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FAITH AND PRACTICE

Book of Discipline

FRIENDS CHURCH OF NORTH CAROLINA

114 Trindale Road
Archdale, NC 27263

www.friendschurchnc.org

AFFILIATED WITH FRIENDS UNITED MEETING
RICHMOND, INDIANA

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Introduction

Faith and Practice as a Resource

This volume of Faith and Practice is intended to serve as a resource for members of Friends Church of North Carolina. The included history and information on who we are and what we believe as Friends should be helpful to all members as they continue their daily walk with Jesus Christ. Also, the guidelines outlining the structure and processes of the organization will be helpful in business proceedings, not only in the broad scope of the larger body, but also in the maintenance of the work of the local meeting as we strive to be the hands of Christ.

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Part I
Faith and Life

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Historical Statement

George Fox and the Rise of Quakerism in England

Beginnings in England 1. Quakerism had its beginning in England at a time of great religious and political ferment. The Reformation had involved crown and church alike, and the struggle with the papacy had opened the way for numerous independent movements that affected all elements of society. Over against the formalism of the established church stood Puritan attempts at reform, as well as the search for a fundamentally different expression of religious truth which at times led to fanaticism. But there were also deeply concerned Seekers whose spiritual ideals were so similar to those of George Fox that to a great extent he drew his followers and fellow workers from them. It is impossible to determine how many of his views and practices he may have adopted from that source, but since he would accept nothing until it was confirmed by his own experience, he developed the firsthand certainty which made his teachings so effective.

Fox... Childhood, Youth 2. George Fox was born in July 1624, into a home of piety. His father, Christopher, was known in his community as “Righteous Christer” and his mother, Mary, was “a good, honest, virtuous woman.” In Fox’s own account in his Journal, he writes, “When I came to eleven years of age, I knew pureness and righteousness; for while a child I was taught how to walk to be kept pure.”¹ At nineteen years of age, experiencing deep spiritual conflict, he began a four-year period of wandering over the land, studying the Bible and seeking spiritual help from churchmen and dissenters alike. He then tells of his great religious experience, “And when all my hopes in them and in all men were gone, so that I had nothing outwardly to help me, nor could I tell what to do; then, oh! then I heard a voice which said, ‘There is One, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition’”² In 1647, at the age of twenty-three, he began the ministry that was to bring together before his death in 1691 some fifty or sixty thousand Friends in England, besides large groups in America and elsewhere.

First Called Quakers 3. The emphasis of George Fox on the “light of Christ” led to the adoption by his followers of the name, “Children of Light”. This was succeeded as early as 1652 by “Friends in the Truth”, or merely “Friends”. The popular name, “Quakers” was said by George Fox to have been first applied by Justice Bennett in 1650, “because I bade them tremble at the word of the Lord”. It was said by Robert Barclay to have been applied as a term of reproach because “sometimes the power of God will break forth into a whole meeting . . . and thereby trembling and a motion of the body will be upon most if not upon all.”³

Early Organization 4. Although he declared that he was forming no new sect or denominational group but bringing a universal message, Fox soon found some organization necessary for his growing fellowship. Though various local and general meetings had been held previously, the first regular monthly meeting seems to have been organized in 1653. Fox writes in 1656: “About this time I was moved to set up the men’s quarterly meetings throughout the nation,” thus carrying on a work already begun and furnishing an enduring pattern of organization. General meetings had been held in various localities prior to 1668 when London Yearly Meeting began to meet regularly. Dublin (Ireland) Yearly Meeting was organized in 1669.

¹ George Fox, *Journal*.

Period of Persecution 5. During this early period of Quakerism, the persecution because of the refusal to take oaths, pay tithes, and attend the established church was extremely severe. About four hundred fifty of the most gifted young leaders among Fox's followers either were killed or died as a result of the various forms of persecution. The loss of this leadership was an important factor in the decline of the evangelical fervor of the early Quakers, and, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Quakerism began to settle into a period of quietism from which it did not emerge until well into the nineteenth century.

Meetings for Sufferings 6. Although there was no hesitation on the part of early Friends in recognizing the ministry of women, the first meetings for business were men's meetings; however, meetings for women were soon established, charged particularly with the care of members of their sex. The Meeting for Sufferings looked after the victims of persecution and other cases of need, and later had general charge of the affairs of the group between sessions of the yearly meeting. In most groups in America the Meeting for Sufferings was later known as the Permanent Board and later still the Representative Body. Records of births, marriages, and deaths were carefully kept by the monthly meetings, and marriages were carefully supervised. In the course of time the desire for good order, harmony and religious unity in their meetings led to rigid regulations as to the conduct of members and finally to the disownment of large numbers of persons who were not disposed to conform to certain regulations.

American Beginnings and Growth

Growth and Expansion 1. The universal aspect of Quakerism led its messengers at an early date to the continent of Europe and as far east as Turkey and Palestine. They ministered without prejudice to Protestants, Catholics, Jews and Mohammedans, and impartially to kings, nobles, and peasants. The first Friends to cross the Atlantic went to Barbados where they had large followings. Mary Fisher and Ann Austin, who came to the islands in 1655, passed on to Boston the next summer, and, as far as is known, were the first Quaker visitors to the American mainland. These women were seized at once, imprisoned, and finally sent back to their place of departure as were the other Quaker apostles who ventured to come later. But banishment, fines, whipping, imprisonment, and even hanging of four of the number on Boston Common, 1659-1661, were not sufficient to restrain their coming. "If God calls us" they declared, "woe to us if we come not". Condemned persons were accompanied by followers who were "moved of their Lord to look your bloody laws in the face."

American Yearly Meetings 2. George Fox and other early leaders visited America, evangelizing and aiding in the organization of meetings. The first yearly meeting to be organized was *New England* in 1661. *Baltimore Yearly Meeting* was established in 1672 (as *Maryland Yearly Meeting*) and *Virginia Yearly Meeting* in 1673 "by the motion and order of George Fox" who had attended the first and second session of *Baltimore Yearly Meeting*. *Virginia Yearly Meeting* united with *Baltimore* in 1845. *Philadelphia Yearly Meeting* was organized in 1681; *New York* in 1695 by *New England*; *North Carolina* in 1698; *Ohio*, the first beyond the Alleghenies, in 1813 by *Baltimore*. *Indiana Yearly Meeting* was organized by *Ohio* in 1827 and became the fruitful mother of several other yearly meetings: *Western Yearly Meeting* in *Indiana* and eastern *Illinois* in 1858; *Iowa* in 1863; *Kansas* in 1872; and *Wilmington* in 1892. *Canadian (Orthodox) Yearly Meeting* was organized by *New York* in 1867; *Oregon* in 1893 by *Iowa*; and *Nebraska* in 1908 by the *Five Years Meeting (FUM)* from *Iowa Yearly Meeting* territory.

Current American yearly meetings, year of establishment, and affiliations are: *New England Yearly Meeting* (US), 1661, Friends United Meeting (FUM) and Friends General Conference (FGC); *Baltimore Yearly Meeting* (US), 1672, FUM and FGC; *Philadelphia Yearly Meeting* (US), 1681, FGC; *New York Yearly Meeting* (US), 1695, FUM and FGC; *Ohio Yearly Meeting* (US), 1813, Conservative; *Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region* (US), 1813 (name changed from *Ohio Yearly Meeting*, *Damascus*, in 1971), *Evangelical Friends Church (EFC)* [formerly *Evangelical Friends International*]; *Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting* (US), 1821 (name changed from *Indiana Yearly Meeting* in 1976), FGC; *Indiana Yearly Meeting* (US), 1821, FUM; *Western Yearly Meeting* (US), 1858, FUM; *Iowa Yearly Meeting* (US), 1863, FUM; *Mid-America Yearly Meeting* (US), 1872 (name changed from *Kansas Yearly Meeting* in 1978), EFC; *Illinois Yearly Meeting* (US), 1875, FGC; *Iowa Yearly Meeting* (US), 1877,

Conservative; *Wilmington Yearly Meeting* (US), 1892, FUM; *Northwest Yearly Meeting* (US), 1893 (name changed from Oregon Yearly Meeting in 1971), EFC; *Western Association of the Religious Society of Friends* (California, US), 1895 (name changed from California Yearly Meeting to Southwest Yearly Meeting in 1984 to current name); *North Carolina Yearly Meeting* (US), 1904, Conservative; *Great Plains Yearly Meeting of Friends* (US), 1908, (name changed from Nebraska Yearly Meeting) FUM; *Cuba Yearly Meeting* (Cuba), 1927, FUM; *Jamaica Yearly Meeting* (West Indies), 1941, FUM; *Pacific Yearly Meeting* (US), 1947; *Canadian Yearly Meeting* (Canada) (union of Genesee, 1834, Hicksite; Canadian Yearly Meeting, 1867, Orthodox; and Canadian Yearly Meeting, 1881, Conservative), 1955, FUM and FGC; *Rocky Mountain Yearly Meeting* (US), 1957, EFC; *South Central Yearly Meeting* (US), 1961, FGC; *Southeastern Yearly Meeting* (US), 1962, FUM and FGC; *Lake Erie Yearly Meeting* (US), 1963, FGC; *Alaska Yearly Meeting* (US), 1970, by California Yearly Meeting, EFC; *National Evangelical Friends Church* (Guatemala, Central America); *Evangelical Friends Yearly Meeting* (Honduras, Central America); *Yearly Meeting of Evangelical Friends* (El Salvador, Central America); *Religious Association of Evangelical Friends* (Mexico); *Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting* (US), 1970; *North Pacific Yearly Meeting* (US), 1973; *National Evangelical Friends Church* (Peru, South America); *Bolivian Holiness Mission Evangelical Friends Church* (Bolivia, South America); *National Evangelical Friends Church of Bolivia* (Bolivia, South America); *Northern Yearly Meeting* (US), 1975, FGC, *New Association of Friends (Indiana)* (US), 2015, FUM; *Friends Church of North Carolina* (US) 2018, FUM and *North Carolina Fellowship of Friends* (US) 2018, FUM (as a division of North Carolina Yearly Meeting, 1698).

Other Yearly Meetings 3. Yearly meetings in Africa are: *Madagascar* (Malagasy Republic, 1881, now part of the United Church); *Pemba Yearly Meeting* (Tanzania), 1916; *East Africa Yearly Meeting* (Kaimosi) (Kenya), 1946, FUM, Friends Mission from 1902; *South Africa Yearly Meeting* (South Africa), 1948; *Elgon Religious Society of Friends* (Lugulu) (Kenya), 1973; *Burundi Yearly Meeting* (Burundi), 1977, interim yearly meeting status granted by Mid-America Yearly Meeting.

Other African yearly meetings organized since 1977 are: *Bware Yearly Meeting* (Kenya) FUM; *Central Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Chavakali Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Chebuiyusi Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Chwele Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Congo Yearly Meeting* (Congo); *East Africa Yearly Meeting of Friends (North)* (Kenya), FUM; *Elgon East Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Highland Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Kakamega Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Lugari Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Malava Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Nairobi Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Nandi, Yearly Meeting*, (Kenya); *Rwanda Yearly Meeting* (Rwanda); *Tanzania Yearly Meeting* (Tanzania) FUM; *Tongaren Yearly Meeting* (Kenya) FUM; *Tuloi Yearly Meeting* (Kenya) FUM; *Uganda Yearly Meeting* (Uganda), FUM; *Vihiga Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM; *Vokoli Yearly Meeting* (Kenya), FUM.

Yearly meetings in Asia are: *Bundelkhand; Mid-India*, 1907; *Japan*, 1917; *Taiwan*, 1977, by Evangelical Friends Church-Eastern Region; *Near East* (occupied West Bank and Lebanon) 1929 (originally Syria and Palestine Yearly Meeting), FUM.

Yearly meetings in Australasia are: *Australia*, 1964 and *New Zealand*, 1964.

Yearly meetings in Europe are: *Britain Yearly Meeting*, 1668 (name changed from London Yearly Meeting, 1994); *Ireland*, 1669; *Norway*, 1818; *Denmark*, 1875; *Pyrmont*, 1925 (Germany); *Netherlands*, 1931; *France*, 1933; *Sweden*, 1935; *Switzerland*, 1944; *Germany*, 1969.

Historical Sketch, North Carolina Yearly Meeting 4. In 1672, George Fox and William Edmundson, engaged in a great mission in the “service of truth”, traveled to America. William Edmundson first made his way into Carolina, and near Albemarle Sound in the general locality of the present town of Hertford, he visited Henry Phillips and his wife, the only Quaker settlers in Carolina. Henry Phillips called the inhabitants together and Edmundson had a meeting with them; the next day he held a meeting at the home of Francis Toms, and “a blessed meeting it was, for several were tendered with a sense of the Power of God and received the truth and abode in it.” These two meetings mark the planting of Quakerism in North Carolina.

A few weeks later, George Fox reached Carolina and spent eighteen days traveling through the Perquimans, Pasquotank, Chowan region and preaching to the people. In 1676, when Edmundson came the second time, he reported that he found Friends “finely settled,” but no record of organization prior to 1680 is preserved. For that year there are minutes of Perquimans Monthly Meeting recording a “general meeting” held at the home of Francis Toms. At that meeting Christopher Nicholson and Ann Atwood announced intentions of their marriage which took place the eleventh of second month 1680.

The Quarterly Meeting (later known as Eastern) was organized in 1681 with the home of Christopher Nicholson as its meeting place. In 1698 Pasquotank Monthly Meeting was set up; it usually met at the home of Henry White until after 1703 when the meeting decided “to erect a meeting house with as much speed as can be”. This meeting house at Symons Creek takes its place in colonial history as the first church erected in the state of North Carolina.

North Carolina Yearly Meeting met for the first time in 1698. Existing minutes date from 1708 to 2017.

Settlement of piedmont Carolina began just before the middle of the eighteenth century and migrations from Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Nantucket brought Quaker settlers into the Cane Creek, New Garden, and Deep River areas in considerable numbers. Fifty years later, Friends from the older meetings in eastern Carolina joined the westward migration; many families went on to Indiana and Ohio, but many remained to strengthen the meetings of central Carolina. By 1759, Friends were so strongly settled in this new center that it seemed expedient to set up a quarterly meeting which took the name Western. Within its original limits, three other quarterly meetings developed as settlements grew: New Garden, set up in 1787; Deep River, in 1818; and Southern, in 1819. Eastern Quarter meanwhile established one other quarterly meeting, Contentnea, in 1789.

The rapid growth of Western Quarter led to changes in the meeting place for the North Carolina Yearly Meeting. As early as 1776, Friends began asking that it convene in Western Quarter in alternate years. In 1787 the request was granted, and in 1787 the North Carolina Yearly Meeting met at Centre Meeting House. Meanwhile, a new meeting house was being erected at New Garden, and when it was finally completed in 1791, the North Carolina Yearly Meeting convened there. Until 1813 it alternated between Symons Creek and New Garden; from 1813 until 1883 it met annually at New Garden, except for the session of 1881, which met at Friendsville, Tennessee, with Friendsville Quarterly Meeting (set up in 1871, transferred to Wilmington in 1897). Expansion into Tennessee had been quite steady and this was the second quarterly meeting established there, the first being Lost Creek (1802-1888). There had also been a quarterly meeting at Bush River for meetings in South Carolina and Georgia between 1791 and 1808. The last quarterly meetings established in North Carolina were Yadkin Valley, set up in 1889; Surry, in 1898; and Northwest in 2000.

From 1883 until 1905 the North Carolina Yearly Meeting met at High Point; from 1905 to 2000 it met in New Garden Meetinghouse or at Guilford College; from 2001 to 2015 at Black Mountain; 2016 at Camp Caraway; and the final meeting in 2017 at Quaker Lake Camp.

In 2017, North Carolina Yearly Meeting organized into two associations, effective in 2018, Friends Church of North Carolina and North Carolina Friends Fellowship. Friends Church of North Carolina began with four quarters: Contentnea, Southern, Western, and Yadkin Valley.

Evangelical Movements of the Nineteenth Century

Ministry of Gurney

1. The development of American Quakerism has been greatly influenced by the visits of prominent English Friends. Hannah Backhouse made extensive visits in the 1830s, encouraging Bible reading and study, and the organization of Bible classes and Bible schools. Her cousin, Joseph John Gurney, who later visited nearly all the American yearly meetings, gave the Bible a still more important place in Friends’ consideration and placed a new emphasis on conversion and on justification through the atoning death of Jesus Christ. Other influences reinforced these movements and when the exclusiveness that had kept Friends from outside contacts was weakened, the great American revival of the 1850s reached the younger members.

Evangelists 2. In 1860 Lindley M. Hoag of Iowa and Sybil Jones of New England were present at Indiana Yearly Meeting and encouraged a special meeting for the young Friends that became a time of vocal exercise and testimony by hundreds. As a result, an unusual group of young men and women were ready for the work of evangelism which followed. The revival movement, checked by the Civil War, reappeared and continued throughout the 1870s and the 1880s under the leadership of such evangelists as John Henry Douglas, Robert Douglas, Nathan and Esther Frame, Allen Jay, and many others. There was some opposition to the new methods and some excesses developed, but the movement spread, reaching the pillars of the meetings and the general community alike.

Development of the Pastoral Ministry

Pastoral Ministry Origins 1. The development of the pastoral ministry during the latter half of the nineteenth century was due to the growing demand for trained leadership. The change probably would have come eventually but more slowly if it had not been for the impetus given to it by the evangelical movement. Many were brought into membership by the revival meetings who had had no experience in the practices and methods of the Society of Friends nor any knowledge of their doctrines and traditions. "In places there were whole Meetings with only a few birthright members. Often converts in a series of meetings would join Friends merely because the preacher was a Quaker, and they had no other denominational preferences."¹ This called for a teaching ministry and for pastoral care such as had never been rendered in the traditional type of Quaker meeting with its system of distributed responsibility.

Employment of Pastors 2. It was natural, therefore, that the evangelist should be asked to remain in the community in full-time ministry and the shepherding of the flock. The feeling against the paid ministry diminished, and references to it were omitted in revisions of the Discipline. Definite employment and financial assistance were provided for ministers and evangelists who were called to serve as pastors. The Meeting on Ministry and Oversight became also the Pastoral Committee and was given the responsibility of selecting the pastor and supervising the work of the pastor. These developments were obvious departures from the early practices of Friends, meeting as they did at the hour of worship in a silence that might continue through the hour, or that might be broken by any one of the several resident ministers or other members of the congregation. The change to current forms took place gradually but not without regret and even opposition on the part of many. In some areas the older forms still survive, but the pastoral ministry is the prevailing pattern in most American yearly meetings.

¹ Elbert Russell, *The History of Quakerism*, p. 483.

Origin of Friends United Meeting (FUM) (formerly Five Years Meeting)

Concern for Unity

1. It was apparent that if some formula of unity could be devised, it would tend to prevent further divisions among Friends if new issues or divergent leadership should again arise. The years after the separation in 1828¹, a conference of the “Orthodox” yearly meetings was held in Philadelphia where a testimony was formulated which they all adopted as a statement of belief. Other conferences were held in 1849, 1851, and 1853, following the Wilbur-Gurney separation², but were ineffective since not all the meetings were represented. Western Yearly Meeting twice asked for a conference but without success. Finally, in 1887, in response to a proposal made the year before by Indiana Yearly Meeting, twelve yearly meetings, including London and Dublin, sent delegates to a general conference held in Richmond, Indiana. Specially invited members from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Arch Street) were also present but not as official delegates. The principal work of this conference was the formulation of the Richmond Declaration of Faith, which was later adopted by six of the yearly meetings represented. London, New England, and Ohio yearly meetings did not adopt the declaration, while Dublin, New York, and Baltimore gave their general approval without formal adoption.

Origin of Five Years Meeting

2. A second conference with the same American representation met at Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1892. It was largely concerned with the consideration of the pastoral ministry to which it gave its approval. It also planned for united foreign missionary activities and for another conference to be held in the same city five years later. When this third conference met in 1897, it approved the idea of a uniform discipline which was to provide for a quinquennial conference with delegated powers. The new discipline was prepared and submitted to the yearly meetings in 1900 for approval; its adoption by eleven yearly meetings by 1902 opened the way for the organization of the Five Years Meeting. The first session was held in Indianapolis in 1902. With the exception of 1912 when the meeting was again held in Indianapolis, succeeding sessions through 1969 were held in Richmond, Indiana. Of the yearly meetings represented at the Conference of 1897, only Philadelphia and Ohio remained outside of the new organization. Canadian Yearly Meeting joined the Five Years Meeting in 1907 and with the organization of Nebraska Yearly Meeting by the Five Years Meeting in 1908, the number of thirteen constituent American yearly meetings was reached. Oregon Yearly Meeting withdrew in 1926 and Kansas in 1937. Due to the Great Depression, the 1932 sessions were postponed to 1935. Since 1960 the sessions have occurred every three years, and in 1966 the name was officially changed from Five Years Meeting of Friends to Friends United Meeting. In 1972, triennial sessions were held at the American Baptist Assembly, Green Lake, Wisconsin; in 1975 at Wilmington College, Ohio; in 1978, at William Penn College, Oskaloosa, Iowa; in 1981, at Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana; in California Yearly Meeting in 1984; in 1987 at Guilford College in Greensboro, North Carolina; in 1990 in Bloomington, Indiana; in 1993 in Clinton, New York; in 1996 at Indianapolis, Indiana; in 1999 in Williamsburg, Virginia; in 2002 in Nairobi, Kenya; in 2005 in Des Moines, Iowa; in 2008 in High Point, North Carolina; in 2011 in Wilmington, Ohio; in 2014 in Marion, Indiana; and in 2017 at Friends University in Wichita, Kansas.

Other Cooperative Agencies

American Friends Service Committee

1. As a channel for service in a wide range of humanitarian activities at home and abroad, the American Friends Service Committee has achieved wide recognition. It was organized in 1917 to train and equip conscientious objectors to compulsory military training (for war relief and reconstruction work in Europe) in the First World War. Its work has been continued through the years in Europe and America, and more recently in Asia and Africa, as a religious expression of the Society of Friends in fields of social action. Whatever concerns human beings in distress, whatever may help free individuals, groups, and nations from fear, hate, or narrowness – these are subjects for the committee’s consideration. With the belief that “that of God in

¹ The Separation of 1828 was as a result of the Hicksite movement, believing “the Inner Light” to have authority over the scriptures.

² A division concerning the authority of Scripture and the role of the Inner Light. Joseph John Gurney held to the Quaker testimonies but saw the Scriptures as authoritative. John Wilbur believed that Scripture was a guide, but that the Inner Light was the ultimate authority. This schism (1845) produced two separate religious societies.

everyone” will respond to unselfish love and constructive goodwill, the committee attempts to interpret religion in concrete ways as a reconciling influence wherever violence and conflict have developed. Its work has been supported by all groups of Friends and by many non-Friends, and it has cooperated closely with the Friends Service Council (London).

***Friends World
Committee for
Consultation***

2. Every generation of Friends has to rediscover the purpose and the strengths of the Religious Society of Friends for themselves and in their own time. Without this renewal, the unique combination of individual faithfulness and social gospel that is the heart of the Quaker movement will risk being lost. The development of so many yearly meetings throughout the world and the outreach of Friends in a wide variety of mission and service projects led to the formation in 1937 of Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC). This consultative committee, made up of representatives from most **Yearly Meetings**, serves primarily as a cooperative instrument by which Friends of all types may come to know each other and work together more effectively. FWCC, in conjunction with AFSC makes possible the representation of world Quakerism at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland and New York as a non-governmental organization. Today, Friends from yearly meetings and groups in 56 nations continue this work. Around the world there are four cooperating, autonomous FWCC Sections serving Africa, the Americas, Asia & the West Pacific (AWPS), and Europe & the Middle East (EMES). FWCC's World Office is in London [website: fwcc.world].

FWCC-Section of the Americas [website: fwccamericas.org]

Our Work: In the Americas, the Quaker community extends from the Arctic to the Andes, spanning a rich diversity of regional cultures, beliefs and styles of worship.

Mission: Answering God's call to universal love, FWCC brings Friends of varying traditions and cultural experiences together in worship, communications and consultation, to express our common heritage and our Quaker message to the world.

Vision: We envision a thriving and integrated network of Friends from the Arctic to the Andes, woven together in transformative faith, learning to love, listen, and witness.

History: In the 1970s the Section of the Americas held a hemispheric conference in Wichita, Kansas. This opportunity for Latin American Friends to become better acquainted and discuss areas of shared interest and concern encouraged groups of Friends and Yearly Meetings from many countries to join and transform an organizing committee into the Comité de los Amigos Latinoamericanos (Committee of Latin American Friends, or COAL).

***Friends
Committee on
National
Legislation***

3. The Friends Committee on National Legislation is a working committee of Friends and like-minded persons who feel a special concern for the political area of religious life. It is autonomous, yet seeks by every means possible to keep itself responsive to concerns of the Religious Society of Friends. Two-thirds of the members of the General Committee are appointed by yearly meetings of the Religious Society of Friends in the United States and other Friends organizations. About one-third of the General Committee are appointed at large.

Among the committee's concerns are: world disarmament under law; supporting and improving the United Nations; economic development of underdeveloped countries; preserving civil liberties, and advancing civil rights.

The committee testifies before congressional committees regarding proposed legislation; interviews members of Congress; publishes a monthly newsletter; publishes periodical action bulletins on vital congressional issues; and encourages Friends and others to visit with and communicate with members of Congress.

CHAPTER 2

Faith and Thought

Basic Principles

Declarations of Faith

1. While we as Friends do not have a formal creed as basis of membership, it has seemed wise from time to time to make some declaration of the fundamentals of our faith. Such a declaration was the letter of George Fox to the Governor of Barbados, which is included in the following section of this volume. A more extended statement was “The Declaration of Faith” issued by the Richmond Conference of 1887, and “Essential Truths” adopted in 1902 by the Five Years Meeting, also included in the following section. We desire at this time to call our own membership to a deeper religious life, a greater consecration of heart and will to God, and a more positive loyalty to the faith for which so many of our forerunners suffered and died.

Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Holy Scriptures

2. We reaffirm the statements of the above documents which gather up and express the central truth with regard to the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Scriptures, for which we stand now as in the past; and we urge all our members to refresh their minds by a careful reading of these documents. Additional statements are contained in paragraphs following.

Meaning of Salvation

3. Because of the universally recognized fact of sin, there is need for repentance and salvation which bring deliverance from sin and the possession of spiritual life. This comes through a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, who through His love and sacrifice draws individuals to Him. Conviction of sin is awakened by the operation of the Holy Spirit, causing the soul to feel its need for reconciliation with God. Individuals thus come into newness of life and are saved from the power of sin to righteousness as they yield their lives to Him in loving and loyal obedience. A direct personal relationship to God becomes an actual reality, a transformation that may be wrought without any human agency or ceremony, since their entire spiritual life springs from the direct relation of their souls with a living and present God and cooperation with Him. Though adults may consciously and deliberately yield to evil impulses necessitating repentance, it does not follow in the views of Friends that guilt is imputed to infants. Jesus said, ‘Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.’ The Christian nurture of children is the highest privilege and most sacred duty of both the Christian home and the church.

The Living Presence

4. Friends give special emphasis to the vital principle that salvation and higher life are personal matters between the individual soul and God. They recall that primitive Christianity was a spiritual society in which all members were priests and held direct communion with God. From the birth of the Quaker movement, Friends have regarded Christianity as essentially an experience and a way of life based on that experience. George Fox, in describing the great spiritual transformation of his early life, declares, “And this I knew experimentally.” Isaac Penington gives as his testimony, “My heart said, ‘This is He whom I waited for and sought after from my childhood . . . I have met with my God, I have met with my Saviour!’” Robert Barclay says, “I have felt a power that touched my heart and as I gave way to it I felt the evil in me weakening and the good raised up.” This

intimate fellowship with God, the consciousness of Christ as a living presence, has run through the whole history of Quakerism as a warm, life-giving stream. A life led by the Holy Spirit is the logical outcome of a faith based upon belief in a direct, personal approach to God. Nothing is more certain than that God is still speaking to individuals as He did in ancient time. His Spirit guides and controls the surrendered life, makes sensitive the conscience, **illuminates** the mind, and strengthens the will. The Christian's constant and supreme business is obedience to Him.

The Light of Christ 5. From the earliest days of Friends' history there are frequent references in their writings to the belief that there is in the human soul a Light which is of divine origin and which makes the individual capable of response to moral and spiritual influences. It is this divine quality that enables that person to develop the awareness of moral distinctions and obligations known as conscience, having the inspiration to live, struggle, and suffer for the achievement of what ought to be. It gives humankind preeminence over the natural world, rising above physical nature, giving divine potentialities, and making it possible to experience the joys and satisfactions of the abundant life through acceptance of obedience to Jesus Christ. It is this spiritual endowment that enables advancement beyond the narrow bounds of self toward the Christian ideals of goodness and love, and to respond to the power and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. George Fox often called this principle the "Seed of God," "that of God in everyone," or "the Light within." William Penn called it "the great principle of God in man, the root and spring of divine substance." Robert Barclay described it as "a real, spiritual substance" or "a divine bestowal." It is "that something we cannot call less than divine and universal for it links up with the eternal realities, and with our fellow men of whatever race or creed. It may be hidden or warped by ignorance or pride or self-will or prejudice, but it cannot be wholly lost, for it is part of that which makes us essentially men, made in the divine image, and having within us boundless possibilities of life in God."¹

Divine-Human Relationship 6. The emphasis placed by Friends upon the foregoing principles is the source of our special testimonies and activities. Since all individuals are potentially temples of God, all personality is sacred; people everywhere are the object of His special concern and so are of immeasurable worth. This doctrine of the individual dignity permeates all human associations and is the basis of true democracy; it rests on the divine-human relationship and works through all aspects of life. Yielding oneself to divine guidance, one becomes an active partner with God in the extension of His kingdom. It is the light of God within that gives a burning sense of mission and inspires the ideal of universal brotherhood. In the realization of this spiritual fellowship and divine guidance, Friends labor for the alleviation of human suffering; for the intellectual, moral, and spiritual elevation of mankind; and for purified and exalted citizenship. It is an essential part of the faith that each individual should be in truth what is professed by them in word. The underlying principle of life and action for individuals, and also for society, is transformation through the power of God and implicit obedience to His revealed will.

For more implicit and extended statements of belief, reference is made to those officially recognized at various times, especially the "Epistle addressed by George Fox and others to the Governor of Barbados in 1671" the "Declaration of Faith" issued by the Richmond Conference in 1887 and "Essential Truths" adopted in 1902 by the Five Years Meeting. (These documents are included in the following section of this printing.)

Ideals of Worship

Meaning of Worship 1. It has been said of the early Friends in America that the meeting for worship was the heart of the Quaker system, because it was in this meeting that they experienced a fresh sense of God. In such a gathering the Quaker method is extremely simple. No intermediary, ritual, or ceremony is required. Words are not essential. God does not need to be brought near for –


"Closer is He than breathing and
nearer than hands and feet."

¹ London Yearly Meeting, *Faith and Practice* (1960), 120.

It is the human mind and heart that need to be adjusted and made conscious of His presence. Waiting in silent meditation, or voicing prayer or praise, the worshiper experiences this fresh sense of God and, with it, a renewal of spiritual strength in communion with God and with fellow worshipers.

Meeting for Worship 2. In such a setting the whole meeting becomes a listening post for divine intimations and revelations. Vocal prayer gathers up the aspirations and needs of all the group. Hymns and spiritual songs, sung with the spirit and with the understanding, are not only appropriate but become the normal and helpful expression of faith, hope, and love toward God and in praise of Christ, the Savior of mankind. The minister speaks with freedom and power; the message, whether conceived in previous meditation and prayer or given by the immediate operation of the Spirit, will be fresh, **illuminating**, and uplifting. The minister will be able to draw on the resources of past experience and study as well as to interpret helpfully the present manifestations of God's will and word.


Friends and the Sacraments

Ceremonial Rites 1. "The external sacramental practices which prevailed in the churches of the seventeenth century seemed to George Fox to have little inner meaning and but slender spiritual significance. They seemed to him, eager as he was to preserve only vital functions, part of the deadwood of the 'wilderness' period of the Church's life. He took the attitude which St. Paul had taken toward circumcision and which Martin Luther had taken a century before toward 'Sacred works'. But he had no thought of omitting or underestimating the Spiritual reality for which the outward sacraments stood" 

The Inward Experience 2. As a result, Friends have never observed outward communion or baptism, the two sacraments which are practiced by most Protestant churches. In these, as in many other matters, the Friends prefer the inward rather than the outward. We believe deeply in the spiritual reality behind these forms. John the Baptist, speaking of Jesus, said, "I indeed baptize you with water: but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost" (Mark 1:8). It is the inward experience, not the outward rite, that has seemed important to Friends. Instead of observing the Lord's Supper once a week or once a month, Friends feel that every time of worship ought to be a time of deep communion with the Divine. The words of Revelation 3:20 refer to this deeper communion which is possible without the use of bread and wine: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him and he with me."

Friends do not, however, belittle the reverent and spiritual use of the sacraments when they are a part of vital worship. They simply do not themselves feel the need for them.

The Scriptures

Scriptures and Inspiration 1. "The Canon of Scripture may be closed, but the inspiration of the Holy Spirit has not ceased. We believe that there is no literature in the world where the revelation of God is given so fully as in our New Testament Scriptures We feel them to be inspired, because they inspire us; we go to them for guidance because as we read them we feel our eyes are being opened and our spirits kindled. We search them because 'They are they that testify of me.' It is the living Christ we want to find, the eternal revealer of the will of God. It is the spirit behind the letter that we need." 

Scriptures and Revelation 2. The Holy Scriptures were given by the inspiration of God and are the divinely authorized record of the moral principles and doctrines of Christianity. In them, as interpreted and unfolded by the Holy Spirit, is an ever fresh and unfailing source of spiritual truth for the proper guidance of life and practice. Their value lies in their witness to the nature and purpose of God, their account of the message and mission of Jesus Christ, and their teachings as to salvation, the way of life, and eternal destiny. In the Scriptures is found the record both of humankind's search for God and of God's revelation to them. Through numerous spiritual pioneers, the illumination

moves from the beginnings of history to “The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” The Scriptures are an inheritance of all who through the centuries have found strength and guidance in the inspired wisdom of this storehouse of spiritual experience.

Search the Scriptures

3. The chief objective of the Bible student should be to grasp spiritual truths and teachings as vital and life-giving realities rather than to regard them as matters only for intellectual or doctrinal discussion. The student should accept with appreciation all fresh light thrown upon the biblical records but should remain assured that the spiritual strength which is received from such study comes from a living communion with Him of whom the records tell. They are an inexhaustible treasury of spiritual truth, fitted to the needs and problems of each age as it interprets and appropriates the message for its own time. Their words are words of life because they testify of Him who is Life. “In keeping them there is great reward.”

Barclay on the Scriptures

4. Of the Scriptures the Quaker apologist, Robert Barclay, writes: “God hath seen meet that herein we should see as in a looking-glass the conditions and experiences of the saints of old, that, finding our experiences to answer theirs, we might thereby be the more confirmed and comforted, and our hopes of obtaining the same end strengthened. This is the great work of the Scriptures, and their service to us, that we may witness them fulfilled in us, and so discern the stamp of God’s Spirit and ways upon them, by the inward acquaintance we have with the same spirit and work in our hearts.”

Spiritual Gifts

Gifts and the Kingdom

1. In fulfillment of the promise given to Joel, “I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,” the Heavenly Father in His wisdom has bestowed a diversity of gifts upon His children for the building up of His kingdom. Recognizing the inherent spiritual capacity of all people and the work of grace that is shared by all believers, Friends cherish these manifold endowments and desire to bring each to full development, that the whole body may be fitly framed together by that which each member supplies.

Endowments for Service

2. These spiritual endowments include: sensitivity to human need and suffering; efficiency in ministering thereto; intuitive power of religious insight; the personality and language to communicate religious truth and enthusiasm; sympathy, intelligence, and optimism in personal counsel; comprehension of broad social problems; constructive guidance in public affairs; power of dedicated self-expression in writing and teaching, and the skillful exercise of the creative arts of invention, painting, sculpture, and music.

Gift of the Ministry

3. Friends hold in special esteem the gift qualifying for the ministry. They do not ordain ministers, but as the gift develops and obedience to the Holy Spirit is manifest, they recognize the gift and encourage its training and exercise. There are a variety of ministries: evangelism; exposition and teaching of the gospel truths; engaging in prayer and in praise; exhortation and encouragement; speaking to states and conditions; and pastoral care. No sharp line of distinction can be drawn between the different types of ministry; all may be cultivated and developed by prayerful study and close observation of human need.

General Doctrinal Statements

Adopted and Authorized by the Five-Years Meeting of Friends (1922)

“We recognize with profound sorrow that there is in the world today a great drift of religious unsettlement, unconcern and unbelief. We desire at this time to call our own membership to a deeper religious life, a greater consecration of heart and will to God and a more positive loyalty to the faith for which so many of our forerunners suffered and died. We wish to reaffirm the statements and declarations of faith contained in our *Uniform Discipline [Faith and Practice]*, vis., ‘*The Essential Truths*’, ‘*The Declaration of Faith*’ issued by the Richmond conference, in 1887, and ‘*George Fox’s letter to the Governor of Barbadoes*’, and we urge upon all our membership to refresh their minds by a careful reading of these documents which gather up and express the central truths for which we stand, now as in the past. But we would further remind our membership that our Christian faith involves more than the adoption and profession of written statements however precious they may be. It stands and lives only in free personal loyalty and devotion to a living Christ and an inward experience of His spiritual presence and power in the soul, making the facts of our religion as real and as capable of being soundly tested as are the facts of the physical universe. May Friends everywhere bear in their bodies the marks of the Lord Jesus.

“Hardly less important for the promotion of our spiritual influence and power in the world is an increase of faith, trust and confidence in one another, a love that suffers long and is kind and a unity of spirit which will bind us more closely together than uniformity of thought could ever do.” – *Extract from Minute 55, page 119, of the Minutes of the Five-Years Meeting, 1922.*

ESSENTIAL TRUTHS

Adopted by the Five Years Meeting, 1902

The vital principle of the Christian faith is the truth that a man's salvation and higher life are personal matters between the individual soul and God.

Salvation is deliverance from sin and the possession of spiritual life. This comes through a personal faith in Jesus Christ as the Saviour, who, through His love and sacrifice draws us to Him.

Conviction for sin is awakened by the operation of the Holy Spirit causing the soul to feel its need of reconciliation with God. When Christ is seen as the only hope of salvation, and a man yields to Him, he is brought into newness of life, and realizes that his sonship to God has become an actual reality. This transformation is wrought without the necessary agency of any human priest, or ordinance, or ceremony whatsoever. A changed nature and life bear witness to this new relation to Him.

The whole spiritual life grows out of the soul's relation to God and its cooperation with Him, not from any outward or traditional observances.

Christ Himself baptizes the surrendered soul with the Holy Spirit, enduing it with power, bestowing gifts for service. This is an efficient baptism, a direct incoming of divine power for the transformation and control of the whole man. Christ Himself is the spiritual bread which nourishes the soul, and He thus enters into and becomes a part of the being of those who partake of Him. This participation with Christ and apprehension of Him become the goal of life for the Christian, Those who thus enter into oneness with Him become also joined in living union with each other as members of one body.

Both worship and Christian fellowship spring out of this immediate relation of believing souls with their Lord.

The Holy Scriptures were given by inspiration of God and are the divinely authorized record of the doctrines which Christians are bound to accept, and the moral principles which are to regulate their lives and actions. In them, as interpreted and unfolded by the Holy Spirit, is an ever fresh and unfailing source of spiritual truth for the proper guidance of life and practice.

The doctrines of the apostolic days are held by the Friends as essentials of Christianity. The Fatherhood of God; the Deity and humanity of the Son; the gift of the Holy Spirit; the atonement through Jesus Christ by which men are reconciled to God; the resurrection; the high priesthood of Christ, and the individual priesthood of believers, are most precious truths to be held, not as traditional dogmas, but as vital, life-giving realities.

The sinful condition of man and his proneness to yield to temptation, the world's absolute need of a Saviour, and the cleansing from sin in forgiveness and sanctification through the blood of Jesus Christ, are unceasing incentives to all who believe to become laborers together with God in extending His kingdom. By this high calling The Friends are pledged to the proclamation of the truth wherever the Spirit leads, both in home and in foreign fields.

The indwelling Spirit guides and controls the surrendered life, and the Christian's constant and supreme business is obedience to Him. But while the importance of individual guidance and obedience is thus emphasized, this fact gives not ground for license; the sanctified conclusions of the Church are above the judgement of a single individual.

The Friends find no scriptural evidence or authority for any form or degree of sacerdotalism in the Christian Church, or for the establishment of any ordinance or ceremonial rite for perpetual observance. The teachings of Jesus Christ concerning the spiritual nature of religion, the impossibility of promoting the spiritual life by the ceremonial application of material things, the fact that faith in Jesus Christ Himself is all-sufficient, the purpose of His life, death, resurrection and ascension, and His presence in the believer's heart, virtually destroy every ceremonial system and point the soul to the only satisfying source of spiritual life and power.

With faith in the wisdom of Almighty God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and believing that it is His purpose to make His Church on earth a power for righteousness and truth, the Friends labor for the alleviation of human suffering; for the intellectual, moral and spiritual elevation of mankind; and for purified and exalted citizenship. The Friends believe war to be incompatible with Christianity and seek to promote peaceful methods for the settlement of all the differences between nations and between men.

It is an essential part of the faith that a man should be in truth what he professes in word, and the underlying principle of life and action for individuals, and also for society, is transformation through the power of God and implicit obedience to His revealed will.

For more explicit and extended statements of belief, reference is made to those officially put forth at various times, especially to the Letter of George Fox to the Governor of Barbadoes in 1671, and to the Declaration of Faith, issued by the Richmond conference of 1887.

EXTRACT FROM GEORGE FOX'S LETTER TO THE
GOVERNOR OF BARBADOS, 1671

We do own and believe in God, the only wise, omnipotent and everlasting God, the Creator of all things both in heaven and in earth and the Preserver of all that He hath made; who is God over all, blessed forever; to whom be all honor and glory, dominion, praise and thanksgiving, both now and forever more.

And we own and believe in Jesus Christ, His beloved and only-begotten Son, in whom He is well pleased; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary; in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the express image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature, by whom were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him. And we do own and believe that He was made a sacrifice for sin, who knew no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; that He was crucified for us in the flesh, without the gates of Jerusalem; and that He was buried, and rose again the third day by the power of His Father, for our justification; and that He ascended up into heaven, and now sitteth at the right hand of God. This Jesus, who was the foundation of the holy prophets and apostles, is our foundation; and we believe that there is no other foundation to be laid than that which is laid, even Christ Jesus; who tasted death for every man, shed His blood for all men and is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world according as John the Baptist testified of Him, when he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29) We believe that He alone is our Redeemer and Saviour, even the captain of our salvation, who saves us from sin, as well as from hell and the wrath to come, and destroys the devil and his works; he is the Seed of the woman that bruises the serpent's head, to-wit, Jesus Christ, the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last. He is (as the Scriptures of Truth say of Him) our wisdom and righteousness, justification, and redemption; neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we may be saved. It is He alone who is the shepherd and Bishop of our Souls: He is our Prophet, whom Moses long since testified of; saying, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of the brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you; and it shall come to pass, that every soul that will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people" (Acts 3:22, 23).

He it is that is now come, "and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true." He rules in our hearts by His law of love and of life, and makes us free from the law of sin and death. We have no life, but of Him; for He is the quickening Spirit, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, by whose blood we are cleansed, and our consciences sprinkled from dead works, to serve the living God. He is our Mediator, that makes peace and reconciliation between God offended and us offending; He being the Oath of God, the new covenant of light, grace and peace; the author and finisher of our faith. This Lord Jesus Christ, the heavenly man, the Emmanuel, God with us, we all own and believe in; He whom the high-priest raged against and said, He had spoken blasphemy; whom the priests and elders of the Jews took counsel together against and put to death; the same whom Judas betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, which the priests gave him as a reward for his treason; who also gave large money to the soldiers to broach a horrible lie, namely, "That his disciples came and stole him away by night whilst they slept." After He was arisen from the dead, the history of the acts of the apostles sets forth how the chief priests and elders persecuted the disciples of this Jesus for preaching Christ and His resurrection. This we say, is that Lord Jesus Christ, whom we own to be our life and salvation.

Concerning the Holy scriptures, we do believe that they were given forth by the Holy Spirit of God, through the holy men of God, who, as the Scripture itself declares (2 Peter 1:21), spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. We believe they are to be read, believed, and fulfilled; (He that fulfills them is Christ), and they are "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:16); and are able to make wise unto salvation, "through faith in Christ Jesus."

DECLARATION OF FAITH ISSUED BY THE RICHMOND CONFERENCE IN 1887

(N.B. It should be understood that the quotations from scripture are made from the Authorized Version unless stated to be made from the Revised Version [RV].)

It is under a deep sense of what we owe to Him who has loved us that we feel called upon to offer a declaration of those fundamental doctrines of Christian truth that have always been professed by our branch of the Church of Christ.

Of God

We believe in one holy (Isaiah 6:3, 57:15), almighty (Genesis 17:1), all wise (Romans 11:33, 16:27), and everlasting (Psalm 90:1, 2) God, the Father (Matthew 11:25-27), the Creator (Genesis 1:1) and Preserver (Job 7:20) of all things; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, by whom all things were made (John 1:3), and by whom all things consist (Colossians 1:17); and in one Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Father and the Son (John 15:26, 16:7), the Reprover (John 16:8) of the world, the Witness for Christ, (John 15:26) and the Teacher (John 14:26), Guide (John 16:13), and Sanctifier (2 Thessalonians 2:13) of the people of God; and that these three are one in the eternal Godhead (Matthew 28:19, John 14:16, 17); to whom be honor, praise and thanksgiving, now and forever. Amen.

The Lord Jesus Christ

It is with reverence and thanksgiving that we profess our unwavering allegiance to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him (John 1:18). In Him was life, and the life was the light of men (John 1:4). He is the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world (John 1:9); through whom the light of truth in all ages has proceeded from the Father of light (James 1:17). He is the eternal Word (John 1:1) who was with God and was God, revealing Himself in infinite wisdom and love, both as man's Creator (Colossians 1:13-16) and Redeemer (Colossians 1:14); for by Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible. Conceived of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 1:20), born of the virgin Mary (Matthew 1:23-25, Luke 1:35), the word was made flesh (John 1:14) and dwelt amongst men. He came in the fullness (Galatians 4) of the appointed time, being verily foreordained before the foundation of the world (1 Peter 1:20) that He might fulfill (Isaiah 11:1-5, 52:13-15) the eternal counsel of the righteousness and love of God for the redemption of man (Isaiah 53). In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Colossians 2:9). Though He was rich, yet, for our sakes, He became poor, veiling in the form of a servant (Philippians 2:7) the brightness of His glory, that, through Him the kindness and love of God (Titus 3:4) toward man might appear in a manner every way suited to our wants and finite capacities. He went about doing good (Acts 10:38); for us He endured (Isaiah 53:4, Luke 12:50, Luke 19:41, 22:44) sorrow, hunger, thirst, weariness (John 4:6), pain, unutterable anguish (Luke 22:43, 44) of body and of soul, being in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15). Thus humbling Himself that we might be exalted, He emphatically recognized the duties and the sufferings of humanity as among the means whereby, through the obedience of faith, we are to be disciplined for heaven, sanctifying them to us, by Himself performing and enduring them, leaving us the one perfect example (1 Peter 2:21) of all righteousness (Matthew 3:15) in self-sacrificing love.

But not only in these blessed relations must the Lord Jesus be ever precious to His people. In Him is revealed as true God and perfect man (Ephesians 4:13), a Redeemer, at once able to suffer and almighty to save. He became obedient (Philippians 2:8) unto death, even the death of the cross, and is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2); in whom we have redemption through His blood (Ephesians 1:7), the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace. It is our joy to confess that the remission of sins which any partake of is only in and by virtue of His most satisfactory sacrifice and not otherwise (*Barclay's Apology*, Propos. v. and vi. par. 15, p. 141). He was buried and rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:4) according to the Scriptures, becoming the first fruits (1 Corinthians 15:23) of them that sleep, and having shown Himself alive after His passion, by many infallible

proofs (Acts 1:3), He ascended into heaven, and hath sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, now to appear in the presence of God for us (Hebrews 1:3, 9:24). With the apostles who beheld His ascension, we rest in the assurance of the angelic messengers, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11, and see v. 7). With the apostle John, we would desire to unite in the words "Amen; even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Revelations 22:20). And now, whilst thus watching and waiting, we rejoice to believe that He is our King and Saviour. He is the one Mediator of the new and everlasting covenant (1 Timothy 2:5, Hebrews 9:15), who makes peace and reconciliation between God offended and man offending (George Fox's Epistle to the Governor of Barbados); the great High Priest whose priesthood is unchangeable (Hebrews 4:14, 7:24). He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them (Hebrews 7:25). All power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth (Matthew 28:18). By him the world shall be judged in righteousness (Acts 17:31); for the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father (John 5:22, 23). All that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good into the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil into the resurrection of judgment (John 5:28, 29 RV).

We reverently confess and believe that divine honor and worship are due to the Son of God, and that He is in true faith to be prayed unto, and his name to be called upon, as the Primitive Christians did because of the glorious oneness of the Father and the Son; and that we cannot acceptably offer prayers and praises to God, nor receive from Him a gracious answer of blessing, but in and through his dear Son (Declaration of 1693, in *Sewell's History*, vol. II, 379).

We would, with humble thanksgiving, bear an especial testimony to our Lord's perpetual dominion and power in His church. Through Him the redeemed in all generations have derived their light, their forgiveness, and their joy. All are members of this church, by whatsoever name they may be called among men, who have been baptized by the one Spirit into the one body; who are builded as living stones upon Christ, the Eternal Foundation, and are united in faith and love in that fellowship which is with the Father and with the Son. Of this church the Lord Jesus Christ is the alone Head (Ephesians 1:22). All its true members are made one in Him. They have washed their robes and made them white in His precious blood (Revelation 7:14), and He has made them priests unto God and His Father (Revelation 1:6). He dwells in their hearts by faith, and gives them of His peace. His will is their law, and in Him they enjoy the true liberty, a freedom from the bondage of sin.

The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is, in the unity of the eternal Godhead, one with the Father and with the Son (Matthew 28:19). He is the Comforter "whom," saith Christ, "the Father will send in my name" (John 14:26). He convinces the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (John 16:8). He testifies of and glorifies Jesus (John 16:14). It is the Holy Spirit who makes the evil manifest. He quickens them that are dead in trespasses and sins, and opens the inward eye to behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world (Ephesians 2:1). Coming in the name and with the authority of the risen and ascended Saviour, He is the precious pledge of the continued love and care of our exalted King. He takes of the things of Christ and shows them, as a realized possession, to the believing soul (John 16:14). Dwelling in the hearts of believers (John 14:17), He opens their understandings that they may understand the Scriptures and become, to the humbled and surrendered heart, the Guide, Comforter, Support, and Sanctifier.

We believe that the essential qualifications for the Lord's service are bestowed upon His children through the reception and baptism of the Holy Ghost. This Holy Spirit is the seal of reconciliation to the believer in Jesus (Ephesians 1:13, 14), the witness to his adoption into the family of the redeemed (Romans 8:15, 16); the earnest and the foretaste of the full communion and perfect joy which are reserved for them that endure unto the end.

We own no principle of spiritual light, life or holiness, inherent by nature in the mind or heart of man. We believe in no principle of spiritual light, life, or holiness, but the influence of the Holy Spirit of God,

bestowed on mankind, in various measures and degrees, through Jesus Christ our Lord. It is the capacity to receive this blessed influence, which in an especial manner, gives man preeminence above the beasts that perish; which distinguishes him, in every nation and in every clime, as an object of the redeeming love of God, as a being not only intelligent but responsible; for whom the message of salvation through our crucified Redeemer is, under all possible circumstances, designed to be a joyful sound. The Holy Spirit must ever be distinguished both from the conscience which He enlightens, and from the natural faculty of reason, which when unsubjected to His Holy influence, is, in the things of God, very foolishness. As the eye is to the body, so is the conscience to our inner being, the organ by which we see; and, as both light and life are essential to the eye, so conscience, as the inward eye, cannot see aright, without the quickening and illumination of the Spirit of God. One with the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit can never disown or dishonor our once crucified and now risen and glorious Redeemer. We disavow all professed illumination or spirituality that is divorced from faith in Jesus Christ of Nazareth, crucified for us without the gates of Jerusalem.

The Holy Scriptures

It has ever been, and still is, the belief of the Society of Friends that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were given by inspiration of God; that, therefore, there can be no appeal from them to any other (outward) authority whatsoever; that they are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Jesus Christ. "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name" (John 20:31). The Scriptures are the only divinely authorized records which we are bound, as Christians to accept, and of the moral principles which are to regulate our actions. No one can be required to believe, as an article of faith, any doctrine which is not contained in them; and whatsoever anyone says or does, contrary to the Scriptures, though under professions of the immediate guidance of the Holy Spirit, must be reckoned and accounted a mere delusion. To the Christian, the Old Testament comes with the solemn and repeated attestation of his Lord. It is to be read in the right and completeness of the New; thus will its meaning be unveiled, and the humble disciple will be taught to discern the unity and mutual adaptation of the whole, and mansideness and harmony of its testimony to Christ. The great Inspirer of Scripture is ever its true Interpreter. He performs this office in condescending love, not by superseding our understandings, but by renewing and enlightening them. Where Christ presides, idle speculation is hushed; His doctrine is learned in the doing of His will, and all knowledge ripens into a deeper and richer experience of His truth and love.

Man's Creation and Fall

It pleased God, in His wisdom and goodness, to create man out of the dust of the earth, and to breathe into his nostrils the breath of life, so that man became a living soul; formed after the image and likeness of God, capable of fulfilling the divine law, and of holding communion with his Maker (Genesis 2:7, 1:26, 27). Being free to obey, or to disobey, he fell into transgression, through unbelief, under the temptation of Satan (Genesis 3:1-7), and, thereby, lost that spiritual life of righteousness, in which he was created; and, so death passed upon him, as the inevitable consequence of his sin (Romans 5:12). As the children of fallen Adam, all mankind bear his image. They partake of his nature, and are involved in the consequences of his fall. To every member of every successive generation, the words of the Redeemer are alike applicable, "Ye must be born again" (John 3:7). But while we hold these views of the lost condition of man in the fall, we rejoice to believe that sin is not imputed to any, until they transgress the divine law, after sufficient capacity has been given to understand it; and that infants, though inheriting this fallen nature, are saved in the infinite mercy of God through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

Justification and Sanctification

"God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). We believe that justification is of God's free grace, through which, upon repentance and faith, He pardons our sins, and imparts to us a new life. It is received, not for any works of righteousness that we have done (Titus 3:5), but in the unmerited mercy of God in Christ Jesus. Through faith in Him, and the shedding of His precious blood, the guilt of sin is taken away, and we stand reconciled to God.

The offering up of Christ as the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, is the appointed manifestation both of the righteousness and of the love of God. In this propitiation the pardon of sin involves no abrogation or relaxation of the law of holiness. It is the vindication and establishment of that law (Romans 3:31), in virtue of the free and righteous submission of the Son of God himself to all its requirements. He, the unchangeably just, proclaims Himself the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus (Romans 3:26). From age to age, the sufferings and death of Christ have been a hidden mystery, and a rock of offense to the unbelief and pride of man's fallen nature; yet, to the humble penitent whose heart is broken under the convicting power of the Spirit, life is revealed in that depth. As he looks upon Him who was wounded for our transgressions (Isaiah 53:5), and upon whom the Lord was pleased to lay the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:6), his eye is more and more opened to see, and his heart to understand, the exceeding sinfulness of sin for which the Savior died; whilst, in the sense of pardoning grace, he will joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received atonement (Romans 5:11).

We believe that in connection with Justification is Regeneration: that they who come to this experience know that they are not their own (1 Corinthians 6:19), that being reconciled to God by the death of His Son, we are saved by His life (Romans 5:10); a new heart is given and new desires; old things are passed away, and we become new creatures (2 Corinthians 5:17), through faith in Christ Jesus; our wills being surrendered to His holy will, grace reigns through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 5:21).

Sanctification is experienced in the acceptance of Christ in living faith for justification, in so far as the pardoned sinner, through faith in Christ, is clothed with a measure of His righteousness and receives the Spirit of promise; for, as saith the Apostle, "Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:11). We rejoice to believe that the provisions of God's grace are sufficient to deliver from the power, as well as from the guilt, of sin, and to enable His believing children always to triumph in Christ (2 Corinthians 2:14). How full of encouragement is the declaration, "According to your faith be it unto you" (Matthew 9:29). Whosoever submits himself wholly to God, believing and appropriating his promises, and exercising faith in Christ Jesus, will have his heart continually cleansed from all sin, by His precious blood, and, through the renewed refining power of the Holy Spirit, be kept in conformity to the will of God, will love Him with all his heart, mind, soul and strength, and be able to say, with the Apostle Paul, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2). Thus, in its full experience, Sanctification is the deliverance from the pollution, nature, and love of sin. To this we are everyone called that we may serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life (Luke 1:74, 75). It was the prayer of the apostle for the believers, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it" (1 Thessalonians 5:23, 24). Yet the most holy Christian is still liable to temptation, is exposed to the subtle assaults of Satan, and can only continue to follow holiness as he humbly watches unto prayer, and is kept in constant dependence upon his Saviour, walking in the light (1 John. 1:7), in the loving obedience of faith.

The Resurrection and Final Judgment

We believe, according to the Scriptures, that there shall be a resurrection from the death, both of the just and of the unjust (Acts 24:15), and that God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness, by Jesus Christ whom he hath ordained (Acts 17:31). For, as saith the apostle, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10).

We sincerely believe, not only a resurrection in Christ from the fallen and sinful state here, but a rising and ascending into glory with Him hereafter; that when He at last appears we may appear with Him in glory. But that all the wicked, who live in rebellion, against the light of grace, and die finally impenitent, shall come forth to the resurrection of condemnation. And that the soul of every man and woman shall be reserved, in its own distinct and proper being, and shall have its proper body as God is pleased to give it. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body (1 Corinthians 15:44); that being first which is natural, and afterward that which

is spiritual. And though it is said, “this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality” (1 Corinthians 15:53), the change shall be such as will accord with the declaration, “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God neither doth corruption inherit incorruption” (1 Corinthians 15:50). We shall be raised out of all corruption and corruptibility, out of all mortality, and shall be the children of God, being the children of resurrection (Luke 20:36). (See also Declaration of 1693, *Sewell's History*, vol. II, 383, 384.)

“Our citizenship is in heaven” (RV), from whence also we look for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself (Philippians 3:20, 21).

We believe that the punishment of the wicked and the blessedness of the righteous shall be everlasting; according to the declaration of our compassionate Redeemer, to whom the judgment is committed, “These shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life” (Matthew 25:46 RV).

Baptism

We would express our continued conviction that our Lord appointed no outward rite or ceremony for observance in His church. We accept every command of our Lord in what we believe to be its genuine import, as absolutely conclusive. The question of the use of outward ordinances is with us a question, not as to the authority of Christ, but as to His real meaning. We reverently believe that, as there is one Lord and one faith, so there is, under the Christian dispensation, but one baptism (Ephesians 4:4, 5), even that whereby all believers are baptized in the one Spirit into the one body (1 Corinthians 12:13 RV). This is not an outward baptism with water, but a spiritual experience; not the putting away the filth of the flesh (1 Peter 3:21), but that inward work which, by transforming the heart and settling the soul upon Christ, brings forth the answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, in the experience of His love and power, as the risen and ascended Saviour. No baptism in outward water can satisfy the description of the apostle, of being buried with Christ by baptism unto death (Romans 6:4). It is with the Spirit alone that any can thus be baptized. In this experience the announcement of the Forerunner of our Lord is fulfilled. “He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire” (Matthew 3:11). In this view we accept the commission of our blessed Lord as given in Matthew 28:18-20 verses: “And Jesus came to them and spake unto them saying, ‘All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world’” (RV). This commission, as we believe, was not designed to set up a new ritual under the new covenant, or to connect the initiation into a membership, in its nature essentially spiritual, with a mere ceremony of a typical character. Otherwise it was not impossible for the Apostle Paul, who was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostle (2 Corinthians 11:5), to have disclaimed that which would, in that case, have been of the essence of his commission when he wrote “Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel” (1 Corinthians 1:17). Whenever an external ceremony is commanded, the particulars, the mode and incidents of that ceremony, become of its essence. There is an utter absence of these particulars in the text before us, which confirms our persuasion that the commission must be construed in connection with the spiritual power which the risen Lord promised should attend the witness of his apostles and of the church to Him, and which after Pentecost, so mightily accompanied their ministry of the word and prayer, that those to whom they were sent were introduced into an experience wherein they had a saving knowledge of, and living fellowship with, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The Supper of the Lord

Intimately connected with the conviction already expressed is the view that we have ever maintained as to the true supper of the Lord. We are well aware that our Lord was pleased to make use of a variety of symbolical utterances, but he often gently upbraided His disciples for accepting literally what He had intended only in its spiritual meaning. His teaching, as in His parables or in the command to wash one another's feet, was often in symbols, and ought ever to be received in the light of His own emphatic declaration, “The words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life” (John 6:63). The old covenant

was full of ceremonial symbols; the new covenant, to which our Saviour alluded at the last supper, is expressly declared by the prophet to be “not according to the old” (Jeremiah 31:32, Hebrews 8:9). We cannot believe that in setting up this new covenant the Lord Jesus intended an institution out of harmony with the spirit of this prophecy. The eating of His body and the drinking of His blood cannot be an outward act. They truly partake of them who habitually rest upon the sufferings and death of their Lord as their only hope, and to whom the indwelling Spirit gives to drink of the fullness that is in Christ. It is this inward and spiritual partaking that is the true supper of the Lord.

The presence of Christ with His church is not designed to be by symbol or representation, but in the real communication of His own Spirit, “I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter who shall abide with you forever” (John 14:16). Convincing of sin testifying of Jesus, taking of the things of Christ, this blessed Comforter communicates to the believer and to the church, in a gracious, abiding manifestation, the real presence of the Lord. As the great remembrancer, through whom the promise is fulfilled, He needs no ritual or priestly intervention in bringing to the experience of the true commemoration and communion. “Behold” saith the risen Redeemer, “I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and sup with him and he with me” (Revelation 3:20). In an especial manner, when assembled for congregational worship, are believers invited to the festival of the Saviour’s peace, and, in a united act of faith and love, unfettered by any outward rite or ceremonial, to partake together of the body that was broken and of the blood that was shed for them without the gates of Jerusalem. In such a worship they are enabled to understand the words of the apostle as expressive of a sweet and most real experience: “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread” (1 Corinthians 10:16, 17).

Public Worship

Worship is the adoring response of the heart and mind to the influence of the Spirit of God. It stands neither in forms nor in the formal disuse of forms: it may be without words as well as with them, but it must be in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). We recognize the value of silence, not as an end, but as a means toward the attainment of the end; a silence, not of listlessness or of vacant musing, but of holy expectation before the Lord. Having become His adopted children through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, it is our privilege to meet together and unite in the worship of Almighty God, to wait upon Him for the renewal of our strength, for communication one with another, for the edification of believers in the exercise of various spiritual gifts, and for the declaration of the glad tidings of salvation to the unconverted who may gather with us. This worship depends not upon numbers. Where two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ there is a church, and Christ, the living Head, in the midst of them. Through His mediation without the necessity for any inferior instrumentality, is the Father to be approached and reverently worshiped. The Lord Jesus has forever fulfilled and ended the typical and sacrificial worship under the law, by the offering up of Himself upon the cross for us, once for all. He has opened the door of access into the inner sanctuary, and graciously provided spiritual offerings for the service of His temple, suited to the several conditions of all who worship in spirit and in truth. The broken and the contrite heart, the confession of the soul prostrate before God, the prayer of the afflicted when he is overwhelmed, the earnest wrestling of the spirit, the outpouring of humble thanksgiving, the spiritual song of melody of the heart (Ephesians 5:19), the simple exercise of faith, the self-denying service of love, these are among the sacrifices which He, our merciful and faithful High Priest, is pleased to prepare, by His Spirit, in the hearts of them that receive Him, and to present with acceptance unto God.

By the immediate operations of the Holy Spirit, He as the Head of the church, alone selects and qualifies those who are to present His messages or engage in other service for Him; and, hence, we cannot commit any formal arrangement to anyone in our regular meetings for worship. We are well aware that the Lord has provided a diversity of gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-6) for the needs both of the church and of the world, and we desire that the church may feel her responsibility, under the government of her Great Head, in doing her part to foster these gifts, and in making arrangements for their proper exercise.

It is not for individual exaltation, but for mutual profit, that the gifts are bestowed (1 Corinthians 12:7); and every living church, abiding under the government of Christ, is humbly and thankfully to receive and exercise them, in subjection to her Holy Head. The church that quenches the Spirit and lives to itself alone must die.

We believe the preaching of the Gospel to be one of the chief means, divinely appointed, for the spreading of the glad tidings of life and salvation through our crucified Redeemer, for the awakening and conversion of sinners, and for the comfort and edification of believers. As it is the prerogative of the Great Head of the church alone to select and call the ministers of His Gospel, so we believe that both the gift and the qualification to exercise it must be derived immediately from Him; and that, as in the primitive church, so now also, He confers spiritual gifts upon women as well as upon men, agreeably to the prophecy recited by the apostle Peter, "It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy" (Acts 2:17). Respecting which the apostle declares "the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39). As the gift is freely received so it is to be freely exercised (Matthew 10:8; see also Acts 20:33-35) in simple obedience to the will of God.

Spiritual gifts, precious as they are, must not be mistaken for grace; they add to our responsibility, but do not raise the minister above his brethren or sisters. They must be exercised in continued dependence upon our Lord and blessed is that ministry in which man is humbled, and Christ and His grace exalted. "He that is greatest among you" said our Lord and Master, "let him be as the younger; and he that is chief as he that doth serve. I am among you as he that serveth" (Luke 22:26, 27).

While the church cannot confer spiritual gifts, it is its duty to recognize and foster them, and to promote their efficiency by all the means in its power. And while, on the one hand, the Gospel should never be preached for money (Acts 8:20, 20:33-35), on the other it is the duty of the church to make such provision that it shall never be hindered for want of it.

The church, if true to her allegiance, cannot forget her part in the command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Knowing that it is the Spirit of God that can alone prepare and qualify the instruments who fulfill this command, the true disciple will be found still sitting at the feet of Jesus, listening that he may learn, and learning that he may obey. He humbly places himself at his Lord's disposal, and, when he hears the call, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" is prepared to respond, in childlike reverence and love, "Here am I, send me" (Isaiah 6:8).

Prayer and Praise

Prayer is the outcome of our sense of need, and of our continual dependence upon God. He who uttered the invitation, "Ask and it shall be given you" (Matthew 7:7), is himself the Mediator and High Priest who, by His spirit, prompts the petition, and who presents it with the acceptance before God. With such an invitation, prayer becomes the duty and the privilege of all who are called by His name. Prayer is, in the awakening soul, the utterance of the cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13), and, at every stage of the believer's course, prayer is essential to his spiritual life. A life without prayer is a life practically without God. The Christian's life is a continual asking. The thirst that prompts the petition produces, as it is satisfied, still deeper longings, which prepare for yet more bounteous supplies, from Him who delights to bless. Prayer is not confined to the closet. When uttered in response to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, it becomes an important part of public worship, and, whenever the Lord's people meet together in His name, it is their privilege to wait upon Him for the spirit of Grace and supplications (Zechariah 12:10). A life of prayer cannot be other than a life of praise. As the peace of Christ reigns in the church, her living members accept all that they receive, as from His pure bounty, and each day brings them fresh pledges of their Father's love. Satisfied with the goodness of His house, whether as individuals, in families, or in congregations, they will be still praising Him (Psalm 84:4), heart answering to heart, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name" (Psalm 103:1).

Liberty of Conscience in its Relation to Civil Government

That conscience should be free, and that in matters of religious doctrine and worship man is accountable only to God, are truths which are plainly declared in the New Testament: and which are confirmed by the whole scope of the Gospel, and by the example of our Lord and His disciples. To rule over the conscience, and to command the spiritual allegiance of his creature man, is the high and sacred prerogative of God alone. In religion every act ought to be free. A forced worship is plainly a contradiction in terms, under that dispensation in which the worship of the Father must be in spirit and in truth (John 4:24).

We have ever maintained that it is the duty of Christians to obey the enactments of civil government except those which interfere with our allegiance to God. We owe much to its blessings. Through it we enjoy liberty and protection, in connection with law and order. Civil Government is a divine ordinance (Romans 12:1, 1 Peter 2:13-16) instituted to promote the best welfare of man, hence magistrates are to be regarded as God's ministers who should be a terror to evil doers and a praise to them that do well. Therefore, it is with us a matter of conscience to render them respect and obedience in the exercise of their proper functions.

Marriage

Marriage is an institution graciously ordained by the Creator Himself, for the help and continuance of the human family. It is not a mere civil contract, and ought never to be entered upon without a reference to the sanction and blessing of Him who ordained it. It is a solemn engagement for the term of life (Matthew 19:5-6), designed for the mutual assistance and comfort of both sexes, that they may be helpmeets to each other in things temporal and spiritual. To this end it should imply concurrence in spiritual as well as temporal concerns, and should be entered upon discreetly, soberly, and in fear of the Lord.

Peace

We feel bound explicitly to avow our unshaken persuasion that all war is utterly incompatible with the plain precepts of our divine Lord and Lawgiver, and the whole spirit of His Gospel, and that no plea of necessity or policy, however urgent or peculiar, can avail to release either individuals or nations from the paramount allegiance which they owe to Him who hath said, "Love your enemies" (Matthew 5:44, Luke 6:27). In enjoining this love, and the forgiveness of injuries, He who has brought us to Himself has not prescribed for man precepts which are incapable of being carried into practice, or of which the practice is to be postponed until all shall be persuaded to act upon them. We cannot doubt that they are incumbent now, and that we have in the prophetic Scriptures the distinct intimation of their direct application not only to individuals, but to nations also (Isaiah 2:4, Micah 4:1). When nations conform their laws to this divine teaching, wars must necessarily cease.

We would, in humility, but in faithfulness to our Lord, express our firm persuasion that all the exigencies of civil government and social order may be met under the banner of the Prince of Peace, in strict conformity with His commands.

Oaths

We hold it to be the inalienable privilege of the disciple of the Lord Jesus that his statements concerning matters of fact within his knowledge should be accepted, under all circumstances, as expressing his belief as to the fact asserted. We rest upon the plain command of our Lord and Master, "Swear not at all" (Matthew 5:34); and we believe any departure from this standard to be prejudicial to the cause of truth and to that confidence between man and man, the maintenance of which is indispensable to our mutual well-being. This command, in our persuasion, applies not to profane swearing only, but to judicial oaths also. It abrogates any previous permission to the contrary, and is, for the Christian, absolutely conclusive.

The First Day of the Week

Whilst the remembrance of our Creator ought to be at all times present with the Christian, we would express our thankfulness to our Heavenly Father that He has been pleased to honor the setting apart of one

day in seven for the purpose of holy rest, religious duties, and public worship, and we desire that all under our name may avail themselves of this great privilege as those who are called to be risen with Christ, and to seek those things that are above where He sitteth at the right hand of God (Colossians 3:1). May the release thus granted from other occupations be diligently improved. On this day of the week especially ought the households of Friends to be assembled for the reading of the Scriptures and for waiting upon the Lord; and we trust that, in a Christianly wise economy of our time and strength, the engagements of the day may be so ordered as not to frustrate the gracious provision thus made for us by our Heavenly Father, or to shut out the opportunity either for public worship or for private retirement and devotional reading.

In presenting this declaration of our Christian faith, we desire that all our members may be afresh encouraged, in humility and devotedness, to renewed faithfulness in fulfilling their part in the great mission of the Church, and through the Church to the world around us, in the name of our Crucified Redeemer. Life *from* Christ, life *in* Christ, must ever be the basis of life *for* Christ. For this we have been created and redeemed, and by this alone can the longings of our immortal souls be satisfied.

DRAFT

CHAPTER 4

Life and Action

The Way of Life

Motives for Service

1. Just as the Quaker faith gives spirit, form, and substance to the Quaker manner of worship, so also the concern that Friends feel to take up and share the burden of the world's suffering springs out of their central faith and intimate fellowship of worship.

The liberation, enlargement, and fulfillment of one's life is the ideal objective of Friends in every humanitarian undertaking. As Friends endeavor to transform oppressive social and economic systems, to end war, to eliminate brutal and degrading forms of punishment, and to remedy other harmful conditions, it is with the positive conviction that we are laboring in the service of the Master who said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." In the words of John Woolman, Friends believe that ". . . to labor for the perfect redemption from the spirit of oppression is the great business of the whole family of Christ Jesus in this world."¹

Qualifications for Service

2. Such service is always consistent with the Christlike spirit of love and goodwill; it is never the result of the spirit of violence and coercion. Godly conditions of living only prevail when individual hearts are filled with the spirit so that they

provide Fruits of the Spirit. Only when hearts are so filled will sacrificial giving not only by the sharing of financial resources, but also sharing of time and energy, even to the extent of losing income or even life. "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

Inner Compulsion

3. It is the Quaker ideal to comprehend the ethical and spiritual significance of the whole situation and to deal with it above the storm of controversy and propaganda. Such an attitude brings into view the transcendent or eternal aspect which should be the aim of

the religious body. It is often necessary to wait in silence until the message comes; but when it does come, nothing must hinder saying the word which needs to be said or doing the deed which the times and circumstances demand.

Forces of the Holy Spirit

4. Ideals have no power until they are incarnated in lives through which they can work. The essential matter is the spiritual quality of those who compose the social and economic order. In a world always threatened by the forces of evil, one can help

toward its betterment by a confident reliance on the forces of the Holy Spirit on the soul which must be applied in cooperation with God.

Value of Historical Approach

5. Many of the ideals and testimonies of present-day Quakerism may be traced back to the earliest period in its history. The testimonies have been confirmed by many Quaker historians and journalists, and by numerous minutes, advices, and epistles, found in the records of Friends. Therefore, it is felt that some consideration of the statements and

activities of the Friends of earlier days is necessary to the proper understanding of the Quaker message and the way of life which it inspires. Understanding Friend's past better prepares and equips us to meet the challenges of the future.

Evangelism and Extension

New Testament Evangelism

1. The early Christians, in obedience to the divine compulsion to share with others the spiritual riches of the gospel of Jesus, **zealously proclaimed the Gospel**. This early evangelism was not a campaign to develop a new religious cult but was,

rather, the sharing of the joys of salvation by those who had actually experienced this spiritual transformation. With a zeal and power that stand as a pattern for any age, these first evangelists soon carried the "Good News" to the entire Mediterranean area.

Publishers of Truth

2. In a similar manner, early Friends were moved by an irresistible urge from the Holy Spirit to tell as many as possible of the joyous, newly found freedom of a direct approach to God without mediating instruments. This doctrine of free access to

¹ John Woolman essay, "A Plea for the Poor" Chapter 13, final sentence.

divine redemptive grace was preached without regard to the social rank, race, or gender of those who would give audience. As a result of the work as earnest “publishers of truth”, Quakerism soon extended over much of the western seventeenth-century world.

Period of Quietism 3. When Friends passed into their period of quietism¹, they lost interest as a group in the aggressive preaching of the gospel message and became introspective and largely concerned in maintaining their testimony against "creaturely activity." It should be said in justice to this period that it had some positive values. It was characterized by extreme sensitivity to strength as revealed by the journals and advices of the time. There was also quite a measure of surrendered and dedicated life. But, as one might expect from the weakening of the evangelistic impulse, there resulted not only a loss of membership, but also a decline in spiritual vitality.

New Awakening 4. Then came the new spirit of evangelism which swept over America in the nineteenth century and caused a new awakening among Friends. As they felt the joy and enthusiasm of a life surrendered and dedicated to the indwelling Christ, they again experienced something of their early evangelistic zeal and took their place in proclaiming the gospel of Christ to the world.

Evangelistic Methods 5. The logical and natural consequence of a restored personal fellowship with God was, and continues to be, a compelling concern to share with other people both at home and abroad the spiritual satisfactions of that fellowship. The ministries of preaching, teaching, Christian service, and group activity are to be considered as divinely appointed instruments for carrying the Christian message wherever the way opens. Friends have found evangelistic efforts of different kinds useful, as they have been adapted to the various needs of meetings. These include special evangelistic meetings conducted either by the pastor or by visiting ministers, preaching missions carried on by a group of Christian leaders, and evangelism by home visitation.

Need of Steady Building 6. Though periods of intensive evangelistic effort are spiritually beneficial, the work of the meeting, including that of the pastor, should be carried on throughout the year with the purpose of deepening and enriching the religious life of the members. The most stable and healthful conditions usually follow constant and steady building of Christian character. The relationship of children with the meeting through associate membership provides a great opportunity for special work in evangelism. Methods of a teaching ministry, such as preparatory classes given at the intellectual and spiritual level of the young, will bear rich fruit in later years. Loyalty to Christ places upon Friends the constant obligation to seek by every appropriate method to win individuals to the Christian life.

Missionary Enterprise

Beyond the Seas 1. The earliest activities of the Society of Friends were essentially missionary. Those who were convinced sounded forth their message, first in England and soon in foreign lands, in the faith that a response would be found among many of like spirit. In 1660 they could report “great work and service of the Lord beyond the seas” ranging from Palestine and Turkey in the East to Newfoundland and Virginia in the West. Even during the period of quietism there were fruitful labors by individuals who responded to deeply felt calls for special services at home and abroad. Among these were **Mary Fisher, Ann Austin**, John Woolman, William Allen, Daniel Wheeler, Elizabeth Fry, and Stephen Grellet, with their concerns for the Native Americans, Negro slaves, Russian serfs, and prisoners of body or of spirit throughout the world.

First Organized 2. These activities had important and far-reaching results, but gradually the conviction grew that such brief and transient visits were not a full discharge of Christian duty. It was realized that the needs of non-Christian lands required services continuing for many years or even for the lifetime of the workers. This made necessary a greater financial outlay and more systematic methods of securing support. Beginning in 1866 with the establishment of a station in central India by English Friends, the work of foreign missions under the care of English and American Friends has extended around the world. At first such work was carried on by committees of concerned Friends, but later it generally became a part of the organized activities of the various yearly meetings. For those composing Friends United Meeting (formerly the Five Years

¹An explanation of the period of quietism can be found in Part I, Chapter 1, second page, under the heading of “Period of Persecution”.

Meeting), most of the missionary efforts both at home and abroad are now administered unitedly by Global Ministries.

Missionary Incentive 3. Missionary enterprise grows out of the essence of Christianity itself. Sharing with others the best one has and knows is basic to true Christian living. The highest incentive of the missionary effort is the love of Christ which constrains His followers to “go into all the world.” As one acts in accordance with this motive, the spirit of obedience grows and ripens into outgoing love and compassion for those who are in need of the gospel.

Intelligent Adaptation 4. Discerning leaders in the field of missionary enterprise have reached the clear conviction that the spiritual objectives desired cannot be achieved by a reproduction in other lands of the American form of church government. Friends, therefore, should not insist upon a form of worship which may or may not prove helpful on the various mission fields. The primary aim should always be to instill Christ’s principles of living as fundamental and adaptable to every form and stage of human development. With this in mind, missionaries should encourage forms of expression and organization among different races and nationalities that are in accordance with their varying aptitudes and experiences.

Expanding Program 5. New opportunities for Christian service are constantly opening. Christ centered perceptions of Biblical Truth become clearer as one matures and seeks God’s purpose. New avenues of approach and fresh methods of presenting the message will develop as each generation makes its advance in knowledge and experience. To this service all followers of Christ are called. In the words of George Fox: “Let all nations hear the sound, by word or writing. Spare no place, spare not tongue nor pen, but be obedient to the Lord God; go through the world and be valiant for the truth upon earth . . . Then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one.”

Christian Education

The Training of Children 1. George Fox, quoting from the Book of Proverbs, once said, “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. Here is the duty of parents, and the duty of children, which is to be followed and practiced.” Friends of those days took seriously the religious training of their children. The religious motive was always the dominant one; the aim was to lead children to God and to participation in the creating of a Christian social order. These purposes could not then, and cannot now, be attained through a single agency, nor merely by the use of an hour or two on one day of the week; yet there is a special value attached to Sunday School, Vacation Bible School and other such courses of religious instruction as it may provide.

Friends’ First Day Schools 2. American Friends became interested in the Bible school soon after its origin in England in 1780. A “Society for the Institution and Support of the First Day or Sunday Schools in the City of Philadelphia” organized in 1791, had Friends among its members. Bible schools were carried on in scattered areas in the early part of the nineteenth century and multiplied rapidly after 1830, though there was some opposition to them on the grounds that such organized study of the Bible was a departure from the Friends’ position of dependence on spiritual guidance. Held first in homes, then in Friends’ schoolhouses, Sunday School later became an integral part of most meetings.

Christian Training 3. Need of attention to the work of Christian education has increased with the general replacement of Friends’ schools by the public school system which has little concern for instruction in religion and biblical subjects. There is a general secularization of life that affects the very atmosphere in which children are reared. The unity of the family life that formerly prevailed is often broken up by the diversified interests of the members of the household, thus rendering family worship more difficult. Many parents feel poorly equipped for guiding the spiritual growth of their children. In the light of such considerations the importance of provisions for carrying on the work of Christian education can hardly be overstressed.

Essential Objectives 4. A plan for adequate Christian Education should embrace the home, the meeting (i.e. Sunday School, VBS, children and youth ministries, etc.) and Christian youth oriented civic events. Objectives include an increasing sense of reality of God in human experience, a growing understanding and appreciation of Jesus Christ, a dedication of one's life to Him, a continuous development of Christlike character, and a deepening respect for "that of God" in others. Rightly guided Bible study, a sympathetic evaluation of significant religious experiences, acquaintance with the history and principles of Friends, definite preparation for worship, and an appreciation of the Quaker method of arriving at group decisions are some of the essentials of a program for such education. Ministers and teachers should earnestly prepare themselves for their duties as leaders in this important work.

Upward Call 5. An abiding, compelling motive is the desire that young people shall realize for themselves a vital Christian experience and learn in natural ways to build the Christian ideals into personal, social, industrial, and international relationships. Regular attendance at the meeting for worship and an active interest and participation in all activities of the meeting are factors of proven value in their contribution to spiritual growth, and are necessary for the continuance of the life of the church. As always, the church of today faces the future with confidence in the courage, sincerity, and faithfulness to "the upward calling" of oncoming generations.

The Social Order

Early Reforms 1. The abolition of slavery, prison reform, the humane treatment of the mentally ill and defective, systematic relief for the poor, provisions for their employment and self-help, the education of poor children, the prevention of injurious employment of children in industry, and the use of fair and fixed prices for goods and services are some of the activities in which Friends pioneered in times of much indifference and even vigorous opposition. They established for themselves new ethical standards and sought earnestly that these be applied to every victim of oppression or wrong.

Concern for Justice 2. George Fox felt a deep concern for justice in social and economic relationships. He visited magistrates to urge that fair wages be fixed for laborers; he wrote to Parliament urging the redistribution of wealth so as to relieve the poor; he besought employers to treat their servants as they, under like circumstances, would wish to be treated. In brief, according to his conception, the practical workings of Christianity reached into every phase of human relations, so that, wherever inequity or injustice was discovered, there was a matter for spiritual concern and remedial action. His intense and constructive evangelism in the social and economic fields gave a quality to early Quakerism that has survived changing conditions from the simple, localized, industrial, and economic systems of his day to the worldwide complexities of modern times.

Reformers 3. The records of past achievements include the names of such well-known Friends as Elizabeth Fry in prison reform; John Woolman, Anthony Benezet, Joseph Sturge, **Susan B. Anthony**, and John Greenleaf Whittier in the abolition of slavery, and John Bellers and William Allen in the relief of the poor and unemployed and in the promotion of popular education.

Wrongs Righted 4. The profound changes wrought by the industrial revolution and the effects of modern invention challenge Quakerism to adapt its philosophy to the new conditions and prove its applicability to present-day problems. The technological revolution introduced cultural change that rivals or exceeds that of the industrial revolution. The obligation rests on Friends to demonstrate that economic wrongs can be righted and that justice for oppressed minorities or for any underprivileged group can be secured without the use of violence. The theory of violent coercion relies on the ability of one group to impose its will upon another by mere preponderance of physical or economic strength. The yielding of the weak to the strong does not prove that the right has been vindicated nor that opinions have been altered.

The More Excellent Way 5. The slower but more effective process of education is a field in which Friends are called to use the weight of enlightened influence. The mere enactment of good laws does

not in itself constitute reform; just and fair administration is also necessary. The constant aim should be to bring about such a spiritual transformation of all persons concerned that outward laws will be superseded by “the more excellent way”. This transformation comes through the work of the Holy Spirit that Christ gives to his followers. Laws and education can do much good, but only the Gospel of Jesus Christ can change the heart.

Ethical Obligations 6. The development of a sensitive conscience concerning the existing maladjustments, unfair prices, and positive evils of our economic system should be a vital concern to all Friends. As a consumer every person should endeavor to control his purchases so as to encourage healthful living conditions and adequate wages. The producer is under an ethical obligation to produce goods under sanitary conditions and without deception as to quality. Upon the employer rests the responsibility to see that those in his employ receive adequate wages and general treatment that will not dwarf but rather develop their personalities. The employee should feel obligated to render loyal and efficient service to his employer and to exercise proper care in the use of tools and machinery and in the handling of materials used or produced in his work. As an investor, the individual should strive to avoid support of antisocial enterprises. The problem of distribution in the world’s economic order should be a matter for profound Christian concern. The availability of the necessities of life to all people is highly important in the promotion of the political and economic stability of the world.

Technology can be a threat to spiritual health, and like any tool, it is neither good nor bad on its own, but in how it is used, or in some cases, abused. Friends are not called to avoid technology or social media, but to keep them in their proper place. Anything that has addictive properties can easily become an idol. Our first loyalty is always to the Lord Jesus.

Social Redemption 7. In every social or business relationship, Friends should seek diligently and experiment actively, within the boundaries set by scripture, to find ways of producing a social order based on the Christian principles of justice, love, and goodwill. So keenly did early Friends feel their responsibility as individual members of society that, when they observed the violation of moral and religious principles, they assumed an attitude of penitence for society’s sins. A greater measure of such responsibility must be felt by Christians of the present day if they are to be effective agents in carrying on the work of social redemption. Friends realize that change comes not through judgment, but through repentance.

Ideals in General Education

Early Quaker Education 1. Although certain that education alone “was not sufficient to fit a man to be a minister of Christ”, early Friends were nonetheless concerned that a lack of it should hinder the highest development of the youth under their care. Far in advance of his time, George Fox advised that schools be provided for “girls and young maidens” as well as for boys, for instruction “in whatever things were civil and useful in the creation.” William Penn also held and expressed at length advanced views on the importance of right methods and aims in the education of children, warning against such as would “make them scholars but not men”. Schools were opened in Pennsylvania in 1683, only two years after Penn’s grant, and a Friends public school was set up in Philadelphia in 1689.

School and Meeting 2. The democratic organization of the Society of Friends has given emphasis to the importance of intellectual training as an aid to spiritual development and effective Christian service. The positions taken by the leaders noted previously have been steadily maintained. Monthly meeting minutes and other records from the very beginning contain many expressions of concern that the education of the young be promoted and safeguarded. School and meeting have constantly gone hand in hand as a united bulwark of Quakerism throughout the world.

Institutions of Learning 3. This practical application of ideals put Friends in the forefront in the development of educational opportunities and standards in this country. Their elementary and secondary

schools in several states were the forerunners of the public school system, which has, for the most part, superseded the numerous Quaker institutions of earlier days. A few survive, mostly in the eastern part of the United States; and these, with a number of strategically located colleges, do a highly important work in furthering the interests of Friends both in thoroughness of scholarship and in the development of Christian leaders.

Aims of Education 4. “The aim of education is the full and harmonious development of the resources of the human spirit. Human nature has within it the promise of a divine growth; upon this we base our faith as a religious community. There can, therefore, be no task nearer our hearts than to help all our members towards the fulfillment of this promise. Such fulfillment means that body and mind alike bring all their gifts to fruition in the unity of the spirit. Here is a clear call to educative effort as a part of the very purpose of the Christian religion. We desire to testify in word and deed to the truth that religion gathers the whole of life into its domain. We believe that there are godlike possibilities in every man. We must proclaim a Christian gospel of education which in breadth and depth shall be worthy of this faith. . . . The intellect is an integral part of man’s spiritual equipment; and its development brings with it a growth in personality and an increased power of facing difficult moral issues. The man whose mind is many-sided has a special contribution to make to the solution of the complex personal and social problems of modern life.”¹

Friends and the State

Under Authority 1. The first authentic pronouncement of early Friends on their relation to the state was made in the days of Oliver Cromwell in the form of an advice from a meeting of ministers and elders. It urged fellow members to accept public office, if they could rightly do so, as a means of serving their community. George Fox professed his loyalty to protector and king in turn, declaring, “Our prayers are for them that are in authority, that under them we may live a godly life in peace.” In those days of unsettlement and strife, Friends utterly disowned all plottings and armed resistance against the government.

Limitations of Authority 2. Friends set definite limitations, however, to the authority of their rulers. More than once George Fox demanded of officers of the law whether he should obey God or man and warned the king to “hearken to God’s voice” or he would be overthrown. If occasion arises when it is necessary to refuse obedience to unjust laws, such conscientious objection should not be entered into lightly or hastily and should be made with love and forbearance toward those who disagree. The conquest of evil is to be effected only by the overpowering force of truth and righteousness. Friends’ testimonies in support of these principles in the days of their persecution and their steadiest insistence on the right of the freedom of conscience, peaceable assembly, and worship did much to gain religious liberty for citizens of both England and America.

God and Government 3. Friends’ influence has been felt in the abolishment or modification of harmful laws and customs in many fields. Government by divine guidance rather than by arbitrary compulsion and the prevention of criminal acts rather than their punishment are the primary objectives of Friends. Their testimony against capital punishment is based on the belief that it is a violation of the sacredness of human life, that it disregards the fundamental capacity of all persons to respond to right influences, and that it gives no opportunity to reform the offender.

Highest Allegiance 4. Friends regard the state as a social instrument to be used for the cooperative promotion of the common welfare. The source of its authority and the most reliable guide in its administration should be the inward conviction of right possessed by its citizens. “Our highest allegiance as Christians is not to the state but to the kingdom of God. But this does not mean that we have not duties, as Christians, toward the state and the nation to which we belong, or that our attitude toward the state should be a negative one, or one of indifference.”² Good government depends on observance of the laws of God by those in authority. It behooves all Friends to fit themselves for efficient public service and to be faithful to their performance of duty as they are gifted and guided by the inspiration of God.

¹ London Yearly Meeting, *Faith and Practice* (1925), p. 93, par. 6.

² London Yearly Meeting, *Faith and Practice* (1925).

Interracial Relations

Testimony Against Racial Prejudice

1. The conception of “that of God in everyone” makes it impossible for Friends to draw lines of distinction in capacity or privilege between different races or nations. It is the concern of Friends that Caucasians, Native Americans, African-Americans, those of Asian and Latin American descent, and all other peoples may share equally in the heritage of justice, freedom, and brotherly love, which is their inalienable right. “For God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth” (Acts 17:26). Friends believe that any racial discrimination, whether by legal enactment or by cultural or economic practices, is essentially a violation of His law of love. To dwell together in friendly relations, on a basis of mutual respect, courtesy, and understanding, is our ideal. George Fox, in an epistle to Friends in America, wrote: “Let your light shine among the Indians, the blacks and the whites, that ye may answer the truth in them, and to bring them to the standard and ensign that God hath set up, Christ Jesus.”

Woolman and Slavery

2. In 1688, Germantown Monthly Meeting in Pennsylvania made what is believed to be the first official protest of any religious body against slavery. Friends’ position in general on the question was far from clear, however; and it was not until 1760 that the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting was ready to call on Friends everywhere to free their slaves. There had always been those who had testified against the practice, and much effective work had been done in the preceding decades, notably by Woolman. His faithfully borne testimony to the necessity of making conduct conform to profession was so fruitful a message that Friends were generally free of slaveholding by 1780. Their efforts were then devoted to the convincing of society in general of the iniquity of slavery.

In the period before the Civil War the homes of many Quakers became stations for the “Underground Railroad” by which thousands of slaves gained their freedom. After the Emancipation Proclamation, Friends became very active in aiding ex-slaves to establish themselves as free citizens in the full employment of their rights. Since the Civil War, various yearly meetings have founded schools and orphans’ homes for African-American children, and many individual Friends, in the belief that there should be no distinction of privilege on the basis of color, have cooperated with numerous movements for the promotion of the social and economic welfare of African-Americans.

Native Americans

3. President Grant in his first annual message to Congress made the following statement: “I have attempted a new policy towards these wards of the nation. The Society of Friends is well known in having succeeded in living at peace with the Indians in the early settlement of Pennsylvania. They are also known for their opposition to all strife, violence and war, and are generally known for their strict integrity and fair dealing. These considerations induced me to give the management of a few reservations of Indians to them and to throw the burden of selection of agents upon the Society itself. The result has proven most satisfactory.”

Native American Missions

4. In 1869 missionary work among Native Americans was placed under the care of the Associated Executive Committee of Friends on Indian Affairs and has been carried on principally for the tribes of Oklahoma. The story of how many of the hardened Modoc warriors from Oregon became humble and peace-loving Christians is one of the most remarkable in the history of Christian missions.

Peace Testimony

No Participation in War

1. We condemn war as the greatest violation of the sacredness of human life and reaffirm our faith that all war is absolutely contradictory to the plain precepts of Christ, and the whole spirit of His Gospel. We hold that no argument of necessity or policy, however urgent or peculiar, can avail to release individuals or nations from obedience to the teachings of Him who said, “Love your enemies.” It is our purpose to live in that spirit that takes away the occasion for war and to suffer violence, if necessary, as did our Lord, but never return evil for evil.

War Renounced 2. Statements against war have been issued by Friends during practically every military crisis since the earliest days of their history. In 1660 the following declaration was made to Charles II by George Fox and others: “We utterly deny all outward wars and strife, and fighting with outward weapons, for any end or under any pretense whatever. . . . And we certainly know and testify to the whole world that the Spirit of Christ, which leads us unto all truth, will never move us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons, neither for the kingdom of Christ nor for the kingdom of this world.” The Conference of All Friends held in London in 1920 adopted this statement: “The fundamental ground of our opposition to war is religious and ethical. It is attached to the nature of God as revealed in Christ and to the nature of man as related to Him. . . . The Christian way of life as revealed in the New Testament, the voice of conscience revealed in the soul, the preciousness of personality revealed by the transforming force of love, and the irrationality revealed in modern warfare, either together or singly, present grounds which, for those who feel them, make participation in war under any conditions impossible.”

Overcoming Evil 3. Christ’s teaching that evil cannot be overcome by evil, but only by love and the returning of good for evil, has been abundantly proved by the fact that Christianity has attained its greatest heights of spiritual power under persecution, and has died spiritually when it resorted to violence for its propagation and protection. Friends, in following Christ’s way of love, are a leaven for peace far beyond their number and find abundant openings for a ministry of healing and reconciliation amongst people of all nations. Romans 12:18 states, “If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.” Therefore, Friends feel that nonparticipation in military training and war is the action which follows the message and example of Jesus. Friends hold that nonparticipation is the way to maintain full witness to Christ’s way of love; however, understand that some individuals may feel led to serve. While such service is not encouraged, those who may feel led to serve are supported in their service. Those who feel led to serve are encouraged to seek non-combative roles.

Building Peace 4. Friends, realizing the evil nature of war, have always felt a strong responsibility for leadership in building peace and eliminating war. Friends have given leadership to all types of practical work for peace. These have included encouraging our government to apply Christian principles in relations with other nations; opposition to militarism and conscription; expressing love for all through bringing food, clothing, and other help to those in need (including “enemies”); world court and federal world government.

War Relief 5. The work in Europe of the Friends Service Council (London) and the American Friends Service Committee during and after the First World War is example of the practical application of Friends’ philosophy to international affairs. This work has continued during and after many other struggles, including feeding the hungry, relocating the displaced and efforts to promote friendly understanding and goodwill around the world.

Sanctity of the Home

Marriage 1. Marriage is a sacred institution between a man and a woman, graciously ordained by the Creator himself for the help and continuance of the human family. It is a solemn engagement for the term of life, and should be entered into reverently, advisedly, and with full consciousness of the guidance and sanction of Him who ordained it, and who alone can consummate the spiritual union of two hearts and lives. The home and family were honored and blessed by our Lord; and when he wished to portray the Kingdom of Heaven he drew his figures from these relationships.

Responsibilities 2. Marriage involves the most sacred obligations and responsibilities of life. In absolute fidelity and devotion, and as helpmeets in things temporal and spiritual, the husband and wife are to seek the well-being of each other. The virtues of life, forbearance, understanding, and self-forgetful service are the requisites of a happy home. Children have the divine right to be born into an atmosphere of love and to be reared in the nurture and admonition of the Lord by consecrated parents. It is the solemn duty of parents to build and maintain a home where mutual respect, love, courtesy, loyalty, and helpfulness are the standards of conduct.

Divorce 3. Since marriage is a solemn engagement for the term of life, and a union of souls ordained by God Himself, Friends bear a strong testimony against divorce. “What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”

Recreation and Entertainment

Recreation and Entertainment Rest and recreation are necessary to every person in the maintenance of physical, mental, and spiritual health. Friends are encouraged to consider all entertainment carefully and to weigh whether it is consistent with Christian principles and standards. It is also important to recognize that technology has a moral and spiritual dimension – for both children and adults. When entertainment and/or technology activities are in doubt, and when such doubts cannot be intelligently and conscientiously resolved, they should be avoided.

The church and the community should cooperate in furnishing wholesome and constructive social activities and recreation for the young people, in accordance with their needs. Thus high standards of quality and moral influence may be maintained, and the problem of unwholesome commercialized entertainment largely avoided.

Addictions

Addictions 1. Friends maintain a strong testimony against all addictive behavior. The Quaker testimonies of simplicity and moderation are expansive enough to encourage great caution with any substance or activity that has the potential to be addictive. These substances and activities are many and varied, including legal and illegal, moral and immoral and sometimes even encouraged or prescribed. Care should also be taken that one’s activity does not become “a stumbling block” for others and realize that what may not be problematic or addictive for one individual may be an issue for those within that person’s area of influence.

Oaths

Honesty 1. The basis of Friends testimony against taking oaths is the word of Jesus: “Swear not at all” and ‘Let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil” (Matthew 5:34, 37). (See also James 5:12.) These scriptural injunctions not only plainly forbid the taking of oaths, but emphasize simple and direct honesty in speech. The truth is to be spoken at all times. An individual’s word must be “as good as his bond”.

Exemption 2. Friends and others conscientiously opposed to oaths are generally exempt by law from such procedure. A simple affirmation may be taken instead. Requests for the use of the affirmation will be respected by all officers acquainted with the law, and those ignorant of it should be informed of its provisions.

Secret Organizations

Freedom of Action The rights of individuals to freedom of action is emphasized, but Friends are cautioned against membership in an organization which will directly or indirectly diminish sympathy with any portion of society or tend to compete with the church of Jesus Christ as the center of one’s interest and loyalty.

Observance of A Day of Rest

Day of Rest In accordance with the teachings of the Holy Scriptures, we believe that our loving Heavenly Father, with a full understanding of our physical and spiritual needs, has graciously set apart one day in seven for rest and worship. While we do not understand this to be a day of legalistic restrictions and prohibitions (Mark 2:27), it is to be kept holy and sacred, free from the stress and the labor of the other six days, and dedicated to the purposes for which it was ordained. We bear a testimony against commercialized Sunday recreation and entertainment, and against industries which operate on Sunday, not of necessity but for profit. Friends are urged not to participate in them.

Simplicity

Quality of Life The lives of Friends should be characterized by simplicity and sincerity. Friends feel that simplicity in speech, in dress, and in manner of living is the Christian ideal. Members are constrained to “free themselves from luxurious and self-indulgent ways of living”¹ and to seek rather a depth and purity of life consistent with “the Light within.”

As the Society of Friends, we are more concerned for the progress of the kingdom of God than for power, prestige and possessions. We should be eager to do all that is possible to bring men and women to Christ, to see justice and equal opportunity given to all, and to see that conditions for world peace are sought and maintained. One’s entire life is considered to be a sacred stewardship.

DRAFT

¹ Caroline Emilia Stephens, *Quaker Strongholds*, pg. 144

The Queries

The purpose of the Queries is to direct attention to the true source of spiritual strength, to promote individual faithfulness to Christ, and to keep the church in a healthy condition. They are of value in appraising the state of society and in helping each member to determine through self-examination whether he/she is living a consistent Christian life. The Queries should be read frequently in private devotions and at specified intervals both in monthly and in quarterly meetings.

Meetings should find a method to share The Queries on a regular and frequent basis.

General Queries

- Spiritual Growth* 1. Do you strive for the constant realization of God's presence in your life? Do you profess your unwavering allegiance to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ? Are you sensitive and obedient to the leading of the Holy Spirit? Do you endeavor to advance your spiritual growth by the prayerful study of the Bible and other devotional literature?
- Meetings for Worship and Business* 2. Are all meetings for worship and for business held regularly and are you regular and punctual in attending? Do you come with heart and mind prepared for communion with God and fellowship with one another? Do you individually assume your rightful share in the responsibility of the work and worship of the meeting? Are your meetings for business times of spiritual concern and prayerful search for the way of truth?
- Christian Fellowship* 3. Do you love one another as becomes the followers of Christ? Are you careful of the reputation of others? When differences arise, do you make earnest effort to end them speedily?
- Home and Family* 4. Do you practice the daily reading of the scriptures in your families, giving time for reverent meditation? Do you make your home a place of hospitality, friendliness, peace, and Christian fellowship? Do you promote the moral and spiritual life of your children through careful supervision of their education, recreation, and friendships?
- Youth and the Church* 5. Do you seek the conversion to Jesus Christ and spiritual development of your young people? Do you instruct them in the principles and practices of Friends? Do you strive to create a community life that will promote their mental and physical well-being?
- Standards of Life* 6. Do you observe simplicity and moderation in your manner of living? Do you give proper attention to the rules of health? As ambassadors of Christ, are you careful to avoid activities and the use of substances which adversely affect your Christian witness?
- Business Responsibility* 7. Are you careful to keep service to Christ's Kingdom before professional/career responsibilities? Are you truthful and honest in your business transactions, punctual in fulfilling your promises, and prompt in the payment of your debts? Do you give an honest day's work for a day's pay?
- Missionary Outreach* 8. Do you make diligent effort to acquaint yourselves and those under your care with spiritual needs locally and globally? Do you support by prayer and systematic giving those who are laboring to extend Christ's Kingdom? Do you use your spiritual gifts in serving humanity as God grants you light to see such service?
- Peace* 9. Do you consistently practice the Christian principles of love and goodwill toward all people? Do you work actively for peace and for the removal of the causes of war? Do you observe the

testimony of Friends against military training and service? Do you endeavor to make clear to all whom you can influence, that war is inconsistent with the spirit and teaching of Jesus?

Attitudes in Race Relations 10. Does your attitude toward people of other races indicate your belief in their right to equal opportunity? Do you believe in the spiritual capacity of individuals of all races and do you recognize their equality in the sight of God? Are you aware of your responsibility as a Christian to help in the elimination of racial discrimination and prejudice?

Social Conscience 11. Do you minister to others, understanding that when you minister to "the least of these..." you are ministering to Christ as well? Do you as workers, employers, producers, consumers, and investors endeavor to cultivate goodwill and mutual understanding in your economic relationships? Do you intelligently exercise all of your constitutional privileges and thus seek to promote Christian influence locally, nationally, and internationally?

Queries for Meetings on Ministry and Counsel

Responsibilities of Membership 1. Do you as elders and ministers recognize your responsibility in setting an example of faithfulness and loyalty to the meetings for worship and business? Do you accept appointment to this group as a definite response to the "high calling of God in Christ Jesus"? Are you concerned that the needs of all are ministered to in your meetings, whether by silent worship, inspirational speaking, or reverent music?

Relations with Other Members 2. Are you aware of the necessity of harmonious relations with your fellow members as a basis for the most effective service to the church? Do you as leaders in the meeting earnestly try to win individuals to Christ and to strengthen the faith and loyalty of fellow Christians?

Spiritual Gifts 3. Do you endeavor to recognize and develop your special talents and abilities for service in the meeting, and do you pray for divine guidance in their use? Do you cultivate the spiritual gifts of the members of your meeting? Are you always ready to encourage and advise those who engage in the vocal ministry or in other Christian work?

Personal Life and Conduct 4. Do you provide in your schedule of activities an opportunity for daily devotions? Do you prayerfully seek the leading of the Holy Spirit in the interpretation of scriptural truth? Does your personal conduct reflect the true dignity of Christian character as set forth in the Scriptures? Do you strive to live so that others see Christ in you?

Queries for Pastors (if approved)