



## Concord Quarterly Meeting Newsletter Volume 11, Issue 1 Jan 2015

### Adult Meeting for Learning: Questions in a Hat

*Tom Woodward, Goshen Meeting*

During our time together at Quarterly Meeting, we would like to share a practice we have been using in Adult Meeting for Learning at Goshen for several years now. It is simple. We gather every first First Day of the month. We have a collection of questions written by those who come to these sessions, including any new questions added that day. None is signed. The anonymity allows us to pose our



own tender, soul-searching questions without undue self-consciousness. We place all questions in a hat and draw one at random for discussion in a relaxed, worship sharing mode. Generally we have time for only one question in a

morning. Discussions are wide ranging and penetrating, truly a spiritual exercise and experience for those in attendance.

A few questions that we have already addressed might give a sense of the scope of our discussions.

- Have you ever had a "mountain top" experience? Can you put it in words?
- How does Jesus fit in your thinking?
- What does your belief in God/Spirit/Higher Power do for you in your life? What role does this Presence play in your daily life?
- What is the Quaker stance towards police work?

In our last session we considered "What words are most helpful in describing the divine?"

The range of questions and our not knowing what we will consider until the question is selected at random and read to the group perhaps explain why what we do remains vital and engaging. After a period of silent centering we begin, first to come to a better understanding of what is being asked of us and then to share our own experiences;

we all realize that our answers are tentative and may well change as we hear what others say. As often happens, we are coming face to face with the limitations of language. Our desire to listen, to hear what others have to say is frequently stronger than our desire to speak. We share our



questions as much if not more than our answers.

Frequently, our answers are simply questions from a different point of view. The greatest certainty we gain from this time together is

that we are not alone in our struggles, which we are all seeking. From here we go to the meeting room for further worship. On occasion, what has focused our discussion during this session has surfaced in the vocal ministry of one who was not part of that discussion, a profound and deepening experience.

We realize that in the hour allotted for the program we can replicate only the barest bones of our practice. We will divide into groups with a members of Goshen who have participated in the exercise to help start the process and to offer assistance if necessary. In an effort to save time, we will provide questions already written. We will also provide paper and pencils to Friends from the Quarter who have questions they would like to submit. Our intent is to have sufficient structure to proceed and sufficient flexibility to allow the leading of Spirit.

Through this practice we at Goshen have come to greater understanding of ourselves, each other, and of Spirit, and we would like to share our experience with Friends in the Quarter.

### Children's Program at Quarterly Meeting: Gender Equality in the U.S. & Abroad

At Quarterly Meeting in January, the Children's Program will explore gender equality with age appropriate activities. The very young will enjoy songs, stories and art activities during childcare. Older children will watch a selected clip from the documentary *Girls Rising* about the struggles that girls face around the world. Afterwards, elementary aged children will share their thoughts and process their feelings through wondering questions, group games, and art response. Middle schoolers and young Friends will also watch an interview with Malala Yousafzai, the girl who just won the Nobel Peace Prize. Her interview speaks strongly of Quaker principles. These video clips will be used to help inspire questions the older children might ask about equality of the sexes. Like the adults, those questions will be put in a hat and drawn for discussion.

Child care for all ages will take place during Quarterly Meeting for Business from 8:30-9:30 am. The children's program on Gender Equality will run from 9:30-11:30; then the children will join meeting for worship. We hope many children in the Quarter will come join us.

## BIRMINGHAM'S HARVEST BUFFET

"It is all about fun, food, farmers and fundraising." That is how Connie Eash describes Birmingham's annual Harvest Buffet that was held on November 15, 2014. More than 65 meeting members and attendees enjoyed working together to serve supper buffet-style to 175 paying guests.

Local family farms grew the food, free of pesticides and GMOs. The turkey was raised specifically for the Harvest Buffet in the pasture of a local Amish farm. Some farmers donated herbs, eggplant and squash, while most was purchased directly from the farmers, supporting the local economy as well as the families who depend on farming for their income. The popular roasted Brussel sprouts, roasted beets, and fresh lettuce were grown and harvested just for the dinner. The menu also included turkey with honey mustard rosemary glaze, mashed potatoes and gravy, butternut squash with cranberry filling, garden salad with strawberry vinaigrette, and a variety of homemade fruit pies, apple cider and hot beverages.

There were options for vegans, vegetarians, and those who eat gluten free. For example, this year the Harvest Buffet featured a gluten free, vegan main dish consisting of lentils, mushrooms, rice, onions, carrots and garlic.

Birmingham pools the net proceeds from the Harvest Buffet with those from the Chicken Barbecue it holds

in the summer to make donations to various Friends organizations including American Friends Service Committee, Right Sharing of World Resources, and Friends General Conference, and to various local, non-profit

organizations including Barclay Friends, The Hickman, Safe Harbor, Act in Faith, and Friends Association for the Care of Children. Each year Birmingham Meeting approves which entities will receive its contributions based upon recommendations by its Oversight and Pastoral Care Committee.

The Harvest Buffet began in 2011 one year after Birmingham had laid down its sit-down-and-be-served Turkey Supper which had been held for more than 60 years and which had required more energy to put on than existed within the Meeting. In large measure, the Turkey Supper's reincarnation into the Harvest Buffet is the result of Connie Eash's vision and work.

This year's Harvest Buffet could not have been carried out without Serita Spadoni, who coordinated the volunteers; Marcia Cole-Quigley, who handled ticket sales; Betsy Wenny, who was in charge of serving; and Ted Pace, who manages Brandywine Catering in Chadds Ford. Ted prepared the food with the help of volunteers.

There's nothing better than having a member who is a caterer and who is dedicated to his meeting. Without Ted's contribution to both the Harvest Festival and Chicken Barbecue, Birmingham would be hard pressed to serve such high quality food and to raise the money it does for the benefit of such worthwhile organizations and charities. — Charles Spadoni, Coordinator



## PYM GenSec Tour

On the evening of November 8, 2014, in the social room of Centre Meeting, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's new General Secretary Christie Duncan-Tessmer spoke to 67 Friends



from many different monthly meetings on the theme "You Are PYM." She addressed the overflowing crowd after they had enjoyed a baked-potato-with-toppings supper and

dessert. It was her first stop on her tour of five geographically dispersed monthly meetings to speak about her vision of what PYM is and can be. Christie, a member of

Chestnut Hill Meeting for over twenty years, has spent a substantial part of her life working in Quaker-related undertakings: facilitator for Chestnut Hill Meeting's First Day School program; coordinator of Friends General Conference's Junior Gathering; PYM's Children's Religious Life Coordinator; and PYM's Associate Secretary for Program and Religious Life. She assumed the position of PYM's General Secretary on September 1, 2014.

Christie used the setting of a table to bring a visual dimension to her vision. She likened the table cloth she placed on a small table as PYM – a community of Friends in our defined geographical area and not its many committees and staff. The plate represented the nourishment PYM supplies us to live in the Truth as we understand it. The fork represented how we use the Spirit in our lives. She recommended that to keep that Spirit alive we ask of others "How does Truth fare with thee?" and know the answer to that question when it is posed to us.

Christie suggested that we set the table for several people so that we can share the Spirit in an ever expanding community within which we interact. One of the ways to do that is to visit other monthly meetings – hopefully at least two in the next year. Another is to be visible in the greater community in which Quakers are known for their good works. She noted that “What we do is big and it matters!”

Christie responded to several questions from those in attendance. When asked what her vision for PYM is, she responded that she wanted to see “gathered, powerful people who live from the center together.” When asked about her aspirations as General Secretary, she replied that she wanted to find ways (1) for PYM’s members to communicate among ourselves so that we remain lifted up and (2) to disseminate the news about what we are doing to

the wider world.

Christie was asked about the greatest challenges PYM faced. She mentioned two. The first, implementing the long-range plan that PYM adopted at Annual Sessions 2014, will require PYM to decide which activities to give up so that it can focus on fewer. The other is dealing with the issue of perceived and actual racism within PYM and the Society of Friends that was raised at Annual Sessions. There has been a wellspring of interest among PYM’s members to address that issue.

There is no doubt that Christie is excited about her new role as General Secretary and is committed to helping us be PYM. Fortunately, she will be able to focus on PYM’s programs rather than its finances, which are sound as a result of modest budget surpluses during the last couple of years. – *Charles Spadoni, Coordinator*

## Willistown Friends Builds an Addition

Willistown Friends Meeting has been dealing with an awkward entrance to our Meeting House for over 50 years. The problem started when friends in the 1950’s built a new two-story addition with a Social Room above and First Day School rooms below. It was a huge improvement at the time; however, there was a serious design flaw. The stair cases to the new upper and lower floors were set about ten feet from the front door and placed in the middle of the hall that divided the new wing from the original Meeting House. This created a logjam of people coming into the entrance of the building on First Day, and it was clogged like a Los Angeles Freeway in rush hour for a wedding or memorial service.

This troubled Friends, but the thought of correcting it meant building a whole new entrance structure that would be quite costly. Should we be spending such a considerable sum just to correct a minor inconvenience?

As the years went by another dynamic appeared. Our building now had three levels of which two were not handicapped accessible. In addition to an aging Meeting population, the building is used by the township as a polling place. The handicap issue was of growing concern to Friends, and most believed we had an obligation as Quakers to correct it.

An *ad hoc* committee was formed to consider the options. We brought in several architects, an elevator company, and a specialist in retrofitting existing buildings for handicap access. There really was no fix that made any sense except building a new entrance way and installing a lift that would access all three floors.

A husband of a meeting member, architect Jon Dyer, agreed to undertake the project *pro bono*. This was a

huge gift and got us moving in the right direction. Jon’s drawings were fantastic — full color CAD printouts showing the finished building complete with landscaping. However, the timing was the end of 2008 and difficult financial times meant difficulty in raising funds. We were

also reluctant to use the capital funds from investments with Friends Fiduciary. Some Friends contributed generously to the project immediately. But financial anxiety led Friends sitting month after month without deciding on whether to go forward or just abandon the project. Our treasurer finally challenged us: either we commit to going forward within 3 months or he would return all money back to the original donors.

The *ad hoc* Handicapped Access committee then identified two suitable builders and received requested estimates. The hard numbers and the deadline were now on the table. The Financial Stewardship Committee had to make a decision. The committee suggested we borrow from our Burial Ground Trust and pay it back at current interest rates to liberate the necessary cash. With this members saw that the addition was truly achievable.

For years we had struggled with the impossible entry problem, but now a way opened. The addition was approved at a Meeting for Business under a unity of the whole Meeting. In addition to the worthiness of the project, this gave

us a sense of accomplishing something big using Quaker process, as challenging and difficult as it was. Maybe the next risky undertaking will be met with less mouse-like trembling.

So it’s finished! Come visit us. Tell us what you think. And if you have trouble with the stairs, by all means hitch a ride on the lift. – *by Keith Fox, Clerk of the Committee on the Handicapped Access Addition*



## Wilmington Meeting Member is new PYM Associate Secretary

Before Christie Duncan-Tessmer became PYM’s General Secretary on September 1, 2014, she was its Associate Secretary for Program and Religious Life. Who has replaced her in that position? It is none other than Concord Quarter’s own Zachary Dutton. Zachary grew up in Wilmington Meeting and was very involved in PYM’s youth program. He is a graduate of Wilmington Friends School and Haverford College where he steeped himself in Quaker studies. After a stint at Harvard’s Divinity School, Zachary returned to Philadelphia and began working as Western Quarter’s Coordinator. I had the good fortune of working with Zachary for eight months before he assumed his new position. I look forward to seeing him bring the same great enthusiasm and skill to his new position that he brought to his old one. – *Charles Spadoni, Coordinator*



# CONCORD QUARTER

## Multi-Generational

# SQUARE DANCE

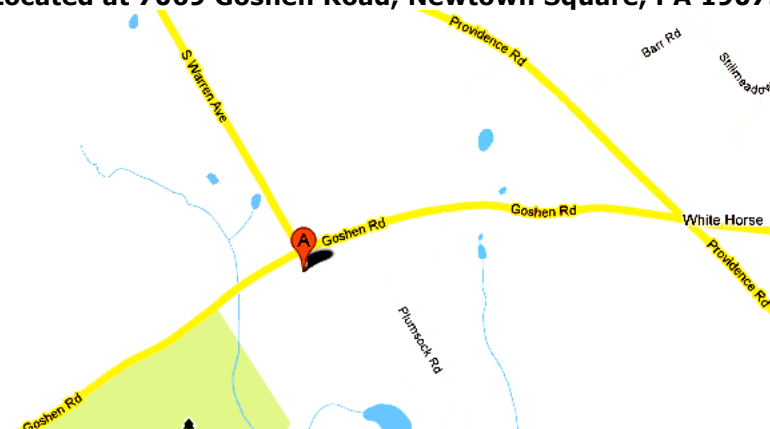
**February 21, 2015 – 7 to 9 pm**  
**Willistown Meeting**  
(No Snow Date)



**Music by the Thornbury Ramblers • caller: Alan Crosman**

*Admission fee: Please bring non-perishable items in non-breakable containers for donation to food bank.  
Refreshments will be served. For more info email [concordquarter@pym.org](mailto:concordquarter@pym.org) or visit our website at  
<http://concordquarter.org>*

**Located at 7069 Goshen Road, Newtown Square, PA 19073**



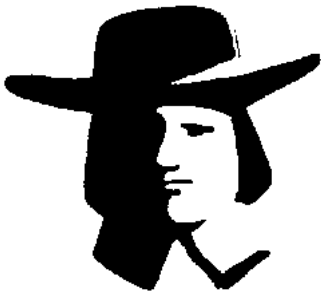
# Concord Quarterly Meeting

## January 25, 2015

### Goshen Monthly Meeting

8:00-8:30	Sign-in
8:30-9:30	Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
9:30-9:45	Break
9:45-10:45	Program on Goshen Meeting's Question based Discussion Technique
10:45-11:45	Meeting for Worship with Goshen Meeting
12:00 -1:00	Fellowship with Lunch provided by Goshen Meeting

### Questions in a Hat



During our time together at Quarterly Meeting, we would like to share a practice we have been using in Adult Meeting for Learning at Goshen for several years now. It is simple. We gather every first First Day of the month. We have a collection of questions written by those who come to these sessions, including any new ones added that day. None of the questions is signed. We place all questions in a hat and draw one at random for discussion in a relaxed, worship sharing mode. Our intent is to have sufficient structure to proceed and sufficient flexibility to allow all who attend the opportunity to participate in a similar session under the leading of Spirit.

*"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.."— Matthew 7:7-8*

### Special Children's Program: Gender Equality in the U.S. & Abroad

The Children's Program will explore gender equality with age appropriate activities. The very young will enjoy songs, stories and art activities during childcare. Older children will watch a selected clip from the documentary Girls Rising about the struggles that girls face around the world. Afterwards, elementary aged children will share their thoughts and process their feelings through wondering questions, group games, and art response. Middle schoolers and young Friends will also watch an interview with Malala Yousafzai, the girl who just won the Nobel Peace Prize. Her interview speaks strongly of Quaker principles. These video clips will be used to help inspire questions the older children might ask about equality of the sexes. Like the adults, those questions will be put in a hat and drawn for discussion.

Note: Childcare is available beginning at 8:30.

Directions: Rte. 3 to Rte. 352; north on 352; just before Paoli Pike, enter the school drive on the right and follow to meetinghouse. Or take Paoli Pike to Rte. 352 south; pass meetinghouse and enter at school drive. From Delaware take Rte. 202 north to the Paoli Pike exit toward Paoli; go right on Rte 352 south, pass the meetinghouse and enter at the school.

For more info and a map to the meeting go to <http://concordquarter.org/meeting-maps/>  
You can also email Charlie Spadoni, Coordinator, at [concordquarter@pym.org](mailto:concordquarter@pym.org)

# Concord Quarterly Meeting Calendar of Events

- January 10, 2015 **PYM called meeting for worship with attention to business** “to discern how we, as a faith community, are being led to address racism.” 1:00-4:00 p.m. at Arch Street Meeting
- January 26, 2015 **Concord Quarterly Meeting at Goshen Monthly Meeting** 8:15 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The adult program is entitled “Questions in a Hat.” The children’s program will focus on gender equality at home and abroad. For more information, go to <http://concordquarter.org/>.
- February 16, 2015 **Deadline** for submitting Concord Quarterly Meeting’s application for tuition aid for the academic year 2015-16. The application can be found at <http://concordquarter.org/documents/>. If you have any questions about the application or cannot access it on CQM’s website, please contact Charles Spadoni, Coordinator, Concord Quarterly Meeting: 610-256-3572, [concordquarter@pym.org](mailto:concordquarter@pym.org), or 116 S. New St., West Chester, PA 19382.
- February 21, 2015 **PYM-sponsored conference: “Climate, Race and Justice: We’re all in this Together”** 9:30 a.m. at Arch Street Meeting
- February 21, 2015 **Concord Quarterly Meeting’s Fifth Annual Square Dance.** 7:00-9:00 p.m. at Willistown Meeting

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## Concord Quarterly Meeting Held at Concord Monthly Meeting - July 20, 2014 Minutes

**Opening Worship:** The meeting opened with a period of worship at 8:20 am.

**Welcome:** The clerk welcomed the 16 Friends who were present as the meeting began; there were 26 with us by the time the meeting concluded. Individuals were present from the following member monthly meetings -- Birmingham, Concord, Goshen, Middletown, West Chester, Westtown, and Willistown.

**Coordinator's report** (Charlie Spadoni): A report on the Quarter’s and the Coordinator’s activities over the last three months was received with appreciation. The first part was published in the October newsletter and the supplement is attached to these minutes,

**Treasurer’s Report** – Financial Statements 06/30/2014: Bruce James, our Treasurer, has been overwhelmed with his responsibilities as a parent of new twins, and will have to present his report at our next meeting. We do have sufficient cash on hand to meet our expected outlays.

**Annual Financial Review:** The meeting asked the Planning Committee to select two Friends to serve as auditors of the accounts.

**Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee:** The nomination of Peter Lane (Westtown) to serve on the new Nominating Committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting was approved. The meeting also minuted its appreciation for Peter’s service on the previous committee.

**Policy on the Quarter’s use of its members’ personal contact information** (Bruce Harrison – Westtown): The meeting received a draft of the policy and approved the text attached below.

**Recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on Outreach** to parents of students attending Quaker schools (Tom Woodward - Goshen): The report of the ad hoc Quarterly Meeting committee on this subject is attached. At the moment the participating schools are those that are within the Quarter. Tom noted that in the future an invitation to participate might be extended to other, neighboring Friends schools which happen to be in other Quarters. The report will be sent to the Quarter’s Monthly Meetings so that they now can approve the participation of their meetings in the process. So far Goshen, Middletown and West Chester have approved their being hosts under the program. The ad hoc committee will bring a further report to the next Quarterly Meeting.

**Thomas Swain’s Report on his ministry to England** (Thomas Swain – Middletown): The report is encompassed in the talk he is giving following our business meeting, as well as in the article he published in the October newsletter.

**Joys and Challenges R e p o r t s : Middletown and Westtown MMs:** The report of Middletown Monthly Meeting was made by Rich Ailes and that of Westtown by Deb Wood. Both were received with appreciation and are attached to these minutes.

Respectfully submitted, Bruce Harrison (Clerk) David Leonard (Recording Clerk)

### **Attachment 1: Coordinator's Report**

This report supplements the one that was included in the October 2014 newsletter that: (1) recommended that members keep abreast of programs and events throughout PYM by turning to PYM's Calendar and PYM's Community Calendar (which includes events sponsored by quarterly meetings and monthly meetings); (2) described briefly the richness of PYM's youth programs; (3) described PYM's new General Secretary's program to focus all of us on the importance of the Spirit in our daily lives and among the body of Friends that is Philadelphia Yearly Meeting; (4) reported on my visit to Bucks Quarterly Meeting; and (5) described my work on the Quarter's Ad Hoc Committee on Outreach to Parents of Quaker School Students. I have enjoyed being part of that committee, and I was heartened by a recent conversation I had with Brian Fahey, Head of West Chester Friends School (and a clerk of Wilmington Monthly Meeting) who was quite enthusiastic about that school's participation in the Quarter's efforts. That Ad Hoc Committee will submit its first report later in today's meeting.

We had a delightful hayride and bonfire on September 28, 2014, at the Stratton Family Farm in Thornbury (Chester County) Township. Approximately 43 people attended of whom 15 or so came from Western Quarterly Meeting. In addition to the hotdogs and hamburgers cooked up by master chef Bruce Harrison and the potluck dishes brought by participants, we sat by the bonfire enchanted by the music played and sung by Pete Lane and the Duffy Family (Michael, Sarah Jane and James) all of Westtown Meeting. Fortunately, no one was burned roasting marshmallows.

In 2015, we are hoping to sponsor a couple of activities for the youth of our Quarter. Stay tuned for further updates.

*Respectfully submitted, - Charles B. Spadoni, Coordinator*

### **Attachment 2: Concord Quarterly Meeting Policy Regarding Personal Information Use**

Concord Quarterly Meeting retains the names and contact information, including postal address, email address, and telephone numbers, of its members, and it uses such information to communicate and conduct business with those members.

Concord Quarterly Meeting will use the personal information of its members only for its own purposes. It will not use any of such information for any other purpose including, without limitation, creating, supplementing or maintaining any independent database, list or web site. Concord Quarterly Meeting will not sell, share, transfer or disclose any personal information of any member to any person including, without limitation, any for-profit or non-profit organization, other than to the clerks and staff of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting so that they can communicate with its members in conformity with its privacy policy.

### **Attachment 3: Report on Monthly Meetings' Outreach to Parents of Students Attending Quaker Schools**

In our July meeting we approved a proposal to invite parents of students enrolled in Friends schools within the Quarter to worship at the eight meetings of the Quarter. We have made good progress in forming and implementing the program. Planning Committee named an ad hoc committee to begin this work; the ad hoc committee is composed of Bruce Harrison, Concord QM clerk, Charlie Spadoni, Concord Quarter Coordinator, Betsy Swan, Willistown MM, and Tom Woodward, Goshen MM. This group has met twice to date.

Our goal has been to keep the program simple. Rather than try to rush our plans in order to start implementation this year, we decided to take more time and begin next year. Tentatively we have designated March 1, May 3, and November 1 of 2015 as days to invite families of Friends schools to worship at specified meetings. Once the program is established, each meeting will host once every two years. This schedule will become more concrete as meetings and schools indicate their willingness to participate.

We intend to circulate to parents a brief explanation of Friends' beliefs and practice beforehand. Our hope is that each school will contact parents through its own publications and electronic communications to inform them which meeting is hosting the event. We will also have a place on the Quarter web page for this information. Our expectation is that each meeting will welcome guests and provide a brief introduction to Friends practice before worship and provide opportunity for discussion and information sharing after worship. We want the procedure to be uniform among meetings while allowing each meeting to shape it in ways that are authentic to its own character. For those meetings which would like to have additional support, we envision a group of Friends who would be present to help in the discussion after worship.

We have also discussed creating a brochure for the Quarter with photographs of each meetinghouse, times of worship and First Day School, and GPS reliable addresses. This brochure would also list Friends schools in the Quarter and other Friends institutions. We also see the value to the Quarter of such a brochure beyond the school visiting program. It can be a useful outreach tool. Rich Ailes and Charlie Spadoni are working on this project.

We see this as important outreach for the Quarter and for Friends. While we do not want to proselytize, we want our message to be accessible to the wider community. *Respectfully Submitted, Tom Woodward (Goshen)*

*Editors Note: Because of space limitations we were unable to fit the Joys and Challenges reports of Westtown and Middletown Meetings. Those reports can be found in a copy of our minutes posted on our website at: <http://concordquarter.org/documents/?category=Minutes>*

Concord Quarterly Meeting Newsletter  
**Volume 11 Issue 1 January 2015**

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