

**MINUTES OF THE 187th SESSIONS OF
OHIO VALLEY YEARLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
Seventh Month 25 - Seventh Month 29, 2007**

Seventh Month 25, 2007, 2:30pm - 5:15pm

1. Opening of sessions

Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting gathered in waiting worship at Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana, for its 187th annual sessions. During the opening period of waiting worship, the Presiding Clerk read from Lloyd Lee Wilson's address *A Lively and Harmonious Exercise*.

2. Greetings and welcome

The Clerk greeted Friends present and recognized Avis Stewart, Vice-President for Community Relations at Earlham College, who also welcomed Friends.

3. 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.

4. Welcoming of guests

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

5. Review of agenda

The Clerk directed Friends' attention to the agenda printed in *Reports in Advance*, pointed out changes, and asked for questions or comments. Friends approved the amended agenda.

6. Correction to Minute 48 of the 2006 sessions of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting

Friends approved a correction of Minute 48 of the 2006 sessions of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting. The corrected minute now reads:

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. The fifth draft with minor wording changes reflecting our discussion is to be circulated as an addendum to the Yearly Meeting Minute Book and will be brought to the 2007 sessions for final approval as part of the revised Book of Discipline.

7. 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 were available for Friends to read during the

Yearly Meeting sessions. Friends gratefully accepted the report.

8. State of Society report

On behalf of Advancement and Nurture Committee, Sandra Ward Angell presented highlights of the Yearly Meeting's State of Society report, based primarily on State of the Meeting reports submitted by constituent monthly meetings. Important themes included earth care, small groups, the aging of our membership, adult religious education, the sense of being overly busy, and monthly meetings as communities. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

9. Absent Friends

Friends held in the Light those who were absent from this year's sessions. Friends were asked to provide names of those in our Yearly Meeting family who were prevented from attending this year's sessions.

10. Executive Committee report

The Clerk referred Friends to the written report. Important items for discernment over the past year had included challenges facing Nominating Committee, the Lauramoore Home, the development of a sexual abuse policy for youth programs, and the need for increasing participation in the life of the Yearly Meeting by more Friends and more constituent monthly meetings. Executive Committee had approved a new rotation of Presiding and Assistant Clerk, such that Friends serving in these capacities would first serve one year as Assistant Clerk, then two years as Presiding Clerk, followed by one final year as Assistant Clerk. At the beginning of the third year of this Friend's service, another Friend would begin the first year of his or her four-year term of service. Executive Committee also approved the establishment of an ad hoc committee for 2007-2008 for discernment of contributions to be made by the Yearly Meeting.

11. Nominating Committee initial report

Byron Branson presented the initial report, up-dating the report printed in *Reports in Advance* with a copiously annotated overhead. Friends approved nominations for responsibilities at the 2007 sessions. Friends' attention was then drawn to the large number of positions for which Nominating Committee had no names to bring forward, the most critical of which remains Assistant Treasurer. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

12. Naming Committee report

On behalf of Naming Committee, David Garman brought forward the names of Evalyn Kellum and Peg Champney each to serve a three-year term on Nominating Committee, 2007 to 2010. Friends approved.

13. Welcoming of plenary speaker Margaret Fraser

Friends welcomed Margaret Fraser, who will be offering a plenary address on Fifth Day evening, and who is attending these sessions as the representative of Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas.

14. Clerical Staff report

Krystin Schmidt presented the report, highlighting printed materials available to Friends outside the meetingroom. Krystin shared with Friends many of the opportunities that have opened up to her as the result of serving as the Clerical Staff Person for the past four years. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

15. Minute of appreciation for Krystin Schmidt

Friends approved the following minute of appreciation for Krystin Schmidt:

Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting minutes its appreciation to Krystin Schmidt as she resigns after serving the Yearly Meeting for four years. As our first Clerical Staff Person, Krystin has done more than merely provide clerical support to our clerks and committees. Under her mindful care, a position described on paper has become one that truly matches the needs of the Yearly Meeting. This is because Krystin has listened deeply with an open heart. Krystin has accepted all the challenges we have sent her way, even those which were poorly defined. Her deep listening has led her personally to respond to concerns within the Yearly Meeting, particularly those of individual teens and the Teen Committee. We thank her for the many hours she has spent with our youth. Krystin's thoroughness in seeking to serve Friends is commended. We wish her well in her future endeavors.

16. Personnel Committee report

Lisa Cayard presented the report, introducing Friend Deborah Jordan as the Yearly Meeting's new Clerical Staff Person. Friends accepted the report with gratitude and welcomed Deborah in her new position of service to the Yearly Meeting.

17. Lauramoore Report

Ron Haldeman presented the report, summarizing the history and current work of the Lauramoore Home. It was highlighted that it would be very helpful to have more Richmond-based participation on the Lauramoore Board and in the life of the Lauramoore more generally. Friends accepted the report with gratitude. Friends approved the naming of Annie Glen to the Board of the Lauramoore Home.

18. Friends General Conference Representative report

David Wood presented the report, highlighting some of the work of Friends General Conference and the spiritual benefits associated with service as a representative to Friends General Conference. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

19. Up-coming Friends General Conference consultations

The Presiding Clerk announced that Friends General Conference was planning two consultations in the next twelve months: one for Friends with emerging gifts in gospel ministry to be held in Eleventh Month 2007 and one for clerks of committees of ministry and counsel of yearly meetings to be held in Fourth Month 2008. It was clarified that any Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Friends who should travel to either of these consultations would be covered by the travel reimbursement policy for co-opted representatives. The Clerk asked that she be informed of Friends whose names might be forwarded to Friends General Conference for the consultation on emerging gifts in gospel ministry.

20. Closing worship

After a few brief announcements, the session closed at 5:20pm with a period of waiting worship, to reconvene on Seventh Month 26, 2005, as way opens.

Seventh Month 26, 2006, 10:00am - 12:35pm

21. Opening of session

Friends gathered at the appointed time in waiting worship. During the period of opening worship, the Clerk read a passage from Britain Yearly Meeting's 2007 epistle.

22. 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.

23. Letter of introduction

The Clerk read aloud a letter of introduction for Paul Buckley from the Earlham School of Religion. Paul will be a plenary speaker on Sixth Day evening.

24. Availability of Yearly Meeting Handbooks

The Clerk announced that paper copies of the Yearly Meeting Handbook for specific Friends and monthly meetings were to be found in the lobby outside the meetingroom. Friends were reminded that the Yearly Meeting Handbook is also available online through the Yearly Meeting website.

25. Yearly Meeting Minute Book

The Clerk announced that she and Annie Glen would compile the Minute Book for the 2007 Yearly Meeting sessions. Friends were reminded to submit any new or updated reports to the Clerk or to Annie, preferably electronically, within one week of the conclusion of these sessions.

26. 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, in addition to those Friends serving on youth committees. Working with children were Lupe Witt, Kate Reynolds, Jen Filbrun, and Diane Hernandez; with middle youth, Jason Dean and Ann Holzer; with the teens, Ed Hyde and Becky Doan. Friends expressed their gratitude to these Friends.

27. Delegates to youth business sessions

The Clerk asked that any Friends willing to serve as delegates from this body to the youth business sessions contact her within the day.

28. Traveling in the ministry

Susan Lee Barton, who holds a traveling minute issued by Clear Creek Friends Meeting and

endorsed by Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting, spoke of some of her experiences in traveling in the ministry, highlighting the desire for international communications among Friends she has observed in Canada and Latin America. She also spoke of the extreme joy she has experienced as traveling has helped her to learn to trust in God at a deeper level. A folder with endorsements of Susan Lee's traveling minute was made available for Friend's viewing. Friends held Susan Lee in supportive prayer.

29. Report from representatives to Friends General Conference's Consultation on Nurturing Emerging Gifts of Ministry

Linda Coppock, who had represented Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting at Friends General Conference's Consultation on Nurturing Emerging Gifts of Ministry, held on Eleventh Month 10-12, 2006. Linda highlighted that one central theme emerging from the consultation is that we need to spend enough time with one another to know each other well enough to be able to discern one another's spiritual gifts.

30. Friends World Committee for Consultation Representative report

Stephen Angell presented the report, highlighting the recent meeting of Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas, held early in 2007 in Providence, Rhode Island, and the opportunities for dialogue across Friends of diverse traditions. 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. Steve also announced a number of upcoming Friends World Committee for Consultation and Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas gatherings. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

31. Introduction of representatives to Friends World Committee for Consultation Triennial

The Clerk introduced J.P. Lund and Krystin Schmidt as representatives of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting to the Friends World Committee for Consultation Triennial to be held Eighth Month 11-19, 2007, in Ireland.

32. Report on plans to host 2008 Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas meeting

Susan Lee Barton presented the report, announcing that the next session of Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas on Fourth Month 3-6, 2008, at Waycross, near Morgantown, Indiana. Friends approved the addition of Janette Shetter and Mandy Smith to the planning committee.

33. Whitewater Quarterly Meeting report

Rex Sprouse presented the report, highlighting joys and challenges that had faced Whitewater Quarterly Meeting Friends during the past year. Whitewater Quarterly Friends had become signatories of the Earth Charter at their Fourth Month 2007 session and brought forward the Earth Charter for consideration by Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Friends. The Earth Charter appears in *Reports in Advance*. The Peace and Social Concerns committee of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting will support Whitewater Quarterly Meeting Friends in the action of introducing

the Earth Charter through the yearly meeting. Friends entered into discussion and questions about the Earth Charter and were reminded that the Earth Charter is an existing document not subject to editing. The clerk recommended the matter be forwarded to Miami Quarterly Meeting for their action and returned to Whitewater Quarterly Meeting for seasoning. Friends accepted the report.

34. Peace and Social Concerns Committee report

Ron Haldeman presented the report, highlighting the current concern regarding corporal punishment, as well as a host of additional peace and social concerns. Ron introduced Richard Mitchell as the incoming Clerk of Peace and Social Concerns Committee. One Friend raised a question from the floor about the process for the emergence of a new Yearly Meeting committee from an existing subcommittee. It was clarified that right order would call for consultation with Executive Committee and a detailed written statement of how the new committee would serve the needs and goals of the Yearly Meeting. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

35. Friends Music Camp report

J.P. Lund presented the report, highlighting both up-coming events at this summer's Friends Music Camp and the on-going efforts on the part of longtime Camp Director Peg Champney to cultivate a new generation of adult leaders for the Camp. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

36. Closing worship

The session closed at 12:35pm with a period of waiting worship, to reconvene at 3:30pm, as way opens.

Seventh Month 26, 2007, 3:30pm - 5:10pm

37. Opening of session

Friends gathered at the appointed time in waiting worship. During the period of opening worship, the Clerk read from Sandra Cronk's book *Gospel Order* and from the writings of Isaac Penington.

38. 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.

39. 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. It was noted that the section on Membership does not include text on the Membership of Children, as this issue is treated in a variety ways by Monthly Meetings. This matter will be addressed in part three of the section on Membership. Friends accepted the report.

40. Consideration of the fifth draft of the Introduction proposed for inclusion in the revised Book of Discipline

Friends approved the fifth draft of the Introduction proposed for inclusion in the revised Book of Discipline and printed in *Reports in Advance*.

41. Threshing session on the fourth 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 twenty minutes was devoted to discussion of the fourth 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. The fifth draft on the first part of the section on Membership will be included in the minutes of these Yearly Meeting sessions.

42. Threshing session on the second draft of second 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 twenty-five minutes was devoted to discussion of the second draft of the second part of the section on Membership 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.

43. Publications Coordinator Report

Barbarie Hill presented the report and reviewed the process of transition of the duties of Publications Coordinator. The clerk introduced Annie Glen as the incoming editor of *The Quaker Quill*.

44. Minute of appreciation for Barbarie Hill

Friends approved the following minute of appreciation for Barbarie Hill:

Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting minutes its appreciation to Barbarie Hill for the seventeen years that she has served the Yearly Meeting as Editor of *The Quaker Quill*. I cannot tell by reading Yearly Meeting minutes when Barbarie assumed the duties for compiling *Reports in Advance*, the Yearly Meeting Minute Book, and the Yearly Meeting Directory, but it has been a long time. Three, perhaps four people will assume these duties and others that Barbarie has performed over the years. We thank Barbarie for her dedicated service, her attention to detail, and her persistent efforts to provide us the opportunity by which we might build our faith community by telling our stories. Thank you, good and faithful servant.

45. Closing Worship

After a number of announcements, the session closed at 5:10pm with a period of waiting worship, to reconvene on Seventh Month 27, 2006, as way opens.

Seventh Month 27, 2006, 10:00am - 12:50pm

46. Opening of Session

Friends gathered at the appointed time in waiting worship. During the period of opening worship, the Clerk read from the writings of Isaac Pennington.

47. 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.

48. Letter of introduction

The Clerk read aloud a letter of introduction for Barbara Mays from Friends General Conference. Barbara is attending Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting sessions as the Friends General Conference staff visitor.

49. Visitors from Irvington Friends Meeting

The Clerk invited visitors from Irvington Yearly Meeting (Western Yearly Meeting) to introduce themselves. Gail Hoffman, Clerk of Irvington Friends Meeting, rose to thank Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Friends for welcoming Irvington Friends among us, offering hospitality, gentle questioning, and unexpected healing. Gail spoke briefly to the circumstances that had led to this visit, which include conflict within Western Yearly Meeting around issues of theological diversity, questions of authority, and understanding of Quaker process; she also asked Friends to hold Western Yearly Meeting Friends in prayer during their annual sessions to be held the following week.

50. Continuation of Nominating Committee report

Byron Branson reported that Nominating Committee planned to bring forward on First Day the name of Stephen Angell to serve as Assistant Treasurer.

51. Friends Home report

Byron Branson 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. The large corporate board had recently been laid down and replaced by a fifteen-member Board of Trustees. Wendy offered a copiously illustrated presentation outlining the recent contours of finances, occupancy, insurance, staff retention, and staff and resident diversity at Friends Home. Wendy also spoke of the long-term unsustainability of the current system of state funding for the care for older adults. Dale Hayes, liaison between the Friends Home Board of Trustees and Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting, highlighted plans to incorporate strengthened care of residents' spiritual needs in the life of Friends Home in the coming year. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

52. Statistical Report

Tom Hill presented the report, which showed a decline of 28 members between Fourth Month

30, 2006 and Twelfth Month 31, 2006. Friends accepted the report with gratitude for Tom's work.

53. Treasurer's report

Treasurer Paul Buckley presented the report. For FY 2007, a deficit of approximately \$10,000.00 had been anticipated; in actuality, there was a surplus of almost \$5,000. While some of this discrepancy may reflect genuine efficiency, as well as the receipt of assessment payments from the previous year, the size of the discrepancy raises the concern that we are not accomplishing all that we intend to do. The Treasurer encouraged Friends to submit Travel Reimbursement Forms for all relevant travel expenses, even if Friends contribute their travel costs, rather than seeking reimbursement for them. Paul also distributed information packets on an insurance program directed specifically at Quaker meetings. Paul addressed several Friends' questions. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

54. Audit report

Tom Glen presented the audit report for the period from First Month 1, 2007 through Sixth Month 30, 2007. The report certified the financial records of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting for that period to be accurate, precise, and balanced. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

55. Proposed budget for FY 2008

Stan Zarowin presented the report. Stan stressed that it is important that monthly meetings hold called meetings so that a wide range of Friends can participate in the budget process if the covenanting process is approved. It was clarified that it would be acceptable for committees to exceed their budget lines when this is necessary to complete the work before them. Friends approved the proposed budget.

56. Report on covenant-based financing

Stan Zarowin presented the report, stressing the importance of greater involvement for the covenant-based financing process to function well. Stan also pointed out that Finance Committee had discerned that certain adjustments to the timetable for the seven steps outlined in Minute 30 of the 2006 Yearly Meeting sessions were required. Some Friends spoke of the experience of their monthly meetings that the process involved more time devoted to detailed financial discernment than seemed reasonable or spiritually healthy for their meetings. Friends agreed to move forward with the basic plan of Minute 30 of the 2006 Yearly Meeting sessions, without reliance on covenanting for 2008, and with the understanding that Finance Committee would devise queries designed to simplify or streamline the discernment process for monthly meetings.

57. Closing worship

After several brief announcements, the session closed at 12:50pm with a period of waiting worship, to reconvene on Seventh Month 28, 2007, 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 28, 2006, 10:00am - 12:55pm

58. Opening of session

Friends gathered at the appointed time in waiting worship. During the period of opening worship, the Clerk read from the writings of Isaac Penington.

59. 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.

60. Miami Quarterly Meeting report

Tom Nowell presented the report, expressing gratitude to out-going Miami Quarterly Meeting Clerk Ben Griffith, as well as continuing Recording Clerk Deb Kocisiewski and Treasurer Frank Huss. The central item of business before Miami Quarterly Meeting during the past year had been the Spring Grove Cemetery, and Miami Quarterly Meeting Friends had reached unity around this concern. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

61. Property Corporation report

David Duvall presented the report, explaining that the Trustees had not met since the 2006 Yearly Meeting sessions and that no business had been brought before them. The Property Corporation assets, the sum of \$1,272.90, had been released from Domini Investments and placed in a certificate of deposit with First Financial Bank. David explained for Friends the background and purpose of the Property Corporation.

62. Lifting up of youth concerns

Friends entered a period of deeper worship, during which Friends were asked to speak to the role of youth in the life of the Yearly Meeting and in Friends' individual lives. Several Friends rose and spoke to the importance of incorporating youth more deeply into the life of the Yearly Meeting. A summary of the vocal ministry offered during this period is attached to these minutes.

63. Reports from visitors to youth business sessions

Mandy Smith presented a report on the Teens' business session, highlighting the worshipful nature of the Teens' business meeting and encouraging Friends to make our Teens part of our lives. David Wood reported on his visit to Middle Youth business session, stressing the enthusiasm that he observed and their willingness to enter into worship sharing during their canoe trip. The Presiding Clerk read aloud Barbara Robinson's report on her visit to the children's business session, where the children considered how they could make an impact on their families, schools, and meetings. At that meeting, Barbara Robinson shared the adult responses to the children's 2006 Earth Care queries and encouraged the children to send a new query to the adults this year.

64. Teen Secretary report

James Taylor presented the report, likening the youth of the Yearly Meeting to diamonds in our own backyard. Seven (7) Teens participated in the Teen program at the Joint Quarterly Meeting at Happy Hollow in Tenth Month 2006 and five (5) participated in the work day at Fall Creek Meetinghouse in Eleventh Month 2006. Due to communication breakdowns with contacts in the vicinity of New Orleans, the service project for 2007 has been cancelled. Friends expressed appreciation for JT's work with the Teens.

65. Teen Committee report

Mandy Smith presented the report, highlighting Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Teens' participation in the Quake that Rocked the Midwest and the opportunities for workshops helping Friends to serve as Friendly Adult Presences at Teen events. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

66. Middle Youth Committee report

Gale Koehler presented the report, highlighting appreciation for the Yearly Meeting's Middle Youth program, concerns about whether adult Friends respect and spend time with Middle Youth, and excitement about the introduction of worship mentors for Middle Youth and the healthy number of participants in the Middle Youth program this year. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

67. Children's Committee report

Hannah Branson, accompanied by daughter Cecilia, presented the report, highlighting ways in which the theme of this year's Yearly Meeting sessions has informed this year's Children's Program. Eleven (11) youngsters between the ages of 1 and 10 are participating in this year's program. The children had prepared the following query, which the Presiding Clerk will share with Friends throughout the coming year:

In what ways do you transform your family?

Friends are asked to respond to this query in writing before the 2008 Yearly Meeting sessions. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

68. Religious Education Committee report

Diann Herzog 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. The committee is engaged in the process of discernment of its best role of support and resources to the Yearly Meeting. Credit was given to Lou Bucklin for his guidance. The clerk noted that Friends General Conference Religious Education Institute will be held at Bradford Woods near Indianapolis in summer 2008. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

69. Friends General Conference Consultation on Sharing Our Light report

Paulette Meier presented the report on the consultation which took place in Pittsburgh, PA, Third Month 30 to Fourth Month 3, 2007. Friends were encouraged to look inward to find strength to respond to the challenges of the world, to be aware of the need for newcomers to find and build friendships when they come to visit our meetings, and encouraged to look to Friends General Conference for support and resources. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

70. Friends Committee on National Legislation report

Paul Kriese reported on his work as Representative to Friends Committee on National Legislation and reminded Friends that Friends Committee on National Legislation belongs to us and has strong connections to the Richmond area. Paul noted that the issues of Friends Committee on National Legislation are those issues which we as Friends hold as important and vital. It was noted that Friends Committee on National Legislation was the first religious lobby organization. Friends Committee on National Legislation is a vibrant example of God's work in the world. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

71. Report of representatives to American Friends Service Committee

Deborah Jordan presented the report. American Friends Service Committee is working to transform the world not as an issues-based, but as a values-based organization. The 90th anniversary of American Friends Service Committee is approaching. Evalyn Kellum of the regional executive committee spoke to Friends, expressing that the heart of American Friends Service Committee is in our region. Tom Bennett has become part of a committee working with American Friends Service Committee on financial concerns of the organization. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

72. 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 take information provided at the yearly meeting on the work of Friends Peace Teams. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

73. William Penn House report

Paul Kriese presented the report. William Penn House provides a Quaker presence on Capitol Hill, offering workshops and space for Friends and others to pursue the work of Friends. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

74. Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Concerns

The clerk shared a portion of an epistle received from Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Concerns. The complete epistle is available for Friends at the Clerk's table in the lobby.

75. Quaker Earthcare Witness

Marcia Ankrom was not able to attend yearly meeting sessions this year. Bill Cahalan addressed the yearly meeting noting that Marcia participated in Quaker Earthcare Witness events in Fall 2006 in Cuba, New Mexico and the Spring 2007 meeting in Chicago. The fall 2007 meeting will be held in Vermont. Friends are encouraged to subscribe to Befriending Creation. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

76. 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 issues of interest to Friends and a commitment to survey Friends to maintain connection with current concerns. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

77. Closing Worship

The session closed at 12:55pm with a period of waiting worship, to reconvene on Seventh Month 29, 2006, as way opens.

Seventh Month 29, 2006, 10:00am - 11:30am

78. Opening of session

Friends gathered at the appointed time in waiting worship. During the period of opening worship, the Clerk read from the Epistle of the Meeting of Elders at Balby, Yorkshire, England, 1656.

79. 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.

80. Site for 2008 Yearly Meeting Sessions

On behalf of Yearly Meeting Planning Committee, Jim Morgan 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 23-27, 2008. It was announced that Wilmington College would be unable to accommodate Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting sessions during late Seventh Month for some time to come. Wilmington College personnel have communicated to us that the only time they could host Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting sessions in the foreseeable future would be mid Sixth Month. Friends were invited to share thoughts regarding this with the Clerk after Yearly Meeting sessions.

81. Registrar's report

Lisa Cayard presented the report. There were 177 registered attendees, including 11 children (10 years of age and under), 12 Middle Youth, 13 Teens, and 141 adults. Seventeen (17) of our constituent monthly meetings have been represented, and we were privileged to welcome 9 Friends from Irvington Friends Meeting. Friends expressed their gratitude to Lisa for her faithful service.

82. Nominating Committee Final Report

Byron Branson represented the report, detailing changes to the initial report.

Friends were reminded of the introduction of a new rotation for Presiding and Assistant Clerk and for Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer. A Friend will now first serve one year as Assistant Clerk, then two years as Presiding Clerk, followed by one final year as Assistant Clerk. At the beginning of the third year of this Friend's service, another Friend would begin the first year of his or her four-year term of service. Likewise, a Friend will now first serve one year as Assistant

Treasurer, then two years as Presiding Treasurer, followed by one final year as Assistant Treasurer. At the beginning of the third year of this Friend's service, another Friend would begin the first year of his or her four-year term of service. Friends approved the names in the final report, which was to be easily available to Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Friends shortly after the end of Yearly Meeting sessions 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.

83. Additional nominations

Friends approved the name of Jim Morgan to serve on the Local Arrangements Committee for Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas. Friends approved the following names to serve on the Ad Hoc Review Committee for Yearly Meeting Contributions (See Minute 10): Rex Sprouse (Executive Committee), Paul Buckley (Finance Committee), Richard Mitchell and Ron Haldeman (Peace and Social Concerns), and Mandy Smith, Ken Champney, and Christine Snyder (at large).

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

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

85. Minute of appreciation for David Garman and Rex Sprouse

Presiding Clerk Virginia Wood read aloud the following minute of appreciation for the service of David Garman as Assistant Clerk and Rex Sprouse as Recording Clerk:

As Yearly Meeting Clerk I would like to minute my appreciation to Rex Sprouse and David Garman for their service to me and the Yearly Meeting. How does one adequately thank you for your prayers, support, help in discernment, as well as just doing the work of the office? It has been a gift to know that you were there. It is even more of a gift to know that you are not going too far away. David has been steady, quiet and empowering. His ability to see beyond our human responses to the broader issue of spirit working through us is uplifting. Rex has a gift for recording and prophetic witness that one can only admire. I understand from others that their clerking for me with only days' notice was superb. Thank You Friends for you gifts, your blessings.

86. Recognition of incoming Assistant Clerk and Recording Clerk

The Clerk introduced Ben Griffith as the incoming Assistant Clerk and Deb Kocisiewski as the incoming Recording Clerk.

87. Reading of the Epistles

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

Children. The epistle, read by Andrew Hardy summarizes some of the highlights the children experienced during the Yearly Meeting session, in particular how growing our faith is like growing a garden.

Middle Youth. The epistle, read by Olivia Logan-Wood, speaks of lessons learned and community built by the Middle Youth through their activities at Yearly Meeting.

Teens. Sybilla Bryson, Aidan Robinson, and Meara Bucklin read the epistle, which speaks both of the enjoyment and fellowship of Teen activities and the Teens' experience of the wider Yearly Meeting, including workshops, plenaries, group singing, and visiting Ichthys House on the Earlham College campus.

Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Epistle. Lisa Cayard and William Shetter read the epistle, which highlighted the theme of growing our faith to transform the world. Transformation served as a unifying thread across our experiences during the Yearly Meeting sessions, in business sessions, workshops, and plenaries.

Friends approved these epistles.

88. Closing Worship

Friends closed these sessions at 11:30am, to reconvene in summer 2008, 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 (assisted by Deb Kocisiewski on Minutes 33, 39-42, 68-76, 85)

APPENDED MATERIAL

Roll call of Monthly Meeting representatives (See Minutes 3, 22, 38, 47, 59, 79)

Miami Quarterly Meeting

Campus:	Dales Hayes
Community:	Ken Bordwell
Dayton:	David Wood
Eastern Hills:	Linda Coppock
Green Plain:	Caroline Taylor
Lexington:	Ben Griffith, Gail Koehler
Louisville:	Beth Parish
Miami:	Tom Nowell
Owensboro Worship Group:	(no representative)
Oxford:	Barbara Diehl, Sandra Ward Angell
Yellow Springs:	Deb Kociszewski

Whitewater Quarterly Meeting

Bloomington:	Terry Reynolds
Clear Creek:	Paul Kriese
Fall Creek:	Diann Herzog, Eileen Pierce

Fort Wayne Worship Group:	(no representative)
Hopewell:	Annie Glen
Lafayette:	Linda Olis
Maple Grove:	(no representative)
North Meadow Circle:	David Pilbrow
White Rose:	Paul Ricketts

Notes from Discipline Revision threshing session on 4th draft of first part of section on Membership (See Minute 41)

A member of the Discipline Revision Committee reminded Friends that there will be a glossary appended to the book of discipline.

A Friend asked for the meaning of “full membership”.

Another Friend stated that one needs to be a Quaker or not, but stated that he would not stand in the way of the wording brought forward in this section.

A Friend asked what Ministry and Counsel or Monthly Meeting would do if there are “concerns” expressed about a member-to-be’s application. A member of the Discipline Revision Committee asked whether adding a sentence clarifying that this be left to the discernment of Ministry and Counsel would address her concern, and she stated that it would. However, another Friend stated that the clearness process for membership is “daunting” and adding more words would not be helpful, feeling that the paragraph should not get longer.

Notes from Discipline Revision threshing session on 2nd draft of second part of section on Membership (See Minute 42)

A Friend stated that “two years” in the section on sojourning is too short a period of time.

Another Friend suggested “four years” for sojourning or the substitution of flexible language.

Another Friend reminded us to consider the question of “are you intending to return to your home meeting” as we think about sojourning membership.

A Friend commented upon the phrase “loss of interest”. He encouraged care in the removal of names and a smooth process of making corrections for any names removed in error. He asked a second question: “What happens when a meeting is laid down –are members of the said meeting now members of the Quarterly Meeting”?

A Friend stated that the language in the section about Disownment seemed legalistic and asked where the love in this section lay, stating “how do we deal with this in a loving way...how do we deal with the pain”? Another called attention to the first paragraph of this section as a response to this concern.

A Friend stated that the wording is not clear in the section on transfer of membership, asking whether there were circumstances under which transfer of membership might be denied. Another Friend stated that a denial of transfer of membership is possible and at times necessary. A member of the Discipline Revision Committee suggested that Ministry and Counsel needs to be involved here, because oversight of the transfer of membership process is necessary.

One Friend asked why the letter of resignation goes to the Clerk of meeting and not the Clerk of Ministry and Counsel. Another Friend stated that it makes sense for letters to go to Ministry and Counsel. A member of the Discipline Revision Committee pointed out that the text of the current draft instructed the Clerk to forward the letter to Ministry and Counsel, and that it might simply be easier for a person seeking to resign to address a letter to the Clerk of the Meeting.

Summary of the vocal ministry on youth concerns (See Minute 62)

A Friend spoke of a time 50 years ago when the youth of New York Yearly Meeting raised their concern for the future of the yearly meeting. He stated that “they spoke out of their innocence.

Another Friend spoke that our young people are not a “task” and reminded us to keep them at the center of our life as a yearly meeting. “May we continue to hear their ministry”, he said.

A Friend stated that we ought to listen more closely to the teens stating that “each voice is important.”

Another Friend encouraged us to teach children the idea of what it means to be part of a religious “worshipping” community. He added that all of us need to learn the above.

One Friend lifted up Simply Speaking and shared it had improved his relationship with his son.

A Friend encouraged the adding of teens to all committees stating that we do not want to send a message of “you are not weighty enough to serve on committees”.

Another Friend stated that we have a responsibility to hear the words and thoughts of our young people.

Text of epistles (See Minute 87)

Children’s Epistle

Eleven children between the ages of one and ten met at the 187th annual session of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting at Earlham College in Richmond Indiana from July 25-29, 2007, to consider the theme of “Growing Our Faith to Transform the World.”

We understand that growing our faith is like tending a garden. First the soil has to be cleared of rocks, sticks and weeds. A seed is planted and must have water and sunlight to have

any hope of growing. There are tools we can learn to use, such as choosing what is best for us, saying “I don’t like it when you do that,” encouraging, helping others and sharing our gifts with others. These tools help us transform the world with our family, friends and ourselves.

Finally after much waiting and working this garden we see blossoms, the fruits of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, goodness, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control. Taking action to make a change is possible. We expressed these fruits through writing a song to share, giving gifts and singing for the seniors at Lauramore Home and raising money for the Heiffer Project by selling crafts. To quote our song,

“Day by day,
week by week,
Transforming our world is what we need to do.
Sharing, caring, helping each along.
Taking care of earth so she’s here when we are gone.
Day by day,
week by week.”

Middle Youth Epistle

This year the Middle Youth of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting tried to create a little community inside of a larger Quaker community. We got to know each other through activities. This included community service at a local animal shelter where we walked and washed dogs and played with cats. While we were working at the animal shelter there was a good feeling that we have a lot to give to the community. We went kayaking and during the lunch break we learned about worship sharing. Some of us really enjoyed the experience. We also felt that the kayaking trip helped us build this small community because it required teamwork to finish the eight miles. Working together made the trip more enjoyable. Then we biked to Quaker Hill where we ate lunch, played soccer and worked on our skit for the talent show. We tried to connect our skit to what Alisha McBride taught us about lobbying. In our skit we wanted to get the point across that since we are older we wanted to be treated with respect. In preparing our skit we became more of a community. When we performed it we felt like we had become closer to the larger community and earned more respect.

Some of the most valuable things that we thought we learned this year were from Shannon Isaacs about Conscientious Objectors. We found that it’s harder than we expected to be completely non-violent. We don’t know exactly what we would say if the Draft Board asked us such hard questions. We realized that being in the Quaker community may come as a challenge to some of us, but it’s worth it.

Teens’ Epistle

Dear Friends, thirteen teens between the ages of fourteen and eighteen met at the 187th session of the Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting in Richmond, Indiana from July 25th through 29th 2007 to

explore the theme “Growing Our Faith to Transform the World”. Through worship, discussion and community we have learned that it takes the whole community from the smallest to the largest to accomplish transformation.

We began Thursday morning with the idea that our annual canoe trip would be another normal event of floating lazily down the river eating bagged meals but much to our great dismay we actually *learned* something. We got to spend good ole quality time with our much-missed Friend the wonderful wilderness that used to inhabit the places we now live. On the river we felt led to latch together our canoes and float sloppily down the river as one. We braved rapids, large streams and a giant whale-shaped stone, all as a group.

On Friday we immersed our hearts and minds in the workshops of the afternoon. The teens all went their separate ways and chose what interested them most. One of the workshops attended was Paul Buckley’s “Be Ye Transformed” which left us with answers and questions alike. We enjoyed hearing others insights on scripture and it challenged us to explore our minds, and sit still. Other young Friends went to Richard Mitchell’s “Health Care for all” and were reminded that these are pressing issues that will be knocking on our doors in a short 45 years and maybe sooner.

Although not a Yearly Meeting sponsored activity we find it important to mention our journey to the Ichthys House. The Spirit came down on us like water and much was realized about ourselves, our lives, our faith, and each other. Amidst all the books and comfy well-seasoned furniture, it felt like venturing to that small, warm, secret corner of your heart where the passion for great books and a deep love for your fellow creatures of Earth is sealed away. After worship, much to the amusement of Clyde Johnson we formed a pile of Quaker bonding on his squishy, green couch (no you did not mis-read/hear, seven of us literally stacked up on his couch).

This years’ Plenary and workshop speakers seemed to unofficially be themed with the tough question, “Is this God’s will and part of the bigger plan or my will and part of my plan?” At any point during our spiritual journeys this is a question that is very important. In your teen years you feel like you are at the beginning of an actual sized version of the board game *Life* “choose college or career,” spiritual callings are something we need to pay very close attention to at this turning point. We realized that you just have to open up to God and be willing to give up everything for His plan, to trust that He knows where your life is going, and although you may not see it the Light is everywhere waiting not to just be heard but to be understood, not just to be seen, but perceived.

A few of us, we won’t name any names, have realized that our singing voices are not up to par. In fact, while singing alone we actually sound like dying animals. This yearly meeting bellowing together during the hymn singing sessions to our great surprise we made a joyful noise while trying to achieve a semi-harmonious state. Really, isn’t that what being a Friend and changing the world for the better is like? Alone we may not be able to accomplish much, but together through fellowship and improving our faith in each other we can transform the world!

Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Epistle

To Friends everywhere,

Greetings to Friends around the world, from Friends meeting for the 187th annual session of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting, July 25th to 29th 2007 at Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana, USA.

The theme of our Yearly Meeting has been “Growing our Faith to Transform the World,” words that in a variety of ways have inspired us in the time we have spent together. We opened our Yearly Meeting sessions reminded of the words of George Fox “Do all that you can in peace and love and in the fear of God, condescending one to another, in the simplicity and innocency of truth, and in the wisdom of God, that this may be everyone’s crown, that nothing may be done in strife to occasion words; for you are called to peace and holiness in which the kingdom stands and to serve one another in love.”

Our worship-sharing groups focused intensively on this year’s theme, and gave us the welcome opportunity to meditate and discern together our role in transforming the world at all levels from the local to the global. We considered the central role our faith plays: how can we nourish our faith to transform our impact on the world? We pray that our small daily tasks of caring for the earth and for one another may serve as seeds of God’s transforming love.

We are still in the lengthy process of revising our *Book of Discipline*, and are grateful for the engagement and participation of the entire Yearly Meeting. It was with a sense of accomplishment that we were able to take the first concrete step in giving voice to our faith as we found unity to give final approval to the Introduction of our *Book of Discipline* which sets forth the ways in which we experience our Quaker faith.

We see a welcome chance to ‘grow our faith’ in the sense of spreading our Quaker values as we move closer to clearness on adoption of the Earth Charter, a process that is still being seasoned.

We continue to discern our way forward in the development of a spirit-led ‘covenanting’ process for meetings to determine their share of the Yearly Meeting’s budget.

We have vigorous programs for children and youth. We appreciated their participation in the business sessions as they shared their own epistles and queries. The youth programs included opportunities for centering worship and Quaker business practice. We lifted up the important role of youth in the life of our yearly meeting, and recommitted ourselves to nurturing and learning from our children and youth. Opportunities for intergenerational sharing included having adults serving as worship mentors to the middle youth and ‘simply speaking’ discussions between teens and adults.

We have held a number of workshops, among them alternatives to violence, internalizing the Quaker message through songs and chants, religious education for children, and one called “Be ye transformed,” which used passages from scripture that contained stories of transformation, and

asked Friends to share how these stories spoke to them. In the workshop on transforming our relationships with food and the land, we considered that change needs to come from deep moral and spiritual roots. We shared the joy and hope found in living closer to the land, and in creating community through sharing locally grown food.

Each year we hold a session called 'Living Witness' where an experienced Friend is given the opportunity to recount a life in Quaker faith. This year featured Bob Vetter, currently a member of the Board of Trustees of Right Sharing of World Resources, who told us of his spiritual journey which involved, among others, joining Ohio Yearly Meeting Conservative in his teens, and later spending time in prison for non-compliance with the military draft.

It is with a sense of eager anticipation that we look forward to hosting the FWCC Annual Meeting in April 2008. At this session we have taken steps toward preparing our resources to meet the numerous challenges this event will bring, as we anticipate being able to welcome Friends from the entire Americas region.

We were pleased to welcome into our sessions a small group of Friends from another Yearly Meeting who were exploring avenues toward the healing power of a different Friends' faith community.

We were inspired by the wise words of our two Plenary speakers, Margaret Fraser of FWCC and Paul Buckley of OVYM. Margaret provided a strong voice in addressing several themes, beginning with the assurance that transforming the world is indeed possible even in a time when we have largely lost confidence in the inevitability of progress. Only a radical trust in God's hand will enable us to address the many problems of transforming the world. We are often called a 'peace church', she also reminded us, but we cannot talk peace unless we practice it totally among ourselves. She moved into helping us prepare ourselves for the hosting of the FWCC Annual Meeting next year, reminding us of the rapidly increasing dominance of the southern hemisphere in the world of Friends. We are no longer the 'mainstream' Friends, and we need to take leave of any traces of ethnocentricity. We cannot even claim to be guardians of Quakerism (for instance saying "Friends believe ...") in matters of religious practice. But giving up this dominance does not mean giving up our values.

Paul Buckley asked us to join him in a meditation on the passage from Romans 12:2 KJV "And be not conformed to this world: but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Friends were reminded that, although conforming to the world may often be the route that works, we are called to a much higher standard. Whatever we do must come out of love. We are not called to be effective, we are called to be faithful. We were given some examples of how the world may be transformed by patient obedience to the will of God. Even our daily choices for simplicity may make us feel good, but we still like to be in charge. The real purpose of discernment is trusting God to transform lives. Are we willing to give up all to discern the will of God, to be tools in God's hands rather than individual agents of change? This is how the world is transformed.

We call on Friends everywhere to discern their own ways of growing their faith to transform the world.