

**MINUTES OF THE 186th SESSIONS OF
OHIO VALLEY YEARLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
Seventh Month 26 - Seventh Month 30, 2006**

Seventh Month 26, 2006, 2:30pm - 5:15pm

1. Opening of sessions

Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting gathered in waiting worship at Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana, for its 186th annual sessions. The Presiding Clerk opened the sessions with a reading of John 17:11, 21.

2. Greetings and welcome

The Clerk greeted Friends present and recognized Nelson Bingham, representing the office of the President of Earlham College, who also welcomed Friends.

3. Greetings from Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative)

The Clerk read from a letter of greeting and encouragement from Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative).

4. Roll call of representatives

The Clerk called the roll of monthly meetings. A list of Friends who identified themselves over the course of the sessions as designated representatives of their respective monthly meetings is appended to these minutes. Other Friends present from the various meetings were recognized at this time.

5. Welcoming of guests

The Clerk extended a special welcome to Friends from outside Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting. Friends welcomed Alicia McBride, who was representing Friends Committee on National Legislation.

6. Gratitude to Friends working with youth programs

The Clerk read a list of names of Friends working with the Yearly Meeting's youth during sessions. Friends expressed their gratitude to these Friends.

7. Absent Friends

Friends held in the Light those who were prevented from attending this year's sessions, as well as the Quaker Youth Pilgrims currently undertaking a journey of faith. Friends were asked to provide names of those in our Yearly Meeting family in need of prayers for healing and announced that a called meeting for healing would be held on Sixth Day evening during Yearly Meeting sessions.

8. Review of agenda

The Clerk thanked Barbarie Hill for her excellent service in compiling *Reports in Advance*. The Clerk directed Friends' attention to the agenda printed in *Reports in Advance*, pointed out the

shift of a few items, and asked for questions or comments. No concerns were raised.

9. Summary of Epistles Received

Barbara Robinson offered a summary of epistles received from various yearly meetings around the world throughout the past year. The epistles, described as united in speaking to Friends' desire to make a difference in a hurting world through their actions, were available for Friends to read during the Yearly Meeting sessions.

10. State of Society report

Sandra Ward Angell presented highlights of the report, including the joys and sorrows, areas of growth and challenge facing many of our constituent monthly meetings. Friends were encouraged to read the entire report as well as the state of meeting reports submitted by constituent monthly meetings, all of which are printed in *Reports in Advance*.

11. Executive Committee report

The Clerk referred Friends to the written report, highlighting several points, including the continuing concern over the lack of representation of many monthly meetings at Executive Committee meetings throughout the year. During these Yearly Meeting sessions, four items arising from Executive Committee were to be brought forward for consideration by Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Friends, including the travel reimbursement policy, funds for Fall Creek Meetinghouse improvements, reexamination of the process for the use of Yearly Meeting funds for various projects, and the shift from a per capita based to a covenant based Yearly Meeting funding system.

12. Nominating Committee initial report

Byron Branson presented the initial report, drawing Friends' attention to the large number of gaps in the report as printed in *Reports in Advance*, particularly in the area of youth committees. Byron explained for Friends how to interpret the tables in the printed report. In light of the large number of unfilled positions, Friends re-entered silent worship, and speaking from the silence, several Friends articulated concerns and questions regarding the actual process of nomination at the Yearly Meeting level, as well as the helpfulness of particular committees. Friends were particularly encouraged to consider the addition of a member to the Epistolary Committee. The final report of Nominating Committee was to be presented at the session on Seventh Month 30, 2006.

13. Lauramoore Report

Julie Owen (West Richmond Friends Meeting, Indiana Yearly Meeting) presented the report, highlighting a number of volunteer efforts during the past year, including the Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Work Day at the Lauramoore held on Fourth Month 29, 2006, as well as a number of visits and activities held there. Friends were reminded that as an historic building, the Lauramoore Home required frequent improvements; this can present financial challenges. The home currently had six residents and three vacancies. In addition to fundraising needs, there are many ways in which Friends can assist in the ministry of the Lauramoore Home. Friends approved the naming of Dan Simms to the Board of the Lauramoore Home.

14. Miami Quarterly Meeting report

Ben Griffith presented the report, highlighting the upcoming Joint Quarterly Meeting to be held Tenth Month 14-15, 2006, at Happy Hollow Children's Camp near Nashville, IN.

15. Whitewater Quarterly Meeting report

Rex Sprouse presented the report, highlighting joys and challenges that had faced Whitewater Quarterly Meeting Friends during the past year.

16. Clerical Staff report

Krystin Schmidt presented the report, highlighting aspects of her ongoing work, including work on revising the Yearly Meeting Handbook. Krystin also reminded Friends of her new contact information.

17. Closing worship

After a few brief announcements, the session closed at 5:15pm with a period of waiting worship, to reconvene on Seventh Month 27, 2006, as way opens.

Seventh Month 27, 2006, 10:00am - 12:40pm

18. Opening of session

Friends gathered at the appointed time in waiting worship. During the period of opening worship, the Clerk read from an epistle of George Fox.

19. Gratitude to Teens for get acquainted activity organization

Friends expressed gratitude to Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Teens for organizing, with very little advanced notice, a joyful get acquainted activity on Fourth Day evening. The Clerk asked for a volunteer to come forward to thank the Teens in person.

20. Roll call of representatives

A list of Friends who identified themselves over the course of the sessions as designated representatives of their respective monthly meetings is appended to these minutes. Other Friends present from the various meetings were recognized at this time.

21. Welcoming of guests

The Clerk extended a special welcome to Friends from outside Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting. Friends welcomed Ruth Dobyms (Wilmington Yearly Meeting), Curator of Quaker Heritage Center at Wilmington College, and Doris Ferm (North Pacific Yearly Meeting), the evening's plenary speaker. The Clerk read aloud a letter of introduction from Friends World Committee for Consultation introducing Dorothy Day (Illinois Yearly Meeting).

22. Naming Committee report

David Garman reported that Naming Committee had no names to bring forward at that time to serve on Nominating Committee. Friends entered into silent worship, seeking Divine Guidance

for a way forward. In the course of worship, three names arose from the floor and were referred to Naming Committee for further discernment. The Presiding Clerk announced that at its Sixth Month 2006 meeting, Executive Committee had approved the name of Byron Branson to serve a three-year term on Nominating Committee, serving as Committee Clerk for 2006-2007.

23. Report from representatives to World Gathering of Young Friends 2005

Krystin Schmidt and Rachel Dean had served as Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting's representatives to the World Gathering of Young Friends, held in Lancaster, England, in Eighth Month 2005. The Presiding Clerk read aloud the endorsement of Krystin's and Rachel's traveling minutes. Rachel and Krystin presented the report, sharing some of the impact that attendance at World Gathering of Young Friends has had on their spiritual lives. Friends thanked Krystin and Rachel for their availability over the past year to share their experiences with Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Friends.

24. Other traveling minutes

The Presiding Clerk read aloud a recent communication from Susan Lee Barton, describing some of the work she has undertaken while carrying a traveling minute from Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting. Friends approved continuation of this traveling minute. Friends approved the laying down of the traveling minute held by David and Virginia Wood since 2000, with gratitude for the Spirit-led ministry David and Virginia have offered throughout the United States over the course of the past six years.

25. Friends General Conference representative report

Michael Birkel presented the report, highlighting progress in restructuring aspects of the Friends General Conference staff, in youth ministries, in work on documenting the history of race relations within the Religious Society of Friends, and in development of fundraising work. Friends accepted the report.

26. Appointment of two representatives to Friends General Conference's Consultation on Nurturing Emerging Gifts of Ministry.

On behalf of Advancement and Nurture Committee, David Garman brought forward the following names to serve as Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting representatives to Friends General Conference's Consultation on Nurturing Emerging Gifts of Ministry to be held Eleventh Month 10-12, 2006, in the vicinity of Pittsburgh, PA: Dale Hayes, Linda Coppock, and Sandra Ward Angell (alternate). Friends approved.

27. Letter from Deborah Fisch

When Friends had returned from a short break, the Presiding Clerk read some very stirring passages from a letter to Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting from Deborah Fisch (Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) and Friends General Conference Traveling Ministries Program), written after her Ninth Month 2005 series of visits to several of our monthly meetings.

28. Records Coordinator report

Karen Campbell presented the report, highlighting recent improvements in accessibility of

materials archived in the Quaker Collection at the Watson Library at Wilmington College. Karen also made announcements regarding ongoing documentation of Quaker anti-slavery work and Quaker genealogy.

29. Peace and Social Concerns Committee report

Ron Haldeman presented the report, highlighting upcoming events, including a fall 2006 work camp at Fall Creek Meetinghouse plus a spring 2007 work camp within the boundaries of Miami Quarterly Meeting. Friends were encouraged to bring peace and social concerns before the Peace and Social Concerns Committee. On behalf of Peace and Social Concerns, Richard Mitchell brought forward the draft text of a minute calling for peace between Israel and Lebanon. Friends shared several concerns from the floor, and the Committee was asked to bring forward a revised draft on Sixth Day.

30. Report from Ad Hoc Committee on Covenant-based Financing

Stan Zarowin presented the report, the details of which are printed in *Reports in Advance*. It was emphasized that one primary goal of the ad hoc committee was to identify a process that would be workable, simple, and loving. The annual process proposed by the ad hoc committee involves seven steps to be carried out during the period Third Month 15 through the yearly meeting sessions. The committee suggests that the seven steps be followed in 2007, but without implementation of reliance on covenanting; reliance on covenanting would begin in 2008 or 2009. The ad hoc committee clarified a number of questions and concerns. Friends approved continuation of the trial implementation as described for the next twelve months. At Yearly Meeting sessions in 2007, Friends will share their evaluations of that experience. Friends agreed that their monthly meetings would complete and submit the annual statistical report to the Yearly Meeting by Twelfth Month 31.

31. Closing worship

The session closed at 12:40pm with a period of waiting worship, to reconvene at 3:30pm, as way opens.

Seventh Month 27, 2006, 3:30pm - 5:10pm

32. Opening of session

Friends gathered at the appointed time in waiting worship. During the period of opening worship, the Clerk read from Patricia Loring's *The Hidden Center and Outward Scaffolding of Quaker Spiritual Community*.

33. Greetings and roll call of representatives

The Clerk welcomed Friends and called on designated representatives who had not been present earlier to identify themselves and invited others to introduce themselves. A list of Friends who identified themselves over the course of the sessions as designated representatives of their respective monthly meetings is appended to these minutes.

34. Continuation of Nominating Committee report

On behalf of the committee, Byron Branson brought forward the name of Christine Carver to serve on the Epistolary Committee during these Yearly Meeting sessions. Friends approved. It was announced that Victoria Burke, member of Advancement and Nurture Committee, had also agreed to work with the Epistolary Committee.

35. Middle Eastern Yearly Meeting Friends

It was announced that due to the current level of hostilities, Middle Eastern Yearly Meeting sessions, planned for Lebanon, could not be held there. Friends held Middle Eastern Yearly Meeting Friends in the Light.

36. Personnel Committee report

Lisa Cayard presented the report, highlighting Personnel Committee's work on issues regarding longevity increases for staff, documentation of temporary employees for tax purposes, and pay inequity for temporary employees at Yearly Meeting sessions. Personnel Committee welcomes Friends' suggestions as it continues to seek unity.

37. Treasurer's report

Paul Buckley presented the report. For FY 2006, a deficit of \$3,440.00 had been anticipated; the actual deficit was \$2,361.95; thus, the actual deficit was \$1,078.05 less than had been anticipated. Paul explained that there were savings in all major expense categories. Paul addressed several Friends' questions. Friends were grateful for the transparency of the report.

38. Proposed budget for FY 2007

J.P. Lund presented the report. Before considering the budget for FY 2007 as a whole, Friends were asked to consider two questions. First, Friends approved a capital expenditure to replace the electric wiring in Fall Creek Meetinghouse. The initial estimate for this project is \$4,000, although the ultimate cost might be somewhat higher. Secondly, Friends approved a revision in the Yearly Meeting's travel reimbursement policy such that travel to and from Yearly Meeting committee meetings or for service at special events sponsored by Yearly Meeting committees would be honored if the amount does not exceed \$300 during a one-year term of service, whereas for requests exceeding \$300 the Treasurer and Presiding Clerk should consult with the clerks of the monthly and quarterly meetings to which the Friend belongs. J.P. then explained a number of changes in line items for FY 2007. The proposed budget would increase the assessment from \$90 to \$97 per budget member. Friends approved the proposed budget.

39. Advancement and Nurture Committee report

David Garman presented the report, highlighting the Advancement and Nurture Committee's work during the past year, particularly the impact of the Friends General Conference Traveling Ministries visits to Northern Indiana and the workshop on Nurturing Vocal Ministry held in the spring at the Earlham School of Religion.

40. Closing Worship

After a number of announcements, the session closed at 5:10pm with a period of waiting worship, to reconvene on Seventh Month 28, 2006, as way opens.

Seventh Month 28, 2006, 10:00am - 12:40pm

41. Opening of Session

Friends gathered at the appointed time in waiting worship. The Clerk read a passage from the writings of Cathy Habschmidt.

42. Greetings and roll call of representatives

The Clerk welcomed Friends and called on designated representatives who had not been present earlier to identify themselves and invited others to introduce themselves. A list of Friends who identified themselves over the course of the sessions as designated representatives of their respective monthly meetings is appended to these minutes.

43. Welcoming of guests

The Clerk extended a special welcome to Friends from outside Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting. The Clerk read aloud a letter of introduction from Friends General Conference, introducing Perry Treadwell (Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association), who served as representative of Friends General Conference at these Yearly Meeting sessions.

44. Indiana Friends Committee on Legislation announcements

David Pilbrow, lobbyist for the Indiana Friends Committee on Legislation, announced ongoing engagement with the Indiana State Legislature on a variety of issue of interests to Friends.

45. Friends Home report

Alice Palmer and Wendy Waters-Connell presented the report, highlighting recent very positive developments at Friends Home (doing business as Quaker Heights Care Community) in Waynesville, Ohio. Quaker Heights and the union representing all union-affiliated employees at Quaker Heights had recently signed a new contract. Friends Home was operating at full capacity and was faced with the challenge of managing a waiting list in a fair and equitable manner. Nevertheless, the independent living facility had some openings. Friends Home was also in the process of revising its bylaws to better reflect the current realities of the institution. Friends approved the addition of a member of Executive Committee who would also serve on the Board of Trustees of Friends Home Inc. The Presiding Clerk was asked to make inquiries among current members of the Board of Trustees in order to identify an appropriate Friend for this service. Friends hope that this will strengthen Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting's relationship to this ministry.

46. Discipline Revision Committee report

Betsy Neale and Rex Sprouse presented the report. They summarized the progress of the committee over the past year and reviewed the *Discipline* revision process with Friends.

47. Threshing session on the second draft of the first part of the section on Membership proposed for inclusion in the revised Book of Discipline of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting

At this point a period of approximately fifteen minutes was devoted to discussion of the second

draft of the first part of the section on Membership proposed for inclusion in the revised Book of Discipline and printed in *Reports in Advance*. Assistant Clerk David Garman made a list of Friends' thoughts and concerns, which is appended to these minutes and is to be forwarded to Discipline Revision Committee for further deliberation.

48. Threshing session on the fourth draft of the Introduction proposed for inclusion in the revised Book of Discipline of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting

At this point a period of approximately twenty-five minutes was devoted to discussion of the fourth draft of the Introduction proposed for inclusion in the revised Book of Discipline. Assistant Clerk David Garman made a list of Friends' thoughts and concerns, which is appended to these minutes and is to be forwarded to Discipline Revision Committee for further deliberation.

49. Minute calling for peace between Israel and Lebanon

On behalf of the Peace and Social Concerns Committee, Richard Mitchell brought forward the revised following minute, which Friends approved:

Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting affirms the 340-year-old testimony of the Religious Society of Friends against war. We seek to live in that Spirit that takes away the occasion for war.

The recent warfare in Israel and Lebanon breaks our hearts. We are particularly concerned that the great majority of the killed and wounded on both sides have been civilians. We are praying for the safety of all persons in these nations.

We believe that our own nation can do more to end this conflict. We call on our government to work for an immediate ceasefire. We support our government's call for an end to arms shipments to Hezbollah, but also call for our government to attempt to limit Israel's use of U.S.-supplied-and-funded weapons.

We further call on our government to support multilateral efforts, particularly working through the United Nations, to resolve the Israel-Palestine conflict. We urge our government to pursue a more balanced policy whose goal is sustainable and secure states in Lebanon, Palestine, and Israel.

The minute was to be widely distributed, but also was to be sent specifically to President George W. Bush, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, and Congressional delegations and media of Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio.

50. Report of representatives to American Friends Service Committee

Tom Bennett presented the report. Tom spoke of the arrest of staff interns of the American Friends Service Committee for distributing counter military recruitment leaflets at the Taste of Chicago, on Seventh Month 2, 2006, outside the "Free Speech Zone". Tom encouraged Friends to consider the corrosion of civil liberties in the United States and to contact elected officials.

51. Friends Committee on National Legislation report

Ken Bordwell reported on his work as Representative to Friends Committee on National

Legislation and encouraged Friends to consider a visit to the FCNL office in Washington, DC. Ken praised the excellent policy research and lobbying efforts of the organization and encouraged monthly meetings to identify liaisons to facilitate communication with FCNL. Alicia McBride, representative of FCNL at these Yearly Meeting sessions, provided further details and reminded Friends that in upcoming months priorities would be set for engaging with the next Congress.

52. Closing worship

After several brief announcements, the session closed at 12:40pm with a period of waiting worship, to reconvene on Seventh Month 29, 2006, as way opens. During the closing worship, the Clerk read aloud the names of Friends who had been prevented from attending these Yearly Meeting sessions by illness.

Seventh Month 29, 2006, 10:00am - 12:55pm

53. Opening of session

Friends gathered at the appointed time in waiting worship. The Clerk read passages written by Friends Karen Stewart and Aliyah Meena Shanti on Friends General Conference's initiative to promote intergenerational engagement among Friends.

54. Greetings and roll call of representatives

The Clerk welcomed Friends and called on designated representatives who had not been present earlier to identify themselves and invited others to introduce themselves. A list of Friends who identified themselves over the course of the sessions as designated representatives of their respective monthly meetings is appended to these minutes.

55. Welcoming of guests

The Clerk extended a special welcome to Friends from outside Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting.

56. Teen Secretary report

James Taylor presented the report, sharing some of the blessings of working with the Yearly Meeting's youth this year. Teens raised money through the sale of Christmas trees. One of the highlights of the year had been the service project with Osage Friends in Hominy, Oklahoma. Four of this year's Teens have now graduated from high school, and the Teen Secretary looked forward to a new group of young Friends joining the Teen group in the fall. Friends expressed appreciation for JT's work with the Teens.

57. Middle Youth Committee Report

Deborah Jordan and Gale Koehler presented the report, first asking Friends to hold Lou Bucklin, the beloved former Clerk of Middle Youth Committee, in the Light. This year the Middle Youth Program at Yearly Meeting sessions included eight Middle Youth and two paid staff. Middle Youth Committee thanked Yearly Meeting for its support, both financial and spiritual, of Middle Youth programs.

58. Gathering of feelings for Minute of Appreciation for Lou Bucklin

Friends entered into a period of silent worship. From the silence, many Friends rose to share their deep feelings of love and appreciation for Lou Bucklin, currently struggling with severe health problems. The Clerk and Assistant Clerk agreed to take these thoughts and to formulate a minute to be offered at the next day's business session.

59. Friends Music Camp report

J.P. Lund presented the report, highlighting the quality of Friends Music Camp, both musically and experientially. J.P. pointed out that more of the organization of Friends Music Camp was now being shared with younger adult leaders.

60. Children's Committee report

Hannah Branson, accompanied by Toby Dean, presented the report, highlighting the joys of working with the 16 youngsters between the ages of 1 and 10 participating in the Children's Program this year. This year's program followed the theme of an Earth Restored, including visits from adults who shared their perspectives on nature and the creation of costumes using recycled materials. The children had prepared the following query, which the Presiding Clerk will share with monthly meetings and which will be considered at the upcoming Joint Quarterly Meeting in Tenth Month.

How are we personally connected to the earth in our lives and how do we use that connection in our lives?

61. Report from visit with Teens

Mandy Smith reported on her visit to the Teens, to thank them for taking the opening evening's get-acquainted activities under their care. Mandy reported that the Teens had been delighted to hear directly of the adults' appreciation of their ministry.

62. Teen Committee

Due to time conflict with the service project scheduled for the Teen Program, it was not possible for Jim Coppock, outgoing Clerk of the Teen Committee, to be present at the business session to present a report to the Yearly Meeting in person. Friends minuted their appreciation for the tireless efforts that Jim has contributed over the past two years as Clerk of Teen Committee and the commitment of the entire Coppock family to this work. Friends note with joy the active role that Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Teens play in the life of the Yearly Meeting.

63. Religious Education Committee report

Diann Herzog and Lou Bucklin presented the report, stressing Religious Education Committee's willingness to serve the Yearly Meeting's religious education needs across the age spectrum and at monthly, quarterly, and yearly meeting levels. Resource questionnaires had recently been distributed to monthly meetings. Current Religious Education Committee projects include a special session at the upcoming Joint Quarterly Meeting on The Historical Jesus to be presented by Richard Mitchell and Betsy Neale, the development of a lending library of materials, and workshops for religious educators across the Yearly Meeting. The committee is also particularly

interested in reaching out to the Adult Young Friends (ages 18 to 35) and in developing programs of special interest to them.

64. Inspirational reading

After a short break, the Assistant Clerk read aloud from the Epistle of the World Gathering of Young Friends, held in the United Kingdom in Eighth Month 2005 and from the Epistle of the post-Gathering held two months later in Kenya, primarily to include those who could not obtain visas to attend the gathering in the UK. Both epistles stressed love and unity.

65. Audit

The Presiding Clerk announced that due to circumstances, the audit for FY 2006 had not yet occurred; thus, no Audit report would be given at these sessions.

66. Statistical Report

Tom Hill presented the report, pointing out new features in the format in this year's report printed in *Reports in Advance*. The report noted that not all monthly meetings report children and not all monthly meetings report attenders. Friends approved the Statistician's request to submit a corrected statistical report for the Minute Book. One Friend noted with sadness that this year's report showed a net decrease in membership and asked whether we are letting our Light shine in such a way that our neighbors are aware of who Quakers are and that we are here.

67. Quaker Earth Care Witness representative report

Marcia Ankrom reported on her very positive experiences at the Quaker Earthcare Witness 2005 Annual Meeting held at the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore in Tenth Month and the 2006 meeting of the Steering Committee of Quaker Earth Care Witness, held in Fourth Month in Chicago, IL. Important themes included mindfulness of the carbon dioxide emissions resulting from our activities and of our overall ecological footprints.

68. Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Concerns Report

Rex Sprouse presented the report, reminding Friends that Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Concerns are grateful for Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting's spiritual and financial support, and also that FLGBTQC is a community of Friends who share and lift up particular concerns, not an organization specifically or exclusively for Friends who identify themselves as other than heterosexual. All Friends should feel welcome at all FLGBTQC meetings for worship, meetings for business, gatherings, and activities. The report stated that FLGBTQC may be experiencing a period of transition and that the organization had recently been facing various challenges, including difficulty in identifying Friends to serve on committees and as officers.

69. Representative to Friends Peace Teams report

Jim Morgan presented the report, highlighting the growth of the work of Friends Peace Teams, particularly in the Great Lakes Region of East Africa. Jim invited Friends to consider whether they might be led to participate in this important witness or in similar peace witness organizations.

70. Friends World Committee for Consultation Representative report

Steve Angell presented the report, highlighting the recent meeting of Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas, held in Third Month 2006 in Chiquimula, Guatemala, and the opportunities for dialogue across Friends of diverse traditions. Steve also announced a number of upcoming FWCC and FWCC, Section of the America gatherings. Friends were reminded that plans were underway for Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting to host the gathering of Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas, in 2008.

71. Publications, Newsletter, and Web Site Coordinator's report

Barbarie Hill presented the report, including several announcements. Friends were reminded that the Yearly Meeting mailing list is not restricted to members. Friends were asked to submit any corrections or additions to reports that are to appear in the Minute Book by Eighth Month 31. Barbarie highlighted the differences between information available on the Yearly Meeting Web site and the Yearly Meeting blog. It was announced that Annie Glen would serve as Barbarie's assistant for *The Quaker Quill*. Friends expressed enthusiasm and gratitude for Barbarie's service to the Yearly Meeting.

72. Closing Worship

The session closed at 12:55pm with a period of waiting worship, to reconvene on Seventh Month 30, 2006, as way opens. During the closing worship, the members of the Clerks' Table read aloud gifts of the Yearly Meeting named at the Clerks' pre-Yearly Meeting retreat one week earlier.

Seventh Month 30, 2006, 10:00am - 11:00am

73. Opening of session

Friends gathered at the appointed time in waiting worship. During the period of opening worship, the Clerk read a passage from Michael Birkel's book *Silence and Witness*.

74. Greetings and roll call of representatives

The Clerk welcomed Friends and called on designated representatives who had not been present earlier to identify themselves and invited others to introduce themselves. A list of Friends who identified themselves over the course of the sessions as designated representatives of their respective monthly meetings is appended to these minutes. Friends extended a special welcome to Middle Youth and Teen Friends as well as to the Middle Youth and Teen staff, who were joining the business meeting for the first time during these sessions.

75. Naming Committee report

On behalf of Naming Committee, David Garman brought forward the name of Eileen Pierce to serve a three-year term on Nominating Committee to end in 2009. Friends approved.

76. Nominating Committee Final Report

Byron Branson represented the report, detailing changes to the initial report. Friends approved the names in the final report, which was to be easily available to Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting

Friends within a week and which appears in this minute book. Nominating Committee will continue its discernment process for a number of as yet unnamed committee members and would be thankful to hear the names of Friends willing to serve. Friends thanked Nominating Committee for their Spirit-led discernment.

77. Minute of appreciation for the service of Lou Bucklin

Friends approved the following minute, which will be sent to Lou Bucklin:

Friends wish to express our appreciation for the way that Lou Bucklin has lovingly brought his skills of leadership to our Yearly Meeting committees and bodies. He is a witness of compassion, wisdom, and spiritual depth, demanding of us that we continually re-examine what we feel is right order. His plain, forthright words have taken committees and individuals to new levels of service within the Yearly Meeting. Thank thee, Friend, for so tenderly holding us in your heart. We are and will continue to be nurtured by your loving attention.

78. Appreciation for those completing service to Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting

Friends minuted their appreciation to those completing service to the Yearly Meeting.

79. Registrar's report

Lisa Cayard presented the report. There were 188 registered attendees, including 17 children (10 years of age and under), 8 Middle Youth, 13 Teens, and 150 adults. All but two of our constituent monthly meetings have been represented. Friends expressed their gratitude to Lisa for her faithful service.

80. Site for 2007 Yearly Meeting Sessions

On behalf of Yearly Meeting Planning Committee, Diann Herzog presented the report, announcing that the next Yearly Meeting sessions will be held at Earlham College in Richmond, IN, with a tentative date of Seventh Month 25-29, 2007. This will continue the rotation of two years at Earlham College followed by two years at Wilmington College.

81. Welcome to the Children and appreciation for the staff of the Children's Program and to the Children's Committee

At this point, the Clerk welcomed the Children, who had just joined the business meeting for the first time during these sessions. Friends expressed their appreciation to the staff of the Children's program and to the Children's Committee.

82. Reading of the Epistles

The complete text of all these epistles is attached to these minutes.

Children. The epistle, read by Rachel Logan-Wood, Isaac Hines Williams, Andrew Hardy, Hanae Togami, and Michael Bruner, summarizes some of the highlights the children experienced during the Yearly Meeting session, in particular what they learned and experienced about the theme of this year's Yearly Meeting sessions, an Earth Restored.

Middle Youth. The epistle, read by Olivia Logan-Wood, speaks of how their service project related to the theme of seeking an earth restored and the frequent failure of human beings to live in harmony with the earth.

Teens. Mary Hyde, Rebekah Miller, Sybilla Bryson, Chie Togami, and Meara Bucklin read the epistle, which speaks of the experiences and life lessons these Yearly Meeting sessions offered them and the sense of responsibility they feel for the future.

Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Epistle. Steve Angell read the epistle, which highlighted the urgency and hope Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Friends experienced as they contemplated the theme of seeking an earth restored. Friends were strongly moved by the powerful plenary addresses offered by Friends Doris Ferm and Carl Magruder and gained concrete insights on the path toward an earth restored through workshops. Friends were blessed by a loving spirit that characterized business sessions, where there was a strong sense of love and trust and the absence of contentiousness over potentially problematic issues, such as the budget and proposed revisions of our Book of Discipline. Repeatedly, Friends were reminded that discouragement and despair are not a part of the Spirit of God.

Friends approved these epistles.

83. Closing Worship

Friends closed these sessions at 11:30am with a hymn, to reconvene in summer 2007, as way opens. Immediately afterward, Friends held a meeting for worship in nearby Stout Meetinghouse.

Presiding Clerk: Virginia Wood

Assistant Clerk: David Garman

Recording Clerk: Rex Sprouse

APPENDED MATERIAL

Roll call of Monthly Meeting representatives

Miami Quarterly Meeting

Campus:	(no representative)
Community:	Ken Bordwell
Dayton:	Barb Robinson, David Wood
Eastern Hills:	J.P. Lund
Green Plain:	Caroline Taylor
Lexington:	Ben Griffith, Betsy Neale
Louisville:	Beth Parrish
Miami:	Lonny Burger
Owensboro Worship Group:	(no representative)
Oxford:	Sandra Ward Angell

Yellow Springs: Victoria Burke

Whitewater Quarterly Meeting

Bloomington:	Terry Reynolds
Clear Creek:	Mildred Milhoney
Fall Creek:	Diann Herzog
Fort Wayne Worship Group:	(no representative)
Hopewell:	Annie Glen
Lafayette:	Linda Olis
Maple Grove:	(no representative)
North Meadow Circle:	Ron Haldeman
White Rose:	Vaughn Peebles

Notes from threshing sessions on *Discipline* revision

Discussion of 2nd draft of first part of section on Membership

Application process, ¶ 4: Replace “approve” with “consider”

Application process, ¶ 3: Note the action of the clearness process in meeting minutes, even if the outcome is negative. [The Discipline Revision Committee asked Friends to inform them whether this is the practice of their monthly meetings or if their monthly meetings felt that this should be the practice of the Yearly Meeting as a whole.]

Application process, ¶ 2: explain what a letter of application should contain

Criteria for membership: define “thorough understanding”

Application process, ¶ 4: Explain expectations of welcoming committee

Criteria for membership: Reconsider the wording “the beginning of a life journey of transformation”

Discussion of 4th draft of Introduction

¶ 1: Remove “Seed of God” wording and merge the first two sentences

¶ 4: Should there be a list of the testimonies?

¶ 1: Add “and in all creation” to “in every human being”

Two Friends asked for simple approval of the draft as it stands

¶ 1: More discomfort with the phrase “Seed of God” in this context; the phrase has many meanings through Quaker history

¶ 3: The last sentence is unclear

Two Friends expressed unity with the Spirit behind the draft

Text of epistles

Children's Epistle

Seventeen children ages one to ten met at the 186th session of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting in at Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana, from July 26-30, 2006, to consider the theme "Seeking an Earth Restored: The Spiritual Path to Stewardship." The peaceful and beautiful campus of a historic Quaker college was the background for a time of fellowship and deep spiritual sharing. Our speakers taught us about nature and the earth. We learned that children don't go out in nature to play much anymore. We learned about recycling food. We experienced many fun activities. We discussed what we feel about nature and the earth. We made musical instruments and costumes and sang about our favorite things in nature. We are concerned that people waste things and cut down too many trees. We hope to find a way to recycle everything and a way to energize cars with electricity and solar power. We presented a query to the business meeting and sent a message to you all that we care about the earth.

Middle Youth Epistle

Greetings from the 2006 Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Middle Youth, who met at Earlham College from July 26, 2006 to July 30, 2006. The theme of this session was "Seeking an Earth Restored," and our service project connected to this idea. We bicycled to the Cope Environmental Center to learn more about solar power, wind power, composting, and other sustainable eco-friendly alternatives. While we were there, we tackled and removed a number of invasive plants such as: Russian olive, honeysuckle, grapevine, and multi-flora rose. Invasive plants crowd out the native plants, they don't provide food or home for wildlife, and in general they take more than they give. This reminded us of another species. We realized as humans we use a lot of resources that we don't replace. People should help each other to be more life-giving than life-taking. Using more sustainable resources instead of disposable resources will help us accomplish this goal.

Not only do we need to hold each other in the Light, we need to hold up our solar panels, too.

Teens' Epistle

Love and greetings to Friends around the world!

Thirteen Quaker youth (ages 14-19) met at the 186th annual sessions of Ohio Valley

Yearly Meeting at Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana, from July 26 to 30, 2006, to consider the theme of “Seeking an Earth Restored: The Spiritual Path of Stewardship.” The elegant and serene campus of a traditional Friends college was the backdrop for this year’s spiritual retreat. It was a time of self-realization, bonding with our fellow Friends, deep spiritual growth, and learning from others’ experiences.

We learned that despite age differences, we *can* relate to adults and appreciate the wisdom they have to share. In the words of one of our dedicated leaders, Tahnea Jafari, “What you fear you attract; what you resist persists. You create your own reality.” The truth we’ve learned from this is that by conquering our fears we overcome obstacles.

We realize that one obstacle we face every day and will soon inherit fully is the responsibility for our planet’s ecological future. We discussed this concern with plenary speaker Carl Magruder. We discovered that although each of us carries different concerns within our hearts they all lead back to a central root, which is a deep human concern for God’s creation. We sincerely hope you share our concerns, because we are the future, and we can’t do it alone.

We shall overcome. The future is uncertain, but one thing is certain:

WE ARE QUAKERS.

Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Epistle

To Friends everywhere,

Greetings to Friends throughout creation, from Friends meeting at Earlham College for the 186th annual session of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting. Both familiar faces and many new faces mingled in love and joy at our sessions. In these perilous and momentous times, we remember the counsel of George Fox: “Sing and rejoice, ye children of the day and of the light; for the Lord is at work in this thick night of darkness that may be felt. And truth doth flourish as the rose, and the lilies do grow among the thorns, and the plants atop of the hills, and upon them the lambs do skip and play. And never heed the tempests nor the storms, floods nor rains, for the seed Christ is over all, and doth reign. And so be of good faith and valiant for the truth.” (Epistle 227, Eleventh Month, 1663) We have indeed felt God’s presence working strongly among us this week, as we have worshiped together and explored how God is leading us, as we have sought guidance on our most deeply-felt concerns.

The theme of our Yearly Meeting has been “Seeking an Earth Restored: The Spiritual Path of Stewardship,” a theme we have explored in two plenary addresses and in a variety of workshops. We feel a sense of both urgency and hope.

Our two plenary sessions were experienced as powerful trumpet blasts of the Holy Spirit. Doris Ferm called us “to commit to radically changed lives but filled with Spirit and universal love, in faith and in hope,” as we explore how to bring about a new planetary culture. Doris reminded us that “the earth is not to be used up. Rather, it is a gift to be treasured and to be passed on to our descendants.”

Previous generations of our ancestors have planted fruit trees, such as date trees, that

matured long after the death of the planter. Let us see where we are called to plant such fruit trees. Instead of looking at ourselves primarily as stewards of our fellow creatures, let us act out of a sense of oneness with the natural world. All creatures belong to God: “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world and all who live in it.” Dear God, “you open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing.” (Psalm 24:1-2; Psalm 145:16) Doris reminded us that our despair over global warming and environmental degradation had at last removed the scales from our eyes, allowing us to see that we humans are neither separate from, nor above, the natural world.

Carl Magruder helped us understand the pain and guilt expressed by many Friends during worship sharing. He said it arises because we are embedded in a system that does not allow us to live in integrity with our beliefs. He urged us not to succumb to a paralyzing sense of inadequacy. If we miss the mark, we must pick up our arrow and let it fly again and again.

Building on Doris’ message that we have been called to commit our lives to acts of faith, to live out a new truth, Carl urged us to embark on another leg of the journey that Quakers had endeavored to travel for over 350 years. We must willingly abandon the treasured values of the North American culture: comfort and convenience.

We belong to a worldwide community of Friends as well as to local communities. And our communities may be the best green technology we have. These are spiritual edifices far surpassing the grandeur of cathedrals and temples wrought of fine stonework, colored glass, and dazzling mosaic. Our religious communities are built from the very stones the Lord has lifted up to do His work. No matter where we are on Earth, we humans, fashioned by God, stand on holy ground to sing the praises of the Creator and the Creation.

Our workshops included an experiential exploration of expressing earth spirituality through music; examining the Biblical basis of earth care; an examination of the challenges of “peak oil” production, global warming, and the transition to a low-energy society; gardening as a spiritual path; starting an earth care committee at your local meeting; embracing earth care as a religious calling; and a look at sustainability in light of the spiritual and moral challenges of declining resources.

Friends in attendance expressed a sense that they were being led by the Spirit or of being uplifted and awed by the Light we experienced as a gathered meeting. We felt blessed by the loving spirit that characterized our business sessions and the absence of contentiousness over problematic issues such as the budget, the proposed revisions of our Faith and Practice, and financial stewardship of the Yearly Meeting.

We heard a variety of prophetic voices. At the beginning of our sessions, the Nominating Committee’s slate had over 30 unfilled positions; the Committee found Friends to fill many of these positions by our sessions’ end. We approved a minute urging our government to act to de-escalate hostilities in Lebanon and Israel. We held Mid East Yearly Meeting in the Light upon hearing that their assembly in Lebanon had to be canceled this year. We were disgusted by the

erosion of civil liberties illustrated by the arrest of AFSC interns who were distributing counter-recruitment leaflets outside of “a Free Speech Zone” in Chicago on July 7.

These voices were accompanied by voices that reminded us repeatedly that discouragement and despair were not part of the Spirit of God. In a variety of settings Friends expressed a sense that there is no time to waste and a desire for concerted community action. But we must also have patience to wait in the Spirit for way to open.

“I must *be* the song I sing about,” sang Carl Magruder. Then, in conclusion, he proclaimed, “There is a symphony to be played, and I am longing to hear that music.”

We call for Friends everywhere to dedicate themselves in order to put the needs of the natural world first. We believe there will be no end to war, and no end to poverty, and no end to injustice, unless we create a new web of allegiance with the earth.

In God’s Love and Peace,