

FRIENDS CONSULTATION ON EVANGELISM:

Calling Forth That of God in Others

Quaker Hill Conference Center

Richmond, Indiana

December 6 - 9, 1990

SPONSORED BY

Earlham School of Religion
and
Quaker Hill Conference Center

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PREFACE

This is a report of the findings from the eleventh Friends Consultation held on December 6 through 9, 1990, at Quaker Hill Conference Center. These Consultations are jointly sponsored by Earlham School of Religion and the Quaker Hill Conference Center. The ten previous Consultations were planned by Eldon Harzman of Quaker Hill Conference Center and Wilmer Cooper of Earlham School of Religion. Both of these Friends moved from this responsibility this year, so this gathering was planned by Marilyn Neyer, Interim Director of Quaker Hill Conference Center, Curtis Shaw and Stephanie Crumley-Effinger from the Board of Quaker Hill Conference Center, and James Newby and Lonnie Valentine of Earlham School of Religion. We owe a debt of gratitude to Wilmer and Eldon for the carefully developed traditions of these Consultations, which made it possible for us to step in and take it over.

This year's topic was "Evangelism: Calling Forth that of God in Others." It drew together 31 Friends from 14 North American yearly meetings and London Yearly Meeting. All branches of Friends in North America were represented: Friends United Meeting, Friends General Conference, Evangelical Friends International, Conservative Friends, and independent yearly meetings.

We want to acknowledge with special thanks the grant of money from the Chace Fund of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, which helped underwrite travel expenses to the Consultation. Without this generous support, it would not be possible to bring together such a geographically diverse group of Friends.

Previous Consultations have had the wonderful problem of more people wanting to attend than there was space for, and have been more able to strive for balance among the various branches of Friends. The more evangelical yearly meetings have generally been underrepresented, however. This year's topic, Evangelism, was one that we hoped might draw more Friends from the evangelical yearly meetings. In fact, perhaps in part because of Friends' discomfort with the topic, we had a smaller group this year and had to work harder than usual to encourage people to attend. Evangelical Friends were still underrepresented, but the mix was a useful and productive one, and we are grateful for all who participated.

The purpose of these Consultations is not only to address a topic of importance to Friends but to provide an opportunity for Friends from divergent backgrounds in faith and practice to get to know one another at both the personal and spiritual levels. Past experience has shown that these occasions have become important events in the lives of those who attend. This year's Consultation was another such experience for participants.

We continue to believe that the Spirit of God is at work in these Consultations, not only to the benefit of those who attend but to the Society of Friends as a whole. We look forward to the next Consultation, date and topic to be announced. We invite names of interested participants, preferably not repeats and not more than one person from any given meeting. The Consultations now have an alumni/ae list of more than 375 names.

Consultation booklets from the past are being reprinted. Contact Quaker Hill Conference Center for availability information.

For the Consultation Steering Committee,

Marilyn Neyer, Interim Director
Quaker Hill Conference Center

Please note: Additional copies of this booklet and some previous Consultation booklets are available for \$6.00 each from the Quaker Hill Conference Center, 10 Quaker Hill Drive, Richmond, IN 47374

Friends Consultation:

On Service	1980	(out of print)
On Ministry	1981	
On Eldering	1982	
On Membership	1983	
On Spiritual Authority and Accountability	1984	
On Discernment	1985	
On Doing the Truth	1986	
On Overcoming Sin and Evil	1987	
On Testimonies, Queries, and Advices	1988	
On Worship	1989	

PROSPECTUS

FRIENDS CONSULTATION ON EVANGELISM: Calling Forth that of God in Others

Enthusiasm, fear, and anger mark the diversity of responses evoked by "evangelism." Such responses are apparent within the breadth of the Christian family today. The family of Friends seems to mirror these discordant responses. Evangelism can be defined as simply as proclaiming good news. Often the Christian community has sought a more specific meaning as the proclamation of the good news of salvation to men and women with a view to their conversion to Christ and incorporation into the Church.

We have each heard the good news. We have been invited into the community of faith. Evangelism is the ministry of faith when we invite others into the truth in which we reside. It is the action of opening the doors of God's community. Evangelism is the ministry of early Friends undertaking extensive travels and broad missions, earning the name "Publishers of Truth."

Controversy has long been the soil of evangelism. Luke's gospel tells of Jesus announcing the fulfillment of Isaiah, reading, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news (euaggelisasthai) to the poor ... to proclaim release ... recovery ... liberty ... the acceptable year of the Lord." Jesus' proclamation of good news results in his summary rejection. In the sprouting of early Quakerism, the "Valiant Sixty" went forth with a common objective to make known throughout the world their discovery of the indwelling Christ. These bold Friends were met with both attentive listeners as well as turbulent hostility.

Yet the image of proclaiming the good news is the positive picture of sharing wealth. It is the response of being at God's banquet table and seeing those who hunger. The focus of evangelism is not upon one's own possession, rather the focus becomes recognizing the other in need and the abundance available. The symbols in the picture represent the need for truth, the abundance of gospel, and the particular need for the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Advancement, outreach, proclamation, and witness are other ways of naming in part or in whole this exercise of gospel. Friends need to clarify and encourage this vital ministry of calling forth that of God in others. We gather seeking to affirm our need for this ministry of advancement among contemporary publishers of Truth.

This consultation seeks to find the place of evangelism among Friends today. It is the hope of this Consultation to:

- 1) Listen to how diverse Friends have heard the good news and entered into the life of their meeting.
- 2) Identify particular ministries by which Friends are currently "proclaiming good news."
- 3) Clarify the impact of these ministries for expanding God's community and the local meeting.
- 4) Discern the motives, spirits, and structures which empower or hinder evangelism among us.
- 5) Provide ground to share the diversity of wealth divided among Friends concerning evangelism.

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Clerk: Johan Maurer,
Friends World Committee for Consultation

Thursday, December 6

5:00 p.m.	Arrive and get settled
6:00	Dinner
7:00	Introductions and background of Consultation <u>AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON FRIENDS EVANGELISM</u> Jim LeShana, Southwest Yearly Meeting
8:30	Response and plenary discussion
9:15	Break
9:30	Worship - programmed, Stephanie Crumley-Effinger, Indiana Yearly Meeting

Friday, December 7

7:30 a.m.	Breakfast
8:30	Worship - unprogrammed
9:15	Small groups meet to get acquainted
10:15	Break - Travel Vouchers due
10:30	<u>EVANGELISM AMONG PROGRAMMED FRIENDS</u> David Brock, Indiana Yearly Meeting
11:30	Response and plenary discussion
12:15 p.m.	Break
12:30	Lunch
	Free time
3:30	<u>OUTREACH AMONG UNPROGRAMMED FRIENDS</u> Mary Moehlman, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
4:30	Responses and plenary discussion
6:00	Dinner
7:30	Small Groups meet with assigned tasks
9:00	Music Program, Susan Hubbard, Intermountain YM
9:30	Worship - programmed, Jim Heaton, Southwest Yearly Meeting

Saturday, December 8

7:30 a.m.	Breakfast
8:30	Worship - unprogrammed
9:15	Small Groups continue with assigned tasks
10:15	Break
10:30	<u>ROLE PLAYS ON FRIENDS EVANGELISM</u> Judith Dancy, North Carolina Yearly Meeting Phil Baisley, Evangelical Friends - Eastern Region Plenary discussion to follow
12:30 p.m.	Lunch Free time (tour of Earlham and Richmond for those interested)
3:30	Small Groups continue with assigned tasks
4:30	Reports from Small Groups in Plenary Session
5:00	Free time
6:00	Dinner
7:30	Forum on resources for outreach Harvey Gillman, London Yearly Meeting
9:00	Hymn Sing
9:30	Worship - programmed, Jan Hodson, Indiana Yearly Meeting

Sunday, December 9

8:00 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00	<u>SUMMARY REPORT BY PARTICIPANT/OBSERVERS</u> Jonathan Vogel-Borne, New England Yearly Meeting Nancy Wood, Indiana Yearly Meeting
10:00	Consultation Evaluation and Guidance for Future Consultations
10:45	Break
11:00	Closing Worship
12:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00	Departure

FRIENDS CONSULTATION ON EVANGELISM

LIST OF ATTENDERS

Beth Allen**London Yearly Meeting**

Beth Allen of London Yearly Meeting is a lifelong Quaker, married to an Anglican priest; they have four children. She is the General Secretary - Designate of Quaker Home Service, part of London Yearly Meeting's central offices. Her particular interests are spirituality, ecumenical relationships, Quaker history, and knitting.

Phil Baisley**Evangelical Friends Church - Eastern Region****Doris Blossom****New York Yearly Meeting**

"I was often called 'different,' but this 'difference' has taught me respect for each individual. It has helped me work with those society has rejected and those called handicapped. The greatest handicap is feeling separated from God - not knowing God is the essence of all being." I am clerk of the Advancement Committee of New York Yearly Meeting.

David Brock**Indiana Yearly Meeting****P.V. Chandy****Western Yearly Meeting**

Born in Kerala, South India. Graduated from Earlham School of Religion and Vanderbilt University. Pastored in Port Antonio, Jamaica, and Fairview (Ohio). Now pastor of Chicago Friends Meeting, and also does pastoral counseling in a shopping center on south side of Chicago.

Stephanie Crumley-Effinger **Indiana Yearly Meeting**

Stephanie Crumley-Effinger, member of West Richmond Friends Meeting, is in her fifth year directing Quaker and campus ministries at Earlham College. A recorded minister of Indiana Yearly Meeting, she has also served in campus ministry at Wilmington College and on the ministry team at West Richmond Friends Meeting. Married to Michael, a carpenter, she has two children and one on the way. Stephanie is concerned to find ways to more adequately share a Quaker Christianity that features both hospitality and particularity. Stephanie is currently clerk of the the Quaker Hill Foundation Board.

Judith Dancy**North Carolina Yearly Meeting**

Second-year Earlham School of Religion student working towards M.Div. degree. Assistant editor of Quaker Life. The fully human, fully divine Jesus Christ is my new, constant companion. As my faith deepens, I am exploring ways of sharing the good news with others.

Harvey Gillman**London Yearly Meeting**

Born into a Jewish family, Harvey Gillman is a member of Ealing Meeting, West London, England. After teaching French and Italian, he became publication secretary for Quaker Peace and Service and is now Outreach Secretary of Quaker Home Service. He gave the Swarthmore Lecture 'A Minority of One' in May 1988 and published 'A Light that is Shining,' an introduction to British Quakerism, at the end of 1988. His Outreach Manual was published in 1990. He is also a poet.

Robert Gosney**North Carolina Yearly Meeting Conservative**

I am a 45 year old man living with my wife, two daughters, and a recently acquired kitten all together in a house we spend a lot of time fixing up or repairing. I work as a child welfare social worker with a very rural county department of social service. I am an active member of Rich Square Monthly Meeting of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative). I enjoy vegetable gardening and reading, particularly "boring stuff in ethics," as one daughter says. I think it important that we cultivate our relationship with self, others, and nature in and through the living God.

Ken Haase**New England Yearly Meeting**

Ken Haase is a member of Beacon Hill Monthly Meeting in New England Yearly Meeting and an active attender at Fresh Pond Meeting (a gathering in the process of becoming a monthly meeting). He serves as Clerk of New England Yearly Meeting's Ministry and Counsel. Professionally, he is a Professor of Media Arts and Sciences at MIT in Cambridge.

James Heulton**Southwest Yearly Meeting**

I am 36 years old, am very happily married to my wife, Tyla, and we have two sons: Adam, 5, and Mark, 3. I have served as pastor of the Sacramento Friends Community Church for the last eight years. This church is a part of Southwest Yearly Meeting. We generally have between 60 and 70 attending on Sundays. My parents were members of the Pacific Yearly Meeting, and I attended with them from about age 5 until I was 18. Near the end of my junior year in high school, I turned from a fairly liberal, Eastern religious viewpoint to faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Soon afterward, I began doing evangelical work in the Jesus Movement. Eventually, I came back to Friends, becoming a member of the church I am presently pastoring. I received a B.S. in History from California State University, Sacramento, and an M.A. in Cross-cultural Studies from Fuller Theological Seminary.

Jan Hodson**Indiana Yearly Meeting****Susan Hubbard****Intermountain Yearly Meeting**

I am a 46 year old married psychotherapist in private practice. My daughter is 20, and my son 13. I am also a Quaker singer-songwriter and have completed two professional audio-tapes of my music. I grew up in New York City and have lived in Boulder, Colorado, for almost 20 years.

Dean Johnson**Evangelical Friends Church - Eastern Region**

My name is Dean Johnson, 60 years old, married, father of four, grandfather of six. Member of Boston Heights Friends Monthly Meeting for over 32 years. Boston Heights is in Northern Ohio District of Eastern Region Friends. In monthly meeting, have held positions of Elder, overseer, monthly meeting clerk, Sunday School supt., Sunday School teacher, youth sponsor, and bus driver, not always all at the same time. Have coordinated Friends Disaster Service since 1974. I love people and want to share God's love expressed to us through the redemptive power of Jesus Christ. Am looking forward to the Consultation for learning new ways to share.

Jim LeShana**Southwest Yearly Meeting**

I've been married to Jeanine for 8 1/2 years, and we have been blessed with two boys: Jason (5 1/2 years) and Jonathan (2 years). I serve as an Associate Pastor at Rose Drive Friends Church in Yorba Linda, California, and am working toward a doctoral degree in church history from the University of California at Riverside.

Sam Legg**Baltimore Yearly Meeting**

Member Stony Run Monthly Meeting, Baltimore Yearly Meeting. Quaker involvement: AFSC - domestic and foreign, QUNO - Geneva, Friends Journal, various Friends schools as teacher and administrator.

David Male**Lake Erie Yearly Meeting**

I am a birthright and a convinced Friend who is always searching for ways to share my experience of God's love in ways which do not arouse prejudice, and to discover the underlying unity among people who seem to disagree. By trade I am a math teacher.

Johan Maurer**Friends World Committee for Consultation**

Born in Oslo, Norway, in 1953. Got involved with Quakers while studying Russian in college. Since 1983 have served Friends World Committee for Consultation in ministries of visitation, encouragement, Quaker community-building; since 1986 have also staffed FWCC's Right Sharing of World Resources program. Live in Wilmington, Ohio, with wife Judy and sons Luke and Eliot.

Mary Moehlman**Philadelphia Yearly Meeting****Cynthia Moore****Intermountain Yearly Meeting**

I joined unprogrammed Friends because they lived their faith, something I hadn't found as an Episcopalian. Christianity participated in, even! God was something within me which encompassed all. After several years of membership, I discovered our diversities! Study, reading, and visitation leads me to seek greater understanding among us.

Tom Moore**Philadelphia Yearly Meeting**

Six feet, 5 and 1/2 inches tall. Member and Clerk of Overseers of Valley Friends Meeting (near Valley Forge in Philadelphia's western suburbs). Member Yearly Meeting Outreach Committee. Born into Presbyterianism, spent youth as a Congregationalist. Joined Friends in Berkeley, lived 23 years in Kansas. Regards self as a Christo-centric Quaker Universalist.

Jim Newby**Indiana Yearly Meeting**

I have lived in Richmond, Indiana, since 1979, when I became Director of the Yokefellow Academy, a school devoted to the development of education and renewal programs in local congregations. In 1987, the Academy merged with the Earlham School of Religion, becoming the D. Elton Trueblood Academy for Applied Christianity, and I became a member of the faculty. In 1990, I was named editor of Quaker Life magazine, a position I hold along with my faculty appointment at ESR. I am married to Elizabeth and have one daughter, Alicia Marie, a freshman at Hope College, Holland, Michigan.

Marilyn Neyer**New England Yearly Meeting**

Member of New England Yearly Meeting, where I helped start a new unprogrammed meeting in Cambridge, MA, shortly before coming to Earlham School of Religion as a student in 1989. Interim Director of Quaker Hill Conference Center during a time of transition here. Married to John Brady, also an ESR student. Mother of Joel, aged 2. Concerned to promote Christ-centered unprogrammed worship.

Lawrence Ross**North Carolina Yearly Meeting****Lois Forbes Sexton****Baltimore Yearly Meeting**

Currently member of Gunpowder Monthly Meeting, Sparks, Maryland, Baltimore Yearly Meeting. Experienced Quakerism as a birthright member of Raysville Monthly Meeting, Raysville, Indiana, Indiana Yearly Meeting, and Baltimore Monthly Meeting, Homewood,

Baltimore, Maryland, Baltimore Yearly Meeting. In fall of 1989, worked with another member of Gunpowder Meeting to hold seminar to seek ways to strengthen spiritual life and foster growth of small meetings in Baltimore Yearly Meeting. Married John Montgomery Sexton in 1954. Have three children and two grandchildren. Retired as head of Finance Department of Walters Art Gallery in 1988.

Curt Shaw

Indiana Yearly Meeting

Joe Snyder

North Pacific Yearly Meeting

I am associated with a "liberal" unprogrammed yearly meeting, but live in an isolated rural area, unable to attend Meeting regularly. Jesus Christ is the best news I ever heard. I am concerned that I/we do so poorly in sharing that good news.

Joe Stacey

Intermountain Yearly Meeting

I became a convinced Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative Friend in 1972 when I joined the Pasadena (CA) Monthly Meeting. In my years of spiritual growing, my concern has been with penal reform. Several worship groups have been started but short-lived due to inmate transfers. Currently, a concern toward the Navajo nation is developing.

Nancy Terrell

Wilmington Yearly Meeting

Nancy J. Terrell is 42, wife of Kenneth A. Terrell and mother of Douglas A. (18 years old). We live at 602 Johnson Road in New Vienna, Ohio, where Ken and Doug manage the family farm. Nancy is the office secretary for Wilmington Yearly Meeting.

Jonathan Vogel-Borne

New England Yearly Meeting

I was born into a Quaker family in Pasadena, California. Pasadena has two Friends meetings and one Friends church, representing liberal independent, conservative (Wilburite), and Friends United Meeting Quakers. From an early age, I have experienced both dismay and delight over our religious society's fragmentation as well as its rich diversity. My life (and ministry) is dedicated to discovering, living-out, and proclaiming God's unique call to spiritual vitality that will unite Friends and all people of faith into a blessed community - a community that ushers in the new heaven and the new earth. In this process, I have been active in wider Friends organizations such as the Friends World Committee for Consultation, the 1985 World Gathering of Young Friends, and Young Friends of North America. My spouse, Minga Claggett-Borne, and I have recently left the position of resident Friends for the Friends Meeting at Cambridge where we served for five years. I now practice a livelihood as a free-lance graphic artist.

Nancy Wood

Indiana Yearly Meeting

Prior to pastoring at First Friends (Richmond, IN), I was Director of Service Learning at Earlham College, supervising community service of 650 student volunteers. I experience my calling in the areas of personal and institutional healing, ministry development, and evangelism. I am also finishing my ministry degree at Earlham School of Religion.

An Historical Perspective on Friends Evangelism

Jim LeShana

There is an old story told about two brothers, Joe and Fred, who used to go out fishing together on a big lake near their home town. They would rent a boat, take it out to the middle of the lake, and then they would enjoy the fellowship, even if they didn't catch many fish. One morning, they decided to take their boat out to a more secluded area on the far side of the lake - and it was a **fantastic** fishing spot! A fisherman's dream! They each caught the limit, and then decided to head back home as victorious sportsmen. On the way home, Joe asked Fred, "Oh, by the way, did you remember to mark that spot where the fishing was so good?" "Of course," Fred responded with some exasperation, "I put an 'X' right on the side of the boat." "Are you serious?!" Joe cried. "I can't believe you did that! What if we take a different boat next time?!"

Not unlike these two brothers, I believe that the Society of Friends has proven to be outstanding "fishers of men" on occasions in the past. However, if we are not careful, that heritage can become easy to forget and even more difficult to emulate or repeat. It's not simply a matter of failing to remember how to win people to Christ. As time continues to pass, we risk losing sight of the fact that, like the disciples in Jesus' day and the Quakers in Fox's day, evangelizing and fishing for men is a vital and essential part of what God calls Friends to do!

For some people, evangelism has become a forgotten Quaker distinctive. Many in society are not aware of our past. As Elton Trueblood pointed out: "According to the popular conception, Quakers are an exceedingly mild and harmless people, largely given to silence, totally unaggressive, with a religion that is neither evangelical in content nor evangelistic in practice."¹

Although evangelism has been at the heart of Friends activity during their times of greatest vitality, I believe the task of winning people to Christ has even become a non-issue for many Quakers today - their lifestyles indicate that it holds no place on their list of priorities. As Johan Maurer put it, "the traditional attitude of many Friends can be summed up in one sentence: 'Quakers do not proselytize.'"² At the same time, I have also observed that there are others who are rediscovering our Friends heritage as "Publishers of Truth" - men and women who are attempting to make a difference in their worlds with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Probably many of you who are here for this consultation would fall into this latter group, and yet I also believe it can be helpful for each of us to be reminded of past examples and to be encouraged to be about that business of spreading the Gospel that God has called us to perform today and in the future.

In this paper, my aim is to share what I believe to be an exciting legacy of boldness and compassion that was distinctively Quaker, an historical perspective on Friends evangelism, followed by a few remarks and a challenge regarding a vision for the days ahead. Initially, however, it may be helpful to address some more fundamental questions regarding this topic, specifically: "What is evangelism?" and "What is *not* evangelism?"

¹D. Elton Trueblood, The People Called Quakers, Harper and Row, New York, 1966, p. 1.

²Johan Maurer, "Towards a Quaker View of Evangelism," Quaker Life, Series XXVIII, Number 3, Richmond, Indiana, April, 1987, p. 8.

First of all, it is important to understand that part of evangelism is that which has been called "Social Action."³ This has been a strength for Friends in the past. It involves getting outside of ourselves in ministry to others, attempting to meet felt needs and sharing God's love in action. It has been said that "people don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care." Establishing loving relationships, then, and demonstrating genuine concern, authenticates the verbal message one gives. It becomes what Michael Cassidy has called the "presence" part of evangelism.⁴

While social concern for others is necessary in fulfilling the Greatest Commandments (Matthew 22:38), it falls short of sufficiency in responding to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). To be complete, evangelism involves proclaiming the good news. This, too, has been a strength for Friends. "Whoever preaches the gospel," wrote Robert Barclay, "is really an evangelist."⁵ He also offered what Trueblood called an "unapologetic defense of proselytizing" when he stated in his Apology, "We desire therefore all that come among us to be proselyted."⁶ As the ultimate expression of love, it requires ministering to others in both word and deed. It means telling people about Jesus Christ and the message of salvation, with the goal of converting and enfolded them into His Church. As Peter Wagner explained, "Evangelism is not only reaching people with the gospel message and bringing them to a decision for Christ, it is making them disciples."⁷

Although the objective is to bear fruit, authentic evangelism is not contingent upon the "success" or results. "One can evangelize without winning souls," Cassidy explains, "though winning souls is the aim of evangelism."⁸ This leaves the ultimate task of persuasion and conviction to God's Spirit in a person's life. Doug Gwyn stated this concept well, when writing about some of the first converts to Quakerism. "They were convinced not by the *preached* Word," he observed, "but by the *inward* Word, to which Quaker preaching turned them."⁹

With these thoughts in mind then, evangelism is **not** social action alone - which is hopeless. But neither is it proclamation alone - this is loveless. Instead, expressing God's love "with actions and in truth" (I John 3:18) demands that followers of Christ participate in both the verbal and nonverbal aspects of evangelism.

Some other significant misconceptions about evangelism also merit attention. First of all, evangelism is not synonymous with "church growth," although growing churches may be both a contributing cause and a result of evangelistic efforts. Neither may evangelism

³An excellent article on this topic is by Luis Palau, "Evangelism is Social Action," Evangelical Friend, Vol. XXIII, No. 11/12, The Barclay Press, Newberg, Oregon, July/August, 1990, pp. 2-3, and 18.

⁴Michael Cassidy, "The Nature of Evangelism," The New Face Of Evangelicalism: An International Symposium On The Lausanne Covenant, C.Rene Padilla, ed., InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, 1976, p.76.

⁵Barclay's Apology in Modern English, Dean Freiday, editor, 1967, p. 213.

⁶Trueblood, p. 5.

⁷C.Peter Wagner, Leading Your Church to Growth, Regal Books, Ventura, California, 1984, p.21.

⁸Cassidy, p.70-71.

⁹Douglas Gwyn, Apocalypse of the Word: The Life and Message of George Fox, Friends United Press, Richmond, Indiana, 1986, p.67.

properly be called "revival," which actually refers to the awakening of believers to a renewed commitment to the Lordship of Christ in their lives. In this sense, like church growth, revival may be involved at both the root and the fruit of evangelism. In addition, it is also true that the ministry of evangelism is not something to be avoided as "anti-spiritual" or "anti-Friends." It certainly is not something that Quakers have avoided throughout history.

Although other distinctives have been better documented, Friends have been active in evangelism since their earliest beginnings. Since many are aware of the participation and prominence of Friends in social action, the rest of this paper will focus on the less-well-known, but equally important aspects of Friends evangelism through proclamation. Obviously, any attempt at comprehension would produce a massive study, far beyond the scope of what we are able to cover in these pages. Instead, this essay will provide verbal snapshots of Friends activity, taken from each of the four centuries of the existence of Quakerism.

The first 40 years of the Friends Movement were actually characterized by a time of great evangelistic impulse, regardless of the response by the hearers. The early Quakers proclaimed the Good News with boldness, clarity, and regularity. In Trueblood's words, "All tried to make converts and they tried all the time."¹⁰ Any attempt to understand this zeal for communicating the gospel properly begins with George Fox.

As you will recall, Fox grew up during a bloody, corrupt and intolerant age. Bribery was commonplace among the religious leaders, and people were persecuted and even killed in the name of religion. What Fox observed was a dead religion - people jumping through the hoops of being religious, without demonstrating a change in their lives through an ongoing relationship with Jesus Christ. He longed for something more and began looking for it.

Fox's search came to an end when he met Christ in a personal and meaningful way. His spiritual emptiness found fulfillment in the One "who could speak to his condition." Not only did his "heart leap for joy" as a result,¹¹ but he began ministering to others the grace of God that he had experienced. News this good was not meant to be kept to one's self! He "had a deep concern to help men find a genuine religious experience," Walter Williams explained. Having "found the living Christ. . .the winning of souls to Christ was now [Fox's] one consuming passion."¹² I'm sure that he had no idea in those early years that he was starting a new denomination or sect. All he knew was that he had found the answer to his search in Jesus Christ, and there were others in his world who needed the same answer.

In describing his own call to ministry, Fox wrote in decidedly evangelistic terms:

I was sent to turn people from darkness to the Light, that they might receive Christ Jesus; for to as many as should receive Him in His Light, I saw He

¹⁰Trueblood, p.5.

¹¹The Journal of George Fox, Rufus M. Jones, editor, Friends United Press, Richmond, Indiana, 1976, p.82.

¹²Walter R. Williams, The Rich Heritage of Quakerism, edited reprint with Epilogue by Paul Anderson, The Barclay Press, Newberg, Oregon, 1987, p. 1.

would give power to become the sons of God; which power I had obtained by receiving Christ.¹³

George Fox was bold and outspoken in sharing his faith with anyone who would listen, and even with those who tried not to hear. He interrupted worship services, preached in the streets, and confronted jailors and judges alike with what he called the "everlasting gospel." While in custody on his way to imprisonment in Leicester during the harvest season, Fox had to pass through the open fields and towns. Traveling by so many people, he once again took the opportunity to declare "the Truth to them" with his open Bible in his hands.¹⁴ In York, he was once hurled down the cathedral steps into the snow but left with the consolation that "several were convinced there."¹⁵ After being released by a judge near Patrington, Fox went back to the town where he had been arrested, found a place to stay, and immediately began ministering again. As he recorded in his journal, "Presently after I had a great meeting at the man's house where I lay, . . . many were convinced of the Lord's everlasting truth, who stand faithful witnesses of it to this day."¹⁶ Whether in bondage or at liberty, he exercised the freedom to warn people to repent and directed them to Christ.

On another occasion, George Fox preached to a schoolmaster and his family. Supposing that he had lost his senses, they somehow managed to lock him up in one of the rooms of their house. It is difficult to know what they thought they were going to do with their own, private, crazy preacher (my wife probably feels that same way sometimes), but they eventually let him out. Rather than leaving the situation as quickly as he could, or being afraid that they would again mistake his zeal for madness, Fox said that he stayed and "exhorted them to repentance, and directed them to the Light of Christ Jesus, that through it they might come unto Him and be saved."¹⁷

Without a doubt, George Fox was motivated to evangelize and win his world for Christ! He saw the needs around him, and responded with zeal, out of compassion. After his mistreatment on the snowy cathedral steps at York, Fox said that he was "burthened with [the people's] profession without possession," and after visiting a town where the people were hardened to the gospel, he "mourned over them."¹⁸ He ached for those who needed to be saved.

George Fox's vision for the lost came into clearer focus when he saw "a great people to be gathered" from Pendle Hill in 1652. Shortly thereafter, about a thousand Seekers gathered to hear Fox outside a little chapel at Firbank Fell. He preached for over three hours, "and many hundreds, including all the leaders of the Seekers, were convinced by his message."¹⁹ These conversions proved to be pivotal, as a number of the leaders began to follow in the steps of Fox and spread the gospel message around the countryside. By the spring of 1654, the Lord had raised up almost seventy people, "the Valiant Sixty" as they

¹³The Journal of George Fox, p. 102.

¹⁴Elfrida Vipont, The Story of Quakerism, 1652-1952, The Bannisdale Press, London, 1954, p. 88.

¹⁵The Journal of George Fox, p. 138.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 144-145.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 152.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 138 and 131.

¹⁹Vipont, p.30.

have been called, to preach the good news far and wide.²⁰ Writing to these and other "Friends in the ministry" in 1656, Fox challenged the itinerants to a mission of "spreading the Truth abroad, awakening the witness, confounding deceit, [and] gathering" which would answer "that of God in every one."²¹

The commitment of these early Friends to share their faith was matched only by that of their spiritual leader, and they ventured forth sacrificially to proclaim the gospel as often as possible. On one memorable occasion, young Edward Burrough walked into a town and saw a crowd gathered for a wrestling match. A brute of great strength was taking on all comers, and so the youthful Quaker stepped into the ring to face the champion. However, having recognized this as an opportunity to preach, Burrough turned to the expectant crowd and began to proclaim the gospel and call them to repentance.²²

The message of the Quakers was met with a mixed response. While some embraced it, others were indifferent or even hostile. In 1653, Mary Fisher and Elizabeth Williams were arrested at Cambridge for their missionary efforts. They were sentenced to be stripped to the waist and flogged "until the blood ran." The following year, two other young girls received a similar punishment from the authorities at Oxford. It is difficult to discern if anyone was convinced by their preaching, but shortly thereafter, John Camm did convert Thomas Loe in Oxford, who was instrumental in the conviction of William Penn.²³

It did not take long for the scope of the Quaker missionary enterprise to take on a world perspective. In 1655, William Caton and John Stubbs travelled to Holland, believing that they were led "to publish His eternal truth in their streets whether they could understand or no." The next year, Caton returned to that country and tried to cross the language barrier by preaching in Latin and later learning to speak Dutch.²⁴

On another occasion, undaunted by previous persecution and seemingly insurmountable odds, Mary Fisher felt called to preach to the Sultan of Turkey. The British consul at Smyrna, however, thought this was too dangerous a journey for a young woman to make by herself without knowing the language, so they put her on a ship to return to England. But the story does not end there. At the first available stop, Mary disembarked and set out alone on a six hundred mile overland trip to Adrianople. Upon her arrival, she was able to gain a hearing with the Sultan and proclaim the gospel, returning home some time later.²⁵ While Fisher was able to safely complete this journey, other missionaries were not so fortunate. It was only a few years later that the first Quaker martyrs were hung in Boston for their gospel labors.²⁶

This sense of urgency among Quaker missionaries and the willingness to risk their lives was motivated by more than simply a desire to be "radical." From George Fox, to the

²⁰Williams writes that "Ernest E. Taylor lists some sixty-six persons who had part in the task. Fifty-four of them were men; twelve were women." Williams, p.51, and The Journal of George Fox, p.201.

²¹Trueblood, p.37.

²²Vipont, p. 46.

²³Ibid., p.44.

²⁴Ibid., p.50.

²⁵Williams, p.59-60.

²⁶Elbert Russell, The History of Quakerism, Friends United Press, Richmond, Indiana, reprinted in 1979, p. 42.

"Valiant Sixty," to many other men and women, the burning passion of these first Friends was to win what they perceived to be a lost generation. Considering all of the difficulties and distances involved, Walter Williams was justified in his amazement at a minute from a Friends Meeting in Skipton in 1660, which reads:

We have received certain information from Friends in London of the great work and service of the Lord beyond the seas, in several parts and regions, as Germany, America, Virginia, and many other places as Florence, Mantua, Palatine, Tuscany, Italy, Rome, Turkey, Jerusalem, France, Geneva, Norway, Barbados, Bermuda, Antigua, Surinam, Newfoundland, through all which Friends have passed in the service of the Lord, and divers other places, countries, islands, and nations; and over and among many nations of the Indians, in which they have had service for the Lord, and have published His Name and declared the everlasting Gospel of peace unto them that have been afar off, that they might be brought nigh unto God.²⁷

The evangelistic efforts of these Friends in the seventeenth century were followed by a period that some have dubbed the "Dark Ages." Standard views of eighteenth century Quakerism tend to emphasize the institutionalization of an ingrown organization, characterized by quietism in worship, fears of "creaturely activity," and an absence of evangelism. However, contrary to the traditional interpretation,²⁸ recent research suggests that during the Great Awakening in the middle of the century, Friends were more than casual spectators. Rather than a monolithic organization, individuals with diverse opinions and behaviors comprised the Quaker meetings. While there were some, no doubt, who opposed the revival and its evangelists, others supported and encouraged its development by their participation in it, which may give cause for rethinking the rest of the century, as well.

Some Friends gave tacit approval during these years to the methods of the Awakening's chief evangelist, George Whitefield (who was also compared in mannerism and zeal to George Fox). They participated in large revival assemblies, invited Whitefield into their homes to sleep, eat, and hold evangelistic meetings, and they read and discussed his published sermons. Others were more blatant in their support. The youth in Philadelphia were "very constant in attendance [to hear Whitefield] and much pleased."²⁹ The evangelist was invited to speak at Friends gatherings, including meetings for worship and funerals, and he converted (and even baptized) a number of presumably nominal Quakers, who then continued or began active involvement in the Society of Friends. Such was the case with Joseph Oxley, a well-respected Friends minister who remained a Quaker until his death, even though his conversion came through Whitefield's preaching.³⁰ The dramatic reduction of Friends membership roles a decade after the Awakening may be due in part to a misunderstanding and conservative response by those in leadership, fearfully reacting to what they perceived to be a loss of Quaker traditions.

²⁷Williams, p.60.

²⁸For the best rendering of the traditional perspective of Friends response to the Great Awakening, see Frederick B. Tolles, Quakers and the Atlantic Culture, The MacMillan Company, New York, 1960.

²⁹Ibid., p. 97.

³⁰Norman Penney, ed., The Journal of Friends Historical Society, Vol. 10, Herman Newman, Philadelphia, 1913, p. 130.

Among the most convincing Quaker testimonies regarding Whitefield came from a letter by Richard Hockley. "If we believe the gospel," he wrote, "we must. . . without enthusiasm say that the Doctrine of the great reformer Mr. W[hitefield] is inculcating of the Spirit of God being felt is true."³¹ In correspondence to another Quaker, Whitefield's friend and frequent host, Anthony Benezet, spoke highly of the evangelist and reiterated their mutual concern for propagating the gospel. "I spent some time yesterday with G[eorge] Whitefield," he reported,

who appears in a very good disposition in meekness and universal love; the accmpt [account?] he gave me of the sincere desires after God which prevails in many in Gt. Britain. . . was agreeable. The Gospel must and will be preached to every creature under heaven, one way or other and it will prevail except choked with covetousness, pride, the love of ease, of self, or lust of other things.³²

In addition to at least some favorable response to Whitefield and the Great Awakening, there are also noteworthy examples of Quaker involvement in spreading the gospel in the eighteenth century. Many Quaker itinerants ministered with zeal and may have indirectly benefited from the renewed interest in spiritual matters on the part of the society as a whole. In 1742, John Churchman related a story that sounded similar to those of other revivalists of the period:

We got to the place near the time proposed, and found a considerable gathering of people, that I wondered how it could be in so short a time, not more than three hours warning; they were preparing seats, by laying boards on blocks in a large new house, and soon sat down in an orderly manner. . . none of our profession [were present] among them except the Friend and his wife who accompanied me, and two others who joined us on . . . the way. . . . [The Lord] furnished me with wisdom and strength to declare his word to the people, among whom there were some very tender seekers after the true knowledge of God. The doctrine of truth flowed freely towards them, the universality of the love of God being set forth.³³

Another Quaker itinerant minister during these years, Thomas Shillitoe, was also active in evangelism during the early part of the nineteenth century. According to Williams, he was "used of God to reach sin-hardened people for whose salvation others had abandoned hope," and "his heart burned with zeal to save lost men."³⁴ Shillitoe was born in London but travelled widely in both England and America proclaiming God's truth. A strong evangelical, he emphasized scriptural teachings and topics such as Christ's miraculous birth and atoning death.

³¹The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, Vol. 27, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, 1903, p. 324.

³²George S. Brooks, Friend Anthony Benezet, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1937, p. 96.

³³"An Account of the Gospel Labours and Christian Experiences of that Faithful Minister of Christ, John Churchman," The Friends' Library, Vol. 6, Joseph Rakestraw, Philadelphia, 1842, pp. 195-196.

³⁴Williams, p. 145.

Although the focus of attention for nineteenth century studies has often concentrated on the denominational splits in the early and middle of the period, evangelism was actually taking on a renewed place of prominence among the ministry priorities of Friends. As with Thomas Shillitoe, other evangelical Friends were meeting Christ in a personal way and actively sharing the gospel. In the first half of the century, Anna Braithwaite, Benjamin Seeböhm, Robert Lindsey, and a number of others began evangelistic travelling ministries, believing that it was necessary to call people to turn to the light of Christ, and accept Him as Lord for salvation. They desired to follow God's leading regarding when, where, and to whom they preached. On one unique occasion near his New Jersey home, Stephen Grellet believed that God was directing him to preach out in the woods "just to logs and boards." Some years later, a man heard his voice, rushed toward him, and reminded him of his forest sermon. He then exclaimed:

I have found you at last. . . I was at work in those woods, and came to fetch those tools that you saw. Surprised to hear someone speaking, I listened to all you said. I was a swearing, godless fellow, but your sermon went to my heart and wrought my conversion, and now I am a missionary for Jesus Christ.³⁵

The influence of Joseph John Gurney during this period has been called "epochal."³⁶ While he "forcefully preached the evangelical doctrines as set forth in the Holy Scriptures," he was committed to the Quaker emphasis of God's Spirit bringing a person to true conversion. As he rhetorically asked, "Who that is engaged in preaching the gospel either at home or abroad, can deny the advantage of being able to appeal to the light of God's law appearing in the hearts of his hearers?" For him, conversions do result from preaching, but they are also a gift from God.³⁷

In the latter half of the century, Quaker concerns for evangelism became more general with the onset of the Third Great Awakening in America. Sparked by the Spirit and kindled by men and women, revival fires burned bright in the hearts of many Friends. Various meetings claimed to have experienced the first outpouring of the Spirit, but one of the most notable occurrences was the one prompted by a special meeting for youth at Indiana Yearly Meeting in 1860. News of the awakening began to spread, as the Philadelphia-based Friends Review indicates:

"Our Yearly Meeting this year," remarks a valued and faithful correspondent, "has been unusually large and it is the general opinion that we never before had such evidences of the prevalence of real, vital religion amongst us. It has been spoken of as a genuine revival. . . thanks have ascended that we have lived to see this day."³⁸

Revival fires spread from this meeting in Indiana, and from other locales, so that thousands of Friends were awakened from their slumber of quietism and challenged anew to a vital

³⁵Ibid., p. 151.

³⁶Ibid., p. 194.

³⁷Ibid., and Joseph John Gurney, Observations on the Distinguishing Views and Practices of the Society of Friends, 9th edition, Josiah Fletcher, Haymarket, Norwich, 1848, p. 9 and 184.

³⁸"Indiana Yearly Meeting 1860," Friends' Review, Vol. XIX, No. 7, Philadelphia, pp. 104-105.

relationship with their Lord Jesus Christ. One of the results was a fresh and pervasive zeal for evangelism, not seen since the days of Fox. On the campus of Earlham College in 1866, there were twenty young men who acknowledged Christ as Lord in one term alone. The "students' prayer meetings gradually increased in numbers and interest," and "souls became awakened to their sense of need," so that by the end of the year "there were but few who did not acknowledge the pardoning love of Christ."³⁹

The first report of emotionalism and religious excitement came from Walnut Ridge, Indiana in 1868. Evangelist Nathan Frame explained that "the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon the people, so that there was not room for the sinners that were convicted at the seekers' bench." The event was accompanied by tears and cries for mercy, and "those who were converted immediately gathered around their unconverted friends," pleading with them to repent and receive Christ.⁴⁰

By 1880, revival and evangelistic fervor had broken out from South Glens Falls, New York, to Haviland, Kansas, to Ypsilanti, Michigan. Friends journals and autobiographies are full of stirring accounts. An example is Rhoda Blackledge's report from Damascus, Ohio, in 1873. She describes a visit by the Quaker evangelist, Amos Kenworthy, in which he preached a simple sermon one night that "seemed to cut into the heart." Many came under conviction, and more than sixty people went on record as having experienced conversion.⁴¹

Some of those converted during the awakening among Friends were regular church attenders. Such was the case with Libni Kelly, a 70 year old birthright Quaker who made a surprising confession upon becoming a Christian. During all those years in silent meetings, rather than worshipping, he had really been inventing a better rat trap and a device to catch hogs (for which he later received patents).⁴²

But church-goers were not the only ones finding Christ through the ministry of Friends. At the weekly "stock sales" in London, Ohio, in 1875, a great concourse of people regularly assembled. This drew the attention of Nathan and Esther Frame, who went there to hold some evangelistic services. They reported that "scores of men and women who had lived under the shadow of the churches all their lives" were now "earnestly asking. . . 'What must I do to be saved?'" People came from miles around, the altar was crowded with penitents each night, and many of them gave testimony of receiving Christ. One father in the town was asked if his son was yet converted. He remarked, "No, he is not, and I think hell will freeze over before he is." But that very night, his son committed his life to Christ, and there was such a marked change in him that the father decided to find out for himself what was happening in those Quaker meetings. According to Frame, the father came, "and the spirit of the Lord reached his heart," and in a few days he, too, "found the

³⁹Allen Jay, Autobiography of Allen Jay, John C. Winston Co., Philadelphia, 1910, pp. 110-111.

⁴⁰Nathan T. Frame and Esther G. Frame, Reminiscences of Nathan T. Frame and Esther G. Frame, Britton Printing, Cleveland, 1907, pp. 60-61.

⁴¹Lydia M. William-Cammack and Truman C. Kenworthy, Life and Works of Amos M. Kenworthy, Nelson Printing, Richmond, Indiana, 1918, pp. 49-50.

⁴²Jacob Baker, Incidents of My Life and Life Work of 84 Years, Nicholson Printing, Richmond, Indiana, 1911, pp. 52-53.

Saviour." Ten years later, the evangelist reported that both father and son were still "the most faithful Christians among the converts."⁴³

While not all Friends during this period (or any other, for that matter) participated in evangelistic efforts, the revival seemed to influence many to help their friends and neighbors find Christ without fear of "creaturely activity." Outstanding evangelists such as David Updegraff, the Frames, and Eli and Sybil Jones were not alone in attempting to save the lost. In addition, a number of new methods, adapted from other denominations, came into use during these years. For example: praying for conversions; public testimonies; the "mourner's bench" at Walnut Ridge in 1867; "altar calls" at Bear Creek Quarterly Meeting in 1877; home meetings "in every other house" in Plainfield in 1877; visiting the homes of even unchurched families; hired pastors to care for the new "converts" and gathered believers; and the first "Evangelistic Committee" originated in Iowa in 1883.

Another result of the awakening was a new global vision of the need for people to find Christ. Missionary target groups included American Indians, people who were moving to new territories in the west, and those in foreign countries. Before long, "every Yearly Meeting assumed a mission field."⁴⁴ Some startling statistics are reported from these years. In the new territory of the Cherokee Strip in Oklahoma, the Friends Meeting there quickly grew from only 3 or 4 birthright Quakers to 250 people, exploding in membership from zero to 1150 members in only six years.⁴⁵ Louis and Sarah Street from Indiana felt called to become Friends missionaries in Madagascar in 1869, and only three years later there were 59 congregations and 15,000 worshippers in the Quaker district.⁴⁶

While the nineteenth century gave birth to a special awakening among Friends, the twentieth century has seen continued emphasis on evangelism, particularly through missions and starting new churches. Regarding outreach through missions, a number of new "fields" have been worked in by Friends. From Alaska to Peru, and from the Inner City in Long Beach, California, to East Africa, Quakers have been active in attempting to evangelize and spread the gospel among new people groups. In 1956, one of the stated objectives of the new Association of Evangelical Friends (the forerunner of the Evangelical Friends International), was to "promote revival throughout Quakerdom and the speedy evangelization of the world." Echoing this vision, the "Evangelical Friends Mission" began in 1970 with the purpose of communicating "the gospel of Jesus Christ through 'helping to build the Church by missionary outreach in any culture or country where evangelical Friends are already working or wherever the Holy Spirit leads in opening new doors.'"⁴⁷ Other groups of Friends have also attempted to maintain an evangelistic thrust through missions. Certainly, encouraging a world-wide perspective was part of the aim of the International Friends Conference on Evangelism held in Guatemala in 1987. Writing back in 1916, Henry T. Hodgkin described the missionary enterprise of English Friends,

⁴³Frame, pp. 159-163.

⁴⁴David C. Le Shana, Quakers in California: The Effects of 19th Century Revivalism on Western Quakerism, The Barclay Press, Newberg, Oregon, 1969, p. 42.

⁴⁵Sheldon G. Jackson, Quaker Pioneers in the Cherokee Strip: The Life and Times of Alvin and Laura Coppock, Azusa Pacific University Press, Azusa, California, 1982, p. 50-51.

⁴⁶Russell, p. 439.

⁴⁷Williams, p. 212 and 268.

which illustrates well the desire of many Quakers during this century to proclaim the Gospel to those who are lost. "Today," he explained,

we see the Society of Friends, small though it be, grappling with great problems in China, in India, in Madagascar, in Constantinople and Syria, in Pemba and Ceylon. . . . Most of the people are in areas where no other Protestant mission is working, and a very large proportion would have no means of hearing the Gospel if it were not proclaimed by Friends. . . . Preaching by the spoken and written word, and by the lives of missionaries and native Christians, everywhere takes precedence. In meeting-houses and chapels, in the market and bazaar, camping among the villages, visiting in the zenanas, in Sakalava huts, in prisons and in yamens, to rich and poor alike the good news is made known.⁴⁸

Although the essential gospel message has remained the same, some new methods for attracting the unchurched to hear the good news have developed. From special youth retreats and summer camps, to Vacation Bible Schools, to personal evangelism through the use of surveys and tracts, Quakers in this century have attempted to make use of many means to win people to Christ. Perhaps one of the most revolutionary methods initiated by Friends has been a telemarketing approach to planting new churches. Developed by Norm Whan from Friends Church Southwest Yearly Meeting, he calls his program "The Phone's For You," with the stated purpose of being "partners with Jesus in reaching the lost." His plan makes use of the telephone and "the law of large numbers." In short, the more phone invitations a church makes, the greater the total number of positive responses, visitors, and eventual converts they will receive. Since Whan began his first Friends church using this method in 1986, his ministry has worked with over ninety denominations worldwide to plant and grow nearly five thousand churches. He believes that "tens of thousands of first time and significant decisions have been made for Jesus Christ" as a result of this ministry birthed among Friends.⁴⁹

In June of this year, Southwest Yearly Meeting began its newest church, Canyon Hills Friends, as a daughter congregation to Rose Drive Friends Church in Yorba Linda, California. The pastor for the new work, Larry Mendenhall, joined Rose Drive's staff nine months prior to the "birth" date, developed a leadership team, planned, prayed, and made contacts through the phone and mail with prospective attenders. Although 163 people left the mother church to help start the baby, they have averaged 365 attenders per Sunday, with the numbers continuing to increase this Fall. They averaged 369 attenders in October, 414 in November, and had a "high" attendance of 480. The evangelistic impact of these efforts have been significant. Mendenhall reports that at least sixty adults and twenty children indicated a first-time commitment to Christ in the congregation's first 26 weeks.⁵⁰

Whether it is through foreign missions, church planting, or by using other means for contacting the lost, there continue to be Friends in the twentieth century who are attempting to spread the gospel and win people to Christ. Indeed, these and other kinds of outreach efforts comprise an on-going theme throughout the last four centuries of Quaker activity.

⁴⁸Russell, p. 446-447.

⁴⁹An unpublished Fact Sheet and other materials are available from: Church Growth Development International, 420 W. Lambert, Suite E, Brea, California, 92621.

⁵⁰The information on Canyon Hills Friends Church was obtained through a private conversation with Larry Mendenhall.

After considering this overview of gospel labors from George Fox to the present, if someone is going to talk historically about Friends distinctives, they should include the topic of evangelism. As this study suggests, there have been outstanding examples of proclaiming the good news by and among Quakers in both the distant and recent past. But what about the future for Friends?

Recalling our two intrepid brothers, Joe and Fred, I am reminded of two fraternal fishermen from the New Testament. They were probably hard at work. Busy doing the things they had done for years. But then something happened to these brothers. They would never be the same again.

Peter and Andrew met Christ. Their response to Him altered the course of their future. They left mundane tasks of making a living, for meaningful roles to really live! The ripple effects of their faithfulness are still felt today.

In a similar way, I believe that the future of the Friends Church is dependent upon our response to Christ. If we desire to not simply survive to serve ourselves but thrive and grow into a church which continues to have an impact on our world, then we, too, must respond in humble obedience to our Lord. As we do this, our future as Friends is a bright one.⁵¹

What did Jesus say to the brothers? "Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19). We, too, need to "come" to Christ. Our future as a denomination, local church, or as individuals, is only as sure as our foundation on Him. We must "come" to Him personally for salvation, and He desires to be our source of strength and help. It is imperative that our meetings be Christ-centered and led by His Spirit. He is the "head" of the Church, and we need to acknowledge Him as such to keep moving forward together. To do this, we must consistently go to Him in prayer and search His Word for direction.

Like Peter and Andrew, we also need to "follow" Christ. If Friends are to faithfully accomplish this, we will attempt to imitate Jesus in at least three ways. First, we need to "*Go where the people are.*" We may not be able to go to everyone, but to be effective in caring for people, we must continue to search for whatever methods and means are helpful in reaching the people who are within our spheres of influence. Personal contacts through talking to people at work, telephoning, and reaching out to neighbors, are all examples of this process, as are church planting and missions.

Secondly, we must "*Go where the needs are.*" It's not enough to be in proximity to people, we need to see them through Christ's compassionate eyes. Instead of tradition-bound programs, we must have needs-based ministries which may vary from place to place and church to church. This is part of social action. In general, specialized ministries to couples, families, singles, youth, children, and to anyone who is hurting, seem to be some important ministry considerations. The third aspect of following Christ is to "*Go with the Good News.*" The most important "need" persons have in this life, is to come to know Jesus as their Savior and Lord. Ron Stansell quotes James Morris as saying, "if all men were rich. . . if all were educated. . . if all had sufficient income and lived under just governments, the great commission to 'go'. . . would continue to be imperative and

⁵¹Jim Le Shana, "Together in Obedience," Quaker Life, Series XXVIII, No. 5, Friends United Press, Richmond, Indiana, June, 1987, pp. 13-14. Much of the rest of the paper is adapted from this brief article.

urgent."⁵² The question remains, how can people hear the gospel and be turned to the light of Christ unless they are told? In all we do then, evangelism must become and remain our ministry priority.

As Friends come to Jesus and follow Him, then He will help us become faithful "fishers of men," making a difference in our world for His sake. Lives will be changed for eternity -- others' as well as our own. This is what God desires, and nothing is impossible with Him -- so, will it happen?! As it was with Peter and Andrew, and with George Fox, Joseph John Gurney, and many others, it is up to us! I believe the possibilities for the future of Friends are even more *exciting* than our past, as we respond and move forward together in obedience to Christ.

⁵²Ron Stansell, "Trends in Friends Missions," Evangelical Friend, Vol. XX, No. 9, The Barclay Press, Newberg, Oregon, May, 1987, p. 2.

EVANGELISM AMONG PROGRAMMED FRIENDS

David Brock

I just finished teaching a class at Earlham School of Religion on Evangelism and Outreach. The class was listed under the practical ministries department, and I was asked to do it because they believed that I had some practical experience in the area of evangelism. I have spoken at other conferences and have been introduced as an "expert on church growth and evangelism." On the other side of the spectrum, in our own yearly meeting where I have served as superintendent for almost five years, a group of people organized themselves to help the yearly meeting "become more evangelistic" because the leadership of the yearly meeting was not strong enough in evangelism. Personally, I don't really like to be referred to as an expert in evangelism, and I don't like to have people say that I don't believe in evangelism strongly enough. This little incident from my own life reflects what is true in the larger Society of Friends and, in fact, the Christian world. We have difficulty defining and doing evangelism effectively. We can discuss it at length and have committee meetings about it and have conferences about it, but when it comes to doing it effectively, we fall short.

I joined a Friends church seventeen years ago. One of the things that attracted me to that particular local Friends church was that they were doing effective evangelism. The pastor of the church almost never had an altar call. They didn't have tracts in a tract rack outside, and they didn't have a television or radio program. But persons who were not believers and not church attenders were coming to church and finding real meaning in a relationship with Jesus Christ. They found their lives being transformed and their direction altered as they became involved in the church and in their relationship with Christ. They began to study the Bible, Quaker literature, and other Christian writing. They got involved in teaching and in helping other people in many different ways. I had been working with a youth organization and had seen effective evangelism, but this was one of the first times I had seen real effective adult evangelism. That was attractive to me and, consequently, I became a Quaker.

It wasn't more than a few years later that I took a trip back East to see what Quaker roots were all about. It was on that trip that I met eastern Quakers for the first time, and I asked them why their meetinghouses were so hidden and why they didn't advertise or let people know. I was told that Quakers "didn't proselytize" and that we believed that any way was as good as another just as long as we were on the search. That was news to me because that was not what had attracted me to Quakerism!

Jim LeShana outlined for us the history of Friends and evangelism. He made it clear that from the beginning we have been involved in evangelism - that is, encouraging and trying to persuade persons to turn from one way of believing to another. We have spoken clearly to them that the only way to God is through Jesus Christ and that it is important for them to make a clear-cut personal choice as to their loyalty and direction in life. That is the past, however, and we can build on that, but we must turn our attention to the future. I want to discuss today what programmed Friends are doing about evangelism. We want to look at some of their attitudes, methods, and barriers.

I haven't been to Pendle Hill myself, but I have seen a vision for a great people to be gathered. For some reason, it has always been a desire of mine to help other people find meaning in this Christian message that has been so meaningful to me. I haven't been in the habit of handing out tracts on the street corner, nor giving long drawn-out altar calls, and I don't like to put people on the spot about anything - especially religion. However, as I look at people and see groups of people, I wonder if there is a way to communicate the wholeness, the abundant life, the love relationship, and the forgiveness that Christ offers to each of us. I started the Friends Church in Bakersfield, California. We started with just a few folks who were interested in

developing a Friends ministry. It grew into a fairly good-sized congregation. Many of the people were persons who had not attended church before they came to the Friends church. They found some meaning in our presentation of the Christian gospel in a Quaker package. Yes, we had programs like draft counseling, a Friends school patterned after the schools in the East, unprogrammed worship as well as programmed worship. We also had Bible studies, studies of Barclay's Apology and George Fox's Journal, and many other practical studies to help train people to live better lives. The challenge in Bakersfield was to become a committed community living out our Christian faith in creative ways. My responsibility now at Indiana Yearly Meeting is substantially different. Indiana Yearly Meeting has been in existence for over 170 years. We have had a reputation and a track record of being "interested in evangelism," but at the same time we have lost substantial numbers of members over the last ten, twenty, thirty years, even over the last eighty years. The challenge here in Indiana is to find some ways to revitalize the old and the existing and become current, fresh and effective in today's society. This question of evangelism and how it could work is a current question that we are working on as well as many others. Hopefully, conferences like this Consultation will help us sort out the issues and find more ways to be effective.

The Need for Evangelism

Jesus said to his disciples, *"I am the way and the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father but through me"* (John 14:6). These words of Jesus speak clearly to the issue of how we find God. The only way is through Jesus Christ. The rest of the New Testament is clear that "through Jesus Christ" means a belief in Jesus, His death and His resurrection. Jesus was also clear about that relationship changing our lives. In His conversation with the Samaritan woman, He said, *"Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up in eternal life"* (John 4:13-14). This speaks of the change and the transformation that occurs when we have this relationship and encounter with Jesus Christ who is the source of the living water. Alan Kolp wrote in Quaker Religious Thought in the Spring of 1982 about evangelism and outreach. He said:

There comes through every person's experience of the living God the commission to share the news with others as one finds oneself in God's presence and agrees to become an instrument of God's creativity. One witnesses God's creative work in oneself and endeavors to carry the message to others that there is a God, that God has created men and women and that God has created them for community - a community in the full and certain confidence that God *"made us and we are His, we are His people and the sheep of His pasture"* (Psalm 109).

Later in the same article Alan writes, "In one's redemption, not only is the experience of one's own release from bondage into freedom realized, but the missionary call is heard to become a reconciler in one's own right."

We must not only experience this wholeness and new life for ourselves, but once we have experienced it, our challenge and our commission is to work to build up the Kingdom of God here on earth. We must help other people to find the same living water that we have found. We must help them find wholeness, meaning and purpose to life that is grounded in a relationship with the creator of the universe. This kind of understanding of who we are as Christians and Quakers is vastly different from the understanding that there are several ways to God and any way is acceptable as long as you are happy with it. Some people feel that any way is okay, but let's just sit down and talk about your experience and my experience and see what we can develop out of it. There is certainly nothing wrong about sharing personal spiritual experience or pilgrimages; in fact, it can be very helpful. However, when we talk

about evangelism among programmed Friends, I want to start with this base: that Jesus made a clear call that He is the only way to God and that our challenge is not only to accept that way for ourselves and experience new life, but then to reach out and find ways to share that with others. The Scripture seems clear at this point, as well as early Quaker history. Both the early followers of Christ and the early followers of George Fox point to the need to find ways to speak to others about their Christian commitment.

Methods of Evangelism

The word *methods* itself seems incongruous in this setting. Evangelism should grow out of a love relationship between us and Christ and then between us and other people around us. There are different emphases and different methods, however.

In the late 1800's, there were **massive revivals** across the middle section of the United States. They had tremendous impact and huge numbers of people were converted to Christianity. Many of them became Friends because there were many Friends in the area. Like many of us, they thought that the way they became Christians was the only way. Since they had been converted in a revival setting with altar calls and fiery preaching, they thought that to be the way all churches should be and that is the way all conversions should occur. It is a good thing that the apostle Paul did not think that, or everyone would have had to fall off of a horse with a great light in the sky before they could become a Christian! This large number of new converts radically affected the Society of Friends, especially in the Midwest and stretching westward. There were a large number of Quakers in Indiana already who had their roots in North Carolina and other places of traditional Quakerism. Many new Quaker meetings sprang up as a result of these holiness revivals, and their roots stretched only back to the revival. Our yearly meeting still shows some of the division between meetings which have their roots in early Quakerism and meetings which have roots that only stretch to the 1800's and are rooted in that revival tradition.

We have many churches which have altar calls and revivals regularly. We also have many others which would never think of having an altar call but simply present the gospel and leave it up to the person to make his/her own decision, or sometimes, perhaps, there is an individual personal follow-up or personal visit by a pastor or an elder in the church. In some churches, members and attenders are actively involved in discussing their faith with their friends and actively inviting people to their church with the intent that they would become Christians and regular attenders.

Another method of evangelism might be described as **theories of church growth**. Church growth isn't necessarily evangelism. Churches might grow for all kinds of different reasons. In fact, some writers have pointed out that heavy emphasis on church growth for church growth's sake can defeat the purposes of evangelism. If evangelism requires a radical change of direction, many people may not be attracted to that. Certainly Jesus found that when He was most clear about the gospel, people turned away. Even though church growth is not automatically evangelism, it certainly can be. Evangelism always brings church growth. In many places where churches have grown substantially, people have come to church searching for some meaning to life and have found their meaning in Jesus Christ. They have been evangelized and have become Christians. One major aspect of the church growth movement has to do with **planting new churches**. Sometimes that new church may be started without a core group by a direct mail program, or a telemarketing program. Other times, a new church is started as a spin-off congregation. Several members of an existing church go to begin a new one.

Another method of evangelism would be **good preaching**. People like to hear a speaker who is not only a good speaker but effectively communicates some help in how we might better live

our lives. Good preaching can do a lot to attract people to a church where they will hear the good news. While it is true that people don't have to be in church to hear the good news, they won't be aware of it unless they are told either by another person or through a message on Sunday or some other means of communication.

Good programming is another method of evangelism. Programming that reaches out to a specific target group of people like young married, teenagers, singles, retired folks - any other specific aspect of the population can be effective in drawing those people into a church and helping them to find out that the message of the gospel will have meaning for them.

Another method that is used might be called **community outreach**. This would include schools, programs to feed the hungry and house the homeless, jail ministry, sports programs, involvement in the PTA, and those kinds of community outreach activities.

Every one of these methods have had and are having some success in several different places. Almost all of them have also been tried without success by some people. We are constantly reminded that the message of evangelism remains somewhat the same, but the package that we put it in - in other words, the presentation and how we get it communicated - is always changing. Some people like strawberry, and some like butter pecan. Likewise, different people will be attracted to the good news of Jesus Christ by different methods because their tastes vary.

Barriers to Effective Evangelism Among Programmed Friends

There is a common belief that all programmed meetings are losing their numbers and all unprogrammed meetings are gaining members. The statistics do not bear that out. It is true that several programmed "evangelical" yearly meetings have lost substantial members. Our yearly meeting is one of those that has lost a lot of members in recent years. We and others like us talk a good line. Our talk sounds like we are strongly evangelistic. We talk about Scripture, we are adamant that evangelism is important, and we act like we believe it. We have revivals, we talk about people getting saved, and we pray for non-Christians. But it is easy to fall into the **trap of talking about something so much that we don't really get around to doing it**. It is like the parable of the fishermen who caught some fish but enjoyed it so much that they began to have conferences on fishing, built shops to buy better fishing equipment, had seminars on how to fish more effectively and what time to fish, and discussed the ins and outs of the meaning of fishing. However, no one ever got around to actually fishing. Sometimes we are like that. We believe in outreach, but we haven't gotten around to telling the people we are trying to reach.

In fact, many times we don't even know many of those people. Christians are a subgroup of society, and Quakers are an even smaller and less well-known subgroup of the Christians. As long as we spend all of our time with Christians and talking about Christian things, we are **unable to reach out effectively** to persons who are not yet believers.

One of the major barriers that keep us from doing this effectively is our perception of what the church is all about. Kennon L. Callahan, in his book Effective Church Leadership, develops a clear picture of what the church will have to become if it's going to be effective in the 1990's and beyond. He illustrates it as a comparison between a mission station and an established church. If you were to go to a foreign culture and country as a missionary, you would not even begin to think that you could go and simply build a hut and stay inside and hope that people would come to you. Instead, you would go out into the culture, learn the language, meet the people, interact with them, get better acquainted, talk with them about their needs, and gradually share with them a part of your own life. A part of that sharing would involve your commitment to Christ and your belief that He is helping to make your life whole and complete.

For the last forty years in the United States, our churches have concentrated for the most part on their own programming and **meeting their own needs** and the needs of their own families. In our American culture today, people don't hate the church, they simply don't see what difference the church makes. They don't see any reason to go to the church. In a very real sense, the church has become irrelevant to the society at large because it has isolated itself and stepped back from interaction with our overall culture.

In the local meeting, this concept works itself out as people always ask, "What will this program do for me?" or "Do I need this program or this building or this parking lot?" They ask questions about how the pastor can better minister to them and how they can get their own grown children to come back to the meeting. These questions are a lot different than asking questions about how we could shape the Christian message so that it would reach a yuppie, or a baby-boomer, or a single mother, or a widowed person, or a young teenager, or a person that is on drugs, or a person with AIDS, or a person with cancer.

In the early 1900's, there were two companies in the business of making buggy whips. They noticed that the sales of buggy whips were going down. One company decided that they would make the very best buggy whip possible. They felt that this quality of buggy whip would sell best. Some people said that the reason buggy whip sales were going down was because of this new thing called the horseless carriage that was coming into popularity. They were certain, however, that this would never last. It was only a passing fad. It was too noisy. There were no roads. It was unreliable. It certainly wasn't something that people would choose over a horse that was faithful and had served us for years. The other company noticed their sales of buggy whips going down, and they looked around at the horseless carriage and decided that they would gradually make the transition to building horseless carriages. They did that and became known as Ford Motor Company. Friends meetings many times are **holding onto the past**, expecting that this generation and future generations will somehow become like the past generations. They are hoping that the family of the 50's will come back into popularity, that difficult problems like AIDS and drugs will go away, and that people won't need all of these fancy programs and multimedia. They hope that things will just get back to normal like they should be and like they were when they were younger.

The world is changing rapidly but probably will not change back to the way it was before. A mission station church will find ways to get its message into the community and to where the people are. That will change the way the pastor will spend his or her day, and it will change the way key leaders are assigned tasks. The very best leaders in the meeting will have to be assigned to work on ministries that are outside of the church building if we are going to highlight those as the very most important. It will change the way we budget and the way we think about the church and its overall ministry.

Another barrier is our **buildings**. Our buildings were built for the most part about a hundred years ago - some more, some less. They were not built for the modern era. The size of churches needed today is different because of the number of programs. The need for fellowship halls and other kinds of classroom space are all different today. They were not needed a hundred years ago. If churches are going to be viable, programmed churches with a fully released pastor, they need to be averaging a hundred or more people. In the early 1900's, a church could average thirty and support a pastor.

Traditions are another barrier to evangelism. Traditions die hard to all of us. We value our traditions, and they are important. I am not suggesting here that we give up all of our Quaker identity, but we have given up traditions already. Few of us are wearing gray bonnets. Few of us are speaking with thee's and thou's. For the most part, none of us have a wood stove in the middle of our meetinghouse to heat the meetinghouse. Hardly anyone has men's and women's separate monthly meetings now with a wall dividing them. We gave up those

traditions in order to preserve the larger tradition of what the Society of Friends stood for. I think that we are at that place again and, in fact, probably will continually be at that place. We need to be willing to give up certain traditions to preserve the greater tradition. Many supermarkets tried to keep from going to scanning devices to check out the merchandise. Eventually, though, most have gone that way in order to preserve their marketability and their ability to handle large amounts of customers and remain profitable. Meat-and-potatoes restaurants have added salad bars and health foods because that is what the customers have wanted.

In this kind of adaptation, I'm not suggesting that the core of our message changes. In fact, I'm suggesting that we need to change other things in order to preserve that core. The core message is so important and so vital to get into our communities that we need to be willing to change the peripheral traditions so that we can speak clearly to the value of this personal relationship with Jesus Christ. We need to be able to speak about that clearly and to speak about it in a language that is understood by the culture around us.

It is traditions that can add to a **feeling of security**. Security is always a temptation that stands off against risk. The movement should always be forward through open doors and into wider horizons. Christians who have stopped going and growing and retreated into security are the most miserable. They bog down churches with undue caution and discourage the church with their own frustration. Their continual analysis and regulation has a paralyzing effect on the meeting.

Another barrier is our **unwillingness to accept people where they are** instead of where we want them to be. Many churches ask me how they can reach the forty-five year olds and under. Another way of saying that would be, "How do we reach the baby-boomer population?" Basically, they are talking about how you reach the younger married couples, people who are married, having children, raising their kids through elementary, junior high, and high school. When you talk about what that large segment of our population wants in a church, their immediate response is, "We can't offer that; it's not Quakerly." Or, "That's not possible because of our size." Or they will say, "Well, that's crazy; they shouldn't want those things" or "That's not spiritual." How much do we adapt to the times around us? If we really want to speak to a particular segment of the population, we need to study carefully and listen carefully to what that population group is looking for and wanting, and then find some ways to meet those needs or perceived needs as best we can without compromising our theology. If we find that we are unable to meet their needs without compromising our theology, then we need to proceed to other groups and find ways to meet them and to meet their needs.

A part of this issue for us in the Midwest is going to where the people are. We all know that the people have moved to the cities, but most of our churches and meetings are in the rural areas. We have had limited success in the cities, but we need to find more ways and double our commitment to try to get into the cities and be effective.

Conclusion - Clarifying Our Mission and Our Message

I spoke in the beginning of this talk about the message that we have as Christians. The New Testament is quite clear about the message, and we also need to be able to be clear and concise about the message that we are trying to communicate to others. That message must be rooted in Scripture and in our own experiential relationship with Jesus. Early Friends found that the Scripture and their own experiential relationship worked hand-in-hand. They were not in conflict with each other.

Our mission needs to be clear by carefully defining the work and ministry of the local church or meeting. Kennon Callahan, in his book Twelve Keys for an Effective Church, lists twelve

specific areas that we could use to evaluate our ministry. The first six have to do with relational characteristics. The second six are functional characteristics. He elaborates and develops each of these in full detail. The two books that I have mentioned by Callahan could help any church or meeting to revamp effectively their ministry to the community and to find themselves communicating the gospel in new ways. He asks for such things as a specific, concrete, missional objective. He is not talking about a simple, general, purpose statement, although that would be a beginning. He is talking about specific objectives - reaching certain groups or doing certain tasks in your communities and meeting certain needs. He is talking about being specific in advance, planning, preparing, and doing the very best job possible. He mentions other relational areas like visitation by people and pastor, dynamic worship, relational groups, strong leadership, and participatory decision-making. He thinks that these six relational characteristics are by far the most important. There are functional characteristics that have to do with accessibility, visibility, adequate parking space, facilities, and finances. He feels that most churches spend most of their time on the second six and very little time on the first six.

One reason we are not being effective is because we aren't clear about where the target is. If we don't know where the target is, of course, we cannot hit it. Callahan refers to this as Bo-Peep Theology as compared to Good Shepherd Theology. The Little Bo-Beep nursery rhyme says, "Little Bo-Peep has lost her sheep and can't tell where to find them. Leave them alone, and they'll come home, wagging their tails behind them." That differs substantially from the Good Shepherd Theology that teaches us that the shepherd left the flock and went looking for the one that was wounded. It is this Good Shepherd Theology that we need to emulate in our meetings and churches.

I am hoping and praying and working for the day when we have a new influx of large numbers of people like we did in the late 1800's. I am sure that if that happens, it will vastly change the face of Quakerism in ways that we cannot even imagine. I think it will change Quakerism in ways that will help us to be more effective in helping and ministering to the people around us and to the culture in which we find ourselves. Early Quakers were known widely, and we love to quote history on how far ahead of the times we were as we recognized certain social problems and took steps to provide a solution. I hope that again as this century nears its close we will find Quakers being the first ones to recognize a problem and provide a solution. I hope that again we'll see large numbers of persons being attracted to Friends meetings and churches because they see that that's where an effective gospel that is meaningful and helpful to their lives is being proclaimed.

OUTREACH AMONG UNPROGRAMMED FRIENDS: Evangelism By Any Other Name

by Mary Moehlman

There are some advantages and disadvantages to being the last one to speak before a group like this—at least to speak formally. The advantage is having a chance to hear what the other speakers had to say and to hear what is on all of your minds in response to that. The disadvantage is that there is some pressure to try to sum up, at least in some ways, as well as to carry out my assignment to represent something about outreach among unprogrammed Friends and to bring a vision for Friends' evangelism and outreach.

I'm highly suspect, I think, if I come representing myself as speaking for unprogrammed Friends. Therefore, I will not speak for Philadelphia Yearly Meeting or unprogrammed Friends, I will speak about us. That may relieve some concerns about representing a particular "position." I represent my observations and my opinions about Friends in the unprogrammed tradition and what we call outreach. And I will try to be faithful in speaking what God has given me for this Consultation.

This will not be an academic address about nor a learned explanation of why Friends in my tradition do what we choose to call "outreach." I have not searched the annals of time or Quaker history to find out why we call "outreach" what some other Friends call "evangelism." Nor will I try to defend it nor try to convince anyone that "our" way is the "right" way. Instead, I will, to the best of my ability and knowledge, describe some of what we do in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting because that is what I know best. However, I can assure you that I certainly do not know all that we do in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. I will also talk about why I think we do outreach this way. What I have to say will be part experience and observation, part personal opinion and emotions, and part speculative questions I ask myself and others about what we are doing and what we are about. I will also look at the strengths and weaknesses of our approach to outwardly proclaiming God to others. I know that other Friends from this tradition are here who can also speak very well to what we do and why, and I will rely on them to add more to what I have said. I also want to elaborate about the source of outreach/evangelism, and the how of it—the "how," not the "how-to"—in other words, what happens when evangelism/outreach is "sourced." And as an example of what can happen when outreach is sourced in this way, I want to mention briefly a particular project, in what I think is in the best tradition of Friends evangelism or outreach, that I and a number of other Friends in this tradition are working on. This project may be surprising to some Friends who think that Friends in the unprogrammed tradition have no commitment to missionary activity or to "planting churches," if you will. This is one of those.

Most of all, though, I want to convey to you, and to other Friends who may hear of or read about this Consultation, a vision God has given Friends that is worth shouting from the housetops, a la Pentecost, and hilltops, a la Pendle Hill and Firbank Fell. This is a vision that is worth whispering in the silence, discussing at the dinner table, "schmoozing" about with our friends and neighbors, and preaching to our politicians. It is a vision that should be demonstrated on picket lines. It is a vision that should be carried out among the homeless and hungry and hopeless who are cast off like litter in the streets and alleys and abandoned buildings of our cities and in this country now. It is a vision that should be paraded on all the battle fronts of the Middle East and in front of the generals and terrorists and politicians and businesses bent on violence and war as solutions to the world's problems. It is a vision that should be displayed in our everyday lives for our co-workers and anyone else with whom we interact. Indeed, it is a vision that should be witnessed to,

acted upon, and shared with all who hunger and thirst and suffer and long for that inchoate, unnameable something that lies just beyond their grasp or their consciousness—the something that represents love, and justice, and harmony, and well-being on this, at least for now, still lovely, blue-green planet God created for us.

What is "outreach"? Is it different than "evangelism"?

In some ways, pursuing this line of thought seems like a pointless trail to follow. Whether we call what we do evangelism or outreach, we are all proclaiming God—God at work in our lives in one way or another. How else can we honestly claim to proclaim anything about God except as we know God in our own lives? And whether we call it evangelism or outreach, we do it in word and we do it in deed!

Evangelism isn't just about missions, or planting churches, or proclaiming the word of God as we know it through the Bible. Outreach isn't just about letting people know our meetings are around, or what we believe, or say, or do, or think. They are not different; they are one and the same, Friends. They are about proclaiming the Word, not words found in any book we have, no matter how holy or how inspired by the Spirit. Evangelism is about proclaiming the miracles produced through us when we are channels for the Word. Outreach is about proclaiming the eternal Christ, the Word which was in the beginning, which was with God, is from God, which is God, and which we see incarnate in the man we know as Jesus who lived some 2000 years ago. Evangelism is about proclaiming the Word that still lives within every human being brought into the world, whoever lived before, whoever lives now, whoever will live. Outreach is about proclaiming the Word that is incarnate in the Divine Spirit, the Light Within, the little Seed of Christ within us all, waiting to be brought forth, to be made incarnate in the world through us, through our words, with our hands, in our hearts and minds. That's what outreach is. That's what evangelism is. And that is what our lives should be about.

How do non-pastoral Friends define outreach?

What do we think, do, say? And why do we do it?

Do we think that outreach and evangelism are the same?

I will use Philadelphia Yearly Meeting as the departure point for talking about outreach among Friends of my tradition, not because it is the Rome of Quakerism or because it is wiser or older or anything else like that. First of all, this is the yearly meeting I know best. Secondly, I would say that, roughly speaking, it is probably fairly representative of many yearly meetings in its tradition in how it sees and does outreach. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting does not define outreach in our *Faith And Practice* nor is a section devoted to it, although there are several queries referring to outreach at the end. However, in casting about for some "official" definition, I did find one in a publication called *Outreach Idea Book: Suggestions for Attracting and Nurturing Newcomers and Enriching Quaker Meetings*, published by the Outreach Committee of the yearly meeting.

Outreach refers to those activities that make the general public more aware of Friends' existence, more knowledgeable about Friends' beliefs, and more welcome at Friends' meetings. *It is not evangelism: its goal is not converting people to a particular set of beliefs. Nor is it proselytizing; outreach should not make any individual feel pressure to join the Society of Friends.* Outreach is simply a sharing of information and experience outside the circle of Quakerism; as one Friend put it, "bringing the community into the meeting and the meeting into the community" (page 2, emphases mine).

As labeled here, outreach and evangelism are most definitely very different. And as a Philadelphia Friend who is excited and inspired by the possibilities for stepping into the kingdom of heaven, who is excited and inspired by the possibilities for being channels for God to transform the world when we gather more and more people under the power, love, and peace that we find inwardly through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in each of us, my response to that is "you must be kidding!"

I suppose that definition represents something about what we think or are afraid that "convert" means. But it happens to be a word that I like. It is taken from the Latin *com* meaning "to," plus *vertere*, meaning "transform." Synonyms include "bring, cause, lead, move, persuade, modify, influence, reclaim, recover, redeem, alter, change, improve, revolutionize." I like those words too. Conversion is the result of a process that yields a believer, a disciple, a follower. Looks to me like it's something we all need, Friends included. If our goal is not to convert people, to change or influence or revolutionize or have them be transformed or have their behavior be transformed, why bother talking to them about Friends at all? Seems like a waste of time to me.

But I do want to acknowledge that words have negative meaning and negative power as well, and I understand some of the reluctance that we have in using words that have been appropriated by others to mean something to which we are fundamentally opposed or hold in question. Friends in my tradition know and use the power of traditional Quaker words and terms. We also know how damaged some people have been by words, and we are committed to opening dialogue with all people and to avoiding words and language that hurt people and sound exclusivist.

I also love and know the power of the words of traditional Christianity and like to use them too, although I may take a minority position in my yearly meeting, both in my views about what words to use to describe outreach and in my views about what it is and should be. So being only a little afraid to tread where angels fear to tread, I want to explore this later in a discussion of our strengths and weaknesses. Speaking Truth to Power never seems more risky than when one's own yearly meeting is the power, but since we have abandoned the practice of throwing the rascals out for speaking their minds, I will speak what God has laid on my heart and mind with only a little trembling. But first, I want to describe some of the things Friends in Philadelphia are doing and the ways in which we view outreach.

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's *Outreach Idea Book* does well when it reminds those of us in my tradition that perhaps we have turned too far inward since the early days of Quakerism and have kept our "radical form of Christianity to ourselves." It asks us to consider that if our message has not lost its value, how is it that we have "retreated from a very active, prophetic kind of outreach . . . to our current position . . .?" It also reminds us that this "failure to make our beliefs well known . . . threatens our ability to make ourselves better people and the world a better place." (Pages 2 & 3.) Interestingly, though, in the face of the definition of outreach given earlier, both explicit and implicit in this opening section is an acknowledgment of the need to bring more people into attendance and membership at our meetings. In other words, maybe we need to convert them?

The worries of some Friends about outreach taking precedence over "inreach" are the problems non-pastoral Friends have traditionally faced as a result of all kinds of things in our history: The Quietist period when our fears of "creaturely activity" and dilution of our beliefs by others caused us to wall in this little do-it-yourself religion. Fears about the splits that resulted from the American Revivalist Movement among Friends where Quaker language and worship and practice seemed threatened. It is good that these issues are not brushed aside and invalidated. Instead, the concerns that we put "our own spiritual houses . . . in order" and that "outreach not detract from this elemental part of our faith" are seen

as important and real, and "[are] even beneficial to outreach [because they stimulate] our own reflection, which is necessary in order to articulate our faith, religious experience, and practice; and [they bring] us questions in freshly-posed terms and with fresh insights." (Page 4.) Since the official outreach book of my yearly meeting starts out with this, I have hope that we do, indeed, have someplace to go.

What do Philadelphia Friends do for outreach, and what do we believe about it?

Since practice tends to follow belief, it is fairly easy to determine what we think and believe about outreach, and the following will be illustrative.

Publishing and Disseminating Information: One of our favorite outreach activities, and one that I think we do particularly well, is the printing and distribution of literature about Quakers and Quakerism. This literature ranges from reprints of older books and journals to introductory or explanatory leaflets to First Day school materials to inspirational materials. The yearly meeting also underwrites joint projects with other Friends organizations. Many of the books and pamphlets are distributed widely in the English-speaking Quaker world and used heavily by monthly meetings, which most typically use leaflets and pamphlets on literature racks or tables in meetinghouses. Both adult and children's first day school programs, which Friends are urged to use for outreach, also use a lot of religious education material published by the yearly meeting, and we have an excellent library which loans books, tapes, videos, and a variety of materials through the mail. (I believe anyone can use this service for a small annual fee, and it would be well to check this out.)

The committees most active in publishing include the Religious Education Committee, the Peace Committee, the Family Relations Committee, the Racial Concerns Committee, the Book Committee, just to name a few. To my knowledge though, at present there is no central plan for or oversight of all the literature published and distributed by these committees and, with the exception of the new Friends Information Center, no central or organized plan for disseminating any of it.

Under this same type of heading, a Friends Information Center has been established by several Quaker organizations, including the yearly meeting, at Friends Center to provide all kinds of information and literature to those who come in or call to inquire about Friends. (More than a few of the people who use the center are Friends, of course.) This center grew out of the experience and concerns of many Quaker organizations at Friends Center and around the Philadelphia area who frequently fielded phone calls and other inquiries regarding Quakers but who felt that they did not have time or expertise or, more importantly, appropriate information to respond. We wanted to have a centralized source of information from and about various Friends organizations, activities, and sources to refer people to so that callers and visitors would not be shuttled from pillar to post when they were seeking something. This new center seemed especially important with the closing of Friends Bookstore last year.

Education: This is another outreach that we are particularly good at, I think. Several adult education programs have been created to build a solid foundation of knowledge and renewed spiritual life among the monthly meetings—something the yearly meeting considers critical to "inreach" and, as a result, outreach, and equally critical to preparing the place where all those hoped-for new members will find the Inward Word, the divine presence which brings salvation, love, and inner peace that Friends in my tradition are particularly good at articulating. (Well, maybe not the salvation part.)

The most well-known of these is probably the Quaker Studies Program which was a 24 session, year-long series of evening workshops or seminars, if you will, organized in eight-week segments around the Bible, Christianity, and Quakerism. And there was a whole lot of proclamation going on in this program! Some of the other programs have been six-week, six-session "courses" with titles like Quakerism 101 (or Basic Quakerism), Quakerism 201, Prayer, and most recently, Bible, which are held at individual monthly meetings using teachers supplied by the yearly meeting. The yearly meeting has been a superb resource for this. Meetings have invited others in their communities to come to those "courses" as a way to learn more about Friends. They are a popular source of information for new attenders in meetings, as well, and have resulted in decisions to apply for membership. (Which is not to say that long-standing members don't also attend in large number.) These courses have been a catalyst in producing knowledgeable and even excited Friends whose gifts have included ministries that I would readily include under the heading of "evangelism."

The Religious Education Committee also publishes a list of teachers and facilitators available to help meetings set up and run retreats and workshops on almost any Quakerly topic you can think of, and meetings often invite others in their communities to these activities. The Religious Education Committee, along with the Peace Committee, often seems to be at the heart of or actively involved in a variety of activities that inevitably lead Philadelphia Friends to outreach.

Thanks to a Friend from London Yearly Meeting who now works at Pendle Hill and several Philadelphia Friends who have worked with Harvey Gillman in London's Quaker Home Service, recently Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and Pendle Hill have set up a new program, borrowed from London Yearly Meeting, called an Inquirers' Weekend. It is offered several times a year to people who have heard about it through advertising or word-of-mouth, and it is facilitated by experienced Friends. People spend Friday evening, Saturday, and part of Sunday in a mix of formal and informal sessions designed to let them know as much as possible about who Friends are, what we believe and why, what we do, how our meetings operate, and most importantly, give them an opportunity to worship with us in silent meeting for worship in order to experience the Source of what it is we are so excited about. Despite some of the initial doubts that I heard about when the program was first proposed, it seems to be well attended and well received at this point.

"Advertising" and Publicity: The yearly meeting has also been singularly successful over the past couple of years in having highly visible articles published in the big Philadelphia daily or Sunday newspaper and getting T.V. newsclips of various Friends activities made and shown on local stations. Besides a commitment on the part of the yearly meeting to do more and better of this kind of outreach, our cause was not hurt by publicity surrounding the yearly meeting's defiance, on grounds of religious freedom of conscience, of a court order to appear in federal court for refusal to pay federal withholding taxes for a yearly meeting employee who was a war tax objector. Here is a case where outreach by action spoke much louder than words in proclaiming Friends belief in and commitment to bringing about the peaceable kingdom.

I am not certain what other "advertising" the yearly or monthly meetings do, or where, but I do know that Friends General Conference places ads in publications and sends information about Friends to those who reply.

Meeting and Individual Activities: What are monthly meetings and individual Friends doing for outreach, though? This list could take up more space and time than we have. First Day school and adult discussion groups before or after meeting for worship seem to be growing in popularity as a way to reach out into the local community. Public witnessing

or demonstrating, both group and individual, are never far from some Philadelphia Friends' hearts (to the consternation of a whole other segment of Philadelphia Friends). Peace scholarships and peace essays in local schools have been sponsored by Friends. One creative woman even persuaded her local high school to let her organize a draft counseling workshop to provide alternative information to students after military recruiters had come to her son's school. Many monthly meetings have Friends schools under their care, and these schools have quiet but enormous impact on their surrounding communities.

Visitors Days have been experimented with by many meetings as a way to introduce themselves to their communities by inviting people to visit and worship. Good publicity is important, as well as good planning to make things interesting and informative before and after meeting for worship. All kinds of other community functions and events are sponsored by Friends at the meetinghouse or elsewhere—dinners for the homeless, Thanksgiving or Christmas dinners for those in the community who are alone, singles groups, community concerts, and so on—and many meetings allow their meetinghouses to be used by other groups in the community.

Although Philadelphia Friends have not been as active as those in some other areas of the country, Sanctuary has been another way to reach or cooperate with others in the community who then have a chance to learn of Friends' views on peace, non-violence, and social and economic justice issues. Many Worship and Ministry Committees are represented on their local ministers' groups and often have an impact on, as well as share in, community activities.

This kind of list could go on and on, but you get the gist of it. We write and publish and advertise and march and witness and try to reach out to our communities in ways that will touch them spiritually, socially, and humanly. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting is planning a workshop on outreach this winter, and our new general secretary will take a very active role in it. But we could and need to do more, both in having good programs and having good community outreach. We especially need to find ways to reach large numbers of people, particularly people in socio-economic groups that are not part of the white middle class to which most Friends in my tradition belong.

There is also much that we do not do and probably won't, with occasional exceptions—such as set up organized missions or missions societies, or hold revival meetings, or set up inner city meetings with pastors or resident Friends to live there and get them started, for instance—because of our particular historical and spiritual antecedents. Whether non-pastoral Friends should be involved in these activities or not has been debated in one way or another before and probably will be one of the topics under discussion this weekend.

What else? And what's missing?

I recommend a look at the *Outreach Idea Book* if you are interested in more detail. Most especially I urge you to read in it about what Philadelphia Friends have urged one another to do in order to go more deeply inward before reaching outward to others, for this is the key to calling forth that of God in others. But there is also something missing in the outreach activities of Friends in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

What all our towns and villages need is not missionaries sent from afar, but rather persons in their own communities who live and act and talk in the power and demonstration of a gospel which is their very own. It is this new type of apostolic person that will change the level of life for our communities. (Rufus Jones, 1943. Quoted from Part One of the *Book of Discipline*, New York Yearly Meeting, 1988.)

That is at the heart of it. The problem is that, although we do and say everything I just spoke of, outreach is still hit or miss. There are over 100 meetings in our yearly meeting, so to stand here and enumerate what some of them do some of the time sounds like a lot. In reality, most of the time outreach is way down the list on the agenda at our meetings for business—even on the list of concerns which occupy our hearts and minds in meeting for worship. Friends I talked to about outreach in preparation for coming here all had a sense that we should be doing more or better. One Friend said that his meeting occasionally does something, but there is no real thrust for reaching outside the meeting on a consistent basis. A Friend said that when the meeting had an outreach project or sponsored some other event that went particularly well, it seemed like "accidental evangelism" to him.

We seem to have a vague sense of something missing, but we don't know what. Apparently some meetings or Friends are afraid of offending people, both within and outside of the meeting. We seem to think we do a particularly poor job of outreach and that others in our communities are only vaguely, if at all, aware that we are there and of who we are and what we stand for or do. Many Friends think that we do too little. I worry that someday we will find it was too little, too late.

Maybe a look at some of the strengths and weaknesses of our way of doing outreach would create openings so that, as Jim LeShana has suggested, we can go with more good news to where more people are with more needs. Then we can create more needs-based ministries which use whatever methods and whatever means are appropriate. Maybe we can find ways to have better "preaching," better programs, and better (and more) community outreach, as David Brock has suggested.

Strengths And Weaknesses

I have never heard a discussion in my tradition talk about the strengths and weaknesses in our approach to outreach. Let me start with what I think is a major weakness: we are too heavy, too serious. I know there are a lot of problems in the world, Friends, but for God's sake—for the sake of God in the world—lighten up. I guess that problem comes partly as baggage from those of our roots that are Puritan, but I also think it comes with our tendency to over-intellectualization and a social or cultural inability to express fully the joy and gladness, the satisfaction and happiness that come with being close to God and having found inner peace.

Dare I say the word? We have dropped "fun" out. Whenever I teach in the yearly meeting or lead a workshop or retreat anywhere, one of the things I do at the beginning is tell Friends that we are going to design some agreements about how we want our time together to go. And I never fail to put in those agreements that we make with one another that we have some fun. That is quite startling or odd to many Friends. However, being in the Light, walking in the Light, also ought to have an equivalent outward manifestation that results in lightening up. We need to practice and demonstrate a lightness of being that shows others the joy to be found when we turn to the Light and find forgiveness, inner peace, and oneness with God, when we come to Christ. It is missing; it is a big missing. And I think it continues among us, at least in part, because we have confused tradition with testimony.

What are other strengths and weaknesses I see? As I started to examine the ones I observe, I saw that some of the strengths were also some of the weaknesses, and this was very interesting to ponder. I am sure you can think of other things, but let's start here.

Strengths

1. One of the first things I put on the list was: hesitation to speak. I see that as a strength. We are good at waiting for the right time or the right word to be given to us.
2. Our speaking is not authoritarian.
3. We try to present things in a way that will give people a broad understanding of Quaker belief and practice.
4. We are usually sensitive to and accepting of the validity of a variety of experience and beliefs. We acknowledge and affirm that of God to be found in them.

Weaknesses

1. One of the first things that I put on this list was: hesitation to speak. We wait when we should be forthcoming. Either we don't know what to say or we are afraid to say it for a variety of reasons.
2. We do not speak with authority and power. We often speak with so much deference that the power of our message is lost or diluted, and people are confused by it.
3. We talk in abstractions and concepts rather than in concrete experience.
4. We are not clear about what we believe as Friends, nor are we clear about why we believe it. Therefore, why should others become Friends if we cannot even tell them what we know and understand? We do not know or cannot articulate why Quakerism is more efficacious than other religions. Therefore, we cannot say why anyone else should become a Friend, even when asked directly.

5. Reluctance or refusal to label people as bad. We might think what they are doing is bad, but we don't hold people as intrinsically bad. This is an enormous strength.

6. Social action is one of our enormous strengths.

7. We seek and we encourage other people to seek God, seek Truth. This is sometimes a surprise or a revelation to people that they can even be allowed to do that.

8. We are not pushy or coercive. We respect others' beliefs and practices, and we have a gentle way of presenting the opportunity and possibilities of Quakerism that allows people to connect with it in their own experience.

9. We do not manipulate people with emotionalism, passion, or religious fervor.

5. Difficulty with and failure to recognize and acknowledge that many people are lost; many people do need salvation. We confuse the terminology of being lost and needing to be saved with the terminology or the thinking that if that is so, they are bad. Therefore, when we don't or can't or won't say when someone is lost, if we don't name it, then they may never hear it, and we don't answer that of God calling out somewhere within them when that is true for them. Therefore, the message that we give doesn't really face up to the reality in some people's lives, and it has no power for them because we haven't named Truth for them. We don't have the freedom - and it is freedom - to call people to repentance.

6. The weakness that goes with this strength is our inability or unwillingness to speak, to "preach" the Word that leads inwardly to outward social action.

7. We are unwilling or unable to say what we have found and what we know of Truth.

8. We are not pushy. I think sometimes we could be characterized as a bit cowardly because we are unwilling to push past and examine or challenge our own opinions and uncomfortable feelings about what it takes to bring someone into relationship with the living God under the power of the Inward Light. Therefore, we often miss the opportunity to bring someone else into that experience.

9. We are suspicious and afraid of emotions, passions, and religious fervor and enthusiasm.

10. We excel in publishing Truth through proclamation by the written Word.

10. The weakness that goes with this is that we don't speak or verbally proclaim Truth and the good news to anyone outside our own Quaker community very much. In general, good vocal ministry in our meetings for worship or elsewhere is infrequent, and we need to learn anew how to be ministers of Truth.

11. We know the power of words to hurt and to create reality. We are sensitive to others who have been hurt or misled by language and words. We are becoming more sensitive to inclusive language, and we know and use well Quaker words and language that can be heard by many others when conventional religious language fails.

11. We have relinquished - totally given it up - the power and the excitement of naming what we do "evangelism." I want to ask: what kind of power and excitement are generated in you by the words "outreach" or "extension"? This is where I think that I tread where angels fear to tread in my yearly meeting and among unprogrammed Friends. I truly believe that we need to reclaim some of the religious words and language that have power, that are empowering, and that touch others as well.

Language is important. Language creates reality as we know it. It shapes and molds our experience, and whoever controls it controls reality. Just look at the world around us and see who controls language, words, naming reality. Take a look at the kind of world that we have and we are trying to make a difference in. Naming Truth begins to create reality for everyone.

We "liberal" Friends recognize the power of language and often speak passionately about inclusive language and ways of speaking to people that will have them understand us. We know the power of language and of words. Let's reclaim for ourselves the power of some of the religious words and language that others have appropriated and used in ways that we find distasteful or hurtful. Early Friends were quite active in doing this very thing. Let's take back some of those words we have lost and make them powerful for ourselves and others again.

Let's reclaim the word "evangelism." Try it again. It moves me and can move all of us. Evangelism! Give us back a beautiful word from the very beginnings of our own Quaker tradition that carries much meaning and power. It is a word that reminds us of our Source.

What is our Source?

In Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and other long-established yearly meetings in this unprogrammed tradition, we do need to get past or outside of what David Brock called the "established Church mentality" and beyond the "ethnic church identification" that he spoke of. So what will help? How do we get beyond too little, too late? Where do we begin to find our source?

For starters, we must get rid of the idea and stop saying that we want to reach people "who are already Friends without knowing it." First of all, keeping that notion alive just reinforces that established Church mentality we already have that makes us think that if we just open our doors, people will show up. It relieves us of the effort and the need to consider doing something other than we have always done, and it keeps us from closely examining our own beliefs and practices.

Second, this view is arrogant on our part and demeaning to people because it implies that somehow we are better than they, and if they only knew it, they would stop being who they are or doing what they do and just join up with us. Frankly, it seems to me that if they are "Friends already," they are in pretty good spiritual shape and are probably already going about the business of bringing the kingdom of heaven into reality.

Third, we had better be far more interested in reaching those who are not "Friends already," because they are the ones who either probably most need or most want some other way than they now follow—the ones who need love, the ones who need hope, the ones who need peace, the ones for whom finding the Word Within, the Christ Within, finding within them the Seed of Life, a Light that teaches, guides, sets them on the straight and narrow, and empowers them to change their lives—these are the people who are dying in every sense of the word and who could be saved by the transforming power of love and peace and inward experience of God that Friends can show them.

Next, we also need a source from which evangelism and outreach flows, and what I am going to say clearly reveals my roots in the Quaker tradition in which I stand. I am going to talk about the Light. Quakers proclaim the Inward Light, the Christ Within, and we know that we must tend to and nurture it so that, like a Seed buried deep in the heart and mind, the divine presence may grow within us, blossom, and break forth for the world to see—through us and through our actions. When we are open to the Light and the leading of the Light, Christ works through us, and through us is made incarnate in the world again. Then we proclaim the kingdom of heaven come and coming.

"Mind the Light," Friends used to say to admonish one another to pay attention to it and follow its leadings as well as to nurture and care for it. Although Friends rarely say that to one another now, it underlies everything that we do. "Mind the Light." Attend to the leadings of that of God in yourself and others, and you will discover the Source of Friends' activities in the Spirit and in the world.

Let me illustrate:

In the beginning of the year 1655, I was at the plough in the east part of Yorkshire in Old England . . . and, as I walked after the plough, I was filled with the love and presence of the living God. . . . And, as I stood a little still, with my heart and mind stayed upon the Lord, the word of the Lord came to me . . . which I did hear perfectly, saying to me in the secret of my heart and conscience, "I have ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."

...At the time appointed, Barbados was set before me, unto which I was required of the Lord to go. . . . After that . . . the word of the Lord came to me, saying, "Go to Boston with thy brother" . . . and at His command I was obedient and gave up to His will, that so His work and service may be accomplished. . . . for obeying the voice and command of the everlasting God, which created heaven and earth and the fountain of waters, do I, with my dear brother, suffer outward bonds near unto death.

And this is given forth to be upon record, that all people may know who hear it, that we *come not in our own wills but in the will of God*. (A quote from Marmaduke Stephenson—who was hanged on Boston Common in 1659 for his evangelism to Massachusetts—found in *Faith And Practice*, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1972. Emphasis mine.) "

"We come not in our own wills but in the will of God." We claim to be seekers of Truth who submit our lives to divine will under a guiding, prophetic Inward Light which we traditionally identify with the Christ of history and the eternal Christ. This is the Source of outreach, of evangelism, Friends. Without this, there is no Power, no Truth, no message to convey to anyone who might be listening or looking. Without this, all our efforts are futile, for we simply proclaim ourselves to the world, not God active in our religious society or churches.

For outreach or evangelism, as in every other inward and outward action we take, we must begin with an openness to discovering, accepting, and faithfully following the Light, the divine presence in our own lives and in the lives of others. This committed openness and awareness allows us to form a religious society or church that seeks and finds the inward spiritual unity that sources our outward actions. We Quakers are practical mystics whose inward experience of God leads us—indeed, compels us—to work to make the vision of *shalom* real in the world. We work for the peaceable kingdom on earth where love, justice, and harmony reign.

We in the Religious Society of Friends and Friends Church are an unusual, vital, and decidedly unconventional group of Christians who declare our ties to all religions and all humanity through a vision of peace, love, social and economic justice, and well-being in all creation. We find this vision by turning inward to encounter the direct, unmediated promptings of the Divine within our hearts in order to live outwardly as God intends. Our direct experience of knowing the Word of God inwardly has revealed that vision to us. It is confirmed as we hear God's word in Scripture. And as a final step, when our understanding of both of those sources is confirmed by our spiritual worshiping community, we discover a vital, empowering way of worship and life that we must follow and that we cannot help but proclaim to the rest of the world in word and deed.

Missionaries To Moscow

This is what sources the mission to Moscow that I referred to earlier. This project arose from one Friend who saw and heard a vision and faithfully articulated it for others who then were called to bring it to reality and establish a Friends' meeting in Moscow. Rather than talk now at length about the mission to Moscow, I will save the details for tomorrow night when we all have a chance to share some of the projects that are going on. I just briefly want to say that this project is an example of organized, planned evangelism by unprogrammed Friends that is establishing meetings in Russia—"planting churches," to put it in terms that are quite foreign to the lips and ears of unprogrammed Friends. The project, with several different focuses and aspects, has been under way for several years and is presently in some very active stages. I want to announce to those of you who don't know it, there is a fledgling worship group now in Moscow. We are doing a lot of interesting things to support the meeting and the project and to evangelize, in every sense of the word, to the whole of the Soviet Union. It is very exciting, and I hope I get a chance tomorrow night to share some of it with you and talk to you about it.

But for anybody who thinks that unprogrammed Friends don't go about establishing missions and doing missionary activity, we certainly do! And in the course of our work

and in articulating Friends beliefs and practices for the people of the Soviet Union, we are becoming particularly clear about the vision we carry.

A Vision for Friends to Convey

What is the gospel message that we are trying to convey? What is it that will catch the hearts and minds and spirits of people and whoosh them into the kingdom? Why should anyone listen to us anyway?

We can talk about sin, we can talk about salvation, we can talk about finding that of God within, we can talk about being led to follow God's will inwardly and then propelled outward to make God real in the world. But what is it that will catch fire in the hearts and minds and spirits of those who see us and hear us? What will call forth that of God in others? I say that we must be prophets, we must speak Truth, we must allow God to speak through us.

Be prophetic. Convey a vision from God and call people to something that is bigger than the Religious Society of Friends and Friends Church. Convey a vision that we recognize and identify with immediately upon hearing, for it is a vision that God built into the world at creation and has kept alive in our hearts and minds and spirits ever since. It is the vision heard and nurtured and carried by a faithful community of God's people. It is the biblical vision of *shalom*—the covenant vision of love conveyed in the Scriptures, both Old Testament and New, and carried by a faithful community, a covenant community. And it is the one at the foundation of the Religious Society of Friends. It is one that Friends can speak and proclaim with confidence, regardless of our theological stance within our religious society or church.

What Is The Prophetic Covenant Vision of Friends?

An especially active Quaker dream has been a vision of unity and harmonious diversity brought about through living in justice and peace, both inward and outward. This is a covenant vision, and we lay special claim to it as Children of the Covenant, Children of Light who "walk cheerfully over the world" calling others to be attentive, faithful, and accountable to the Light, the Christ within them. We are given a vision of a universal community of God's people drawn together by hearing and turning toward that loving, prophetic, saving, empowering, pure Light of Christ already present within all the diverse peoples of the world.

This is a vision to proclaim from the housetops and hilltops of the world. This is a vision that will gather a great people. A central first principle of Quakerism is that there is a continuing, inward, unmediated, universal, and saving Light of Christ in every human being who comes into the world, regardless of religion, culture, creed, race, gender, age, or understanding. Through this, Friends understand and express our experience of God incarnate and active in the world in a way that can be and is empowering for everyone, everywhere.

Here is a gospel to inflame the inner spirit. Listen to how Friends have proclaimed it; it sets my soul on fire! When I hear it spoken and read it and experience it anew, I can hardly wait to go out and talk about it.

Christ . . . has enlightened every man that comes into the world . . . that they might believe in him, and become the children of Light . . . And they that walk in this Light come to the mountain of the house of God . . . and to God's teachings, who will teach them his ways (Fox) .

Previously the law was outward, written on stone tablets, but now it is inward, written in the heart . . . All of us, at all times, have access to Christ as often as we draw near him with pure hearts. He reveals his will to us by his Spirit, and writes his law in our hearts . . . the revelation of God is inward, direct, and objective. . . . And the secret Light which shines in the heart and reproves righteousness is the small beginning of the revelation of God's Spirit (Barclay).

The Light of Christ has been given to all men everywhere, since the beginning of the human race. . . . This Light is the inward gospel preached to every creature under heaven (Brinton).

Deep within us all there is an amazing inner sanctuary of the soul, a holy place, a Divine Center, a speaking Voice, to which we may continuously return . . . It is a Light Within . . . the Slumbering Christ stirring to be awakened. . . . And the Light is within us all (Kelly).

As the capacity of a man or woman is not only in a child, but even in the very embryo, even so the Kingdom of Jesus Christ . . . is in every man's and woman's heart, in that little incorruptible seed, ready to be brought forth (Barclay).

Why is this vision so exciting, so enticing, and so empowering for those to whom we speak? Because, Friends, this Quaker metaphor of Light and Seed is unmistakably one of the experience of growing into, becoming, or unfolding that which God supplies for our process of attaining the Kingdom, final union with God, and attainment of God's purpose for salvation and creation—*shalom*. And we know that this Light, this Seed, the possibility of experiencing God inwardly in a way that leads to inner peace and outward harmony is present in everyone, that it is available to be called forth. It is the beginning and ending point of this whole Consultation.

Friends who know and understand this vision speak of the Light in ways that either evoke the biblical notion of covenant or make direct reference to it. Fox called people to "come to the house of God," to Zion, the mountain of God where all nations would gather in unity under God's covenant promises of justice and peace for the whole world. (See Is. 2:2-4) To walk in the Light is to walk where nations "shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Friends' vision is a covenant vision where it is normal that the "wolf will dwell with the lamb." (Is. 11:6)

The vision we have to proclaim is one of unity, peace, plenty, and stewardship. Traditionally, Friends have been special carriers of this message as it has unfolded through the revelation and action of the Inward Light in a worshipping community committed not only to inward salvation and transformation, but also to the outward action needed to bring this vision to reality. Our continuing, direct experience of the Light of Christ, God's ever-present Spirit, and a hearing, responding, dialogical relationship with the living God in our hearts inspires us to seek unity with all who catch and hold this vision. That's how we call forth that of God in others.

Our mission is to proclaim this covenant community, this worshipping faith community that carries God's vision of *shalom*. Our mission is to know and to bring this vision into reality in the whole world by holding it up for others to unite with and work toward. Our Quaker

worshiping community is a creative, powerful force for receiving and maintaining the covenant vision and finding and uniting with others who share it.

This is what Friends have to offer, to proclaim throughout the land.

What is it that is worth evangelizing about, that is worth reaching out about? The Word, Friends, the Word of God revealed and incarnate within, the Light of the world as confirmed in the vision of love, harmony, and justice revealed in Scripture and to our covenant community. We offer the reality of that vision to be known and experienced by everyone, everywhere, waiting to be called forth. As a worshiping community empowered by God's vision of *shalom* --that is, as a covenant community --we reach out to others who are lost, who are in a place of separation, to a multitude who experience God incarnate within but who have no place of support and interaction. This Quaker community of faith is where we can come to know inwardly the vision of *shalom* and, if we are faithful disciples, to experience the empowering support of others in our community in an intimate, loving fellowship. Such a faithful community can challenge the status quo and the sinfulness that is sometimes within us and certainly around us. In our covenant community, the vision of the kingdom, of *shalom*, is set against a world which would deny that vision.

The world is seeking our worshiping faith community, our covenant community, which provides a microcosm of God's activity. As we grow in the Light, as we come to experience and know God made real in word and deed, and as we come to recognize God in ourselves and others, we begin to experience relationships that are no longer broken but whole and complete reflections of God's relationship with us. We find renewal with all humanity and all creation, not simply personal wholeness or personal unity with God.

Through our worshiping covenant community we begin to see what the world will be like when love and justice reign and creation is in harmony. We begin to experience the *shalom* of Old Testament proclamation. We begin to experience the love and peace Christ proclaimed in the New Testament. We begin to experience the coming of the kingdom, salvation, union with the living God, the Divine presence alive in all creation. We let our lives speak.

This is what the world and the people in it are dying for—quite literally. This is what people seek, although they may never know it unless we Friends speak it, with words and through lives, and call it forth as we "walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in everyone." This vision of love, harmony, justice, and well-being of all creation, and our experience of the Inward Prophet, Priest, Teacher, and Friend is the "how" that sources the "how-to's" of our outreach and evangelism. The inner voice of the living God is what propels us outward to proclaim the word of God as Quakers know it to call forth that of God in everyone. There is a great people to be gathered, Friends, and God is calling us to do the gathering.

ROLEPLAYS

Judith Dancy and Phil Baisley

Situation I:

In Windy Willow Meeting, an unprogrammed meeting in New England, new attenders are bringing messages of the power of Jesus. Some members are uncomfortable. Ministry and Counsel meets to discuss.

The Task:

How to handle the turmoil resulting from this Jesus language.

Role Players:

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| Person #1 | You think they are overwhelming the meeting and inhibiting the freedom of the Spirit. |
| Person #2 | "I like it. Let's not spoil it." |
| Person #3 | "They need to be elderred." |
| Person #4 | You are a "refugee" from an evangelical/fundamental church and are hardly able to stay in the room when these messages come. |
| Person #5 | Messages both frighten and excite you. You are ambivalent. |

Situation II:

The Second Friends Church of Greensboro, North Carolina, has lost thirty of its seventy-five members in the last five years. The budget of the church continues to be met, so the members really hadn't been aware of the decline.

The Task:

The Evangelism Outreach Committee meets to discuss possible solutions.

Role Players:

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| Person #1 | "Is there really a problem? We're meeting the budget." |
| Person #2 | "I remember a previous revival. I came to the meeting as a result." |
| Person #3 | "Let's do telemarketing! I heard a church in California did that." |
| Person #4 | "I don't care what we do, no one is going to come as long as" |
| Person #5 | "We don't have the money to do a campaign." |

SMALL GROUPS' TASK

We want the groups to develop their own integrity and follow their own leadings, but, based on past experience, we think the groups function better if they have some suggestions to get started and to set boundaries to their discussion.

First, your initial meeting on Friday morning should give opportunity for members of your group to become acquainted. Everyone should share what they would like the group to know about them, the meeting they come from, and what their hopes are in coming to this Consultation. Second, the convener should moderate the group discussion, keep track of the time, try to keep the discussion on the topic, and be sure everyone has an opportunity to share in the group without one or two dominating the discussion. Sometimes it may be helpful for the group to wait in silence. Third, someone in the group should be designated as recorder of general conclusions reached (not the detailed discussion). It will be the responsibility of this person to make a five-minute report to the Saturday afternoon plenary session, sharing the important ideas and concerns that came out of the group. Also, these summary remarks should be put in writing to leave at the conference center. They will go in the published findings of the Consultation, which will be mailed to all attenders.

Several things can usefully go on in the small groups:

- Personal responses to the presentations, in addition to what might come out in the plenary response and discussion time;
- Checking in with each other about our experience of the Consultation;
- Hearing each other's different understandings of the meaning and process of evangelism among Friends.

Focusing on the goals at the end of the prospectus, groups are invited to respond to questions such as:

- How did you come to Friends?
- What did you hear as "good news"?
- What does it mean to you to "call forth that of God in others"? Is this the same as or different from "conversion to Christ"?
- How does "calling forth that of God in others" happen/not happen in your meeting? What empowers evangelism in your meeting? What keeps it from happening? What is your role in this process?
- What about fears of exclusivity, or condemnation of others' paths?

As you explore these questions, you might consider the following:

1. Could you be a Friends meeting with your diversity of background and experience?
2. What would be the cohesion or boundaries for your meeting?
3. How would you go about:
 - a. Speaking and sharing the truth you know?
 - b. Inviting others to be a part of your community?

SMALL GROUPS' SUMMARY REPORTS

Group 1

Group 1 designed the following scenario: London Yearly Meeting has decided to underwrite completely the establishment and building of a Friends meeting in Allentown, Indiana. We will call our new meeting Bethel Friends Meeting.

Our first goal was to select the site and design a fully functional meetinghouse. It shall have a large foyer with plenty of glass windows (floor-to-ceiling) to allow plenty of light. The worship center is a large open room with chairs and tables stored within the side walls. It shall be a ground-level building which would make it easily accessible for our elder members and the handicapped. Our basketball equipment is recessed in the ceiling but easily lowered--after all, this is Indiana! The kitchen is large and fully equipped, capable of preparing for large banquets and small enough to host the local AA group meetings.

Along our side wings, we have a fully equipped office and pastoral study, church school rooms, children and adult rest rooms equipped also for the handicapped. To accommodate our overnight traveling Friends or retreats, we have installed shower facilities.

Our next step was to develop a mission statement:

1. To seek, experience, live out, share the Good News of Christ in our community.
2. Good news is:
 - Quaker worship as led by God
 - Progressive, constantly revealing availability of the love and forgiveness of God with Christ as a Guidepost
 - Community of seekers and believers who recognize and nurture the gifts of all in mutual discipleship
 - Christ as our teacher, present in our midst
 - Embodying the coming of the Realm of God in our community, lives, and service
 - What God is like

The co-founders then developed a promo. for public television, as well as a thirty-minute video. The video would show:

1. Children singing at First Day school
2. People streaming into the meetinghouse
3. People at worship
4. A letter of membership being read in monthly meeting
 - a) Sorting clothes in clothing room
 - b) People at church picnic
 - c) Elder speaking with person about spiritual journey
 - d) Adult First Day school class talking about Quakers, Authority, and the Bible
 - e) Young Friends sleep-over at meetinghouse
5. Stills from Friends history with voice-over
6. Stills or footage of Friends around the world
7. People coming to meeting with food donations for community
8. Jail ministry
9. Civilian public service alumnus talking with Young Friends about a conscientious objector during World War II
10. During the week, day care, Alcoholics Anonymous, Girl's Club

11. Anchor of community worship
12. Invitation to attend

Video is available to any interested meeting or individual.

These goals established that it was time to prepare the worship service. A warm friendly person would greet people as they entered the meetinghouse. Our mission statement would be placed where all could view, as well as in printed tracts for sharing. We would ask one of the co-founders to explain briefly the history of Quakers and to explain the Friends manner of worship.

The pastor would select the morning hymns that would go along with his/her message. The pastor would lead the congregation in centering down for 15 minutes of unprogrammed worship, after which he/she would bring the message. Scripture reading would be done by the pastor and one of the co-founders. Children over the age of six would be encouraged to remain for worship while smaller children would have the opportunity to attend church school. We would not have an offering but instead request all contributions be mailed to the treasurer of the meeting.

The pastor and Ministry and Oversight /Ministry and Counsel would follow up by visiting various members/visitors of the congregation, either in person or by phone. They would also encourage all to participate in the support of the meeting through the various committees and activities, as well as the community around us.

Welcome to Bethel Friends Meeting!

Beth Allen, Convener
Phil Baisley
Stephanie Crumley-Effinger

Sam Legg
Johan Maurer
Joe Stacey

Nancy Terrell
Jonathan Vogel-Borne

Group 2

There is great variety of responses among the six in our group. Stereotypes of Philadelphia Friends were agreeably shattered for some FUM Friends by Mary's presentation. Hearing these stereotypes was difficult for the unprogrammed Friends who had no such trouble with Jim's and David's presentations.

We do more outreach and calling forth that of God in others than we have done consciously or labeled as such.

We have some questions : What are the boundaries for an evangelism that is respectful of a person who is content with his or her present persuasion? Can we accept the Buddhist's preference for Buddhism? Are we willing to see God in the other even though the other person doesn't see God the same way we do? Are we willing to see God in other people's religions? Is evangelism sharing the good news alone, or is it essential that it be aimed toward conversion?

We have six different answers to these questions.

P. V. Chandy, Convener
Harvey Gillman
Judith Dancy

Susan Hubbard
Jim LeShana
Thomas Moore

Group 3

Evangelism is something we do not because we want or ought to but because God demands it of us. We cannot help it.

If this is true, how then can we plan for it?

1. We can encourage each other. This is illustrated by the "two-dog principle": Joe once had a dog who was a very good dog. Then he acquired a second, and after some time, the first dog died, and he had only the second, who was a very good dog. But when the two dogs were together, they got into a lot of trouble. They would go to the fence that they knew they weren't to cross, stop and look at each other. "I'll do it if you do it!" said the look, and off they went together. So can we Friends encourage each other to be ready to undertake that which seems too big or scary for us alone?
2. We can learn to "see through the eyes of Christ": to order our lives so that opportunities for evangelism are recognized. We realized that countless opportunities to share our faith are given us, but we in our busyness fail to see them. We need to learn a new way of "seeing" in order to recognize them.

We had some discussion of the seemingly unreconcilable differences that were apparent in the larger group. "Why all this struggle since we'll all go back and continue doing what we've done before?" "The only hope we have for a reunification of vision is to go back to the vision of early Friends." This raised a discussion about "going back" vs. going forward and some agreement that both "new wine in new wineskins" and "there is nothing new under the sun" had validity and that we needed a balance between them.

This discussion of differences raised the "two-cat principle": Doris once had a very fat, indolent, cat. Her daughter had an overly active, thin, cat. When her daughter moved, the thin cat came to live with the fat cat. The indolent cat was spurred to more play and exercise, losing weight, while the hyperactive cat slowed down and gained weight. Each became more healthy, while retaining its own identity. So, too, we Friends may contribute to each other's health and attitude.

We also shared our visions of the Society of Friends and the good news to be shared. Although we didn't use the same words, we found ourselves comfortable with each other.

Finally, we shared some personal experience with evangelism and recognized the following:

1. The results of evangelistic efforts are often not immediately evident. Such lack of immediate results should not discourage us.
2. We need "different strokes for different folks." In Doris' garden, she sometimes swings a mattock with all her strength to break the ground, sometimes gently uses a demitasse spoon to transplant seedlings. We need to have and use both kinds of tools in our evangelistic kit.
3. Sometimes, the wrong thing is better than nothing at all.

Our concern for evangelism arises from our tender care for our brothers and sisters on this planet. Our hearts ache for those struggling to make it on their own. We would share with them the love, hope, joy, and power that comes from hearing the One who can speak to our condition.

Bob Gosney, Convener
Doris Blossom
Jim Heulton

Lawrence Ross
Joe Snyder
Nancy Wood

Group 4

In addressing the question or challenge of Quaker evangelism, we found ourselves evangelizing one another in the gentlest, truest, and most Friendly of ways. In the challenge of sharing our own spiritual centers and listening as others shared their own centers, we found ourselves discovering - by practice - what allows us to share our own good news and - of equal importance - what blocks us from evangelizing and being evangelized to.

We are variously blocked by the caricatures we hold of our own message, our own community, the messages of others, and the community of others; furthermore, the balance and tension between the understanding of our intellects and the passion of our faiths strikes dumb our evangelical call.

Among the caricatures shared was a framework which (liberally paraphrased) "puts Christ in a box, puts me in a box, while I want to break free and dance among the meetings!" This spoke to several Friends as a question whose answer was "The Truth Shall Make You Free" and the corresponding evangelical call to ministry. Another caricature was clearly revealed by the realization of one Friend that "Liberals can be Christians, too."

A discussion of the meaning of salvation focused on an image of "turning" rather than "conversion" as in George Fox's "I turned them to their true teacher, who is Christ." One member realized for the first time the personal and internal nature of the "decision for Christ" as the message of Christian salvation; when the message comes to the heart, he realized, that is when the turning point comes. And, for many, the message gets caught in the sieve of the head before hitting the heart; but the solution, we all agreed, is not a smaller head but a bigger heart and to find a place for the giving and accepting of compassion. The problem of the message getting mired in the head became especially clear as we chuckled over a description of theological argumentation being a tracking of reasons and supports for arguments with the rule (imposed by the game) that "whoever reaches faith first loses." To be true to our faith, we realized that we must identify both the intellectually examined faith and the experientially "simple" faith as having equal profundity and not to toss one aside as being less profound or central than the other.

Finally, we left our groups feeling both a sense of closeness and community and possessed with an urgency to evangelize, to call our meetings to spread our "Good News" as Friends, to create the structures within our meetings which enable and nurture evangelism, and to re-own the vision of Friends - of the "Quaker distinctives" and the news of the Inward Christ - which are our gift and our responsibility to share with the larger world.

Curt Shaw, Convener
Ken Haase
Jan Hodson

Mary Moehlman
Cynthia Moore
Jim Newby

Group 5

After agreeing that our diverse group would probably never agree, we found that we all agreed with these ideas presented by Mary Moehlman:

In order for evangelism to be effective, it must reach those who need love, hope, peace, and light (i.e., everyone or anyone), and it must come from the Source, which is the inward light, the Christ within. We must tend the Light so it will grow, and we must come not in our own wills but in the will of God - without this, there is no power, no truth. The inward experience of Christ compels us to act.

We see that evangelism is something we live, not just something we do. One of our group defined evangelism as proclaiming the Word and leaving the results to God, the essence of the Word being that "God has forgiven me and has replaced my guilt with peace and joy and a burning desire to share this with others."

To do this effectively, we must follow the leadership of the Holy Spirit. How is this done? By reading the Gospels and journals of Friends like John Woolman, we may learn how they did it and follow their example. We can find someone who is doing it and do what they do. Some of us have come to Christ ourselves by finding that we wanted what some Christians had.

We are in different places along the spiritual path, and the forms our evangelism will take depend upon our experience of the inward light of Christ and the condition of the flock we are called to gather.

I am reminded of something my boy-choir director often said, "A chain is only as strong as its weakest link," by which we understood that we were responsible to and for each other for the success of our performance.

I see the spiritual life in simplistic terms, that there are basically two conditions, one of moving toward God and one of moving away from God, and that our location in the path is less important than which direction we are going. The cross stands on that path, but until we reach that spot we will not and cannot be reconciled to it, and unless the evangelist carries the cross in his/her own heart, he/she cannot help us accept it.

We must try to be strong links in the chain, with one hand reaching up to those further along the path, and one hand reaching back to those coming up behind us, pulling us all toward God. Our meetings and churches are chains of individuals, and the Society of Friends is a chain of meetings and churches, some closer to and some farther from God, but each responsible to and for one another for the success of our spiritual journey.

Marilyn Neyer, Convener
David Brock
Dean Johnson

David Male
Lois Sexton

PARTICIPANTS OBSERVERS' REPORT

FRIENDS CONSULTATION ON EVANGELISM: Calling Forth that of God in Others

Nancy Wood

Last night, Jonathan and I agreed we would work no longer than 1:00 on the summary report we are presenting this morning. And we did pretty well in sticking to that boundary, but, as I was driving home at 1:30, I realized I was feeling very uneasy, and all of a sudden I knew why: I am a pastor in a programmed meeting, used to a manuscript or at least notes, and there I was involved in doing what seemed to be a very unprogrammed report. So I went right home and wrote down some notes!

Seriously, we have planned for this hour to be more of a group reflection than your standard progress report. We want you all to be drawn into remembering the past three days, and so to begin that reflection as you center, we will highlight a number of feeling words and phrases to call you back to important moments:

Evangelism/outreach
History/tradition
Good news
"Fishers of men"
Letting go/holding on
Authentic - genuine
A "non-issue"
Fragile unity
Anger, pain, denial
Sensitivity, respect
Gentleness, joy, laughter, caring
Motivation
Passion, fire
Intentionality, planning
Within/without
Spontaneous opportunities
"How could a loving father kill a son?"
Continual crucifixion
"Life in the worship"
Tension, intolerance, language, definition, "lost," "saved," "the Truth"
"This is what God wants"
"Decision for Christ"
So what?
Exclusive/inclusive
Low self-esteem
"Begging for converts"
Outward witness/inward experience
Preconceptions, expectations, caricature
Commonalties
"Two dog principle" (a story where a dog respected a boundary, but when two dogs were together, they urged each other on to break that boundary)
"Two cat principle" (a story about what happened when a slow cat moved in with a hyperactive cat - their respective behaviors were modified after being influenced by the other)
"Where 2 or 3 and less than 30 are gathered"
"Filling the pews"

"What do you do with Jesus?"
Scarcity/survival mentality
Who is Jesus?
Biblical illiteracy
Needs-based ministry, church growth, bold, clarity, emphatic
Ministry priority
Sharing the faith
Valiant 60
Pride, arrogance
"Giving birth," "labor"
"Friends don't proselytize!"
"Give up some tradition to preserve the main one"
Merchandizing, hospitality/particularity
Conversion, vision, prophecy
Fear, too little-too late
"Sometimes the most destructive thing we can do is nothing"
We are not clear about what we believe
We can laugh at our foibles
It's not funny when it's happening in my church!

Now - look around the room for a moment. "Who are we?" and "What are we doing here?"

We are a gathered group of programmed and unprogrammed Quakers, chosen as a representational group of the Religious Society of Friends, though not really a complete and true representation. How many of us would say that all views have been clearly presented here, speaking to the fullness and breadth of our tradition? But I think all would agree that in our personal testimonies this weekend, we stayed close to our experience, and, therefore, we did well at representing ourselves. We were honest and vulnerable and authentic in our sharing - so much so that in some instances barriers came crashing down.

Coming from as far away as London, New York, and California, we brought bags full of history, tradition, and all kinds of expectations, and prejudice. We had questions and not many answers. Some of us, frankly, had to ask ourselves "So what? How is this going to accomplish anything? Won't we all go home doing just as we always have?"

I don't think so, because as we talked, we listened, we cried and got angry, we laughed and sang, we prayed together and named our differences, fears, and passions. We talked about the things most dear to our hearts: our faith and the Religious Society of Friends. And we found that that's what motivates us to share the good news. I don't think many of us found the arrogance and pride or the passionless faith we expected to find in one another. We don't have all the answers but probably have more questions.

We looked back with Jim LeShana to our rich common history, but also realized that we come from several different Quaker traditions, each affecting our evangelistic styles in different ways. David Brock helped us look more specifically at evangelism among programmed Friends, and Mary Moehlman at outreach among unprogrammed Friends.

Right off the bat, we addressed the language difficulty and struggled with how to get past words we don't understand, can't connect with, and which are downright offensive to us. But out of that same evening came the call to newness and the comparison of giving birth and laboring to the process of birthing new "converts."

In our small groups, we began getting in touch with our fears and the pain of our differences, and described the personal experiences which formed those. In the naming, there was relief and dialogue. With our role plays, we were able to see ourselves processing through the typical struggles we all face in our meeting : we laughed and didn't laugh at the realism, and we began recognizing our many commonalties.

Last evening, Jonathan and I questioned what our unity actually is and asked ourselves the important question: "Can we really get away from dealing with Jesus Christ before we leave here?" This question and others which we feel this group is not finished with, Jonathan will be posing after a bit of silence.

Jonathan Vogel-Borne

The consultation that I thought I would be attending might have been more appropriately named "Friends and the Evangelical Faith," not "Friends and Evangelism." It has seemed to me that during the last few days we have spent quite a bit of our time focussing more on the act of evangelizing, rather than on the faith basis of a religious movement that has been called Evangelicalism. I realize that the act of "telling the Good News" is inextricably linked to the personal experience of that "Good News." Yet I have noticed that it is easier to talk about the technical aspects of "winning souls for Jesus Christ" than it is to open our hearts to a fresh baptism of that Christ Spirit.

As part of my preparation for this gathering, I came across Charles F. Thomas' pamphlet, Thoughts on Evangelical Quakerism (Indiana Yearly Meeting, 1978). In that pamphlet, Charles F. Thomas lists the following "broad principles of evangelical faith" (p. 3) which he uses as "criteria against which to discuss the particular characteristics of the evangelical emphasis among early Friends":

1. Revelation as the source of the knowledge of God.
2. Jesus Christ as an act of God in the salvation of the human race.
3. The sinfulness of humankind and our alienation from God.
4. The regeneration of individuals through faith in Christ.
5. The authority of Scripture as normative for faith and the rule of life.
6. Work of the Holy Spirit in sanctifying, guiding, and empowering individuals for moral and ethical responsibility and for Christian ministry.
7. The commission to the church to go into all the world and make disciples.

I offer these principles to the group at this time in order to remind us that the Great Commission (#7, above), the act of evangelizing is only a part, an inevitable outcome of our faith experience.

Along with this consideration of our basis in faith, one of the important themes of the Consultation has been the concern to know and to be sensitive to the condition of those with whom we share the "Good News" of Christ. Related to this, I would like to recount an experience I had in a small prayer group at the 1987 International Friends Conference on Evangelism in Guatemala City. In the middle of our week together, I felt led to speak about my sense of uncertainty, even fear. I had felt drawn to attend this conference out of a hope to renew my experience of Christ in a direct, face-to-face encounter with Jesus. I had come to Guatemala hoping to learn from people for whom the experience of the living presence of Jesus Christ might be more tangible than it had been for me. My fear about a renewed and direct encounter with Jesus Christ was that I would be required to commit my life more fully, and in fact totally, to God's service. After I shared this fear in the group and asked for their prayers, a dear woman Friend whom I had known prior to the conference asked everyone to hold hands and gathered us all in prayer. Her words melted my heart into the heart of God as Jesus spoke clearly through her, ever so directly to my

condition. By the tone of subsequent prayers, however, it became evident to me that some others in the group questioned whether or not I had been truly saved.

The lesson I gained from this experience and have found repeated here at the Consultation is that the maturation of the evangelist has all to do with developing the gift of sensitivity to others' conditions. While I felt supported and upheld by the woman Friend, I feel as though I was not really heard by the other Friends who prayed that I might find salvation. Was it their own fear or doubt that made them pray more fervently for my soul? Was it my projection? I don't know. I do know that after that I did not speak in the group again. I was not able to touch that vulnerable, growing place in my heart.

Picking up on what Nancy has said about the representational spread of our Consultation, we both noted that at this gathering the evangelical perspective, in Indiana basketball terms, seems to have the "home court" advantage. The Friends that have come from the liberal, generally unprogrammed Friends traditions, myself included, tend to have a more evangelical perspective than do the people in their meetings back home. Because of this, I would like to say a few words in defense of the unprogrammed meetings' actual and potential role as an evangelical mission point.

People are often attracted to the unprogrammed meetings because our form of worship is so different from the mainstream Christian church. For this reason, these meetings have attracted "religious refugees" who have come to us wounded, burnt-out from their past church experiences. At least the form, if not some of the content, of unprogrammed worship offers these people a visible alternative. In my meeting in Cambridge, Massachusetts, we have upwards to 30 visitors a week. As I have traveled among Quaker circles, I am struck by how often I hear of one Friend or another whose entry into the Religious Society of Friends began with the Friends Meeting at Cambridge. It is true that we are on the forefront of unprogrammed evangelism.

Now there are some positive aspects to this kind of evangelism, as well as some serious weaknesses. In the positive vein, given that our tradition has undeniably Christian roots and that there are often those Friends within a given meeting who embody a clear witness of the living experience of Christ, those "religious refugees" who are able to find a connection with us through our public worship may experience what a friend of mine has called "being nursed back to Christ." Given the wide range of views and opinions in most unprogrammed meeting increases the likelihood that inquirers will find a meaningful connection with Friends. In my meeting, even within our narrow socioeconomic confines and outlook, people new to us will often find something in the worship that speaks to their condition.

Within the strength of diversity lies an often fatal drawback. We are so diverse, we become spiritual mush. Once inquirers have found a living spiritual connection with the community and have been around the meeting for a length of time - what then? What is the "Good News" within the unprogrammed tradition? Where is there guidance for the mature spiritual walk?

Lastly, as Nancy mentioned earlier, we were struck by the fact that in the prospectus for the Consultation, and indeed with few exceptions throughout our discussions, there seemed to be an implied equation between what liberal Friends call "outreach" or "advancement" and what evangelical Friends call "evangelism." In this light, we offer the following questions as a way to open the group's consideration of these issues:

1. Are "evangelism" and "outreach" the same?

2. Can "outreach" be considered in the same realm as "evangelism" if it doesn't lead people to Christ?
3. How do we avoid the historical fact that the evangelical movement within Quakerism is based on the immediate experience of Jesus Christ?
4. Can a person be fully reconciled to God without a recognition of Christ?
5. Is the "Good News" about:
 - a) Jesus Christ's historical work on the cross?
 - b) The experience of the living Christ?
 - c) The message Jesus of Nazareth preached?
 - d) None of the above?
 - e) All the above
 - f) All of the above and more?

APPENDIX

OUTREACH AND LONDON YEARLY MEETING

An example of an outreach program
presented by Harvey Gillman, Outreach Secretary
Quaker Home Service, London Yearly Meeting
at the "Forum on Resources for Outreach."

"What are we doing when we get involved in Quaker outreach? We are addressing 'that of God' in those we meet, and we are being addressed in return.

The Light in one is reflected by the Light in the other.

The Seed, the Voice, the Christ within, is thus affirmed.

Outreach is a process of liberation."

Those words were written on the front of the Quaker Home Service Outreach Manual which was published at Yearly Meeting 1990. The manual was one of the results of a large conference of about one hundred and fifty Friends who met at Nottingham the previous year to consider "Outreach for the '90's." Some of the Friends there expressed a traditional fear that we would be embarking on a course of action which would go against the belief that there was "that of God" in everyone and so we must not presume that the individual is an empty vessel in need of being filled with our particular contents; one or two others suggested the model of the missionary standing in the market square banging the drum of the Gospel. Many in the conference expressed their fears about rigid dogmas and institutions they had escaped from. The last thing they wanted was a new authoritarianism.

In the covering letter to the report which later went off to all participants, I tried to analyse various ways of looking at outreach.

- a) All Quaker work, be it with the needy, the starving, the refugees, the oppressed, is outreach to the world, and this is outreach undertaken as service with no intention even of putting the Quaker label on it. It is good work done for itself.
- b) All Quaker liaison with other religious groups, community groups, etc., is outreach usually undertaken as part of our presence in that part of the world in which we live. This is mainly because we feel it is part of our commitment to the local community and as Friends we feel we have a role to play.
- c) Our work as individual Quakers is outreach when informed by our spiritual convictions, our ways of doing things, that lead people to ask what is our motivation. Again, this is not done as a conscious intention to reach out but is the means through which many people come to Friends.
- d) The work of the Leaveners and the Tapestry Group, various informal groups, etc., is outreach that makes people outside of Friends aware of Quaker principles.
- e) Outreach is putting Friends on the map through advertising talks, showing of the exhibition, the tapestry, the videos, literature, etc. This is intentional outreach, trying to make Quakers known, without, at the same time, trying to make people into Quakers.

My own particular job involves "intentional outreach," and I should divide this into two particular goals:

First, going back to the words from the cover of the manual, this involves helping people to discover their own spirituality, whatever form this may take. This is precisely the process of liberation referred to. In Christian terms, it is about (re-)discovering the Christ Within, the Inner Redeemer which is the way to God. I am aware that many in London Yearly Meeting would not put it this way, but to me the reality of the human-divine encounter is greater than our limited ways of describing it.

Second, the provision of the "invisible option" whereby the Quaker way as experienced in the spiritual life of London Yearly Meeting is made manifest to the public at large, so that when people reach a stage in their lives when they are considering their spiritual directions they know what Quakers can offer them.

Both of these goals are expressed in the creation of resources and in the presentation of the Society in talks and conferences . (A list of outreach resources is appended.)

The Quaker Home Service Advertising Campaign

An example of this theology in action is the advertising campaign that Quaker Home Service has carried out in the last twenty or so years. We have a budget of about £13,000 (\$24,715 US) simply for advertising in the national press. Between 3000-4000 replies are received each year. Each coupon elicits an enquirer's pack which contains:

- A copy of A Light That is Shining;
- The introductory book on Quakerism;
- A list of all the Meetings in the General Meeting of the enquirer;
- A Meet-a-Friend form, which will put the enquirer in contact with a local Friend if required;
- A copy of "Quaker Monthly" and a subscription form;
- A covering letter which welcomes the enquirer to Meeting and tells of enquirers' conferences.

To this is added a leaflet "Your First Time at Quaker Meeting." Later, a second letter is sent inviting the enquirer (depending on area) to a national weekend enquirers' conference. About 120 enquirers come each year to these conferences. These have proved very popular, and many Friends have come into the Society through them.

It is also our policy to encourage local gatherings to hold their own meetings, and we send out invitations on their behalf to people from their areas who have replied to the advertising campaign.

Resources for Exhibitions, etc.

1. The Quaker Home Service Travelling Exhibition: "Meet the Quakers" is available for Friends who are holding an open day or local celebration. This comprises sixteen frames (32 sides including two blank ones) which describe the life, attitudes, worship, and testimonies of Friends. There are also in addition six blank frames (12 sides) so that meetings can make their own local exhibitions. The frames are approximately 35 inches height by 24 inches wide. Notes on setting this up and ideas on how to use it are available from the Outreach Section of QHS. The cost of this is on a sliding scale from £10 to £25 depending on the ability of the meeting to pay. Costume dolls are also available from QHS, but may need some refurbishing.

2. Two Videos: One for adults ("The Quaker Way") and one for children ("Quakerism through the Eyes of Young People") have been produced by Quaker Home Service for local gatherings. They last for thirty minutes and are based on the Bolton Meeting for Worship. It is not a good idea to show both to the same audience as parts of them are the same. They can be hired by the week and can be obtained from the Resources Room of QHS.
3. Posters: Quaker Home Service, Quaker Peace & Service, and Quaker Social Responsibility and Education all bought from the Book Centre. Poster lists are attached to this paper.
4. Leaflets: Quaker Home Service produces a wide range of leaflets for exhibitions. A description of leaflets for outreach and their prices is available as the buff-coloured leaflet on leaflets attached.
5. Coupons: Coupons are available for enquirers and attenders which can be sent to the Outreach Section of Friends House for a Quaker information pack.
6. Badges: Two QHS Q badges are available, one green on white (square), one black on silver (round), priced 0.90p from the Book Centre.
7. The Quaker Tapestry: This is an independent enterprise of the Quaker Tapestry Group. For details and hire of panels, contact Katherine N. Gell, 1 Rose Cottage, Westington, Chipping Camden, GL55 6EG.
8. Talking Threads: A show given by Barry and Jill Wilsher has been arranged to coincide with the exhibition of the Quaker Tapestry. Its working title is "Talking Threads: Stories from the Quaker Tapestry." It was written by Roy Apps, and the Wilshers are offering performers to display the Tapestry at museums and galleries. Contact Barry and Jill Wilsher at The Stables, Dene Lane, Aston, near Stevenage, Hertfordshire SG2 7EP (043-888-308).
9. The Quaker Show Kit: The kit comprises: a marquee (12 ft. x 9 ft.) with hand banner and night curtain; two tables with tablecloths; four blank display boards (2 ft. x 6 in. x 4 ft.); four poster boards; two flags and poles (12 ft. high); an information desk and stool. All fit into a trailer.

Provisional bookings should be made as early as possible and confirmed nearer the time. Please also state your collection and return dates in writing. The kit is based with William and Gillian Waddilove, The Rollies, Priory Road, Wolston, Coventry, Warwickshire (CV8 3FX) (0203 544 255) who will be able to answer any technical questions. Please phone them a few days before collection to confirm detailed arrangements. There are no set fees for this, though donations are welcome.

Background for Outreach

1. Reaching Out: Ten issues of "Reaching Out," the outreach newsletter have so far been published. These contain a wealth of description of good practice by Friends up and down the country.
2. The Outreach Manual: This is a specially written manual to help Friends through the whole process from thinking about outreach into the unknown to making attenders feel at home. Price is £1.50 + p.p. from the Book Centre.

Book Boxes

Book boxes can be supplied from the Book Centre at Friends House for a maximum of three months. If the books cannot be collected, they will be sent by post free of charge, the meeting paying the full cost of return postage. Give the Book Centre at least three weeks' notice. Books are ordered on a sale-or-return basis. It is important that when books are returned, invoices and cash for sales are sent back at the same time, under the same cover. Leaflets and posters are not available on a sale-or-return basis.

Books Recommended for Enquirers:

General:

- Advices and Queries
- Christian Faith and Practice
- Church Government
- Coming Home (Gerald Priestland)
- Introducing Quakers (George Gorman)
- A Light that is Shining (Harvey Gillman)
- To Lima with Love: the Response of the Religious Society of Friends in Great Britain to the World Council of Churches, document Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry
- Quaker by Convincement (Geoffrey Hubbard)
- Questions and Counsel

George Fox:

- George Fox and the Quaker (Cecil Sharman) - to be published early in 1991
- Wait in the Light: the Spirituality of George Fox (John Lampen)

History:

- Portrait in Grey: A Short History of the Quakers (John Punshon)

Worship and Prayer:

- The Amazing Fact of Quaker Worship (George Gorman)
- The Desert and the Market Place (Jack Dobbs)
- Encounter with Silence: Reflections from the Quaker Tradition (John Punshon)
- An Exercise of the Spirit: Quakers and Prayer (compiled by Leila Ward)
- Preparation for Worship (Thomas Green)
- What Do You Do in Meeting for Worship? (Members and attenders of Newcastle upon Tyne Preparative Meeting)

The Bible:

- The Bible and the Light Within (George Boobyer)
- Twenty Questions about Jesus (John Lampen)

Young People and Children:

- The Quaker Meeting and its Children (Peggy McGeoghan)
- You and the Quakers: a Book about the Society of Friends for Young People (Alison Sharman)

Other Books Recommended:

- Authority, Leadership and Concern (Roger Wilson)
- The Growth of the Peace Testimony of the Society of Friends (Horace Alexander)
- Power in the Peace and the Light (David Lonsdale)
- Quaker Organization: A Plain Person's Guide (Barry Wilsher)