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Let Your Lives Speak: A Report of the World Gathering of Young Friends, 1985, Greensboro, North Carolina

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WORLD GATHERING OF YOUNG FRIENDS 1985



Let Our Lives Speak

Visioning a Future for Friends



New Garden Friends' Meeting House
& Guilford College
Greensboro, N. Carolina, USA
19-27th Seventh month 1985

LET YOUR LIVES SPEAK:
A REPORT OF THE WORLD GATHERING OF YOUNG FRIENDS, 1985,
GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

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EPISTLE TO ALL FRIENDS EVERYWHERE

Over 300 Young Friends from 34 countries, 57 Yearly Meetings, and 8 Monthly Meetings under the care of Friends World Committee for Consultation, met at Guilford College, Greensboro, North Carolina, 19-26 Seventh Month 1985, to envisage the future of the Religious Society of Friends and to see how our lives should speak within that vision.

We have come together from every continent, separated by language, race, culture, ways we worship God, and beliefs about Christ and God. By visiting local Friends Meetings, we tasted the diversity of North Carolina Quakerism and this led us into exploring our worldwide diversity. We have been challenged, shaken up, at times even enraged, intimidated, and offended by these differences in each other. We have grown from this struggle and have felt the Holy Spirit in programmed worship, singing, Bible study, open times of worship and sharing and silent waiting upon God.

* Our differences are our richness, but also our problem. One of our key differences is the different names we give our Inward Teacher. Some of us name that Teacher Lord; others of us use the name Spirit, Inner Light, Inward Christ, or Jesus Christ. It is important to acknowledge that these names involve more than language; they involve basic differences in our understanding of who God is, and how God enters our lives. We urge Friends to wrestle, as many of us have here, with the conviction and experience of many Friends that this Inward Teacher is in fact Christ himself. We have been struck this week, however, with the experience of being forced to recognise this same God at work in others who call that Voice by different names, or who understand differently who that Voice is.

We have often wondered whether there is anything Quakers today can say as one. After much struggle we have discovered that we can proclaim this: there is a living God at the centre of all, who is available to each of us as a Present Teacher at the very heart of our lives. We seek as people of God to be worthy vessels to deliver the Lord's transforming word, to be prophets of joy who know from experience and can testify to the world, as George Fox did, "that the Lord God is at work in this thick night." Our priority is to be receptive and responsive to the life-giving Word of God, whether it comes through the written Word - the Scriptures, the Incarnate Word - Jesus Christ, the Corporate Word - as discerned by the gathered meeting, or the Inward Word of God in our hearts which is available to each of us who seek the Truth.

This can be made easier if we face the truth within ourselves, embrace the pain, and lay down our differences before God for the Holy Spirit to forgive, thus transforming us into instruments of healing. This priority is not merely an abstract idea, but something we have experienced powerfully at work among us this week.

Our five invited speakers presented vivid pictures of economic, ecological, and military crises in this world today. We acknowledge that these crises are in fact only a reflection of the great spiritual crisis which underlies them all. Our peace testimony inspires us, yet we move beyond it to challenge our world with the call for justice. We are called to be peacemakers, not protesters.

It is our desire to work cooperatively on unifying these points. The challenges of this time are almost too great to be faced, but we must let our lives mirror what is written on our hearts - to be so full of God's love that we can do no other than to live out our corporate testimonies to the world of honesty, simplicity, equality, and peace, whatever the consequences.

We pray for both the personal and inner strength as well as the corporate strength of a shared calling/struggle that will empower us to face all the trials that we will necessarily encounter. We have no illusions about the fact that to truly live a Christian life in these cataclysmic times means to live a life of great risk.

We call on Friends to rediscover our own roots in the vision and lives of early Friends whose own transformed lives shook the unjust social and economic structures of their day. They treasured the records of God's encounters with humanity found in the Bible, and above all, the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. And we call upon Friends across the earth to heed the voice of God and let it send us out in truth and power to rise up to the immense challenge of our world today.

FOREWORD

"I believe that around the world this day there are Friends who earnestly desire a fresh work of the Spirit. We are disenchanted with the fruitlessness of depending on our own wisdom, our own planning, and our own strength."

"We are thirsty - and yet we must confess that as Israel of old we have repeatedly abandoned the fountain of living water, only to dig cisterns that hold no water." (Jeremiah 2:13)

"The transforming power of the love of God is that which seeks to work its purpose among us. It is this that both gives us our thirst and will satisfy it."

Don Green, 1982, Keynote address for the Friends
World Conference at Kaimosi, Kenya.

The participants of the World Gathering of Young Friends experienced powerfully the transforming presence of God's love. As Don Green observed three years earlier, this love is both the source of our thirst and the means by which it is satisfied. We experienced it through both the anguish and the exhilaration of exploring together a new vision for the future of the Society of Friends.

Despite incredible odds against drawing Young Friends together from all over the world, the World Gathering of Young Friends DID happen! For the first time within the history of Quakerism, a truly representative number of Young Friends, from all but a handful of the yearly meetings in the world met in one place. This was primarily due to the priority placed on enabling the travel of Friends from Africa and Latin America, and the result was an explosive combination of sharing with and receiving from one another.

A feeling of expectancy filled the atmosphere. In fact, the time was so "full" for some participants, it wasn't until several months later that they could take proper inventory of all they had experienced.

The mornings were filled by breakfast, a time for collection, Worship Sharing, Quaker Vision Workshops and special interest groups; the afternoons were taken up with lunch, committee meetings, other organisational activities and Bible studies -- which left very little time for rest or recreation; and the evenings were filled, after supper, with a 2 - 3 hour plenary meeting, followed by evening activities and worship! Some people were getting up before 6:00 a.m. to have meetings for worship or prayer before breakfast, while some of the same people and others had stayed up well past midnight sharing ideas on a dormitory porch or while eating pizza together.

These are just a few of the things that happened; only the passage of time will reveal the true impact of the gathering.

Friends around the world have received the Epistle and the response has been overwhelmingly positive. Towards the end of the gathering each of the 37 worship sharing groups was asked to prepare a statement of its

experience and vision. When a summary of all these was written and revised at a plenary session, it could not be made acceptable and was eventually laid aside. The Epistle Drafting Committee was then able to build on this experience to write the Epistle To All Friends Everywhere and we agreed to publish this together with the group statements and the Statement on Racism prepared by one of the Interest groups.

Most if not all Quaker magazines and newsletters have already published all or part of the Epistle and have carried participants' reports and reflections on the Gathering. To include everything that has been written about the Gathering in one cover would make heavy reading in more than one sense, but it has all been assembled, along with full minutes and accounts of the planning committees, and is being held as an accessible archive by the Library at Guilford College in Greensboro, North Carolina, USA, where the WGYF was held. In this book we have reproduced excerpts from some of these reflective articles and from other accounts together with the group statements and abridged versions of the addresses presented at plenary sessions. To these we have added two of the songs of the Gathering, a selection of photographs taken by Peter Hancock, drawings by Joanna Frances Moore, and watercolours by David Waterworth.

We hope that this collection will be more than a mere collage of events; we hope it will inspire Friends for the future.

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Eleanor Lloyd

Frances Hill

plus representatives from the European Planning Committee

THE BIRTH OF THE VISION

The idea began several years ago, in 1980:

Some people dream dreams. Val Ferguson, the Associate Secretary of the Friends World Committee for Consultation, has had a dream of a great conference of Quaker youth to be held sometime in the 1980s, to revitalise the Society of Friends by changing the lives of the participants.

When she first mentioned it to me, I thought at once of the way the Society of Friends in Great Britain was revitalised by the Manchester Conference of 1895 when a whole generation of Young Friends experienced what Rufus Jones called "a fresh incursion of the Holy Spirit".

("YQ" Feb 1981)

Tom Bodine

New England Yearly Meeting

As Acting General Secretary of FWCC Tom travelled among young Friends in 1980 and 1981 promoting the idea of a world conference. Others followed suit, such as Hannah Pearce who travelled widely in North America in 1981.

When I went on a Quaker Youth Pilgrimage (Summer 1979), I realised how very much more there was to Quakers than peace and light. As I have travelled and met with more Friends, I sensed a need for others to be able to do that too. Somehow, someone got an idea moving for a world gathering of Young Friends. Several other people suddenly came together and it grew from there. What I first heard about as a suggestion to London Yearly Meeting Young Friends Central Committee went global in Kenya and will happen, God willing, in 1985.

Hannah Pearce

London Yearly Meeting

Over the winter of 1981 little was done. The following year, at Kaimosi, FWCC had a global conference of Friends. One of the few Young Friends present, Mary Beth Neal from Ann Arbor, Michigan, was a Yearly Meeting representative to the imminent FWCC Triennial. She was able to present to FWCC a minute from a special interest group convened by Young Friends which included the following paragraph:

We wish to arrange a gathering to nurture the transforming power of the Love of God, in Young Friends' spiritual understanding and their witness, as well as a dynamic part of the present. It needs your support.

There are a few things worth noting about the vision which the group who wrote this request shared. The group was united in the conviction that the gathering should be organised by the young and representative of both evangelical and liberal, northern and southern, men and women. Even then there were people who would not have believed it possible, but held faith to see the project through to completion.

Kenyan Young Friends, meeting at the FWCC Africa Section seminar for Youth in December 1982, made the following minute:

While we all look forward with great enthusiasm to the forthcoming Young Friends International Conference...we are aware that the prevailing worldwide economic difficulties will not allow us all to participate in this great gathering. Our 3rd World handicaps will be additional disadvantage. We however recommend that our three groups of Friends in Kenya i.e. East African YM, East African YM "South", and Elgon Religious Society of Friends through their Youth Offices, nominate a total of 30 Young Friends, both men and women, 10 from each group. We prayerfully hope that our three groups will endeavour to raise at least one-third of the total amount of the fare to USA while we kindly request the Overseas Friends to assist us by raising two-thirds of the total fare besides accommodation expenses. We further specifically ask every nominee to individually contribute generously to the travel fund.

From the teachings at Kaimosi about the transforming power of the love of God it was almost inevitable that we should question how we develop our lives as part of the Religious Society of Friends. Thus it was that the vision and theme of the conference emerged:

Many Friends harbor a deep longing for better understanding and trust between divided groups of Friends. While many of the differences seem to be insurmountable there is also a widespread conviction that Friends need one another - diverse though we be. As iron sharpens iron, the witness of one group of Friends hones the witness of other groups, and vice versa. While we may never be totally of one mind as a Society of Friends (nor should we be), we do have a great deal to benefit from listening to one another. Face to face those old prejudices fade into the background in contrast to the vivid experiences of enjoying one another's friendship. Even new prejudices which may arise are softened by connecting a friendly person with what would otherwise have been a faceless position.

Paul Anderson

Northwest Yearly Meeting

My purpose for the gathering is two-fold: 1) How we, as Young Friends, can learn both how to "mind the light" and to "let our lives speak". That is, how we can become more aware of our spiritual dimensions and how we can explore possible career directions which are based in our spirituality. 2) How we, as Young Friends, can help make bridges of communication across the diversity of Friends' traditions, cultures, and generations. One thing I learned as a result of my experience in the last FWCC Triennial is that there is a level, beyond words, to which everyone refers and which everyone shares. This unity underlying the diversity of expression is something to be explored and celebrated.

Mary Beth Neal

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting

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TRAVEL IN LATIN AMERICA

The vision for the World Gathering of Young Friends was full participation on an equal basis by Friends from all parts of the world. A decision was made to send representatives to visit Friends in the Third World, as well as visit Yearly Meetings in Europe and the United States. The purpose of these visits was to generate interest, and to get ideas and participation from as many people as possible, by making the WGYF real in personal visits. The announcements and written materials were not enough to generate the support and participation of people who were not acquainted with the concept. I think these visits were well worth the time and money, as we had the broadest representation of Friends ever to participate in any such meeting.

As funds are available, I hope this type of travel will continue to be a part of the planning of future gatherings. I feel that the vision of the WGYF would be served also by having representatives from developing nations on the planning committees. Although the cost of such participation is prohibitive, the planning would have benefitted from more diverse participation.

I first heard about the WGYF when a friend told me that the North American planning committee was seeking someone to travel to Latin America to promote "this conference in 1985". I felt a clear leading that God could use me in that particular way in this ministry. Traveling in the ministry, bringing together diverse groups of Friends, and working in Latin America are three of my long-term interests and callings. Even now I can hardly believe I was given such an opportunity.

On my way to Bolivia I stopped overnight in Bogota, Columbia and had the privilege of meeting Silvia Cabrera and learning about the Friends there. Silvia was able to attend the WGYF.

Then I visited Friends in Bolivia and Peru. Having grown up in Northwest Yearly Meeting, hearing about the missions, it felt like coming home to be there. As most Bolivian Friends are Aymyra speaking, I had the new experience of my speaking, in Spanish, being translated into Aymyra. I met many young Friends and was able to share some of the vision for the WGYF as well as catch some of their vision for the future of Friends. It was exciting for me to hear that other Friends in other places were being led in some of the ways that I was. I thank God for this further assurance of love and purpose for us. Twelve young Friends from Bolivia attended the WGYF.

On my way back from South America I spent a few days in Costa Rica. I was able to visit friends in San Jose, the Peace Center there, and the community of Monteverde. Benito Guidon from Monte Verde attended the WGYF and was a great help with translating. Two North Americans living in Costa Rica also attended.

I also had the privilege of spending several weeks in Guatemala and

Honduras. Again I met Friends who shared the vision for the future of Friends. Three Guatemalans, two Hondurans and one Salvadorean were able to attend the conference, with one Honduran Friend's visa being refused at the last minute. The ministry of these Friends was vital and centered many meetings at the WGYF.

After returning to the US for a few weeks, I then spent time traveling in Mexico. These were familiar places and I saw many old friends as well as meeting many new people. I visited Mexico City, Ciudad Satelite, Ciudad Victoria and Nueva Rosita, Coahuila. Eight Friends from Cd. Victoria and Nueva Rosita attended the WGYF. These Friends helped with translation and many other tasks at the Gathering, as well as hosting Friends who traveled afterward to the FWCC meetings in Oaxtepec.

I had hoped to visit Cuba and Jamaica as well, but time and visa problems prevented it. Unfortunately, the Cuban Friends were not allowed to come at the last minute. Three Jamaican Friends were able to attend and contributed much.

When I returned from my travels, the North American planning committee asked me to join them, to continue to work as liaison with Latin American Friends, on cross-cultural sensitivity, and on translation. I thank God that I was given the privilege to participate in all these ways.

By the grace of God and much hard work, the WGYF was a bilingual meeting. With volunteer translators, we were able to make full participation of Spanish-speaking Friends a reality. The Holy Spirit enabled us to find the words, and to find new abilities to communicate in the Spirit when we couldn't find the words. This was one of the most tender and miraculous aspects of the WGYF. What a blessing to see how God works in so many ways and in so many different types of people!

Portia Jones

North Pacific Yearly Meeting

CULTIVATING THE VISION IN AFRICA

In the autumn of 1984, as Africa Contact Person for the World Gathering committee, I travelled in East Africa in order to spread news of the gathering and to find out what Africans would like to see on the agenda. My work was closely coordinated with Zablon Malenge of FWCC (Africa Section). During the trip I travelled well over 3000 miles (4500km) by train, bus, car, lorry, hitching, "matatu", bicycle and on foot, staying in Friends homes throughout (except for three nights in Tanzania with a tax collector). For this openness of heart and home I am extremely grateful.

The vision and perceptions of Africans have long been ignored by the rest of the world. One special hope is that the gathering will strengthen our international witness and sense of human unity in a world so desperately ravaged by greed, prejudice, war, poverty and injustice. This is why it is so exciting that among Friends from all over the world so many Africans will be able to attend. Africans have a tremendous amount to offer us in our struggle for a "world consciousness".

With upwards of sixty thousand members, western Kenya remains the strongest centre of Quakerism in Africa. Despite the continued divisions of Quakers there, the strength and spiritual commitment of those Young Friends who will be attending the gathering is a source of hope for the future.

In Uganda Friends are also plagued with leadership problems and are emerging from the difficult times of Amin, who banned the Protestant sects.

In north-west Tanzania a small group of Friends are now registered with the government and are beginning to establish themselves, and are desperate to join the international body of Friends.

Friends will also attend from the fast growing Burundi Friends Church and from the small meetings of Pemba, Ghana and southern Africa. These groups are thrilled to have this chance of international involvement and it will no doubt enable them to much strengthen their witness.

We must learn too. We must be ready to accept a fundamental reorientation of our views in topics as diverse as the international distribution of wealth and power, the inner light and the nature of prayer. To take this chance of great enrichment we must learn anew about listening and cross-cultural friendship. Such learning can only come from trying, and the experience of trying can be as educative and inspiring as is actually "succeeding".

Ken Wilson

London Yearly Meeting

PLANNING IN EUROPE

I became aware of the idea in the summer of 1980 when I spent an evening with Tom and Val in London, but it was not until Kaimosi or after, that I began to see the vision of what was truly possible.

The group meeting in Kenya asked YFCC to organise four different committees of Young Friends in Latin America, Africa, Europe and North America. It proved impossible to establish committees in Latin America and Africa due to several factors such as finance and communication.

At its first meeting the European Committee was a small group. We sought clear guidance concerning the site, the programme and spiritual direction. It was evident even in our own committee that the theological differences were oceans apart. I, an evangelical, initially felt somewhat swamped by more liberal Friends from London Yearly Meeting. I know that some of the other members were surprised by the strength of my feelings on salvation by Christ and other issues. Yet it was through working together with our different perspectives of Quakerism that we began to envisage what could happen if almost equal numbers of evangelical programmed and liberal unprogrammed Friends from around the world began to interact on a large scale. Minute 1.8 of this meeting reads:

We know that all Quakers share a common heritage in Fox and that he forms a natural centre out of which to take the gathering forward. Four main ideas could be covered: Firstly, bringing together the history and types of Quaker practice around "that of God in everyone". Secondly, consideration of what our Quakerism means to us in the wider church and what it meant to Fox when he thought that "there is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition". Thirdly, we feel it central to consider his basic belief that "I lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars". Inner peace, outer peace, and our witness at every level in our world must begin with our faith. Lastly, we felt that a day should be given to the celebration of cultural diversity among those attending and to consider what it is to be a Quaker not living in a developed nation.

I suspect that if we left our first committee meeting with any particular aim concerning the Gathering, it was that it should not happen unless all groups and types of Friends were fairly and adequately represented. The minute on Participation reads:

It is suggested that Young Friends (YM representatives or at-large participants) called to attend 1) be approximately between the ages of 18-35, 2) express maturity and a sense of leadership, 3) be active in the life of their meeting (locally and/or regionally), 4) be committed to seeking and following the leadings of Christ; inwardly and outwardly, 5) be interested in and concerned for the world community of Friends, and 6) yearly meetings with more than one

representative will appoint a balance of female and male Young Friends.

Our second meeting made both the European and the North American Committees aware of how differently the two committees were likely to work. A clear difference of opinion arose over the proposed site of the Gathering. Our first telephone call across the Atlantic during that meeting produced no clarity. However, following a most powerful period of worship in which spiritual ministry and vocal prayer was shared, a strong sense of unity was reached and North America was discerned to be the right place.

I feel personally that if there was one decision in which the Holy Spirit had its way, it was this one. Looking back on the Gathering the decision was clearly the right one.

Soon after our establishment the two committees divided up the administrative responsibilities. The North American committee took responsibility for the Americas, while the European committee dealt with the rest of the world. To this end Ken Wilson corresponded with and visited East African Young Friends and worked closely with Zablon Malenge, secretary of FWCC Africa Section.

While Ken was in Africa, I travelled on behalf of the committee to the USA to work with Jonathan Vogel on the detailed programme for the Gathering. Despite our differences of approach we came to a clear understanding of what form the programme should take. We felt that although the evening sessions with invited speakers were important, the focal point of the gathering should be the small Worship Sharing groups and Quaker Vision Workshops. The QVWs developed from a concern of many Young Friends worldwide that clear discussion must take place at the gathering about where the Religious Society of Friends is to head as we go into the twenty-first century. Many Young Friends wished to discuss the role and forms of Worship. Others, particularly those from East Africa, wished to raise the issue of Church government and the role of Young Friends in it.

Two months before the gathering we began to hear that some Kenyans were being refused visas by the American Embassy. Letters to the Embassy in Nairobi helped to obtain these visas and in the end every Kenyan who had a passport received a visa to enter Britain. However, Joshua Muhando was unable to obtain a visa for the USA, even in London. He attended the European Young Friends' Gathering at Charbonnieres, in France, instead. Only weeks later we were informed that the four Friends from Burundi were being refused exit from their own country by their government, and that most foreign church organisations in Burundi were being asked to leave. Sadly in this case we were able to do nothing.

Our problems with Embassies were not yet over. Several Indians and a Ghanaian arrived in London without a visa for the USA. By this time Ruth Heine and I were already in North Carolina and with the help of Ezra Edgerton and other members of the Greensboro Site Committee we contacted the offices of the local Congressman who in turn phoned the American Embassy in London. At the same time Ken Wilson, Jane Mills and Val Ferguson were making efforts to obtain the visas by regular visits to the

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London Embassy. Fortunately the combination of all our efforts succeeded in obtaining the visas for the Indians. Unfortunately Edwina Dankwa, the Ghanaian, could not get a visa and had to remain in Britain, where she was welcomed into Friends homes, for the duration of the Gathering.

It is impossible to mention every aspect of the Committee's work, yet I feel it is important to record that many of the committee members were blessed and enriched spiritually by being involved. One of us was heard to say, during our second meeting, that if the gathering ever got off the ground God would certainly have played a major part in making it happen.

For myself, I am sure that the presence of the Almighty God in our meetings was what bound the European and American members of our Committee together and without the Holy Spirit in our midst the Gathering would never have happened.

TO GOD BE THANKS AND PRAISE!

Simon Lamb

Ireland Yearly Meeting



PLANNING IN NORTH AMERICA

The work of organising the World Gathering of Young Friends began in 1982 following the FWCC Triennial in Kaimosi, Kenya. From the outset of the active planning for the WGYF, the reaction from official Quaker organisations was a mixture of truly supportive excitement and a scepticism that such an event could even take place, on such a scale, with such a short amount of lead time, and organised by younger, relatively inexperienced Friends.

The first organised meetings of the North American committee (NAC) took place at the 1983 gathering of Young Friends of North America and included Friends from across the spectrum of Quakerism. The European committee (EC) had their first meetings in London during this same weekend. Subsequent meetings on both sides of the Atlantic were also held simultaneously leading to successful communication by transatlantic telephone.

At our meetings in Second Month 1984, all of us in the NAC, in our own way, were able to share private fears about the potentially negative results that might be generated by the gathering. Most of the organising work still remained ahead of us, and the task, without God's help, was impossible. At this meeting we suggested that the EC continue with the major responsibility for program planning, and asked Portia Jones to travel in Latin America on our behalf.

Peter Hohage, a member of the EC from West Germany, attended our next meetings. His presence was extremely useful in helping us understand the personalities of the EC. An interesting contrast between the two committees related to our different approaches towards program and fund-raising. The EC, charged with working on program, and Andrew McTear took the logistical responsibility of coordinating the travel of nearly 140 YFs from Africa, Asia, and Europe to and from Greensboro. Therefore a major concern of theirs was, "How are we going to raise enough money to get all these YFs to Greensboro and back again?" The NAC, on the other hand, was only coordinating travel from Latin America, Jamaica and Alaska (a total of approximately 30 people). Our primary concern was, "Once we get all these people to Guilford College, what will happen then?" Being clear and articulate about a vision for the potential of such a gathering was not only the first step for program development, but it also became the first step for effective fund-raising.

Simon Lamb's visit in Ninth Month 1984 proved productive and helpful. The necessity for this personal contact between the two planning groups cannot be overemphasised! Working together at such a distance requires a large amount of trust in each other and, in the long run, utter dependence on God.

Early in 1985 a number of ideas that had been germinating began to grow more clearly into focus. Susan Stark's image of the music ministry included the limited publication of a WGYF Hymnal/Songbook including favorite songs contributed by participants. Portia Jones suggested that we have a set of daily queries at the gathering to foster an atmosphere of

spiritual retreat. Plans for post-gathering visitation began to take on a more substantial shape. Next to the planning for the conference itself, this ambitious visitation effort would prove to be a monumental task.

In Third Month 1985, carrying the NAC's recommendation for materials to be included in the first mailing to participants, I left for nearly a month of travel, first to the FWCC (Americas Section), then to the EC's meeting in London, back to Philadelphia YM and on to Southeastern YM. While I was in London we prepared the booklet "Programme and Preparation". This booklet, (or a Spanish translation of it) plus registration form and cover letter was included in the first mailing to all WGYF participants.

The high-point of our final meeting in Fifth Month 1985 was our role-playing around issues of cross-cultural/theological sensitivity. We were all very concerned that the gathering should speak to the needs of Latin American and other Third World Friends. We imagined our worst fears about what could go wrong at the gathering and, through acting them out, we looked for ways to resolve these potential conflicts.

From this point until the conference, the primary work and decision-making shifted to the local Site Committee. Organized into three sub-groups on 1) Visitation (both pre- and post-gathering), 2) Program (mostly dealing with aspects of leadership training and coordination), and 3) Physical Arrangements (including a multitude of details), this committee had a lot of work to do in a short time.

The second preparation mailing including the booklet "Visioning a Future for Friends" was sent to English-speaking participants one month before the gathering. A part of the pamphlet was translated into Spanish for Latin American Friends to study upon their arrival in the USA.

Other than the Site Committee preparations and our individual tasks, much of the time during the last month was spent straightening out visa problems with the US consulates in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and later in Great Britain. All in all, we only lost two Latin American YFs through visa difficulties with the US consulates, but we were able to welcome ten Taiwanese YFs.

For all of us on the NAC the experience of planning the WGYF gave us profound insight not only into the condition of our worldwide Religious Society, but also into our own personal, inward walks with God. One of the many blessings of working with the NAC was that over our two years together in planning, prayer and worship we began to perceive a possible model for how Friends of diverse backgrounds might really experience true communion with God and with each other. We are all very grateful for the gift God has given us in our work together and especially in our love for one another.

SOME VALUES OF A WORLD GATHERING OF YOUNG FRIENDS

"Evangelical Friend" July/August, 1984

A world gathering of any sort is a gigantic undertaking! The expenses in terms of travel, time and coordinating efforts are immense. However, in the light of the values of such a gathering, the expenses seem minimal. The following are but a few values that could result from such a gathering.

1. The cultivation of new leadership.

The task of cultivating future generations of leadership is a never-ending one. If ever a society fails to equip its young to carry on the vision of that society, its future vitality will be severely crippled. So it will be for Friends if we do not actively cultivate forthcoming generations. Jesus spent 30 years preparing for 3 years of ministry, and it is hoped that such a gathering would at least play some role in the encouraging of Young Friends in their emerging ministries.

2. The gaining of valuable insight from one another.

The Society of Friends may be one of the most theologically diverse groups for its size, and this has been a great source of both joy and pain. We often find it difficult to appreciate the experiences of others that are different from our own. Yet through these very differences, more people are reached by God's love than would have been reached otherwise. What is needed is prayerful and tender interaction among Friends who are mature enough to listen to another's sojourn, and then to offer humbly one's own learnings about the life of the Spirit.

Indeed, one of the greatest values of such a conference would be the enriching insights we could learn from one another. Our greatest source of pain is also our greatest source of joy. We can react against our diversity, considering it a foe; or we can respond to it as a friend, seeking to gain enrichment through loving interaction. As different parts of the body there is a lot to be gained through appreciating one another. In doing so we will experience the freedom that comes with being "humble learners together in the school of Christ".

3. The empowering of Quaker witness and ministry in the world.

Quakerism has a good deal to offer the rest of the world. But no tradition, no matter how memorable or quaint, deserves to exist in and of itself. Only as Friends are active and effective in the healing, redeeming and transforming work of God is their existence justified. Such a movement cannot rest on its past laurels or learnings. Just as the manna in the wilderness had to be gathered daily, so must each new generation of Friends be cultivated anew to carry on the ministry of Christ. Our prayer is that our lives might indeed become healing love for others...and that such a gathering would further that process.

Paul Anderson

Northwest Yearly Meeting

To help prepare spiritually for the gathering all participants received two mailings. The second contained this

MEDITATION

We come from all parts of the world, from all races, and from all branches of the Religious Society of Friends.

We come, each at a different stage in our spiritual journeys, and each with different hopes and dreams for our own lives and the lives of our loved ones.

We come (some of us) not totally sure why we are coming - filled with both a certain excitement, as well as a certain fear of the unknown.

We come because it will be great fun to travel to a new place and to meet new people and to broaden our vision of the world of Friends.

The World Gathering of Young Friends has been planned as a time for individual and corporate retreat and renewal. For this process of renewal to really happen at the Gathering in mid-July, it must happen now, in our individual thoughts and prayers, and in our regular contacts with Friends in our home Churches and Meetings. Sensing that the Spirit moves most freely among a people who are prepared, we urge you to take regular time, leading up to the Gathering, in prayer, meditation, and devotional reading. As you prepare for the worship time, you may find it helpful to picture sisters and brothers in Nairobi, London, La Paz, San Francisco and Bombay who are (perhaps at the very same moment) also centering down and praying for guidance for themselves and for the future of our prophetic/worshipping community.

In closing, as we embark on this process of visioning a future for the Religious Society of Friends, we must be brutally frank in acknowledging the many obstacles which line our path. Yet, could it be that in the very acknowledgment of the depths of our own struggles and the depths of our own confusion we will be freed to look beyond our own set answers and limited visions? And will this enable us truly to open our minds and hearts, allowing the Word of God to break in upon us?

And so, in direct contradiction to all of the common wisdom of the day, let us come together in a spirit of great **hope**. Let us come together with a sense of great promise and expectation that, as we Young Friends from throughout the world wait upon the Lord, it will make a difference. Perhaps **the** difference! Because Christ has promised that when we seek, so shall we find, and when we knock, so shall the door be opened.

LET US KNOCK - AND KNOCK LOUDLY!!

THE GATHERING ITSELF

TRAVELLING AND ARRIVING

On 10th July, 1985, at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, 42 Young Friends from Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania Mainland boarded their flight to London via Khartoum en route for USA for the World Gathering of Young Friends.

"This is your captain of SD 305.

You are welcome on board SD 305 Nairobi-Khartoum. Our flying time will be 2hours 30minutes and we shall be flying at an altitude of 35,000ft above sea level. As soon as we are in level flight we shall serve you with a hot dinner. Please fasten your seatbelts and observe the no smoking signs.

Thank you."

Time came for the promised dinner to be served and it really looked delicious; and finger lickin good. It was not until all had been eaten that it was discovered that the delicious dinner was a Crab Meal. After this discovery, many wished that they had not taken the meal, since crabs are not eaten in most African societies. This was only the beginning of things yet to come.

We were met at Heathrow Airport and from there we travelled to Ilford Friends Meeting House where we all stayed for one week. We were tired, sleepy, hungry and exhausted. A snack lunch was served and we were all issued with sleeping bags. Most of us had never used sleeping bags before:

"Shall I fit into this bag?" one Young Friend asked.

"And where are the blankets and bedsheets?" asked another.

"Look here, Friends. The sleeping bag is your bed, mattress, blanket, bedsheets and everything that is supposed to be on your bed," Ken Wilson explained. Ken was already popular with the delegation since he had met most of them during his pre-conference visit to Africa.

"And where are the bathrooms?"

"There are no bathrooms here but we shall be transporting you every morning to a swimming pool three kilometres away where you will take a bath," Ken explained. The Young Friends from Africa could not imagine how this would work and therefore thought of putting up a temporary bathing shanty by the wall of the church. The leader of the group, Thomas Munyasa, supervised the construction of this shanty to its completion. "Come on Young Friends, let's see your Lives Speak."

By this time information had been received that one of us had lost his Passport. The Passport was later found but it was too late for him to travel to USA. Thomas organised a prayer meeting for this young Friend to get courage.

On 16th July, all Young Friends from Europe, Asia, and Africa assembled in London for a final briefing. We were all treated to a dinner at the Lambeth Centre in Brixton. We were divided into groups of 16 identified by coloured badges, so as to facilitate easy movement. On 17th July at 4.30pm, we departed Gatwick Airport on board Virgin Atlantic airways destined for New York. It was all joyous and singing on the flight

as we crossed the Atlantic Ocean. The joy included an airborne birthday for my wife Alexie. Everybody broke into "Happy Birthday" song. All the flight crew were amazed at the kind of joy that surrounded the cabin. It was their first experience in the history of aviation to see passengers sing and dance in flight. The Spirit of God was really moving among us. The Jumbo touched down at 6.00pm New York time amid joyous singing. We all spent a night at 15th Street Friends Meeting House, in New York.

Thank you for the hospitality accorded to us by the Meeting.

The following day we started off on a 14 hour journey south to North Carolina; where we arrived at 10pm. Again it was all singing and clapping as the Young Friends on the three bus coaches ploughed through the green vegetation of USA to Greensboro. The Conference started on 19th July with various activities. The Kenyan Friends put up a drama performance featuring the coming of missionaries to Kenya. They also dominated the music ministry.

Two days after the Conference had taken off, the Friends started to realise that the Spirit that had bound them together was fading out. It did not take very long before we realised the cause of this fading. It was not easy to comprise Friends from the Programmed and unProgrammed Meetings when both are sharing the same worship under the same roof. There was a general feeling that the organisers never respected different ways of worship traditions. Each group thought that the conference favoured the other group. There was spiritual disunity immediately after the conference had started and you could see tears as Young Friends expressed this concern. The unProgrammed Friends needed Silence, which could not be found, and the Programmed Friends were thirsting for sermons which they also could not get! There was confusion and tension. Nobody could understand what was going on. It was not until when one morning the worship sharing groups abandoned their daily routine and discussed this problem that the Spirit of Unity was experienced in the conference. It was discovered that our main differences came from:

Different worship traditions,

The importance which is attached to the Bible,

The name given to the inner light, and

The importance attached to George Fox vs Jesus Christ.

As days went by we started to understand each other better and realised our differences. We discovered that our differences were in fact our unity. We continued to live in this unity until the end of the conference. It was really wonderful the way the Spirit worked through each one of us to create unity that was not there at first.

	Friday 19th	Saturday 20th	Sunday 21st	Monday 22nd
am 7.00-7.45	Group Leader Training Sessions (Thursday and Friday)	Breakfast		Breakfast
8.00		Collection	Breakfast	Collection
8.45		Worship Sharing (W/S Group)	Collection	W/S Group
9.45		Break	Meeting for Worship with local friends	Break
10.30		Quaker Vision Workshop (QVW)		QVW
11.45		Interest Groups		Interest Groups
pm 1.00-1.30	Registration (until 10 pm) Orientation (to each other and facilities)	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
2.00		Free Time WS Leaders 2 pm Nurture Committee	Afternoon Activities with local friends	Free Time eg Recreation
3.00				Nurture Com
4.30		Bible Study		Bible Study
5.30-6.00	Dinner in W/S Groups	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner
6.30	<u>Opening Of Gathering</u> - Worship - Introductions - Roll Call - Greeting Letters - Opening Address "Let our lives Speak"	Plenary Session - Worship - Tradition (T) 1 - "There is one, Christ Jesus.." Jan Wood	Traditions 2 & 3 Evening of Song	Plenary Session -W, -T4 - "Walk Cheerfully.." Jonathan Fryer
9.30	Closing Silent Worship	Evening Activities		Evening Activities
10.00-10.15	----- End of Day Worship - -			

	Tuesday 23rd	Wednesday 24th	Thursday 25th	Friday 26th
am 7.00-7.45	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
8.00	Collection	Collection	Collection	Collection
8.45	W/S Group	W/S Group	W/S Group	W/S Group
9.45	Break	Break	Break	Break
10.30	QW	QW	QW - Plenary	Final Session - Worship and Singing - Epistle - AOB Clearing Up
11.45	Interest Groups	Interest Groups		
pm 1.00-1.30	Lunch	Lunch		
2.00	Free Time eg Informal Groups Nurture Cam	Free Time eg Relaxation Sessions Nurture Cam	Free Time	Closing Meeting for Worship Visit local friends for the weekend or longer Followed by post-Gathering events
3.00			Open Epistle Committee	
4.30	Bible Study	Bible Study	Bible Study	
5.30-6.00	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	
6.30	Plenary Session -W, -T5 - "I live in the virtue.." Heinrich Brückner	Plenary Session -W, -T6 - "Friends in the dev world" Arturo Carranza (in Spanish)	International Festival	
9.30	Evening Activities	Evening Activities	Evening Activities	
10.00-10.15	-----			

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOUNG FRIENDS GATHER?

"The Friend" August 23rd 1985

So, it is possible to gather over 300 Young Friends from thirty-four countries in one place - but what happens then?

In the main the preparatory committees disbanded so that all the participants could run the gathering as they were led. Young Friends volunteered to take over the administrative tasks, organising visitation, running the children's programme and so on. But among the volunteers were many who had already invested much time, energy and care into the gathering, and they continued to respond to the needs, both calculated and immediate, of the rest. Many individual queries and concerns were considered by a Steering Committee on which Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, and Latin America were all represented.

The days were exceptionally full, and so intense at times that Friends had to go off campus for a break, or "crash out" on their bed for a couple of hours' necessary rest and renewal, with reluctance if this meant missing a session. A short walk to breakfast was a joy, since there was just a little freshness to greet one outside the non-air-conditioned rooms where most of us slept. Cafeteria meals, of a higher standard than my experience of college meals in England, were enjoyed by many who were keen to sample grits, waffles, hash brown potatoes, brownies and pecan pie, and pick and choose from a large salad bar. However, many Asian and African Young Friends found the lack of spices, salt and moisture a problem for taste and health alike.

Each morning at eight we were expected to assemble in the New Garden Meeting House - across the street from the main college campus - for "Collection", a period of worship after which notices were given. This time of worship was designated as unprogrammed, but it was often very far from silent worship as we in Britain know it, and frequently overran.

Immediately following this, we would scatter across the campus to the thirty-seven Worship Sharing Groups. A break for fruit and juice at ten, and we then reassembled in the same group for our Quaker Vision Workshop. Membership of these groups was arranged prior to our arrival, and the two facilitators in each group were expected to support one another in following some very strong guidelines, in the form of Queries*, and a daily workplan, underlined by a very helpful statement of purpose. Groups were encouraged to follow this programme, but often found more appropriate routes for themselves. In these sessions we were able, through Creative Listening, prayer, silent worship, singing, listening to music, brainstorming, and other techniques, to learn from each other, and share our thoughts for today and our visions for the future. It was originally hoped that at the end of the gathering we could produce a "Vision of the Future of Quakerism", but the thirty-seven groups were all so varied that when this was considered by the gathering as a whole it was realised that a single minute could never truly reflect our very diverse experiences, and so the thirty-seven minutes are to be published, with the Epistle, in a pamphlet.

Next came Interest Groups, which met before lunch and often again at

mealtimes or during any mutual free time that could be snatched. Free time, according to the programme, was from two to four-thirty, but during this period various extra opportunities sprang up - Facilitators Meeting, and Nurture and Epistle Committees to name but three. An hour's Bible Study preceded tea, after which the Plenary Session was due to begin. Two of the plenary sessions were held in the open air and attended by local Friends; the other four were at the New Garden Meeting House. They consisted of programmed worship which included music ministry, prayer, an address, a "Worship Tradition", and some open worship. The plenary addresses have been recorded, and as little direct use was made of them by the gathering it is to be hoped that they will be published and discussed elsewhere.

Each continent individually portrayed its Worship Tradition, and the performances were full of memorable highlights which many Friends tried to capture on film. Friends from Africa gave a short and very colourful dramatisation of how Quakerism came to Kenya, with songs and explanations as to the development of Quakerism in the smaller African Yearly Meetings. European Young Friends recalled the history of their Yearly Meetings in drama, song and speech with British Young Friends portraying the intricacies of the relationship between preparative and monthly meetings, Yearly Meeting and Young Friends. Asian Friends and the North and Latin American groups followed these varied examples in their own ways.

Due to the fullness and deep intensity, plenary sessions frequently overran, thereby curtailing any other communal activities. However, some much needed light relief and friendly enjoyment was shared during folkdancing, singing, and table games. Hall steps and verandahs were the scene for small groups as impressions and thoughts of the day were shared above the noisy chirruping of the crickets, in the slightly cooler air of the night.

On the Sunday Young Friends were wafted, by transport varying from large private cars to church buses, to nearby Quaker Meetings. Hosts included their guests in everything, and some even arranged sightseeing tours of museums or beauty spots after delicious and friendly "potluck" lunches.

Music ministry played a very important and joyful part in our gathering and the songbook is a wonderful memento for all of us who sang in Spanish, Swahili, English, or German, whatever our native tongue. The vitality of this shared experience transcended differences and overcame problems of translation (try as some might, it was hard to provide adequate translation at all times and therefore some were isolated by language). And on the penultimate evening our International Festival was a further delight, when we shared with new friends just a few of our varied talents and our national oddities.

All gatherings need gathering up, and ours concluded with an open Epistle meeting, one session to consider the minutes from the Quaker Vision Workshops and a final business meeting for the Epistle and other items. In the unusually formal gathering of the latter two our depth of concern was truly felt, and the distinguished clerking was an admirable example of yet another London Yearly Meeting tradition, for many present.

Many Young Friends attended this gathering weighed down with the expectations of other Friends at home, and their personal concerns about peace, poverty and conservation that they expected to explore with others of their own generation, with different standpoints. However, as reference to the Epistle shows, it was a gathering that was led elsewhere by the Spirit. To some, it may seem a tremendous opportunity lost, that we should have spent so much time discussing our differences, which in the end we, perhaps as expected, acknowledged as essential but not all-important since we are all Quakers.

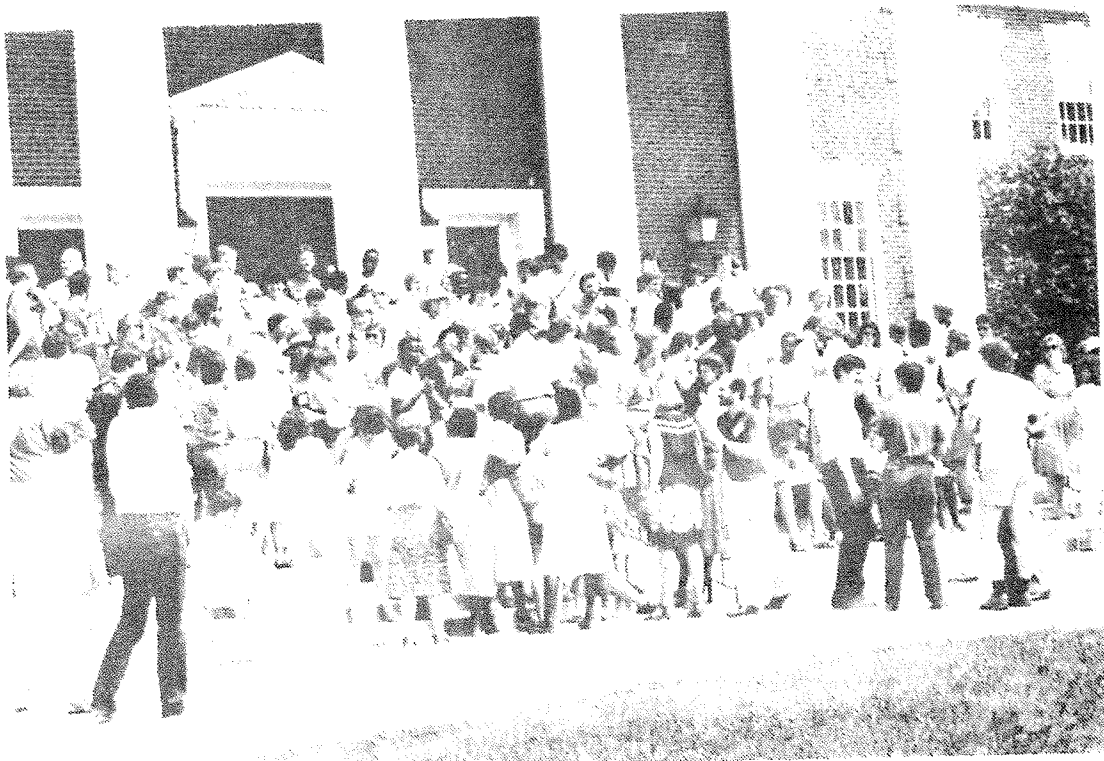
Having embarked on the helter-skelter of a programme designed to give security to non-programmed and programmed Friends alike, it was impossible for us to climb down earlier, to take a long hard look at where we were going. If the World Gathering of Young Friends was just one "ride at the fair", there are many others still to be tried. We have been made aware of some of each other's strengths and weaknesses, our individual needs and gifts, and we carry with us the overwhelming feeling that we must and can go further together. The question is when and how?

Shirley Kearns

London Yearly Meeting

* The Quaker Vision Workshops were given direction by the following questions:

- 1 If God had it in mind to "lay down" the Society of Friends and start all over again, what is one thing which should not be lost at any cost?
- 2 If George Fox came back to life and saw the present practice of Friends, do you think he would say that this is the type of Friends church I started?
- 3 What would your ideal monthly meeting look like?
- 4 Where do I see the Society of Friends 10 years from now?



THE PARTICIPANTS

A future (and in a very real sense, present) generation of leadership was brought together at the gathering to enkindle one another with the fire of the Spirit. I remember tears coming to my eyes as Frances Hill called the roll during our first plenary session. As Friends from virtually every sector of Quakerism stood to add the blessing of their presence to the gathering. I remember thinking what a privilege it was to be at such an event! It is encouraging to observe the quality of leadership which is emerging among Friends. There were over 500 tasks and responsibilities which were recruited for and carried out the very week of the conference! If such resourcefulness is any indication as to the leadership potential among Friends, I would say that the Society of Friends has some very bright days ahead.

Janice Acquah	Ghana MM
Abigail Adams	Monteverde MM (Costa Rica)
Rose Adede	Kenya
Moses Ahuli	Kenya
Carmen Alcalde	Spain MM, France YM
Humberto Gutierrez Alegria	INELA (Bolivia)
Seth C. Alwiga	Kenya
Belinda Amabi	Kenya
Francis Amimo	Kenya
Carla Anderson	Northwest YM (USA)
Paul Anderson	Northwest YM (USA)
Janet Angell	New York YM
Thomas Angell	New York YM
Ben Arnold	Alaska YM
Onesmus Asiema	Kenya
Andrew Backhouse	London YM
Bob Baird	North Pacific YM (USA)
Judith Baker	London YM
Marian K. Baker	New England YM
Rhonda Barber	Wilmington YM
Tim Bartoo	Canadian YM
Tor Bejnar	Ohio YM
Ian Bell	Canadian YM
Katherine Bell	North Pacific YM (USA)
Margaret Benefiel	Northwest YM (USA)
Daryl Berquist	New England YM
Sarah Blackburn	London YM
Dorrell Blake	Jamaica YM
Peter Blood	Philadelphia YM
Tom Bodine	New England YM
Gil Man Booh	Korea MM
Michael Booth	London YM
Bridget Bower	Lake Erie YM
Hannah Branson	Ohio Valley YM

THE GATHERING ITSELF

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Jai Raj Brown
 Ellerie Brownfain
 Heinrich Bruckner
 Sabine Bruckner
 Beth Bussiere-Nichols
 Brad Bussiere-Nichols
 Scott Bywater
 Silvia de Cabrera
 Maria E. Cancio
 Arturo Carranza
 Consuelo Carranza
 David Lee Cash

Arnoldo Garcia Castillo
 Peter Chao
 Luke Chen
 Oliver Chen
 Luke Cheng
 Masuzgo Chirwa
 Carol Chu
 Sally Claggett
 Beth Claggett
 Kate Clark
 Dionisio Aspi Cosme
 Kirsten L. Krutcher
 Benjamin Huarina Cruz
 Clarence Cunningham
 Carl Curtis
 John Dash
 Sarah Daykin
 Mark Deasey
 Caroline S. Dommen
 Virginia Douglas

D. Ezra Edgerton
 Florian Eichler
 Brenda Esch
 Maudiel Arevelo Espinoza
 Sandra Eurom
 Chuck Fager
 Rick Farmer
 Michelle Fellows
 Val Ferguson
 John Fitzgerald
 Helen Forsythe
 Jochen Fricke
 Ute Fricke
 Jonathan Fryer

Bundelkhand YM (India)
 Lake Erie YM
 German Democratic Republic YM
 German Democratic Republic YM
 Philadelphia YM
 Philadelphia YM
 Australia YM
 Bogota MM (Colombia)
 North Carolina YM (FUM)
 California YM
 California YM
 Evangelical Friends Church,
 Eastern Region (USA)
 Honduras YM
 Taiwan YM
 Taiwan YM
 Taiwan YM
 Taiwan YM
 Southern Africa YM
 Taiwan YM
 Philadelphia YM
 Philadelphia YM
 Philadelphia YM
 INELA (Bolivia)
 Pacific YM (USA)
 INELA (Bolivia)
 Pacific YM (USA)
 Philadelphia YM
 London YM
 Ohio YM
 Australia YM
 Switzerland YM
 Evangelical Friends Church,
 Eastern Region (USA)
 Chapel Hill MM (N.Carolina, USA)
 Austria GM, Pyrmont YM (Germany)
 Indiana YM
 Cuba YM
 Iowa YM (FUM)
 New England YM
 Philadelphia YM
 London YM
 London YM
 New York YM
 Illinois YM
 Pyrmont YM (German Federal Republic)
 Pyrmont YM (German Federal Republic)
 London YM

Lucy Fullerton	Baltimore YM
Brooke Garrison	Baltimore YM
Nicola Geiger	Pacific YM (USA)
Wendy Geiger	Southeastern YM (USA)
Jeremy Gibberd	Southern Africa YM
Joey Giffen	Ohio YM
Josephine Gimode	Kenya
Musa Gimode	Kenya
Evaristo Gironda	Amigos Central (Bolivia)
Peter Gissop	London YM
Archna Gour	General Conference of Friends in India
Alison Gray	London YM
Jenny Greaves	London YM
Helen Green	London YM
Sandra Grotberg	Philadelphia YM
Cilde Grover	Northwest YM (USA)
Benito Guindon	Monteverde MM (Costa Rica)
Petrona Calamani de Gutierrez	INELA (Bolivia)
Marilyn Hadley-Voth	Northwest YM (USA)
Wes Hadley-Voth	Northwest YM (USA)
Robert Halliday	London YM
Norris Rose Hamilton	:General Conference of Friends
Vivian Rose Hamilton	: in India
Peter Hancock	London YM
Ruth Harland	London YM
Charlene Harris	Northwest YM (USA)
Lutz Haubold	German Democratic Republic YM
Donna Haynes	North Carolina YM (FUM)
Mark Hebert	London YM
Ruth Heine	London YM
Zandy Hemsley	London YM
Jonathan Hibbs	Baltimore YM
Damon Hickey	North Carolina YM (Conservative)
Frances Hill	London YM
Sally Hindman	Baltimore YM
David Hobson	North Carolina YM (FUM)
Ellen Hodge	Ohio Valley YM
Judy Hodgkin	Australia YM
Jan Hoek	Netherlands YM
Peter Hohage	Pyrmont YM (German Federal Republic)
Marsha Holleman	Mid-America YM
David Honigman	London YM
Scott Hoskins	Philadelphia YM
Susan Hoskins	Philadelphia YM
Janet Hough	Lake Erie YM
Espen Hovdenak	Norway YM
Grace Hsieh	Taiwan YM

THE GATHERING ITSELF

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Felix Carlos Huarena
 Paul Hughes
 Amanda Hurton
 Ella Ruth Hutson

 Marianne IJspeert
 Deirdre Jacob
 Christopher Jayne
 Dean Johnson
 Freeda Johnson
 Lynnette Jones
 Portia Jones
 Tim Jones
 William Mather Jones
 Christel Jorgenson
 Naomi Backes Kamimura
 Sadock Paulo Kanani
 Shirley Kearns
 George O. Kegode
 Anna Kennedy
 Kate Kerman
 Sia Kessi
 Pamela Khayota
 Richard Kiboi
 Kamana Kigweba
 Benjamin Kimito
 Cindy Kirk
 Mary Kirk
 Dickson Kona Mutsami
 Lucy Knott
 Ilse Krott
 Andrew Kurima
 Leila L'Abate
 Simon Lamb
 Jean Lawrence
 Josephina Elena Pena Leal
 Mark Lee
 Sam Levering
 Debbie Liston
 Stephen Little
 Charlene Littlefield
 Randy Littlefield
 Caroline Ethel Livermore
 Eleanor Lloyd
 Catherine Loney
 Alfred Lugalia
 Mable Lugalia
 Lloyd Lushinga

INELA (Bolivia)
 London YM
 London YM
 Evangelical Friends Church,
 Eastern Region (USA)
 Netherlands YM
 Ireland YM
 Southern Appalachian YM
 :Evangelical Friends Church,
 : Eastern Region (USA)
 Mid-America YM
 North Pacific YM (USA)
 Mid-America YM
 Illinois YM
 New England YM
 Japan YM
 Tanzania MM
 London YM
 Kenya
 Near East YM
 Philadelphia YM
 Switzerland YM
 Kenya
 Kenya
 Mid-America YM
 Tanzania YM
 Ohio YM
 Baltimore YM
 Kenya
 London YM
 Austria GM, Pyrmont YM (Germany)
 Uganda YM
 Southern Appalachian YM
 Ireland YM
 Southeastern YM
 Mexico GM
 Taiwan YM
 North Carolina YM (FUM)
 Nebraska YM/Mid-America YM
 Ireland YM
 Mid-America YM
 Mid-America YM
 London YM
 London YM
 Ireland YM
 Kenya
 Kenya
 Southern Africa YM

Gillian McCaw
 Carolyn McCoy
 Damian McGirt
 Andrew McTear
 David Mackenzie
 Fiona Mackenzie
 Kinyangi Macmillan
 Julius Mahagwa
 Fabian Makani
 Margaret Malenge
 Zablon Malenge
 Robin E. Mallison
 Hewitt Malone
 James Mari-Navarro
 Lauren Mari-Navarro
 John Marshburn
 Michael E Martin
 Manuel Guzman Martinez
 Angela Mascetti
 Frank Massey
 Eric Mayer
 Andy Maynard
 Miriam Mesner
 Melissa Meredith
 Elizabeth Milford
 Alistair Millington
 Jane Mills
 Alfred Misaki
 Nadine Molloy
 Lisandro Gordillo Monterosa
 Carlos Cecilio Moran
 Benson Muhalia
 Seth Daniel Munter
 Thomas Munyasa
 Hazel Murdoch
 Joshua Murunga
 Mary Musera
 Zebedee Musudia
 Alexie Muzame
 Edwin Muzame
 Philip Mwangale
 David Nagle
 Josephat Namaswa
 Kumari Ranjna Nath
 Etienne Nduli
 Margaret Namikoge Nyoga
 Laura Newbury
 Diana Nicholson

Ireland YM
 Philadelphia YM
 South Central YM (USA)
 London YM
 Pacific YM (USA)
 London YM
 Kenya
 Kenya
 Kenya
 Kenya
 Kenya
 New York YM
 Philadelphia YM
 Pacific YM (USA)
 Pacific YM (USA)
 California YM
 Iowa YM (FUM)
 Mexico GM
 Italy
 North Carolina YM (FUM)
 Baltimore YM
 North Carolina YM (FUM)
 Nebraska YM
 North Carolina YM (FUM)
 Intermountain YM (USA)
 London YM
 London YM

 Jamaica YM
 Cuba YM
 Cuba YM
 Kenya
 Pacific YM (USA)
 Kenya
 Ireland YM
 Kenya
 Kenya
 Kenya
 Kenya
 Kenya
 Ohio YM (Conservative)
 Kenya
 Bundelkhand YM (India)
 Southern Africa YM
 Kenya
 London YM
 Indiana YM

THE GATHERING ITSELF

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Jane North	London YM
Tom North	London YM
Rose Ochirawa	Kenya
Obedy Ombuya	Kenya
Otiende A.M. Josephat	Kenya
Elisha Oviyo	Kenya
Jesse Paledofsky	Lake Erie YM
Hannah Pearce	London YM
Mark Pearson	London YM
Lynn Peery	Western YM (USA)
Erica Pelz	Western YM (USA)
Lucia Eugenia Tapia Pena	Mexico GM
Juan Manuel de Avila Perez	Mexico GM
Elizabeth Perry	Pacific YM (USA)
Randy Peterson	Northern YM (USA)
Christian Pinkert	German Democratic Republic YM
Jan Pohl	Central Alaska Friends Conference
David M. Pucho	INELA (Bolivia)
Mary Quinlan	Guatemala City Worship Group
Sadrach Quisbert	Amigos Central (Bolivia)
Pontus R. Rancken	Finland MM, Sweden YM
Lesley Richards	London YM
Maurice Richards	Jamaica YM
Ben Richmond	Iowa YM (FUM)
Jody Richmond	Iowa YM (FUM)
Matthew D. Roazen	New England YM
Ed Roberts	Mid-America YM
Griselda Perez Robles	Mexico GM
Gale Rohde	Northern YM (USA)
Helen Rowlands	London YM
Rachel Rowley	London YM
George Rwela	Pemba YM
John Sabwa	Kenya
Helen Salisbury	London YM
Andrew Secrest	Earlham School of Religion
Deborah Shaw	North Carolina YM (Conservative)
Charles Shikalama	Kenya
Robert Siedle-Khan	Philadelphia YM
Francis Simiyu	Kenya
Mariana Sollman	Philadelphia YM
Katherine Sorel	New York YM
Kevin Spratt	Australia YM
Harold R. Stamm	Pyrmont YM (German Federal Republic)
Judith Stanley	Evangelical Friends Church, Eastern Region (USA)
Christopher Stern	New York YM
Sue Stover	New Zealand YM
Ginny Sutton	Ohio YM

David Tebbs
 Katja Tempel
 Jane Terrell
 Sara Beth Terrell
 Jay Thatcher
 Karin Thron
 Kristi Thygeson
 Dorothy Treadway
 Gerardina Tristan
 Ellen Tung
 Paul Tung
 David Upchurch
 Gregory Valatin
 Stephen van Bibber
 Cate Van Meter
 Timoteo Choques Vargas
 Anna Elizabeth Vazquez
 Dinora Uvalle Vazquez
 Marco Uvalle Vazquez
 Silvia E.I. Vazquez
 Jonathan Vogel
 John Wafula
 William Walters
 David Waterworth
 Samuel Wefafa
 Henry Wekesa
 Ted Welch
 Wilma Wilcox
 Ken Wilson
 Ingosi Wilson
 Jan Wood
 John Wood
 Karen Woodhouse
 Jonathan Woods
 Tim Yeaney
 Ruth Yeh
 Amos Yiminyi

North Carolina YM (FUM)
 Pyrmont YM (German Federal Republic)
 North Carolina YM (FUM)
 North Carolina YM (FUM)
 North Pacific YM (USA)
 Intermountain YM (USA)
 Northwest YM (USA)
 Iowa YM (Conservative)
 Mexico GM
 Taiwan YM
 Taiwan YM
 North Carolina YM (FUM)
 London YM
 Western YM (USA)
 Lake Erie YM
 INELA (Bolivia)
 Mexico GM
 Mexico GM
 Mexico GM
 Mexico GM
 Pacific YM (USA)
 Kenya
 South Central YM (USA)
 London YM
 Uganda YM
 Kenya
 Iowa YM (Conservative)
 New York YM
 London YM
 Kenya
 Northwest YM (USA)
 London YM
 London YM
 London YM
 Baltimore YM
 Taiwan YM
 Kenya

Several other Friends, including the following, had hoped to come, but were with us in Spirit only, having been unable to gain diplomatic clearance:

Edwina Dankwa
 Samson Gahungu
 Aaron Habonimana
 Joseph Kafuko
 Joshua Muhando
 Gustave Nduwayo
 Emmanuel Sibonana
 Abel Siboniyo

Ghana MM
 Burundi YM
 Burundi YM
 Uganda YM
 Kenya
 Burundi YM
 Burundi YM
 Burundi YM

REFLECTIONS AND GROUP VISION STATEMENTS

The reflections, on the following left hand pages, have been arranged under several themes:

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Many of the group vision statements, on right hand pages, follow the same themes; others have been set near reflections written by members of the group.

REFLECTIONS

BEING TOGETHER

Ever since the first moment I learned about the gathering of Young Friends, I thought this would be a very important gathering - not only for individual Quakers, but for the life of the Religious Society of Friends - because in the thinking and feeling of the youth lies its future.

I was fortunate to have the opportunity to attend the gathering as one of the members of the small silent meeting in Bogota, Columbia. After completing a week of arduous work, of prayer, and of sharing with persons from many parts of the world, I have a deep sense of well-being. Despite our differences, which in some cases were quite large, we have been able to express with unanimity our desire to give the world a practical testimony of peace and love, made manifest by our own way of life.

Silvia De Cabrera

Bogota, Columbia

DIVERSITY - TO THE POINT OF ANGUISH!

"The Friend" August 16th 1985

What would George Fox have made of all this? The Kenyans arrived in London carrying their suitcases on their heads! A large section of a transatlantic jumbo jet had more than a hundred European, African and Indian Young Friends singing songs and dancing up and down its aisles in high spirits, to the joy of other non-Friend passengers and the cabin staff.

The gathering itself was rich in the diversity of Friends from different traditions around the world and this, to me, is the outstanding impression of the event. The diversity did, however, bring its problems. How could we worship in silence when others saw the "gaps" as an opportunity to (vocally) praise the Lord? How could Friends from other traditions understand that silent worship **meant** anything - "What are they waiting for?" My own wish was to see this diversity transformed into true unity, so that the corporate group could envision the future of the Society of Friends as a whole.

Some of my own prejudices have been demolished and I am having to think again. Strangely, though, I am wondering whether some new ones have developed - I was shocked to see Friends from the rich North waste so much food while Friends from the South seemed not to. Wealthy Friends take so much for granted while others starve, and I feel a calling, with God's help, to end this thoughtless attitude.

Simplicity, equality, honesty and peace are the issues that the World Gathering of Young Friends has left in my mind, together with an awareness of the diversity in the world family of Friends, which **can** become united with love and understanding.

Peter Gissop

London Yearly Meeting

We, the body of Young Friends, find within our hearts that of God, nurturing our souls and speaking to our condition. Through His Divine guidance we grow and become fruitful in our Christian living. As we become filled with the fullness of Divine inspiration in the Light of Christ, it is only natural to offer praise to our Savior and reach, with that indwelling Spirit, to our fellow man. By our actions, we wish to share the joy and peace which we have been given, and seek to uplift each other. For there is that of God in everyone, yet it needs nurturance and support to grow to fruition. We live not with a sense of this life but of future without bounds. As that our Heavenly Father is beyond limits, so should our life experience.

We see ourselves still trying to follow Christ and to "live in the Light". We hope to be better at witnessing to those ideas we hold dear. We will still be learning how to worship and how to be able to contribute more to the Spiritual life of our meetings and the Society of Friends. We hope to heal divisions in the world at large.

Anna Kennedy, Sandrs Eurom, Mike Martin, Michael Booth, Christopher Stern, Silvia de Cabrera, Josephina Pena, Laura Newbury, Dionisio Aspi Cosme



TENSIONS

The gathering had valuable openings of understanding of how we differ in our daily worship and fellowship depending on our insights and geographical set ups, although we all remained united as a family of friends under one umbrella. I feel that tensions came about partly as a result of fear. Some Friends feared that if one professes Christ, he or she would be involving himself or herself in politics. Also verbal ministry was seen as a disturbance for those of unprogrammed meetings. Tensions also came about due to lack of knowledge in the faith and practice of Quakerism. Many delegates did not know what Quakerism was and how it came about and what it currently is to us as young people. The tensions in the gathering have helped us to be aware of who are who in the Society of Friends around the world.

The vision of a future for the Religious Society of Friends could be seen only by young people, since young people, themselves, are the future. However, I never saw a clear picture of the future during the gathering, because we never discussed enough the barriers that stopped our progress in both developed and developing worlds. If we had discussed topics like peace, racism, education, famine, poverty, economic stableness and economic unstableness, it would have helped to see where young people are. Some of these topics were discussed in interest groups but not in enough detail: also the time allowed was not enough to discuss an important issue.

John Wafula

East Africa Yearly Meeting

We were able to share different beliefs, customs, traditions and our religion which was the base for all. As our theme states, "Let your lives speak," this means "Let Christ speak through **my** life and actions".

We met together as the family of God, as the Bible states that all shall come together without preference to tribe, colour, wealth or poverty, under the feet of Jesus Christ to be led to the New Heaven and the New Earth, before our glorious Father God. Although we have different backgrounds and types of worship we should let Christ "speak to our conditions", as George Fox puts it. I have learned that we all need salvation as the only source of true life. This created unity in the minds and actions of myself and others, in that there is that of God in every human being which produced brotherhood and sisterhood for those who attended. By the end of one

Each of us gathered here take personal responsibility for creating, continuing and expanding the international network of Friends born at this gathering; to inform others of what we have learned and to continue to learn and grow from one another. As members of the Religious Society of Friends, we share **one** body; yet as a human body, represent many distinct and occasionally conflicting parts. We have in common the compulsion to share our vision for the future (whether that be our visions for world peace, social justice or the evangelism of Jesus Christ) with the world. We acknowledge the presence and teachings of Christ Jesus in our lives and the impact, not so much of our words, but of how our lives speak, through direct communion with the Spirit, the light which illuminates our being.

Benjamin Huarina Cruz, Tim Yeaney, Judith Harvey, Portia Jones, Jane North, Juan Manuel de Avila Perez, Wilma Wilcox, Ruth Yeh, John Wafula

We quickly got to know one another and became a supportive family, which gave comfort after the painful experience of diverse beliefs and ways of worship clashing in larger meetings. Here we found that of God in different Friends as a common dynamic relationship between the inward presence of God and the outward speaking of our lives as a striving for a Christ-like activity. It grieves all of us when individual Friends from any tradition become hardened to the Light.

We hope we can help Friends in our branch of Quakerism to be more true to the Light given them.

Harold Stamm, Christopher Jayne, Tom Bodine, Samuel Wefafa, Wesley Hadley-Voth, Sabine Bruckner, Ken Wilson

week, and after staying with different families, it gave me a heart-cry which I will never forget as we parted from each other. This gathering has left me with the brotherly and sisterly affection as if we came of one family.

In conclusion, I personally found that people are staying in the Society of Friends as a forest to hide. They are not challenged spiritually but they view Christianity and salvation as their human knowledge tells them to. There is a great hole between us and God. The people are concerned for themselves, and they don't even care for their fellow brothers and sisters who are sick or hungry. Some Quakers in certain continents even share arms to kill their fellow brothers and sisters in other continents.

May the Lord who is so lovely through God continue to reveal and teach generation to generation for the restoration of our lives.

Samuel N Wefafa

Uganda Yearly Meeting

MONDAY NIGHT

A DIFFERENT BAPTISM

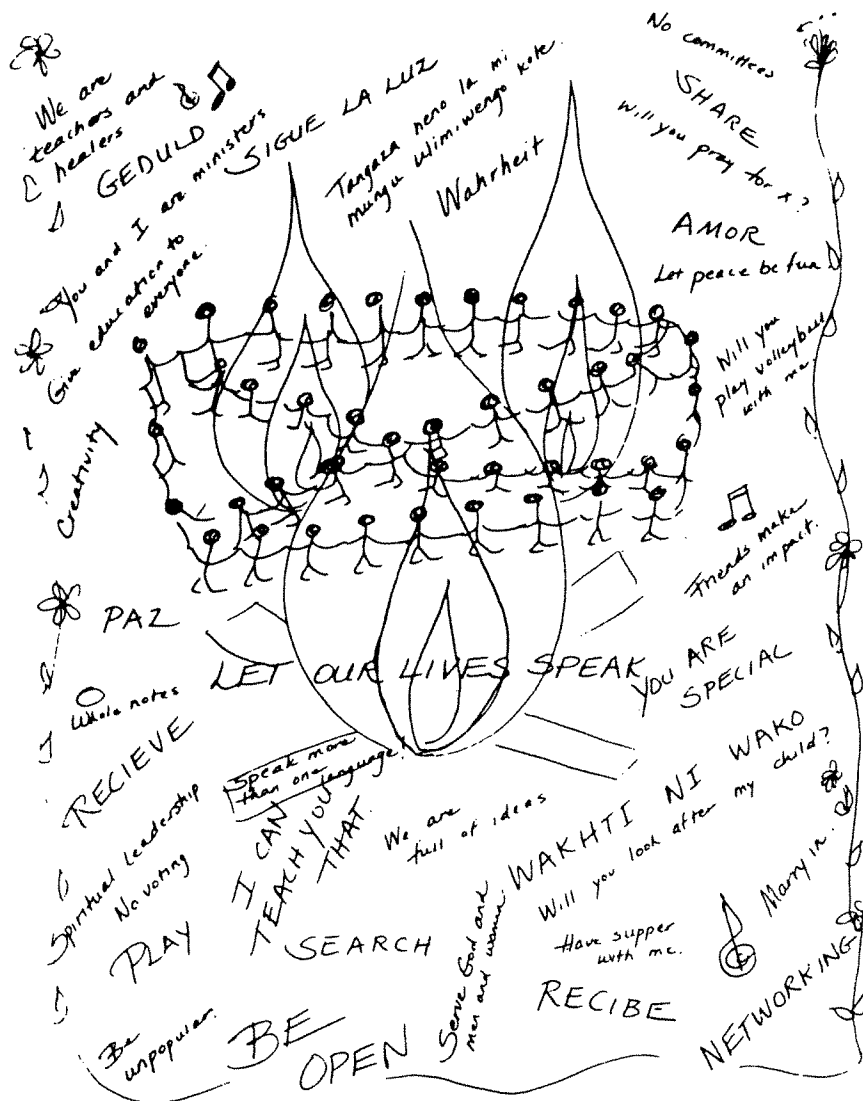
"Friend's Journal" November 15, 1985

During the first two or three days of the conference, the electric excitement of simply being together was overwhelming. Each one of us had arrived at the gathering with a variety of expectations, hoping in our heart of hearts to see God's Spirit poured forth in great abundance. To a significant degree, the innocent, emotional joy of these first few days had momentarily blinded us to the truly deep cultural and theological differences that divide our religious society.

The watershed incident that constituted our crisis of faith occurred at the plenary session on Monday night. After Sunday visits to the mostly programmed worship services in the several meetings in the Greensboro area, and as Young Friends encountered one another on deeper levels, we all were beginning to experience these differences first hand.

On that Monday night Jonathan Fryer, of London Yearly Meeting, spoke to us, ironically enough, on the theme of unity in diversity. My intuitive analysis of what happened can be explained as an experience of extreme, alienating polarization. The language of Jonathan Fryer's talk was

- ...based on George Fox.
- ...doing things because God told us to.
- ...looking for the light of God in people.
- ...doing brave work with and for people.
- ...learning to love and respect **all** of each other.
- ...wanting to hear God speak through ourselves and each other.



*Kirsten Crutcher, Mariana Sollman, Charlene Littlefield, Francis Amimo,
Maurice Richards, Ingosi Wilson, Erica Pelz, Jane Mills*

conspicuously devoid of much, if any, traditional biblical, or even religious, imagery. As far as I understand, this is in keeping with the present day tone of many Friends in London Yearly Meeting. He emphasized the need to put our religion into practice; applying our faith to the world's problems rather than remaining too inwardly directed.

As we entered into an extended period of worship following this address, I was acutely aware of a huge spiritual vacuum. The absence of religious language had created a certain tension that pervaded the room. I was not surprised, and indeed personally thankful, when a Guatemalan Young Friend, Lisandro Gordillo, stood to speak. He wanted to share with us from his tradition. At his church in Guatemala City, towards the end of their order of service, the pastor will invite all those present who want to have a personal experience of the love, forgiveness and saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ to come forward to the altar. Without any particular place designated as the altar, Lisandro Gordillo asked us to raise our hands as a sign of our readiness to receive Christ. As I raised my hand, along with 50 or 60 other Friends, I was at once thankful for the clear witness to Christ being given, yet, at the same time, deeply grieved by the incredible pain being experienced by many of the Young Friends who, for a variety of reasons, were genuinely disturbed by this altar call.

Along with the question of **who** it is we worship, some Young Friends found difficulty in the different **ways** we worship. To sizeable numbers of Young Friends both the altar call and the silent waiting had never before been experienced in the context of Quaker worship.

The need for reconciliation and understanding began to be realized. At the same time, however, we were mindful of Jan Wood's observation that "we are very good at lying to each other" for the sake of superficial unity.

Much of the actual reconciliation that did occur at the conference happened in the small groups. The idea behind these groups was that the same eight or so Young Friends would move each morning from a personal sharing, meditative experience towards a more verbally active visioning process on the future of Friends. Unfortunately visioning does not fully translate into all cultures and, due to the emotional paralysis over our differences, not many practical ideas on a future for Friends emerged. However, for most of us, these groups proved to be the heart of the gathering. They provided the opportunity for us to explore, in a personal and caring way, our relationships to each other and to the multitude of issues set before us.

My deepest prayer as I approached the actual conference was to see God's Spirit poured forth, something like tongues of fire resting on each head; to be present at the day of pentecost. As swirling images of song, laughter and tears bring back warm memories, I come away from the gathering with the question "Who am I to counsel God?" My expectation of the specific way God would move us blinded me to the reality that, indeed, we have truly been baptized with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

We have considered the present needs of our own meetings and churches, and how we hope to meet those needs when we return after the gathering. Out of this we found some strong common themes:

1. We must learn to get to know each other, as individuals, in a much deeper way.
2. We want to come closer to our roots through the study of the Bible and our Christian heritage, of Quaker history and faith around the world.
3. We should learn to reach out corporately into the world around us, as we are led by the Spirit.
4. Each of these will strengthen, and be strengthened by, that deep worship which we know is possible, but so rarely experience.

We hope to consider further how this gathering has changed, or will change, our own lives and that of the Society of Friends.

John Wood, Alexie Muzame, Jonathan Vogel, Janet Angell, Sia Kessi, Michelle Fellows, Benito Guindon



THE FIRE AND THE HEALING

"The Friend" August 30th 1985

The evening plenary session on Monday started with a programmed period of worship, with readings, songs and hymns. Then followed a period of open worship, with fast flowing contributions which stand out in my mind for their emphasis on people's relationship with Christ. This was followed by a presentation of Asian Quaker traditions. Jonathan Fryer next spoke to us on "Unity in Diversity"- the need for us all to be open to each other - and after this, in the open worship, there was ministry arising from Jonathan's address.

At this point, however, the ministry changed. A Friend spoke of the saving power of Christ in his life, taking away the fear of death. A Guatemalan Friend testified to the **essential** nature of accepting Christ as one's saviour, and asked those of us who wished to experience Christ in our lives to raise a hand. Others followed in this vein, and were supported by many "amens" and "hallelujahs", which reinforced the feeling in many of us that this implied that those not accepting Christ on these terms were not, and could not be, regarded as Friends or as Christians. The close of the session saw many people clustered enthusiastically around a group who were hard at work playing gospel songs; while scattered around were many others in tears, feeling rejected by the Evangelical traditions, and without having had a chance to share in the healing power of silence. Some of these found their way outside, where they met together for some quieter worship, first describing their hurts, and eventually feeling empowered to carry on.

Tuesday morning found many still in a dazed state, and the period of open worship during the morning Collection saw a repetition of what some American Friends refer to as "popcorn" ministry, with Friends' pleas for silence being passed over very quickly, until some Friends stood up together to hold a period of silence. After this, in our small worship sharing groups, some of us continued the silent worship, while others were able to explore their problems, and it seemed to be broadly recognised in the gathering that more silence would be very valuable, to allow God to heal wounds. That evening saw the first fairly silent meeting with much healing ministry, reflecting perhaps that a real understanding had been gained by traditionally evangelical, Christ-centred Friends of the needs of those Friends who see their way as seeking an individual relationship with God through silent gathered worship.

Andrew Backhouse

London Yearly Meeting

GROUP VISION STATEMENTS

Being unable to adequately explore our thoughts and visions in the time we were allowed, we relate the following shared and individual visions, hoping for better understanding among the entire Society of Friends.

Shared Visions

1. Continuing the Quaker testimony of honesty and truth.
2. Continuing the Quaker peace testimony.
3. Working for social justice.
4. Continued efforts at better communication, fellowship, and cooperation among different persuasions of Friends.

Individual Visions

1. The absorption of the theological extremes of Quakerism into more like-minded denominations.
2. Truth uniting all people regardless of the source.
3. Clarifying the place of Christ among Friends.
4. Maintaining a strong evangelical faith while seeking continued dialogue with and better understanding of Quakers of other persuasions.
5. Releasing burdensome stereotypes and other baggage while walking along the Christian path.
6. Identifying as a Christian yet feeling comfortable with other forms of Quaker religious expression.
7. Fear of isolation and how to cope with the surrounding dominant religion.
8. Concern over increasing fragmentation and isolation of different groups of Friends, along with the hope for improved communication, fellowship, and cooperation while maintaining distinctive identities.

David Cash, Judith Baker, Paul Anderson, Ed Roberts, Daryl Berquist, Janice Acquah, Mark Beckham, Angela Mascetti, Chuck Fager

I would like to express my experiences. I come from a programmed meeting and hadn't heard or even seen an unprogrammed meeting, so I was very interested in that worship. I was very interested to meet all kinds of people from all parts of the world.

Because we are having both programmed and unprogrammed meetings for worship, I would like for the future both to be united for us to become one. We all pray to God and we all follow George Fox. We must take all good things from programmed and unprogrammed meetings, put them together, and publish one book for all. This will fit for the future generations.

Sadock Kanani

Tanzania Yearly Meeting

I reached the limit of my tolerance capacity in the middle of the gathering when it seemed to me that one group lacked any understanding for the spirituality of Friends from a different tradition. Then came the revelation that I had to put myself in their shoes, understand their backgrounds and try to empathise with a position I had previously felt to be intolerant. At the end of the gathering my small group decided to pray for each other once a week, something I would never have thought possible given that we nearly came to blows earlier on!

I found that I turned the title of the gathering around. In order to let our lives speak with power, love, honesty and vision, we first have to let our lives listen.

Judith Baker

London Yearly Meeting and QUNO Geneva

We know there is division in our diversity but in our group we have found ways to bridge our divisions. We struggled hard to hear past the words to the experience behind them. We asked for help from each other when we needed it and so we learned from each other's ways.

It took us time to trust ourselves to be truthful and say things we found difficult to say, but we trusted God to help us. So we were enabled to learn not just about the joys of our common humanity but about the darkness in ourselves. We learned something of how to forgive ourselves and forgive the darkness in others, asking forgiveness from them.

We pray that we will be enabled to carry the trust and the ability to listen which we have learned in this small group, and the gathering, to our relationships afterwards, both personal and social, because we **have** to have the courage to be radical, the courage to witness to the truth as it is given to us. Too often we do this with arrogance and self righteousness and unnecessarily hurt people - instead of in a way that answers that of God in them and uplifts them.

We pray that our lives will speak, and will speak consistently at all times and places. Will we ever be true Friends? We are striving towards this vision.

Seth Alwiga, Sandra Grotberg, Sally Claggett, Val Ferguson, Mark Hebert, Sadock Kanani, Elizabeth Perry, William Mather Jones





"YOU HAVE TO SUFFER PAIN IN ORDER TO TRANSCEND IT"

"The Friend" August 23rd 1985

"Young Quaker" September 1985

At the beginning of the week everyone was being very 'nice' to each other and pretending that any problems or differences there were didn't really exist. By Monday evening it had become obvious to everyone present that there was a problem. The unprogrammed worship times were not working well. There was literally no silence. The second one person sat down, someone else was on their feet and talking, and although what was being said was worth listening to, there wasn't time to take in what one person said before listening to the next. Many of us from unprogrammed meetings found this very frustrating and upsetting. This was especially true of the worship time after Jonathon Fryer's talk. I'm sure that some of us felt that there wasn't any unity in our diversity. I know that at one stage I felt that programmed Friends weren't really Quakers at all and should leave and form a new church. It was a very painful experience and I seemed to spend all day Tuesday in tears, as did quite a few other people. On Tuesday morning I had to walk out of Collection - the morning's unprogrammed worship - as I couldn't take any more of it.

We came together initially from different cultures and worship practices. We explored briefly each others' lives from childhood through the future. We shared our experiences of new forms of Quaker worship and how they affected us. We shared the pain of witnessing our diversity. Through this sharing, we came to understand and respect each other and to appreciate the common thread that joins us. From the unity we created, we were able to begin envisioning the future of the Society of Friends. We recognized the personal and corporate responsibilities for growth. We envisioned ways in which we can work effectively towards our goals for the Society of Friends, a society where that of God in each person is fully expressed. We recognized that these goals cannot be accomplished by human might or will but only by the Spirit of God.

Virginia Douglas, Benjamin Kimito, Brooke Garrison, Ben Arnold, Caroline Bethel Livermore, Dickson Kona, Paul Hughes

There is that of God within each of us which works to transform us and is expressed in lives that build the Kingdom of God. The presence and work of the Spirit is much more important than our words and forms of worship. Some of us place special emphasis on the historical Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour; others on the Inner Light within everyone, which is interpreted by some as the Holy Spirit and by some as the Christ Principle; while others emphasize the universal spirit of God. We see these as three aspects of the one God and rejoice in our unity.

McCelyn Jones, Lloyd Lushinga, Hannah Branson, Musa Gimode, Gill McCaw, Janet Hough, Ian Hough, Sam Levering, Helen Salisbury

After that things started getting better. We faced up to the fact that there were differences between us. We worship in different ways, and have different attitudes about many things, especially Jesus Christ. By facing our differences and accepting that they existed, we were then able to become more tolerant of each other and to see the similarities instead.

In our Quaker Vision Workshop we started out by looking at our pasts, recalling memories of religious practices when we were young, and then looking at the histories of our Yearly Meetings. After that we turned to the future. We spent one morning thinking about "our ideal meeting". We used brainstorming - each saying whatever came into our heads and writing it all up on a large sheet of paper. Our ideas about the ideal size of a meeting varied drastically - from 15 through to 300 - but surprisingly our thoughts about worship, though varied, were not actually conflicting. Having looked at our ideal meeting, the next day we thought about what we would like the Society of Friends as a whole to be like, again using brainstorming. The main change our group wanted to see was an increase in communication within the Society, at local levels and also between Friends from different worship traditions, with more opportunities to meet with Friends from other countries and other worship traditions, so that we might learn from each other and work together to achieve our common goals. This was something we all felt was very important. The experience that we shared together cannot be expressed in words, and I hope that in the future many more Friends, both young and old, will be able to have such an opportunity and to find themselves, as we were, truly united in our diversity.

Caroline Ethel Livermore

London Yearly Meeting

The conference was a great success in that we opened our hearts to each other, exposing our differences openly. But **Thank God** we were able to unite in the things we all cherished and shared as reflected in the Epistle. **We know what "unity in diversity" means!**

The gathering was down to earth, as will surely be the results.

The contacts made at the gathering and after (visitation in the USA and UK) will, I hope, enable me to play a part in **the great task of Universal Reconstruction.**

There is no more appropriate ending than in the words of the song most of us loved, "Friends Forever", "We are friends forever and our work on earth has just begun."

Lloyd Kapisha Lushinga

Southern African Yearly Meeting



HEALING WORSHIP

I grew up a Christian Friend. To my mind and knowledge, till the gathering, the Religious Society of Friends was just another one of the numerous Christian religious sects that can be found in my country. At the world Gathering I learned a divine lesson. Christ is within **me**. Christ is teaching and guiding me always. It is therefore necessary for me to wait upon this **holy guidance** and the presence of God in **total silence**! Nobody has any right to mediate between me and my God. His **divine word** should guide me in everything I do, big or small. In this way can my life truly speak, which was a most fitting theme for the conference.

OK, some human being stands up in a congregation every Sunday to read the Scriptures. They go on to interpret the Scriptures in their own ways. Finally they pray to God, talking to Him in their own human words on behalf of the congregation. They say what they like to God. Yes, it gives the average church goer an impression that God is a Mighty Human Being who needs to be talked to in a special way, and not that just anyone can talk to Him. It must be some special person. This is what goes on in third world Quakerism. The Spirit is never given even a chance to guide and manifest the Divine Word of God.

We from Kenya need time to study and appreciate Quakerism. The World Gathering was an eye-opener! We should not only appreciate but be seen practising Quakerism or quit. I will never rest until I acquaint myself fully with the principles, values and practices of this movement and faith.

George Fox, the founder of this movement, had thorough knowledge of the Holy Bible. In fact, Fox's movement was not a new thing. It was Christianity which had been founded more than 1600 years before he was born. It was founded by **Christ Himself**. Fox was merely guided by the Spirit to interpret the Scriptures anew, and to give his followers a new understanding and practice. Three hundred years after the founding of this faith, there is manifesting a tendency of some members to disown Jesus Christ and even God, replacing all this with something of their own within themselves. Well, of course, we all worship an intangible God, but we cannot disown Christianity and yet confess Quakerism. Superior intellect, superior material wealth and superior freedom are allowing fear or total rejection of Christianity because Christianity does advocate some amount of discipline. Why?

Musa Gimode

East Africa Yearly Meeting

In our group, we feel that we have struggled with and overcome some barriers which the wider Society of Friends has not yet transcended. In doing this we realized that many of the things which seem to keep us apart are not essential to our faith.

As far as the form of worship is concerned, what is important is not how we worship, but that we worship the same God. Our cultures, traditions, and our own backgrounds influence how we worship, and we must have faith, sensitivity, and understanding to accept the validity of each others' religious practices. We all remember George Fox, and all try to listen for the voice of God to guide our actions.

The theological language we use can also divide us, so we need to remember that some among us have had painful experiences in the past with people who claim to represent the Christian faith. Each one will find his or her own way to God in God's own time. Some of us must realize how important and precious the experience of Christ is for those who have had that experience - others must be sensitive to those who have understood their experience in a different way, or who have not had the experience and find it difficult to understand.

Our unity was found in deep understanding and sensitivity to one another, which is something much more than mere toleration. We experienced very strongly God working in and among us. We found great compassion in our group, which helped us to be led to this unity rooted in a genuine love for one another. We see our work and struggle here in this gathering and the steps we have taken to overcome our differences as our vision for the future of Friends, for this is the work we must all undertake.

Andrew Secrest, David MacKenzie, Fiona MacKenzie, Kristi Thygesen, Lisandro Gordillo Monterosa, Marco Antonio Uvalle Vazquez, Stephen van Bibber, Rose-Ann Ochirawa, Christian Pinkert, Eric Mayer, Josephat Otiende

I was greatly moved due to our differences; however there was a hope in my heart of joining together which was confirmed by the gathering. My soul leaped with joy to learn that each one of us was cared for during special moments of the conference. Although our differences could be portrayed at times, I was glad to see that we had patience and tolerance among ourselves, and respect and love towards each other. This was experienced during worship and Quaker vision workshops. As we continued to worship together, we came to understand each other and appreciated some of the differences which we thought about employing in our own meetings.

There are certain things we need to make us grow deeper in our Christian faith as Quakers, which can apply to every member in the community of Friends. We need to appreciate how people would understand and worship God in connection with their environment. There were also some resources which are very essential and can be used to draw the hearts of people nearer to God, and to help them be aware of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. These include the great journals of those such as George Fox and others who succeeded in making the church exist, and who were living Christian lives. Other resources were reading the Bible and discussing among ourselves which was considered to be the foundation of a Christian life. For instance, we read in the book of St. John about Christ who is the light which came to earth to shine in the hearts of men - as the new covenant was revealed in the hearts of men. For He is the way, the truth and life. Also, singing and having silent times brings the unity of worship closer to our inward teacher. We should live in togetherness and have love, peace and unity among ourselves and be simply letting our lives mirror the Christian life in us.

As Friends we uphold that each person can have a direct experience of the light which has been realised in Christ as our great teacher.

Mary Musera

Kenya

As Friends we hold that each person can have a direct experience of the Light, that some of us have seen particularly in Christ, and that all of us have seen in each other. Let our lives speak in words and in actions that mirror what we find written in one another's hearts.

David Hobson, Silvia Edith Iturbe, William Walters, Robin Mallison, Clarence Cunningham, Mary Musera, Caroline Dommen, Sarah Blackburn

We represent Bolivia, Germany, Kenya, Britain, Taiwan, the United States and Costa Rica. Of ten Friends, only three share English as their first language. We are a diverse group, enriched by our many cultures. This was tremendous and awesome, yet it was also difficult and painful.

We believe that God is a part of each of us, and speaks through each of us. Fundamental to this is an understanding that God speaks to each of us according to our own condition. We must therefore be open to and tolerant of various forms of worship and practice. This enables us to know God more fully.

We are each, from our various cultures and traditions, called to truly live our lives according to our faith, regardless of the consequences. Our lives and worship must reflect that which God teaches us.

As we consider the future of Friends we realize that we must make ourselves aware of the ways that God works in the lives of others. We must be willing to integrate their faith and practice into our own. Let us not be afraid to hear God's many voices. Some may need to overcome their fear of the Bible, some may need to embrace silence in it's power and fullness, while others may need to gain the courage, strength and integrity of early Friends.

Katja Tempel, Grace Hsieh, Robert Halliday, Evaristo Jironda, Oliver Chen, Abigail Adams, Julius Mahagwa, Jochen Fricke, Diana Nicholson, Damian McGirt

*Our small group was not able to write down a unified statement of vision. But we were able to learn to love each other better. Let our **lives** speak.*

Leila L'Abate, Ellen Hodge, Jonathan Woods, Stephen Little, Andrew Kurima, Griselda Perez Robles, Maria Cancio

As far as the Gathering was concerned, my own experience was that it made me grow strong spiritually because we were able to mix with people of different colours, cultures and languages. This is to say, God is for us all regardless of the colour. The other thing I learned from this gathering was that many people worship God in many different ways, but the fact remains that God is one for all, and the way to reach Him is through Jesus Christ. However, in this gathering one group looked at the other as having a wrong way of worship. One was programmed and another was unprogrammed, so the programmed looked at the unprogrammed as wrong and the same applied to the programmed.

May the Lord bless you.

Cherop Richard Kiboi

East Africa Yearly Meeting

YOUNG FRIENDS FROM AROUND THE WORLD GATHER "Quaker Life" September 1985

One of the most striking things about the gathering was the cultural and traditional balance among the participants. There were many representatives from each of the branches of Friends in the United States. There were more than 40 African Friends and over 30 Latin Americans participating. There was a balance between programmed and unprogrammed Friends. This led to worship and sharing that was both familiar and challenging to each of us. We all felt the impact of the growing number of Friends in East Africa and Latin America. It was exciting to share in their experience of Quakerism. I was particularly moved by the experience of working with caring, loving, committed Young Friends from all parts of the world of Friends.

I believe that Quakers as a body cannot effectively serve God if we do not continue to share in this way. Yet to truly share in the experiences of others we must know and understand our own tradition and culture. When we are fed and nourished through our own Monthly Meeting or Yearly Meeting we are then able to be open to others. As individuals we recognize the need to spend time alone in prayer, Bible study and meditation, and this in turn enhances the experience of corporate worship.

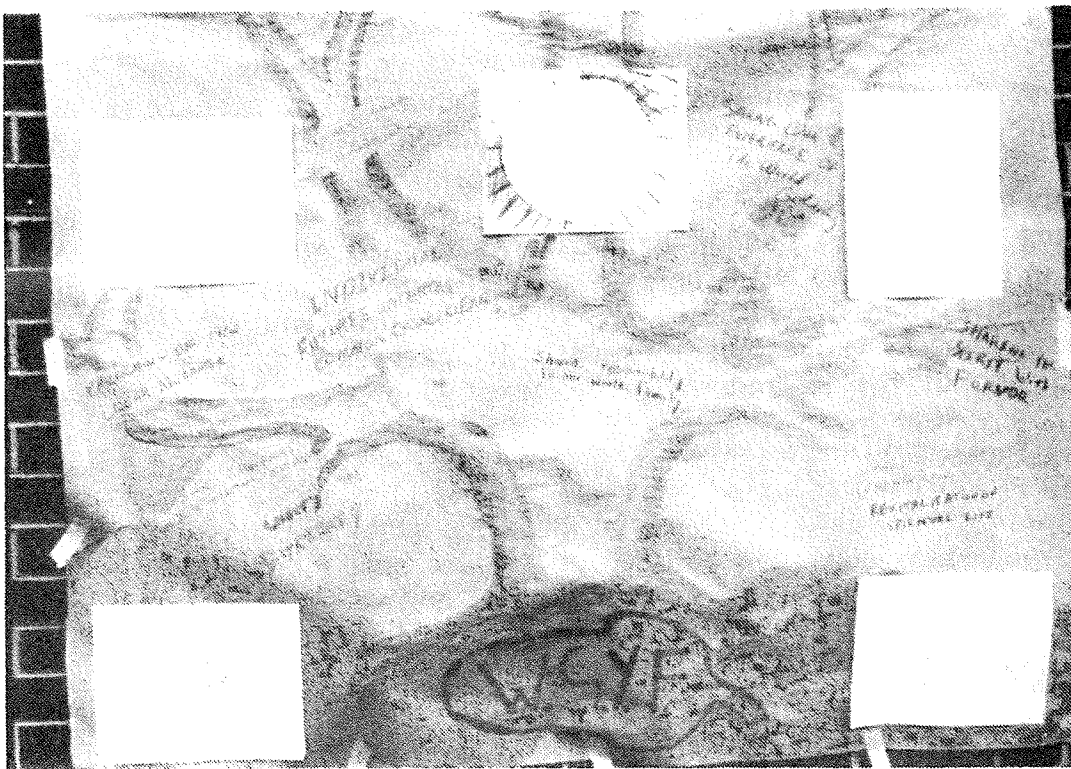
It became clear to me in Greensboro that our task was not to "figure out" how Friends might find unity within our diversity. And our task was not to plan the future of Friends. Our task is simply to open our lives to the presence of God. We must first want to let our lives listen and then we will know how to let our lives speak.

Diana Nicholson

Indiana Yearly Meeting

Our vision of the future was represented in a large picture of a tree with an acorn at the root representing WGYF. Each branch describes a vision we had:

- sharing our vision of WGYF with others
- sharing the Spirit with fervour
- the need for everyone to discover the inner light
- we share responsibility in our world family
- we develop a greater ability to communicate
- we should preach one clear message
- have more world gatherings to promote spiritual growth
- unity in diversity
- travelling abroad to learn rather than teach (English students at Kaimosi)



Tom North, Hazel Murdoch, Josephine Musa Gimode, Richard Kiboi, John Fitzgerald, Matthew Roazen, Mary Kirk, Brad Bussiere-Nichols, Jeremy Gibberd

The gathering of youth from all over the world was very necessary, and it gave us time to look into the possibilities of our future Quakerism. I learned a lot, and that there is a lot to do. I am thankful for the spirit the European and North American young Friends had for organising the gathering.

There is, however, one thing I feel we should not see happening. This is when Europeans and Americans think they have the first position to God more than that of Africans and Asians. I think that to God we are all equal regardless of colour, height or size.

Thankyou.

Obedy W. Ombuya

East Africa Yearly Meeting (South)

Our Quaker vision workshops were charged to prepare a minute regarding the questions: 1) What is our common witness? 2) How ought our lives to speak?

My group was diverse, ranging from Taiwanese Friends to FGC Friends, including Kenyan and London Friends. As we struggled with the role of Christ in our lives and with the role of the peace testimony in our vision of Quakerism, I opened my Bible. What I found was Paul's prayer for the church at Ephesus (Ephesians 3:14-19). We gathered together in a sense of worship and of the immediate presence of God.

Bridget Bower

Lake Erie YM

During the World Gathering I felt the vitality of the youth. I met many Friends from Latin America. Although I couldn't understand Spanish at all, I tried to communicate with them just by smiling. Also we were singing altogether. I found that smiles, tears, and music were our common language.

While some Friends were giving messages or addresses, they wept and cried. The first time it seemed a little strange, but we were all moved deeply by each other. I felt that we were all in one world and that we all were brothers and sisters in the same root of the Spirit.

Gil Mann Booh

Seoul

It is clear for each and every one of us that a great spiritual power and change sweeps through us. We are empowered that we will be able to know both God and God's peace with more clarity and greater ease. We shall share this widely, teaching and leading others, without pride or ambition. As we grow and change with Christ's leading, let us act out of that spiritual reality with faith in all our witnesses for social justice.

Our vision for the Society of Friends, as we follow more closely God's leading, is that we will grow more closely together as a body listening to our own Light, and to that of others from whichever quarter it may come. To do this we need to communicate more, to form close friendships and to have more chances to meet and visit. We must understand ourselves and each other better if we are to be patterns in the world. We must reinforce our Quaker values in our daily lives and practice. As we seek unity, we must cultivate all our traditions of worship, simplicity and peace. Then we will **truly** come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in everyone.

Andrew Backhouse, Obedy Ombuya, Jane Terrell, Bridget Bower, Gale Rohde, Ellen Tung, Josephat Namaswa, Hannah Pearce

We are a people continually seeking to know and live the truth that comes from the Spirit and not from ourselves. Our lives speak in the ways we "do justice, show mercy and walk humbly with God" Micah 6:8. As we love one another, we find unity, and become peacemakers. The barriers which separate us are broken and we support each other in the diversity of our witness. We are one World trying to live our lives as Christ did.

Margaret Ngoya, Gil Man Booh, Scott Bywater, Deirdre Jacob, Gregory Valatin, Marian Baker, Carolyn McCoy, Deborah Shaw

On Thursday afternoon there was to be an open epistle drafting session, when the committee were to present their draft for amendment and comment. Apart from the committee members, only about eight of us turned up. This was providential, because the committee seemed lost. They had a possible opening section, the two attempted compilations of the small group minutes and no clear sense of direction.

We sat round a table, sharing ideas, highlighting passages that we liked, suggesting other points for inclusion. At the end of an hour the committee seemed happier, but the rest of us agreed to look in on them at times during the evening in case we had anything else to offer.

After the international festival I did look in. There were lots of individual sentences in rows on the floor, being shuffled. It was beginning to take shape, but quite unlike the final version in places. After a while I felt I had nothing more to offer them, so I went away for a couple of hours. When I returned, it was complete, and being translated into Spanish. I found it hard to believe the transformation that had taken place. To me, it seemed like a miracle.

Peter Hancock

London Yearly Meeting

AN EXPERIENCE OF TRANSFORMING LOVE

The day was Friday, and we were mindful that within a few hours we would be going in separate directions, never to be gathered under the same circumstances again. As we met for worship that morning we were faced with the decision, whether or not to approve the epistle. We had labored for several hours the day before, and it looked as though preferences for wording and other concerns would make it impossible to approve the final draft also.

However, something happened which transformed the feeling of our meeting. Out of a loving concern for evangelical Friends, Daryl Berquist of New England Yearly Meeting stood and said something like, "I know that the blood of Christ and the Atonement are very important issues to some Friends, and I don't see anything in the epistle which addresses those convictions. I'd like to know how Latin American Friends feel about that."

At that point, Humberto Gutierrez of Bolivia (INELA) stood and said something like, "Yes, we are aware that those things are missing, but I feel that we can include our understanding of the gospel in the phrase, 'We seek as a people of God to be worthy vessels to deliver the Lord's transforming word...' We feel that we can approve this epistle."

In the discussion that followed another evangelical Friend expressed his concern that the number of references to Christ might be difficult for Friends not used to Christ-language. What had begun as an act of loving consideration for other Friends transformed the meeting into a unified

We vision the Religious Society of Friends ten years from now as being centered in the Meeting for Worship in the common experience of the living God. We are all different races, have different cultures and ways to express our religious experience. We support and respect each other's traditions. We care, love, sing and share in our fellowship. Others are attracted to us because they sense the life and power of God.

In our worship we are empowered by the Holy Spirit, the presence of God, to reach out to each other in our meeting and to go out into the world as Jesus Christ taught us, speaking truth to power.

The development of situations in the world have caused us to make some difficult choices. In order to do this, we have reached greater spiritual growth, and we have overcome fear. The journey was difficult, with tears, but our spirits are united and rejoice in the obedience of God.

In our Religious Society worldwide, we have leaders who attended the WGYF in 1985. We are having an impact on peace and justice issues. We are well on the way to nuclear disarmament and mutual respect among all people and nations. Caring for basic human needs, possessions and natural resources are shared equally. In a worldwide network, monthly meetings from one continent to another share human and spiritual resources in a sister relationship.

Ted Welch, Dorrell Blake, Lynnette Jones, Randy Peterson, Moses Ahuli, Marianne IJspeert, Margaret Benefil, Jody Richmond



whole. The discussion had changed from persons wanting to ensure that their concerns were heard to wanting to ensure that the concerns of others were heard and that their needs were met. We had indeed experienced the transforming power of God's love.

Paul Anderson

North Western Yearly Meeting



World Groups (of Friends) should influence each other, not by force or power but by unity. We each have something to give, and to learn, from each other:

- silence in worship is valuable
- unity in the Holy Spirit of Christ and truth, not necessarily in style of worship
- live the peace testimony, in all aspects of life
- that all Quakers use their gifts for God
- be open to Light from the Bible and experience

Christel Jorgenson, Sara Beth Terrell, Rachel Rowley, Carmen Alcalde, David Waterworth, Peter Chao, Mark Lee, Humberto Gutierrez Alegria, Petrona Calamani De Gutierrez

We are blessed.

We have been holding our hopes out for this World Gathering of Young Friends, and we have experienced them being answered. Our common witness is to speak lives of action. We need to go ahead and shine, as we are the Light of the World (as stated in Matthew 5:14). When we do live in the Light, whether we are missionaries who preach the Gospel, or quiet Quakers who lead serene and simple lives, our lives speak. Someone is always listening - a small child who receives life-saving food, or a stranger who receives a life-saving smile. As individuals and as a Society of Friends we have the responsibility to actively live the teachings of Christ.

We confronted differences in ways of worship, culture, and our ideas of the "perfect" Quaker, and discovered that a unified community of Friends exists. We realized in our Quaker Vision Workshop, that an international monthly meeting could be established, and thrive. In the Light.

Rhonda Barber, John Sabwa, Masuzgo Chirwa, Luke Chen, Luke Cheng, Tim Bartoo, Helen Forsythe, Andy Maynard, Judi Hodgkin, Nicola Geiger

DIFFERENT KINDS OF WORSHIP

Coming from George Fox's homeland I tend to view the world with a London-centred conceit. This was dispelled when I learned that Bolivia Yearly Meeting is twice the size of London Y.M. and that East Africa Y.M. is eight times as big.

Conscious of the different experiences of God, and fearing division on issues such as homosexuality, we looked for unifying points.

As an unprogrammed liberal Friend I have learnt the value of song in meeting, and the importance of a purely silent tradition. I learnt the reality of Christ in the life of more evangelical Friends and, as a result, the value of Jesus in my own life.

Alistair Millington

London Yearly Meeting

To many of us it has become clear that the events of Monday evening were central to what happened at the conference. In watching the Latin Americans I was challenged. Although I am an evangelical, and although I have experienced personal salvation through Christ and therefore a personal experience with Jesus, these Friends' spiritual experiences stretched further than mine. I was continually aware that the Holy Spirit was with them in a very real way. I think many of us felt that. But in what way must my relationship to Christ change? What is the most positive direction for me to move as an individual? I have no clear answers. It may take much seeking on my behalf. Maybe Thomas Kelly in his writings on holiness in some ways speaks to this challenge in my heart when he suggests that there are different planes of spiritual experience, one being of this world while the other is not.

I had the privilege of going off one evening alone with a Guatemalan Friend. Since he could not speak English and I know only one or two words in Spanish, we talked in sign language. We spent half an hour in prayer (he in Spanish and I in English), each beseeching God without the other understanding to answer the needs of our hearts. Afterwards we walked back to our dorms and as we separated he pointed to his heart and stared at me. Then he struggled with the words, "You love Jesus". I nodded and smiled for I knew that although language, culture, our Quaker backgrounds and thousands of miles separated us, we shared and thrived on that experience of Christ within as our Saviour and Friend.

Simon Lamb

Ireland Yearly Meeting

In a spirit that acknowledges that of God in every person we call upon the Society of Friends to witness as a body to Christ. We encourage Friends to engage in study of the Bible as a way of knowing whether to accept or reject what's written there, being aware that for many Friends this book is one of the few books they know and we can share together better when we have more in common. Knowing that people have a choice to make constantly between good and evil, we call on the Society of Friends to gather in Christ and trust that there we will find the discipline that leads us to the Truth which denies all evil. We know this to be possible only by knowing God directly.

We urge ourselves to expand a travelling ministry. In this way we will both come to know our Society as it lives at home and share deeply with one another what Christ would have us know and testify. We have a vision of a great people to be gathered. Some of us know that we have been led on the path to Christ away from past hurts inflicted upon us within the forms of organized religion, by the open acceptance found in unprogrammed worship. Friends should be more aware of our mission to serve in this way to the world's people and rejoice in taking it up as a work.

We recommend that all of this work be taken up with a great deal of supportive prayer.

Jan Phol, Brenda Esch, Dinora Uvalle Vazquez, Bob Baird, Jonathan Hibbs, Maudiel Espinoza, Simon Lamb, David Upchurch



I loved our different ways of worship and would love to see Young Friends accepting each other's faith and practice. I feel that if world Quakers practised silent worship and afterwards a vocal ministry, this would bring a new blend into our church which I think is a good sharing. What I mean here is to combine different kinds of worship.

There are some Quakers in some parts of the world who would not accept a change and they would keep on defending their own interests. When they do that they create problems and then afterward there's a revolution in the church. We need to practise some kind of diplomacy and accept each other's ideas in order to have a strong united church. Let us always remember our own belief that "there's that of God in everyone".

Benson A Muhalia

East Africa Yearly Meeting

I came into the gathering having held it in prayer and worship for two years. I feel that for me it started when I got on the plane to get there and as a result was able fully to enter into the spirit of the gathering from the beginning. As the conference continued, we certainly became a group rejoicing at being together, as even difficulties became a unifying task for us to engage in. Praise God!

The small groups, and the interpersonal ministries that we engaged in were among the most important parts of the time we had. I also went to a group which gathered every morning at 6.30a.m. to uphold the gathering in prayer. I saw many direct results of this which may not have been apparent to those who weren't at these times of deep prayer.

Praise the Lord! Our hearts have been written upon with a message of understanding, hope, and power in Jesus Christ.

Now I am returning to my home changed, yet to people who expect me to be the same. Today my prayer is that they will be able to accept the change which has occurred in me and come to share in it as time goes by.

Bob Baird

North Pacific Yearly Meeting

This gathering has brought about many expressions of Quakerism. We acknowledge our differences, of which many have been healed in the course of the gathering; and yet still we have the need for more healing. After this week of the Gathering, we envision the need to have another organized gathering. We envision the need to begin visitation and greater communication programs, through letters, bulletins, or newsletters. Doing projects together and representing Quakerism to home meetings and yearly meetings are just some of the many ways we can learn about each other. All of these projects require a deeper commitment that we hope to develop in the years to follow.

Benson Muhalia, Pontus Rancken, Philip Mwangale, Florian Eichler, Marilyn Hadley-Voth, Debbie Liston, Peter Hohage, Alistair Millington, Norris Hamilton

We celebrate our diversity as a Society of Friends, and at the same time we realize the strong presence of the common spirit/God/Christ which connects us all together. We continue to nurture that of God/the Inner Light in each other and allow it to shape, more and more, our Meetings, our Worship, and our lives.

This week we have all had to struggle to experience God's Spirit at work in unfamiliar forms of worship. We have grown from this struggle and felt the Holy Spirit working in a wide variety of forms: programmed worship, singing, Bible study, open times of prayer and sharing, and silent waiting upon God. We encourage Friends to resist rigid attachment to old and comfortable forms and to allow the Spirit fresh ways of expression in worship. We urge Friends to find new ways to risk allowing God's presence to pour out into our hearts in gathered silence and to direct the words we speak in worship.

We have realized that we have not really shared nearly as fully as we might have our lives with each other. We consider that this may have been because the First World planners were not fully aware of the range of differences between the groups of participants (economic and social, as well as theological) and we feel that greater planning input from Third World participants would have ameliorated this situation.

Peter Blood, Onesmus Asiema, Sarah Daykin, Jan Hoek, Felix Carlos Huarena, Kate Kerman, Cindy Kirk, Alfred Misaki, Mark Pearson, Susan Stark, Anna Vazquez

We are not the same, nor will we ever be again. This is the feeling of the Youth Group of the Community of Victoria Tamaulipas, Mexico, who had the privilege of being present at the World Gathering of Young Friends in North Carolina, USA in July 1985.

Our experience began with a long road journey across various states of the American Union, such as Texas, Georgia, South Carolina, and from there we reached North Carolina, the place of our Change and Transformation.

Our 'apprenticeship' consisted in knowing how to communicate with each other despite the barrier of language: the feedback showed itself in smiles, handshakes, gestures and mime. The cultural barriers disappeared to give way to complete understanding between brothers and sisters. The preconceived barrier of our manner of worship in contrast to unprogrammed worship was also forgotten; the programmed and unprogrammed came to realise that our differences constitute our richness.

But the most important for us was that a precedent for the future was experienced, we returned to our country with a great challenge which the world gives us, real and daily problems which we cannot forget by enclosing ourselves in a tightening circle of introspection, and with the firm decision to change; the lives of the young spoke out to proclaim unity in this. We are not the same, nor will we ever be again.

Manuel Guzman Martinez

Mexico GM



We conclude that our common purpose is seeking and following the Inner Light and we accept our many differences in both belief and practice and hope that we may learn from them. We recognize and hope to overcome our intolerance to our differences with God's help.

We would like to see the Society of Friends return to their roots through the study of George Fox's teachings in light of the Bible and our own revelation and each live a lifestyle that shows our principles.

We recommend as the Society of Friends that we need to balance our spiritual outreach and social service, remembering that on the seventh day our Lord rested.

Mary Quinlan, Manuel Guzman Martinez, Arnoldo Garcia Castillo, Elizabeth Milford, Catherine Loney, Jean Lawrence, Zablon Isaac Malenge, Kamana Kigweba

It is difficult always to respect the styles/means by which God chooses to speak through others. We agree not to be uniform and believe that the source of some of our differences is based on culture. We are all affected by the week together and are unable to process the tensions immediately but hope that we will continue the process later. We attempted to discover our unities and discussed these areas, upon which we were not all agreed:

1. The need to call evil, evil, to call ourselves to repentance, to realize that each is a sinner.
2. The desire to propagate Christian ministry to others through Quakerism.
3. The unity of our selves in Christ. (There was one whose doubts made her unable to agree while not disagreeing.) This division is quite painful. We **were** agreed upon the importance of the historical Quaker witness to honesty, equality, peace and simplicity.

As Quakers we seek to point out to the world leaders the dangers of amassing lethal weapons, and we seek to persuade leaders of oppressive regimes to embrace all in equality. As Quakers we are clear that the way to peace in the world begins with an experience of Christ within and our respect for Christ within every person.

Our vision for the future: We propose, as did the Young Friends Meeting of 1895 in Manchester, that we have a two week summer school, every summer, for 100 representatives throughout the world, to study Christian and Quaker thought and history.

Quakers should continue with greater effort to interact with other Christian and governmental organizations in order to learn from them and to borrow ideas. We hope that Quakers will continue to confront and to live in places of violence, hunger and poverty, as witness to the Light.

Joey Giffen, Karen Woodhouse, Helen Green, Jesse Paledofsky, Charles Shikalama, Thomas Munyasa, Marsha Cline Holleman

It was disturbing and challenging to feel little silence in some meetings for worship, and to realise in the silence that there were many who felt ill at ease, or perceived no purpose. I felt both frustration and anger, and at times even under attack.

While eventually I could resolve some of these feelings, through deep and honest sharing with Friends from other traditions, this painful experience called into question for me how much we Friends from the "unprogrammed" or "liberal" tradition really understand and value our own heritage. Do we truly gather and centre down in the silence? Are we punctual in arrival, and do we leave outside concerns and prejudices behind? And if we are truly open to the Spirit which "blows where it will" why do so many of react so strongly to Christ-centred testimony? Is our decision-making **truly** Spirit led?

Despite my often great discomfort with worship from other Friends' traditions, I now feel bereaved without it. I realise that if we are truly to share, as the family we can be, we must first learn to value the unique experiences of our own traditions. Too often the most precious parts of our heritage are effectively disregarded.

Mark Deasey

Australia Yearly Meeting

The biggest challenge I received, the one that will affect any other challenges I have met or will meet, was to declare my love of God, or the Inner Light, or Jesus Christ, however you want to refer to it. And also how God's love for me can bring me a transforming power that will enable me to face the difficult situations that surely will arise in my life.

The faith in Christ and resulting power declared by the Latin American, Asian and African Young Friends has shaken me out of my complacency!

I now have some big decisions to make in all areas of my life. My only hope is that the Society of Friends will continue to support me as they have thus far in my journey through life.

Miriam Mesner

Nebraska Yearly Meeting

In seeking a vision of our future as the world body of Friends, we have had to come to terms with our differences, as well as the common witness which binds us. Some differences lie in our words, though we have felt a deeper spiritual unity to underlie them. Other deep and real differences may abide, but we feel we must seek to hold them in love, rather than allowing them to further fragment us.

We have all felt the imperative to seek the divine in **all** those around us, whether we call this the Inner Light, or the Spirit of Jesus Christ, or both. Even within ourselves, we may feel contradictions and dilemmas on the living out of the Peace Testimony, though we all feel an urgent need to feel God's peace in our hearts and bear it witness to the world. Simplicity is a principle to which we all hold, yet in our different cultures and different levels of our lives, we interpret this in radically different ways.

We have felt enriched by each other's means of worship, and the encounter with each other's cultures and values, and hope this sharing may continue. Our Quaker means of decision making, all submitting their personalities to the greater will of God, is a witness which must be strengthened.

The paid ministry is a cause of concern to some, and we find it difficult to agree on whether the Gospel must be primarily proclaimed through verbal witness or acts of service.

On the practical level, we feel our monthly and yearly meetings should strive to work to a global vision, and that steps towards this may be achieved by other Young Friends in different parts of the world, sharing through correspondence and visitation, and circulating to others the history, faith and practice of their meeting.

Mark Deasey, Nadine Molloy, Beth Claggett, Melissa Meredith, James Mari-Navarro, Lucia Eugenia Tapia Pena, Katherine Sorel, Henry Wekesa

We listen to each other, care for each other, and dare to understand each other's conditions: "...as people come into subjection to the spirit of God, and grow up in the image and power of the Almighty, they may receive the Word of wisdom, that opens all things, and come to know the hidden unity in the Eternal Being." George Fox 1648

Dorothy Treadway, Tor Bejnar, Ginny Sutton, Etienne Nduli, Carlos Cecilio Moran, Lesley Richards, Sally Hindman

One key learning: Quakerism has far broader boundaries than I'd ever imagined. And that most amazing for me was the fact that, after a week of swimming within that immense and confusing pool called Quakerism, I could say sincerely that there is room for everyone. Those of us who come out of the British tradition - the unprogrammed tradition - are incredibly rigid in adhering to the processes handed down for generations. Do the processes define Quakerism? And oh, we are arrogant!! One British Friend could not accept that what was un-Quakerly in Britain was not necessarily un-Quakerly everywhere else. She is not unique in her blinkered view of Quakerism. And programmed Friends are arrogant in their ways, too. They see us unprogrammed Friends as having kept to the letter of the processes, but having lost the inspirational spirit that moved amongst Friends in their critical periods of development. One young Kenyan Friend was under the impression that unprogrammed Friends did not believe in God or Jesus and said she found unprogrammed meetings to be boring and non-participatory. Fully programmed meetings do not allow space for spontaneous sharing nor to hear the ways in which the Holy Spirit was at work amongst Friends.

It seems to me that programmed and unprogrammed Friends have held onto complementary halves of the spirit of early Friends. We need to encounter each other and to wonder at the amazing fact that God lives in all our hearts and requires us to value each other.

Sue Stover

New Zealand Yearly Meeting

Relationship with God

Friends recognise the Lordship of Christ over all aspects of life. This demands that we consider life as a gift from God, holy, appreciated and lived as a sacrament. Through His Spirit, Christ is present with His people and each individual has the responsibility to be intimately related to Him. One means of doing this is through silent worship, when the group and individuals seek the truth revealed to meet the needs of the present day. The Bible is a useful and necessary norm to measure and judge the value of the experience of God's People today.

Relationship with individuals and Society

We are called to walk cheerfully throughout the world, answering that of God in everyone. We are called to a life of simplicity, to a life of ministry, to a life of moral integrity. We are called to a sacramental life, grounded in the love of God which leads us to embrace our Peace Testimony and the quest for human rights. We have a message for the world, which may be spread, as appropriate, by evangelism, vocal ministry and political involvement.

Timoteo Mamani Choques Vargas, Arturo Carranza, Kinyangi Macmillan, Sue Stover, Peter Hancock, John Dash, Carla Anderson

As Friends we need to become better at making all of our lives permeated with Life and Power. This Life and Power addresses, individually and corporately, every part of our existence. We need to be ready to meet the challenge of living radically, to risk comfort. We need to learn not to be afraid to let go and see what will happen.

Lutz Haubold, Ruth Heine, Margaret Malenge, Miriam Mesner, David Nagle, Jay Thatcher, Jan Wood

OUR FAITH IN CHRIST JESUS

Quakers will again be relevant when we all fall at the feet of Christ and allow Him to change, direct, and empower us.

David Nagle

Ohio Yearly Meeting and Nebraska Yearly Meeting

I have finally learned to accept our differences as they help to define our various traditions and enrich our experiences as Friends.

A moving experience for me, at the Gathering, was when I worshipped with a small group from Latin America. During this worship, I not only accepted their style of worship, but for once was able to join as I had never done before and to experience Jesus Christ.

Ellerie Brownfain

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting



We have struggled with our different perspectives: that Jesus Christ was born son of God, lived, died on the cross, and on the third day arose for our salvation; that God is in everything; that the spirit works in silence; and that music gathers us into prayer. From this diversity, our languages cannot describe the experience around which we find unity. We choose to live as Jesus Christ and draw upon the power of God, that our lives might speak with power and authority. Seeking inward frees our minds to capture the essence of God which directs our actions. We are called to share our faith with our families, to nurture our children and to reach out to all people. Through listening, visitation and reconciliation, we shall build a worldwide family of Friends.

Espen Howdenak, Eleanor Lloyd, George Kegode, Seth Daniel Munter, Archana Gour, Ellerie Brownfain, Carl Curtis, Randy Littlefield

In sharing our religious and cultural traditions we realised how these have shaped our lives. We explored the surface differences and thought ourselves so disparate as never to find unity until we confronted these differences again, searching deeper and deeper yet, beyond the limitations of language and manners of worship to a place where we could agree that there is unity. We realised that our differences, while significant, separate us only on the surface. They are not a threat, rather a treasure; a source for strength. Our diversity is unified in our faith and our pursuit of peace, social concerns, outreach, and tolerance towards others. Our unity is clear when we seek deeply to hear the truth within us, and know that we each may hear the same God speaking.

Edwin Muzame, David Mamani Pucho, Heinrich Bruckner, Helen Rowlands, Fabian Makani, Karin Thron, Cilde Grover, Andrew McTear, Scott Hoskins

I'm quite sure that every participant at the Gathering was glad to have been there, though not everyone was comfortable with every aspect of it. My own doubts had been that the enormous cultural differences experienced - for example by some of the Africans - would swamp any valuable religious experience to be gained. On our arrival in North Carolina this seemed more likely than ever given the opulence of the lifestyle enjoyed by many of the local Quakers who gave us hospitality. Everything in America seemed so large at first - even the "Quakers for Peace" badges were twice the size of our British ones! - and nearly everything was designed to be disposable. ("What a waste," I heard a Kenyan say as I threw a plastic lemonade bottle onto a fire.) But the impact of meeting with three hundred "committed Quakers" from so many different countries tended to push American culture into the background.

Songs of any style and language were popular (favourites were collected in advance for the "Let Our Lives Sing" World Gathering song book) so that the evening's worship incorporated thunderous applause and appreciative whistling. We spent up to an hour in unprogrammed worship and these meetings were among the most exciting, inspiring, even disturbing, many of us have ever experienced. Ministry flowed unceasingly, with prayers, extracts from the Bible, gentle hymns and powerful visions. Every word was translated from English into Spanish or vice versa.

One evening a heartfelt invitation for each one of us to accept Jesus Christ into our hearts was made by a Guatemalan Friend and many raised their hand as he prayed with them. It was evident to Friends by this stage of the Gathering that there was no bridging the gap between belief in an impersonal power called "God" and belief in the intimately personal Father, Son and Spirit also called "God" other than by this leap of faith and humble desire to receive. Much of the following day was spent in discussion of this particular Meeting for Worship and an evening session of completely silent worship was requested by Friends from "Unprogrammed" traditions as a result.

The time I found most valuable during the week was that spent with my Worship Sharing Group. There were eight of us - from England, Norway, India, Kenya and North America - and our religious convictions were as varied as our backgrounds. This did not hinder our worship and, by the end of our six mornings together, we felt a bond of unity deeper than our differences.

Eleanor Lloyd

London Yearly Meeting

We feel there is a direct link between us and God. Jesus and others have shown us examples of how to relate to God and how to live out this relationship. It is important to live our faith actively, to base our lives on a spiritual commitment, as we understand it, day by day. Our lives ought to speak as they are led. It is limiting to cling to traditions, without the conviction that makes them valid. Let George Fox inspire us, not bind us. Jesus set us a challenge through his simple life and the power behind his message towards peace and love. This power grows out of our relationship with God. All our actions (peacemaking, etc.) are the fruits of living in the Light and should remain so.

God gives us powerful resources. Our faith tells us that we may use these resources to overcome fear, to be tolerant, open and to challenge people, including ourselves.

God is within us and part of all that is.

Amos Yiminyi, Wendy Geiger, Kate Clark, Alison Gray, Jenny Greaves

We gathered from four continents and five Yearly Meetings, representing several different traditions in the Society of Friends. None of us had met before, but we found much unity among us. We feel led by God to issue the following testimonies:

1. That the foundation of the Society of Friends lies in a deep and abiding faith in the power of Jesus Christ to lead us and guide us individually and corporately. We do not view Jesus Christ in a singular fashion - we realize that God respects and understands this rich diversity.
2. That as a Society we must be definite about our faith, avoiding the pitfalls of theological vagueness. We cannot be all things to all people. We must be willing to reaffirm our spiritual roots; we need to study our traditions, and reclaim those parts of our historical vision which are eternal.
3. That our Society need not be uniform. That we be open to, and learn from, our cultural differences and the ways they affect our forms of worship.
4. That the lives of our members and meetings bear witness to the Kingdom of God. We envisioned together of a Religious Society of Friends that was unified and revitalized. We feel led to share this vision with the rest of our Society (and the world!).

Frederick W. Farmer, Amanda Hurton, Lynn Peery, Beth Bussiere-Nichols, Tom Angell, Zebedee Musudia, Vivian Rose Hamilton

Through the World Gathering of Young Friends I was able to learn much as to what Quakerism is all about. I have learned differences amongst us; they are bound to remain or increase because of our cultural differences and different environmental pressures. While in the US or Europe people are concerned with nuclear warfare, people in Africa are struggling to raise their standard of living. We are not addressing ourselves to the same issues at the same time due to natural factors. Differences were also visible in our spiritual beliefs and practices before the gathering. As an after-effect of the gathering, at least two Friends have shared their thoughts with me. Before the conference they addressed themselves to material issues (for the betterment of mankind) and with little regard to Jesus or the Holy Spirit. But within the conference they acquired a new approach to the earthly problems which involves an acceptance of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Whether this will be the general outcome of the gathering or not, only time can tell.

George Rwela

Pemba, Tanzania

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

During the programme, although it was given a title of **World Gathering of Young Friends**, it looked as if a certain strong group of Young Friends had just invited the rest to listen to them on what they themselves do think is right. Other nations did not participate in the Gathering fully. The way the afternoons were spent wasn't pleasing to me. This could have been the right times for the young nations to present their views for discussion in order to find possible solutions for help.

In Africa, when you have done something good to your friend, you don't keep on telling him what you have done for him for he knows and you know. When you keep on, you make him feel unhappy. Some friends from developed countries made this a habit to the Africans when they kept on reminding on how they helped them and are still helping them.

After the gathering on visitation, it was alright and most of us had an opportunity to visit places we could not have gone to during the Gathering. We were happily received by the Americans. They gave us free rides to visit all the historical places they could find in their states. This was indeed great! I encourage it for future gatherings.

Elisha Oviyo Bwondera

East Africa YM (South)

We have all found our gathering together of value. In our different ways of worship we have recognised that God has power over us all. It's with this knowledge that we look hopefully towards the future.

Jai Raj Brown, Elisha Oviyo, Pamela Khayota, Ilse Krott, Shirley Kearns, Cate Van Meter, Katherine Bell



The seed has grown over three years, and it has come to fruition in one week. It was not destroyed by hail or thunderstorms, not even in the last "minute", and the crop has been safely harvested.

Now it will serve to provide new seed which will grow on well chosen ground by the transforming power of the Light. And it would take more than one hail or thunderstorm to destroy it.

Peter Hohage

Pyrmont Yearly Meeting

OUR BRIGHT DREAM FOR THE FUTURE

"The Friend" August 16th 1985

Many of us found that worship on the basis of silence was complex and baffling, just as European Friends found our Pastoral practice confusing! Yet, still, our cross-section of delegates from world-wide Quakerism demonstrated that Quakers can live, work, worship and tolerate each other, loving and caring for one another as family members with different points of opinion.

As we close our gathering, let us in God's power think of what next. Shall we once again share this world-wide fellowship? Shall we again communicate? Shall we exchange opportunities of travel and visitation? Shall we talk about our theological differences? Shall we reconcile ourselves?

We feel that anything in this gathering which fell short of our expectations should not matter. In fact, we should re-dedicate ourselves, and learn from any of these shortcomings. Our dream for the future should be bright.

As we disperse into the world with its social ills, economic problems and moral abuses, we believe that God will open for us avenues of hope, that the young will bring forth the light from within each one, and that the Young Friends will be supported as they make even greater strides.

Francis Simiyu

East Africa Yearly Meeting

This vision should be reflected in the life of our Monthly Meetings. Friends of all ages should be welcome in all worship, social and study opportunities. Visitors, as well, should be welcomed in our meetings and homes. Worship should reflect our cultures, but we see value in that worship which incorporates singing, Biblical preaching, and extended periods for listening directly to the voice of God. Our Meetings should support each member in clarifying and carrying out his or her ministry, as each should uphold the ministry of the meeting. We should uphold each individual and family in tolerance and love.

Consuelo Carranza, Hewitt Malone, Kevin Spratt, Francis Simiyu, Ben Richmond, Lucy Fullerton, Ruth Harland, Ute Fricke

We feel there is unity among us in the belief that the Spirit moves in each/all of us. In this we can transcend our traditional differences. We can listen to what the Holy Spirit leads us to do, individually and corporately, and to acknowledge our gifts. To do this, one must have total commitment to God within, and much support (encouragement, nurture, love) from others. We need to offer this support to each other.

We envision more exchanges of people and cultures, conferences, and educational materials about Quakers from all traditions in all languages to help expand our understanding and enhance spiritual growth. What a strong witness we can make in unity!

Susan Woodman Hoskins, George Rwela, Alfred Lugalia, Charlene Harris, Ian Bell, Zandy Hemsley, Gerardina Tristan

We have been stimulated by the diversity among us into sharing our various approaches to God, and into learning and caring about others' cultural backgrounds. This has brought us to looking at people's needs. We have realized the interrelationship of world famine/poverty and the arms race. We hope to continue and foster our communications by slowly developing a letterwriting and support network linking Meetings in different parts of the world.

Frank Massey, Lauren Mari-Navarro, Lucy Knott, Frances Hill, John Marshburn, Naomi Kamimura, Mable Lugalia, Ranjna Nath

The experience I felt during the World Gathering of Young Friends was beyond measure. I thought hard about why Friends would start shedding tears in the middle of their sermons. The true faith of God should be with us and guide us all. Although different parts of the world with its Quakers believe in pastoral services or silent meetings, all of us are united together by God.

It's wonderful for the Friends world-wide to have met together and shared their varied traditions about Quakerism. I was indeed pleased to notice that most Young Friends world-wide were really concerned with the issue of nuclear disarmament and the need to help those people who cannot help themselves because of famine or resettling the refugees. It's actually hard to turn from one thing to another suddenly. The key slogan of Quakers about simplicity and reconciliation won't be effective unless we Young Friends understand the needs of other people who are suffering. Let us be like the tree growing near the stream of water, the leaves wither off but the tree grows more leaves in the following season.

Let us have peace, love and unity and be equal spiritually. Young Friends world-wide should make visits to other parts of the world in exchange form, so that our knowledge about Quakerism be widened. As George Fox had difficulties, so do we. The self abandonment of George Fox had made him overcome all his difficulties. Therefore, why can't we Young Friends follow the principles of George Fox? Faith is something human beings cannot force to come. It's what you and I believe in.

Therefore the future of world Quakerism depends entirely on everybody who claims to be a Quaker, especially the Young Friends. Are we letting our lives speak? Other people's blessing or lamentation depend on whether or not our lives are speaking.

Joshua Murunga

East Africa Yearly Meeting

We see a Meeting gathered in the midst of the presence of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

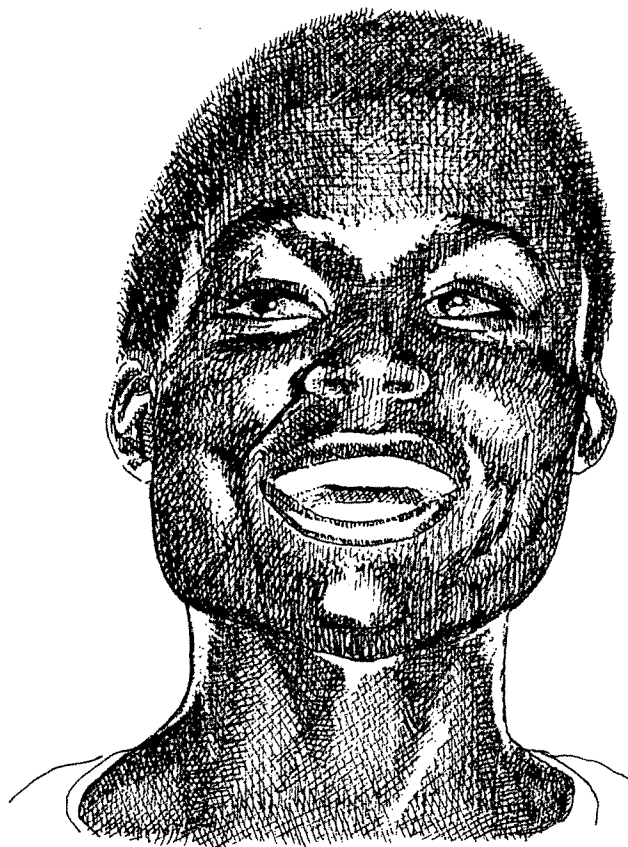
We have realised that boundaries can be overcome through love and understanding which has uplifted us on many occasions.

We vision that hearts open to the Light would cause us to minister in unity and with the Truth we are called to, sharing our experiences, ideas, and wealth. We realise that this sharing cannot be fully completed until we open to what is shared with us.

The boundaries of our diversity can be brought together through the encouragement of intervisitation and releasing Friends to travel in ministry. Within this capacity we could encourage our like witness of service and outreach inspired by both our founders and the Bible. The unity for our concern for confronting economic social injustice and the reawakening of the Peace Testimony could commonly be experienced.

It is within the understanding of this and of ourselves the testimony we would engage would allow us to walk peacefully, cheerfully, and lovingly among all people, speaking to that of God in everyone.

Belinda Amabi, Peter Gissop, Tim Jones, Joshua Murunga, Robert Siedle-Khan, Judith Stanley



I want to share a vision that was given to me in worship at the World Gathering just after our Epistle was approved. I invite you to open yourself to the deepest level of your heart and share in this vision.

I sense a great wind. A wind is sweeping from high above the trees, sweeping down to touch the earth. And the wings of this wind are made up of people, people of all colors and from all traditions. These people turned from their ordinary work and everyday squabbles to join the wings of the wind. And the crowd pushed the wings forward throughout all the world. And instead of carrying weapons in their hands they held their hands outstretched with an open heart to offer each other and the suffering world. May we all join the force of this loving wind.

Beth Claggett

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting



Minute of the special interest group on racism at the World Gathering of Young Friends.

ABOLITION OF RACISM

We, Young Friends from all over the world gathered at Guilford College, Greensboro, North Carolina from 19th Seventh Month 1985, wish to proclaim our recognition that racism exists today as a terrible cancer affecting the lives of millions of people throughout the world. We have learned from first-hand experience this week that it is possible for all people to live and worship and play together, and learn from each other in great joy and harmony.

We are particularly moved by the terrible suffering of the people of South Africa as described to us by one of our Young Friends from that region. We recognise the deep complicity which many of us have in this suffering because of economic investments and the support which some of our governments are giving towards the Republic of South Africa.

Where there is racism, there can be no peace - whether this takes the form of hatred or mistrust or economic oppression or denial of political and human rights because of colour. We pray that God will direct Friends to find ways to play a central role in helping the people of our nations to struggle with peaceful means to abolish the plague of racism from our earth for ever.

*Onesmus Asiema - Convenor
Kinyangi MacMillan
Alfred Misaki
Charlene Harris
Peter Blood
Katherine Sorel*

One hundred and thirty-seven other participants added their names to this minute in support of its message.

Friends Forever

By John W. Carter

Andante



(Ladies) 1. It's a jig-saw puz-zle world with walls and bor-ders, bro-ken lines on maps of
 barb-wire in the world can not di-vide us; on-ly fear can build a
 sim-ple faith that binds us all to-geth-er with a love that nev-er

men. But the world is just one place, and all the stran-gers on its face be-long to
 fence. So a spir-it that can reach a-cross the fence a-round us each is sent from
 ends. And to-geth-er we will join our hands and reach a-round the world. We are the

From U.S.A.

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1 2,3

God, who calls us to be friends. (Men) 2. All the God so we can live as
 Lord's and we shall live as

friends. And we are friends for - ev - er, we are friends for - ev - er, and our
 friends.

work on Earth is just be - gun Through the pain and pleas - ure we will

stand to- geth - er, We are friends for - ev - er; — We are one.

(All) 3. It's a

friends for - ev - er; We are one. — And we are

D.S. al Coda

D.S. al Coda

Coda

friends for-ev-er; — We are — one. —

Coda

This system contains two musical staves. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef, and the bottom staff is a piano accompaniment in bass clef. Both are in a key with three flats (B-flat major or D-flat minor) and 4/4 time. The vocal line has lyrics: "friends for-ev-er; — We are — one. —". The piano part features a melodic line in the right hand and a supporting bass line in the left hand. A second system, also marked "Coda", continues the piano accompaniment with similar melodic and harmonic structures.

This system continues the musical piece with two staves. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef, and the bottom staff is a piano accompaniment in bass clef. The key signature remains three flats, and the time signature is 4/4. The vocal line consists of a few notes followed by a long rest. The piano accompaniment continues with a melodic line in the right hand and a supporting bass line in the left hand. A "rit." (ritardando) marking is present above the final measure of the piano part, indicating a gradual deceleration of the tempo.

Demos Gracias

Let Us Give Thanks

Autor des conocido



Literal translation by Earl W. Redding

*Let us give thanks to the Lord,
Let us give thanks
Let us give thanks for His Love. (repeat)*

*In the morning the birds sing the praises of Christ, the Savior
And you, friend, why don't you sing praises 1) to Christ, the Savior?
2) to God, the Creator?*

From Mexico

THE ADDRESSES GIVEN AT PLENARY SESSIONS

THE SPEAKERS

In planning the addresses to be given at the conference it was felt that the themes should reflect our common heritage as Friends, and therefore several quotations were selected from the writings of George Fox (see minute 1.8, on page 17). It was also felt that the speakers should reflect Quakerism today.

Rose Adede, a Kenyan Friend pursuing graduate studies in the United States, gave the keynote address on Friday night from "that of God in everyone." We were challenged to simplify our lives as she spoke on the theme LET OUR LIVES SPEAK.

Jan Wood, a pastoral Friend and member of Indiana Yearly Meeting, now living in Seattle, Washington, sees herself as a traveling minister in the 1980s. She spoke on the theme OUR ROOTS IN CHRIST: 'I heard a voice which said "There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition" and when I heard it my heart did leap for joy.'

Jonathan Fryer, a British freelance journalist for the B.B.C. often writing on international affairs, spoke Monday night on the theme UNITY IN DIVERSITY: "Then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one." (George Fox 1656) When Jonathan said that our diversity was our richness as well as our problem none of us could have imagined how "rich" the conference would eventually become.

Heinrich Bruckner, a Friend from the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) who is a pediatrician and who feels that Friends have a special task to work towards bridging the East-West divide, spoke Tuesday night on the topic PEACEMAKING: "I lived in the virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars." (George Fox 1651)

Arturo Carranza, a Friend of Mexican descent born in the United States, who is serving as the director of a Friends school of ministry (California Y.M.) was asked to share Wednesday night on the theme FRIENDS IN THE DEVELOPING NATIONS. Arturo's manuscript in English was distributed and the address was given in Spanish under the title "A Challenge of a World Grown Small." This was the first session in which our Latin American Friends didn't need to use their headphones for English to Spanish translation.

The addresses have been edited and condensed for inclusion here.



LET YOUR LIVES SPEAK

Rose Adede

My task this evening is to give the keynote speech. In a secular meeting a keynote speech is a starting point for discussion and thought, but in a gathered meeting like this one I would like to begin a keynote speech not only for discussion and thought but also for reflection and deep prayer.

The topic of the Quaker Testimony of Simplicity came to me out of many questions, questions like - what does one say at a Quaker conference with a theme "Let Our Lives Speak"?.. "Let Our Lives Speak" of what?..when?..to whom? As I wrestled with these and other questions it quickly became apparent to me that, as Quakers, our tradition calls for a holy life, a life free of possessions, a holy life of marked simplicity.

In response to the invitation to speak tonight I wrote to Jonathan Vogel clearly stating my topic as "Let Our Lives Speak: Reflections on the Quaker Testimony of Simplicity", adding "I will draw from John Woolman, the Bible, and Quaker literature generally in order to get the whole spectrum. I am taking very seriously the assumption that any Quaker cannot be indifferent to this testimony or the relevant issues of war and peace for us today and in the future".

At this point I would like to share with you three things that have constantly stayed with me as I prepared myself for tonight's task. One is a picture of young Quaker men and women, some with their small babies, all gathered in a united spirit ready to dream dreams, ready to see crystal clear visions for a better future for Quakers, indeed for a better future for the whole world.

The second picture is of thousands of Quakers world wide, young and old, who know about this conference, standing in prayer because this conference is a blessing and a real serious effort to touch the hearts of young Quakers who are the Quakers of tomorrow.

The third picture, the one that never left me for a single moment, is of thousands of Quakers scattered throughout the world, who have no idea that this important conference is taking place: the thousands of fellow 'Third World' Quaker women and kids, scattered all over the villages in their homes going about their usual business. Many of them, like those in my home village in Kenya, spent today, Friday, working in their gardens, scratching the soil for food to grow and then they will go to the stream to collect water; and tomorrow is a Saturday: it will be a market day. Many of them, like my mother, will go to the market to buy some vegetables, sugar cane, maybe a kilo of meat and other things. While others will send some produce from their gardens - fruits, sugar cane, meat, vegetables; to get money to buy washing soap, sugar, and maybe a dress. And then on Sunday these women will wake up very early in the morning and walk to the church at the end of the village to attend the morning service. They will fill the benches of the church. They will earnestly pray that God open the eyes of Young Quakers everywhere so that they may grow in awareness and actively provide the vision for a better tomorrow. Then the pastor will preach at an appropriate time, and call for an offering. These women will reach out of their pockets the balance from Saturday's buying and selling, and they will put it in the

basket for collection in faith that it will bring a better tomorrow. At the end of the service - late in the afternoon, they will gather (without coffee and doughnuts) to talk to one another, they will exchange news and then walk to their homes and pick up their pots and get the water. And then on Monday at sunrise they will carry on the thread of life and for the rest of the week, determined to live in utter defiance of inflation and rumbling wars which in some cases result from economic disparity among them and in other cases from the sheer power struggle in the world. Remove these women and you will have removed the resilient backbone of their families and the backbone of the church in the village. This stark picture of Quaker women typical of most 'Third World' women filled me with a passion to speak tonight, that my voice may be their voice, the voice of a people that needs to be heard, who I believe have something to offer and contribute to the health of the Quaker movement world-wide.

Now I will move on and begin by listing some of the Quaker testimonies. Friends have been known from the beginning for certain moral standards. According to Hugh Barbour, who I think is one of the few clearly eminent Quaker historians of our time, "Quakers expected their actions as well as their words to challenge the conscience of their hearers". He reduces the Quaker Testimonies to four basic concerns - honesty, equality, simplicity and peace.

The Testimony of Honesty, he says, was to do with speaking plain language, rejecting oaths (adding that one should speak the truth at all times and not only when swearing by the Bible), and, in business, only asking and giving what the goods were actually worth. Quaker honesty also meant rejecting pagan names of months and days of the week, preferring to keep the names like Seventh Month.

In their Testimony on Equality Friends followed the teachings of Jesus who said, "Call no man Master"; and also included the belief that God was able to speak to everyone who was open and this led to their faith in the equality of men and women and to their faith in cultural equality.

The Testimony of Peace, according to Hugh, started with a refusal to bear arms and fight. Now one of the most occupied questions of our day, especially by Quakers in the United States and in Europe, is the refusal to pay taxes for war.

Finally the one which is our concern for tonight, Simplicity; and this is what Hugh has to say about it: "The Quaker Testimony of Simplicity, like Equality and Honesty, has its roots in the Bible, and attacks pride in one's costume and worldliness." So Quakers opted for simple dress. In doing so - and I like this - Quakers reminded the wealthy that affluence was at the expense of the poor, who could eat and dress with what the rich wasted. I hadn't imagined that Quakers of that time could reason in that kind of way. I was really impressed.

I partly chose this topic so that we can corporately reflect on one Quaker testimony of common belief; but most of all to focus our attention on the life of one Quaker whose life spoke in a different way. When I come down the history of the Quaker movement, John Woolman stands out for me as one who consciously lived out all the Quaker testimonies, and especially

as one that exemplified the power of the Quaker testimony of simplicity. He believed every form of luxury had some connection with evil, so he watched his way of life very carefully. He was a Quaker who made a great impact during his time and aroused the dull awareness of the world to stop human exploitation, the inhuman economic system of slavery.

I am not speaking as a competent authority, but I would say this: the glimpse of John Woolman's life that I have had so far has spoken to me and made all sense to me, a Quaker in Kaimosi, 200 years after his death. I was deeply moved by the description of his life and work, to an extent I cannot express, when I first met John Woolman, in 1977.

I was twenty four years old. At college I had read stories in fiction and non-fiction that raised for me critical questions about Christians, Quakers included. In my history course I had read of the slave trade and colonialism, and that even Christians, Quakers included, sold, bought and kept slaves for years. I had also read "Wretched of the Earth" by Franz Fanon whose clever analysis had uncovered in a nutshell the workings and mind-set of the imperialists and imperialism; revealing that there was more to the sorry state of the world than had been argued.

So in 1977 I knew that charity and goodwill as a solution to poverty was not enough. I knew that people suffering from poverty and oppression needed help to straighten themselves, to be given confidence in their villages, to control their lives for their own purposes; and that the most meaningful way of expressing concern for the poor and oppressed was by working with them in actively initiating, securing and creating changes that would lead to the poverty itself being overcome in a world based on peace and social justice.

Although I had read a lot of books about Quakers before I discovered John Woolman, I had never encountered one whose life challenged my intellectual understanding. The selfless love and devotion won my heart and caused me to re-examine what brand of Quakerism I valued. He was a Quaker who gallantly rose against an inhuman oppressive economic system that thrived on the exploitation of slavery. His life spoke to me in a most dramatic way, that made me pause for a while and appreciate more than ever before that there seems to be a kind of a way for Quakers to offer more to fight today's injustice and establish a just society. And, mark you, what moved me was not a big volume or a good sermon about John Woolman, but a glimpse of a faith in life, a life that was free of possessions, a life that was dedicated to doing good for all people. As Rufus Jones said, "John Woolman, more than any one man or woman, aided the English-speaking nations to throw off the disgrace of slavery". So John Woolman's life indeed had impact, and this impact goes beyond even the Quaker world. I would insist that his choice to live a life without encumbrance left him free to speak convincingly. He was believable and that was enough to give him power.

I will not bother to try and draw parallels between the evil forces that John Woolman fought in his day, and try to compare with what is today. I will leave that to you. For we do not have to lift our eyes very high to see the suffering of the black people in South Africa, who, like the slaves of John

Woolman's days, are being exploited, discriminated against, and misused blatantly in broad daylight by an ardent, racist people and their supporters who do not want to share the wealth and power in their country.

Woolman challenged the racists of his time, and I appeal to you tonight: we need to challenge the racists of our time, beginning with those die-hard racists in South Africa down to the racism at home in our own movement, in our own Quaker schools, in our Quaker churches, in our own Quaker conferences. The racism in South Africa is glaring and it's ugly; but when we find racism within our own Quaker world it is worse and more insidious and more a cataract because it is for ever protected by a veneer of self-righteousness and refusal to acknowledge that it exists.

We need to speak with warm admiration for John Woolman and his thoughts and work and lifestyle. It was not even easy for Woolman himself and you will agree with me it is not easy for you and me, rich or poor, in this day and age. Those of us (even myself, you know) that are rich, like many other rich people of the world, know how difficult it is. And those of us who normally feel poverty - and I am putting myself with those of us who are feeling poor too - know how annoying it is when the rich talk of stopping us from aspiring and demanding the love of material wealth, and power, that goes with it. So we can see, which ever side we are, it is not easy - we know that.

You will agree with me that the poor and oppressed world-wide can no longer be contained: their awareness is sharpened and they are rising in rebellion, and, difficult as it is, we must opt for the Quaker testimony of simplicity. It is the only hope we have that has potential for making a difference in our sharing consciously and equally the world's resources and power. I like when Quakers talk of sharing the world's resources: I say no!, sharing **equally** not just sharing, because we are already sharing, after all. We must share equally the world's resources and power. It is our only hope of checking exploitation of man by man; it is our only hope of putting a halt to the greed and materialism at the expense of other people; it is our only hope of uprooting the causes of war.

I have seen, and I am sure you have seen, signs of hope in our lives today. One is the very fact that we are here tonight listening to someone giving her reflections on the Quaker testimony of simplicity. Even back home in Kenya students are rising up, young people of our age bracket are rising up and taking a stand on these issues. For example, people that call for disinvestment in South Africa are making a symbolic statement - that apartheid profits at the expense of the black people in that country. It is a sign of hope that we can witness. Another sign of hope is that it is not only tonight that this topic is being shared among Quakers. This is a topic that is of concern to many Quakers everywhere. There is now a Pendle Hill pamphlet on a rich Quaker's view of the Quaker testimony of simplicity, and so I can say there is hope. So, rich Quakers, poor Quakers; they are being awakened here and they are coming out to speak on this issue.

Different countries of the world carry hidden in their roots different theological history and development as well as cultural differences. We are a diverse group gathered here seeking a work of God. A work common to all of us: embracing each of us: making something corporate out of disparate pieces. We are a very diverse group. We are all here following a dream of some sort. A dream in which we realise that we need one another. Many things divide and separate us. But certainly, the most basic to our differences is the matter of Jesus Christ.

It is ironic that the very bedrock of George Fox's message, the Allness of Jesus Christ, is cause for dialogue for those who would follow in George Fox's "wake". You know the story...

He was a scrupulously devout child and young adult. He was able to say that he had never wronged a man or woman; people loved him for his innocence and integrity. You would think that would have been enough to ask of himself. But by the age of 19 he was totally miserable. He was deeply and increasingly disturbed by another reality. A reality of evil, brokenness, rebellion, and sin among all people. Everywhere he looked he saw something that most of us prefer to ignore. Something was terribly wrong in the world. He didn't know exactly what it was; but he couldn't do "business as usual" until he got to the bottom of it. He broke off relationships with family and friends and started to wander England to find some answers.

He started at the logical place for a spiritual quest - with the clergy. He was bitterly disappointed. The clergy seemed to be affected by the same blight that he sensed everywhere. He was morose, accusative, depressed. Hardly a happy fellow to be around. If he were here in our midst today, we would most certainly try to steer him into counselling. Or in our anger and impatience at his not taking the easy answers, we might lash out at him and tell him to "snap out of it". And his family tried some of these approaches. When he came home they wanted him to marry. Can't you just hear it? "Now, George, all you need is a good woman to love you. Find a wife. Settle down and raise a family. All this nonsense will fade away and you will feel much better. Stop chasing after the impossible. The world will never be the place you want it to be." I can hear it. People who loved him trying to talk sense into his head. But George could not be turned, he had heard enough from God that he could not be stopped.

In time he concluded that he was looking in the wrong place for answers. So he dropped his talk with the priests - and started searching out the dissenters, the separatists of his day. But again he stated, "I saw there was none among them all that could speak to my condition". Then at the very bottom of his despair - inwardly and outwardly - George found out what we can all find out: that there **is** One who awaits us all. One who meets the existential pain of our humanness that can be met in no other way. For George Fox, that encounter came as a voice saying "There is One, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition". George Fox met a person.

It was in the encounter that an explosion of fulfilment occurred. And it's the same for us. We can talk about the religious and spiritual until doomsday; but the miracle doesn't happen until we meet the Personhood of God. By any historical standard the cornerstone of being Quaker is that we have met God...and there abide in ongoing, dynamic relationship. This meeting transforms us. It creates in us new being.

Fox came to know, in the inward fiber of his being, that "all was done and to be done in and by Christ." As the Apostle Paul puts it in Ephesians, "he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fulness of him who fills all in all." For George Fox, life was forever altered. His heart did **leap** for joy. But that was not the end of his spiritual saga. The closer he came to God the more he knew himself and the more he saw the human condition for what it was. We, like George Fox, are the ones who know that we exist on the face of the universe only because of some incredible grace that transforms the brokenness of our very being into something counted as righteousness, into a vehicle of the very presence and power of God. It is only when we go to the very depths of facing our aloneness, our insufficiency, our unworthiness, that we have any hope to offer a world in similar condition. It is only when we in a sense die that we are lifted up in the time and the manner that seemeth right to the Godhead -that we can participate in any ocean of Light and Love to flow over the ocean of darkness. It is only when we as a gathered group come to the end of our human contrivances and meet the Living God Incarnate, that we are kindled into a fire that ignites the Kingdom-come here today.

To try and live religiously outside that grace is emptiness, impotence, failure, and death. Only knowledge in the Spirit of God can produce Life and Truth and Power and Light. I have no desire to bring fleshly words and knowledge to set person against person, isolating them all in the chill that the sin of pride produces. Nor am I here to say something bland and noneffectual to keep peace for tidiness' sake. No bland mush for the tongue. Truth is bittersweet: bitter because it brings us pain, but sweet because Truth-embraced sets us free. What I sense God wants me to do tonight is not to give you a big logical argument about the deity of Jesus Christ, but to tell you how you go about the process of finding that out for yourself so that you, like George Fox, can say that you have been met and been encountered by One, God Incarnate, Jesus Christ.

The path to this knowledge is not cheap! The price is the same for everyone. It costs everything you ever have and everything you are. We all have equal opportunity to say "yes" to the Voice of God. We will never find the Truth of God by a cheap, meditational high; an hour of weekly worship; by an adoring heart before a burning fire; or by a lively intellectual debate. The very costly trip takes us to the end of ourselves and all our props for coping in an imperfect world. It encompasses all of our being, and nothing remains the same. The mystery and the vision is that God's very Presence of Love and Power and Light comes to encompass us, renew us into the "spitting images" of God and pour out to a world that is hungry and thirsty for hope.

The first signpost on the path to the Kingdom is to **be authentic as to who you are right now**. When we think of encountering God, most of us have some instinctual desire to get ourselves ready. It feels like the way we try to tuck in our shirt-tails, straighten our hair, and check to see if the room is o.k. when we see a guest coming to our home. But the motion of this signpost is quite the opposite of this. It is to sit and know exactly who and what we are. Not lying about our strengths or our weaknesses. Feeling all that we are. It is when we take responsibility for being ourselves, that we begin the trip. It matters not that we are right or wrong. It matters not what degree of good or badness resides in us. It matters not how people see us or what they think of us. It only matters that we claim exactly who and what we are as we meet God.

I suspect that one of the reasons that Quaker conferences usually fall short of the miracle that is envisioned, is that we don't tell the truth very much about the way we are. We pretend that we can fix the differences between us because we're so afraid that if we admit that we are hopelessly divided, we also have to admit that we don't know what to do about it. And we are afraid that we'll tear and rend and divide further. But when was the last time that we all fell on our faces together before God in the truth that we are divided fundamentally and we have no way to fix it? To have more than a sociable time together, a stimulating dialogue with wonderful people - takes a miracle! The miracle can come only when we abandon ourselves to the truth of ourselves individually and gathered and let God be God.

The second step on the path to the Kingdom is that of intensity and **abandonment**. There was nothing "cool" about George Fox. And we cannot seek God with the entirety of our beings and remain "cool", self-contained, safe - and even sane by some standards. Our different cultures have taught us different ways to cope in an imperfect world. They all serve the purpose of shielding us from that raw encounter with ourselves and our God. We have to break our cultural norms to seek God with the passion by which He is to be found.

Wherever you dip into the Bible, into the narrative of a person of God, you find an incredible, often frightening, intensity of seeking. Think of the Patriarchs of the Old Testament. Abraham stopped at nothing to follow the words of promise. He took on a nomadic life; he followed a dream, and then he was willing to sacrifice his only son, the vehicle of that promise. All to follow this supposed Voice of God. Jacob wheeled and dealt and manipulated his way through life trying to grab the blessing of God upon his life. Joseph let no tragedy, adversity or horror stop him from acting in accordance with his childhood dreams. Or think about the disciples. Galilean fishermen, many of them. No fancy mystics from Jerusalem. Yet Andrew said to Peter, "We have found the Messiah." Philip said to Nathaniel, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, son of Joseph." They had lived their lives in seeking. They were willing to drop everything when Jesus presented himself. For "the Kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure, hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up; and then, in his joy, he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field." Today God is still presenting Herself and

Himself to us. The ways that we experience it will be very different. But it is our second step to pour ourselves into those responses with abandonment and intensity. Playing it safe is not a heavenly virtue. It certainly was not a maxim of George Fox or Jesus. "Truly, truly, I say unto you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

The third step is **to be willing to embrace the pain of living**. The issue of pain is a truly monumental one for us. The avoidance of pain, or the **attempts** to avoid pain, often becomes the central theme of our natural existence. Unfortunately many folks see their religious experience as a way to get rid of the pain in their life. Following God involves embracing pain. The Kingdom promises no escape from pain. God's plan for the ultimate defeat of pain, suffering, and tragedy is clear. It does not involve duelling it to the ground. It doesn't mean staying clear of its grasp. It does not mean searching out and destroying all the strongholds of evil in others that would cause or precipitate pain. God's plan is to enter into the middle of pain and suffering and **there** break its power by transcending it. To explode its grinding horror from the inside out. The Incarnation did exactly that. God entered into the horror of human existence and there lived out an alternative, and through the atonement made it possible that each of us can do the same.

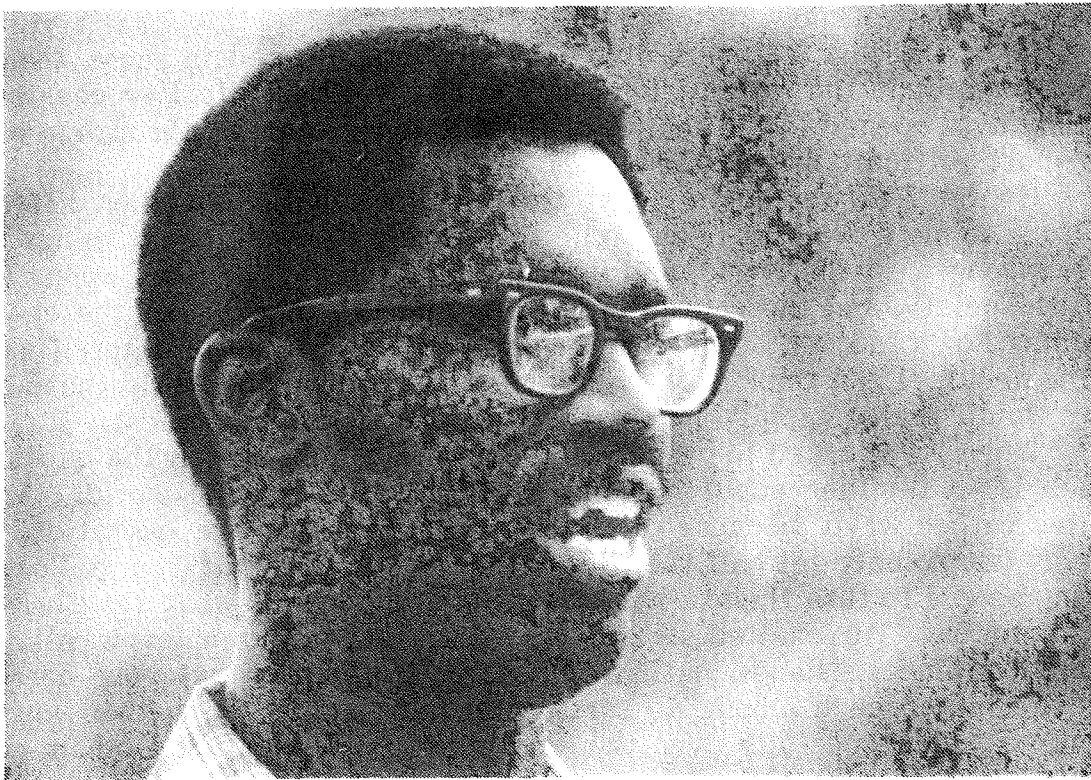
We need not be bound to pain unto death. Pain does not need to work weakness, callousness, bitterness, anger, cruelty in us. If we will choose to give up our rights on our life, if we will accept pain as part of our life's pattern, we are free to make it count for something. It is an awesome thing to be so free that there are no more ways to hurt and cause us fear. It is a power that overcomes all evil when love cannot be stopped by personal loss. And it is a 'must' if we are to encounter the Living God.

Corporately we also shy away from pain. There are few things that will cause us as much pain as being in the body of Christ. There are days and months that you will doubt that it could possibly be worth it. The early church had a lot of problems with relationships. Our meetings are not mystical sanctuaries of perfection. They are yet another place to embrace the pain of humanness and from that struggle let the sweet perfume flow that says, "Behold, how they love one another." As Thomas Merton wrote in *New Seeds of Contemplation*: "To serve the God of love, one must be free, one must face the terrible responsibility of the decision to love, in spite of all unworthiness whether in oneself or in one's neighbor."

The last step is that we must **resist the temptation to define God by our own notions**. God is larger and more complex than the dimensions of our human understanding. God will **never** fit into the boxes we have prepared for Her. God encompasses all there is of maleness and femaleness. God is Allness. God is Incarnate and human. God is Spirit. Let yourself stretch and grow in the knowledge of your Lord and Savior. If you are used to thinking of God as masculine get to know God-feminine. You'll be delighted! If you are habitually more comfortable with the Godhead as Father/Mother or Jesus or Spirit - expand your friendship with the other roles. Let God be bigger than yourself. Let God reveal the

wonder of Personhood. Open yourself to an adventure that never ends.

You know how it feels to explore everything about the person you love. There is not a story too obscure, a thought too small, for those who are "in love". The adventure of knowing one another is an ongoing delight. In fact, love often stops when we think we know the other "inside-out". Well, you are in a giant Love story. There is endless delight for each of us as we let God reveal the wonder of the Eternal Personhood to us. There can never be another relationship exactly like the one you will have with God. There will not be one encounter with the Trinity that will be duplicated. You are creating something new. Something wonderful. And in that joy we look at each other and are forever bonded by the marvel of being in love with the God of the Universe. Don't try to control your relationship. Simply meet and love. And the validity of that meeting will reverberate throughout your world - and bear witness to the truth that you, like George Fox, have met God.



UNITY IN DIVERSITY

Jonathan Fryer

Way down south there is a holy place, the cathedral of San Salvador, a building of quite spectacular ugliness and yet a place of immense beauty, a building of quite extraordinary violence and yet a place of peace. It's not all that many years since the steps of that cathedral were awash with the blood of people shot in the square, and since that great voice for peace and justice in Central America, Monsignor Romero, fell to an assassin's bullet.

When I went to El Salvador earlier this month, arriving late in the evening from the airport, when already the streets were deserted, some force, some inexplicable force, sent me to walk to the cathedral. To my amazement the building was not locked, but was open, the wide doors looking on to that dark empty square. Behind the metal grills that protect the doors were women guarding the steps. And I went to them and said "May I come in?" and they welcomed me in. Inside that building were hundreds and hundreds of women in black and white headscarves - the mothers of the disappeared. They were spending that night in a vigil of peace - in prayer, in song, in speeches, waiting for an answer as to why, in the last five years, in El Salvador alone, fifty thousand people have died.

I broke down in that cathedral. I fell to my knees and wept because that building was electric with the power of the Lord, reflected in the human determination to overcome the hatred and the fear that divide not only so much of El Salvador (so ironically named after the Saviour), but so much of the world as we know it today.

Over the last 17 years I've travelled and worked in more than 80 countries around the world. Everyday in that working life I've constantly had my eyes opened to the reality of God's message coming through in often the most difficult of circumstances.

George Fox was also a great traveller, but he had a rather different attitude to his travelling, because he felt moved to speak about things that were wrong with the world, and in particular, things that were wrong with British society, and the church in Britain, and the teaching of the church. Reading Fox's Journal, one becomes rapidly aware that he was a terrific pain in the neck! I can think of very few meetings around the world these days that would really happily live with George Fox in their midst.

When I was asked to prepare this short talk, I was given the quotation which is so familiar about walking cheerfully through the world. And I smiled rather wryly because of course, it is only half the quotation, and usually you do only get half the quotation. In the first half George Fox was asking people to turn themselves into walking models of what the Christian ought to be. He exalted us to "be patterns, be examples in all your countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come, that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people, and to them; **then** you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one."

That needs a lot of preparation, a lot of sorting ourselves out before we can actually set out on this task. That preparation, a very time-consuming task, can often be a very emotionally draining task too, unless we

have the support of others who are engaged in a similar activity, which is what the true value of the Society of Friends should be in all its diversity.

Travelling around, one begins to realize how diverse the Society really is these days. There are obvious, immediate, some might say superficial, types of diversity, but I don't think they are superficial at all. I'm white, Etienne is black, Sally is a woman. These are not differences that we can ignore, but they're not reasons why we shouldn't be able to communicate together without denying the special nature of any of our characteristics. But it's not only the physical attributes that are important, there is also the diversity of our natures, of our temperaments, of our goals in life. And that diversity is for me the great richness of God's creation. Because, although there may be some powers in the world that would like to see a future society where we all dress alike, all eat the same food, and all drink the same drinks, all watch the same video programs sent to us through satellites all the way around the world, I hope to goodness that that diabolical intention is thwarted because I do not believe it was what was intended. Our differences are our richness! But then they are also a problem, and if we try to ignore that problem, then the problem will not go away.

We see this starkly, day by day, in societies like South Africa. We see it also on a less dramatic level in our own lives. More importantly, in a gathering like this, it affects our individual interpretations of ourselves and the way we react to those around us. To be able to really tackle the problem of differences we have to acknowledge that there is in every one of us diversity in ourselves. There are contradictions **inside** ourselves, and very difficult tensions. Most of us have moods; most of us have all sorts of conflicting tendencies and conflicting ideals which can sometimes persuade us to look outside ourselves for the diversity of others with which we can then disagree, because it is so much more comfortable to disagree with others than it is to disagree with ourselves.

Virtually all eastern religions take as their starting point the need to come to terms with yourself to understand your own being and the relationship of that being to the Godhead or whatever you want to call the divinity. Similarly, before going out to walk cheerfully across the world, it is always helpful to sit at home for a while and analyse yourself a bit, to discover what sort of a person you really are, to discover what really motivates you, what turns you on, what turns you off, and why, what it is that is good inside you and what it is that is bad or at least not all that good, and that you ought to try and do something about. I acknowledge that it's often very difficult to understand what is happening inside our own minds and our own souls.

The one exception to this is when it comes to faith. That is the one leap that the true Christian has to make and does make. Even if he or she cannot be sure about his or her nature, or the point of his or her existence on this planet, or what she or he ought to be doing about life; the one thing that she or he can be sure of is the love of God and the need to have a relationship with God.

Now George Fox, when he came across people he didn't really approve of, he could be quite stern with them, to say the least. He was a dangerous

man to invite to dinner. He might not only refuse to eat your food, but he would probably give you a lecture on all your failings. He was very good at giving people a shock: sometimes by refusing to take off his hat or by refusing to take oaths, things which sometimes now seem trivial.

I like his warning to the persecutors of Quakers in one of his famous open letters:

"The word of the Lord to all of you that scorn trembling and quaking - who scoff at, scorn, stone and belch forth oaths against those who are trembling and quaking, threatening and beating them; strangers ye are all to the apostles and prophets - to the light in all your consciousnesses I speak that with it you may see yourselves to be out of the life of the holy men of God."

A stern message and rebuke indeed! I think these days we tend to have a much more reconciliatory approach to our presentation of the Christian way of life as perceived by the Society of Friends. And I think we CAN talk about a Christian way of life as perceived by the Society of Friends, because although there are fundamental differences on all sorts of issues between the currents of Friends' thoughts, the basic tenets are the same and the basic goals are the same.

Often the approach these days is to try to see in a fairly analytical way where conflict can be tackled and how it can be resolved. One needs tremendous strength to help resolve conflicts and to help reconcile people - not only nations who are at war, which is where the Quaker peace testimony gets most of its publicity, but on a much more mundane, domestic level. Often problems have occurred because either people thought they were right to such an extent that everyone else was wrong, or else problems arose because people were afraid. Much persecution, much intolerance and much bigotry is in fact a reflection of fear and of insecurity. Again we come back to the need for self-analysis.

Many people have found that it was when they travelled that such self-analysis could happen. It was when they came into contact with different societies and with different strains of thought that their own values were put under the microscope and put into creative tension with what was going on around them. Thus, I think we see in gatherings like this that Friends from different parts of the world and from different traditions can, over a period, go through a process of fundamental change. I wouldn't be at all surprised if there were people in this room who feel very contradictory emotions about different people and different ideas that they have come across during the week. They may feel at times threatened, at times intolerant, at times shocked and even angry about the things they hear or that they perceive, because it doesn't fit in neatly with their interpretation of what Quakers are all about.

Obviously, in a world in which there are many national and international conflicts, it rather reduces Friends' potential for having a tremendous impact if within the Society of Friends there are similarly enormous divisions and conflicts. It is very difficult to be the single lone voice of peace if, in fact, you turn out to be a choir of 23 not entirely tuned

and harmonious voices. But this is something, fortunately, that can be worked out if it is approached in the right spirit - if it is approached by really following the message of the gospels and the core of the message (with all his faults) of dear old George Fox. We have to be tremendously open to other people's beliefs, personalities, and interpretations without necessarily feeling that if we are tolerant of them, we must therefore accept them for ourselves.

God's creation is diverse. The world is a rich tapestry of different cultures, which nonetheless are all reflections of God's will on earth. Therefore, it should be possible for the true Christian community to be diverse itself. The unity for which people have so often sought, namely, that we all will believe "this", is in fact totalitarianism, anti-democratic and anti-Christian. The only true unity is a unity of diversity, as it's often been called; it is unity in diversity, but I would also like to dub it a unity in tolerance. How lucky those countries, such as the one where we are now, where people actually have the choice of what sort of meeting or group they can belong to, and yet still be within the family of Friends. That is something that I think we should treasure and that we should cherish. We should not fall into the trap that some other denominations may have fallen into, of believing that there is only one official line that must be followed because otherwise we are erring into sin.

We live in a world that is full of nasty things. It is full of all sorts of happenings, mostly created through the willpower of individuals or governments or societies of various kinds, which are clearly alien to the message of the gospel and clearly alien to the message of Quakers and to the whole idea of walking out into the world finding out that which is good in people and preaching (I hope not sanctimoniously) a message of peace and tolerance around the world. Although we may not have a world war on our hands or anything like that, I personally believe that the mid-1980s offer us no reassurance whatsoever that we are not in the major crisis of history so far, for at least two reasons.

The first is that we have the permanently unforgettable reality of destruction hanging over our heads. I'm not being flippant when I describe this as **the** difference between the 17th century and the 20th century. Whereas someone like George Fox may have said that God's retribution was always there ready to destroy those who went against what He wished, in the 20th century, **man's** retribution is hanging over our heads ready to destroy whatever the people who have the power to do it do not approve of. That is something which has changed the whole nature of existence and which has changed the whole nature of the way that any religious group or society must approach existence.

At the same time, the second factor which leaves me in a sombre mood, is the fact that many of the great problems of the world - the problems of survival have not improved, despite the fact that we have the capacity, the technology and the wealth to alter them. The number of hungry in the world is going up, not down. The problems of the indebted nations of the world are getting worse, not better. The army of the unemployed and the underemployed throughout vast areas of this globe is

THE ADDRESSES GIVEN AT PLENARY SESSIONS

getting bigger, not smaller. These social questions are not something which any Christian can ignore. Christ would not have ignored them, and I believe He does not ignore them now - through us. I believe He calls on us to work in action to combat such things as hunger, disease and poverty. These are not marginal to society, nor are they something that happens "out there" somewhere on the fringes, but they are in fact the reality of most of the world.

However, another need in the world is to create a new community of Friends within this global village. We mustn't take too long about it because we can't afford to. If we spend the next century merely getting to know each other, unfortunately the world may have left us behind. This getting to know each other has to be alongside a process of understanding the tensions that there are in the world, and understanding which "problems" are not really problems at all, but are only of our own making.

We are a very small group. We feel very big when we're at gatherings like this but we are really a very, very small drop in the ocean of humanity. On many things we will have to work with those who have views very different from ourselves, not only with people within the Society of Friends but also with other Christian groups and with other religions and even often with political groups and people who wouldn't consider themselves as being religiously-minded at all. The challenges ahead mean that just as we in the Society of Friends can only survive if we recognise and develop our unity in diversity, so the survival of the world is only possible if we recognise the need and the challenge for unity in diversity.



PEACEMAKING

Heinrich Bruckner

As we first look back in history the 17th century in Britain appears rather chaotic, but in it we find many roots of a new movement. In the political field people fought for the republic under Cromwell while monarchists defended the King. In the religious field the church had become an instrument of power for the state. In October 1650, George Fox was arrested and brought into the penitentiary of Derby for six months because he had commented critically on the social structure. In 1651 he wrote in his Journal,

"When the time of my commitment to the House of Correction being nearly out and there being many new soldiers raised, the commissioners would have made me captain over them. And the soldiers cried they would have none but me. So, the keeper of the House of Correction was commanded to bring me before the commissioners and soldiers in the marketplace, asking me if I would not take up arms for the Commonwealth against Charles Stuart. I told them I lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars and I knew from whence all wars did rise, from the lust, according to James's doctrine."

These words are not a declaration meant for the public. Fox's refusal to take arms is only one aspect of this much more comprehensive attitude that took away the occasion of all wars. There are also no requests for other people to do the same, to imitate thus an outer action. Only if they are seeking the way of truth and are directly attending to the true Teacher within themselves can they be led to the same choices and let their lives speak. It was not until the year 1660 that Friends offered their first written declaration from which all later peace testimonies were more or less derived. The passage most often quoted in support of the peace testimony is the declaration to Charles II from 1661.

"We utterly deny all outward wars and strife and fightings with outward weapons, for any end or under any pretence whatsoever...and we do certainly know and so testify to the world, that the spirit of Christ, which leads us to all Truth, will never move us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons, neither for the kingdom of Christ, nor for the kingdoms of this world."

Friends were suspected by both sides because they didn't fit into the ordinary scheme of thinking. In such turbulent times it is much easier to say, "He who is not with me is against me." But Friends' position between the two sides came from the fascinating discovery of the Fountain within ourselves by which Friends gained their inner certainty and were motivated to what was ironically called "Holy Obedience". This Quaker way attracted suspicion and persecution; but on the other hand it offered a great chance to seek new, constructive ways to overcome social suffering, to mediate between groups opposing each other and sometimes even to reconcile them. Friends dreamed of a better world and a better order of

living together. The Kingdom of God was never understood by Friends as hope for salvation in other spheres of existence as a heavenly reward for sufferings in this valley of tears. Friends always understood it as a challenge for the here and now.

In the course of history the passage of the declaration of 1661, quoted above, has been discovered and used by Friends as a good formulation to explain in public our longing for peace and our feeling of being called to work for peace. Calling this verbal declaration "a peace testimony as the basis for further Quaker peace work" is a misunderstanding we sometimes encounter. There is the danger of misinterpreting it as an article of faith because it declares we have to do this and that. This would be absolutely alien to our thinking! Besides, it is a negative formulation, taken out of a much longer text written for a special time and situation. It's more important to think about what we can do in a positive sense than to restrict ourselves on conscientious objections, although they are sometimes necessary. We would do well to remind ourselves that Jesus, in His Sermon on the Mount, did not commend the anti-war protestors but the **peacemakers**. "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God", said Jesus.

George Fox's affirmation, which he made a decade earlier and which is included in the title of this lecture, expresses the concern for peace in a better way. For me, this is the real peace testimony. Personal experience and a certain attitude are standing behind it. And now allow me to make a big step forward into the 20th century to speak about Quaker experiences in Germany in World War II.

Though having been a child at this time and unable to understand all the tragedy, I remember facts and the mood around them. For one instance, my aunt, who worked as a midwife, brought a parcel home. When we unwrapped it we found a baby, nice and charming like all babies, but his mother was a Jew. Consequently this little Tom was looked upon as rubbish, to be thrown away as one unworthy to live. We cared for him until we found a suitable grandmother who adopted him as her Aryan grandchild and pretended he was German. I remember how I liked to feed Thomas from a milk bottle and how sad I was when we had to part. Years later I met him again. We had a university festival in Leipzig and I had to speak there. In order to make the ceremony more impressive, they had invited a string quartet. Its leader turned to me with a question about the music programme and he introduced himself, Thomas P. In fact he was my Thomas baby of 25 years ago! You can imagine how his violin music impressed me. Twenty five years before, we could not know whether or not he really had a chance to live. We did for him what we felt we had to do in spite of all dangers, not only for Jews, but for ourselves as well. You see, people who dared to help Jews were executed. When Thomas played his violin, I meditated about the old Quaker wisdom that in being led by the Spirit, you sometimes have to act and undergo risks not knowing whether or not there will be any success.

After World War II, fascism was stopped, but soon the escalating confrontation between the superpowers and the following re-militarisation

with West and East Germany gave rise to fear that a new world catastrophe might happen. Therefore in 1948, German Quakers felt that they had to raise their voices. After long and deep discussion, they used again the peace testimony formulated by Friends in 1661 and added the following text. Like the words of Friends in 1661, these words are actual in our time - when people and statesmen are afraid of a new catastrophe.

"Therefore we proclaim this peace testimony to us and to our people, in love and responsibility before God. It calls on us to object to everything which leads in the direction of war, preparing for it, or supporting it. Our faith challenges us as to whether we allow ourselves to be used as tools without a will of our own, and to become a divided people, swept along by the stream of mistrust and fear, arrogance and hatred which produces tension in the world; or whether by our own decision, confidence and courage, we can become a bridge between the different sides working for truth, justice and peace."

You see, here Friends don't only speak of objection to military service, but of everything which leads into the direction of war, prepares for or supports it. However, this text is rather general, though at this time, several Friends have stressed that a peace testimony like this is not sufficient to meet the needs of our time, saying that it should become more concrete by adding a social testimony.

The greatest challenge for a new human community came from Jesus Christ. Perhaps I should better say a challenge for a new attitude towards our fellow men and women and consequently, a new social order. But within 2000 years Christianity has not yet put this challenge into effective action to solve peace and social problems in His Spirit. On the contrary, the symbol of the cross has been misused in many wars. Weapons are blessed by priests. The words "God with us" were still to be seen on the belts of German soldiers in World War I.

300 years ago, Friends experienced wars predominantly as religious wars. This is different from our situation. Nevertheless, their proposals for a peace (and a new social order) are extremely interesting. For instance, that of John Bellows in 1700. He thought the different churches should look for what they agreed upon rather than quarrelling about where they differed. He carried further William Penn's plan for a European parliament, suggesting that a supreme court should settle disputes instead of wars being fought, and as many wars seemed to have a religious basis, he suggested that a general council of European churches be formed. John Bellows realised that these proposals were too advanced to be accepted by people at the beginning of the 18th century, but that did not stop him making them. He said, "He that does not (do) right while he's alive, cannot speak when he's dead".

Today we know much more about the economic background with so-called "structural violence" as a reason for social injustice, resulting tension and finally violent attempts to change the situation. Therefore the peace testimony of the 20th and 21st centuries has to include aspects of the new

economic order, or even more so, a new order of living together, if it is to be taken seriously. But similar to John Bellows I may say that these proposals may be too radical to be accepted unconditionally by Friends in the 20th century. I have no problems accepting that Friends often cannot make unanimous decisions because of their conscientious manner of reaching decisions. But if Friends with a certain prejudice or aversion lose patience in listening to each other and thus fail in their necessary openness to each other, they lose essential parts of their all-uniting silence in worship. Only as we become more united in our concerns for peace and social justice can we speak with a more unified voice as a society of Friends, as well as being instruments of the one Voice waiting to speak through us.

Allow me to come back to my personal experience. We in the German Democratic Republic underwent a socialist development, not by our own choice, but as a consequence of war. We had to learn to incorporate socialist aims and hopes into the practical consequences of everyday life, and we had to develop an understanding of our own part in this development. The situation differs widely from that of a spectator or visitor standing outside and observing without any obligation the action on stage, pointing out like critics what's good and what's bad, what could have been avoided, and what could have been carried out in a better way. In these circumstances, I have found that it was of great help to me to have the **examples of other people**, for example my parents and many other friends, who had let their lives speak. In a difficult and dangerous time, they had acted according to their convictions. This made me believe in what they told me about their religious experiences, and it gave me an idea of what it means to follow God's guidance. This became my own basis too.

The following points are more of a method - how to approach questions. In looking at the social change that happened and the construction of a society, it helps to **distinguish between the basic concern and the method by which it was carried out**. While this may help us understand, to understand doesn't mean to condone. But it's a first step towards reconciliation. It's a precondition for peace work.

Another point is to **look for the positive**. It's important to find and keep in mind the positive aspects of any concern. Remember John Bellows? "They should look for what they agree in rather than quarrelling about where they differ."

Another point is to **see old and new together**. Sometimes we complain about discrepancies in theory and practice in our new social structure, but in fact it's not easy to build a new society with people who were educated by the old tradition. It needs much more than one generation to change common attitudes essentially. This is true for all countries which undergo the same development.

Another point is **the bridging of the language gap**. If you want to understand somebody you have to know his or her language, or else you need a good interpreter. The better you know the other's language, the better you'll understand. In the same way, you need knowledge of the language of different systems and the background of their history and philosophy, if you want to understand their aims and the actions of their government.

representatives. This understanding helps not only you, but perhaps it may make you able to become a link between two opposite sides.

Another point is to **refuse to allow ideologies to become obstacles**. The message of Jesus was taken up about 150 years after his death by the church fathers and formed into a theology; a system in which you find explanations for everything, with commandments and prohibitions for any situation. The temptation to put others and their ideas in neat little boxes is still with us today! It's safer when we have a box or recipe for everything, but the problem is that others are either alienated or left unsatisfied. They know different ways leading to knowledge and certainty, and these ways open themselves to you especially in silence and devotion when you can put your ego aside enabling you to receive that message. Whether you call it God, the universe, the eternal, we must not let words separate us. Living religion is characterised by the practical possibility of gaining insight which goes beyond ideologies. New methods of living and working together have arisen out of the concern of single people who followed their concern with dedication without knowing the result. Remember John Woolman and his concern for the liberation of slaves? He was not trying to perpetuate an ideology. He was seeking to be faithful to the Truth he had received.

Another point is **the need to cultivate creative listening**. When I was a child, two characteristics of Friends made a particular impression on me: their personal warmth and natural openness on one hand, and their technique of speaking to each other about problems on the other. They could differ widely in their opinions, but nevertheless, they spoke in an atmosphere of concentration and quietness, sometimes interrupted by short periods of silence. When it happened that a discussion stirred emotions and became vehement, a period of silence could change the relation between important and unimportant facts so much that a completely new basis was found in a relatively short time. Friends reached unity which could not have been reached by arguments alone. There also was no majority triumphing over a minority.

In daily life around us this attitude is rare. More often you meet people who want to be right instead of being open to each other. In their discussion they seek to find better and striking arguments, to be quick and clever and to hit the weak points in the opponent's presentation. Their own opinion cannot be given up because it's a kind of "property". It would mean losing or giving up. Of course people with such an attitude cannot listen because they're already preparing their own answer while their opponent is still speaking. Some can't even wait until the other has finished his or her words. Impatiently they interrupt each others' speeches.

The other type are those open minded people who are more Quaker-like. Without clinging defensively to a narrow programme, they remain open without their egos making them deaf. This is the reason they can really listen. They produce new ideas because they don't cling to a fixed opinion. A talk with them is not only an exchange of knowledge, information, or even a duel with words, but it becomes a dialogue in which opponents become partners and sometimes they gain new insights together.

When they part, neither of them has feelings of triumph or defeat - both are satisfied and happy. It's possible to learn and practice this kind of communication! It's a central part of every reconciling work and every attempt to mediate. It's a kind of **peace education**.

The last point is **an appreciation for both the short and the long way**. May we hope that the vision of a peaceful world expressed in our peace testimony is the short way, and that the small, intellectual steps of politicians in the same direction can be appreciated as the long one. Steps as suggestions for peaceful co-existence of different social systems appeal for a coalition of common sense. Partnership for security, and security in the military and economic fields cannot be reached against each other but only with each other. This may sound like utopia, but since Jesus Christ, this utopia wants to speak through men and women willing to change the world. Let us use this precious gift and help to put as much of this utopia into reality as possible, each of us in our own places. And here we meet again George Fox, who described this new reality as "the virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars".



It is with great pleasure that I come to speak to you this evening. I was asked to present a message along the lines of Friends in the developing nations, and after thinking and praying I decided to talk about one aspect of the subject, the challenge of a world grown smaller. The ability to travel long distances in short amounts of time, the rapidness of communications, and the interdependence of nations and governments on one another has made us into a global community in spite of the differences which exist. Our membership in this global community brings into focus the answer which Jesus made to the question, "Who is my neighbor?" He pointed out in the parable of the Good Samaritan that the real question should have been, "Who is **not** my neighbor?" In a world grown smaller, the fault lines separating nations are rumbling and the cracks are coming together.

For the last two years I have been serving as a missionary among our Friends churches in Mexicali, Baja California, Mexico. There, along the international border between Mexico and the United States, we witness in miniature dimensions the larger struggles which are taking place throughout the world as developed nations and less developed nations influence and often strive with one another. I agree with the bank executive in El Paso who in a recent issue of 'Time' magazine (7.8.85) declared that the border between Mexico and the United States is the "only place I know where you can jump from the First World to the Third World in five minutes."

I am not an economist nor a politician, but if the suffering and inequalities which we see occurring daily as we cross the border between the two countries are any indication of what is happening throughout the world, then Friends, I feel it is time for each of us to cleanse our hands with honesty for the part we are playing in this dilemma and to seek the forgiveness and guidance which comes only from love of God and service to our neighbor.

The concept of a world grown smaller is not new, but in recent months an ominous note has been added to the scenario. In her article entitled, 'Our Disintegrating World: The Menace of Global Anarchy', journalist Georgie Anne Geyer takes a sober look at our world in 1985. We are living in a new and different world, she writes, a world of institutional breakdowns where the authority and status of intergovernmental agencies are slowly eroding away; there is a widespread increase of regional conflicts within countries which do not directly affect the major powers, but which likewise makes it difficult for them to intervene, and in some of these struggles there is always the possibility that a smaller nation will get and use nuclear weapons to achieve their aims; within some developing nations there are power struggles taking place because having rid themselves of the colonial powers from outside, they are now having to rid themselves of a colonial mentality from within as they seek to find the proper balance to rule their own people; and of course, for the first time in the history of humankind, there is the possibility of committing cosmic suicide in the horror of a dismal nuclear winter.

According to Geyer, the following trends and patterns point to a radical disintegration of world order. They affect us all for they are transnational and transcultural, they are occurring in developed nations as well as in underdeveloped ones.

In Lebanon we have an example of **national disintegration** wherein a country has broken down to warring factions and the war being fought seems to be a no-win situation with destruction and further destruction the only result.

There is among some developing and less developed nations a desire to **return to the past**. Where colonialism has given way to the progressive ideas instituted by the leadership in developing countries, there has sometimes been a backlash caused by fanatics wishing to violently reinstate the practices of the past. In Iran this is illustrated by Khomeini's "Holy War", and in India by the assassination of Indira Gandhi by fanatical Sikhs.

In the United States, in Europe, in Africa, and in Latin America, we are witnessing the **breakdown of borders**, not by political agreement but because of economic necessity, and sometimes because of human rights abuses. Perhaps the biggest example of this is the immigration of Mexicans and other Hispanics into the United States.

Overpopulation and its consequences will continue to be a major problem among both developed countries and less developed ones. In the United States it is estimated that at the current rate our population will double in 100 years. In comparison, Asia's population will double in 38 years, Latin America in 30 years, Africa in 24 years. The stress which such growth places on both governments and social structures is tremendous. Between 1980 and the year 2000, 700 million new jobs will have to be created - more than currently exist in the entire industrialised world.

Along with all of the above and as a consequence of it, there is a growing tendency of what is being called **compassion fatigue**. People are getting tired of confronting problems which are both overwhelming in dimensions and endless in demands. The future may see the developed world gradually withdrawing into itself, leaving the less developed nations to fend for themselves.

So then, we have here a view of the world which is not only growing smaller but also increasingly dangerous. Taken alone, the trends are irritations, but together they become major distractions. We need not agree with all the details presented, but I think what is important for us to recognise is that the world **is** changing and not all the changes are for the good of humankind. Another point worth considering is that we are in this together. This is our world.

What wisdom and strength can we draw from our Quaker tradition as we confront the challenge of a world grown smaller? The problems which confront us require an expertise beyond my ability to offer solutions, but I believe that our heritage as Quakers offers us examples of the **type** of people who are needed to work towards finding the solutions. What do I mean by this? How do we face the challenges of our world with a Quaker mind?

First of all, the Quaker mind is one which is **valiant for the truth**. While in prison George Fox penned these words: "...spare not tongue nor pen;

but be obedient to the Lord God and go through the world and be valiant for the Truth upon earth..."

George Fox knew that in order to be valiant for the Truth you first had to know what the Truth was. For him the question was settled on the day when he heard a voice which said, "There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition." He would agree with the words of Christ, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man comes to the Father but by me." One who had not made a decision about this Truth was called a Seeker, or a Ranter, but not a Quaker. Quakers trembled not because they despaired of ever finding the Truth, but because they saw it and understood it in all its implications.

Along with this, early Friends recognised that Truth demands a teacher and that Teacher is Jesus Christ himself. Why is this important? Because as we face the problems of our modern world we need to know that we are not alone. Early Friends believed that God cares about what is happening and is actively working through those who are obedient to the Light which He has given them, unlike many people today who believe they can change the problems of the world through their efforts alone.

Along with this, early Friends recognised that anything other than the Truth would only lead men astray whereas the Truth was meant to convince a man, to make him completely new. They knew that only a power greater than man could change a man and the society he lived in. For them this power was the Truth made known through Jesus Christ. George Fox knew the world could be an "ocean of darkness and death", but he was convinced that there also existed "an infinite ocean of light and love" and because of this Friends could "walk cheerfully over the world". Fox knew this because he had experienced it himself: "For I had been brought through the very ocean of darkness and death, and through the power and over the power of Satan, by the eternal glorious power of Christ."

The observation has been made that the early Che Guevara believed that a new man would arise as the result of a new society, but as time went on he began to see that the opposite was true - a changed society will come only when the people within it become changed themselves. Early Friends would have agreed. William Penn put it this way, the early Friends "were changed men themselves before they went about to change others. Their hearts were rent as well as their garments; and they knew the power and work of God upon them."

Furthermore, being valiant for the truth requires obedience; a person is not free to agree to Truth and not follow its implications to the end, and the implications of following Truth lead eventually to the question of doing justice. If all men are created in the image of God, then all men have a worth and value granted them by divine permission. Robert Barclay would put it this way, "Christ has tasted death for every man: not only for all kinds of men...but for every man of all kinds." This leads us then to the second aspect of the Quaker mind, it **seeks the good of all people**.

In their declaration to King Charles II of England in 1661, early Friends proclaimed that their principle and practice was to "seek peace and ensue it and to follow after righteousness and knowledge of God, seeking the

good and welfare and doing that which tends to the peace of all." The knowledge of God was never meant to be something which only affected the inward aspects of a person's life, faith was seen as having repercussions in the way a person lived and the way they lived among others. The two key words were "righteousness" (we might say 'justice') and "peace".

Early Friends knew by experience what it was to live in an unjust society; in fact, my suspicion is that early Friends would relate to the millions of suffering refugees and victims of torture and false incarceration throughout our world today more than they would with many of us living in affluent societies where our only concern is that no one infringe on our personal lifestyle. In their declaration to the King, Friends went on to state, "men come against us with clubs, staves, drawn swords, pistols cocked, and do beat, cut, and abuse us...", they were "...cast into holes, dungeons, houses of correction, prisons...sparing neither old nor young, men nor women.." And yet, they knew that if it was wrong for their persecutors to use such tactics, then it would be equally wrong for them to turn around and use the same tactics against their persecutors; but neither could they be silent. Justice demanded that they speak; faithfulness to the example of Christ, the Lamb of God, demanded that they speak peacefully.

The example of Christ gave early Friends an ethic to follow; his spirit a power to draw upon; his Truth a kingdom to inherit.

Along with the concern for justice and peace, the Quaker mind was characterised by a **willingness to suffer**, to pay the price. Because they had renounced all bloody principles and practices, all outward wars, strife, and fighting with outward weapons, for any end or under any pretence whatsoever, early Friends set themselves up to be abused, persecuted and disposed of.

We in the developed world are learning that, if we are going to counteract the terrible escalation towards nuclear war which currently seems to be going out of control, reaching even the vistas of space, then we are going to have to suffer. Toleration in our governments for a radical witness for peace is growing less. Penalties for such a witness are more like reprisals, and a generation is arising which is willing to coexist with nuclear weapons as long as they are not forced to think about them. The witness for peace and justice serves to prick the conscience and remind the governments of this world of how futile and doomed for failure are their efforts at erecting a shelter of armaments. Our witness for peace and justice will not be appreciated in such a situation, but are we willing to pay the price? And there will be a price to pay.

In many of the less developed countries throughout the world there is hunger, overpopulation, unemployment, human rights abuses, and myriads of mini-wars taking civilian lives by the hundreds. And yet, our brethren in these countries must be willing to suffer further if there is to be a change for the better in our world. Friends, you must be valiant for the Truth even at the cost of your lives. Your people need the witness of Truth and the example of servant love. I know, it is easy to allow yourselves to become like those who oppress you, to allow falsehood and deceit to become normal, a way of survival. But we must be children of light, and not darkness; we

must overcome evil by refusing to be overcome by evil.

Over a thousand years ago Tertullian declared that "the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church"; this the early Friends knew and so we must learn again today. This is the Lamb's War, we must not retreat in the face of possible suffering, nor must we take up the weapons of the enemy which bring only death and suffering. We must not grow weary, the victory will be ours. The Scriptures tell us that the enemies of humankind "make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings - and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers." (Rev.17:14) The faithful are those "who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." (Rev.7:14)

Friends, this evening I have spoken about a world which is growing smaller and increasingly dangerous. Solutions to the problems which confront us will require wisdom, patience, and a great amount of humbleness. I do not look to the politicians and the warriors for the final solution, but to God. And yet, he has given this world to our care, and I believe he did so because in his great wisdom there is a belief that man is capable of achieving a safer and happier world than we now have. It will take ordinary people like you and I to make a difference; people who are willing to do the significant something instead of the elusive all. Our world needs to see a people who are valiant for the Truth and living in the power of it; a people who are convinced that justice and peace are not the by-products of human civilisation, but the very basis of it; a people who are willing to suffer and die so that others may prosper and live.

Friends, there is evil stalking our world and we are living in dangerous times, but we must not despair. There may be a Day of Visitation in our generation, but our Quaker forefathers faced a world of danger also, and there have been other times in the history of humankind when civilisation seemed to be tiring of its own life and vitality. Let us walk as Children of Light, for the Light is never overcome by darkness; let us be valiant for the Truth, for it has never been suppressed by falsehoods; let us do justice and peace, for they have never been forgotten in a world where they are rare; let us suffer willingly, for a crown will never be given without first receiving a cross.

May the Truth of God in Christ give you power, and may the example of our Quaker heritage give you courage to face the challenge of a world grown small.

AMONG FRIENDS : AFTER THE GATHERING

ORGANIZING PARTICIPANTS' VISITS TO FRIENDS AFTER THE GATHERING

For three weeks after the World Gathering, 68 participants from developing nations and the German Democratic Republic visited Friends in the Americas and Britain under the Gathering's auspices. Friends representing more than 37 organizations and communities of faith offered hospitality to these visitors, and had an opportunity to share their witness and visions of the future.

Administratively the visitation office's record was mixed. The successes include: 1) safe travel and departure of visiting Young Friends; 2) many opportunities for host Friends to meet Young Friends from developing nations and vice versa; 3) opportunities for visitors to participate in structured activities, such as educational programs at the Quaker U.N. Office and William Penn House, a workcamp at Habitat for Humanity in Baltimore, and teaching at a Quaker summer camp in Medford, New Jersey; 4) attendance by visitors at sessions, sponsored tours and/or special events of at least 10 U.S. Yearly Meetings and one Quarterly Meeting, representing a wide variety of Friends.

Our most noteworthy administrative failures include: 1) miscommunication between those responsible for organization of the visitation program ahead of time and those taking responsibility for it at the time of the Gathering; 2) poor preparation of hosts and visitors; 3) broken commitments to several prospective hosts; 4) a manner of work not entirely consistent with Friends' principles. We can only hope that we who are responsible for these failings will be forgiven.

For all involved, this opportunity was precious, and I know many join me in thanking all those who received visiting Friends into their homes and meetings, and in the prayer that we be blessed in its use to nurture the seeds God planted in our hearts at Greensboro.

Jonathan Hibbs

Baltimore YM

VISITING AMONG FRIENDS

FWCC Africa Section Newsletter, Dec 85

Post Conference activities were dominated for Third World Friends by visitation among the American and British Friends. We visited Pendle Hill in Pennsylvania, William Penn House in Washington, the American Independence house in Philadelphia, QUNO in New York and various Yearly Meetings. My wife and I had the opportunity of attending Richmond, Indiana, Yearly Meeting and the Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting (FGC). Staying with the American families was a very interesting experience. African men had to learn how to cook and wash dishes, a life style which is

not African. My compliments go to those who organised the visitation programme, though some journeys were as long as 26 hours by coach.

Edwin Muzame

East Africa Yearly Meeting

VISITING AMONG FRIENDS

After the one week Gathering of Young Friends from all over the world, we had the opportunity to visit among the American and British Friends. The group of Young Friends from East Africa was split into two groups of which one stayed in the USA while the other went visiting among British Friends.

Those of us who were able to attend various Yearly Meetings also got an opportunity to learn how their meetings were conducted. I was impressed by the way one of the Yearly Meetings I attended was conducted compared to the way we conduct ours here in Kenya.

I thank those who organised the visitation programme. The financial assistance and travel arrangements were great. It enabled us to visit places that we could not have visited in our life time. The long journeys especially for those who were travelling in America could not have been possible if we were to meet the fares ourselves. We were also grateful to our hosts who could travel long distances coming to meet us at the bus terminals. Though some Friends had to spend more than 24 hours travelling to reach the next host, they were not tired because of the curiosity to see and learn more about America. We also had an experience of travelling in fast-moving underground trains which cannot be compared to our trains here in East Africa. We were also exposed to modern telephone operations. Our visits in farming areas helped us to compare the various methods of modern farming. We strongly feel that such visitations should be extended to developing countries to have Christian experience with Friends all over the world. All our hosts were open to us in taking us round and explaining to us things of importance for our interest.

During these visits after the gathering we were able to share with Friends both in America and Britain the conference experience. We were privileged to compare and share our cultural values of developed and developing countries. Since the theme of the conference was "Let Our Lives Speak", we had to put the theme in practice wherever we visited. Some of us went on workcamps to help the needy people. It was quite educative to most of us. Is there any way such a programme of intervisitation could be established to enable more Young Friends to learn from one another?

Margaret Malenge

East Africa Yearly Meeting

BEING VISITED

"How about offering to put up two Young Friends on their return journey to Kenya after the Young Friends Conference in America?"

Seth and Charles had a rather hectic week with us. We were anxious that a trip of a lifetime should be as full of as many experiences as possible. Their itinerary included a trip to Chester, a visit to an old parish church, viewing the Quaker Graves at Burton, Wirral, and seeing the Science Museum in Manchester as well as trips into the countryside of Derbyshire. Then there were the times to meet local Friends, either for a meal or for discussion, and an evening of entertainment in both English and Swahili. Sunday Meeting at Stockport was added to by a Kenyan hymn.

While that was the form of the week, the more rewarding occasions were the long discussions (we seemed to get later and later to bed as the week went on), the sharing of beliefs and ideals, and obtaining some insight into how the other person viewed what was precious and of value to him. Not always seeing eye to eye but with compassion being able to challenge each other, and learning to listen without rejecting even when one disagreed. We knew the Kenyans felt at home when on a return from a day trip out, Seth said, "Before we do anything else, how about a cup of tea!" As we seemed to jell together very quickly and because of their great sense of humour, we found that we could ask each other meaningful questions without offence.

There were times that we were embarrassed by our material wealth (not that we consider ourselves wealthy by English standards), being aware that we had a spare black and white television and more than one radio. And all that tinned cat food! We were able to donate a portable cassette recorder to Charles to use with his interest in choral music.

When the week was up our visitors moved up to Yealand Conyers. It is to be hoped the pace slowed down a little then - we felt left in a vacuum. We had received as much as we had given. We had in fact participated in the World Gathering of Young Friends, as the Kenyans had brought some of that experience to share with us.

In retrospect we realise that we all related extremely well together, that a close bond was made between Charles and Seth and our family as well as with other members of Cheshire Monthly Meeting, but then we are all part of the world-wide Quaker family and really this should go without saying even if we do have some theological divergences.

One member of our family says she is going to Kenya on a return visit, who knows?

Tim Carlisle

Cheshire Monthly Meeting, England

THE ROAD ON TO OAXTEPEC

Friends World Committee for Consultation had asked Yearly Meetings to consider appointing WGYF attenders as representatives to the Triennial in Mexico. About 20 of us made the journey from Greensboro to Oaxtepec and it proved to be a fascinating experience. An immediate contrast was apparent in the obvious dominance of North Americans and Europeans, despite the Latin American location. There also seemed to be a relatively token representation of evangelical Friends. Where the World Gathering had split over styles of worship, the Triennial came up against deeper Quaker politics, and financial relationships.

I was struck by the way that, despite great efforts by the interpreters, the Spanish speakers seemed able to take little part. At Greensboro most of the small groups worked in more than one language; at Oaxtepec we were separated. It all added to the feeling of poor representation. Many of the Young Friends present were concerned at this difference, the apparent closedness of the Quaker Jet-Set. To be fair, there was also a certain cliquiness about the Young Friends.

One of the highlights of the week was our presentation about the Gathering, and preparing for it. We were very aware that this would be the most mixed group ever likely to assemble to share impressions of the Gathering. It would also be the most diverse audience. It was good to have to think through my own reactions, and be able to hear those of the others. On a close, thundery evening we tried to impart a sense of what it was like to be there and something of what happened. I think we succeeded, as the Triennial later approved a proposal to look at another World Conference of Friends, something they had been hesitating over for years.

One thing the Triennial did demonstrate: the inertia that we shall have to overcome if any of the new visions of Young Friends are to bear fruit.

Peter Hancock

London Yearly Meeting

THE PLANNING GROUP LAYS ITSELF DOWN

When those involved in planning the Gathering met for the last time, in April 1986, they made the following minute:

As we conclude our final meeting we are aware that the Almighty God is in all, through all and above all. Our hearts sing praises for the way in which we were able to complete our task. We have all sensed through these past few years the blessing of friendship and unity of purpose within this group. We have wrestled with how to lay down our very existence, to release the project of the World Gathering, and yet to hand on the stewardship of the vision it has embodied. We depart with both sorrow and joy, knowing that God has no ending and that in His divine power new concerns for the global community of Friends will arise by the leadings of the spirit in the hearts of individuals and that although the World Gathering of Young Friends has run its course the vision has just begun.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It would be impossible to express fully our gratitude to all who have helped to make this gathering come into existence, and who held us in prayer throughout. However, we would like to thank the following Friends in particular:

- the members and staff of Friends World Committee for Consultation who gave their support and advice throughout the preparation and during the Gathering;
- the president and staff of Guilford College who went beyond the call of duty in accommodating us;
- the pastor and members of New Garden Friends Meeting for their love, support and trust;
- all the many Trusts, Meetings and individual Friends who so generously contributed to the costs of the Gathering;
- all who worked on the site committee;
- North Carolina Friends and all Friends and Meetings that provided hospitality to participants before, during and after the Gathering, especially 15th Street Meeting, New York, and Ilford Meeting, London who welcomed such large numbers of Friends in transit;
- the five Friends who gave addresses to the plenary sessions; those who led the music ministry; and the other valuable resource people;
- the Friends who had the exhausting task of providing complete Spanish/English translations in all sessions and whenever needed; and all the ad hoc translators into Chinese, German, Swahili, etc;
- everybody who volunteered for literally hundreds of jobs in the running of the Gathering, from leading Bible studies and facilitating sessions to organising visitation, running the children's programme and answering the telephone;
- and finally to those individuals who struggled from the time it was conceived to keep faith to the vision throughout the five years during which they planned and organised the Gathering.

WORLD GATHERING OF YOUNG FRIENDS 1985
NORTH AMERICAN PLANNING COMMITTEE
ACCOUNT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE PERIOD TO 4-16-86

Receipts

Individuals	
Meetings	\$ 28887
Trusts	15240
Delegates	25941
T-shirt and photo sales	50011
Interest received	2122
	1874
Total Receipts	-----
	\$124075

Payments

Travel for organizers	\$ 8558
Administration	19317
Fundraising and publicity	4725
Latin American travel	13460
Transfer to European Committee	10000
Conference expenses	50267
Hospitality subsidy	8831
Post-gathering	7756
Total payments	-----
	\$122914
Balance remaining	-----
	\$ 1161
	=====

NOTES:

- All figures are in US Dollars.
- Contributions earmarked for the subsidy fund were spent exclusively on Third World subsidy.
- The balance remaining in the North American bank account will be transferred to the European bank account in May 1986.

Prepared by: Tor Bejnar
Date : April 18th 1986

WORLD GATHERING OF YOUNG FRIENDS 1985
EUROPEAN PLANNING COMMITTEE
ACCOUNT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE PERIOD TO 31.12.85

Receipts

	31.12.85	
	£	£
Money donated for administration		1624
Participants contributions to their travel costs		24491
Trusts / Meetings		36156
Cancelled tickets reimbursed		3496
Interest received		1110
YFCC Appeal 1984		6182
Transfer from USA planning committee		7722
Follow up meeting at Sutton		89
Total receipts		----- 80870

Payments

Virgin Transatlantic airfares	26865	
Insurance of participants	4216	
India/Africa travel to/from London	22825	
Trailways travel within USA)	5592	
London Hospitality) Third World	4981	
Transit / USA Hospitality)	5909	
Administration of planning committee	2634	
Speakers expenses	500	
Follow up meeting at Sutton	100	
Total Payments		----- (73622)
Net Receipts		----- £ 7248
		=====

Represented By:

Bank Accounts		
Norwich	Deposit	
	Current	4300
London	Deposit	96
	Current	2407
		445
		----- £ 7248
		=====

NOTES:

- All figures are in Pounds Sterling.
- Further audited accounts will be presented to YFCC in Great Britain at each calendar year end as appropriate.

Summary of events since the year end:

- A further £4871 mainly from cancelled tickets and transfers has been received. The costs of editing and printing the conference report have been estimated at £3000. Translation into Spanish will cost a further £1000.

- Having the financial resources to do so, the planning group decided at their final meeting on 26th April 1986 to write to Young Friends' groups wherever they are known to exist asking them to come together to find, in clearness, if they can nominate a person to attend a small global (of approx 10) to communicate ideas about future activity and dialogue in pursuit of the vision embodied in the WGYF.

Prepared by: Andrew McTear
Date : 20th April 1986