

The Herndon Light



2nd Month 12, 2017 A Newsletter of Herndon Friends Meeting - Quakers - Reston & Herndon Virginia 242

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| 2/19 | Fauquier Friends Worship Group Singing at 10:30; Worship/First Day school 11:00 |
| 2/19 | Adult Discussion 9:00 AM Ting Yi Oei—a spiritual journey |
| 3/5 | Potluck at Rise of Meeting for Worship |
| 3/11 | Second Saturday Friendly Eight Discussion at Meg Wallace's house; sign up at Meetinghouse |
| 3/12 | Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business |
| 3/12 | Peace Awards Recognition Ceremony, Sherwood Community Center 4 PM |
| 3/19 | Adult Discussion: Draft Minute on Support of Friends United Meeting Led by John Smallwood |
| 4/23 | Adult Discussion: 9:00 AM The Conversation Project: End of Life Planning K. Cole |

Query: Aging

Do we welcome the approach of old age, both for ourselves and for others, as an opportunity for wisdom, for detachment from turmoil and for greater attachment to the Light?

How might I attend to what love requires of me in each new stage of my life?

Have I arranged the practical matters regarding possessions, location of documents, burial, etc., that will arise when I die or am unable to communicate so my family is not unduly burdened?

Am I comfortable with the relationships I will leave behind?

How can we support that of God in one another in the face of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral challenges?

How do we support caregivers who may be overwhelmed by the chronic needs of the one receiving care?

Advices:

Aging begins the moment we are born, and cells within us keep growing until we die. We

need to approach old age with courage and hope, with receiving and giving, and with forgiving and being forgiven. Aging is a natural part of human life. At no time should people be on the periphery of society because of their age. Older persons, who represent an increasingly large portion of the population, have varied talents, interests, and concerns. Friends have a long tradition of appreciating the gifts of older members, and our Meetings should continue to encourage participation of all ages in Meeting activities.

As much as possible, make arrangements for your end of life care in good time, so that an undue burden does not fall on others. Although growing older may bring increasing disability and loneliness, it can also bring serenity, detachment, and wisdom. Pray that in your final years you may be enabled to find new ways of receiving and reflecting God's love.

A Meeting will be rewarded by a mutual relationship in which younger Friends are able to appreciate the presence and worth of the older Friends in their midst. We should help

Herndon Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends holds Meeting for Worship at 660 Spring Street in Herndon each First Day (Sunday). Hymn singing begins at 10:15 am. An unprogrammed Meeting for Worship begins at 10:30 am and lasts about one hour. After worshipping with adults for 10-15 minutes, children and teenagers attend First Day School classes until the end of Meeting for Worship. The building is wheelchair accessible. For more information call the Meeting's telephone answering machine at 703-736-0592. The Newsletter Editor is Terence McCormally. Notices for the Newsletter can be sent to him at 2514 Trophy Lane, Reston, VA 20191 E-mail tmccormally@ffpcs.com. Newsletter assembled addressed and mailed by Meg Wallace **WEBSITE AT** <http://www.quakercloud.org/cloud/herndon-friends-meeting>.

The Care Coordinating Committee is available for Friends in need. If you need assistance because of an illness or other emergency, contact Abbey Compton, Clerk, at abbey.compton@verizon.net; or Priscilla Chamlee at dandpchamlee@gmail.com; or Fred Cresson at cresson4@verizon.net, or Stacey LaRoy at staceybear@laroyfamily.com or Margaret Rogers at margaret.anne.rogers1@gmail.com

older Friends know that they are needed, cared for, loved, and will be remembered.

Meeting For Business 2/12/17

Clerk Cat Wilkins gathered 26 Friends for Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business at 9:00 a.m. on February 12, 2017, with a reading of the 1st Query on Aging, from the 2013 edition, Second Reading, of *Faith and Practice of the Baltimore Yearly Meeting*. Friends responded out of the silence, noting the importance of grace in offering, accepting and declining help. Parents assist their children by helping them accept more responsibility as they grow up, and they can continue to help their children by modeling when to relinquish some autonomy. The shift in capacity can look like a role reversal, but it may be more of a continuous process. It applies not just to aging, but disability from any reason and even to differences in skills.

Ministry and Oversight - Inga Erickson reported on upcoming adult discussions, held at 9 a.m. in the Meeting room. On February 19 at 9:00 AM, Ting Yi Oei will share his spiritual journey with Friends. On March 19 will be a discussion on our relationship with Friends United Meeting led by John Smallwod, and on April 23 Katherine Cole and Terence McCormally will lead a discussion on end-of-life issues and planning.

Treasurer – Terence McCormally, Treasurer and Liz Willson, Assistant Treasurer, presented the Budget year-end report for 2016, as well as the proposed 2017 budget. There was some concern in the latter part of 2016 that contributions were not meeting budgeted expectations. Although the year-end audit is not yet complete it does appear that contributions were about 500 short of expenditures in 2016, resulting in that decrease in meeting reserves Both contributions and expenditures were about 6000 short of budget, which meant we did not make the usual budgeted contribution to the Growth and Building Fund. The Finance committee thought this was likely a one time effect and recommends not decreasing the budget expectations, with the hope that we will be able to contribute to the growth and

building fund in 2017. Accordingly a 2017 budget was presented.

The Finance committee noted some savings. Utility costs are expected to decrease about \$1000 a year due to changes meeting house use and phone service. The finance committee recommends paying the allocated apportionment to BYM, but not contributing more to BYM until we are confident of meeting our other commitments. Likewise, the contribution to Friends United Meeting will not be paid until after Friends have considered our relationship to FUM during the March Adult Discussion session.

There are other minor changes in the budget: the amounts allocated for the newsletter, and the ministry and oversight committee were reduced to bring them more in line with recent experience. The finance committee's budget was increased to allow for increase in Electronic Fund Transfer costs.

Supplies for making bag lunches for the homeless shelter have increased, but the net result is zero since other costs for Peace and Social Concerns were lowered. Insurance costs went up because of the shed. **The Meeting approved the budget proposal for 2017.**

The Finance Committee is considering paying off our mortgage from the Growth and Building Fund. The Herndon Friends Meetinghouse was purchased from the Herndon Fortnightly Club with a mortgage extended to Herndon Friends from the Fortnightly club. The interest rate on the mortgage for the last 20 years has been 7.75%, which was a favorable rate at the time, particularly since it would have been difficult for the Meeting at the time to have obtained a mortgage without personal loan guarantees from Meeting members. The mortgage has a remaining principal of \$76,000. With Herndon Friends' commitment to the Growth and Building Fund (now at about \$400,000), the Meeting is in a position to pay off the mortgage. This would take some of the pressure off the annual budget and save approximately \$30,000 in interest payments over the remaining 10 years of the loan. This would be at the cost of losing the interest on

that money in the growth and building fund, which last year earned about 5.7%

Terence reported that consideration of paying off the mortgage was not raised out of a financial concern about cash flow, but rather a concern that we could spend our money more effectively by serving the community in other ways.

The Finance Committee recommends that the Meeting begin the process of negotiating with the Herndon Fortnightly club to pay off the balance of the mortgage on the property at 660 Spring Street in the middle of the year. The Meeting approved having Harry Tunis approach the Herndon Fortnightly Club about this. Finance Committee will discuss this further after the investigation and report back to the Meeting at a later date.

Terence McCormally, Treasurer, reported that the transfer of responsibility for Meeting finances from Devin Mahoney, the previous Treasurer, has been completed. Friends should note two changes in contact information. The treasurer can be contacted by email at HerndonFriendsTreasurer@gmail.com or by US Post at Herndon Friends Meeting, PO Box 88, Herndon, VA, 20172.

Apportionment: Each year BYM queries monthly meetings to establish appropriate apportionment. The data collected includes the total number of households contributing to the Meeting in the previous year (for Herndon Friends: 51); the total amount contributed to the meeting (\$60,018—although this number may change after an internal audit of 2016 contributions), the number of households that contributed more than \$100 in the year (47), the investment income and interest received by the meeting (\$6,423.42) and the amount of that income which is in restricted accounts (for HFM, \$6,275.67 of interest and dividends in the Growth and Building Fund.)

House & Grounds – Dave Whomsley announced that, thanks to Andrew LaRoy and Harry Tunis, we have received three bids for

the proposed electrical work, which will be reviewed and reported to the House and Grounds committee for selection of a contractor.

Dave Whomsley also presented the House and Grounds Annual Report for 2016

Ad Hoc Greening Committee – Margaret Rogers reported for Margaret Fisher that at their meeting on January 15, 2017, the Greening committee prepared a proposal for the outdoor space surrounding the meetinghouse. The committee is proposing consultation with a professional landscape designer for advice on using the meeting property to support local wildlife, reducing rainwater run off, and demonstrate sustainable landscaping to our community. Components of the landscaping might include a rain garden or vegetated swale, locally native plants, and a place to sit outside that would be inviting both for Friends and for passersby.

The committee asked for approval to hire a landscape designer to draw up a plan, with the expectation that they would return for further approval once those plans have been created. The committee estimates that this plan would cost under \$600. Funds would come from the Capital Fund. The Meeting approved this request.

Student Peace Awards of Fairfax County: Margaret Rogers reported there are now 22 recipients of the award this year. The awards ceremony will be on March 12 at 4 p.m. at Sherwood Community Center. If anyone wants to be added to Margaret's email list about this committee's work, please contact her.

The next Meeting for Business will be on **March 12**, at 9 a.m. Friends were reminded that this will be the first day of Daylight Savings Time.

Mea Culpa, Mea Culpa, Mea Maxima Culpa

The treasurer has received notification of errors in the 2016 Donor Acknowledgement Letters. So far, errors have been identified in 18 of the 51 letters sent. The treasurer

apologizes for the errors, thanks those who notified him, and asked that anyone else who sees a discrepancy send a notice to HerndonFriendsTreasurer@gmail.com. The contribution file is being audited, and corrected Donor Acknowledgement letters will be sent.

Sandwich Making

Thanks again to the legion of sandwich makers who with 22 hands made 120 sandwiches for the Embry Rucker Shelter! Asa McClendon, Eli McClendon, Finn Wilkins and Kyle Benjamin spread the meat and cheese while Milo Wilkins and Ebba Shinkman stuffed the paper bags. Kim Glazer counted and marked the bags. Tim Stanley, Melanie Stanley, and Abbey Compton supervised, bagged and did quality control. Lynn Nagle continues to supervise the delivery of supplies.

Unspoken Messages

Transfer of Membership

Terence McCormally

My friend John Miller died last month; he was my oldest friend. We met in the 7th grade. I wasn't going to go to the funeral. He lived in Burlington, Iowa and it's a long way to go, but then his brother Steve called and asked if I would be one of the pallbearers and I couldn't really turn that down.

The thing about John was that he was badly disabled. He had some rare genetic condition --Fibrodysplasia ossificans progressive--so that whenever he got a muscle bruise, instead of healing the bruised muscle turned to bone and he got stiffer and stiffer. The doctors at Mayo Clinic said he wouldn't make it through his teens. When I met him, one hip was fused at a 40 degree angle, meaning he couldn't walk upright. That one came from a line drive to the hip in 3rd grade. He should have been afraid to do anything for worry that an injury would limit him more but he was pretty much fearless: in high school he kept up with the usual risky antics of teenagers, bouncing around in the back of a pick up truck and playing football with the guys. By the time he was 22 he was bedfast, his legs mostly bone and his shoulders and elbows really stiff..

His father died when he was in high school, and his older brother went off to college and career, so for 40 years it was him and his mother, she providing the physical care he needed until just 3 years ago when at the age of 83 she needed a hip replacement and John moved to a nursing home. The two of them were on the phone every day.

When the Internet became available, it was a real boon for John, with streaming movies and media and access to news and books, and letting him keep in touch with friends across the country. For the Burlington High School class of 1972 John was the glue. He was the guy to call to find out what had happened to Mark's kid, or did Chris really quit being a lawyer to become a UCC minister? After he was bedbound, he didn't have a lot of opportunity to make new friends, so he kept the old ones—that's why six of his high school buddies were his pallbearers.

John's family had been members of Grace United Methodist Church forever. John hadn't attended services there since, well, for more than 40 years, but his mother is a faithful attender, so that's where the funeral was.

Maybe "a good funeral" is an oxymoron, but it was a good funeral. I think the mark of a good funeral is one where you leave saying, "I wish I would have known this person better." John's brother spoke, as did one of the other pallbearers and one of John's cousins, and the Chaplain of the nursing home. They talked about how much he loved sports, how he loved to compete (in everything: Fantasy football and cribbage and political arguments) and how much he hated to lose.

The Nursing Home Chaplain delivered a eulogy with the advantage of having met with John every week or so for the last three years. He pulled out the notes from three years ago of the intake interview when he'd asked John how he was coping with his condition. "I just feel that the spirit of God in me lifts me above my limitations." And "God gave me the right kind of personality for this disease." And he read the comments from the nursing home caregivers about what a funny, kind, smart

man John was, how he would educate people on his disease, but was always patient, always thankful. He was always in pain but never complaining. He was disappointed about having to leave home to go the nursing home, but he accepted it graciously.

The funny thing is that John never talked religion with me. He didn't talk sports either. We played chess and talked about his niece the doctor. He spoke to me in the language I understood, and that was his real genius. He saw each of us for what we were and what we were interested in and responded to us out of that: the pastor in religious terms, the sports fan of the superbowl, the doctor of another doctor. His life was infused with gratitude.

When I left after a visit, I didn't feel guilty that I hadn't done more. That was John's gift to me, that the paltry little I did for him was enough. He was always grateful. When a flare in his condition stiffened up his last elbow, leaving his arm permanently bent at a 90 degree angle, what he said was, "I'm so glad that it froze in a position I can still feed myself."

I tried to offer this little condolence to his brother: that he had been a wonderful big brother all these years, and to his mother that no one could have done a better job caring for him. They both demurred, Steve saying that he could have done more, and Mrs. Miller saying "I could have kept him home a little longer." I don't think that was true a bit.

The pastor of Grace Methodist Church, a 4th generation Methodist pastor, whose wife is also a pastor delivered the final remarks. He remarked on the devotion John inspired in those around him, and he closed with an invocation asking God to accept John's transfer of membership from Grace Methodist Church to the Church Magnificat. Amen.

Women's Retreat January 27-29

Twenty women from Herndon Friends Meeting attended the annual BYM Women's retreat. The retreat epistle is shared here:



29 January 2017

Dear Friends near and far,

The weekend of January 27-29 2017, 175 Friends representing 28 meetings gathered at the Pearlstone Center to reflect on the theme of *Quaker Wisdom: Echoes In Our Souls.*"

Out of gathered silence on Saturday morning, our plenary singer Paulette Meier shared the words of Quaker thinkers, set to music. Paulette reminded us that a deep and thoughtful exploration of Quaker spiritual roots can strengthen us collectively and individually. Particularly resonant this weekend in light of political developments were these words from James Naylor:

*"Art thou in darkness?
Mind it not, for if thou dost it will feed thee
more.
But stand still, and act not, and wait in
patience
Till Light arises out of Darkness and leads
thee."*

We were grateful for Paulette's strong voice-- and for the chance to add ours when we joined her in song.

As morning workshops began, we gathered to write, celebrate, knit, heal, and process the election. How warm it is to hold the Light to each other when we all need it. We reflected on radical simplicity and how to heal in a post-truth world.

In small groups, in worship sharing, we felt wisdom transfer between the old and the young. It is powerful to be near the deep anchors of our elders, and inspiring to hear wisdom come from the younger members of our body. Many of us turned to the Light and waited faithfully in it. Experiments with Light drew 90 of us together in a new way.

In the afternoon, workshops continued as a source of thought and reflection. Many Friends joined in worship sharing and discussions about the Women's March on Washington earlier this month, and how Quakers are led to respond and act. Some of us participated in chanting, welcoming the mysteries that opened in our hearts. For those who needed a chance to stretch, walks on the Pearlstone grounds past the pond and signs noting flora and fauna were rejuvenating.

At dinner on Saturday, Young Friends and Young Adult Friends discussed how we can carry these communities with us to our adult years. We marveled at how Friends can learn from each other across age lines, and planted seeds of thought on how to do so more intentionally in the future. Our conversation sparked many ideas, including walking worship sharing groups, and Young Friends announced interest in helping plan the next retreat alongside whichever meeting(s) take on planning for next year.

After dinner, over 100 women gathered in three circles for Sacred Circle Dancing led by Maggie Moon. We danced to great spiritual traditions from around the world and ended with a chant, created by Marcelle Martin and Betsy Krome at Pendle Hill: "Abide In Me."

Other groups gathered in the lounges and in front of the fireplace to read books from the book swap and knit pink pussy hats. We were reminded how joyful it can be to gather for the purpose of action when times are uncertain.

The joy continued in an evening talent show, now called "Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Performance." We started laughing and guffawing as the show began. We basked in original song and stories. Friends noted a strong presence of...ukuleles!

And as Mary Campbell noted, "You will all be able to get to bed by Quaker midnight."

Amid the levity, we feel a somber tone weigh in on our conversations as a new Administration takes office in D.C. Fatigue and grief mix in with the joy of seeing one another. We are troubled to hear that the "Muslim ban" has become a reality. We each struggle to balance the need for outward action with the need for inward renewal. And we take heart in our unity together as we return to homes and actions led by the Spirit.

In Love and Light,

Baltimore Yearly Meeting Women's Retreat
[Epistle Committee: YAF Anna McCormally
and YAF Johanna Jackson]

Should Churches be Tax Havens?

In the process of sending out the donor acknowledgement letters for Friends to use on their tax returns, the treasurer was looking for the Meeting's tax ID number, only to discover that we don't have one. That's because the Meeting is not registered as a 501c-3 charitable organization. Most large churches do register with the IRS as tax exempt (BYM does) but many smaller churches don't do this. Only two monthly meetings of BYM have troubled to go through the 501 c3 registration process—Friends Meeting of Washington and Stoney Spring. And that's OK; donations to churches are "assumed" to be tax deductible even without registering. In the event of an audit of a contributor's taxes, it becomes the taxpayers' burden of proof that the organization to which they've contributed is eligible—not too hard for a Quaker meeting.

Churches are "tax exempt" in three important ways. They don't have to pay taxes on the income they receive in exchange for their services—on their donations. They don't have to pay property taxes. And their contributors can deduct their contributions from their own personal taxes. These tax breaks, which account for 80 billion dollars a year in lost revenue to state and federal governments, are justified based on two ideas. One is that the

government is interested in promoting charity for social welfare programs. The trouble with this is that the overwhelming majority of money raised by churches goes to benefit the people in the church. At Herndon Friends, about 15% of our budget goes to things outside our own community (that's if you include things like the apportionment we pay to BYM as inside our community). So in some ways it's like a social club, or my gym membership. I pay to support it and I get most of the benefit. It's not obvious to this writer that this needs 80 billion a year in government subsidy.

The second reason for keeping churches tax exempt is that religious liberty/separation of church and state thing. If churches owed taxes on their property, and didn't pay them, it puts the government in the position of being able to close the church down, and that seems like a bad thing. But it leads to this problem of "fraudulent" churches: self proclaimed one person or one family churches, or "non denominational" mega-churches investing in corporate jets and expansive real estate. This leads to the possibility of asking the government to decide what is a "real" church, a very difficult decision. The IRS does list some characteristics that are common to churches and says it uses some combination of these to decide if an organization is a Church:

- Distinct legal existence
- Recognized creed and form of worship
- Definite and distinct ecclesiastical government
- Formal code of doctrine and discipline
- Distinct religious history
- Membership not associated with any other church or denomination
- Organization of ordained ministers
- Ordained ministers selected after completing prescribed courses of study
- Literature of its own
- Established places of worship
- Regular congregations
- Regular religious services
- Sunday schools for the religious instruction of the young
- Schools for the preparation of its members

On some of these Quakers would qualify but on others not so much.

Another aspect of the church state separation is the prohibition against campaigning from the pulpit. The IRS can decide that an organization is not a church if it spends a substantial amount of its resources trying to get particular people elected. The original idea about this was to prevent wealthy people from getting around campaign finance laws limiting contributions to political candidates by funneling them through a church. Now that the rules have changed so there is really no limit on campaign spending this distinction between religious and political speech is less important. Perhaps that's why there are now proposals to eliminate the restrictions on campaigning from the pulpit.

These sorts of questions about the relationship between churches and government, and citizens and government just remind me that all the interesting stuff happens at the boundaries.

--Terence McCormally

Second Saturday

Meg Wallace has been hosting "Second Saturday" Friendly Eights sessions at her home. The format consists of a light meal, followed by a focus piece followed by a time for private meditation or reflection and then some time for sharing. Sign up at the Meetinghouse for the next session which will be on March 8th.

This piece was the focus of the most recent Second Saturday.

A Ritual to Read to Each Other

*If you don't know the kind of person I am
And I don't know the kind of person you are
A pattern that others made may prevail in the world
And following the wrong god home we may miss our star.*

*For there is many a small betrayal in the mind,
A shrug that lets the fragile sequence break
Sending with shouts the horrible errors of childhood
Storming out to play through the broken dyke.*

And as elephants parade holding each elephant's tail,

*But if one wanders the circus won't find the park,
I call it cruel and maybe the root of all cruelty
To know what occurs but not recognize the fact.*

*And so I appeal to a voice, to something shadowy,
a remote important region in all who talk:
though we could fool each other, we should
consider-
Lest the parade of our mutual life get lost in the
dark.*

*For it is important that awake people be awake,
Or a breaking line may discourage them back to
sleep;
The signals we give - yes or no, or maybe-
Should be clear: the darkness around us is deep.*

--William Stafford

Vocal Ministry

On January 22nd, Harry Tunis led a discussion on the Vocal Ministry during Adult Discussion, and he shared these notes from the discussion.

Friends did not do away with the laity, they did away with the priesthood. So we all assume the challenge of vocal ministry. Early Quakers were sometimes called “Friends of Truth” or “Friends of Jesus.” Those labels morphed into the “Religious Society of Friends.” Our prophetic tradition can reasonably be traced to this passage. We are encouraged to share our Truths.

Vocal ministry is just *one* form for ministry. We have our Food Ministry for Cornerstones. We have a care committee ministry. We have a ministry that attempts to affect legislation. We can see some of our ministries. They are tangible. Some ministries cannot be seen, like holding someone in the Light.

Another ministry that cannot be seen is the ministry of presence. Our meetings for worship are successful to the extent that together we have a collective sense of a ministry of presence. We come as individuals but we can experience a ministry of presence for the entire group. Vocal ministry arises out of that ministry of presence. The ministry of presence is a form of expectant waiting ... expecting to be comforted, inspired, educated or nudged into action. If we don't come with a sense of expectation then there is no reason to have a meeting for worship.

So, there are conditions where vocal ministry can flourish. There are many formats for messages but many begin with a reflection on

an experience then move on to a larger Truth. Friends believe in progressive revelation so that the Truth we have today may be surpassed later by a deeper understanding. Early Friends probably used traditional Bible-based language. Today we use less of that style.

There are times when we craft messages in the first fifteen minutes so that children can have access to them. And that's fine. We can be lead to make our messages simpler.

Messages are different from what we might say in an adult discussion. Messages are more than a rich idea that the mind has created. Vocal ministry is not meant to be a personal therapeutic moment although profound emotions can be expressed. But vocal ministry is much broader. When we hear vocal ministry we do not exercise our critical minds like we might outside of meeting for worship. We do look for words or ideas that might inspire us in some way.... Realizing that the speaker may be using different words from what we might use. We may need to overcome the desire to edit what we are listening.

Not every message is for everyone. Perhaps a message will never be for you, but perhaps it is something you will grow into understanding. So, rejoice if it rings true, but if it does not speak to your condition, there is no need to internally dissect it, simply return to worship.

Harry related some of his personal experiences with giving a message:

“Issues before the message: The main question I have as a message is taking shape is whether the message is only for me. I am quite persistent in asking that question. I try to convince myself that it is only for me. A second question is: “Am I adding anything to the worship? If not, then perhaps I just have an intellectual creation. I know I have to guard against that. If I can stifle the urge to speak then I often discover that some threads of my inspiration appear in the messages that others give. (In short, I've been let off the hook.)

Most of my messages gradually take shape, word by word, sort of emerging out of a mist. Then when I stand I try to read the words that have appeared. I hope that I reflect the Light not out run the Light.

Often times I enter meeting for worship as a blank slate, minding my own business, and something nudges its way in. At other times I arrive with a germ of an idea that I have wanted to have time to explore... and it may or may not build into a message. And, of course, there are times when the vocal ministry that is given can prompt my giving a message.

Struggles after the message: Sometimes I'm annoyed that I missed saying something that was clear in my mind before I stood up. Sometimes I feel that I didn't pull it all together or that I was unusually obtuse in connecting the flow of ideas. Sometimes I regret the feeling that the message didn't appear to add anything to the worship. Sometimes I regret that I've given too many messages.

Overall, I have fewer struggles now, compared to fifty years ago when I gave my first messages in Lewisburg Friends Meeting. A few years back I thought that if God wants me to give a message then God should appreciate that I gave it my best effort.

Of course there are times when I have no regrets. I sit down in peace. I'm relieved. And sometimes I'm especially surprised to discover what I have said.

I hope that this discussion today will not suppress the number of messages that are given but will assist you in how you experience that nudge that all of a sudden means that you are standing. "Faithfulness takes courage" as the Quaker Speak video mentioned."

After his introduction, Harry opened the floor for consideration of the queries:

1. What are the conditions under which you find yourself speaking in Meeting? And the conditions under which you find yourself not speaking?

2. How do you know if the message is for you or for others?
3. How do you know if the message is formed only by the intellect and not by a spiritual guide?
4. How do you begin a message? How do you end it?
5. How do you feel after you sit down after giving a message? Later on?
6. How many messages should there be in a Meeting for Worship?

Friends responded including the observation that one useful exercise is to try and distinguish what might be a message, versus a joy or sorrow to share, vs an announcement.

Friends who want go further explore ideas about the vocal ministry were referred to the QuakerSpeak videos at quakerspeak.com. and to the meeting website with guidelines for meeting for worship at <https://www.fgcquaker.org/cloud/herndon-friends-meeting/pages/meeting-worship>

SSOM 2016

During meeting on 2/12/17 M&O Clerk Inga Erickson led a worship sharing to discern the Spiritual State of the Meeting. This is an annual exercise, used to prepare a minute to send to BYM. The newsletter editor will compose a draft of the Spiritual State of the Meeting Report to be reviewed at the March Meeting for Business. Friends who were unable to attend or who have had additional insights into the Queries can email their thoughts to tmccormally@ffpcs.com

Tim Stanley

"Tim and Melanie Stanley report that Tim is still undergoing evaluation of the abnormal MRI finding he had last month. Tim will be having major abdominal (pancreatic) surgery as soon as possible and will be in the Washington Hospital Center for 7 to 10 days. Afterward, the surgeon will have more information as to whether any other treatment will be necessary. Tim writes, "we have felt your prayers and caring thoughts over us like a warm blanket on a cold night. There are not words to express our thanks, but Thank you." Cards and letters can be sent to: Tim and Melanie Stanley 12228 Parkstream Terrace Herndon, Va 20170"

Brief Notes

Thanks to Camryn Joy Williams and Renee Erickson for providing Child Care during Meeting for Business and Worship Sharing.

FCNL Action Alerts

What's the one action you should take this week to influence Congress? Sign up to get a weekly dose of advocacy delivered right to your inbox, from the biggest lobby for peace on Capitol Hill.

Find out how easy it can be to take effective action and make your voice heard.

<http://act.fcnl.org/signup/one-action-every-week/>

*Herndon Friends Meeting
660 Spring Street
Herndon, VA 20170*