

Seeds of Silence

**Oread Friends Meeting
1950-2000**

Jean Grant

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Dedication

To those who kept the minutes

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Preface

Our life is love, and peace, and tenderness; and bearing one with another, and forgiving one another, and not laying accusations one against another, but praying one for another, and helping one another up with a tender hand.

—Isaac Pennington, 1667

In church histories mention of God is often absent. Heroes, schisms and rebels are there of course, but seldom God for whose worship the churches exist. Why then have a history?

It's surprisingly hard to keep God in the forefront of an institutional history. The minutes of Oread Friends Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business are indeed voluminous. But in a spirit of reverence, Friends kept no record of the few words spoken in Meeting, intimations they trusted to have come from God. Imagine if there had been a voice-activated recorder in the many rooms in which Oread Friends have met! What surprises and reflections might it yield!

The first part of this book gives a quick historical sketch of the major concerns of the Meeting. It's a "let's do the numbers" kind of history, but done with the understanding that Quakers have never equated numbers with strength. The second half examines the community, beliefs, and testimonies of Oread Friends Meeting. Most of the information comes from the Minutes.

It is fascinating to consider what is omitted there. Surely the change in the status of women in the U.S. is one of the major social changes of the half-century. Yet the minutes make no mention of this struggle, not even in the tumultuous bra-burning years. Perhaps there was no need. Women's equality was taken for granted as women like Anna McCracken, Anne Moore and Saunny Scott led the Meeting. The Meeting was also spared dissension over the abortion debate ("right to life" versus "right to choose") that ripped apart so many congregations in the 1970s and 1980s. Apart from one discussion on "When is a Fertilized Cell a Baby?" no written mention is made of this topic.

All quotations are from the minutes unless otherwise attributed. Because of the gentleness and politeness of Quakers and the decorum with which they state differences, it is sometimes ascertain to decide when the Meeting was in conflict and how serious the division was. It is also difficult to ascertain whether some of the well-laid plans of Meeting for Business were ever translated into action. For instance, was a bicycle rack ever built or bought? And although Meeting was frequently represented at demonstrations and vigils, the minutes do not count the numbers there. Their aspirations, however, are clear.

Quakers call the Spirit of God which they seek, the "Seed." This invisible Seed nourishes them and grows in their dark places. Its blossoms and fruit are service. Through fifty years of troubles and obstacles, danger and grief, Oread Friends Meeting has sought to listen to the Spirit and to align itself with the will of the Spirit. From that desire has come joy and service. These are the constants in Oread's cycles. Oread rests and then starts up again, eager to "see what love can do." Oread Friends are still cheerfully walking the streets of Lawrence—serving food to the hungry, helping shelter the homeless, and striving to answer "that of God in everyone."

Jean Grant
Lawrence, Kansas
April 2000

Chapter 1

Beginnings

Quakerism at its birth was a fresh attempt to recover the way of life revealed in the New Testament, to re-interpret and re-live it in this present world. Its founders intended to revive apostolic Christianity. ...They carefully avoided calling themselves a 'Church.' They were content to be a "Society of Friends." George Fox said: "The Quakers are not a sect but are [a people living] in the power of God which was before sects were."

—Rufus M. Jones, 1937

The first entry in the worn, leather-bound ledger is dated November, 1949. It reads: "The Lawrence branch of Penn Valley Friends convened for tea and business after Meeting on First Day, 11th Month."

Straight off the reader knows this book of the Minutes is a Quaker document since a nameless soul has changed all the months from their Roman names. "November, 1949" has become "11th Month"; the word "May" is scratched out and "5th Month" superimposed.

The second sentence reads, "William Shoemaker (clerk) refreshed our minds on the disciplinary admonitions in regard to business or executive meetings." What a sober start! Secretary Vera Carter wasn't taking any chances. In deliberate manner she continued, "after considerable discussion and all minds were clear, it seemed to be the consent of the Meeting that the correspondent contact the Executive Secretary of Friends Fellowship Council concerning the process of becoming a Monthly Meeting."

The process was swift. The next month Penn Valley Monthly Meeting of Friends in Kansas City, Missouri congratulated Lawrence Preparatory Meeting on their progress toward becoming an independent Meeting. That same December, 1949, the Lawrence Quakers invited the Friends Fellowship Council (FFC) in Philadelphia to determine if it was appropriate for them to be independently affiliated. A committee of the FFC came to Lawrence February 19, 1950. It must have been a congenial group, for Lawrence Friends were soon asking about the financial obligations of being a Monthly Meeting, "that we might assume our proportional share." The name Society of Friends, Oread Meeting was chosen as the official title and twenty Friends signed on as charter members."

Lawrence had jumped the gun, for it was only the next month—in April—that Meeting received word that the FFC recommended it become a monthly meeting. Lawrence had behaved rather like the Emperor Napoleon, gravely placing the crown on his head himself. Unabashed, Lawrence replied to the FFC that they "were already organized, had adopted our name, and should welcome an official letter of affiliation from the FFC."

This alacrity illustrates the early fervor of the Meeting. Several of the twenty-eight adults who signed the charter were birthright Quakers from the East. Some had found each other in the language departments at the University of Kansas (K.U.). Neale Carman, a poet who joined the K.U. faculty in 1918, headed the Romance Languages Department, and did scholarly work on

French literature related to the Holy Grail. Domingo Ricart taught Spanish literature. William Kuchler, a geographer from Germany, was internationally known for reconstructing a picture of what North America at the time of pioneer settlement,” recalled Howard Baumgartel. Kuchler also stood ramrod-straight, which for Leo Tolstoy was a sign of a passionate temperament. Other KU faculty among them were Rose Ruth Morgan, and Anna McCracken, who taught philosophy. Quakerism was in their bones.

Others were convinced Friends. Their number included Margarita and Domingo Ricart who had come to Quakerism from Roman Catholicism. They wrote for their removal certificates from Wimbledon, England. Neale Carman had no previous church affiliation, but his wife Maybelle transferred from the Lawrence Friends Church. The Meeting, however, was not a split from the Friends Church.

“When the Bible Belt became evangelical,” said Anne Moore, “the conservative Quakers at Lawrence Friends Church became evangelical too, a style with which the members of the new unprogrammed Meeting did not feel comfortable.”

From the start, the Meeting was directly related to the Committee on New Meetings of the Friends World Committee for Consultation. The Lawrence Meeting attracted seekers. Intentionally so. The records at the University of Kansas (K.U.) became a dragnet for students who designated the Religious Society of Friends as their religious preference. Quakers worked tables at K.U. enrollment handing out fliers about the Meeting. Meeting time was published in both the university paper, the *Kansan* and the *Lawrence Journal World*.

Howard Baumgartel was one of the seekers. As a Harvard MBA, he had been recruited by K.U. in 1948 to teach the case method technique, a revolutionary teaching method that was taking the management world by storm. While attending meetings of the American Association of University Professors and the American Federation of Teachers, he met Anna McCracken. Loring Henderson, a member today, who enjoyed their waffle suppers when he was a child, described them as “earnest, serious and devout...the best of a bygone era.”

Howard Baumgartel credited Anna McCracken with getting him involved in Quakerism. “My wife Kate, myself and our two children began to attend Meeting,” he said. “I was a Presbyterian minister’s son. After a religious crisis in college, I had little to do with religion, but I was attracted by silent Meeting, the non-creedal and experiential character of it along with the egalitarian and democratic character of Quakerism.”

From the start it was clear that Meeting was an unusual star in the Lawrence religious galaxy. Its unique qualities may have stood out more in 1950 when Lawrence counted only 23,292 people including some 6,500 students. “Fully 91% of Lawrence people are of midwestern birth,” reported a history of the time.

The Meeting, by contrast, was liberal and international in its outlook. One early attender was Japanese student Shingeru Oae. Meeting helped him to attend Pendle Hill, the Quaker spiritual center outside Philadelphia. Later he became a professor of applied chemistry at the University of Osaka. Several members had varied cultural allegiances. Domingo Ricart spent his formative years in Barcelona and Paris. After the Spanish Civil War, he helped care for nearly 150,000 orphaned or evacuated children. After emigrating to the United States in 1947, he continued to make a mark in Meetings in London, Paris, Barcelona and Mexico City. He was also influential in the Meeting in Batista’s Cuba, where Mary McCracken, another founding member, had taught

in the American Friends Mission School. Domingo Ricart visited Friends in Cuba and Mexico on behalf of the Friends World Committee for Consultation and the American Friends Board of Missions. He edited *Antologia espiritual* (Pendle Hill: 1941), a record of the mysticism and pacifism of Spanish authors, and translated the works of William Penn into Spanish.

Such a cosmopolitan outlook may have seemed strange to the social, political and religious conservatives in Lawrence during the “Quiet Fifties.” The 1950s were marked by a desire for insular politics. But it was also the decade of the war in Korea, the Hungarian Uprising of 1956, the “Red Scare,” and the Cold War. The Meeting discussed “The U.S. and the Soviet Union;” it urged suspension of the production of atomic weapons. Members translated their humanitarian concern into service. In 1951 “all the ladies agreed to meet, and mend, sort and pack the boxes for mailing” to American Friends Service Committee to be sent to Korea.” After the uprising in Hungary, the Meeting shipped twenty-one boxes of clothes there via Des Moines. In December 1958, led by Domingo Ricart, Meeting wrote the Friends World Committee on Consultation (FWCC), asking it to state its concern with the course of events in Cuba. It also asked the AFSC to send a member to consult to Cuban Friends as to steps to be taken to endorse peace. When American troops entered Beirut in 1958, Meeting sent \$20 to the AFSC earmarked for the Lebanon Relief Project. Two years later as North Africa sought liberation from France, the Meeting donated blankets and worked with the K.U. French Club to collect money for the AFSC Algerian Relief Fund.

At this time on the “home front,” the public schools were still segregated by law. But even before the landmark Topeka versus Brown case, Oread was promoting civil rights. Mary McCracken’s (1884-1950) belief in an integrated society that led her to serve as housemother of Henley House, the first interracial residential hall for women at K.U. Russell Carter was a chaplain at what is now Haskell Indian Nations University. Domingo Ricart expressed concern for the Mexican population of Lawrence and overcoming the barriers which it encountered.

The Meeting’s most significant work lay in the area of civil rights (See Chapter 8). Beatrice White was a charter member. An African-American who had grown up in Lawrence on land that was cow pasture, opposite where the stadium now stands, she attended school with Langston Hughes and later went to K.U.. She was an important figure in the life of the Meeting.

In March, 1950, these Friends chose the name “Oread Meeting,” and drew up and signed a charter. The twenty-eight adult Quakers began meeting for First Day Worship at 5 p.m. in an upstairs room at Plymouth Congregational Church on Vermont Street. They also held First Day classes for the dozen or so children. Meeting gave Plymouth Church an initial \$5 and then \$3 a quarter. In 1955, they contributed \$25 to its Building Fund in appreciation for use of the building. Monthly meetings for business were held in Friends’ homes in conjunction with a potluck dinner.

Early on, Friends began “exploring the possibility for a more suitable meeting place,” and by 1958 the Meeting had approved a proposal to establish a building fund. By the end of the decade they had left the Congregational Church and were meeting in Danforth Chapel at K.U..

The fledgling Meeting took seriously its responsibilities to national Quaker organizations. The purchase of twenty cloth bound copies of Faith and Practice shows member were intent on learning more about Quakerism. The 1957 budget of \$299 shows allocations of \$50 to Friends World Committee; \$15 to Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL); \$15 to the American Friends Service Committee’s national office and \$15 to its Des Moines, Iowa, office.

In addition, \$40 was allocated to expenses in connection with First Day School, \$5 to the Committee on Conscientious Objectors; by far the largest sum, \$144, went to the Mother's Interracial Nursery, which was the focus of much of the Meeting's life, especially of that of the women.

Howard Baumgartel, the only charter member still alive in Lawrence, described the Meeting as "a lively group—big enough so one person didn't have to do everything."

The beginnings were auspicious.

Chapter 2

Consolidation

We do not want you to copy or imitate us. We want to be like a ship that has crossed the ocean, leaving a wake of foam which soon fades away. We want you to follow the Spirit, which we have sought to follow, but which must be sought anew in every generation.

—Meeting of Elders, Balby, Yorkshire, England, 1656

One by one the Meeting's founding members departed. The McCracken sisters returned to their home farm in Augusta, Kansas, where Mary died in 1953; Ruth Morgan died in 1956. In 1963 Henry Cleaver joined the Catholic church. Beatrice White's husband Oscar died in 1965. Numbers diminished. The zip too.

“There was no real outreach program to bring in new people,” said Howard Baumgartel, himself inactive from 1959 through 1975. But in a pattern that has repeated itself several times, the tide turned. In 1959 Paul Kopper joined. He was a Washburn University professor of biology, who in 1966 developed a method of fighting blood clots. But it was the arrival of Anne and Tom Moore and their family in 1960 that revitalized the Meeting. Tom Moore had come to work with K.U. and with the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and YWCA. The Moores threw themselves into Quakerly activity. Her first week in Lawrence, Anne Moore attended Friends Church. She joined the cancer bandage folding group at Friends Church where she found the women “alert, kind, and elderly.” Friends Church was active. Two hundred attended services on Easter Sunday. Their pastors in the 1960s were Nazarene-trained, and the gulf between Friends Church and Oread Friends Meeting was great.

Their second week in Lawrence the Moores attended Oread. “There were a dozen resident adult members, a handful of children and a few regular non-adult attenders,” recalled Tom Moore. Less than first two months after her arrival, Anne Moore found herself Clerk of Meeting.

“Being clerk was for me as for many others a training ground,” she said. It was suggested by members in Penn Valley Meeting that Oread Friends should bring in a Quaker from Pennsylvania to advise on how a Quaker meeting should run. I thought that was not right, that each meeting had to do its own thing. For me it was an important realization.”

The Moores became the affectionate topic for humorous stories. There were even stories about their dog Figby. According to Allan Hanson, then a member of Meeting, Figby was gun-shy although he was supposedly a hunting dog. Every Fourth of July the Moores had to leave town because of the effect of the noise of the explosions on this very Quakerly dog.

The Meeting co-sponsored the Annual Brotherhood Banquet, an inter-racial celebration that worked with the churches. “Kansas looked awfully white when we got here,” said Anne Moore, and she was soon arranging speakers for the Brotherhood Banquet. “It was my first volunteer involvement and important to me. It was my entrée into community events, and led me to Churchwomen United,” she said.

She also became the Quaker representative to the Lawrence Ministerial Alliance, then its only woman representative. She volunteered in "The Clearing House," which emerged from the Emergency Services Council, an organization to ensure that there were no overlapping demands on churches." For a year she was chaplain at Lawrence Memorial Hospital. It's little wonder that she was named Lawrence's Woman of the Year for 1974-1975.

In 1963 Neale Carman had expressed concern about the small size of the Meeting and suggested short talks before Meeting for Worship as a way of attracting newcomers. The very next Sunday Tom Moore spoke on civil rights legislation.

Was there division in the Meeting about the spiritual underpinnings of the various talks? Perhaps. Otherwise, why would Domingo Ricart have suggested that "the Christian and more specifically the Quaker view should be central to such talks, no matter what the problem under discussion."

Small numbers made for a small budget. The minutes for 1960 note Meeting's decision to continue contributing to the Lawrence Community Nursery, but that "due to the reduced membership in our Meeting, the contribution will be \$10 instead of the present \$12." Meeting continued to specify that "Negro [sic] children should be given priority in the award of scholarships."

Few members to share the responsibilities meant more work for those who were willing. "When I arrived, it was just personal service," said Anne Moore. "It gradually became 'committees of one' doing things in the community, but we kept each other informed."

In 1964, Anne Moore wrote all former attenders and members and asked them about their affiliation. One replied, "We felt for many years after moving from Kansas that our affections would always be attached to Oread Meeting and that we could never shift the memories of those wonderful years." Most who had moved out of Lawrence resigned. William Shoemaker, first Clerk of the Meeting, and his wife Catherine resigned (An odd coincidence: Anne Moore's father had been a room-mate of Bill Shoemaker at the George School.) So did Albert and Mary Young who had joined Plymouth Congregational Church in Wichita, Kansas. Others transferred their membership: Vera and Russell Carter to a preparative Meeting to New York Monthly Meeting, and Dale and Carmen Johnson and their three children to Live Oak Meeting in Houston, Texas. Howard Baumgartel and his wife Nancy Baumgartel Greenleaf had divorced. She requested a letter of transfer to the First Congregational Church of Colorado Springs. Howard Baumgartel replied that his "association and activity with Friends in Lawrence, Pendle Hill and Ann Arbor played a very important part in my own development but I couldn't say now that I am a part of the Quaker movement."

It was probably Anna McCracken's terse reply which gave the most pleasure. "I was pleased to get your letter revealing that the Oread Meeting of Friends was not extinct. Last summer when most of you were happily on vacation, Mrs. Beatrice White and I held a twosome service one Sunday when I had the opportunity to be in Lawrence."

A "twosome service" augured ill for survival. Ironically, the heightening of hostilities in Vietnam in the mid-sixties sparked new life in the Meeting. In the fall of 1965, more students began attending. Discussion of the Quaker Peace Testimony followed Meeting on most Sundays. Vigils were held. The peace testimony dominated the Meeting through the sixties and early seventies. In 1967, William Kopper, "classified 1-0," son of member Paul Kopper, was accepted

into membership. He received Conscientious Objector (CO) status in 1967. Suddenly a man's draft classification became the most salient fact about him. In the summer of 1968 Peace Vigils in South Park replaced discussion after Meeting for Worship." In 1969 LeRoy and Carol Chittenden joined. The next year LeRoy handed over his draft card to the Meeting.

The President was Richard Nixon, a birthright Quaker and commander-in-chief of the armed forces. He was an embarrassment to Oread Friends (as well as to many Quakers) for his violation of the peace testimony. In 1973 Meeting wrote his home Meeting, the East Whittier Meeting in California questioning the rightness of continuing the President as a member. (See Chapter 7)

It was a time of energy for Oread. Members tackled tedious bureaucratic matters like its future affiliation. The minutes record a new name. No longer was Meeting to be called "the Society of Friends, Oread Meeting," as at its birth in 1950. Now the official "correct name" became Oread Monthly Meeting of Friends."

In 1966, Saunny Silverman joined, and brought her passion for social justice and the poor. The daughter of a Jewish father and Christian Science mother, she had become acquainted with Quakerism while a student at Reid College in Oregon.

"A group of us attended different churches each Sunday; one Sunday we attended Multanomah Monthly Meeting," she recalled. "I sat for an hour waiting for something to happen. Nothing happened. A few months later another friend wanted to attend the Meeting, so I went with her. I knew that "nothing would happen" externally, and maybe because of this I settled down in a different way and "something did happen" within me. After that experience I kept returning week after week looking for religion within."

Later, she worked in the Philippines and won a scholarship for returning Peace Corps workers at Pendle Hill. Then she decided to come to K.U. to get an MA in psychology. Douglas Steere, one of the heavy weights at Pendle Hill, gave her Ann and Tom Moore's address and they offered her a place to stay while she looked for one of her own. In 1968 she and Ken Scott, were married under the care of Meeting in 1968.

Another family came to boost the Meeting's membership list in 1966, Robert and Ardith Hinshaw and their children. Robert Hinshaw, a birthright Quaker and the son of Cecil Hinshaw (another Quaker weighty soul), had taught and been principal at a Friends School in Stillwater, Ohio. With the Hinshaw children— Julia Ellen, Kenneth Robert, and Christopher Lawrence—a "critical mass" was reached which enabled a viable First Day School. A baby sitter was hired to supervise the youngest children, while the older ones studied the teachings of Jesus. They were even given homework.

Allan Hanson, a fellow graduate student with Robert Hinshaw at the University of Chicago, began coming to Meeting too, along with his wife Louise and their children.

"I was orbiting around Quakers for a number of years and became part of the Meeting, transferring from the Lutheran Church," he said.

The Meeting reserved Danforth Chapel for adult worship. Meeting hosted a spring gathering to celebrate its 25th anniversary, which Howard Baumgartel credited with rekindling his interest in Quakerism. Although the Vietnam War was drawing to a close at that time, his interest in the peace movement was unflagging. In 1976 while on a Fulbright to India, he learned of the Peace Studies Program at Bradford University in Yorkshire, England. There he met Adam Curle, the great British Quaker who stressed the need to solve local problems first.

That made Howard Baumgartel think, “What can we do here in Lawrence?”

“Peace lectures!”.

Four prominent Quakers came, including Kenneth Boulding, the first speaker. Thus was the Lawrence Coalition on Peace and Justice (LCPJ) born.

The 1970s was also the heyday of ecumenism, as a result of Vatican II (1962-1965) and this filtered down to Lawrence. Oread held a Meeting for Business at the Lawrence Friends Church in 1973; they also held an unprogrammed Meeting in Danforth Chapel and invited Lawrence Friends Church. The minutes record that it was “deeply appreciated by the fifteen people present including those from Friends Church.” Oread Friends who visited other Meetings had their travel subsidized to do so. Muriel and Michael Hopkins even visited Canadian Yearly Meeting, thanks to this plan.

For the nation’s bicentennial festivities in 1976, the Meeting sought to add “a dimension of religious tolerance, peace and amnesty,” and wrote the Historic Peace Churches (Brethren, Mennonites and Quakers) in Iowa, Missouri, Oklahoma and Nebraska to help in this.

In 1978, Meeting expressed its opposition to the federal licensing of the Wolf Creek nuclear plant as well as a petition supporting clean energy sources. In 1980, Tom and Anne were interviewed by the *Lawrence Journal World* and described as known for their “consuming interest in the anti-nuclear movement.” The Moores had earlier bought ten shares in Kansas Gas & Electric Co. “The purchase was made with an eye toward presenting proposals and using their influence to stop construction of southeast Kansas’ Wolf Creek nuclear power plant. The caption under a picture of them read, “It was Tom and Anne Moore ...against the utilities when the two stockholders teamed up last week to ask Kansas Gas & Electric Co. to stop work on the Wolf Creek nuclear plant. The answer: Forget it.”

Although the Moores failed, the coverage gave them a chance to speak their mind. “Our religious perspective is to see life as all one piece,” said Tom Moore. “Concern for nuclear weapons has to do with concern for peace, for future generations for the quality of the environment.”

As for Anne Moore, she presented an unsuspected benefit of activism: “Being active allows you a sense of freedom and power.”

In 1971 Robert Hinshaw left to become President of Wilmington College, a Quaker college in Ohio. That was a loss as he had been clerk from May 1969-October, 1970. Anna McCracken died in 1971. The next year it was the turn of Neale Carman. During his seventy-five years he had had an interest in visiting graveyards, and now himself was interred. He was much missed as he used to read the children Bible stories and frequently contributed verbal ministry in Meeting for Worship. The Kuchlers were still members, but came irregularly.

The arrival of Ron Rarick in 1972 seemed an example of the optimistic adage that “God does not replace, but God replenishes.” Ron Rarick was a composer, a maker of musical instruments including a harpsichord, and a repairer of pipe organs. A traveling minute described him as “an art historian... Gentle and modest.” He first attended Meeting as a K.U. student, and wrote a class paper on the topic, “On Becoming a Member of the Oread Friends Monthly Meeting. These are his attendance statistics for the Meeting in the fall of 1972: “The list of members and

attenders contains 70 names. 16 are members, 54 attenders. 15 children. 35 K.U. students. Attendance Sunday mornings is usually around 20.”

Meeting flourished in the seventies. Allen and Louis Hanson came. So did David and Nancy Henry. And Ron and Voncille Henry attended until about 1974.

Buoyed by this growth, the Meeting yearned to find a home of its own. Matters came to a head in the fall of 1977 when K.U. changed its arrangement for the use of Danforth Chapel where Friends had met for so many years. Now the chapel could be reserved for only an hour at a time. That was too short.

Momentum gathered, and to facilitate the purchase of land, the Meeting was incorporated in January 1978. While waiting to find a new place, Meeting for Worship was held first at St. Lawrence Catholic Center, then at old Fraser Hall before it was torn down, and then in the old building of Ecumenical Christian Ministries. Allan Hanson recalled meeting in “a pleasant house in a large, open room,” and the “angst about getting a Meeting House.”

There was dissension about the role of children, and a few members left. The Scott family also left for Texas in 1979 while Paul Kopper, retired professor of biology at Washburn University in Topeka, began retirement in England.

Nonetheless, full of hope, the Meeting purchased property and a house at 1146 Oregon Street. It held its first Meeting for Business there 12th month, 1979.

Chapter 3

Hard Times

Why can't we get all the people together in the world that we really like and then just stay together? I guess that wouldn't work. Someone would leave. Someone always leaves and then we have to say goodbye. I hate good-byes. I know what I need: Some more hellos.

—Snoopy in Peanuts by Charles M. Schultz

In March, 1980 Ron Rarick suggested the Meeting celebrate the vernal equinox with a Druidic celebration. It was a signal of a nationwide Quaker interest in being in unity with nature as well as joy at the springtime. But for Oread, the 1980s were a time not of the rebirth, but of challenge. The decade which began with euphoria over the purchase of the new Meeting House in January, 1980, found itself, less than three years later, struggling for life. Numbers were low.

Financial difficulties persisted throughout the decade. Even before the Meeting House was purchased, it had been sometimes hard to make ends meet. Now a large mortgage payment had to be met each month. In 1981, contributions were less than the basic costs of mortgage and utilities. Meeting had a Loan Fund, and sometimes loans made were not repaid. For a while the books were precariously kept. The finance committee met periodically to consider how to increase income, but to no avail. In 1982, income was half what had been budgeted. This was because several people had reduced incomes compared to the previous year and a few of those who had contributed earlier had “moved on to other churches or places,” and had found new outlets for their charitable contributions.

Spirits were low too. Friends missed those who had left. Many familiar faces were gone. In 1982, charter member Beatrice White suffered a stroke and died at age eighty-seven. It was a blow. At her memorial service in the Manner of Friends, Tom Moore described her as “one of those who built bridges between separated elements of the population of Lawrence so we could work together on a city human relations ordinance, to strengthen the state civil rights commission and to win passage of federal voting rights, equal employment opportunity and fair housing laws.... We who knew her and loved her and received her love miss her greatly.”

One reason for optimism in 1982 was that Jeanne Stump asked to join the Meeting. This art history professor at K.U. was just what was needed. A traveling minute several years later described her thus: “a person of concern, insight, and compassion who has given our Meeting much over the years.” She had a talent for organizing and was also a source of spiritual strength.

The Meeting continued its peace testimony. In 1983, it declared its property a nuclear free zone. Concern continued for Central America, and especially for Salvadoran refugees, for whom the Sisters of St. Joseph in Concordia, Kansas, were providing sanctuary. The Meeting approved the use of the name Lawrence Coalition for Peace and Justice (LCPJ) by the Peace Resource Center Committee, which took over the treasury of LCPJ. The Meeting was active in objecting to Selective Service recruiting in the schools. Peggy Baker donated a collection of cooperative children's games. In 1986, Richard Jesse of the Meeting circulated a petition urging more

stringent safety measures at Wolf Creek Nuclear Power Station. In 1987 the Meeting wrote thanking the eleven legislators who helped defeat the proposal to reinstate the death penalty in Kansas.

The broadening of Quaker fellowship was perhaps the great accomplishment of the decade. Inter-Visitation continued with visits to and from the Lawrence Friends Church, Topeka Friends Church, Manhattan Friends Meeting, Penn Valley Meeting in Kansas City, Hesper Friends Church, Stanwood Friends Church, and University Friends Church, Wichita. In December, 1982, Meeting was charged with shepherding the new preparative meeting in Topeka of “eleven remarkable young adults.”

But these accomplishments could not stop the departure of weighty friends. The big blow came in 1983 when six active members left. In April, the Moores, concerned about their parents' health, decided to return East to Philadelphia to be nearer to them. The Chittendens went to Cape Cod, and Bill and Ellen Brow went to Boston.

“Before this if we had ten at a Meeting, we were lucky, so this was a terrible blow to lose so many at once,” said Anne Moore.

Morale sank. Activities were curtailed. The clothing drive was turned over to the Appropriate Technology Center. The Buying Club, a grocery operative, closed. Replacement—the word keeps repeating itself in the minutes, whether it's the replacement of the recording clerk or replacing parts to a leaky toilet. Things fell apart. In May, 1983, the record of all the weddings overseen by the Meeting was lost, as if to echo the loss of members.

A directory dated 1982-83 lists as former attenders Claud and Peggy Baker, Maybelle Carman, the Hansons, Ron and Voncille Henry, William Kuchler, Harold and Betty Piehler. The critical mass was gone. Sometimes it was marriage precipitated the move to another congregation. Sometimes it was the felt need for more religious education for the children. Sometimes as in the case of the Bakers, it was a move away from the area.

Meanwhile Topeka Preparatory Meeting was growing. It had dynamic new members like John Pierpont and Lori Kegan. Its growth led to a suggestion by Pat Click that Oread sell its Meeting House and buy property jointly with Topeka in the Le Compton area. Having a larger group from which to solicit funds would be one advantage. Another was the lower cost of real estate in the Le Compton area, midway between the two cities. Topeka did not feel ready for commitment to a building, but it proved itself “a friend in need.” In December, 1983, when expenses again outran income for Oread, Topeka Friends Preparative Meeting wrote:

In the year the Topeka Friends have been meeting, first as a worship group and now as a Preparative Meeting, we have received invaluable aid from the Oread Meeting. Your guidance, support and encouragement provided us with the impetus to dare to become a Friends Meeting. Many of us find our lives enriched and our faith deepened because of our affiliation with you.

We are aware of the loss you experienced when the Browns, the Chittendens, and the Moores moved away, and we would like to do what we can to help fill the void left by their departure. To this end we are sending you a check for \$25 each month for the next four months, beginning in November 83, as a token of our eagerness to help you as you helped us. There are many talents and resources represented in our Meeting and we hope we may be of service to you as the need arises”

Despite this generosity, Oread's financial difficulties continued. Ron Rarick, the treasurer, suggested a budget and a monthly pledge by members in order to obtain a steady, predictable income. He presented a budget that called for a monthly income of \$350.

"This was, unfortunately, not obtainable at present," concurred Friends present at the Meeting for Business.

More community use of the building was recommended, "the outreach being felt to be of more value than the \$5 a Meeting income (also appreciated)." Among those who rented was Project Acceptance from 1982-1984.

Oread worried that the high percentage of its budget devoted to building matters might "stifle our spiritual needs." Outreach seemed to be the solution. In 1984 Ron Rarick designed posters to advertise the location and time of Meeting and phone contacts. Painfully aware that members had left over the lack of religious education for children, Meeting addressed the needs of the seven or eight children. Baby-sitting was not enough. Instead, adult Friends were to spend time with the children, in preparation "for their possible attendance at Meetings as they grow older and desire it." Two people were to be responsible for child care with the job rotating so that one person was not isolated from the Meeting regularly. The second person was to be paid, recruited from young adults from the Friends Church or local daycare.

We don't know whether or how these decisions took effect, for there is a gap of many months before minutes resume in August, 1984. The big surprise is that virtually all the names are new except those of Saunny Scott (who returned from Texas earlier that year), Jeanne Stump, and Helen Swezey. Perhaps the effort at a good First Day School paid off, for there were sometimes twelve children. Rambunctious ones. The Meeting's northern neighbor complained about "our children playing on her property."

But children don't pledge. In May, 1985, in response to a "very low checking balance" Friends decided once again to try to increase individual contributions, and to advertise to attract rental income. Oread contacted Bahai and the Mennonites. The outreach effort continued as members tried to attract students and "friends of Friends," in the area. It was suggested that there be Meeting once a month on campus, and rides to the Meeting House for those interested.

Nothing worked. When Jeanne Stump shared her concerns with Tom Moore, he testified to the value of prayer:

"...I keep running into things for which prayer seems the best means to a solution. I have this image, derived from Jesus, of God who understands all about me and is willing to listen patiently while I express my great and petty feelings, my perceptions and as it sometimes turns out my misperceptions of what has happened and why, until I get greater clarity and can decide on something to try in order to test whether that sense of clarity is true or not, and after that more prayer, sometimes of joyful thanksgiving and sometime of more searching."

Joy broke through even in these hard years. Karen Ross in 1984 transferred from Wichita Friends Church and brought talent and devotion to the Meeting. Among other contributions, she did the art work for Ron Rarick's Meeting outreach posters. Friends rejoiced at the celebration of marriages like that of Ron Rarick and Lucinda Friend in 1985. And there was excitement when Howard Baumgartel reported on a "hospitality house" to house those in need of temporary shelter. In July, 1985 St. John Catholic Church purchased four houses near its premises, and

agreed that the one at 1244 Kentucky might be a venue for a Peace Center that had been so long talked about. Meeting was requested to contribute \$25.

The response of the Meeting is a sad one. "We continue to support the idea of the Peace House, especially with the expanded concept of shelter for transients but cannot make a financial commitment until the Budget committee has met."

In 1986 Jeanne Stump contacted many friends and attenders to apprise them of the financial difficulties and the possible need to give up the Meeting house. Friends General Council (FGC) was contacted about negotiating mortgage payments. FGC did not reply. A second letter was sent, directly asking for "help with our financial problems." The letter reads in part:

"At the time of our purchase of our present building several years ago, ours was a strong and viable group. But as in any University community, there is a great deal of movement because of jobs or interest.

Our present Meeting has six regular attenders and maintaining the report has been difficult.

Is it possible we could make interest only payments for a year or perhaps reschedule our mortgage loan?"

FGC replied, requiring the Meeting to pay its one delinquent payment, but allowing it to pay interest only (\$77.10) on the loan from April to September of 1986. A minute states Oread is in a "precarious" financial state."

This worry took a great toll on the membership: "Just meeting the expenses of the building takes all or our resources, financial and emotional, leaving us without the strength to undertake outreach," notes one minute.

Jeanne Stump wrote, "We were alternately optimistic and pessimistic about the possibility of keeping the Meeting House. ...If our payments to FGC could be established at around \$100, probably we could manage."

Previous attenders were contacted about the possibility of selling the Meeting House. Selling it off seemed so likely that Oread made it more attractive to potential buyers by turning the back room into a modest kitchen. Bob and Jeanne Stump financed a new linoleum floor while Richard and Marsha Jesse donated a sink for which Richard built a cabinet from scrap lumber.

Numbers stayed low. In January 1986, four were present: Helen Swezey, Richard Jesse, Saunny Scott, and Marta Brow. Ev Grimes requested transfer to the Meeting in Burlington, Vermont.

When Oread could no longer meet its mortgage payments, FGC suspended them for one year. Then when the future looked bleakest, hope appeared as Anne Moore informed Oread about the Charleston Fund. Meeting applied for a grant. The request for funding, dated August 24, 1986, indicated eight members, four of whom had moved or were inactive, plus two other regular attenders who were Quakers; plus five or six occasional attenders who are non-members. The total income depended on regular contributions from six members, "a moved member couple," and a local non-member. Others gave only sporadically. Individuals gave \$2,541 in 1986.

The Meeting anticipated raising only \$1,800-2000 the following year. A "bare bones" budget was submitted, and those who could guarantee a sum monthly, "no matter how small," were urged to do so to "ensure smoother financial concerns."

“Hang in here,” Tom Moore wrote Jeanne Stump. “There are Friends all around us just waiting to discover that the Meeting is what they are looking for. Deepening the spiritual life of the members and attenders and letting what light you have shine out so that others can find you seem to need to be pursued simultaneously.”

Another letter from him read: “It sounds like Oread is at low ebb or near it. It has been there before. I have a vivid memory of going into Danforth Chapel and sitting there, alone, for an hour. I seem to recall that it was spiritually rewarding. Of course we didn’t have a mortgage payment due each month and that may be a significant difference. . . . In a Meeting like Oread where attenders are a large part of the total, some way needs to be found to explain the Meeting’s financial needs and just how one can make a contribution in the absence of a collection plate.”

He suggested a collection box (now on the bookcase under the window in the front room), but recognized that “of course, if there are few people, not many contributions will come in.”

For Tom Moore the spiritual vitality of the Meeting was the key to its success: “If the people who come find others who are worrying about money instead of listening for the stirrings of the Holy Spirit, they won’t think there is anything worth contributing to. So, first things first but don’t forget the second and third level things.”

Some Friends bit their fingernails. Others took consolation from the recollection that Meeting had sometimes been suspended in the summertime in the 1950s, and that in any case numbers matter little as far as the spirit is concerned. Tom Moore cited the text, “Just remember, ‘Where three or four are gathered in my name, there am I also.’”

When the Charleston Fund came through with a \$1000 grant, it seemed like manna from heaven. “We are hopeful that, with some assistance now, Oread Meeting will flourish again, for it has a wonderful past history,” Jeanne Stump wrote to Richard Bansen of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. “Although our numbers have diminished in recent years, chiefly through members moving out of Lawrence, we believe that it will grow in the university community, which is constantly increasing in size. We feel we are needed here. Many of our members and attendees live on quite restricted incomes, and have difficulties in making their ways, but they do not give up. We hate to think of selling the Meeting House, and we regret very much that we cannot give more financial assistance to needs in the community. but we have some wonderful Friends and friends, and we are of good cheer and hope for the future.”

Meeting did in fact grow. In January of 1987 there were eleven present. That March a report noted “our improved financial situation and our increased membership and attendance.” Friends hoped now to concentrate on outreach. But as so often in the past, weighty friends packed their bags. This time it was Ron and Lucinda Rarick leaving for Kentucky. Then Meeting was replenished once again as in July, 1987, Elizabeth (Peggy,) and Claude Baker and their daughter Margaret transferred their membership from the Boulder, Colorado Meeting, to Oread Friends. They also made a generous financial contribution. The seesaw bumped down again in 1989, when Jeanne Stump left for Massachusetts, and Marta Brow for Missouri. Although the Minutes were sketchy and few from September 1988 until 1989, finances continued to be the focus. The Meeting rented out its premises to the East Lawrence Improvement Association, and to a band, about which a neighbor complained. Then it rented to Peggy Baker for a 14-week class in Irish—no complaints there.

“Our financial situation remains the same,” was a gloomy sober statement. Payment of back rent of \$500 by the East Lawrence Improvement Association, led to the note “Our financial situation is improving somewhat.”

Newcomers came bringing substance and life. In November, 1989, Harold Washington, who began attending in 1988, joined. When Oread hosted the Annual Spring Fling for Missouri Valley Friends Conference that year, it chose lively activities including a tour of the Clinton Lake dam, fossil hunting, a picnic and hay ride.

The life of the Meeting was looking up.

Chapter 4

Small But Active

I expect to pass through this life but once; any good thing therefore that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any fellow creature, let me do it now; let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.

—Attributed to Stephen Grellet, c. 1800

One Tuesday noon in the early 1990s Pam Gordon nervously kept opening and shutting an oven door in the kitchen of First Christian Church. Inside the oven, rows and rows of potatoes were baking. Earlier she had bought the fifty-pound bag of potatoes, scrubbed and cut the bad bits from every one. But would they be cooked in time for the hundred hungry men, women and children coming to Lawrence’s Interdenominational Kitchen (LINK)?

“If you keep opening the oven door, it will take longer,” Ahilleas Maurellis teased the red-haired professor of classics at K.U.

As it turned out, the potatoes were ready in time. Pam Gordon and Sandy Hazlett Mitchell filled jam jars with garden zinnias and snapdragons, and set them on the Formica-topped tables. At 1:25 p.m., the servers gathered in a circle in the kitchen, and had a moment of silence to open their hearts to welcome their guests.

Throughout the 1990s Pam Gordon co-ordinated these “fourth Tuesday of the month” meals. Jean Ann Pike, LINK’s director described it as a “loaves and fishes” kind of place. For a few years, a half-dozen Friends managed alone what was challenging congregations of a thousand. “LINK ran smoothly with 126 guests” was a typical report in the minutes.

Pam Gordon grew up in what she described as a “fairly Quakered atmosphere in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, but for complicated reasons her parents banned religion from their home. She didn’t know that her mother’s people were Quakers until her grandmother and aunt heard that she was attending Oread.

“What shall we do, Pam?” her friend Maggie Childs asked a lazy day when Harold Washington, Pam Gordon’s husband, was out of town defending his Ph.D. dissertation. “I know, let’s go to Meeting.”

At the close of the Meeting, Saunny Scott, the clerk, introduced Maggie Childs as a guest but not Pam Gordon because she was so well known through her work with LINK and friendship with members of Meeting.

At the outset Oread Friends shared their LINK workday with Unity Church, but in 1994, Unity abandoned it when they found it hard to get members to volunteer. “Perhaps we could help them by providing food each month rather than every other month,” one Quaker suggested. It didn’t work. Then Oread approached Friends Church, but they did not seem interested. Oread peeled potatoes alone for several months and then collaborated with the Jewish Community Center a couple of times. In 1996, the Philosophy Club of K.U. helped as did the Lone Star Church of the

Brethren. Raintree Montessori School children pitched in too until the LINK board forbade children unaccompanied by a parent. Starting in the late 1990s Dillons has provided the carnivores' casserole, and Nancy O'Connor from Community Mercantile the vegetarian dish. Deborah "Misty" Gerner, month after month, provided delicious cakes, some baked from scratch, while in the LINK kitchen Phil Schrodt handled the pots, pans and sterilizer.

The LINK challenge continued to be met even though numbers continued small throughout the nineties. Just how small? It's hard to tell. The minutes for 1990-91, were lost, and there are minutes for only one Meeting in 1992.

"From the fall of 1988, when I first began attending, through the early 1990s there were some lean years in terms of numbers," said Harold Washington, whom many consider as a cornerstone of the Meeting. After he received a Masters of Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary, he studied Hebrew Bible and Egyptology at the University of Tübingen, Germany. He was a candidate for ordination in the Presbyterian Church but work with AFSC introduced him to Friends and nullified that desire. As he told the Presbyterians, "Bit by bit I'm becoming a Quaker."

There is a delicious irony here, as he is now professor of Hebrew at St. Paul's School of Theology in Kansas City, where he trains United Methodists candidates for the ministry.

When he arrived in Lawrence with his wife Pam Gordon, he thought, "I wonder if there's a Friends Meeting in town." First he drove by the Friends Church. He was shy so he watched from his car as the people entered the church. "Those don't look quite like the folks I'm looking for," he thought and drove on until he found the Meeting House. "Again I watched from my car, but I didn't see anyone so I went in. My first strong impression was one of being welcomed by Saunny in a really friendly way. I didn't know anyone, and she went out of her way to welcome me."

Those at Meeting then included Jay Smith, (now an artist in California). Ahilleas Maurellis described him as "a quiet force of power and strength." He built the front ramp for Bea Scott, uncovered the skylight above the Meeting Room and directed a heat vent into the bathroom, which he had built earlier.

In those years, Meeting was very small. "I remember a time or two when Saunny and I were the only ones present, and it was so good to share the silent time with her," said Harold Washington. "One Sunday morning I found myself entirely alone--but that wasn't a worst day. I sat in silence and thought of the Friends who had worshipped in that space through the years. It was a rich time of reflection about what Meeting means to me."

Deborah Altus had a similar experience. "Despite being alone, I felt it was very important to stay and I worshipped by myself for the hour. Other times, it was just Sunny, Harold, Tom Harvey, Jay Smith and myself, or some combination of this group. Yet despite being so small, the Meeting met my needs in a wonderful way. Soon others joined us—including the Mitchell family, Achille Maurellis, Francis Elling and a number of spirited and delightful children who formed our emerging First Day School, including Bea Scott, who charmed us with her way of sharing or not sharing her name when we went around the circle. "

A new cycle of growth had begun. In 1991 Ahilleas Maurellis, then known as "Archie," became Clerk. Brought up in the Greek Orthodox tradition, he became attracted to Quakerism in South Africa when he was doing his Masters degree under the guidance of George Ellis, a Quaker

involved in grassroots actions against apartheid. Ellis was also an intellectual giant. (He wrote, with Stephen Hawking, the first text on Einstein's theory of relativity and was also invited by the Pope to give the State of the Universe address, conveying the most current explanations of the origins of the universe.)

"George Ellis was marvelous. Any religion which could have such a man in it couldn't be half-bad," thought Ahilleas Maurellis. He began attending Capetown Meeting, and found the Quakers to be the "least evil of the organized religion category." The Capetown Meeting was "berserk with anxiety and energy" during that time of opposition to apartheid, and he brought some of that energy when he came to Lawrence as a Fulbright Scholar to do a Ph.D. in physics.

He recalled that at his first Meeting with Oread Friends there were three or four people. "I came in the room and found it very quiet in a good way and a bit bleak," he said. "Saunny was clerk and stressed as she was trying to do almost everything on her own, including LINK. The Meeting needed new blood. I had a lot of energy and I was gung-ho on the Meeting."

By September, 1993, numbers had risen to the point that there were thirteen at Meeting for Business. These included physicist Thomas Harvey, an East Coast Quaker, who impressed Ahilleas Maurellis.

"The world knows him as the man who was the chief pathologist at Princeton Medical Center when Einstein died," said Ahilleas Maurellis. "After the autopsy, Thomas Harvey slipped Einstein's brain from his cranium and popped it into a jar with the intent of doing research on it." At first this disturbed Einstein's family, who were Jewish, because the Torah calls for individuals to be buried intact. Tom Harvey convinced them he wouldn't do anything unethical with the great brain, and in Titusville, New Jersey, he prepared cross-sections of Einstein's brain. After he lost his medical license because of suits (all resolved in his favor), Tom moved to Lawrence. He and Ahilleas Maurellis met in Meeting. They roomed together for three and a half years. "Tom, then in his eighties, kept Einstein's brain in a jar filled with grain alcohol," said Ahilleas Maurellis who recalled eating a ham sandwich in the kitchen while Tom Harvey topped up the jar with grain alcohol.

"I'm the only physics student who has lived with Einstein's brain," became Ahilleas Maurellis' boast in Lawrence bars. He served as Clerk even before he was a member and introduced several in meeting to Meister Eckhardt and other mystics of the past.

The enthusiasm new attenders like Ahilleas Maurellis brought was exciting. According to Deborah Altus, "the Meeting took on a more dynamic character as we then had the person-power to become involved in more activities. We started reading books together, holding discussion groups, becoming more involved in local service activities. Many of us new to Quakerism threw ourselves into exploring its history."

Meeting began looking for comfortable chairs. The overseers met again, offering themselves "as a core group to whom Friends with concerns can turn to have them addressed with dedication, tact and discretion." Additionally, the Overseers helped set the agenda for Meeting for Business, and tried to "cultivate a sense of Quaker identity and expectations concerning Meeting for Worship and Business." They hoped this would help members and attenders be "at ease about speaking in Meeting for Worship and stay mindful of the worshipful manner in which we intend to conduct Meeting for Business." In 1993, Susan "Sandy" Hazlett Mitchell began a ministry of pastoral care as a hospital and hospice chaplain. Three or four regularly attended Midweek

Meeting for Worship at Danforth Chapel, and spur-of-the-moment post-Meeting lunches and talks invigorated both spiritual and communal life of the Meeting.

In the spring of 1993, Loring Henderson arrived from Washington, D.C.

“I was wearing a suit even though I knew from attending Meetings in Washington, D.C. that Quakers didn’t wear suits. The room was semi-full. There were Tom Harvey, Harold and Pam, Saunny, Ahilleas and others who have since moved away. There must have been a children’s program too as the Mitchells were here with their two sons, then under ten, and Bea too.”

Loring Henderson was brought up in Lawrence Friends Church in the pastoral tradition. Although there was no unprogrammed meeting in town when he was growing up, an aunt who had gone to Philadelphia told him about “those other kind of Quakers.” He went to Washington, where he lived from 1963-93. He was active in the Catholic Workers Committee for Non Violence; he worked in soup kitchens with Mitch Snyder. He returned to Lawrence to care for his mother who was gravely ill. When she died, Sandy Mitchell came to her funeral to represent the Meeting.

“That touched me,” he said.

In 1994 he applied for membership. The next year he clerked the Meeting. And in 1996, the Executive committee of the North Central region of the AFSC nominated him to join their ranks. He has since been active in promoting AFSC and the FCNL, keeping Oread aware of the bigger picture of Friends’s concerns.

In the fall of 1995, Francis Elling transferred his membership from Southern Illinois Society of Friends to Oread Friends. “Follow your leadings,” he often said, encouraging Friends faced with knotty questions. As clerk, he was much appreciated for his “centeredness and gentle organization” which “contributed greatly to the flow of both worship and business.” In 1998-1999, he and Loring Henderson co-clerked, with the former concentrating on potlucks, the latter on paperwork, and splitting the chairing of Meetings for Business.

That these middle years of the nineties were good is apparent from a 1995 letter, Pamela Gordon, corresponding clerk, sent to FGC representative Kenneth Ives about the state of the Meeting.

“We are doing very well and we are growing. Meeting for Worship is regularly attended by approximately 20 and a small group of Friends also gathers for worship on Wednesday nights. We offer First Day School every Sunday, and we bring the children (there is usually at least one) to the last ten minutes or so of worship. Once a month we also have Worship Sharing. When there is not a pressing issue we focus on one of the queries in Faith and Practice.

The most obvious indication of our growth is that three couples are being (or have been) married under the care of our Meeting this year. ...Financially we are still doing well, and we are currently trying to plan how (and when) to make more financial contributions to various groups (Quaker and otherwise). We were able to renovate our bathroom this past year and we added a new wheelchair accessible shower. The new facilities have been nice for us, but even more important, we have been able to offer them to homeless people ever Saturday morning. ...Twice a month we have Study Group which is attended by 4 to 6 people. ...Oread Friends has made a great difference in my own life, and I think that many of my Friends are as happy as I am right now about this Meeting. Of course we have some growing pains: I think many Friends would agree that we could do better with our monthly Meeting with concern for

business, for example. I wouldn't say that we quarrel, but some of us get a bit ruffled sometimes. But with time and effort, we'll learn."

In 1996, Gail Reber was received into membership. She devoted herself to Bea Scott, coloring with her and reading Bible stories to her. Bea Scott, born with cerebral palsy, brought gifts too. In 1994, Pam Gordon wrote, "Last Sunday was a really special Meeting for me because Bea took part in "joys and sorrows" at the close of Meeting. She didn't want to say it herself, but tapped me on the arm (quietly but persistently) and asked me to tell everyone her joy: her mom was coming home (after a week away at Friends General Conference)."

Bea Scott was also the first in Meeting to call Ahilleas Maurellis, "Achille" (his preference then) instead of "Archie." Then to let everyone know she hadn't forgotten his American nickname, she leaned towards him and said, "Archie. She has ministered to ill or absent friends by making them cheerful drawings.

After the midweek worship group on campus was abandoned in 1995, Meeting exerted little deliberate effort at attracting K.U. students. Fortunately, a few found Oread. In 1997, Sarah Ruden, a K.U. student from South Africa, was a faithful attender her two years here. Now back in South Africa, she wrote Meeting of that country's unlikely choice of a Minister of Defense—a Quaker.

During the Gulf War in 1991, many Oread Friends attended weekly vigils at the courthouse following Meeting for Worship. "Our concern about the war gave a certain gravity to worship," said Harold Washington. A second series of vigils in 1999 protested the renewed bombing of Iraq and the suffering of the Iraqi people from the embargo and economic sanctions.

As the economy boomed in the final years of the century, poverty continued unabated. In an article by James Fallows entitled "The Invisible Poor," (New York Times Magazine, March 19,2000), he stated:

"The way a rich nation thinks about its poor will always be convoluted. The richer people become in general, the easier it theoretically becomes for them to share with people who are left out. But the richer people become, the less they naturally stay in touch with the realities of life on the bottom, and the more they naturally prefer to be excited about their own prospects rather than concerned about someone else's."

The Meeting's serving at LINK kept the poor in its sight. It has also tried to help the homeless by hosting the Community Drop-In Center until it gained sufficient funds in 2000 to rent a space downtown.

With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, citizens became more aware of the needs of those with disabilities. A query in Philadelphia's Faith and Practice asks, "Is the spirit of our worship together one that nurtures all worshippers?" Meeting has been fortunate in having Bea Scott, now 18, grow up in Meeting. With her passion for hip-hop music and coloring rainbows, joyous laugh and softest touch, she is easy to love.

"Bea always gives more than she takes," said Pam Gordon. "Bea was my main mentor and source of inspiration in the years when I had severe chronic pain, before I had a diagnosis for my auto immune disease. Back when I thought I'd just get worse and worse, I figured that if Bea could smile like that, I could too."

After attending a conference of the Religion and Disability Program of the National Organization on Disability (NOD) in 1998 in Lawrence, Saunny Scott urged Meeting to become recognized by the NOD as an “Accessible Congregation.” Meeting discussed easy accessibility for wheelchairs; recreating the driveway to provide parking close to the Meeting House as well as spaces for handicapped; getting a towel rack and a sink with a built-in grab bar for the bathroom; and getting a ramp for the back steps. Not all of these have yet been done, but as an “Accessible Congregation,” Meeting has committed itself to welcoming those with disabilities, even if it means doing something about the mud in the driveway that makes chair access difficult.

In a time of cloning sheep (“Dolly”) and piglets, Oread recognized the world as sacred space. In the Peace Pole sculpture to be dedicated at Meeting’s fiftieth anniversary. “We have chosen to include on the Peace Pole, a diversity of human languages as well as animal and bird prints signifying that all living beings on earth are connected to and included in the need for peace,” said Beth Schultz. Many members share her belief “that spiritually and physically we as human are connected to the lives of all that lives and we have an equal commitment to caring for the diversity of the smallest creatures as well as humanity. It is as important to care for biological diversity—for bugs, snakes, animals, flowers, grass—as it is to care for human diversity. Given that we are all connected in an organic web of life, ...if we injure one part of that web, we injure the whole.”

The issue that brought trouble to the Meeting in the 1980s was property and the attendant trials of meeting a mortgage. Trouble came also with the 1996, purchase of a vacant lot adjacent to the Meeting House. Paying the ten thousand dollar price was a lesser worry than dealing with issues of how a religious society should conduct its pecuniary affairs and get along with its neighbors. Making the payments on the mortgage had been simply a matter of money in the lean eighties. This was harder. “That Meeting was not divided or torn apart by it,” was to its credit said Loring Henderson.

For its first 25 years, the Meeting had no telephone, and the only way to know of its existence was through its listing in the weekly religion directory in the *Lawrence Journal World*.

“I didn’t know there were any Quakers in Lawrence,” City Commissioner John Nalbandian said a few years ago when the City Council was invited to the opening of the Community Drop-In Center at the Meeting House.

Several members say it’s unlikely that a City Council member would say that today.

At a 1994 discussion of whether Oread Meeting was “findable” in Lawrence, some asked whether it was “possible and/or desirable for the Meeting to grow since most of those who find Oread Meeting do so because they have been involved with a Friends Meeting elsewhere.”

The primary concern was that the focus of the outreach effort should be on doing work in the community rather than advertising the existence of the Meeting in the Yellow Pages. This led to greater involvement with LCPJ than in previous years. Oread contributed to an LCPJ ad in *Journal World* at Christmas encouraging people not to buy violent toys for children. In 1994, Meeting wrote President Clinton expressing dismay over the imminent US invasion of Haiti. In 1995 concern about Bosnia led Meeting to consider it as a topic for worship sharing. Meeting had letters to the editor published in the *Lawrence Journal World*, one on the Test Ban Treaty, and another on the 1998 U.S. bombings in Kenya, Tanzania, Sudan, and Afghanistan. Oread also participated in the vigils for peace that the LCPJ sponsored in 1990-1991 and in 1999.

Perhaps the most troubling domestic issue of the decade was the war on drugs. In 1997, the Meeting approved a Minute from South Berkshire Friends Meeting of Great Barrington, Massachusetts. The minute stated that

“The commitment of the Society of Friends to nonviolence has direct implications for our nation’s failed drug war. . . . although as Friends we deplore drug abuse for its spiritual and physical damage to individuals and to society, we cannot condone violence. Therefore the Oread Friends Meeting favors harm reduction strategies that

- a. regard addiction as a medical, not criminal, problem
- b. repeal mandatory drug sentences
- c. reduce the profitability of illicit drugs by making them regulated and taxed under legal control; and
- d. vastly increase prevention and treatment programs

Another issue that galvanized the nation was the equal rights for gays and lesbians. In 1982, Oread Friends had allowed the Metropolitan Community Church, one “formed in response to exclusion of gays and lesbians from many Christian churches,” to use the Meeting House for its Christmas Eve Service. In 1996 Oread Friends study group read *Angels in America*, a play which deals with the gays in the U.S. Francis Elling is Meeting’s representative on the national Ministry and Counsel Committee of Friends for Lesbian and Gay Concerns. While gays and lesbians gained ground in seeking equal rights under law, the issue of same-gender marriage led to division and pain in the Society of Friends, as evidenced by numerous articles and letters in *Friends Journal* in the early 1990s. Many unprogrammed Meetings split over the issue of same-gender marriage, and Oread felt concern since a Friend was in a long-term relationship.

“Although he didn’t ask to be married under the care of Friends, we realized there could be a marriage in the offing,” said Ahilleas Maurellis. Jay Smith brought up the subject to Meeting as an ally of the gay Friend. “We had tearful Meetings because some were not happy at this.” Unity began to build and accepting same-gender marriages started to feel appropriate. In 1993, Oread Friends adopted the following minute:

Friends require the acceptance of no creed. In approaching the question of same-gender marriages, however, we find it helpful to re-affirm the following statements from Faith and Practice, Philadelphia YM (1955, 1972, 1978), pp. 32-33.

“Friends believe that everyone is a child of God. . . . Everyone must be regarded as of infinite worth and must be treated as a person who can be drawn by love to live a full and worthwhile life which manifests respect and considerateness for others.

. . . Just as diversity among Friends is vital and healthy when we approach each other in a spirit of caring and humility, so it should become clear that diversity in the world as a whole can be healthy and vital if it is similarly accepted.

. . . Enunciation of the principle of equality among human beings in the sight of God is important and necessary but it is not sufficient. Realization of equality involves such matters as independence and control of one’s own life. Therefore, Friends must aid the efforts of the exploited to attain self-determination and social, political and economic justice, even when their attainment involves change in attitudes and practices formerly taken for granted. Faith and Practice here addresses principally the social ills of racial prejudice and economic

exploitation. We acknowledge that the principles enunciated above speak as well to the matter of discrimination against people because of their sexual orientation. Therefore we affirm that request by couples to be married under the care of the meeting will be given the same loving care and close consideration, whether the partners are of the same or opposite gender.

In the tradition of Friends, we actively seek a world in which love and commitment between partners is not only acknowledged but supported, nurtured, and respected in a manner that shows reverence for that of God in all people. Thus our Meeting chooses intentionally to cherish all such commitments made within our community of Friends.

“When we passed the same gender marriage minute, I felt it was the most wonderful thing we did while I was clerk,” Ahilleas Maurellis said.

On the national scene, the culture faced vast changes brought about by computer technology. The weekly religion briefs to the *Lawrence Journal World* were now emailed rather than “snail-mailed” or hand-delivered. Computers were replacing clothes as collection items of choice. In its early years, Oread annually collected 2,060 pounds of clothing and sent it by rail freight for AFSC to distribute; in 1999, Bob Fraga and Loring Henderson got computers donated and Pastors for Peace trucked them to the University of Leon in Nicaragua.

Meeting’s finances prospered in the nineties. “This is a lovely time to be treasurer,” Harold Washington said. In 1999 the mortgage was only \$75, and past and current members were invited to contribute to paying it off in its entirety as part of the fiftieth anniversary celebration. Oread Friends hosted Missouri Valley Friends at Spring Fling, April 28 through April 30, 2000 in honor of the anniversary. Mary Garman, Earlham College professor of religion, spoke about Quaker women, and the Peace Pole was dedicated. That evening a hymn sing was planned to follow dinner at the Ecumenical Christian Ministries (ECM) building on the K.U. campus.

The hymn sing and ECM notwithstanding, the Meeting appeared now closer in spirit to Universalism than to the Christ-centered ethos of the fifties. Perhaps this is representative of a generational shift throughout unprogrammed meetings across the U.S. When a worship sharing group studied the gospel of Mark, however, a participant stressed “the need for tolerance with regard to the beliefs of all present.” Was this because there were profound theological differences?

The Meeting continued to face the challenge of too few people trying to accomplish a great deal. When a study group in 1996 read Thomas Kelly’s classic *Testament of Devotion*, perhaps his words spoke to their condition:

Religion isn’t something to be added to our other duties, and thus make our lives yet more complex. . . . Too many of us have too many irons in the fire. We get distracted by the intellectual claim to our interest in a thousand and one good things, and before we know it we are pulled and hauled breathlessly along by an over-burdened program of good committees and good undertakings. . . . Acceptance of service on a weighty committee should really depend upon an answering imperative within us, not merely upon a rational calculation of the factors involved. The concern-oriented life is ordered and organized from within. And we learn to say No as well as Yes by attending to the guidance of inner responsibility.

Chapter 5

Faith

Everything in our social conditioning teaches and encourages us to take charge of our lives; to discover what we desire and to go for it; to leave nothing to chance, but to plan ahead.... We have a grave suspicion that if we do not take charge, plan and go for it, either nothing at all will happen or we will become the passive pawns of others who are actively planning. This suspicion bypasses the Quaker experience and faith that the Spirit of God is present and will guide us in whatever is needful for us and for the world around us...[it's a] failure to behave as if we really believe that God is present and engaged in human life with us."

—Patricia Loring, *Listening Spirituality*, Vol. 1

“Quakerism is a funny thing. You can’t sell it. It’s by conviction or birthright,” said Ahilleas Maurellis in 1999. How then do convinced Friends become members? The process is unique: at once intimate and bold. It expects the answer to George Fox’s unequivocal question, “You will say, Christ saith this and the Apostles say this, but what cans’t thou say? Art thou a child of Light and hast thou walked in the Light, and what thou speakest, is it inwardly from God?”

A pamphlet reassures: “Friends wish to respect the integrity of your personal beliefs and do not try to establish conformity to established dogmas...”.(How to Become a Member of the Religious Society of Friends: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, pp. 2-5). The pamphlet goes on to recommend that someone who wishes to join should “attend Meeting for Worship for a considerable period of time; and learn to know the book entitled Faith and Practice ...” Finally he or she should “address a letter to the Monthly Meeting of his choice, stating why he feels drawn into the fellowship of Friends, and indicating that he is in unity with its principles and testimonies.”

There is no creed in Quakerism, and being “in unity with” allows leeway for integrity; the circle of inclusion is wide and members can be at the boundaries as well as at the epicenter of faith. Faith and Practice of the Religious Society of Friends published by Philadelphia Yearly Meeting gives a clear understanding of these principles and testimonies. The book describes the history, beliefs and practices of Friends, and application of their testimonies. For inspiration, there are extracts from the writings of Friends over three hundred years; for administrative information there are explanations of structures in the yearly meeting; a statement of the queries and a glossary of “Quaker talk” top off the book.

Quakerism has no initiation rite like baptism. Although the initial request to join is written, the sentiment that motivates the letter is akin to that which sparks a proposal of marriage. It is a step taken soberly. It has consequences. To be a Quaker you have to live your religion. You can’t just go in to Meeting, sit down and then leave. In the Meeting’s files is a flier from The Washington, D.C. Meeting listing the “Responsibilities of Membership.” These include:

...to seek to understand the testimonies and to express them in everyday living; to use the Queries frequently as a means of examining and directing oneself; to approach social problems based on principles of Friends; to develop an increasing understanding of religious truth; to attend Meeting for Worship and Business in a spirit of devotion and love, seeking to participate; to accept appointment on committees and serve; to participate in Friends projects; to contribute to the financial support of the Meeting and its commitments.”

Why do people wish to take on these responsibilities?

Let us turn to the letters the applicants have written requesting membership in Oread Friends Meeting for answers. It is a tender-making experience to read them. Humility is the dominant tone in these intimate and self-revealing letters.

“I will be happy and grateful if you find it in accordance with God’s will to accept me,” wrote a woman in 1954.

Two years later, another wrote that to “be a real Friend and someday succeed in this desire, I feel I very much need the help of this Meeting.”

“I feel that now is the time for me to be considered for membership in Oread Friends Meeting,” wrote another applicant in the 1950s. “I have come to feel myself a Friend and find that has become a strong part of my life.”

Fifteen years later, another applicant expressed a like sentiment. “Like many persons who have become Quakers after growing up in other religious groups. I feel that I have been a Quaker for several years without knowing it. I would like to add to this sense of belonging the formal bond of membership.”

In the 1980s an attender wrote: “Years of seeking, questioning, thinking and most importantly listening have led me to this point in my life.”

“Led” is a key word. One applicant asks the rhetorical question, “Why am I applying?” and answers, “The simplest words are the truest: I feel clearly led.”

One wrote that she had been inspired and encouraged by Howard Brinton’s statement that, “in the main Friends considered conversion as a gradual process, often lifelong, subsequent to conviction of the truth of Quaker principles.”

Occasionally a candidate’s letter is short, perhaps on the assumption that the Meeting knows one already. As clerk, Ron Rarick received one letter that was two sentences long: “After long consideration I have decided to ask the Oread Society of Friends to take me into the membership of the Society. Would you please set into motion whatever is needed to present my request for memberships to the Meeting?”

As Clerk, Saunny Scott received one that was more terse yet: “Please accept this as my request to become a member of the Oread Friends Meeting.”

Unprogrammed Meetings have no adrenaline-flooding altar calls, no terrifying threats of damnation, not even a clear separation between insiders and outsiders, the saved and the unsaved. Anne Moore recalls a 1970 Evangelical Friends conference in St. Louis she attended with her husband Tom. It included members of 24 of the 28 yearly meetings, all pastors and all men.

“It was my first experience with ‘you’ve got to be saved’ language. I was awake all night because it meant I was out—not in. They were in. It was an eye-opener.”

The unprogrammed Quaker aversion to proselytizing may be due to the fact that some members are refugees from aggressive and rampant evangelism. Having suffered themselves, they are loathe to subject others to it. Rather than being impelled by sloth or reticence, Oread Friends share the sentiment expressed in the Philadelphia pamphlet about membership: “We wish each person to be so desirous of joining that he will take the first step without waiting for a suggestion from us.”

Responsiveness to the nudgings of the Spirit is the goal. Quakers trust to continuing revelation rather than creeds.

In 1974, Ron Rarick, then a student at K.U., wrote an academic paper on the procedure of joining the Society of Friends. In his research he asked members, “Have you or anyone you know asked anyone to join?”

“No,” he was told. Again and again.

As part of his research, he asked those serving on clearness committees for membership at Oread whether they questioned applicants about their theological beliefs.

The answer was negative. One member of the Clearness Committee noted that “the beliefs in themselves are not as important as having thought about them seriously.” It seems that Oread Friends have. Harold Washington is a professor at St. Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, where Sandy Mitchell, a former member, for enrolled for some time. Several have been ordained ministers. Russell Carter was chaplain at Haskell Indian Nations College. Another early member of Meeting, W. A. Young, became a minister at Scranton Methodist Church in 1958, and later associate minister of Plymouth Congregational Church in Wichita. “My work has made it difficult for us to attend with any regularity the Meetings at Lawrence,” he wrote after taking up a clergy job, “but all Meetings attended were enjoyable and spiritually helpful.”

Ministers on vacation have sometimes attended Oread rather than the service at their denomination.

Taking Quakerism seriously does not entail restricting oneself to Christianity. After Howard Baumgartel retired from K.U., for instance, he began auditing courses in religious studies and found himself “deep into Judaism and its wonderful prayer books.”

Once an applicant’s letter has been read in Meeting for Business, the next step, according to Faith and Practice, is for Meeting’s Overseers or a Clearness Committee to “inquire by personal visits [the applicant’s] earnestness, and . . . try to discover whether his life and conduct are consistent with his religious profession.” It is hard to imagine a more discomfiting prospect—like being shoved before Heaven’s Gate before one need be—except for the trust one has in the kindness of those on the Clearness Committee. More unsettling yet, is the fact that in some Meetings, it is not unusual for applicants for to be rejected or discouraged from joining. In Lawrence, all applicants appear to have been welcomed. In any case, the applicants Ron Rarick interviewed were asked neither about their beliefs nor about their life and conduct. The visit by the Clearness Committee, nonetheless, is a serious one. Harold Washington remembers his, with a committee which included Saunny Scott, Karen Ross, Sarah Russell and Peggy Baker.

In 1974 Tom Moore reports that the overseers met for “approximately one and a half hours of discussion” with Ron Rarick, and that this was “enough to satisfy the members of the committee that Ron Rarick is sufficiently acquainted with the Society of Friends, fully committed to accepting his full share of responsibility for its ongoing functioning, in harmony with its traditions and testimonies and open to the possibility that the Holy Spirit may lead the Society along previously untrodden paths....”

Although there is no catechism check-up or theological benchmark to meet, those applying for membership sometimes volunteer their beliefs. One wrote that she was attracted by “a compassionate and activist Christianity which I interpret as Christ’s intention for the World.”

“I have studied the basic tenets of Quaker beliefs,” wrote another, “and I believe I can support them in faith and action with the support, the guidance, and the love you have already given to me, as well as through the guidance of the Light of Christ.”

Other writers witnessed to the strength and joy they find. One testified how “these simple words of George Fox entered my heart and have been my source of strength and inspiration: “Walk cheerfully over the land, seeking that of God in everyone.”

In the 1990s one wrote “I am a Christian and find joy in the Christian values of pacifism, stewardship and community, among others, as practiced in the Quaker way. That there is God in each of us and that unprogrammed worship is deeply satisfying are examples of Quaker beliefs that sustain me day after day. ...Finding the Oread Meeting is a reminder that there are unexpected rewards when one follows a leading. It is my prayer that being a member of the Meeting will be a source of strength to act when I am called again.”

Another member wrote, “From early childhood and on through this my 57th year, I have known the faithful Presence of our loving God whom I believe to be unconditionally present to everyone through the Inner Life given to each of us—a Life not our own, yet somehow very much our own as we turn to it, and in the turn receive it to live out in love and service to others.”

In the early years, it was taken for granted that Oread Friends were Christian. There seems to have been a gradual shift from a Christ-centered theology toward Universalism. “When we began, we were a Philadelphia mainstream silent Meeting. We were always Christian. There was no ambiguity about that,” said founding member Howard Baumgartel.

In 1963 Domingo Ricart suggested “that the Christian and more specifically the Quaker view should be central ...no matter what the problem under discussion.” Some current members sense a vagueness about the identity of the Meeting, while others say that Oread represents the mix in Quakerism across the country.

In the years when it was Christ-centered, the Meeting never suffered from a blinkered fundamentalism. In recent years the word “Light” is sometimes used where the word “Christ” might have been used earlier. The slogan of Quakerism has become “that of God in everyone” rather than “the light of Christ within.”

Evidence of this shift also appears in some of the recent letters. One wrote that “most groups require of their members that they hold to a common ideology.... Friends are really quite hard put to require, as a religious group after all, that their members even believe in God!”

And is belief in God any different than “a belief in the goodness of ongoing and embracing Light and Life, existing both within and without...” It was trust in this goodness, that for one recent member, “dissolved a need for certain questions and a yearning for answers.”

Another member of the nineties wrote, “I am comfortable and compatible with what I might call the theological orientation of the Meeting and Quakerism, more specifically in its “liberal” and “Universalist” dimensions... That Quakerism is a path, not a destination, and so I may travel it through great internal and external changes.”

When Meeting was invited in 2000 to join the Ecumenical Christian Ministries (ECM) at K.U., Saunny Scott spoke in Meeting for Business of her concern that the adjective “Christian” in the organization’s name might put off prospective attenders who would otherwise be attracted to Meeting. Meeting did, however, join ECM.

Those who are Christ-centered may ponder with John McCandless in Quaker Understanding of Christ, “When it is asserted that some Friends are not Christ-centered, but are God-centered or spirit-centered or Light-centered, the question immediately arises, ‘in what light, what spirit, what ‘god’ are they centered?’”

The Certificates of Removal from Meeting read: “We therefore commend _____ to your Christian care.” This wording may no longer be appropriate for Universalist Friends. Nor may the mid-century traveling minutes of Oread Friends which ask “for unity in the spirit of Christ.”

“Let nothing come between your soul and God but Jesus Christ,” said George Fox. A few who cherish this belief have been led to emigrate to mainstream churches—Episcopal, Presbyterian and Methodist. Faith and Practice states that “when members wish to leave the Religious Society of Friends and join some other religious body, they should notify their monthly Meeting. ... When they have been received in membership by another religious group, their membership with Friends shall cease.” (41)

There have also been “hyphenated Quakers,” those who value sermons, the sacraments and liturgy of the mainstream churches but who know experientially the power of silence in worship. They may attend Meeting regularly because their other faith community has little or no time of silent prayer. Faith and Practice notes that “membership is a major commitment to participate in a particular community of Friends, and full participation in two religious bodies at one is usually impractical.” (41) This is probably true, especially in a small Meeting. But these hyphenated Quakers, whether Catholic Quakers or Congregational Quakers may miss hearing the name of Jesus. They are not yet in that rarefied atmosphere which enables one to say, as did Ahilleas Maurellis, “After all why mention his name in his presence?” Why mention God in the presence of God?”

Although not all Friends in the Meeting in 2000 would accept as the core belief George Fox’s impassioned assertion that “there is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition,” most, if not all, believe that obedience to the Spirit is essential. Whether it is called “the Inner Light ” or “the Christ within” may be a matter of semantics. Did not Fox write “I saw in that Light and Spirit which was before Scripture was given forth, that all must come to that Spirit, if they would know God or Christ or the Scriptures aright”?

Both Universalist and Christian Friends believe in the value of “centered silence” to enable one to be open to the Spirit, from which verbal ministry comes. It’s a tender topic because we have been for the last quarter century what is called a “quiet” Meeting, one in which there is little verbal ministry. .

“Doesn’t God talk to us anymore?” Howard Baumgartel asked recently, noting that there had been more testimony in the late 1970s and mid 1980s.

“It could be that during the 1970s the climate of political activism was more intense, and people spoke more about issues, but for me the quiet quality of the Meeting is a plus, so long as we do get to hear Friends speak when they are really led to do so,” said Harold Washington.

Do scant words have greater power? During a time of little verbal ministry, Saunny Scott was struck by something Jay Smith said. The gist of it was that we are not mortal beings with a spiritual side, but spiritual beings on a human journey. She was also struck by how Helen Swezey who had a “rare spiritual depth” kept that even in the beginning stages of Alzheimer’s disease.

How does one measure “quality of silence”?

The Quaker ideal is the “gathered Meeting” which is very different from everyone being in their own public meditation. Quakers do not meditate. Rather than focus on something, even the breath going in and out, they open themselves to whatever comes. Focusing on one thing could be a barrier to hearing God’s voice, thus Quakers wait in silence and listen. There’s a difference too between a “quiet” Meeting and a “dry” Meeting. Minutes of a December 12, 1965, Meeting for Business noted “it was decided that although there was a large amount of silence in our Meeting the silence was quite meaningful to us.”

During the memorial service for Beatrice White in 1981, Anne Moore described what happens in a Meeting for Worship: “We gather in silent waiting on the Lord, and if anyone is moved to speak, they do.” She mentioned that “Tom and I cannot recall Beatrice ever speaking in Meeting, but that doesn’t mean she didn’t minister to us! Hers was a ministry of example, of giving and of caring.”

Yet many times over the decades, the desire and “necessity” for more vocal ministry has been reiterated. The first reference is in November, 1955, when Young Friends “indicate a greater need for verbal ministry in Meeting.” Friends brainstormed strategies to improve worship. In 1956, discussion before Meeting; in 1973 devoting the first minutes of Meeting to sharing openly the busyness, fears, etc. that might otherwise keep members from centering.

Regularly, members have turned to the Queries both to assess the state of the Meeting and to remind members of Quaker ideals. In a 1958 Meeting for Business when Laurie Seeber “expressed her concern that the Meeting failed to participate in the mainstream of Quakerism,” Russell Carter suggested a more frequent reading of the Queries might help members set their aims higher.

A query probes an issue, and this can sometimes be unsettling if not unpleasant. Whatever the reason, something about the queries has caused their use to be sporadic. During those years when a newsletter was published, sometimes a query was placed there. Currently a query is read during Meeting on the second and third Sunday of the month with the idea that there be discussion of the query after Meeting. Few stay.

One of the services a religious community usually offers is a grounding in religious education. To achieve this for adult Friends, Oread has sponsored the reading of a great variety of spiritual writings together over the past half-century. In the 1960s, they read together New Testament History and the letters of St. Paul. In the 1970s Meeting read Barclays *Apology*, Margaret Hope Bacon's *Quiet Rebels*, George Fox's *Journal*, Howard Brinton's *Friends for 300 Years* and John Woolman's *Journal*. More recently Friends have read the *Gospel of Mark*, the work of Rufus Jones, *Black Lamb* and *Gray Falcon* by Rebecca West, *Cloister Walk* by Kathleen Norris, poems by John Greenleaf Whittier and Langston Hughes memoir, *Not Without Laughter*.

Such communal reading can convey a sense of the ethos and culture of the group. It may lead some inquirers to ask whether Oread is an ethical society or a religious society.

Chapter 6

Community and Conflict

“All children from birth to maturity need to feel themselves full participants in the fellowship of the Meeting, to be nurtured in their spiritual development and their understanding of the faith and practice of Friends, and to be guided and encouraged in preparation for Quaker adulthood.”

—*Faith and Practice*, 37

Community among Quakers is more than shared interests or beliefs. Quakers seek to nurture each other on their spiritual adventures and in the troubles of life. These come to all of us. The size of a Meeting influences the way of nurture. When the Moores arrived in 1961, Oread Friends had no committees. “We simply functioned to fill needs, all of us together,” Anne Moore said. As membership grew, a Committee of Overseers was proposed in 1972. Its three members were “to be aware of individuals’ well-being or lack thereof, to be accessible to members and attenders to talk of their problems, with the hope that either within or without the Meeting, resources could be found to improve or make bearable situations faced day to day.” A tall order! Not surprisingly, the Committee of Overseers languished as membership got smaller. It was brought back by Ahilleas Maurellis in the early 1990s.

Meetings, both large and small, must contend with business dealings as well as matters of the spirit. In 1975, when there were 73 adults (52 of them active) and 19 children listed on the roll, commitments seem formidable! There was a presiding clerk, an assistant clerk, a recording clerk, a clerk of correspondence and visitation, a librarian/historian and a treasurer. A “Quaker procedure specialist” ensured that good Quaker order was kept, and a counselor, “to whom anyone, including guests, could turn. Standing Committees had the charge of ministry, finance, the newsletter, and advancement. An “alternatives” committee was charged with “developing and maintaining a creative tension in response to individual and group needs for change.” This dizzying array of functions was augmented with ad hoc committees for clearness, overseers, and nominating. In order that no one might be left out or lose herself in this big loop, the Committee on Ministry developed a telephone chain.

Quakers aim to “know each other in that which is eternal,” but how does this happen in a large group? Over and over again during the 1970s echoes the plaintive plea, “we hardly know each other,” heard even today. To remedy this Oread Friends turned to worship-sharing, a full hour of it in 1972, longer than the 45 minutes of worship that followed. “We did sometimes really share on a personal level and sometimes kept it on an idea level,” noted the recording secretary. It could not have been totally satisfactory, for Meeting switched to fifteen minutes of “group preparation for worship, led by whoever was responsible for the hour following worship. The intent was that “the wide variation of content, style, and method in this [worship-sharing] time would aid members to get to know each other.”

A core group of ten also attended midweek Meeting for Worship in 1974. The year following, a Wednesday evening group met at the homes of members who were concentrating on “simplicity,

community and the religious basis for their lives. It must have worked well for the Advancement Committee then suggested four small worship-sharing groups, “to increase our understanding and caring for each individual in Meeting.”

A newsletter, edited for many years by Louise and Allan Hanson, enhanced the getting acquainted effort. A 1971 newsletter carried chatty notes on seventeen people. These reflect the varied interests of members: LeRoy Chittenden is spending mornings at Someday School (a daycare center in North Lawrence); Lydia Moore is “an up-and-coming beekeeper,” having harvested sixty pounds of comb honey on Labor Day; Saunny Scott has turned in her masters thesis; the Ricarts have settled in their apartment in Spain. Attached to the Newsletter is a list of current local attenders and members, 73 in all, including children.

In 1975 the newsletter was compiled for distribution the first Sunday of each month. Mimeographed on pale blue paper and then folded, it has an intimate, homespun look. The October issue lists proposed topics for Meetings that month: simplicity; alcoholism; the world Peace fund; and “Friendly Notes” on twelve members and attenders. In 1976 sixty names were on the mailing list. When non-resident Friends were asked whether they wanted to continue receiving the newsletter, most answered, “yes.”

The May, 1982, issue notes: a party was held to celebrate Lydia Moore’s getting her M.D.; that Ron Rarick was leaving for Europe; that Anne Moore was at the Meeting House each Tuesday from 4-5:30 p.m. to straighten up the office and would welcome company ; and that the Meeting House was being used by Project Acceptance, Appropriate Technology, LCPJ, National Guard for non-violence training, Community Theatre, and a Women’s Support Group.

The March 27, 1984 issue of two single-spaced pages includes a query on race relations, and a note from Saunny Scott who writes on returning from Texas, “I have a real sense of coming home in returning to Oread Friends Meeting,” a testimony to the strength of community.

The newsletter did much to keep members in touch with those who had moved away. In the files are many letters from former members and attenders. These write in gratitude for being remembered even though one has moved away. They acknowledge the strength of silent worship. In fact, members were encouraged to write those who had left to let them know that Meeting was interested in their welfare.

Although those who moved away from Lawrence were urged to join a Meeting closer to their new home, many stayed in touch. Founding member Shigeru Oae has written the Moores every Christmas. Others come to Meeting when they are in Lawrence.

Every month Oread experiences what is ponderously known as the Monthly Meeting for Worship with Concern for Business. In short, it’s a business meeting. It usually takes place after Meeting for Worship. While it may be an easy joy to “Mind the Light” in Meeting for Worship, Friends have found it more of a challenge in Meeting for Business, socialized as we are to the style of secular meetings. There the emphasis is on expediting matters, getting them done profitably and efficiently. A Quaker Meeting for Business is different. It seeks both unity and “clearness,” or a sense of confidence that an action is consistent with the divine will. According to LeRoy Chittenden, it gives the chance to “put into practice what our regular worship is about.” This is hard as can be deduced from the fact that the following passage that found its way into Oread’s Book of Minutes:

“Receive the ministry of others in a tender and understanding spirit and avoid hurtful criticism...Be faithful; be patient; be in earnest to fulfill your service as messengers of truth. Feel the power of God in one another, drawing you together as he draws you to himself.”
—Advises, London Yearly Meeting, 1964.

There are members and attenders who desire to take a “business-like” approach in these Meetings. They speak as soon as the mind prompts them, rather than waiting for the Spirit. Following Quaker procedure so that Meeting can “move forward in unity” requires patience. Enormous patience!

Quakers measure the vitality of a Meeting by the quality of the silence and ministry. According to Ahilleas Maurellis, “the only important thing is Meeting for Worship as we allow the vacuum to be filled by God.... The central life of the meeting is spiritual.”

Often the spirit-filled silence leads to a desire to serve. A small meeting, however, is sometimes hard pressed to accomplish what it would like. Thus often people leave because they feel inadequate, unable to cope with all the expectations they put on themselves.

“The life of a meeting is pretty thin if worship is all there is, and I would never want to think the meeting itself would be satisfied with that,” said Harold Washington. Even in its years when it was sparsely attended, Oread aspired to serve. In 1962 when there were five members, the Meeting still wanted to invite speakers. In 1987, when again there were five resident members (and two attenders), a “happy spirit” prevailed. Five years later, Jeanne Stump reported that Oread Meeting was “still small, but it always seems to keep a number of worthwhile things going.”

In 1996, an “Available Activities List” was composed, which suggested the dizzying breadth of the work of the Meeting:

All attenders should feel free to join in the following: joining Young Friends for worshipful alternatives to Silent Worship; tending our outdoors and taking care of Meeting House; Opening up and tidying the Meeting House in preparation for Meeting; preparing refreshments for after Meeting; leading music and singing before or after Meeting; help “with our monthly contribution of food time and joy to LINK; reading in Study Group’ sharing in a worshipful spirit, your leadings on important issues in worship sharing; offering to help the Meeting keep up to date on important links with FCNL, LCPJ, Friends with Lesbian and Gay Concerns and other monthly Meetings.”

In 1999, the Overseers disbanded as a separate group and the Meeting again undertook its functions as a committee of the whole. Those so inclined met informally on Sunday evenings in months with a fifth Sunday. Instead of “Overseers,” they called themselves “Fifth Sunday” as a way of encouraging everyone to attend. The food at these gatherings was wonderful.

Table fellowship, throughout the years, has brought Friends closer. Throughout the 1950s, there were covered dish suppers for Young Friends on Friday evenings, often at the Ricart home. “The food in the 1970s was robust and homemade,” said Louise Hanson remembering the potlucks and lentil soups for the lunch meetings. “Why are those Quakers always eating?” several of her friends asked. Nineteen people were expected one Sunday evening supper and discussion at the Hinshaws.

The gastronomy has continued although the fare leans now to the taste of the vegetarians and away from that of the carnivores. Pam Gordon remembers Ahilleas Maurellis’ desserts saturated

in honey and Greek South African cakes; Beth Schultz and Bea Scott remember Pam Gordon's pestos and Francis Elling's stollen. Others remember gigantic platter of *dolmas* brought by Loring, Saunny Scott's spring asparagus casseroles and the Brownies baked by Bea Scott.

Quakers used to be called, "Seekers of Truth," and the religion encourages brave authenticity. An applicant in the mid 1990s, wrote, "When I express my desire to join the Religious Society Of Friends, I feel that I am partly saying that I wish to join a group of people that tries to celebrate each person's "aboriginal Self" (to quote Emerson) in terms perhaps of nurturing and encouragement, but certainly by way of simplicity in interaction and deep respect for each other's special qualities."

Faith waxes and wanes. Individuals change the way they seek the Spirit. What may suit at one point in life does not do so later. Attenders join. Members leave. Some return. Some names of those in the Guest Book (begun in 1967) reappear in the minutes. On 11/11/67, Tom and Anne Moore made their first visit; on 11/24/67 Carol and LeRoy Chittenden; on 9/3/71 Ron Rarick; on 6/1/86 Marta Brow; on 6/26/88 Phil Schrod and Deborah (Misty) Gerner; on 8/28/88 Harold Washington; 12/10/89 Jay Smith; 1/14/90 Thomas Harvey; 9/16/90 Deb Altus; 11/24/91 Jerry Jost, 11/1/92 Loring Henderson; 7/17/94 the Melvin family; 4/22/95 Beth Schultz; 6/23/96 Gail Reber; and 7/13/97 Bob Fraga and Jean Grant.

Guests come for a while and leave. Then return. Or not. Some members have found liturgies which resonate more deeply with them. One joined the Roman Catholic Church. Another joined the United Methodist Church. Yet another left to become a Mennonite. Sometimes the leave taking creates a sense of loss. As the recording secretary lovingly wrote a member who was becoming an Episcopalian, "Your absence has been painful for many of us, but we trust that you are doing what you need to do."

Others have been spiritual nomads, residing in the tents of many faiths. Among them are the hyphenated-Quakers, those who love silent worship but miss verbal ministry. Some of these have gone one week to Meeting and another week to some other place of worship. Bill Brow, a member in the 1960s, would attend Friends Church one Sunday and Oread the next. When Laurie Seeber Friedman converted to Judaism, she continued her membership with Oread. The minutes read that "since the grounds on which she became a member of the Society Of Friends seemed unchanged, so continuing membership seemed acceptable."

Others leave when they marry and take up the religious preference of their spouse. It works the other way too, of course. Elbert Winslow Russell, a Pennsylvania Quaker, brought Susan Hadfield Russell, formerly a Presbyterian.

Others move away. This is especially true in a university town. After all, the Meeting was begun by those who had come from the East and Europe to teach at K.U. It's not surprising then to find academics leaving for better jobs. Anna McCracken insisted on staying with Oread Friends even after she moved away. In 1964 in response to Meeting's mailing to non-resident friends about their intentions, she replied, "So long as I live—and Oread Meeting is in existence—I shall wish to be one of its members."

Traditionally, religious groups involve themselves in rites of passage for birth, marriage and death. When Anna McCracken died in 1971, Anne Moore and Neale Carman arranged a

memorial service for her in Danforth Chapel. Sixty Quakers and others met in silent unprogrammed worship in “memory of this teacher of philosophy and friend to many.”

In September, 1994, Meeting was grieved to learn of the untimely death of Lydia Moore, who had spent her young years as a birthright member of Oread Friends. “She became a saint among us, a bona fide saint,” said Louise Hanson. “At her funeral, Unity Temple in Kansas City was filled with the indigent, the homeless, middle class people and dignitaries. She was absolutely devoted and selfless. She touched so many lives for somebody so young.” That Christmas her parents sent Meeting a bright pink card which read, “The Christmas joy we wish for you is that which we have experienced as, in the aftermath of Lydia’s death, we have felt surrounded and supported by love from our family and friends, countless strangers and the spirit of God. The love we want to share is that which we find flows through us even more now toward others who are suffering.” Such is the intimacy of community.

When Pam Gordon’s nephew Tommy died tragically at age six, it was the silence and not the talk of heaven at the service that was of comfort.

More recently, the Meeting dedicated a magnolia in front of the Meeting House in memory of Liz Cronemeyer, a member who had been active in Missouri Valley Friends. And at Meeting’s fiftieth anniversary, the bagpipes played in memory of member Claude Baker.

In Meetings for Business in 1963 and 1969, burial according to the custom of Friends was discussed. Friends encouraged each other to express their intent about the disposal of their bodies to their loved ones. Meeting was interested in the plan of Manhattan Friends to establish a Memorial Society.

Although Quakers do not practice baptism, they welcome the children born to members of Meeting as birthright members. In 1957, founding members Dale and Carmen Johnson announced the birth of the first birthright member of our Meeting.

When in 1965, Bill E. Howard and Janette Conaway requested to be married under the care of Oread Friends, members questioned whether the Meeting could perform a marriage without a pastor. The minutes read, “It was investigated, and found that in Kansas any person could be appointed by the church or court to sign the marriage certificate as a representative of the church.” The marriage took place January 30, 1966. The minutes record: “Even though the Meeting was well filled, the wedding was quiet and dignified. There was some speaking. Both families and friends of bride and groom were present along with the regular members. Anne Moore signed the marriage license and returned it to the Probate Judge’s office.”

In 1968 the Meeting sought authorization to do marriage licenses. “We wrote quoting Faith and Practice, and the state legislature changed a paragraph in the ordinance allowing Friends Meetings in Kansas to marry with legal recognition,” recalled Anne Moore.

Usually the wedding takes place where the couple reside and where they meet with a clearness committee. When Steve Forest and Maryanne Adine who lived in Lawrence wanted to get married in the manner of Friends, Oread Friends did the clearness committee. Since the couple’s relatives were in Springfield, Pennsylvania, the wedding itself was held there.

Deborah Altus recalled her wedding to Jerry Jost this way: “The thought of attending a Clearness Committee on something as intimate as my own marriage plans was terrifying to me, but it turned out to be a wonderful opportunity for sharing and learning. And the Meeting proved itself to be very adaptable to our unique needs. To accommodate our family and friends who were not

familiar with Friends tradition, our ceremony was only vaguely reminiscent of a Friends wedding. Yet Oread Friends members were not only understanding but exceptionally helpful in taking on many of the tasks with which we needed assistance, including the big chore of cleaning up after the reception. Jerry and I were so exhausted from wedding plans, house renovations and moving, that we had little energy to give back to the Meeting during this period. But, as always, Friends were understanding, supportive and never judgmental.”

Another traditional function of religious groups is ministering to the sick. Friends have done this too. In the early years they even visited those who had no relation with Oread, like the Indian girl at the K.U. Medical Center who was “very lonely and homesick.” Ron Rarick regularly visited Maybelle Carmen, the widow of Neale Carman. When Beatrice White was ill in 1980, a called Meeting for Worship was held at her home, and the following August, a birthday party with ice-cream made from the milk of the Cronemeyer’s goat. After a stroke in 1982, she was “largely unresponsive to visitors except for holding a hand. A deep silence supported all who can and would visit.”

Oread also recognizes the accomplishments that might pass unnoticed in a larger body. When Bill Brow got his Ph.D. in 1981, a surprise dinner was held. When the Ricarts moved to Spain in 1971, the Meeting helped clean the house they were vacating, as “a practical and meaningful way to help two people who have helped so many others during their years in Lawrence.”

In 1975 a loan fund was set up, the money coming from gifts, loans and pledges from everyone in the Meeting. The money was loaned interest free. The eligible borrowers were first, members and attenders; in the second place, outsiders with a co-signer from among members and attenders who would take responsibility for half the loan; finally, the money could be loaned to fund humanitarian projects in which a member or attender had an active part. As regards repayment, the “primary concern” was counseling to help with financial responsibility.

The first year all worked well and continued, working “more or less well” until 1979 when the Finance Committee asked, “at what point does individual responsibility become the Meeting’s responsibility?” That year a \$400 loan had been made to a non-member with Quaker connections but no co-signer from the Meeting. She missed her first payment and a couple of months later had left both her job and apartment. After Meeting learned that she was a “battered woman with a relation to a man who was in debt,” the recording secretary wrote assuring her it was as concerned about her as about having its loan repaid, and set a new repayment schedule.

Perhaps new difficulties arose, for in 1984 a concern was voiced that it be maintained as “loan” fund rather than a “gift” so that the money would be available to others in their time of need.” The Loan fund was still operational in 1995 although at that time some loans had gone unpaid over a year. As the minutes reported, “This is a delicate matter and great care must be taken not to offend or distress friends who have borrowed funds.” In December, 1996, the loan fund had a credit balance of \$295.31. In 1999, treasurer Harold Washington suggested we close it as a separate loan account with Capitol Federal and put the funds into the regular checking account.

With its proximity to K.U. in the early years, many Oread Friends were academics. In its first years, this led to Meeting’s international flair. Professors tend to travel and to delight in the foreign. An early penciled notation lists visitors from a dozen countries. In 1967, Tom Moore

carried a traveling minute as he led ten students on a visit to Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Korea

The Meeting has kept this delight in international culture. How Beth Schulz, a professor of English who knows Japanese culture well, would relish meeting Shigeru Oae, a founding member, now back in Japan. Imagine the pleasure the late McCracken sisters would have in meeting Adeta Allen, who taught in China and brought Chinese students to Meeting. Imagine the pleasure Bob Fraga would have in meeting Domingo Ricart and swapping stories of Latin America. And would not those early friends be thrilled to meet K.U. political scientists Phil Schrodtt and Deborah “Misty” Gerner, both Middle Eastern scholars. The early Friends might share how Meeting invited international students to speak and how they helped them become “acquainted with the ‘American Way of Life.’”

Oread’s early outreach effort focused on students. This was easier when K.U. asked students their religious preference and shared that information with local religious groups. In 1950, fifteen students gave “Friends” as their preference on the university form. Oread Friends invited them to Meeting. In 1954 a student member of Meeting represented it on the K.U. Student Christian Fellowship Council. Every few months, a student requested membership. Meeting ordered twenty copies of the Faith and Practice. The practice of welcoming students who identified with Quakerism continued. In 1960 fourteen were invited to Meeting. The following year thirty-three students who had opted Friends as their religious preference were invited to a potluck. Meeting engaged speakers for Sunday evening Meetings, which were primarily designed for them. An announcement of the time and place of Meeting ran in the *University Daily Kansan* (UDK).

Meeting was held on campus from 1950-1980, either in Danforth Chapel or in the Ecumenical Christian Ministries building. This made it easy for students to attend. The peace testimony attracted many during the Vietnam War. In 1970, an ad about Quaker Meeting was again placed in the UDK, and Meeting paid eight dollars for membership in K.U. Religious Advisors.

Then all mention of students drops from the minutes until 1982 when the minutes noted that thirty-five students had expressed an interest in Quakers. But it was no longer so easy to reach them with a Meeting House off campus. Three years later, in response to a concern, “that we are not reaching out to students,” Meeting considered “offering one Meeting a month on campus, or of providing rides for interested students.” Later minutes did not indicate whether or not action was taken. Although few K.U. students have recently attended Meeting, they have been helpful at LINK since 1995, when Pam Gordon, who is on the LINK board, recruited them.

According to Faith and Practice, “Quakers have felt a special bond that has overreached geographical and cultural boundaries and has made easy the offer of hospitality to traveling Friends on the one hand and the quiet confidence of welcome on the other.” (56)

“Visitors from AFSC, FCNL, FGC and FWCC would have heard of the little Meetings in Kansas City, Lawrence, and Manhattan and stop off to visit them,” said Anne Moore. “In this way we got to have a wider view of Quakerism. Sometimes people in Philadelphia wouldn’t know these people because they were busy in their offices. These visits were important in the life of the Meeting.”

Meeting frequently hosted “weighty Friends. In 1951, when the balance was only \$199, Meeting authorized \$50 for Douglas Steere’s visit. Elton Trueblood came while lecturing in Topeka in

1954. In 1968, Betty Boardman visited. So later did John Linton, who was instrumental in founding the Quaker Universalist Group.

In 1950, its first year, the Meeting had visitors from Lincoln, Des Moines and Kansas City. In 1967, Oread Friends visited other Meetings, and aspired to “do more” with regard to the Missouri Valley Friends Conference Meetings. The 1970s were the heyday of ecumenism. In 1973, the Meeting for Business was held at Lawrence Friends Church; there is a family photo of the Moores in their 1973 Pictorial Directory. In 1974, the Meeting approved paying for transportation to visit other Meetings. Every fourth Sunday, a car was available to visit nearby Friends. A traveling minute was prepared (“We entrust them to your loving care while they are visiting with you...”), and that December, a car of Oread Friends went to Hesper Friends Church. Their letter of introduction read, “Having reaped some of the fruits of one of our members attending the Faith and Life Conference in Indianapolis ... we are eager to share this kind of experience among neighboring Meetings.” That year Anne Moore went to Nebraska Yearly Meeting. In Kansas visits were made to Penn Valley Meeting in Kansas City, and Stanwood Friends Meeting near Oskaloosa. Visits were made to Meetings in La Jolla, California, Lincoln, Nebraska, and Greensboro, North Carolina. Michael and Muriel Hopkins traveled north to attend Canadian Yearly Meeting in 1975.

But from the beginning, unfortunately, relations with the Friends Church in Lawrence were distant. In the early 1860s a number of Friends families had settled in and around Lawrence. Monthly Meetings were set up by the Indiana Yearly Meeting in Springfield (now known as Hesper), Leavenworth, Tonganoxie, etc. A Kansas Quarterly Meeting was established in 1862 and Friends often drove 150 miles in wagons to attend its events. Because of its central location, hotel and railroad, Lawrence was chosen as site for the new Kansas Yearly Meeting House. The Lawrence congregation used the Kansas Yearly Meeting House that had been completed in 1872 until 1941. They then built a church at 16th and New Hampshire Streets. It was this church that Mary Bates and Margarita Ricart visited in 1952 to “talk at length with the minister and express our concern that we should co-operate with them in as many ways as possible.” It didn’t work. Few Oread Friends were comfortable with the approach of Lawrence Friends Church, and vice versa.

Oread Friends were interested in joining inward mysticism with social action. They sought consistency in their beliefs and their actions. As one member wrote in her letter of application, “Quaker beliefs, experiences, community and commitment to social action have provided a buoyant context for learning and doing.” Oread Friends stressed continuing revelation while the Quakers at Friends Church focused on faithfulness to a literal interpretation of Biblical revelation.

“I believe there is that of God in everyone, including those who have never heard of Jesus. I love being a Quaker. It resolves tension in religion because there is not a final creed but an ongoing listening to God, a living religion,” said Loring Henderson who attended Friends Church as a child and then moved to unprogrammed worship.

Oread Friends have for the most part seen Quakerism as a spiritual path open to all, whatever their religious affiliation or lack of it. They would agree with Ferner Nühn, who wrote in 1967, “The word we have is not a purse of gold bestowed unilaterally on us, which we in turn may dole out unilaterally upon others. It is a living spring which may well up alike in others as in ourselves.” (cited in Faith and Practice, 97)

Friends Church joined the Evangelical Friends while Oread Friends Meeting affiliated itself with Friends General Conference (FGC). The estrangement has continued. In 1998, for instance, Meeting discussed “reaching out to the new Friends Church which now has a new minister, and decided that “given theological differences, perhaps we could just do something social.” In fact, nothing happened.

If theology has divided Quakers in Lawrence, the “place” of children in Meeting at one time also led to strain in the very heart of Meeting. “Children’s place” has still not been resolved. Faith and Practice is unequivocal about the needs of children in Meeting.

“...the cornerstone of religious education for most Meetings is a thriving First Day school program for children, youth and adults. These efforts will succeed only if members actively support them by full participation rather than leaving parents to cope alone with the religious education of their children.” (44)

First Day School has always been a challenge for Oread Friends. The seventeen children of the founding members were a sufficient number to have a viable program. Neale Carman would tell Bible stories and the children would sit in Meeting for part of the time. In 1957, First Day School did not meet in summer, but the children learned lessons from the Old and New Testaments. Members were to share the responsibility of First Day School, each spending four weeks with the children. In 1959, fourteen children were added to the roll. A rift grew between those who had children and those who didn’t.

“One couple in Meeting was uncomfortable with children’s noises, and here we were with these children,” recalled Anne Moore. For some years the children played outside while their parents worshipped inside. Once young Howard and Lydia teetered, balancing precariously on a parapet wall twenty feet high near the Spencer Art Museum, while their parents sat in silence inside Danforth Chapel.

To alleviate the concerns of parents, Meeting hired a baby-sitter, but in 1968 this was thought “expensive” and it was decided members should take turns as sitters. Even the best of children are sometimes rambunctious, noisy and impulsive. Several of the children were Hillcrest School’s ‘Student of the Month,’ yet even Quaker-raised children partake of the nature of children. The music group “Dashboard Buddha” (that rented the Meeting House) were surprised to find “that Quaker children were playing with war toys.” The children themselves were sometimes ambivalent about going to Meeting. For several years when he was in elementary school, Greg Scott opted to stay home. As he told a *Lawrence Journal World* reporter, “It was a choice of whether I wanted to go to some stuffy place with a bunch of old people and wait for God to speak for two hours, or stay home with my dad and watch TV and play video games.”

When in 1973, there were only two children under eleven, Meeting was “back to more limited goals.” Then the numbers rose, and in 1976, Rebecca Reber was hired to help. The next year \$200 was budgeted for child care. Carolyn Threadgill was employed to care for the children in her home while parents went off to Meeting then being held at United Christian Ministries building. Some parents wanted their children to stay during worship and to have the child care there. Some felt the children should be able to sit for the whole silent Meeting.

“I had grown up attending the complete Meeting, and I had wanted to stay so I figured my children could too,” said Anne Moore. Not all felt that way.

A committee of Karen Anderson, Hanna Mellicker, Ron Henry and Louise Hanson undertook to solve the problem. They recommended “a person or persons to take responsibility on a monthly or perhaps bi-monthly basis for the child-care program.” The issue of First Day School came to a head in 1978 when Meeting was pursuing plans to buy a Meeting House. Ron Henry expressed “anger at the apathy” about child care. A Meeting House was “too much to contemplate when even a satisfactory children’s program cannot be mustered,” he said. He stressed the disappointment in the lack of support felt by the Child Care Committee from parents and the Meeting as a whole. He attacked the “unspoken belief that Quakerism is in practice, for adults,” and argued that Meeting should be comfortable for the children as well.

“We agonized about it,” said Allan Hanson. “Anne Moore would say, ‘I’ll take care of the kids while you others have your Meeting.’ But that didn’t seem fair to her.”

Some felt that a consistent children’s program required more children. Some parents felt torn between their duty to Meeting and that to their child. To place Meeting first, these argued, would be “a wrongful ordering of priorities.” They considered a meaningful children’s program essential. They even suggested that the children would judge the failure to develop one as “rejection by the Meeting.”

“This brought us to a basic question,” said Ron Rarick, “will there be any program at all to which the Meeting can commit itself? If not, some parents plan to look elsewhere for the experiences they want their children to have.”

That is perhaps what happened for a mini-exodus took place. In Ron Henry’s request for a letter of transfer, he reviewed his “seven good years of involvement with Oread Friends and indicated he had found his place in another Christian community.” Friends decided to write back, “inviting him to a party in the spring, “so we all can celebrate the marvelous life of the Spirit together.”

In 1981, Oread decided to reinstate the children’s committee, plan a children’s education program, and call upon people whose children were grown or who had none to help operate it. In a comment in a 1984 Newsletter, Saunny Scott wrote “the best religious education consists in loving and being loved, but it has not always been easy for us to feel this love for children who are noisy, Negro, handicapped, or in other ways different from the children usually pictured at Jesus’s feet. It is not always easy for us to express love for the children of others during the 168 hour week. It is absolutely essential that it be there for the hours on Sunday morning.”

Yet who was to provide it? How often? How best could the Meeting teach its children the basic tenets of Quakerism?

Throughout the years visitors with children have left when they found no program. The problem is a catch-22. Without a critical mass of children already on site, Meeting has difficulty in attracting parents who will bring their children so a program becomes viable. In 1994, Friends asked, “Do we set up more structure and wait for additional children to come? Or do we mainly continue to serve the needs of the children who are here and design a new structure as children are added? The practical problem is the range of children in our First Day School. It is difficult to have one curriculum. The more difficult problem is that First Day School should communicate some common values and this may be where the Meeting as a whole may be unformed or unarticulated. What is the connection between what is or isn’t going on in the larger Meeting and what is communicated in First Day School?”

In the early 1990s, with five children in Meeting, First Day School seemed feasible. Barely! Oread encouraged Friends to spend time with the children outside of Meeting. Did they? Many people simply aren't as interested in the company of children as of adults.

Sometimes one or two Friends carried the child care program on their own. Pam Gordon, who has been one of these, recently explained her dilemma. "I'd like more time in Meeting so our course I would be delighted if ten more child-oriented folks joined Meeting. On the other hand, Bea is a great friend to me. If I didn't get to color with her on First Day, I'd end up missing her too much."

Chapter 7

Peace

We utterly deny all outward wars and strife, and fightings with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretense whatsoever; this is our testimony to the whole world.... The Spirit of Christ, by which we are guided, is not changeable, so as once to command us from a thing as evil, and again to move us unto it; and we certainly know, and testify to the world, that the Spirit of Christ, which leads us into 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 Kingdoms of this world....Therefore, we cannot learn war any more.

—Quaker Declaration to Charles II, 1660

Of all Quaker testimonies, none is better known than the peace testimony and the Quaker belief that it is preferable to suffer violence than to inflict it. It is a hard testimony. Robert Lawrence Smith in *A Quaker Book of Wisdom* cites Abraham Lincoln's note to a prominent Friend, Eliza Gurney: "Your people, the Friends, have had and are having a very great trial. On principle and faith opposed both to war and oppression, they can only practically oppose oppression by war. In this hard dilemma some have chosen one horn, and some the other." And in the Second World War, according to Robert Lawrence Smith, more than half the draft-eligible Quaker men in the United States served in the Armed Forces, "inspired by the clear moral choices of this conflict." Both Bob Fraga and Phil Schrod, current attenders in Meeting, hesitate about unconditional pacifism.

Oread was founded only five years after the end of World War Two. The founders knew war all too well. Domingo Ricart, for instance, helped save nearly one hundred and fifty thousand orphans from the Spanish Civil War, and in the Second World War he worked in the Quaker relief mission.

Although the decade of the fifties are often stereotyped as a peaceful time, it began in violence. On January 31, 1950, President Truman directed the Atomic Energy Commission to continue its work on all forms of atomic weapons, "including the so-called hydrogen or super bomb." The next month Albert Einstein warned of radioactive poisoning of the atmosphere and the possible "annihilation of any life on earth." Then, on June 25, 1950, Communist North Korea invaded South Korea. Within a month they had occupied most of the peninsula. Oread Friends sent the pamphlet, "Quaker Proposals to Peace" to Senators, but to no apparent avail except to "speak truth to power." President Truman ordered American G.I.s to the battlefield. Once again draft boards stepped up their calls of eligible young men. Oread Friends responded by arranging for clothing to be sent to the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) for shipment to Korea. "All the ladies agreed to meet, mend, sort, and pack the boxes for mailing," reads a February, 1951 minute. The next month, the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) and The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) at K.U. expressed the wish to help with clothing drive for Koreans.

Two months after the ladies finished packing the boxes, General MacArthur was relieved of his command because he urged expanding the war by bombing Chinese bases. In November, 1952, Meeting wrote President Elect Eisenhower of its hope “that we have a peaceful end to the war and not open a second front.” By the time an armistice was concluded on July 27, 1953, an estimated five million people had lost their lives.

The Cold War chilled further with statements like this one by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles in 1956: “The ability to get to the verge without getting into the war is the necessary art. If you cannot master it, you inevitably get into war. If you try to run away from it, if you are scared to go to the brink, you are lost.”

Nikita Khrushchev retaliated with the threat, “We will bury you,” and then Russian tanks rolled into Budapest in 1956. Americans built bomb shelters, and even advertised them as “wonderful places for the children to play in.” The three week struggle of the Hungarians failed. Oread Friends tried to help in the only way they could think of —by organizing a clothing drive. They shipped twenty-one boxes of clothes to the AFSC office in Des Moines with Budapest as their final destination.

Similarly in the Algerian war of independence against France (1954-62) Meeting donated blankets to refugees and worked with the K.U. French Club to collect money for the AFSC Algerian Relief Fund

The plight of the Cubans was felt strongly. Cuba is close, only ninety miles from Key West, Florida. Members had a close association with the island. Mary McCracken had worked there, and in 1951, the Meeting received a letter from a Cuban Friends Meeting expressing appreciation for her work and fellowship. Domingo Ricart knew the island well. He had visited Cuba as a consultant for both the AFSC and the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC). In both 1955 and 1957, Oread Friends collected clothing for a “Cuba Christmas package.”

The next Christmas, Domingo Ricart again expressed his concern about the situation, which he felt was largely ignored by the FWCC and the AFSC. He proposed that a letter be sent to the FWCC asking them to make a public statement of concern with the course of events in Cuba. He also asked that the AFSC aid in efforts at reconciliation, by sending one of their experienced members to consult with Cuban Friends as to steps to be taken to restore peace. The Meeting endorsed this proposition.

Cuba continued under U.S. influence until Fidel Castro’s revolution in 1959. In 1961, Meeting received letters from Friends in Cuba and discussed freedom of the press on the island. In February, 1962, Friends discussed the plight of Cuban refugees, and then in October, 1962, the Cuban Missile Crisis erupted. This major confrontation brought the U.S. and the Soviet Union to the brink of war over the presence of Soviet missiles in Cuba. The November minutes don’t mention the crisis, perhaps because it was so quickly resolved with Khrushchev’s promise to stop work on “weapons construction sites” and to return missiles already in Cuba to the Soviet Union.

Another way in which Meeting showed its commitment to the peace testimony was in supporting the Hasmanite sect of the Church of Jesus Christ at Sullivan, Illinois. “Members of this sect have been refused CO status and jailed because of their refusal to serve in the Armed Forces. They are also suffering persecution in other ways by the local population,” noted the minutes of October, 1961.

This was a time of very low membership for Oread Friends, with five members on the roll. It seems perverse that war clouds on the Pacific horizon should bring renewal to a pacifist group, but that is what happened.

President Kennedy was committed to preventing a Communist takeover in South Vietnam, a small weak country formed from the former French colony of Indochina. The 1954 Geneva Accords provided for temporary division of the country between a Communist-dominated North and a U.S.-supported South. But the activities of the Viet Cong, (Communist rebels in the South), led to ever-increasing U.S. intervention. At the beginning of the war in 1965, U.S. politicians spoke of the “domino theory.” If any country in South East Asia went to the Communists, the others would fall down as fast and dramatically as a line of dominos.

Sentiment was divided over the conflict in Vietnam. The bickering between hawks and doves, the guilt over the killings and horror of the war—kids scarred by napalm, prisoners tortured, nature destroyed by “agent orange” —turned the stomachs of a nation not yet habituated to watching atrocities on the dinnertime TV news. By 1966, the war was costing twenty-five billion dollars a year. In the absence of compelling reasons for fighting it, and the increasing number of those drafted and killed, doubt about the value of the war spread.

Quakers would have opposed it in any case because of their peace testimony. As early as May, 1965, Meeting wrote President Johnson expressing its concern about the situation in Vietnam. They mailed copies of the letter to the two Kansas Senators.

In February, 1966, the Meeting discussed a Minute of Concern regarding the Federal Trading with the Enemy Act. They had received the Minute from the N.Y. Yearly Meeting Peace and Service Committee who wished to gather support from Quakers across the country, so as to “bring our corporate weight to bear upon those unholy laws which restrict humanitarian travel and relief, estrange us from our fellow man and dehumanize both ourselves and the so-called enemy.”

Meeting agreed in essence with the New York Quakers, but felt that “normal governmental channels” should be exhausted before taking more drastic action.

In 1966, Meeting formed a committee to counsel COs facing induction. They invited Eldon Cox, the pastor of Friends Church, to join it. Tom Moore and Robert Hinshaw later met with him and members of the Kansas Yearly Meeting Committee on Peace, Social Service and Benevolence. Evangelical Friends felt they should not join the committee unless it agreed to counsel only men who were “Right with Christ.” The minutes indicate the Kansas Friends objected to the CO committee’s use of the name of “Friends.” Some members of Friends Church were not pacifists but still considered themselves Friends.

Oread Friends quietly continued their activism. In February, 1967, some of them joined with the Kansas Peace Forum’s work shop on techniques for influencing the public. Oread Friends also sent money to help Penn Valley Meeting pay for a reprinting of the AFSC statement concerning peace in Vietnam.

In April, 1967, the ante was upped when William Koper (classified 1-0), the son of members Paul and Goldie Kopper, was received into membership. Meeting sponsored a talk by a Quaker who had visited North Vietnam.

On January 29, 1968, the Communists began the successful Tet offensive. Their forces captured the beautiful old city of Hue and penetrated the U.S. Embassy in Saigon. More U.S. troops were sent until there were a half million Americans in Vietnam.

In Lawrence meanwhile, the CO Counseling committee met with the State Director of Selective Service and the K.U. Dean of Men. The minutes for May, 1968 report that “many students are feeling the pressure to go to Canada.” Ten thousand “draft dodgers” eventually emigrated. It is no surprise, then, that Meeting decided to keep the Draft Committee as a standing committee of the Meeting.

In 1968, Eugene McCarthy ran on a peace platform to challenge President Johnson (LBJ) for the Democratic nomination. McCarthy did so well in the primaries that Johnson took the first step to de-escalate the conflict. LBJ also said he would neither seek nor accept the Democratic nomination for another term as president. When the Democrats convened in Chicago to pick a candidate, street fights flared between the “Peaceniks” and the Chicago police. The fracas may have hurt McGovern’s chances. In any case, the Democrats chose Hubert Humphrey, LBJ’s candidate, to lead the ticket against the Republican Richard Nixon.

That summer Oread Friends continued to meet for worship in Danforth Chapel but the usual discussion after Meeting was canceled because many Friends wanted “to spend more time at the Vigil in South Park.”

Meeting tried to obtain a license to send medical aid to North Vietnam. These medical supplies were to be used for civilian casualties and the money would go through the International Red Cross. The Federal Reserve Bank refused the license, because North Vietnam was not allowing any organization to supervise or examine how the aid was being used. The Meeting thought first of protesting, then decided to help with AFSC’s humanitarian projects in South Vietnam instead. Later, the Meeting requested that its application for a license be re-examined. “The committee felt that the Meeting wanted the letter to be aimed at obtaining a license rather than making a statement of opposition to the war.”

Nine Friends signed a letter to the editor of the *Lawrence Journal World*. They suggested two actions to mark Veterans Day, 1968: first to “look into our own hearts and into the institutions of which we are a part to discover their potential for violence and for peace. Secondly, to seek to nurture those attitudes and mechanisms that lead to peaceful resolution of difficulties.”

In the presidential race, both Hubert Humphrey and Richard Nixon vacillated on the war. Humphrey lost to Nixon, but it was a very close race. The war dragged on, and 50 students crowded around the Quaker table at the Student Activities Carnival. They were interested in draft counseling and the Lawrence Peace Center. Visitors flocked to Meeting.

The bickering continued between “doves” and “hawks.” Protesters poked flowers down the rifle butts of National Guardsmen. These “Flower Children” carried posters that proclaimed, “What if they gave a war and nobody came...” “War is not healthy for children and other living things.” Hormone-happy youth responded to other slogans like, “Make love not war,” and “Girls say YES to boys who say NO.” The numbers of those opposed to the war continued to grow. In October 1969, a million people called for a war moratorium parading with candles.

The next month, Oread endorsed as its own views the minute on conscription for the Buffalo Monthly Meeting Religious Society Of Friends dated May 1969:

The Buffalo Monthly Meeting of the RSOF (Quaker) reaffirms its total commitment to Friends' historic Peace Testimony. Further, we believe that this testimony should be amplified to speak to the conditions of our own times, when warfare has become a complex operation that is sustained not only by soldiers on battlefields but also by political and economic institutions which provide the supplies and recruits, the arms and the money, the encouragement and sanction, without which war would be impossible. Insofar as each of us is upholding the decisions made by these institutions, whether by payment of taxes or by our acceptance of the system of conscription, so too are we implicated in the promotion of hatred, conflict and war.

We ask all men to consider whether they might find some way of withholding the support that they are lending to the decisions and institutions that promote warfare. We affirm that our pacifism can not consist merely of tactful silence and docility, but of active obedience to God's Inner Light and the willing acceptance of suffering.

It is not enough to accept for ourselves the privilege of exemption from military service granted to traditional peace churches. We can not rest secure in our "specialness" while thousands of others, without the sanctuary of tradition, are denied the same privilege and are drawn into a military system of which they wish no part.

We look tenderly upon those Friends and others who feel that it is their duty in conscience to refuse to cooperate with the Selective Service System altogether, and who, in accepting the hard path of imprisonment, choose to follow the justice of God's law rather than to obey against the promptings of their innermost spirit, what is unjust in man's law. We acknowledge the just claims of man's law, but in so doing, we cannot disclaim our responsibility for these, our brothers, nor withhold our support from them.

In a time when the slightest act of intentional ill-will can bring into jeopardy the safety of all men everywhere, every one of us must confront the question: "When we have killed our brother, with whom then shall we live?"

The draft struck closer to home when Walter LeRoy Chittendon asked for a committee on clearness to work with him on expressing his conviction that conscription is evil. LeRoy Chittendon had been active in Meeting several years before 1969 when he was received into membership. The Meeting decided his case would be stronger if Meeting worked on it as a whole rather than naming a clearness committee. On June 28, 1970 he handed his draft card over to the Meeting "to do with it as it saw fit." That November the Meeting had still not yet decided what to do with the draft card. The minutes for that month read, "Taking a stand absolutely by the Meeting is not seen as a wise action because of changing times, the need to be responsive to a variety of individuals and the variety of their experiences."

Meeting sent the draft card to his Selective Service Board along with this letter:

The Oread Friends Meeting of which LeRoy Chittenden is a member, shares the traditional Quaker testimony for peace, constant opposition to any war, and to conscription for military service, and the Quaker concern for positive and constructive service to mankind.

While the decision to divest himself of his draft card is entirely his and he assumed full responsibility for it, the Meeting willingly vouches for his integrity, his sincerity, and the predominantly religious motivation of his action. The Meeting accepts his action and supports his objection to the evil of conscription.

The protests continued. Sixty-five people participated in the second candlelight Silent Vigil for Peace in Indochina, on Christmas Eve, 1970, at South Park. The following year Oread Friends participated in the third Christmas Eve Vigil for Peace.

A continual embarrassment for Oread Friends was the fact that the President Nixon, the Commander in Chief of the U.S. Armed Forces, was a Quaker. In January, 1973, Paul Kopper suggested Meeting write East Whittier Meeting, of which the President was a member, asking about their efforts “to labor with him concerning the Friends peace testimony, with a question as to the appropriateness of removing him from membership as a consequence of the December bombing of North Vietnam.”

The Meeting approved. The letter was sent.

In February, 1973, T. Eugene Coffin of the East Whittier Meeting replied. East Whittier Meeting had “considered for two Monthly Meetings the question of rightness of continuing President Nixon as a member and felt comfortable in so doing.” They kept him on the membership roll because in gist he had not publicly misused his Quaker roots.

The reaction of Oread Friends is surprisingly meek. The minutes read, “We felt it was a complete answer to our questions. It was agreed that further correspondence would not be fruitful at this time.”

Perhaps Meeting would have pursued the matter more vigorously if it were not clear that the war was fizzling. In 1973, Meeting was able to turn its efforts to helping in the reconstruction of Vietnam.

The AFSC wanted to give Vietnam fishnets, agricultural implements and wood screw-making machines as part of “Friendshipment.” This was a national coalition of religious and peace organizations campaigning for private and governmental reconstruction aid to Indochina. The U.S. Treasury Department refused. It invoked the Trading with the Enemy Act to deny the AFSC licenses to ship these goods. In November, 1975, Oread Friends joined a silent vigil in support of AFSC’s “Act for Friendship with Vietnam.”

The Meeting’s twenty-fifth anniversary in 1975, rekindled Howard Baumgartel’s interest in Quakerism. The next year he went to Calcutta and Old Delhi for three months on a Fulbright. At the end of that time, he learned of the Peace Studies Program at Bradford University in Yorkshire, England. He had always been part of the peace movement and had long wanted to introduce courses about peace in the psychology department. He decided to stop off in England on his way home to meet Adam Curle, the prominent British social scientist who held the Peace Studies Chair at Bradford University.

“Adam Curle was a great British Quaker,” said Baumgartel. “He was devout, a social philosopher and an activist who taught that “we should solve local problems first rather than

concerning ourselves about problems far from home. That made me think, What can we do here in Lawrence?"

Peace lectures might be the answer, thought Baumgartel, who had been associate dean of Arts and Sciences at K.U. from 1972-76. He visited nine departments and several administrators, made his case and asked for donations.

"People were honestly interested," he said. The economics department put up money to get Kenneth Boulding, the first speaker and an eminent Quaker, and the Lawrence Coalition for Peace and Justice (LCPJ) was born.

Alan and Louise Hanson, whom Howard Baumgartel described as "very active anti-Nukes," cheered. Others closely involved in the creation of the LCPJ were those who had been active in the Lawrence Peace Center (1967-1971), which had planned the vigils in South Park and offered counseling to the draftees.

The brochure of the LCPJ makes clear its Quaker origin. "During the winter of 1976-77, the members of the Oread Meeting of the Society of Friends (Quakers) founded the LCPJ." In November, 1977, the minutes note that Howard Baumgartel, representing the LCPJ, said that "\$1,100 per year has been pledged to the lecture series program for a four year period."

Soon the LCPJ had representatives from nine area churches and organizations. When Kenneth Boulding spoke on "Human Rights and Economics" the crowd numbered in the hundreds. The LCPJ continued lectures and vigils and workshops on cooperative games for children. Each August 6, the LCPJ commemorated the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki with a peace vigil. Every Christmas the LCPJ distributed fliers urging shoppers not to buy war toys. Each April 15, it alerted taxpayers to the level of U.S. military spending. Because of its commitment to non-violence, the LCPJ has always been a line item in the Oread Friends budget.

A time of potential violence was in 1977 when Iran overran the American Embassy in Teheran and took hostages. Feelings against Iran ran high. Peggy Baker recalled that the Friends were asked, perhaps by University security, to help in case a planned protest turned ugly. Among this small group of Oread Friends were those like Tom and Anne Moore who during the Vietnam War protests would go in after the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) had just left. "The principle they used was the same one as described in the novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*: Since mob action requires anonymity, speaking to people by name often keeps them from following a mob into action they personally would not condone."

In the aftermath of the war, Oread Friends turned their interest to the draft. In 1980, along with Mennonites and Church of the Brethren, they distributed a leaflet on draft registration to pastors and high school counselors. The *Journal World* published a large picture of LeRoy Chittenden with the sign, "Quakers support COs." The caption to the photo ran, "Like other members of the Oread Friends Meeting Chittenden supported conscientious objector status for draft registrants and did not oppose registration itself."

For several days Meeting ran an ad in the *Journal World*. The ad read:

If you were born in 1960 or after and may have doubts about draft registration, send this Now to Oread Friends Meeting (Quaker).

I the undersigned agree that draft registration is a bad idea and wish to go on record as a conscientious objector. Because of my beliefs about war, I am opposed to participating in the military.

In 1981, the Meeting sponsored a gathering for parents of potential draftees, and the four who attended found it “useful.” In May, 1981 the Meeting considered establishing a peace resource center. The Minutes read:

The idea of a Peace Center was brought up for prayerful consideration. We decided the building [i.e. the Meeting House] could be used for a Peace Center. The need for helping people to focus on peace was obvious. ...It was proposed that it [the Peace Center] be open to operating at many levels such as: providing a place where people could work out their violent feelings; working on national political issues ...and spreading the word of FCNL; working with the state perhaps to see if a non-violent force within the National Guard could be developed to prevent looting in disaster areas or to control riots; perhaps serving as a center for people living outside the war-making society, the counterculture, for instance teepee dwellers; ...the Peace Center should have a broader base than just the meeting. How to proceed was not clear.

The Peace Resource Center seems to have fizzled out, if ever it was born. What is clear is that the Meeting House was used for LCPJ meetings.

It is interesting that other conflicts at the time were almost ignored. Take for example, the Six Day War in June, 1967 in which Israel launched a pre-emptive strike on the United Arab Republic (Egypt and Syria), and Jordan. When the war was over, Israeli forces occupied the whole of the Sinai Peninsula, as well as Jerusalem, the West Bank of the Jordan and the Golan Heights. The Meeting also ignored Civil War in Jordan in 1970, and the lingering strife in Lebanon, which Lebanese euphemistically called “The Troubles.”

The Meeting in 1997 urged closing the Army School of the Americas; in 1999 it marched to seek ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. But its major focus was on Iraq. Like the Vietnam War, the Gulf War of 1991 was an “American War.” With the demonization of Saddam Hussein and the government stranglehold on the media coverage, however, public discontent was a trickle compared to the Niagara of fury over the Vietnam war. Yet Quakers participated in the 19 Sunday vigils for peace in the Middle East sponsored in 1990-91 by the LCPJ. The damaging effects on the people of Iraq continued long after the NATO forces left, due to the embargo and economic sanctions. Meeting opposed these sanctions. In 1998 Meeting co-sponsored with LCPJ a visit from Mira Tanna, of the AFSC, who spoke on a trip she had made to Iraq. A few Friends joined a weekly vigil co-sponsored with the LCPJ from January through July 1999 to protest the renewed bombing of Iraq. Phil Schrodtt and Deborah (“Misty”) Gerner, both professors of political science at K.U., presented a teach-in on the effect of the sanctions on Iraq, to a crowd at the Ecumenical Christian Ministries building.

In 2000 the Meeting co-sponsored Dr. Byron Plumley’s presentation, “Death by Sanctions: U.S. Policy toward Iraq.” Plumley was a member of a humanitarian delegation with Life for Relief and Development, which delivered \$600,000 in medical equipment and supplies to Iraq. In Iraq, Plumley visited hospitals, schools, Muslim holy sites, Christian churches, and met with Iraqi citizens and United Nations and Iraqi government officials.

Chapter 8

Justice and Equality

Racism is one of the great evils of our times—as evil as war itself. It is at the root of strife in our city ghettos and of the guerrilla warfare that has plagued Latin America and other parts of the world. John Woolman saw clearly that “The seeds of war have nourishment in the daily lives of men...”

—Barrington Dunbar, 1969

In 1954, the National Student Assembly of the YMCA and the YWCA was set to meet in Lawrence. What might happen if an African American delegate ordered, “Hamburger and fries, please,” only to be refused service? Would the “interloper” mumble an apology for having stepped out of place, and slouch to the door while his or her white friends scurried after in impotent embarrassment?

This scenario was certainly possible when restaurants on Massachusetts Avenue posted signs “reserving the right to refuse to serve anybody.”

When Tom Moore, who headed up the YMCA program in Lawrence, shared his concern for his guests, Oread Friends responded. First, they determined how bad the situation was by sending students to check out the restaurants. Then Anna McCracken suggested the restaurateurs might respect delegate badges. These turned out not to be needed when Domingo Ricart reported that “at least two restaurants in town were willing to serve mixed groups.”

Two years after the YMCA/YWCA conference, the Peace and Social Order committee had good news to report to Meeting: Blacks might still have to sit in the gallery of the Liberty Theatre, but Woolworths would now serve “persons of all races.”

In 1950 Lawrence had a population 23,292 including some 6,500 students. Blacks comprised ten percent of the population and another four percent had Mexican and Indian origins. This survey of the time described the inhabitants as “social, political and religious conservatives.” Of course, there were a few radicals like the “Henley House girls” at K.U. who had been “experimenting in living co-operatively and inter-racially” with Quaker Mary McCracken as house mother. More importantly, an organization called the Lawrence League for the Practice of Democracy (LLPD) had struggled since 1945 “to bring about better racial understanding.” Its nucleus consisted of several Quaker families, including Russell Carter, the religious leader at Haskell Institute and Howard Baumgartel. The LLPD was inter-racial and co-sponsored Brotherhood Banquets with Oread Friends. It also sponsored civil rights speakers and with the League of Women Voters, promoted integration in Lawrence. At its height, the LLPD’s active members numbered about 200, and its total membership was 400. This was a small fraction of the population, but it was an eloquent one, including socially liberal members of the K.U. faculty.

The Quaker belief that “there is that of God in every person,” and its corollary that we are all radically, wonderfully equal was judged inaccurate by some churches, most of which were segregated. The Lawrence hospital was too, and in February, 1956, Friends discussed integrating

it. African-American member Beatrice White in November, 1950, spoke of her concern for an inter-racial baseball team. The plan didn't work as it was "financially impossible," but Meeting expressed the hope to "work toward that end another year." That seems not to have happened.

Meeting cheered the efforts of others toward racial justice. In February, 1956, the corresponding clerk was instructed to write to the Captain of the Girls Basketball team in Liberty, Missouri "commending them on their action to cancel all further games since they couldn't play with teams having Negro players by action of their school board." Oread Friends that year also "expressed upsettiness stemming from contact with persons with strong anti-Negro attitudes."

In 1957, Meeting wrote Kinonia Farm, expressing admiration and support for its interracial co-operative farm near Americus, Georgia. The next year the Meeting ordered a shipment of pecans. Soon Meeting was selling 312 pounds of pecans a year. Meeting ordered Kinonia pecans until 1978; during the Vietnam War, it donated the proceeds of the sale to the Lawrence Peace Center.

Members on Meeting's Committee on Peace and Social Order barked FOUL! when they found blatant discrimination. They sniffed it out like drug dogs. In 1950 they investigated discrimination at the local convalescence home. Happily they reported, "No Negroes had been contacted who had been rejected from the home or who wished to enter." In 1952, Mary Bates reported that under Postmaster Roger Williams "colored personnel" were not hired in the post office except as janitors. The Committee investigated. It interviewed the new Postmaster about his hiring policies. The next year Beatrice White reported "another Negro had been added to the local post office staff."

The focus on equality continued in the 1960s. At its weekly discussion of "institutional racism," Meeting discussed what it might do in Lawrence and decided on real estate, "an area in which majority had an active interest, either for their own house-hunting or on behalf of others." In 1962, Tom Moore suggested Meeting write President Kennedy asking him to sign an executive order forbidding the use of FHA and VA loans for race-restricted housing. Later, members were encouraged to write the Lawrence Real Estate board, and then attend the "open housing" meeting held by the Kansas Advisory council to the Civil Rights Commission in Topeka.

"The stress throughout this conference was on the necessity of continuing communication as a means of education, of reaching those hostile to open housing, by impressing them with the rightness of a cause dedicated to the care and respect of our fellowmen," wrote Clerk Anne Moore.

Papers of the Lawrence Community Nursery show how segregated the city was in the 1950s: "An extremely large percentage of the colored [sic] people of Lawrence live north of the river where there's segregation of the colored and white students in elementary school." There were also "colored residential areas" in the other four elementary school districts in South Lawrence, but black students there were admitted to the schools." (unpublished papers in the Spencer Research Library, K.U.) The junior high and high school were for blacks and whites alike.

In 1951, Oread Friends attended a hearing in Topeka on racial segregation in the schools there.

Perhaps Meeting's greatest contribution to the civil rights cause was its support for the Lawrence Community Nursery, the inter-racial, co-operative nursery that began in 1948. The Nursery, which still serves pre-schoolers in its premises on 7th and Alabama Streets, had Quaker roots. It began as a result of a four-week course on "Pre-School Play," given by the K.U. Extension School. One of the hundred women enrolled was Vera Carter, of Oread Friends Preparatory

Meeting. She became the first supervisor of the children. Her hope, like that of the Nursery's other founders, was "that blacks and whites could base their judgments on friendships instead of color." Costs were kept low. The nursery borrowed equipment from the Haskell Institute through the efforts of Russell Carter, a Quaker who was its religious director. The ten mothers drove carloads of children back and forth, and assisted the teacher one day a week. Meanwhile, the fathers made the toys and kept the building in order. The days of dads diapering babes had not yet dawned!

Nancy Baumgartel, an Oread Friend and the Nursery Board's secretary in 1949, noted that it had discussed "how to allow plenty of freedom for the children's activities without sacrificing all quietness." Another paper presented "thirty-five tips on working with children," including: "Avoid conflict and forcing an issue as much as possible. Sand throwing, biting and spitting are not allowed."

The Nursery's first treasury was a cigar box; unsigned papers of the Nursery noted "its size was more than adequate for the school's meager finances." In 1949, the Friends contributed a scholarship, asking only that minority groups be well represented in receiving it. After moving seven times in its early years, the nursery contacted the AFSC regarding a work camp during the summer of 1955 to build a school in a permanent location. The Meeting's business meetings were held in 1957 and 1958 at the Nursery. In 1957, almost half (\$144) of its total budget was allotted to the nursery. Another year Missouri Valley Friends Conference helped Meeting with its financial contribution to the Nursery.

When the Meeting's membership declined in 1960, it re-considered its donation. "What use had been made by the nursery of last year's contribution?" it asked.

"One year there was no applicant, and the Nursery indicated a reluctance to continue the arrangement," said Saunny Scott.

Disillusioned Friends worried that the Nursery would not maintain itself as "an effective interracial group"? They wrote to minority groups including the Catholic Church, the Negro Churches and the Jehovah's Witness about the scholarship, perhaps to get more applicants.

Meanwhile, some members of the Nursery board proposed sending their own letters to "all the other denominations in town." What was going on?

One of the primary needs of the Nursery was to have parents who would share in the work of the nursery, and this concern may have been placed before that of having equal representation of the races.

The Nursery noted "this country of ours is still a melting pot and the mothers have always felt that in the process of learning to live in our society, the children should accept each other as the individuals they are, not as a member of a minority group that is subjected to pressures. In the seven years of our school there has been fair representation of many groups, both racial and religious--whites, Negroes, Filipino, East Indian, Catholic, Protestant and Jew."

The rift between the Nursery and the Meeting healed and in 1968, Meeting was again contributing to a minority family, while in 1974, it gave a scholarship for a youngster from another country. Meeting members attended the Nursery's 50th anniversary celebrations in 1998.

In the early 1960s Quakers were heartened by the nonviolence of Dr. Martin Luther King. When there were sit-ins, they sat. When there were demonstrations, they marched and sang We Shall

Overcome. In 1963 Beatrice White's daughter and son in law were among the freedom marchers in Greensboro, North Carolina. Blacks were registering to vote; two hundred thousand people marched on Washington to demonstrate for civil rights and heard Dr. Martin Luther King give his historic "I have a dream" speech. Then, in November, 1963, John Fitzgerald Kennedy was assassinated.

A year later, Anna McCracken wrote Anne Moore: "Do you share my hope that, even without JFK in the White House, we may yet win the Civil War (of the 1860s)--still not won? World pressures are strong in that direction."

The Civil War may have been won, but discrimination remained. In 1983, the *Lawrence Journal World* quoted Tom Moore: "The fact that for a good many years now we've had peace--a lack of strife in the field of civil rights--it's conceivable it has lulled a lot of the people who don't suffer from discrimination into believing that there really isn't any discrimination. Certainly over the last two decades, race relations have improved, yet there are perhaps more subtle types of discrimination still prevalent in the community."

One of these was the stigma attached to mental illness.

In 1954, Oread Friends began Sunday afternoon visits to the Topeka State Hospital. These lasted until June, 1956, when Howard Baumgartel reported on the newly organized Douglas County Mental Hygiene Association. Quakerism plants seeds. Perhaps that was one that grew.

In 1978 Oread Friends contributed to Lawrence's Project Acceptance even before it opened. Project Acceptance was to be "a local program designed to provide alternatives to psychiatric hospitalization and to help persons returning to the community from mental hospitals." For two years Friends hosted Project Acceptance at the Meeting House. Now located at 407 Maine it still serves the needs of the mentally ill.

In 1979 Domingo Ricart wrote on the nature of Quaker service. "People are taught or are instinctively afraid of being personally involved. Why should it be so? We partake of the same light; we are brothers and sisters. That is why Quaker service at its best, and Quaker help is so different from the service that organizations, social, political, or purely humanitarian can render." He told the story of Quakers visiting refugee center in France. "We knew you would be coming," the refugees told the Quakers, "because you love us."

The Friends said humbly, "But we don't have anything to give you; we just came to see what you were doing, and find out if, and what we could do."

"Never mind," they said. "You came because you care about us."

According to Domingo Ricart, that was the essence of Quaker service, for "more than food and shelter, people need love."

Another area in which Oread Friends have tried to put their faith into practice is in service to those incarcerated. Ever since Elizabeth Gurney Fry's pioneering work in the early nineteenth century, Quakers have been known for their interest in prison reform. Did not George Fox write "And never heed the tempests nor the storms, floods nor rains, for the seed Christ is over all, and doth reign. And so be of good faith and valiant for the truth; for the truth can live in the jails."

Quakers have been imprisoned for their peace testimony and some have suffered because of their refusal to pay taxes which support the war machine. Because of this, it seems natural to find them visiting in jails and prisons. This was especially true during the time of the Vietnam War when conscientious objectors might be held, but it had its antecedents earlier. In 1956, Howard Baumgartel regularly visited a Conscientious Objector being held in the Federal Penitentiary in Leavenworth. Meeting several times investigated holding Meetings for Worship at prisons (county, state and federal). Unfortunately, their requests were not met.

A 1974 minute reads: “Feeling a need for training and experience, the Meeting wrote officials at Leavenworth about its desire and set up a Prisoner Visitation Committee. It decided it could best serve by providing home hospitality and transportation to visitors of prisoners at Leavenworth. The Corresponding clerk wrote the prison chaplain to suggest this, but heard nothing.”

Nonetheless Meeting allotted forty dollars of the total \$1,085 budget for 1974-75 to the Prison Visitation and Support Committee. LeRoy Chittenden met with Rev. David Petersen about support of families of prisoners at Lansing and Leavenworth and continued his ministry to the prisoners in the Kansas State Penitentiary. In 1979 Carol Chittenden sold crafts made by prisoners at Lansing Prison during the annual Powwow at Haskell.

In 1980, Harold Washington, then a seminary student at Princeton Theological Seminary, worked for a criminal justice advocacy project in Newark, N.J. sponsored by the AFSC. Most of his classmates — candidate for ordination in the Presbyterian church—chose to be church youth group leaders, but he chose this jobs placement program for people just released from prison. At AFSC he met many Quakers.

“I began to realize they were very different from those in the religious communities I had known before,” he said.

Francis Elling who did social work in prison during the late 1990s said that he wouldn’t have considered this if it were not for being a Quaker although he was also influenced by his working class background. “I also feel fairly sure I could not have done it for three years without the support of the Friends. I think my Quaker beliefs influenced the work though I can no put a finger on what exactly—probably just avoiding violence in a place that is awash in patterns of violence and oppression.”

In 1998, Meeting appointed Francis Elling as “prison visitor” along with Sarah Ruden to visit an imprisoned Friend. The assistant warden of Leavenworth Detention Center replied that the individual concerned was not housed at Leavenworth at that time. He also noted that their policy required a pastoral certificate from the national headquarters of the denomination.

Perhaps the most dramatic instance of Meeting’s commitment to those incarcerated was in the early 1990s when Meeting answered a request by Deborah Altus to help a friend of hers in a campaign to get her brother off of Death Row. “Oread Friends wrote a beautiful and moving letter to the judge involved in the case. I’ll never forget when I heard from my friend that her brother’s sentence had been changed from Death to Life. My reasons to be a member of the Oread Friends Meeting were affirmed ten times over by this event.”

Lawrence has a large number of Indian Americans, who have often suffered from misunderstanding and discrimination. They were a focus of Meeting’s interest in the 1970s. When it hosted Spring Gathering (aka Spring Fling) in 1972, Meeting invited Dean Bill Burgess

from Haskell Indian Junior College to answer questions about American Indians today. The discussion “showed real need for change on the part of society.” In 1974, Bob Hubert received support to be a Quaker presence at the Lawrence Indian Center. Two years later, the Meeting contributed a hundred dollars to FCNL to continue work on legislation affecting Native Americans. The interest was on a personal as well as institutional scale. Lawrence is the site of Haskell Indian Nations University, and many of its students had no cars. Since there is no public transport in Lawrence, this posed a difficulty for them. Members of Meeting were asked to make a commitment to be on call, free to say “yes,” or “no” to a specified transportation request from the Lawrence Indian Center. Meeting hoped this would be “a more focused way to help Indians in Lawrence than volunteering to be a driver for United Wheels, or deciding on their behalf about legislation.”

It is hard to ascertain which came first, the Meeting’s renewed interest in prison reform or in aiding Indians in the state prisons. In 1978, members of Meeting visited a group of American Indian prisoners at the state prison along with members of Stanwood Friends Church. It was a “positive experience,” and Friends were invited to their pow-wow. In 1981, the Chittendens worked with the Native American Culture Group at Lansing Penitentiary, where a Sweat Lodge gave Indian prisoners cultural and religious support.

In 1996 Meeting agreed to arrange activities with the Indian Center, and Bruce Fritz wrote on behalf of Meeting to Missouri Valley Friends encouraging them to learn about the religious rights of Native Americans at prison facilities. In 1998, the Meeting contributed to the Leonard Peltier Defense Fund as well as for food shipments to Chiapas, Mexico, where the indigenous people had suffered in an uprising against the Mexican government.

As part of the peace testimony, Oread Friends reached out to refugees. In 1979, they donated an initial \$200 followed by six months of \$50 payments to a Vietnamese family of five arriving in Lawrence. The funds came from Meeting’s Building, Land and Special Purposes fund. It is touching that at a time when Meeting so wanted a home of its own, it was willing to reach out to a refugee family. Meeting was to do this again.

As early as 1986, Marta Brow had suggested altering the Meeting House to provide sanctuary for Central American refugees. Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala were all experiencing civil strife, and the Mennonite Fellowship and Latin American Solidarity group wanted to establish a sanctuary in Lawrence. The Lawrence Latin American Refugee Committee (LLARC) was formed and met at the ECM for suppers of rice and beans and to learn about Latin America. In 1990, the Meeting assisted LLARC in sheltering the Guatemalan refugee, Clara Soto Flores and her family. They had lived in Guatemala City during the height of the violence of the Civil War, a time of “los desaparacidos,” and army execution squads. They found peace in the Meeting House which was leased to LLARC on March 8, 1990. The proviso was that each group of refugees could stay up to one year in the Meeting House. LLARC agreed to remodel the house by installing a hot water heater; rigging up a makeshift shower (predating the present one) in the bathroom; rewiring the kitchen and placing a stove, refrigerator and washing machine there; and setting up a nursery area.

“Clara and her children stayed at the Meeting House for the greater part of 1990-91. Other congregations helped us with food, but we were the only congregation to actually put up a family. We were a small and struggling Meeting, but we were on the edge, the way Meeting is

lots of time. It was a considered choice and gave us a sense that we were doing the right thing,” recalled Harold Washington.

It was also very disruptive. Clara Soto Flores had four daughters and one son, all under the age of 10. “The whole south side of the house was running over with little children,” recalled Harold Washington. “They had very bad teeth, something that was probably discovered in a routine dental exam at school, so Meeting found a dentist who donated his time and fillings.”

Clara Flores and her family were staying at the Meeting House when Deborah Altus made her first visit to Friends. “I knocked on her side of the house, not realizing that it was being used as a private residence,” she recalled. Clara answered the door and spoke to me in Spanish. My high-school Spanish was not sufficient to get across what I wanted to do, but Clara kindly ushered me into the other side of the Meeting House and pointed at a chair. Soon Saunny and Harold showed up and all was well.”

The Mormons who had helped Meeting with food were encouraging her to go to their worship. But she found it in herself to say, “I am Catholic and I want to go to a Catholic Church.”

Meeting broke the law in housing Clara Flores as she was an illegal alien, waiting to be taken to Canada by a Canadian Mennonite group. They agreed to pay half of her plane costs, but she hopped a Greyhound to Vancouver.

Clara Flores’s taking the bus illustrates that Quakers are not the only ones who value thrift, but value it they did. Beatrice White would recycle egg cartons and paper sacks. Square dance records for a retreat in 1976 were purchased “with the understanding that they be donated to the public library if not frequently used.” During the gasoline shortage in the 1970s the Moores drove an electric car. After a visit to them, Andrew Whitehouse wrote, “Tom gave me a good 20 minute tour of their electric car, covering what I would summarize as its moral strengths and practical limitations, which he ended and summarized with, “It’s like Quakerism.”

Sometimes thrift was taken to comical lengths. Alan Hanson recalled that “Tom Moore had feet of two different foot size, and became ‘sole-mates’ with another guy who also had two sizes, so they’d each buy two pairs of one style and trade.”

Peggy Baker recalled that the Meeting House was used for a grocery cooperative, another thrifty enterprise in the pursuit of outreach to the East Lawrence community.

If the Meeting found Clara Flores and her children disruptive, it was good preparation for hosting the Community Drop-In Center in the late 1990s. The social action issue that galvanized Meeting at that time was the plight of those in Lawrence who were without homes. In 1994, the Lawrence Housing and Neighborhood Development Department estimated that nearly 280 Lawrence residents were homeless. Rents tend to be high in Lawrence and on a minimum wage, it is difficult to afford a room, let alone an apartment.

In September, 1994, the Meeting was welcoming the homeless to take showers in the Meeting House on Saturdays. “We need Friends to be here to open the house and supply towels,” noted a minute.

When the Ballard Community Center finished its renovations, and could provide showers, the Meeting felt it no longer need provide this service. There was concern, however, that it would be “unfriendly to end the showers abruptly, “ so they were continued for a few more Saturdays

In 1995 the Community Drop-In Center was opened. This group spent its first winter housed at Second Christian Church. Oread Friends donated \$25 a month to the Salvation Army to be used for this Day Shelter, which was open in the mornings as well as Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. In September, 1996, the Meeting received a request via Saunny Scott, long a passionate advocate for the homeless, to operate the Meeting House as a temporary Drop In Center.

From the outset, several Friends were hesitant. They expressed considerable concern regarding the cleanliness of the Meeting House, our liability and insurance situation, the need for a permit from the city, and adequate staffing. Although Friends agreed as to the usefulness of the Center, too many issues needed to be resolved before unity could be established. Thus a Clearness Committee was set.

At the November, 1996 Meeting for Business it was decided to open the Meeting House to the Drop-In Center five days a week, pending monthly review and liaison to be done by Jamie Shack. The Drop-in Center agreed to pay its co-ordinator, and to pay the Meeting \$50 per month for the increased cost of utilities and for insurance. The Drop-In Center also agreed to contribute a regular maintenance amount of \$50 per month until their use of the Meeting House ended or until the amount of \$500 was reached, whichever came first. Both main rooms were to be made available as well as an office with a phone. Meeting stipulated that there be no use of cigarettes, alcohol or drugs on the premises and that there be daily cleanup of bathroom and kitchen surfaces.

In December, 1996, the hours were extended. Since the Salvation Army required its night shelter residents to leave at 7:30 a.m. the Meeting allowed the Drop-In Center to open from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. instead of the original hours of 9 a.m.-12.

A concern was voiced that evening was the time of greatest need for the homeless. Where would they go in the time between the closing of the stores and public buildings downtown and the opening of the Salvation Army night shelter. A more radical concern was that the Drop-In Center was a band-aid response to the problem of homelessness. Some Friends wished to initiate or become involved in a legislative response or other more substantive remedy.

For a month or two, the operations of the Community Drop-In Center went well. This satisfaction was short-lived. Friends disapproved of the "large numbers of bags and stuff lying around," as well as the general handling of the house and facilities. Matters did not improve. In March, the minutes read that "immediate attention is required." The minute noted the "clutter and the towels in shower, an especial aggravation "since our intent not to allow use of the shower had not been communicated." It was suggested that the shower be made unavailable if adequate arrangements could be not made for cleaning the bathroom and removing and cleaning the towels before First Day Meeting.

Gary Collete, a Drop-In Center attender, was allowed to remain on the premises and to clean and maintain the Meeting House if no staff member was present in regular hours.

In April, 1997, it was reported that the Community Drop-In Center was applying for a large grant to obtain its own premises, but that the Meeting might need to consider "an indefinite period for the use of the Meeting House." Several saw this as a gloomy prospect.

“Guests from the Community Drop-In Center are here for most of the day and usually stay for lunch,” read a minute. The Meeting told the Drop-In Center Board that “although we value their presence, we hope that they will find an alternative facility eventually.”

Problems continued to plague the Drop-In Center. No long distance block had been placed on the phone, and there were irregular telephone charges during the Drop-In Center’s hours of operation. The minutes report, “anecdotal evidence of alcohol and drug abuse on the premises and some abuse by Community Drop-In Center staff of the children who were living in the Meeting House as part of the family.”

This was not the first time members of the homeless community had camped out in the Meeting House. In the late 1980s, according to Peggy Baker, the water bill soared and the police called Clerk Jeanne Stump when they found the front door flapping open. The Meeting assumed a homeless person had dropped by and stayed. Gradually the Meeting has amassed a collection of locks. Friends called for “better supervision.” The Drop-In Center board was informed that “we do not want children at the Meeting House without some kind of guardian and would like to see additional serious committed staff support.”

Matters came to a head in July, 1997. After another guest tried to break in the Meeting House, the manager offered to resign.

It was a time of trouble. Friends shared, “in an atmosphere of worship-sharing, their thoughts and feelings on the viability of the Center, how unsafe they felt coming to the House during the week.” The use of the Meeting House on Saturdays was especially contentious. Friends worried about guests loitering on the premises when the Center was closed. The heat was often left running on high at night and on weekends, which suggested that “there was no staff person present at closing.”

The friction ran both ways. At the end of 1997, the new manager of the Drop-In Center, Donnell Turner, wrote that the paper plates in the kitchen belonged to the Drop-In Center and should be replaced. “The trash needs to be taken out.” he also reminded Meeting.

Friends philosophically concluded that “finding an individual with the personality characteristics appropriate to properly supervise such a facility is very difficult.” But the accumulation of problems—from unlocked doors to plugged toilets—was disturbing.

“Friends want to have their Meeting House be an environment free of intimidation and welcoming to all, including women. That did not seem to be always the case,” some worried. A few Friends who had regular contact with Drop-In Center said that with a small number of exceptions, the individuals using the shelter had been caring of each other.

The most serious objection was a political one: If Meeting could be counted on to provide a center, it might provide an excuse for the city not to deal with this problem. Pam Gordon noted that in that morning’s column on “Lawrence in History,” the *Journal World* reported that in November, 1898, the city council was discussing “how to deal with the problem of the poor.”

That fall, one day after Meeting, Friends discussed the query on Integrity and Simplicity. “How do I strive to maintain the integrity of my inner and outer lives—in my spiritual journey, my work, and my family responsibilities? How do I manage my commitments so that over commitment, worry and stress do not diminish my integrity?”

Might not the Drop-In Center be an example of the kind of “over commitment” that diminishes integrity, pondered one Friend.

“We can’t do a good job of it because we are stressed,” said another. Many agreed, for Meeting consists mainly of those who work more than a 40-hour week. What had originally seemed a short-term commitment was turning into a constant headache.

“Could we not encourage other churches (particularly those downtown and with larger facilities) to assist us?”

Meeting was unable to reach unity on allowing the Drop-In Center to continue using its premises, and another Meeting was called on November 22, 1998. By that time the Salvation Army had announced it would not provide a daytime shelter that winter. It was either the Meeting House or the cold streets.

The Meeting decided to accommodate the Drop-In Center while addressing its own concerns. The first of these was proper supervision. Both the manager and a volunteer were to be present as a single person could not deal with an emergency. The premises were to be left clean and the doors locked promptly at noon. Friends stressed the importance of the Center being a welcoming and secure place for women and children. The office was to be kept locked because Meeting records are kept there.

To accommodate the Drop-In Center in our tiny kitchen, Friends moved their kitchen items out. To alleviate the mud problem, the put down floor mats. Finally a contract was prepared with the following provisions:

The Meeting will make space available on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings (8:00-noon) as soon as the Community Drop-In Center can hire a qualified manager, and provided that both the manager and a volunteer are on the premises when the facility is open. The use of the MEETING HOUSE is also contingent on the guidelines stated in the Community Drop-In Center letter of 1 Nov. 98 with the additional provision that neither the worship room (north room) nor the office will be used by the Community Drop-In Center. The Community Drop-In Center will also take responsibility for making certain there are clean towels and sufficient soap available for all guests.

The Community Drop-In Center has permission to keep one file cabinet in the storage closet off the main room for their records.

The use of the MEETING HOUSE on Saturdays will not extend beyond 15 March 1999 and the use of the MEETING HOUSE as a Community Drop-In Center will be discontinued no later than 15 April 1999. In deference to our neighbors, we ask that individuals going outside to smoke do so in the back and that there be no loitering around the building, particularly when the Community Drop-In Center is closed. The Meeting will provide a liaison with Community Drop-In Center to deal with possible problems. The Meeting reserves the right to terminate the agreement on the use of the space at any time if it appears that the guidelines for the use of the building are not being followed.”

Perhaps what most helped in this troubled relationship was the hiring of a new manager, Teresa Thompson, when the Center re-opened in January, 1999. A “Mother Teresa” to the homeless, she was also firm and insisted on respect and following the rules. And she kept the Community Drop-In Center clean. Very clean! Posters urged guests to wash their hands. A separate phone

line was installed so that the Drop-In Center had the headache were someone to call long distance.

Teresa Thompson resigned a month before the Drop-In Center was to close for the season. In May the Drop-In Center asked to continue to use the Meeting House on Wednesdays over the summer to provide continuity. Meeting approved the request and also endorsed the Drop-In Center's request to hold its board meetings at the Meeting House. Meanwhile the Meeting continued to contribute \$25 to the Drop-In Center as an encouragement to other groups to make like contributions. It also hoped this would indicate its pleasure with the way the Drop-In Center had been run that year.

The next fall, 1999, Meeting felt itself back at Square One. "As the city seems not now to have funds for a permanent Homeless Shelter, the problem of locating the Community Drop-In Center permanently has not been resolved." Dismayed, Friends took action. Meeting wrote the City Commissioners and the Mayor urging "a permanent, year-round, full-time Community Drop-In Center.

Friends received no answer.

Later, when they learned that the City was planning to support the Salvation Army's proposed new shelter, they asked: Will non-heterosexuals be welcome? Will attendance at religious services be required? Does the contribution of City funds mean that any existing discriminatory SA policies, or practices, or conditions will change?

The Drop-In Center had received a grant from the city, but it was not allowed to use these funds to hire a manager until it had a "home of its own." Again it requested use of the Meeting House on Wednesdays and Saturdays through October when it was staffed by volunteers.

The nagging question rose again: Should the Meeting continue to host the Drop-In Center in light of the city's apparent indifference to our request that the Commissioners address the necessity of creating a year round shelter?

It was deeper than hurt feelings at being ignored by the Commissioners. Several members worried about "enabling" an undesirable situation. If Meeting continues to provide a place for the homeless, the City will do nothing—or such was their fear.

Meeting appealed to the churches for help. Beth Schultz drafted a letter to the ministers of all the congregations: "For the past three winters the Oread Friends Meeting has been the site of the Community Drop-In Center. We believe there should be an alternate site from beginning of November. A potential site has been identified but funding and volunteers are needed to make it a reality. We are asking you to join us in supporting the Community Drop-In Center. We hope your church will provide funding and volunteers...."

Only two ministers replied. "If we did not hear from them, we would follow up with personal calls and visits," Friends told each other. A few calls were made.

Then February 8, 2000, the Drop-In Center was awarded a \$35,000 CDBG grant to renovate a property on 214 W. 10th Street to make it accessible to people with disabilities and to add a shower. It was a great triumph for both the Meeting and the Drop-In Center which had been searching for a permanent home.

The Drop-In Center continued to meet at the Meeting House until April 15, 2000. The renovations had not yet begun, but the bids were to be awarded May 9, 2000, and the work was

anticipated to take a month. A major hurdle had been overcome! Although the Drop In Center did not ask to renew its rental of 1146 Oregon while waiting for renovations to be completed at the new site and the Meeting did not offer it, both groups felt their struggles had benefited the homeless in Lawrence, and a better home was on the horizon.

Chapter 9

Property

The place of prayer is a precious habitation; I saw this habitation to be safe, to be inwardly quiet, when there was great stirrings and commotions in the world.

—John Woolman, 1770

Perhaps Oread Friends have been generous in sharing the Meeting House with refugees and the homeless because they knew the feeling of being without a home. For the first thirty years of its history, Meeting depended on the kindness of others to lease them space or to let them use their premises for worship. As a preparatory Meeting, Friends met Sundays in a second floor room at the north end of Plymouth Congregational Church. They placed a sign outside the door with Rev. Dale Turner's permission. With its downtown location it provided easy access to K.U. where most of the early members worked. Friends seem to have met there at least through 1956. In 1949 Meeting gave Plymouth five dollars in appreciation for use of the building, and pledged three dollars a quarter for later use. The situation must have been tolerable for in 1955, Friends sent a \$25 contribution to the Congregational building fund in "appreciation for their generosity in our use of the building."

The main home of Oread Friends during its peregrinations was Danforth Chapel on the K.U. campus. This seemed a dream come true for in the first year of Meeting, a Committee on a meeting place reported that Danforth Chapel was desirable while Myers Hall (home of the K.U. School of Religion) was available. Friends didn't want it; it couldn't resist tremors, and was razed in 1966. More than five years later, Meeting had the spot it wished. It was not a home of their own, but they were content. At first they sat in back, but later, according to Howard Baumgartel, Friends pushed benches in a circle in the front and sat there in silence. It worked well except for the fact there was no place for the children, who for a while had First Day School in a building across the street or were taken care of in a baby-sitter's home. (See chapter 6)

Then in September, 1977, Friends had to move. The university had decided that the Chapel could be reserved only for an hour. Friends had long been accustomed to having it for two full hours. An hour was simply not enough, many felt, if there were to be both worship-sharing and community-building. They brainstormed: "we should use other university facilities, we should continue using the chapel as we have in the past and either inform or not inform the university of such use, that we should ask for an exemption, that we should not ask for an exemption, that we should not split places for worship and discussion, thereby moving altogether if we cannot use the chapel for two hours, etc."

The university's decision zapped Oread into action. Temporarily the Meeting moved to the old building of the United Ministries in Higher Education now known as Ecumenical Christian Ministries (the ECM) at 1204 Oread while they continued to prowl, looking for a home.

Meeting had long wanted its own space. As early as 1951, there was "an inquiry as to possible Meeting room needs and other desirable space made by a group [in Meeting] who are proposing

to build in the future.” Friends kept it in mind, reminding each other to explore any possibility. In March, 1958 someone proposed a fund for those who wished to contribute money “designated for the purpose of acquiring at some future time our own Meeting House.”

Apparently no one was so moved, for thirty years later, in 1976, Meeting again considered establishing a Meeting House Fund. A committee determined an acceptable price range. Hopes ran high. A resident program was envisaged. In June of 1976 a weekend retreat served for worship sharing on the issue. “There was no decision reached, but rather a feeling that we might move ahead with caution. We explored our hesitation, our range of necessary commitments and our lack of working together as a total group on anything this big.”

Howard Baumgartel was one of those who argued for the Meeting House. “We were sponging, and it was time to make a move,” he said.

“Location, location, location,” the realtors cry. They might have been surprised by what Meeting wanted—a modest rather than an affluent area. Although this decision continued to have reverberations long after the purchase. Meeting had always appealed to Deborah Altus, but she was a cautious sort and thought about attending long before she showed up on Meeting’s doorstep. “I was very surprised when I found the Meeting House nestled away in East Lawrence and loved the fact that it was a simple, unpretentious building that was easy to enter and feel at home.”

The Building Land and Special Projects fund had \$4,700, an IRS number (48-0840961) and a grant application for \$4,500 from the FGC Meeting House Fund. Friends had confidence too as they set out to look at 733 Rhode Island. They planned to share the house with Women’s Transitional Care, WTC (now known as Women’s Transitional Care Services WTCS), which in 1976 began helping survivors of domestic violence. The only problem? The owners of the property behind the house planned to open a discotheque. Noise!

A few members yearned for the quiet of Danforth, but the university ruling was firm: Meeting could have the hour of worship there, but Friends would have to pack up and have their usual post-Meeting discussion elsewhere. In gracious resignation, M sent a letter to K.U. expressing its appreciation for the twenty-some years that they had used the Chapel without charge.

October 30, 1977 was the final Meeting for worship in Danforth Chapel, and the following First Day, Meeting moved to the United Ministries in Higher Education building. Meeting thought of buying a smaller house for the use of WTC. This would provide Meeting with equity and a house, that when and if WTC moved could be used for Meeting for Worship. But the proposed house was felt to be inadequate for child care. In any case, the seller took the property off the market.

Meeting looked at more properties: 945 Rhode Island, 1935 Massachusetts, and 1847 Barker. The most promising was the Barker property. Again there was a called Meeting.

“It was not clear what category ‘church with residential use by WTC’ comes under,” note the minutes for November, 1978. WTC was enthusiastic, and Friends decided in favor of the purchase: “A sense of detachment about the house itself was expressed, plus a desire not to exceed \$42,000 total indebtedness impelled us to make the \$36,000 a firm offer, not one for future upward bargaining. It was agreed that of the existing houses we had seen, this has the most potential for meeting our needs as well as those of any residential program such as WTC.”

Both Friends and the WTC staff visited neighbors to drum up support, but to no avail. Some neighbors didn't want a church in the neighborhood while others feared revenge-driven batterers lurking near the secret premises. Confronted with this opposition, the City Planning Committee refused the sale.

United Ministries informed Friends that they "did not want us to continue meeting in their building indefinitely." Gallantly, in April, Meeting agreed on a contribution of \$25 per month to be made retroactively to United Ministries for use of the building. United Ministries were having problems of their own because in May 1978 they dissolved.

"How about building from scratch?" a few Friends suggested. This was agreeable "only if the building reflects our values in an outstanding manner—for instance it should disrupt the environment as little as possible and conserve energy and contribute in a positive way to the community at large."

The hunt went on. The Seventh Day Adventists were approached about sharing their building, but it cost too much. Some Friends suggested meeting in homes as a temporary measure, rotating from one to another, but others worried it would be hard to attract newcomers without a fixed location.

Spirits soared when the FGC awarded Meeting a \$3,000 grant and a loan of 75 percent of the appraised value of the property up to \$30,000.

"Let's go!" Friends shouted, and they hastened to check out a house on 847 Connecticut. It disappointed. Sober souls on the Meeting House Committee recommended that "no more old houses be considered as possible Meeting Houses, due to the inferior nature of property available in our price range." Friends began looking at storefront locations. They approached the Unitarians about sharing space. Although the Unitarians were "enthusiastically positive," nothing happened.

According to the newsletter of November, 1978, Meeting for Worship was now held at the St. Lawrence Catholic Student Center (where the church and center are now located) on First Days. Nine months later Meeting was still there, paying a fee of \$45 per month. Peggy Baker, who came with her husband Claud to Douglas County in the fall of 1977, recalled trying to center down, looking at the Oriental rug in the large living room in the back of the house (now incorporated into the new structure). Friends also tried meeting in the Student Union when the Meeting had student members.

Meeting has "largely given up purchasing a place of our own," note the minutes for August, 1979. With gloomy resignation, Meeting purchased a one year certificate for \$5,000 and invested the remainder of the Building, Land and Special Projects Fund in Pax World Fund.

Then, out of the blue came "an opening." Ron Rarick and Hal Piehler reported on a possible Meeting House located at 1146 Oregon. The building, which had been a paint warehouse, was sold to the American Federation of Musicians Local Union who used it as a musicians' union practice room. This explains why there are cubbyholes and the padded sound-proof corridor connecting the two main rooms. The musicians union asked \$30,000. Friends moved fast, and after worship and a potluck meal at the Catholic Student Center, the Meeting for Business was held, not in a home as was usual, but at 1146 Oregon.

Friends were "reminded of the need to increase their contributions to Meeting," and in January, 1980 a committee was authorized to negotiate a purchase beginning at a \$25,500 offer. Huxtable

Electric Company agreed to let the Meeting use its parking lot. That April the site plan was approved by the City Commission. On Lucretia Mott's birthday, May 10th, Friends celebrated by putting in paving stones in the parking area in front of the Meeting House.

"Property is a big theme in this Meeting, almost a need to feel grounded," Ahilleas Maurellis said. He may be correct for the jubilant home-owners indulged in a frenzy of activity. They reached out to neighbors, visiting and inviting them and telling them "how Quakerism is different." Friends professed themselves eager to break away from a university orientation. They hoped that the Meeting House could be a neighborhood facility for block parties. They planned to bring the building up to ADA standards and to make it known to the School of Social Welfare, the public schools, Independence, Inc., Cottonwood, and the SRS.

In July, 1980 Friends reported that since May they had painted the doors; installed glass panes, as well as guttering and down spouts; shampooed the carpets; and installed light bulbs (which Saunny Scott requested be environmentally appropriate). House-proud, they installed not one but two signs. They had also worked on the garden. The original brainstorming had suggested a shade tree as well as a fast growing tree. There were to be shrubs along the side and back walls and flowers in front, mostly perennials along with tulips, daffodils and iris. Friends would collect leaves and grass clippings from the neighbors to enlarge the compost heap; they'd have a solar water heater and collect rain in a cistern. By July, much of the forsythia had died, but "the grass looked lovely for a time before it died."

Friends welcomed use of the building by others, so long as it was not a commercial use and no more than fifty people were present. The Meeting approved use of the Meeting room to sew a teepee, and for massage by the holistic health group of the Appropriate Technology Resource Center.

When Meeting received a request to use the Meeting House for a six week course in women's self-defense and yoga, it hesitated, caught in what seemed to be a dilemma: it was reluctant to sponsor violence, yet it recognized the felt need of many women for defense techniques. Friends asked to meet with the woman who had made the request. The minutes do not indicate what transpired.

The 1980s were roller coaster years. After the euphoria of finding a home, Friends came close to losing it three years later. Membership was decimated as weighty Friends left. Meeting struggled to meet the mortgage payments. Finances became fuzzy with the treasurer's reports in 1986 not being made. Meeting then wrote Friends General Council (FGC) about negotiating the payments. FGC did not reply. A second letter was sent, directly asking for "help with our financial problems." The letter reads in part:

"At the time of purchase of our present building several years ago, ours was a strong and viable group. But as in any University community, there is a great deal of movement because of jobs or interest.

Our present Meeting has six regular attenders and maintaining the report has been difficult.

Is it possible we could make interest only payments for a year or perhaps reschedule our mortgage loan?"

FGC replied, requiring the Meeting to pay its one delinquent payment, but allowing it to pay interest only (\$77.10) on the loan for the following six months. That provided breathing space

from the concerns that were stifling the life of the Meeting. A minute describes its “precarious” financial state” and the toll on the membership.

“Just meeting the expenses of the building takes all of our resources, financial and emotional, leaving us without the strength to undertake outreach,” notes one minute.

Jeanne Stump wrote, “We were alternately optimistic and pessimistic about the possibility of keeping the Meeting House. . . . If our payments to FGC could be established at around \$100, probably we could manage.”

Previous attenders were contacted about the possibility of selling the Meeting House. To make the house more attractive to potential buyers, Meeting made the back room into a modest kitchen. Bob and Jeanne Stump financed a new linoleum floor while Richard and Marsha Jesse donated a sink for which Richard built a cabinet from scrap lumber. These were hard times.

When the Charleston Fund came through with a \$1000 grant, it seemed like manna from heaven.

When Meeting began to flourish again, Friends spiffed up the place. Two pews were brought in from a Roman Catholic church. In 1997 Pam Gordon designed a garden on the south side of Meeting House. It became an important part of Meeting, said Ahilleas Maurellis, especially when the giant sunflowers bloomed. Inside, the dove grey outside walls had not been painted since the purchase. After taking three months to make a decision on the desired color, Meeting decided on an off-white. Tom Harvey went off to buy a few cans. He found some paint called sandalwood. It was on sale. The color sounded close so he bought it. When the lids were pried off, it turned out to be peachy-salmon. Meeting used anyway, and the color turned to grey—darker and darker—until in 1997 the Meeting House was repainted: off-white this time.

In 1994, Friends installed a shed for a new lawnmower, “at an approximate cost of \$110 plus a few banged thumbs.” It was “decided that the temperature inside the Meeting House be fixed by the Quaker equivalent of papal decree at 67 degrees Fahrenheit,” wrote Ahilleas Maurellis, recording clerk.

The Meeting House had always been opened to others. In 1982 it was used by Project Acceptance, Appropriate Technology, LCPJ, National Guard for non-violence training, Community Theatre, and a Women’s Support Group. In 1986 it was used as a midwife service for expectant mothers to learn Lamaze. Later, Peggy Baker used it for 14-week class in Irish. The band “Dashboard Buddha,” rehearsed there, causing a neighbor to complain about the noise. Saunny Scott wrote part of a dissertation there. Zen Buddhists meditated there.

The Meeting House was also leased for use as an office by Habitat for Humanity in 1992-1993. Rent was payment of the utilities. When Habitat was six months behind in its payments, Pam Gordon, corresponding clerk, wrote: “if Habitat does not have adequate funds right now, do not worry—we want to continue to be your hosts on Oregon Street.” That the two groups were on good terms is clear by the fact that she added, “we would be delighted to have Habitat volunteers for lawn-mowing this summer.”

There were, however, some tenants even the most tolerant of Friends frowned upon. Benjamin may have found a place in Quaker literature as the beloved Meeting House Mouse, but Oread Friends opted for eviction of their less desirable guests: “Feline Friend Charles was introduced to our Meeting House environment in order to discourage the presence of small rodent Friends.”

The trials of home ownership were nothing compared to the saga of the vacant lot. The lot was not for sale when Meeting purchased the house, but two years later, Theresa Smith, the owner of the house to the north of the Meeting House approached Meeting. Would they like to buy the vacant lot that lay between the two structures?

Well, yes! as a matter of fact, Meeting would. The asking price was \$12,500.

“It seems obvious that purchase on our part is impossible,” note the minutes. Yet Meeting was tempted. Although the lot was only 6,002 square feet, less than the 7,000 required for a building to be erected, it had been platted prior to that law, and thus was “buildable.” Meeting asked for first option to buy. And got it.

Years passed. The issue resurfaced in 1996 when the neighbors decided to move and put their house and the adjacent vacant lot up for sale separately. The minutes of December, 1996, note “The Meeting felt secure as to the need for the property” for future expansion or permanent green space. With an anonymous \$1000 pledge toward the purchase and a deposit of \$500 from the Meeting and a grant from the FGC Meeting House Fund, Friends asked for contributions from current and past members and attenders. Jeanne Stump contributed generously in memory of her parents. So did others. But what finally enabled the purchase was the Moore’s pledge, in addition to a \$100 donation, to “make good any outstanding amounts in the form of a non-interest loan payable in five years to the amount of \$7,500.” (Only \$4,000 was eventually needed). Those present “expressed much jubilation,” and Loring Henderson was authorized to proceed to make the offer and negotiate. On March 28, 1997, the land was purchased at a cost of \$10,000.

There was no honeymoon period. Trouble sprang up at once in the form of an incorrect survey in the sale documents which showed the driveway for the house the neighbors were selling to be on the land with the house when, in fact, it was shown to be part of the Meeting’s lot in a revised drawing submitted by the survey company.

“That land is ours,” said Meeting mildly, reluctant to spark a dispute with a neighbor but mindful of its rights.

Dennis and Janet Reed, Meeting’s neighbors at 1134 Oregon said, of course, that, “We were told it belonged to us when we bought our house.”

In May 1997, Meeting for Business considered its options. These were “to give, sell or rent the driveway area to our neighbors.” Meeting also noted that it needed 50 feet of frontage to qualify as a lot. Changing the lot size would cause it to lose its grandfather status and would render it “unbuildable” and therefore valueless on the market.

Prudence was called for. But so were “fairness and respect for the neighbors.” In fact these were “of paramount importance,” along with “seeing the Meeting is fairly treated by the banks, surveyors and mortgage companies concerned.”

Month after dreary month, the “vacant lot” found itself on the agenda. Friends felt Meeting should have “no qualms about insisting that the real estate and survey companies make good the compensation.” Harold Washington and Francis Elling made the point that “the buildability of the plot of land for our purposes is really what is at stake.” A lawyer was consulted. He recommended that a temporary right of way be granted to the Reeds and advised that the Meeting had no grounds for participating in a lawsuit since it had not lost anything/ Legal options were up to the neighbors.

At the beginning of 1998 Pam Gordon wrote the Attorney General of Kansas regarding Meeting's perceived harassment by the Stephens Real Estate Company of our neighbors the Reeds. All through 1998 the saga continued. In January, Meeting barricaded the driveway and posted a No Trespassing sign. The Reeds responded by driving around the barricade. In February the Reeds removed it. In March Meeting decided not to replace the barricade as it would be "detrimental to amiable relations with the Reeds." In August the Reeds got a new attorney. In November Meeting offered the Reeds a permanent easement for \$4,000 or an outright purchase of the driveway strip for \$7,800.

Meeting felt the need to decide what to do if the Reeds didn't respond. The choice seemed to be to make the land inaccessible to the Reeds, or to give it up. Then two other possibilities were suggested: the first was to say that "as a religious organization we simply give the Reeds an easement at no cost." The second was to write up an easement agreement with the Reeds that allowed them to use the driveway without charge but makes explicit that as soon as they sell the property, the easement disappears. This would assert Meeting's legal right to the property.

Deborah Gerner noted that Meeting had already been struggling with the issue for two years. The longer Meeting let the issue ride, she suggested, the more it lost credibility in its need to be compensated. Meeting's concern over not harming the Reeds was causing it harm. With the \$4,000 it could do a lot of good for others in need.

In the spring of 1999, the neighbors initiated a lawsuit against the survey company and that case remains in the courts at the time of this writing.

Chapter 10

A Wider Community

Be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come, that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people, and to them. Then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in everyone; whereby in them you may be a blessing, and make the witness of God in them to bless you.

—George Fox, 1656

It's a truism that a faith is easier to maintain if it is shared. But Oread has never belonged to Yearly Meeting. At times some members have felt this to be a lack. Despite the fellowship offered by Missouri Valley Friends (e.g. the boisterous Saturday evening talent shows) some Oread Friends have missed a yearly meeting affiliation. According to them, it has made Oread less focused and vibrant. But Oread has always been ambivalent about which Yearly Meeting to join. The fit has to be just right. It appears not yet to have been found, but the long and sinuous paths in search of the ideal Yearly Meeting are interesting in themselves.

It may seem surprising that Oread has not been willing to make more concessions. Why? Because Oread Friends seem to like “Big Picture” Quakerly activity. Oread Friends who have attended annual FGC gatherings or Pendle Hill, the Quaker center for study and contemplation outside Philadelphia, testify as to their vitality. Others who have participated in AFSC work camps have found them as fulfilling as they are rigorous. Several members subscribe to *Friends Journal*, an independent magazine featuring Quaker thought and life today, as does the Meeting, and there's a small library of Quaker books in the Meeting House. Friends with access to the Internet can access a plethora of Quaker web pages, and news lists.

“The FGC connection is important too,” said Harold Washington, who first met Friends through AFSC. “FGC connects us with Quaker literature and a sense of the larger movement and tradition.”

The desire to be part of a wider Quaker fellowship was clear when in 1949 the Lawrence Preparatory Meeting contacted the Friends Fellowship Council (FFC) concerning the process of becoming a monthly meeting. At that time there were about fifty monthly meetings in the United States and Canada unaffiliated with any quarterly or yearly meeting. These came under the care of FWCC's “Small Meetings Committee.” Why don't these small unprogrammed Meetings in our region join hands? suggested John Oliver of Penn Valley Meeting in 1950 as he surveyed the Meetings in St. Louis, Lincoln, Des Moines, Ames, Columbia and Kansas City. In 1955 his dream became reality as the Missouri Valley Friends Conference (MVFC) was established with a membership of about one hundred. MVFC was primarily a fellowship with few institutional pretensions. Constituent monthly meetings were free to affiliate with established yearly meetings while maintaining their ties to MVFC although sometimes Meetings abandoned MVFC once they had found a yearly meeting.

In the spring of 1963, Oread Friends hosted a discussion of the issue with the independent Meetings in Kansas City, Manhattan and Lawrence. The minutes report that “there was hearty agreement on the value of thus getting together, but a real hesitancy about any formal organization at this time...If a feeling develops that forming a quarterly meeting seems right, we are open to that and the possibility that offers of possible affiliation with a yearly meeting or FGC.” That fall the three independent meetings again threshed out the idea of a quarterly meeting. They nixed it.

“Belonging to a yearly meeting is more important for small meetings, which is why FWCC thought we should be part of a yearly meeting and not be hanging on to their skirts,” said Anne Moore once the Small Meetings Committee disbanded. Oread had to decide on its allegiance,” said Anne Moore. There were groups in Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas and Texas, each representing a different branch of Quakerism. The difficulty was that each was too distant—either geographically or theologically.

Friends considered their options. They felt they had nothing to lose, for “whatever the final decision, ... the half-yearly meetings of Penn Valley, Manhattan and Oread should continue.” They determined that the ideal yearly meeting should be within a half-day’s drive; have a simple organization to avoid overburdening Friends with activities; and finally, to “not cost too much.”

Some wanted MVFC to become either a yearly meeting itself, or a half-yearly meeting, with each monthly meeting contributing one member to the committee. This would encourage wider fellowship among the monthly meetings; provide a mechanism to keep records; allow a representative for national Quaker organizations; facilitate legal purposes; and permit Quakers to take on projects of greater range.

But was MVFC large enough to support a yearly meeting? Would it not be better to become a quarterly meeting under the Iowa Conservative Meeting instead?

To learn the answer, Oread Friends set out to acquaint themselves with the Iowans and their religious position. In 1966 Tom and Anne Moore attended the Iowa Conservative Yearly Meeting and four Iowans paid a return visit to Lawrence. Despite the strong bond of concern and friendship Meeting felt for the Iowans, they were largely Christo-centric and far more conservative than the MVFC meetings. In 1969, a FGC representative wrote that “in spite of the goodwill of some of its members, the Iowa Conservative Friends as a whole were not ready to accept meetings as liberal as those of the MVFC.”

Paul Goulding, field secretary for FGC, suggested a solution: let MVFC become a yearly meeting. “It need not feel obliged to take on all the functions of larger yearly meetings; it would require very little in the way of increased obligations,” he noted.

That did not happen.

After the “New Meetings Committee” had dissolved, Oread Friends took decisive action. In 1976, they wrote FGC asking if they might join FGC “with the understanding that this may not be a permanent arrangement ... because we have not yet given the question of affiliation with a yearly meeting the time and energy it deserves, and we want to keep that before us.” (A non-Quaker cannot help but wonder just how much time and energy they thought the issue deserved.)

FGC agreed, and Lydia Moore, then at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, became Meeting’s first representative to the FGC.

In 1999, the Missouri Valley Friends Conference (MVFC) discussed strengthening its ties with FGC. Missouri Valley was advised that this could be done only with the approval of the three meetings directly associated with FGC (Topeka, Manhattan, and Oread) and that the decision would end the direct association of each of these with FGC.

“Oread Meeting is not opposed to the change,” wrote Oread Friends co-clerks Loring Henderson and Francis Elling. They noted that “in effect, Missouri Valley would become the yearly meeting of this area although there are Meetings that regularly participate in Missouri Valley that also belong to other official yearly meetings.”

It remains to be seen how the “affiliation issue” will evolve. Some Friends desire to stand under the umbrella of a larger organization. “Otherwise, it’s an odd sense of community,” said Loring Henderson. “If you don’t belong to a yearly meeting and you have a transient congregation, then there is no structure to relate to and no way to define oneself as a Quaker. Then first-timers define Quakerism their way, and so it becomes a vague organization. Everybody is on a quest, but in our Meeting, ‘there is no there there.’ So people leave unless they’re incredibly independent.”

In 1955, the minutes report a request for names of Friends in Manhattan who might be interested in starting a Meeting there. Some must have been found for the next year, Oread Friends reported that a visitation from Manhattan had been “spiritually strengthening and socially delightful.”

In 1962 Oread encouraged Manhattan Friends to become a preparative meeting. Having an official designation would give it greater cohesion, and Oread Friends would encourage it and share its knowledge of Quaker procedures. Oread Friends would gain too, by becoming revitalized by the fresh perspective of Manhattan. The next year, Manhattan Friends duly asked to become a preparative meeting under the guidance of Oread Friends. Their goal was to become a monthly meeting as soon as they were of reasonable size and confident in their knowledge of good Quaker order.

In August, 1963, James F. Walker of the Friends World Committee welcomed Manhattan’s decision to apply for preparative status. “This would seem to me a proper and helpful procedure. In fact it is a procedure that FWCC encourages,” he wrote Lloyd Hulbert, Clerk of Manhattan’s Meeting. But James Walker must have expected the Manhattanites to take a leisurely approach to achieving monthly meeting status. They didn’t. Only three months later, Oread Friends appointed a committee of Paul Kopper of Topeka and Domingo Ricart of Lawrence to encourage Manhattan to organize an independent monthly meeting.

“We stand ready to be of any help we can and feel that the preparative meeting stage is not needed. We do not understand James Walker’s approval of becoming a preparative meeting to be the only procedure open to you, nor necessarily the most desirable,” Oread wrote Manhattan.

This must have irked James Walker, the correspondent for the New Meetings Committee of the FWC. He refused Manhattan’s request: “Our committee’s first step is to see what can be done to hitch a new group to an already established Monthly Meeting or Quarterly Meeting. ...In your case this has already been done with Oread.”

When Manhattan pleaded its case, he suggested it stress the eighty miles between Lawrence and Manhattan as one reason why the arrangement was not optimal. He explained the committee

would also worry how many of the adults worked for the College and were subject to transfer. He apologized for his “many questions,” and appealed for patience.

Lloyd Hulbert wrote meekly to Oread, “I hope we will be of bother to you very little more on this matter.”

Does not this sound dejected? Does it resonate of the struggle of a teenager and a parent each wanting the independence of the teen, but a distant authority—FGC— intervening.

The authority refused. Their reason? “The group seems rather small to assume Monthly Meeting responsibilities and the Committee wonders whether the desirability of preparative meeting status has been fully explored and is really understood. Despite the distance, it would seem a stronger situation if Manhattan and Oread could be combined for the years just ahead, with Manhattan in the preparative meeting position.”

What a blow for Manhattan! Worse, it was hinted that a “typical” waiting period was seven years. The Manhattanites could not wait. Three years later, in 1966, Manhattan Worship Group (is there defiance in the fact they do not call themselves a preparative meeting?) again approached Oread Friends, requesting Oread “to recognize them as a monthly meeting with full independent status.”

Manhattan was following Quakerly procedure according to Faith and Practice which stipulates: “When members of a worship group or of a preparative meeting wish to form a monthly meeting, they should first consult with the appropriate monthly meeting and the regional meeting. The preparative meeting prepares a formal minute and forwards it to the monthly meeting. If the monthly meeting approves it, it is forwarded to the regional meeting. When it approves, it appoints a committee of oversight.”

Clerk Catherine Brown of Manhattan wrote Anne Moore, Clerk of Oread, that they “had given much attention over the past years to the problems of formal affiliation with the larger body of Friends. Since most of us are members of other Meetings around the country, we have desired to transfer our membership to the Meeting in which we participate, particularly because other Meetings are financially involved in their yearly meetings by carrying absentee members on their rolls. Further, we felt that Manhattan Meeting has a vitality and permanence which warrants full Meeting status.”

“Our lack of a clear organizational position sometimes makes us feel apart from the mainstream of Friendly life, in spite of the warm fellowship we do enjoy with other Friends. Therefore, we have sought recognition as a Monthly Meeting of the Society of Friends. Since the World Committee has declined to grant this and since your Meeting has felt that it was inappropriate for us to be a preparative meeting, we now ask your Meeting to grant us full independent monthly meeting status.”

Oread Friends decided: “Since there is no other larger or older body of Friends that would or could appropriately recognize them, we decided to grant their request.”

Oread’s imprimatur had still to be approved by the Committee on New Meetings. James Walker had softened. “Some of us realize that your present situation is unsatisfactory, that you would like to be able to accept new members and that it would be helpful to have a recognized status,” he wrote. When the New Meetings Committee met in Philadelphia February 18, 1967, it agreed to offer Manhattan full monthly meeting status.

By 1976 there were 46 names on Manhattan's mailing list, including 27 residing in the city. It still functions as a Monthly Meeting.

After all Manhattan's trouble, Oread Friends probably dreaded hearing from Topeka that it too wanted to become a preparative meeting. John Wine, a Topeka attorney who was an attender at Friends Church in Wichita, knew Tom Moore; he knew six Topekans who were interested in having a Meeting there. Another acquaintance knew of another six, several of whom worked at the Menninger Clinic. Tom Moore got them together and they started meeting.

The initial "feeler" to Oread came December 1, 1982. Craig Birrel, recording clerk of the worship group in Topeka wrote: "In discussing the plans and intentions of our newly formed group in Topeka, we feel the need for the structure and guidance of the Society of Friends. In accordance with that need, we ask the Oread Meeting for acceptance as a preparatory meeting."

Clerk Anne Moore called the FGC for advice. No "book of discipline" governed such matters, she was told, but the Advancement and Outreach Committee and the Spiritual Nurture committee could both advise.

Oread set up a Committee on Clearness to visit the Topeka Worship Group. It was composed of "young married couples, including among them an attorney, a psychologist, a psychiatrist, two homemakers, three children and a Methodist pastoral counselor." The group appears to have sprung out of a meditation group in the Friends Church. An attender of Topeka Preparative Meeting began attending Oread's Meeting for Business, while an attender of Oread visited Topeka each month to share in worship, discussions and pot luck suppers. The Topekans were to be known as "Topeka Preparative Meeting of the Oread Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, leaving the Topekans free to suggest a new name as way opens." They now call themselves "Topeka Friends Meeting."

While still a preparative meeting, the Topekans came to the rescue of Oread in the tight year of 1983, sending them money "as a token of our eagerness to help you as you helped us."

In April, 1985, Lori Kegan wrote Karen Ross, Clerk of Oread, about the Topekans' desire to become a Monthly Meeting: "Why? Not because we are unhappy with our status as a Preparative Meeting, but there are areas we want to further cultivate in the process of becoming a more mature Meeting. e.g. more communication with the parent Meeting."

To this end, Topeka suggested cross-visitation. Lori Kegan noted also that "the same core group of six families who met together early in the formation of our Preparative Meeting have become more active and committed to the Society of Friends. This lends a sense of stability but also reminds us to become more visible in the community so that others can find us."

The formal request came May 18, 1986. Tom Matthew's, presiding clerk, wrote: "The Meeting seems to possess the requisite stability. We have maintained an active group of approximately one dozen. Nearly every member that was active initially remains an active member. ... We recognize that the size is somewhat small for a Meeting, but it has been a wonderful size for a worship group and it has allowed us to grow strong within. ... We have been active with you in conducting several weddings and in the process of attenders becoming members. We have recently established a formal budget and now make available at each business meeting a treasurer's report and printed minutes."

The Topekans evaluated their religious education and worship thus: "We have explored various means without setting on a satisfactory plan. ... One of the most important strengths of our

Meeting has been the opportunity it offers to each of us for spiritual growth. The Meetings for Worship are meaningful and occasionally dramatically moving. The discussion hours have been lively. A number of us have been able to share at a midweek Meeting for the past four months; there has been similar sharing at weekend retreats. Our fellowship is also important to us. We are a community. We share with one another and love one another. We do experience conflicts and hurts. Some of these have been expressed and resolved while others remain unspoken. However, they have not proven disabling and we hope for their eventual resolution, knowing that we will always need to be mindful of new conflicts.”

In June, 1986, Oread Clerk Saunny Scott wrote FGC that Oread Friends felt Topeka was ready “to take on the responsibilities of a regular Monthly and that it endorsed their desire for regular Meeting status.”

In January of 1987, Marty Walton, general secretary of FGC, wrote Oread Friends that “the FGC is a service organization, not a governing body with authority. We have no power to grant monthly meeting status. Only a yearly meeting or another monthly meeting can do that. Since Topeka Preparative Meeting has been under your care and there is no yearly meeting in your area to which you belong, only Oread Monthly Meeting can bestow monthly meeting status on Topeka. As soon as that is done, FGC would wholeheartedly welcomes Topeka Monthly Meeting into affiliation.”

In February, 1987, Jeanne Stump, clerk of Oread replied: “Oread Meeting is delighted to bestow monthly meeting status on the Topeka Preparatory Meeting, which has been previously under our care. They can now consider themselves as completely on their own, and take their place as an individual monthly meeting in Kansas, associated with the FGC. . . .It has been heartwarming to watch the growth of this meeting in our area, and to become acquainted with its members as Friends and friends. We have found that the spirit of the people of this new Meeting has been an inspiration to us.”

Topeka thrived. Its 1987 directory noted Meeting for Worship was at 4 p.m. in the small room behind the sanctuary of Otterbein Methodist Church, with monthly mid-week Meetings held in homes. The directory included 35 adults as attenders, members and friends.

Topeka now owns its Meeting House at 8th and Tyler and is well-established in the community. By contrast, the Friends Church in Topeka has closed.

“I don’t want the work to become a business, but to remain a work of love,” wrote Mother Theresa of the Missionaries of Charity who care for the dying poor of Calcutta. Alas, religious societies find themselves deluged with paperwork. As a church Oread was not required to obtain recognition from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as a tax exempt organization, but applying for such status under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code has been dismissed many times since the beginning of Oread Friends. Obtaining the IRS letter of exemption gives comfort to some individual donors and is helpful in gaining local and state tax exemptions. After various starts and stops over the years, application for 501 (c) (3) status was submitted in March, 2000. Approval is anticipated but as of this writing a response has not been received from the IRS.

Quakerly patience and process are certainly evident in many of Oread’s dealings. While the Meeting took fifty years to finally submit its tax exemption request, it only took forty-five years to get a telephone and a listing in the Yellow Pages. Getting both the IRS letter and the phone

number probably still does not answer the Quakerly questions: Do we need them? Were we harmed without them?

Perhaps not. But they are signs of the maturing of Oread Friends Meeting.

Major Events: Oread Friends Meeting, 1950-2000

- November, 1949: The Lawrence Preparatory Meeting contacts the Executive Secretary of Friends Fellowship Council (FFC) concerning the process of becoming a Monthly Meeting.
- March, 1950. The name, Society of Friends, Oread Meeting, is chosen. Charter is signed.
- May, 1950. AFSC welcomes Meeting and requests yearly report.
- October, 1950. Peace and Social Order Committee is formed at Meeting for Business held at Plymouth Church.
- March, 1950. Danforth Chapel on the University of Kansas (K.U.) campus is selected as regular meeting place.
- June, 1952. A concern is expressed that Friends think about securing accommodation for a Friends Center or Meeting House.
- June, 1953. An association of isolated unprogrammed Meetings in Kansas, Missouri and neighboring states meets at Lincoln, Nebraska.
1955. The association, now called Missouri Valley Friends Conference, is established with a membership of approximately 100.
- March, 1957. First contact with Kinonia Farm, an interracial co-op farm near Americus, Georgia
- March, 1958. Approval of a proposal to establish a building fund
- June, 1959. Meeting held in Danforth Chapel
- February, 1961. Meeting cosponsors annual brotherhood banquet
- March, 1963. Meeting hosts gathering of independent Meetings in Kansas
- October, 1963. The independent Meetings in Kansas discuss the establishment of a Quarterly Meeting to be called the Missouri Valley Conf. No formal organization of a quarterly Meeting is undertaken but it is agreed that Manhattan, Lawrence and Kansas City friends will continue to meet twice a year.
- June, 1970. Walter LeRoy Chittenden hands his draft card over to the Meeting.
- January, 1973. Meeting writes to East Whittier Meeting, California of which Pres. Nixon is a member, asking about efforts to labor with him concerning the Friends peace testimony
- March, 1973. East Whittier Meeting replies stating their comfort in continuing President Nixon as a member
- April, 1975. Oread Friends Meeting celebrates its twenty-fifth anniversary with a spring gathering of Friends from other Kansas unprogrammed Meetings.

- June, 1976. At Camp Chippawa near Ottawa, Kansas, Meeting recommends that a Land Building, or Special Projects Fund be established to allow for accrual of money which could be used for a down-payment of a Meeting House.
- November, 76. Meeting receives a letter welcoming us to unite with Friends General Council (FGC)
- Winter, 1976-77. Lawrence Coalition for Peace and Justice founded
- Oct. 30, 1977. Letter sent to K.U. expressing appreciation for twenty years of use of Danforth Chapel.
- January, 1978-- Oread Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends.(Quaker) is incorporated, its purpose being “administering to the needs of people.”
- January, 1980. Meeting begins purchase of 1146 Oregon Street. The documents on the purchase are received in May, 1980.
- November 1983. Contribution received from Manhattan Friends Meeting to help make up for loss of weighty members Moores, Browns and Chittendens.
- March, 1986. The Meeting House may have to be abandoned for lack of funds. FGC is approached for help.
- August, 1986. FGC suspends mortgage payments for one year.
- May 18, 1986. Topeka Preparatory Meeting requests becoming a Monthly Meeting.
1991. Peace Vigils to protest Gulf War
- February, 1993. Minute approving same-gender marriages among Friends
- January, 1997. Purchase of adjacent lot
1999. Oread Friends Meeting recognized an “Accessible Congregation” by the National Organization on Disability
1999. Formal affiliation with Ecumenical Christian Ministries to increase outreach to students
1999. Peace Vigils to protest continued economic sanctions against Iraq
- April, 2000. Dedication of Peace Pole for 50th Anniversary celebrations

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