



Tending the garden . . .

# Discipleship Clerk's Message, by Michael Fuson

I have lately been lifted up by my participation in the work of the yearly meeting. My monthly meeting (Granville) recently had a forum on this year's LEYM query: *How long, oh God, how long must we remain complacent in our spiritual and physical relationships with the earth and the sun which sustain us? How may we alter these relationships in a restorative way?* Similarly I have been participating in the Program Committee's deliberations on the theme and plenary speaker for this year's gathering, which will pursue a similar topic: *Being Grounded: Listening to Earth and Spirit*. Being involved in these discussions has not only encouraged me to reflect on my own beliefs and activities, but has reminded me of the great blessing I feel Friends have in their business practice.

Coming together and searching

for unity in the Spirit, in practical as well as in spiritual matters, is fundamental to who we are as a religious society. As Eden Grace says in an essay written for the World Council of Churches, "The primary theological doctrine and spiritual experience of Friends is that the living Christ is present to teach us Himself.... Based on this theology, Friends commit themselves to discovering and implementing the will of God. This is the purpose of the Quaker Meeting for Business. Since our method of transacting business presumes that in a given matter there is a way that is in harmony with God's plan, our search is for that right way, and not simply for a way which is either victory for some faction, or an expedient compromise." [She quotes Thomas Brown.] What we call "the Sense of the Meeting" is not the collected wisdom

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## Moral Values

By Eric Starbuck

After the national election, moral values appear terribly important to many people. There was a flurry of conservative editorials I read which recommended we liberals should read certain news magazines or listen to country music to understand a little better the desire

for morality among the ordinary folk. Many authors wrote with relief that Bush had passed the test and would continue to guide the country in ways most voters approve.

I am revolted at the compari-

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# Clerk's Message — Michael Fuson

of those present, but the collective discernment of God's will. She notes that "the sense of being led into Unity with one another becomes a fundamental mark of the Divine work in the world."

Along with fellowship and spiritual renewal, doing business is one of the main purposes of our yearly meeting's Annual Gathering in June (and the primary purpose of Representative Meeting in March). Each year there are five or six hours of Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business on the agenda. In practice, Friends often feel that participating in these meetings can be both a blessing and a curse. We are often uplifted by moments of unity, but it is all too easy to be submerged in a sea of detail. How to achieve the former and avoid the latter is often a subject of discussion among us.

Our experience, both at yearly meeting and in our monthly meetings, suggests that one of the keys to successful attention to business is proper preparation, often in the form of committee work prior to the meeting.

One of the purposes of this "clerk's message" is simply to urge the committees of the yearly meeting to begin their work now, so that it is well advanced when arriving at Representative Meeting.

A second purpose is to suggest the use of "conference calling" to bring that about. Acting on a suggestion of Merry Stanford, Nancy Nagler and Margy Liske as clerks of the program committee have organized the work of the committee around a series of conference calls this fall. While these calls do not bring the members of the committee into physical proximity, they do lead to greater intimacy, worshipfulness, and efficiency than exchanging e-mails (another common expedient in a geographically dispersed meeting). Compared to a single physical meeting they have allowed the program committee to operate more deliberately, with opportunity for research and reflection between meetings. I believe that the committee has emerged from this process with a strong sense of unity and of direction for the coming Annual Meeting. (Friends interested in the practical details of arranging conference calls can contact Nancy, Margy, or myself. Costs are minimal.)

Eden Grace also says, "We value process over product, action or outcome. We respect each other's thoughts, feelings and insights more than expedient action. The process of reaching a decision yields more 'results' than the decisions themselves. Attention to the Divine movement in the community is, in fact, the source of decision and action, so that process and outcome are ideally two sides of the same Sacramental experience. Through that experience of the Unity of the Meeting, we are prepared for faithful discipleship in the church and world." I invite you to join with me in this discipleship.

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## Moral Values

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son of morality. Bush and Cheney have started two wars, destroyed the healthy budget surplus, rewarded the rich, and played fast and loose with our rights in the name of their morality.

Yet, I can see where these writers are coming from. There's a very unfortunate contrast between Bush, a reformed alcoholic, born-again Christian, and plain speaker (at least he sounds that way) and Bill Clinton, caught cheating, possibly stealing, and lying by telling the truth with fancy language.

Add to this contrast the birthright of most non-big-city folks: a more chaotic and dangerous life. They're afraid for themselves and their children.

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# Representative Meeting

## Registration and Directions - Mar. 4-5, 2005

**Representative Meeting will be held on March 5, 2005** at the Ann Arbor Friends Meetinghouse, 1420 Hill Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. The Meetinghouse and Quaker House phone is: (734) 761 7435.

**Lunch** will be offered for a contribution of \$6 per person for those who have registered in advance.

**Child care** will also be provided for those who notify us in advance.

Schedule for Saturday, March 5, will be as follows:

Registration and simple breakfast.....	8:30 am
Meeting for Worship.....	9:00 am
Announcements.....	9:50 am
Committee Meetings .....	10:00 am
Lunch (Fellowship Room).....	12:15 pm
Meeting for Business.....	1:15 pm
Adjournment .....	4:30 pm

A meeting of the **Executive Committee** (YM officers and committee clerks) will be held in Quaker House, 1416 Hill Street, Ann Arbor, on Friday evening, March 4, starting with a simple supper at 6:00 pm with meeting to commence at 7:00.

### Directions to Ann Arbor Friends Meeting:

#### From the South:

Exit northbound US 23 (from Toledo) at Washtenaw Avenue (MI 17) heading west toward Ann Arbor. Stay in the right lane for 1.4 mi. and bear right with Washtenaw. In another 1.4 mi, turn oblique left at the light onto Hill St. The Meetinghouse is 1.5 blocks on the left (south) side of the street. **Parking** can be found in back, on the side streets, or in the city parking structure on Forest, 1.5 blocks further west on Hill and one block north.

#### From the North:

Exit southbound US 23 onto MI 14, go down the hill and then exit onto Ann Arbor's Main Street just after crossing the Huron River bridge. In 1.3 mi, turn left onto Huron St., which twists and morphs into Washtenaw after you've passed the U of Michigan main campus. In 1.7 mi., just before a large painted rock, take a sharp right onto Hill St, and in 1.5 blocks, the Meetinghouse is

on your left. **Parking** as above.

#### From the West:

Exit I 94 onto Jackson Ave and continue eastward into Ann Arbor. 2.8 mi from your exit from I 94, you will cross Main Street and notice that someplace back there Jackson has become Huron. Continue on Huron as from North, above.

#### From the East:

I 94 westward to US 23, on which you turn north toward Ann Arbor. Exit on Washtenaw Ave. MI 17 westbound and continue as above (From the South).

### **Registration:** to be received by **Feb. 25, '05.**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

Please include (no: ) \_\_\_\_\_ for supper on Mar 4.

Please include (no: ) \_\_\_\_\_ for lunch on Mar 5.

Vegetarians \_\_\_\_\_; omnivores \_\_\_\_\_

Please arrange **child care** for the following children:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ age \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ age \_\_\_\_\_

I (we) need **overnight hospitality** for this many people on:

Friday March 4 \_\_\_\_\_. Saturday March 5 \_\_\_\_\_

Please meet me at

Detroit Metro Airport: \_\_\_\_\_.

AA Amtrak \_\_\_\_\_.

day: \_\_\_\_\_ flight \_\_\_\_\_ time: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Please post or e-mail to:**

Thomas Taylor, LEYM Recording Clerk  
324 Hilldale Drive  
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

(734) 995 6803, [tomnancytaylor@compuserve.com](mailto:tomnancytaylor@compuserve.com)

**Registration fee:** \$6.00 to include Saturday coffee and

# AFSC's Simplicity Committee Work

David Bassett

*Report by David Bassett regarding current status of AFSC's Simplicity Committee work.*

In June 2002, the AFSC Board faced the situation of persistent administrative cost overruns, and asked itself whether these costs resulted from "structural complexity" and inefficiencies which were getting in the way of carrying out AFSC's witness.

A Simplicity Committee was created with Joann Neuroth of Red Cedar Meeting as Clerk to examine the requirements for decision-making authority and responsibility within AFSC, with its goal being to make recommendations to the Board concerning needed changes in AFSC structure and function. Several key aspects of the Committee's efforts (as outlined in a recent memorandum to the Corporation) have included,

-- Careful review of previous efforts to address this issue (notably between 1980 and 2002). This review led to the Committee's conclusion that there was no lack of ideas about what to change, but rather "a lack of a sorting mechanism to use in deciding which changes to undertake when they hurt ... and which to decline even if they're attractive."

-- In June 2003, the Committee named "confusion about decision-making authority and responsibility" as a primary source of "superfluties" (to use an early Quaker term) or "distractions" (the Committee's term) as impeding the AFSC's work. An interim recommendation for changes was presented in 2003, as a "Framework to the Board". The Board then asked the Committee to continue its work, and asked the Finance Committee to recommend some short-term ways to deal with the current administrative cost overruns.

-- Since then, the Committee has labored to derive from the initial Framework concrete recommendations for changes in practice. The Committee has met with Regional Executive Committees (RECs), the International Programs Executive Committee (IPEC), and the Peace-Building Unit and the Community Relations Unit Executive Committees. These consultations confirmed some of the Committee's earlier perceptions and ideas, but also brought forth ideas and concepts which the Committee considered further and incorporated into successive approximations of their report.

-- In September 2004, a detailed 4 ½ page "work-in-progress report" or "working outline" "for how the AFSC does or should do its work" was mailed to the

Corporation members by the Simplicity Committee, with a covering letter by the AFSC Clerk (Paul Lacey). In preparation for our hearing a summary of this report by Joann Neuroth at the November, 2004 Corporation Meeting, the Clerk reminded us that "the Board has been deliberately trying to receive recommendations from staff and committees at earlier stages of conceptualization" (of the final recommendations), and asked "that we participate in a patient process of waiting, worshipping together and holding the principles they (the Committee) propose in the Light." Corporation members were invited to consider the report and convey comments to the Simplicity Committee in advance of the November Corporation meeting, and at the time of that Meeting. It was not the intent that the Corporation or the Board would be asked to make action decisions at the November meetings; but that the Corporation's and the Board's advices were being sought, as the Committee's work nears its completion.

The Committee report covers six general segments: Governance; Implementation; Seasoning; Committees; Program; and Finance (including fiscal soundness, and fundraising considerations). Each segment was presented in the form of various "Principles" and "Board Policy Recommendations". Underlying all is consideration for who is responsible for making and implementing decisions; how decisions are to be made; whose roles are advisory; and clarification of the roles of staff, committees, other volunteers, and constituencies. On Friday afternoon, Nov. 5, 2004 (between 2:00 and 3:45 PM), there was a valuable verbal summary of the Committee's history and its work, presented to the Corporation by Joann Neuroth, followed by comments from each of the other eight members of the Committee (including comments by Mary Ellen McNish, AFSC General Secretary, also a member of this Committee), and then followed by open discussion with Corporation members.

A slightly revised version of the Committee's report (dated Nov. 7, 2004), containing some changes developed by the Committee between Oct. 1, and Nov. 7, was made available to members of the AFSC Board for its meeting on Nov. 7. This was presented (on Sunday, Nov. 7, between 1:30 and 2:30 PM, by Joann Neuroth) for the Board's consideration and reflection. The Committee's note to the Board states "We expect to continue to season (the following principles) by consulting further in the next few months with staff, and

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# American Friends Service Committee Corporation Meeting

**Mike Hinshaw**

AFSC Corporation meeting, held early November each year, provides a wonderful opportunity for Lake Erie's representatives to be close to the work of AFSC and to report back to you. The many areas being served and the tremendous scope of projects are an inspiration to those of us who sometimes despair. AFSC is doing the hard work on the ground, based on our Quaker values of respect for the life and light of each. Because of their work we can all have hope and optimism for the future.

At the meeting in Philadelphia we heard of just a few of the projects which go on in so many parts of the world:

Our representatives in Iraq, Rick McDowell and Mary Trotochaud, spoke movingly of their connections to a beleaguered and beset people who struggle every day just to protect their children's lives and to

find just the basic human services. Rick and Mary try to impart a sense of support from those of us who care about their situation and who want to use better methods to resolve the terrible conflicts there. We learned that recent estimates put the number of Iraqi civilian dead at 100,000, bringing home the depth of the tragedy and reminding us of our call to alleviate suffering. AFSC is providing relief to some of the most vulnerable Iraqis: the homeless, the disabled, children, and battered women. In addition AFSC supports emerging non-governmental organizations and Iraqi civil society, communities that will play a critical role in the development of a new Iraq.

In the Sudan the AFSC is working to support the goal of strengthening the capacity of Africans to rebuild a culture of peace and justice that fosters sustainable development.

They are collaborating with partners who are creating new definitions of and approaches to security and peacebuilding.

On the U.S.-Mexico border AFSC is working for the reformation of INS/Border Patrol policies and practices and organizing and strategizing with other local and national groups to respond to the increased militarization of the border. AFSC is working to expand bi-national immigrant rights networks, document cases of abuse, make presentations to local, state, federal and international hearings and commissions and support federal litigation to protect documented and undocumented residents from harassment and illegal detention by the Border Patrol.

In Cambodia simple programs to provide water buffalo to struggling families for the improvement of their economic situation are made possible with the support provided by donors.

It is very encouraging to hear that African debt forgiveness is now being discussed at the highest levels of the World Bank, the IMF and the Group of Seven. Such a change in policy is a direct result of many years of work by AFSC and others to prepare the way. Our small efforts can have big results.

*Your representatives to the AFSC Corporation are David Bassett, Jim Satterwhite, Dick Taylor and Mike Hinshaw. We urge all meetings in Lake Erie to consider carefully our gifts to AFSC for their work and hope our support will be willing and full.*

## Simplicity Committee

**David Bassett**

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to bring our final recommendations for action to the Board Executive Committee's January meeting and the Board's March meetings. At that point, we believe that we will have completed our charge and ask that we be laid down."

My impression (DRB) is that the labors of the Committee have been extensive, wide-ranging, and Spirit-led, and that the written and verbal reports as we received them set forth revisions of AFSC structure and functioning which represent the basis for some important changes which could provide for greater clarity, simplicity, and frugality in AFSC's operations and in our interactions with each other and with those we seek to serve. I believe that we are nearing a time when the Simplicity Committee's report could be accepted by the Board as a Framework for our work (both within the organization, and with the wider world); and, with forbearance and recognition of the complexity of human relationships and organizations, that acceptance of the Committee's recommendations will help us in continuing to uphold the Spirit and the testimonies of the Society of Friends which guided our original conception.

# FCNL Annual Meeting 2004

Thomas Taylor

The Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) Annual Meeting of the General Committee was held in Washington on 11-14 November 2004, not long after the election. In spite of the sorry election returns, the meeting had a good spirit and approved a set of Legislative Priorities for the 109th Congress (2005-2007), a Minute on Moral Values as well as the spirit of a Minute on Conscientious Objection, which will be given its final editing at the FCNL Policy Committee meeting in late January 2005, and will be available shortly thereafter.

See the comments to the right and on page seven for the text of the Minute On Moral Values and the Legislative Priorities for the 109th Congress approved by the General Committee.

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## Moral Values

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They want surety, a father they can trust. With schools as battle zones, addicts everywhere, and too many criminals getting off on technicalities, how can they accept a loosening of morals? The greater freedom and individuality liberals stand for terrifies.

The horrid moral values of war don't play much in Peoria. It's taken for granted that occasionally we need to prove we can still knock the other guy down. Especially when they crash planes into buildings. Or threaten our children.

Never mind that you and I could have thought of a hundred actions likely to be more effective in easing the threat of terrorism. It felt good to strike back!

They're worried about things closer to home. Their jobs. Their communities. Their children's safety. How does it play in their neighborhood? Overseas comes second.

Yes, we liberals have moral values. But we have a credibility problem. Can we prove our values to people worried more about children and jobs in Kansas than in Iraq? *Can we explain our values in terms they will understand and believe?*

## Friends Committee on National Legislation Minute on Moral Values

Approved by the General Committee  
November 13, 2004

The Friends Committee on national Legislation (FCNL) is a faith based Quaker organization. As seekers of truth, and Christians, we seek to remain open to where God's spirit leads us.

FCNL bases its public policy positions on moral and religious values.

FCNL has been witnessing on a nonpartisan basis in Washington for more than 60 years, seeking to create a world without war and the threat of war, a society with equity and justice for all, a community where every person's potential may be fulfilled, and an earth restored.

We talk with members of Congress and their staff about our values as they relate to pending legislation and national policy.

We believe moral values should be a prime component of electoral, legislative and public policy. Individuals have a right and a responsibility as citizens to express their views within the framework of the First Amendment of the Constitution.

We invite all who are followers of Jesus and all people of faith to consider ways in which Christ's total message of peace, forgiveness, justice, succor to the poor, the helpless, the scapegoated, and the outcast should be included in the definition of moral values. We recall the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-11) and Jesus quoting Isaiah in Luke 4:18: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me ... to proclaim good news to the poor, freedom for the prisoners, recovery of sight for the blind, release for the oppressed...."

We seek a dialogue about our moral values and how we are attempting to apply them to national policy with followers of all faiths, traditions, and beliefs, and with those whose primary concern is the "security" of our nation.

See [www.fcnl.org](http://www.fcnl.org) for more information.

# Friends Committee for National Legislation

## Legislative Priorities for the 109th Congress Approved by the General Committee, November 14, 2004

The Friends Committee on National Legislation seeks to bring authentic religious experience of Friends to bear on public policy decisions. We are called to bear witness to God's love for every person by sounding a clear voice for truth and peace, bringing forward alternatives to violence and working for justice.

We are committed to government of, by and for the people. Current U.S. policies cause the vulnerable to lose hope and allow the wealthy to amass greater wealth. The public good is compromised in favor of private interests without public accountability. The Executive branch is undermining laws, and Congress is abdicating its responsibilities to promote the public good.

Friends cherish integrity in public and private life. We call on our public officials to lead by example, to be accountable to the people they serve, and to adhere to the highest standards of ethics and civility.

We know that true security grows from international cooperation and trust, as well as respect for human dignity, economic and social equality, and the rule of law. Fear of further acts of terror is being manipulated to justify an agenda of endless war in the name of security.

In light of these concerns, FCNL selects the following priorities for its work during the 109th Congress:

**# Remove all U.S. military forces and bases from Iraq, and fulfill U.S. moral and legal obligations to reconstruct Iraq through appropriate multinational, national, and Iraqi agencies.**

**# Promote a framework for national and international security that includes peaceful prevention and resolution of deadly conflicts, active pursuit of arms control and disarmament, adherence to international law, support**

**for the United Nations, and participation in multilateral efforts to address the root causes of war and terrorism.**

**# Restore and assure full civil liberties for all persons in the United States or under its jurisdiction, and promote human rights around the world through international institutions and treaties.**

**# Change Federal budget, tax and fiscal policies to reduce military spending, meet pressing human needs and address structural economic violence.**

**# Promote long-term protection of the environment and eliminate a critical cause of violent conflict by reducing oil consumption and accelerating development and use of renewable energy sources.**

FCNL will continue active advocacy on Native American issues. As way opens, FCNL will continue Friends' long-standing witness for rights of conscience, criminal justice reform, abolition of the death penalty, and an end to institutional racism.

FCNL's work will be based on legislative opportunity, specific expertise and leadings, and resource availability. FCNL has the flexibility, within the Statement of Legislative Policy<sup>1</sup>, to respond to crises and important legislative opportunities. Omitting an issue from these priorities does not imply a change in our policy.

The General Committee calls upon its members, other Friends, and like-minded people to promote these priorities. In addition to the issues which FCNL has the resources to address, many other deeply held concerns will continue to receive attention from individual Friends, Monthly Meetings and Churches, Yearly Meetings, and other Quaker organizations.

As we work to find solutions to complex problems, Friends continue to seek divine guidance and ask for renewed strength and hope.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Statement of Legislative Policy (11/03)* at <http://www.fcnl.org>, from which these *Legislative Priorities* are drawn.

# Workshop Musings

## Advancement & Outreach

**Mathilda Navias**

I have a confession to make: I didn't expect much from my meeting's annual retreat this September. Others in Broadmead had decided to focus on outreach and to invite a member of Friends General Conferences' Advancement & Outreach Committee to come and lead the program for the weekend. As clerk of LEYM's Advancement & Outreach Committee, you'd think that I would welcome such a program. Pessimistically, I anticipated a lecture on inviting all one's friends to meeting or labor-intensive schemes for inviting in the neighbors. These things rate right up there with me with going door-to-door selling candy bars or having a pair of Mormons in business suits ring my doorbell. Besides, I'm no good at that sort of thing.

So it was with a sense of delight and humility that I participated in the workshop led by Jane Berger of New York Yearly Meeting and Marianne Lockard, who drove all the way from Arkansas to be with us. These seasoned Friends laid before us a different approach to outreach. They emphasized the importance of having a vital meeting to share with others who are seeking—one with periods of deep worship, meaningful vocal ministry, and caring community. One in which conflicts are addressed with deep love and humor. One in which the group serves to help individuals in their spiritual growth and attention to leadings, and individuals work to nurture the group. One in which we hold one another in the Light, ask for accountability, and share one another's lives.

Before trying to attract new people, Jane suggested that the meeting needs to do some work – a spring cleaning, as it were. A session should be scheduled for worship sharing on whether the present Friends truly want the meeting to grow. Some may wish to keep the good things already present in the meeting and not want things to change. Existing or long-time conflicts need to be addressed.

If the group finds clarity on working to attract new people, they should look first to simple things they can do without a lot of effort. Specific people should take on responsibility for getting things done and be held accountable by the group. Some examples: write or purchase a statement of welcome that you can hand to visitors; use a portable bulletin board (science fair type) to display information on a variety of Friends organizations and concerns; get in touch with those who have been absent from meeting; make sure there is a sign where you worship that is easily

visible from the road and says that visitors are welcome; make sure your meeting has an up-to-date listing on [www.QuakerFinder.org](http://www.QuakerFinder.org). These and many more ideas can be found in a handout from FGC titled "Inreach/Outreach Review". A version of it is available on FGC's Advancement & Outreach web page ([www.fgcquaker.org/ao](http://www.fgcquaker.org/ao)) or I can send you the most up-to-date version. FGC's web page also contains a number of other helpful resources.

Our leaders' vision of outreach does not end with getting new people to walk in the door. Just as important is what we do with the new people who come. Visitors look for meaning and belonging. They need to make some friends – people they feel comfortable talking to – in the first six months. They need to feel accepted. They need to learn Friends' ways of worshiping and doing business. And ultimately, they need to contribute. We brainstormed ideas of other things visitors may be looking for. Our list included similar beliefs, spiritual comfort, space for search, deep worship & connection to God, community, a peer group, connection to real life, care and nurture of children, music, challenge, and knowledge.

Broadmead Monthly Meeting is fairly unique in the U.S. in that it is composed of four separate worship groups strung out 100 miles along I-75 in north-west Ohio. It was enlightening for the members of each worship group to brainstorm ideas on what barriers to visitors currently exist that we could remove and what small steps we could take to actively reach out to others. Each group then shared its plans with the others. The workshop made all this seem possible, rather than overwhelming. And none of the work will be wasted; all the steps we plan to take are worth doing anyway. The sharing and working together helped deepen the ties between us, and on Sunday morning we experienced a deeper worship than we usually do.

Jane did caution us not to be disappointed if we don't get immediate results. As we know from each other's stories of how each of us came to Friends, for many it took years and a number of nudges for us to walk through the door of a Friends meeting or to return.

I have long held a concern that we Quakers share what we have with others. This is ultimately what Advancement & Outreach means to me. This workshop helped me and other Broadmead Friends

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# Earthcare Committee – 6/19/04

Dick Hogan

It has been a fruitful year for the LEYM Earthcare Working Group. We met four times between December and May, each time strengthening our shared understanding of this leading.

This year concludes our second year of a three-year committee formation process. We were happy to have a lively LEYM workshop celebrating earthcare and the Great Story, toward a shared dream for the earth community. We were blessed by the supportive presence and presentations of two guests, Sister Leanne Jablonski of the Ohio Interfaith Climate Justice and Energy Campaign, and Ed Dreby of Quaker Earthcare Witness.

In light of the Spirit moving among us, our committee is evolving and refining its concept of purpose for LEYM Earthcare. We anticipate significant ad-

vances in the coming year. Our next steps will include study and reflection in preparation for nurturing three primary dimensions of earthcare. These dimensions include nurturing LEYM Earthcare within its own two bioregions, Quaker Earthcare Witness (formerly Friends Committee on Unity With Nature, and right relationship with other Earthcare traditions of the world.

We're very pleased the Ministry and Nurture committee decided to take up this concern by creating a beginning Earthcare query. We hope our monthly meetings earnestly consider this query as we engage in this great work of our time.

LEYM Earthcare Co-Clerk

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## Kim Carlyle Speaker for LEYM Annual Meeting

Kim Carlyle is the selected plenary speaker for Lake Erie Yearly Meeting this summer, and he has

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come to a new vision of how we might go about doing that in ways in accord with Quakers' emphasis on the value of each individual.

I would definitely recommend the Inreach/Outreach workshop to others. It was arranged through FGC's Traveling Ministries program. This is the second time Broadmead has used the program to find leaders for our retreat, and we have had good experiences both times. For more information contact the program coordinator, Deborah Fisch, 916 41st Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50312; 515-277-2189; [deborahf@fgcquaker.org](mailto:deborahf@fgcquaker.org), or go to [www.fgcquaker.org/traveling](http://www.fgcquaker.org/traveling).

Please let me know if there is any way LEYM's Advancement & Outreach Committee can help your meeting.

Mathilda Navias

On behalf of LEYM Advancement & Outreach Committee

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agreed to speak to us on our chosen topic, *Being Grounded: Listening to Earth and Spirit*. Kim is a member of Quaker Eco-Witness for National Legislation and a member of Swannanoa Valley Meeting, NC, and of South Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association. He lives in Barnardville, NC.

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## Book Recommendation

Susan Jeffers

*Racing Across the Lines: Changing Race Relations Through Friendship* by Deborah L. Plummer, Pilgrim Press 2004. This short book invites readers to consider how we form friendships and why interracial friendships are so rare. It provides many anecdotes and suggestions for coping with tension and increasing trust. Its perspective is spiritual, personal, and interpersonal. It avoids blame and emphasizes personal change: what each person can do. The author is a psychology professor at Cleveland State University and president of a diversity management consulting company. She is African-American, from the Cleveland area, Catholic. I recommend this book to any individual or Friends Meeting interested in a spiritual approach to "race relations."



Friends World Committee  
for Consultation

SECTION OF THE AMERICAS

Comité Mundial de Consulta  
de los Amigos

SECCIÓN DE LAS AMÉRICAS

“Called to go forth with joy”  
Isaiah 55:12

Make plans now to attend the

# 2005 Annual Meeting

April 14-17, 2005

Tempe, Arizona

Embassy Suites Hotel Phoenix-tempe

**Registration information will be available fall 2004**

**This is the main decision-making body of FWCC Section of the Americas. Affiliated yearly meetings in the Americas send representatives. OPEN TO ALL FRIENDS. English/Spanish interpretation is provided for all sessions and events.**

The 2005 Annual Meeting of Friends World Committee for Consultation Section of the Americas will take place April 14-17, 2005 in Tempe, Arizona at the Embassy Suites Hotel Phoenix-Tempe. Loida Fernández González, Executive Secretary of the FWCC Committee of Latin American Friends (COAL), will speak on the theme ‘Called to go forth with joy’ (Isaiah 55:12).

Affiliated yearly meetings in North, Central and South America send representatives to this meeting. It is open to all interested Friends. Bilingual (English/Spanish) interpretation is provided for all sessions and events. Register online at [www.fwccamericas.org](http://www.fwccamericas.org) or by contacting the FWCC office at 1506 Race St., Philadelphia, PA 19102, (215) 241-7250, email [americas@fwccamericas.org](mailto:americas@fwccamericas.org). Pre-registration required.

**For more information contact FWCC at:  
1506 Race St., Philadelphia, PA 19102, (215) 241-7250, [americas@fwccamericas.org](mailto:americas@fwccamericas.org).**

# Traveling Ministries Consultation

By Nancy Nagler

On a bright weekend in mid-November 34 Friends from eleven different Yearly Meetings met at a commodious retreat center near Pittsburgh to focus on "Nurturing Faithful Ministry in our Monthly and Yearly Meetings." Before coming, each attender had responded to four queries asking how Friends in our meetings recognize a message, how inappropriate messages are dealt with, what our meetings do to encourage faithful ministry and how we truly listen to God during monthly and yearly meetings for business.

The responses that the representatives from each Yearly Meeting had brought were put on large sheets of paper and placed on tables around our meeting room. All attenders circulated among the tables, reading the various responses and writing any thoughts or comments they had on the ample margins surrounding them. Later, time was given to discuss what had been written.

Panel speakers Linda Chidsey and Ernie Buscemi focused our attention on who we are as Friends, and on being servants of God. They gave compelling and moving experiences to illustrate their points. Each representative attended one of three workshops led by the panel speakers and the Traveling Ministries coordinator, Deborah Fisch. This consultation was sponsored by the Traveling Ministries Program and attended and labored on by several of the committee members. It was a time of valuable sharing and exploring a subject we don't frequently give attention to in this thoughtful way.

## The Fight in the Heart

A Native American grandfather was talking to his grandson about how he felt about a tragedy.

He said, "I feel as if I have two wolves fighting in my heart. One wolf is the vengeful, angry, violent one. The other wolf is the loving, compassionate one".

The grandson asked him, "Which wolf will win the fight in your heart?"

The grandfather answered, "The one I feed."

# A Report on FGC Traveling Ministers Program 2004 Consultation

By Connie Bimber

The queries sent to us prior to the conference indicated vocal ministry was to be the main concern of this event. Of course I should have known this. It was sponsored by the Traveling Ministries Committee. But still I hoped that nurturing other ministries would be discussed.

On Friday evening Linda Chidsey spoke of the meeting for worship as corporate contemplative prayer. She listed the preparation that members of the community could take to help the process. These include: midweek worship, spiritual readings and the practice of spiritual disciplines during the week and prior to meeting for worship. Personally, she said, contemplative prayer is an act of surrender.

Ernie Buscemi was led to put aside her planned talk and instead share with us her efforts to follow two different leadings. She spoke openly of her own growth in understanding that a leading is for the person who receives it. It is not a "good idea" for someone else to carry out.

She also spoke of the unexpected results when she faithfully followed a leading to travel to South Africa. Her treatment as a dark skinned person was devastating. She had not experienced being treated as a non-person before. Why had God sent her on this mission? She finally realized that now that she knows how it feels, she can empathize with others still experiencing this. Her meeting's efforts to support her in understanding this were most important.

On Saturday we broke into three groups. I heard of the problems some had in their meetings when they used "Christian" language in their messages. This brought up the question of who should interpret this language: the speaker, the listener or both? And how do we help attenders understand that our roots are Christian.

While we did not discuss how to nurture other forms of ministry, I am beginning to understand the importance of vocal ministry. Perhaps that is why I felt led to attend this conference.

# The Importance of Relationships and Intervisitation Among Friends

By Don Nagler

In what relationships do we truly grow our lives? The Bluffton gathering was really a testimony to the kind of experience that does grow wholeness in us deeply. Michael Birkel's plenary and workshop, the other workshops and interest groups, the early morning Bible study, the manner of the conduct of our business, and the chance to share our lives with old and many new Friends in the rich atmosphere of that place, became fertile ground.

I would encourage Friends to come to annual LEYM gatherings and then during the year to visit and share with Friends within LEYM, who are outside of their own meetings. We should take the opportunity to visit other LEYM monthly meetings and worship groups informally or with "letters of introduction" from our meetings. These relationships, and the giving and receiving of hospitality in them, greatly enrich our lives and the life of our Religious Society.

I believe what we are and what we become as individuals is about relationship with God and persons. It is about how we affirm and are affirmed, how we grow and are giving, how the Spirit gives to us within our meetings and about that experience which we have in the community of our Society and the world. As Friends, we know from an understanding based in experience that listening deeply and being listened to on that level give us new insight. When we listen, and are listened to, in that way we are able to develop new, genuine and deepened identities, as Douglas Steere and Patricia Loring have so well expressed.

Meetings may wish to arrange gatherings with worship groups and other monthly meetings within LEYM. As Pine River Meeting is on the frontier in central Michigan of the known Quaker world, individuals and our meeting have had, for the past several years, meetings and retreats with neighboring worship groups in Fremont, Grand Traverse, and Tustin. Individuals have visited informally several meetings in the Yearly Meeting and the wider Quaker world and affiliations. In Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting, especially at our Mid-Winter Quarterly without attention to business, we have had wonderful fellowship with Friends from all the meetings in the Quarter. Traveling and meeting new persons seem to heighten our spiritual awareness and experience.

On another level, our Society traditionally has written "letters of introduction" for individuals intending to visit other meetings or Friends in their homes. Such a letter may be in the form of a minute, conveying greetings and giving information about the individual's relationship to the meeting and participation in Friends' concerns.

Finally, and most importantly, Friends traveling to others "in the service of Truth" have been essential to the life of the Religious Society of Friends. I especially commend for reading two articles in the FGC Connections, Summer 2004, Publication: "Lessons to Travel By", written by Deborah Fisch and "Visitation in Quaker History" by Margaret Hope Bacon. These articles will warm your heart and give credence to the essential functional importance of this activity among us to enhance "gospel order".

As is stated in the Baltimore Yearly Meeting's Faith and Practice, 1988, "A Friend who feels called to travel in Truth's service – to visit with families, make public speeches, speak at called-meetings, or the like – should lay the concern before the Monthly Meeting, preferably first bringing it to the Committee on Ministry and Counsel. If the Meeting unites with the concern, it should record a minute describing its member's leading and proposed service, expressing the Meeting's approval and support, and asking for the assistance of Friends to be visited. The Meeting should provide the Friend under concern with a copy of the minute. ... The Friend who sets out on such a journey should be accompanied, when practicable, by a Friend in sympathy with the concern and able to give counsel and companionship. The Monthly Meeting issuing the minute is responsible for seeing that the service is not hampered by lack of funds."

"A Monthly Meeting minute for travel outside of the Yearly Meeting should be approved and endorsed by the Yearly Meeting, or Representative Meeting, if time permits. Clerks of the Meetings visited should be asked to endorse letters of introduction or travel minutes. The travelers should return their endorsed documents to the Monthly Meeting promptly at the end of the journey."

The Traveling Ministries program of the Friends General Conference has given evidence of enlivening effects in our meetings. It is a hopeful development and should be fostered within LEYM. As we give

# Relationships and Intervisitation

*(Continued from page 12)*

support to important programs of FCNL and AFSC, should we support the growth of this ministry to and among us? I feel it is an activity that is vital to our “koinonia”, our community of faith.

In the midst of our busy lives, we should give attention to those practices that allow the Spirit to grow in us and our meetings. We are informed by the narrative of our Quaker history, as well as by our own experience of the Spirit working through relationship, in ministry, the giving and receiving of hospitality and in intervisitation. We need to create a space in our lives for those experiences in common.

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## Because I Could Not Stop For Death

Emily Dickinson

Because I could not stop for Death--  
He kindly stopped for me--  
The Carriage held but just Ourselves--  
And Immortality.

We slowly drove--He knew no haste  
And I had put away  
My labor and my leisure too,  
For his Civility--

We passed the School, where Children strove  
At Recess--in the ring--  
We passed the Fields of Gazing Grain--  
We passed the Setting Sun--

Or rather--He passed Us--  
The Dews drew quivering and chill--  
For only Gossamer, my gown--  
My Tippet--only Tulle--

We paused before a House that seemed  
A Swelling on the Ground--  
The Roof was scarcely visible--  
The Cornice--in the Ground--

Since then--'tis Centuries--and yet  
Feels shorter than the Day  
I first surmised the Horses' Heads  
Were toward Eternity--

# Memorial Minute for Isabel Bliss

**Ann Arbor Meeting**

Isabel Needham Bliss, 89, died on June 24, 2004, at her home in Chelsea, Michigan. A traveler to far reaches of the world as a young woman, she became a fervent worker for peace, social justice, and the health of the planet, and inspired many by her enduring grace. Isabel was beloved by her family, friends, and those in Meeting who knew her only as the woman whose peaceful face and clear voice radiated her Light within.

Born in Ashburnham, Massachusetts, on November 19, 1914, Isabel was the youngest of six children. She graduated from the prestigious Cushing Academy and received a Bachelor's degree from Skidmore College, majoring in nursing. After working as a Registered Nurse (R.N.) for a year, she went on to Shauffler College in Cleveland for an additional degree in social work.

It was at Shauffler that she was introduced to the Religious Society of Friends, when a representative from the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) came to speak and recruit volunteers for a summer program with Student Peace Service. She spent the summer of 1938 as part of a team working with communities on peace education activities around Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania. When she returned to Cleveland, she began attending the Cleveland Friends Meeting, becoming a member in 1939.

In December 1939, she was invited by the AFSC to direct a colony of Spanish refugee children in Marseilles, France. She set sail on New Year's Day, 1940, at the age of 25, with only high school French, and spent a memorable two years coping with needs of seventy children amidst wartime France. In the fall of 1942, she served as a nurse with the El Oro Technical Mission in Ecuador through the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (Rockefeller Foundation). While in Ecuador, she was also part of a team which established the first nursing school in Quito, and years later, when she and husband Bill returned for a visit, she was remembered and feted for her pioneering efforts. Her next overseas assignment was with UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration), which took her first to Cairo, Egypt, working with Yugoslav refugees, and then to Belgrade, Yugoslavia. During a transit stay in Italy, between Egypt and Yugoslavia, she met and was blessed by the Pope Pius XII.

In 1946, during a hiatus in her overseas assign-

# Memorial Minute for Isabel Bliss

Ann Arbor Meeting

*(Continued from page 13)*

ments, in Boston while contemplating an assignment in China, she met up again with Bill Bliss, whom she had known during her Cleveland Meeting attendance. China was turned down as Bill's proposal to become his wife was accepted. They were married under the care of the Cleveland Meeting on November 30, 1946.

While raising three children, she remained active in local, national, and global concerns. Her mindful devotion to Quaker values led her to draft counseling, speaking out against the cold war and nuclear proliferation, heading the local PTA, working with the League of Women Voters, organizing a Russian language study group with several other local women, writing letters to newspapers, Congressmen, and Presidents. In June 1968, with other Friends participating in a civil disobedience worship circle in Washington, D.C., in support of the Poor People's Campaign, she was arrested and spent a night in jail (where they confiscated her crochet hook because it was potentially a weapon). In the early 1970s, she testified in a class action suit against realtors for racial discrimination in the Cleveland suburb where they were living at the time. (The case went to the Supreme Court, where the suit was upheld). As her children grew older, she returned to work as a nurse in the Cleveland area at the VA hospital, as a visiting school nurse, and at Cleveland Metropolitan Hospital.

Throughout her life, Isabel served Friends in many capacities: as a member of the Cleveland and Ann Arbor Meetings, as a conference attendee and speaker, and in leadership roles. Her skill in clerking spirit-led meetings was well recognized among Friends. In 1957 and again from 1983-1986, she was Clerk of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting (LEYM). She supported the Cleveland Friends Meeting in many capacities.

Isabel and Bill moved to Chelsea in 1980, and Isabel transferred her membership to Ann Arbor Friends Meeting in 1983. She served us as clerk from January 1988 through June 1989, and was on the Committee on Ministry & Counsel from 1982 to 1987. Her gift for using language well was put to use as one of the editors of a revision of our Meeting Handbook in 1995. She also represented both Lake Erie Yearly Meeting and Ann Arbor Friends Meeting at Friends Committee on National Legislation.

In 1988, she and Bill were among the founders of the Friends Committee on Unity with Nature (FCUN), now known as Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW). Isabel was first clerk and then general secretary, while Bill was the financial officer; they ran FCUN from a corner of their living room in Chelsea, Michigan, until it was turned over to others in January 1995. A quote from Isabel became well-used by this group: "To the testimony of conscientious objection to war, let us add conscientious protection of our planet."

Isabel and Bill started camping at Friends Lake Community in Chelsea, Michigan, during its early days in the mid '60s, eventually retiring to the home they designed and had built within the community in 1980. For many years, they and others worked tirelessly to fulfill the dream of building a Michigan Friends Center at Friends Lake, which was completed in 1995.

In 2002, Isabel was one of five nominees for a Lifetime Achievement Award honoring Michigan volunteers. One of the last trips she and Bill took together was to the reception for the honorees at the Governor's mansion. With her characteristic quiet modesty, she said of the honor, "I only did what anyone else would have done."

Isabel was a person who let her life speak for her; in short, she lived what she believed. Her ministry in the Ann Arbor Meeting, though infrequent, was memorable for its clarity and depth. The strength of her faith was inspiring to many. She seemed to have found how to live her life from the depths of her being.

Isabel's final years were marked by declining health and failing eyesight. Many of us will long remember and admire the grace with which she bore her physical trials. She will be missed, but the inner light of her life will be carried on and continue to shine through all those who were privileged to know her.

She is survived by her husband of 57 years, Bill Bliss, daughter Barbara Bliss of Cambridge, MA, son Roger Bliss of Chelsea, MI, daughter Penny Bliss of Hanover, NH, granddaughter Dana Zeilinger of Hanover, NH, and grandson Adam Fogel of New Haven, CT.

## LEYM Change of Address

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to:

Eric Starbuck  
815 Pitt St. Apt. 3L  
Wilkinsburg, PA 15221  
Email: [ericstarbuck@att.net](mailto:ericstarbuck@att.net)

Thank you!

See you at  
Representative  
Meeting!

(See Page 3)

## Calendar

### LAKE ERIE YEARLY MEETING

- 🌐 MARCH 5, 2005 **REPRESENTATIVE MEETING** IN ANN ARBOR - SEE PAGE 3
- 🌐 MARCH 15, 2005 DUE DATE FOR **SPRING BULLETIN**
- 🌐 MAY 20, 2005 DUE DATE FOR REGISTRATION, **LEYM ANNUAL MEETING**
- 🌐 JUNE 1, 2005 DUE DATE FOR **LEYM ANNUAL MEETING COMMITTEE REPORTS** (THOSE WHICH CAN BE PREPARED AHEAD) AND **STATE OF MEETING REPORTS** (TO ENCOURAGE WRITING THEM OUT AND ALLOWING CLERKS TO ORGANIZE THEM)
- 🌐 JUNE 16-19, 2005 **ANNUAL MEETING**

### MICHIGAN FRIENDS CENTER

- 🌐 JANUARY 22, SATURDAY AT 4:00 P.M. -- **WINTER-FEST: GEMINI WITH SAN AND LAZ SLOMOVITZ. 2:30-3:30 P.M.** – FESTIVE SOCIALIZING WITH MULLED CIDER AND TREATS. 4:00-5:15 P.M. – CONCERT – TICKETS: \$7/PERSON; \$20/FAMILY.
- 🌐 MARCH 12, SATURDAY AT 9:00 A.M. – **MEDITATIVE READING AS SPIRITUAL PRACTICE WORKSHOP:** STEPHANIE FORD, LEADER. AN EXPLORATION OF EXPERIENTIAL APPROACHES THROUGH MEDITATION AND VISUALIZATION.-- STEPHANIE FORD IS AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY AT THE EARLHAM SCHOOL OF RELIGION. (LOOK HER UP ON THEIR WEBSITE UNDER VOCAL MINISTRY/OF HALOS AND ICONS AND WHAT IS IN A NAME.) – FEE: \$25 OR AS ABLE.
- 🌐 MARCH 19, SATURDAY AT 2:00 P.M. – **THE FCNL AND ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL CONCERNS** – PROGRAM OF THIS COMMITTEE OF THE ANN ARBOR FRIENDS

MEETING; FOR INFORMATION CONTACT, BILL BLISS: 734-475-9976 OR [BLISS@IC.NET](mailto:BLISS@IC.NET)

- 🌐 APRIL 9, SATURDAY AT 9:00 A.M. – **DANCES OF UNIVERSAL PEACE WORKSHOP** – FRANCIS GURTZ AND COLETTE MILLER, LEADERS; ATTENDERS AT ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA FRIENDS MEETING. FRANCIS HAS LED SIMILAR WORKSHOPS AT FRIENDS GENERAL CONFERENCE. – DANCES OF UNIVERSAL PEACE ARE SACRED CIRCLE DANCES, DONE WHILE SINGING PHRASES FROM VARIOUS WORLD SPIRITUAL TRADITIONS, ACCOMPANIED BY LIVE MUSIC. MOVEMENTS AND PHRASES ARE SIMPLE AND EASILY LEARNED. THE MOOD OF THE DANCES VARIES, EVOKING FEELINGS OF LOVE, JOY, COMPASSION AND PEACE. – SESSIONS OF DANCES WILL BE INTERSPERSED WITH SESSIONS OF GROUP CHANTING, WORSHIP-SHARING AND READING TO ONE ANOTHER FROM POETRY OF RUMI AND HAFIZ – FEE: \$25 OR AS ABLE.
- 🌐 APRIL 23, SATURDAY AT 3:00 P.M. – **LOVE, FAMILY, AND RELATIONS: A CELEBRATION IN STORY AND SONG** – ERIC ENGEL, CRAIG KUKUK AND A.T. MILLER - STORY-TELLING AND SONG SINGING - REFRESHMENTS SERVED. INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION AT (734) 475-1892 OR [MICHIGANFC@HOTMAIL.COM](mailto:MICHIGANFC@HOTMAIL.COM).

### OTHER FRIENDS

- APRIL 14-17, 2005—**FRIENDS WORLD COMMITTEE ON CONSULTATION (FWCC) OF AMERICAS ANNUAL MEETING, TEMPE, AZ.** SEE PAGE 10.

**Address Service Requested**

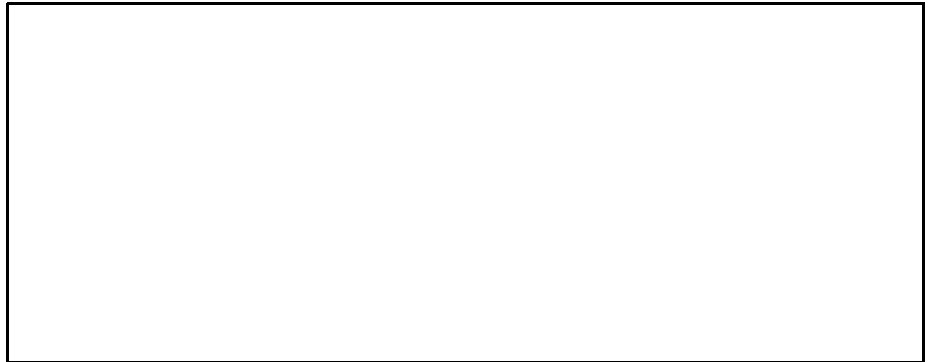


**LAKE ERIE YEARLY MEETING**

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*We may, every one of us, if we will,  
hear that Divine Voice in the secret  
of our hearts.*

*Caroline Stephen*



Fall 2004 Bulletin

