

Concord Quarterly News

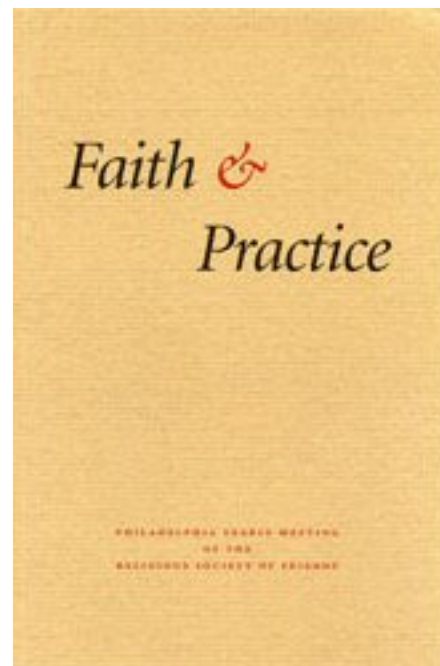
Concord Quarterly Meeting Newsletter

Volume 9, Issue 1 January 2013

Quarterly Meetings?: A look at *Faith and Practice* and Concord Quarter's Minutes

Through my time thus far as Concord Quarter's Coordinator I have heard in various conversations about what the role of the Quarterly Meeting is and what it could be. I decided to take a look at Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice* for some insight into this question. I also had a chance to look back through the archives of Concord Quarter as was suggested at October Quarterly Meeting. I was able to see what the Quarter was like in the past, and the following is a brief look at some of the salient issues that seem to still be present in the Quarter's conversations today.

In Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice*, the role of the Quarterly Meeting is defined very generally: it is a body of meetings in a geographic region that meets two to four times a year to address matters of shared concern across the member meetings. It is also a group that can provide fellowship and support. As it stands now, Concord Quarterly Meeting meets four times a year at a different meeting in the Quarter.



Continued on page 2

Quarterly Meeting-Resources for Our Aging Community

Please join us for Concord Quarterly Meeting at Goshen Monthly Meeting on Sunday January 27th. The day will begin with Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. This Quarterly Meeting will include a youth program.

There will be a presentation from George Schaefer on the resources provided by Philadelphia Yearly Meeting for our aging members and attenders.

See the following flyers for more information on both the adult and youth program

Quarterly Meetings?: A look at *Faith and Practice* and Concord Quarter's Minutes

Continued from page 1....

Quarterly Meetings are a place for meetings to join together in support of one another if a Meeting needs support. For instance, in the 1920s a concern was held in common by the Quarter to support its smaller meetings

In the early 1920s there was a concern raised by a few meetings in the Quarter about their small numbers. The Quarter reached out to them by putting a committee into place to assist in organizing regular visits between Monthly Meetings. The committee that was tasked with taking up this concern also addressed other areas of concern, such as the structures and functions of the Meetings. The report also noted that the size of a Meeting is not the only factor into whether it is a functional and vital religious community. The depth of worship and the extent to which a Meeting is a community is also important

Another concern that I have found to be consistently present in the life of the Quarter is responsibilities on committees being held by only a few. This reality puts those who are willing to be on committees in a situation where they may be on more than one, and therefore not able to give their full time and attention to either. As well, if only

certain people are serving their Monthly Meetings, a great deal of dormant talent and gifts may be lost. While this observation was made in regard to positions on the Quarterly level, it is also a concern that should be taken into consideration by Monthly Meetings.

In minutes from as late as the 1990s, I have found that the Quarter finds a great deal more energy than maybe it otherwise would because of the presence of a coordinator. The Quarter has supported this position since the 1970s at least. However, it was noted that this was not the only way that Monthly Meetings could maintain their energy and vitality. There are many other concerns that Monthly Meetings face that can not be solved by having a point person to maintain energy.

Other concerns that have been raised in the minutes of Concord Quarter are concerns about Monthly Meeting membership, if the Quarterly Meeting is necessary in this day and age, and to whom Quakerism should be of interest. These concerns both directly and indirectly show that the question about the purpose and role of the Quarterly Meeting has always been one that is open to consideration. I encourage Friends to keep this line of questioning open so that we may best live out our Quaker faith.

Coordinator's Report

Since my report in October, I have made it to Goshen, Wilmington, West Chester, Middletown, and Concord. This means that I have made it to all eight meetings! I have enjoyed getting to meet each of the meetings and to begin to learn more about their characters and the concerns that they have. I have been considering ways in which I can be of assistance to meetings and how I can help facilitate relationships between Meetings. I have also made it to Meetings for Business at Wilmington, Concord, and Westtown. I am planning on making it to Meetings for Business at the remaining Meetings beginning in February. I have met with Martin Reber at Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to learn how to update our new website. (Look for it in early January!) The Youth Committee has met twice in order to plan the youth event for Quarterly Meeting in January. Plans are underway for a Square Dance in February that will be held at Willistown. I have also met with the Coordinator of Western Quarter, Zac Dutton. We are excited about the possibilities of potentially having joint youth events in the coming months. I have also become aware of Friends General Conference's "Quaker Cloud," an on-line resource that provides Monthly Meetings with a website. I would encourage Monthly Meetings to look into this service.

I wanted to take this space to also say that I will be traveling in January with little to no access to internet. I will be traveling from the 3rd to the 26th. I will, however, be present at January Quarterly Meeting at Goshen on the 27th!

Concord Quarterly Meeting

January 27th 2013

at

Goshen Monthly Meeting

8:0am	Sign-in
8:30-9:45am	Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business (Child care for all ages) Youth Group Program (see below)
9:45-10:00	Break
10:00-10:45	Adult Program
10:45-11:45	Meeting for Worship
11:45am	Lunch

Resources for our Aging Community

George Schaefer, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's Care and Aging Coordinator, will be speaking on the recourses that exist for aging members and attenders of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. George will be speaking about the services provided by Quaker Aging Resources, a joint project between Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and New York Yearly Meeting to address the concerns and needs of aging Friends.

Youth Program

Concord Quarter's Youth Group will be heading to Thorncroft Equestrian Center for a morning of service and spending time with horses! Thorncroft's mission is to "help build the physical, emotional and mental well-being of all people, particularly those with special needs, through establishing an atmosphere of cooperation, respect and love in an equestrian environment." We will likely be sweeping and maintaining stalls, and raking an indoor ring. Wear clothing that can get dirty!

Note: *Childcare is available beginning at 8:00 .*

Directions: *Goshen Monthly Meeting, 814 North Chester Road, West Chester PA 19380, is located at the intersection of Rt. 352 and Paoli Pike at Goshenville, PA*

Concord Quarterly Meeting Calendar of Events

January

12 Junior Interim Meeting

9:30am-1:30pm. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's Children's Program will be heading to SHARE. See PYM's website for more information.

18-20 Middle School Friends Gathering: Winter Wonderland

Come to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's Middle School Friends Gathering! The gathering will be held on January 18th at 6 pm until the 20th at 12 pm. See PYM's website for more information.

27 Concord Quarterly Meeting at Goshen

See flyer for detail.

February

9 Special Junior Interim Meeting at SHARE

Come join Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's Junior Interim Meeting (K-5th graders) for an intergenerational event at the SHARE Food Program Building from 10am-2pm. All ages are invited!

10 Planning Committee Meeting

7:30 pm at The Hickman.

15-17 Young Friends Gathering

Come to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's Young Friends' Gathering! The gathering will be held on February 15th at 6 pm until the 17th at 12 pm. See PYM's website for more information.

16 Concord Quarterly Meeting Square Dance at Willistown

7-9 pm. Look for more information at the end of January!

March

16 Youth Group Bowling

The Youth Group (5th-8th grade) will be going bowling! Look for an announcement in February!

**Concord Quarterly Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
Held at Middletown Monthly Meeting
October 28, 2012**

Meeting began with a period of silent worship. Rich Ailes welcomed everyone. There were 20 Friends in attendance. Friends from Birmingham, Concord, Goshen, Middletown, West Chester, Westtown, Willistown, and Wilmington were present. The agenda was reviewed and approved.

A Report on the Coordinator Hiring Process was given by Rich Ailes and is attached to the minutes. Friends accepted the report.

Coordinator's Report was given by Averyl Hall and is attached to the minutes. Averyl is a member of Downingtown Monthly Meeting and a graduate of Earlham College. Friends accepted her report. **Friends approved a minute of welcome and gratitude for Averyl, and also give her their best wishes as coordinator.**

Friends approved a minute of appreciation for the hiring subcommittee's dedicated work to the Quarter which has made Averyl's hiring possible. The hiring sub committee consisted of Rich Ailes, Beth Lawn, Peter Lane, Ray Hamilton, Valerie Peery, Gwynne Ormsby, and Tom Woodward.

Treasurer's Report was given by Bruce James. Highlights include the transition from outgoing treasurer Ron Ploeg, the hiring of Averyl Hall, the Quarter's new Payroll responsibilities, covenants, and tuition grants. The highlights are attached to the minutes. The Quarter's finance report was distributed to Friends.

A Friend asked about the reason for the delay in students' receipt of the Tuition Aid checks. Both a change from 19 to 18 students and the transition in treasurers contributed to the delay.

A description of how the Tuition Endowment Fund works was also distributed and is intended to be taken back to each monthly meeting. A copy is attached to the minutes. Friends asked that an electronic copy of the document be shared. Bruce urged the treasurers of each Monthly Meeting to have a conversation with him before the next Quarterly meeting in January. A Friend suggested that it would be helpful to present options to the monthly meetings. Friends requested that the planning committee work on this topic.

Middletown and Westtown's "Joys and Challenges" were reported and are attached to the minutes. The Clerk expressed his gratitude to get these reports from each meeting without which, he would not otherwise know what other Meetings are experiencing. A Friend expressed their support for Middletown's difficulties and encouraged others to hold Middletown in the light and support the Meeting as they are led.

Friends approved a minute of appreciation for Beth Lawn:

Beth Lawn has been working for Concord Quarter as our coordinator since 2004. In the eight years since she has listened, helped, counseled, observed, organized, and assisted her way into the hearts of countless Quarterly Meeting members. Although our Quarter is blessed with many committed Friends and attenders who work faithfully in our communities, we acknowledge that the work of our outgoing coordinator has made our shared faithfulness stronger and our commitment easier. Quakers do not have ministers to guide us, but they do have an abundance of organizers, whose intricate attention to detail and structure help pave the way for a multitude of successful events which keep us together in a community of love. Beth Lawn has been that organizer for our Quarter in the past eight years.

Concord Quarterly Meeting minutes its deep appreciation for the service that Beth has given to our Quarter. We are all a little diminished and saddened by her departure but we are pleased to have been enriched by Beth's carefulness and sense of responsibility and watchfulness over us. As she leaves us, we pray that God's grace will be her constant companion. We ask her to remember we will always welcome her into our Worship and socials anytime in the future she chooses to come back into our midst.

The clerk asked Friends to reflect on what they felt the future of the Quarter and ideas on outreach or activities that get the Quarter and Quakers out in front of others.

A Friend was concerned that too many meetings are relying mostly on endowment and not making a individual commitment to their Meetings. The Religious Society of Friends is a wonderful gift to the world, why is it not that popular and why are we experiencing dwindling membership?

A request was made to have a dialog between monthly meetings about our finances and share with each other how financial decisions are made.

Another Friend felt a group in need of support is our young families. She did not feel we were good at reaching out to them. We need to build up this support.

There was a suggestion to research records of the Quarter from about 20 years ago to see what the meetings were doing and acting on at that time.

A Friend asked if it is time to have a conversation on the time and effort spent on maintaining our historic properties. Are these properties a expression of who we are or are we spending so much energy that goes into those properties that we don't have enough energies for our actual ministry?

Meeting ended with a period of silent worship.

Respectfully submitted,
John Lavin and Rich Ailes
Recording Clerk, Clerk

Report to Concord Quarterly Meeting on the New Coordinator Hiring Process

Beth Lawn, our coordinator since 2004, announced her retirement in July 2011 to occur in July 2012. At that time, the Quarter was certain that PYM would decide to drop the \$20,000 subsidy to QM's for their coordinator program and stop administering the position, ceasing their involvement as an employer.

At October 2011 Quarterly Meeting at Westtown, an ad hoc committee was formed to draft a proposal for a way to have the Quarter fund and oversee a coordinator position without assistance from PYM. At the January 2012 QM at Wilmington the ad hoc committee presented the proposal for a part time contractor oriented position with no benefit but a high rate of compensation. This was approved.

Between the January QM at Wilmington and the April 2012 QM at Birmingham, Western Quarter co-clerks approached the Planning Committee with a proposal to share a coordinator position between the two quarters to make it a full time position. The Planning Committee reviewed this and asked an ad hoc sub committee to pursue this with Wright Horne and Pan Leland, the co-clerks of Western Quarter. Two conference calls were held to review this as well as a face to face meeting. The proposal was compelling with the possibility that a full time offering would bring forward a worthy candidate more quickly, than two part time offerings. This process produced a draft job description that was brought to April Quarterly Meeting for review. The job description was written in such a way that it could stand as viable for either the joint full time position or a single Concord Quarterly Meeting position only. Quarterly Meeting approved the job description with some minor changes but could not find unity on the Joint position with Western Quarter. A special called Meeting for Business was arranged for June 10 at Concord Meeting to further discern a way forward regarding the joint coordinator proposal.

Before the called session Pam Leland and Wright Horne decided that the two styles of processing this proposal made them less inclined to support the joint coordinator position. The Co-Clerks informed us that Western Quarter was moving ahead with seeking a part time coordinator, while still being open to the possibility of sharing a coordinator. Some Planning Committee members had wanted the called session to be for Concord Quarterly Meeting members only and that is what we decided to do. This decision seems to have caused the Western co-clerks some unease and probably influenced their decision to pursue their own coordinator.

At the called session about 21 Friends/attenders participated. There was a careful discussion about the Western Quarter proposal. See the minutes from that meeting for details. It was approved to pursue a single part time position only. Members of the hiring sub committee were given authority to pursue this as they saw fit with compensation and hiring process. The Quarter continued to see this position being filled by a contractor.

The hiring sub committee consisted of Rich Ailes, Beth Lawn, Pete Lane, Ray Hamilton, Valerie Peery and Tom Woodward. They met in conference call (a service provided by PYM) a few times to deal with advertising the position, compensation and review of the employee/contractor model.

The following compensation package was agreed to as fair and marketable:

- The position will be for 20 hours per week with a starting rate of \$18.00 per hour for an evaluation period the first 90 days. After this period if members of the planning committee agree that the employee is a good fit for the Quarter, employment would continue with a rate increase to \$20 per hour. At that time the benefit of 10 days of paid all-purpose leave would be available to be used by the employee for the next 12 months. At the end of the 12 month period an evaluation will take place for the employee of job performance and compatibility to see if employment will continue for the next year.
- The Quarter will pay the employer required Social Security and Medicare taxes and Workman's compensation, and withdraw the necessary Federal, State, Social Security and Medicare taxes each pay period using a payroll service. A Travel allowance of \$100 per month and a Communications allowance of \$50 per month for work purposes will be provided to cover travel, email and phone expenses. Event, newsletter, and office supply costs will be reimbursed by the Quarter as needed.

The committee posted this advertisement about June 26:

Applications are now being accepted for a 20 hour/week, part-time coordinator position for Concord Quarterly Meeting, to begin September 1, 2012. Concord Quarter is part of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting; it consists of 8 monthly meetings in southeast Pennsylvania and northern Delaware.

Applicant will be expected to work with the Concord Quarter Planning Committee:

- To facilitate spiritual and social opportunities for members of Monthly Meetings to come together in mutual support and community-building.
- To foster relationships between and among Monthly Meetings and the Quarterly Meeting to address issues of common concern.
- To provide support to the Youth Committee which creates programs and activities for Concord Quarter youth from 5th to 8th grade.

Interested persons may send inquiries for a fuller job description and compensation details to concordqmsearch@gmail.com. Applications will be accepted until August 3, 2012.

A special Gmail account was set up to take inquiries. The copy was sent and posted on the PYM website and on the job boards of 2 prominent Quaker colleges, Guilford and Earlham, and sent around on various Quaker email lists and highlighted in the newsletter. Within 3 weeks we received about 8 inquiries.

Meanwhile Valerie Peery had provided valuable information regarding the "legal" status of hiring a contractor or hiring an employee. In a conference call after reviewing this information, it became clear that the IRS would most likely consider Concord Quarter's staff person as an employee and not as a contractor. This viewpoint was corroborated by an email provided by PYM's human resources staff person, Cliessa Nagle. The next conference call, incoming treasurer Bruce James, and Wilmington meeting rep David Scott participated. The case was made that the coordinator position had to be shifted from a contractor to an employee model. It was decided that this shift would require approval by the Quarterly Meeting, happening at the end of July. The hiring process was put on hold until after the July Quarterly Meeting

A letter explaining this position change was sent out to the Meeting clerks and then presented to the Quarterly Meeting where the change was approved. After that the normal hiring process occurred where 4 possible candidates, all with excellent qualifications, were interviewed. The hiring process completed with Averyl Hall from Downingtown Meeting and a graduate of Earlham College accepting the position in the 3rd week of September. A professional contract provided by a legal website www.lawdepot.com was modified to work for the coordinator position, which Averyl signed on September 23rd.

During this period of time three payroll services were evaluated. AccuPay of Hatboro PA was chosen, suggested by Cliessa Nagle at PYM. It provided the most reasonable rate and solid references. Bruce James, our treasurer, spent many hours handling the paperwork and organizing the processes for making sure the Quarter could meet its financial obligations to our new employee. A Workman's Compensation package will soon be purchased at reasonable cost with the Univest

Insurance Company of West Chester. Payroll is currently being met with a reserve available to handle the cash flow issues that occur when Monthly Meetings make their payments to the Quarter.

In the last month, Averyl has met several times with Beth Lawn, who has carried on as a consultant to help us with the transition process. She has provided our new coordinator with invaluable training in all the aspects of the position, complete with a number of help/how to documents.

Rich Ailes
Clerk, Concord Quarterly Meeting

Coordinator's Report

My role as Concord Quarter's new coordinator officially started on September 23rd. The past month or so has been one of transition and of learning about the details of what I will be doing with the Quarter. I have met several times with Beth Lawn as she formally leaves her role as coordinator.

My first task was to put together the October newsletter. I have also had the opportunity to visit with three meetings in the Quarter. I enjoyed a lovely pancake breakfast as Birmingham Meeting, and a Meeting for Worship at Westtown (a meeting of which I spent many meetings as a student at Westtown School). This past Sunday I had a chance to worship with those at Willistown Meeting. In the coming months I will be visiting more Meetings in the Quarter. I will also be joining meetings for their Meetings for Worship with a Concern for Business.

Another aspect of the position that I have had the chance to get started with has been the work that the Youth Committee is doing. I am very excited about the potential to work with the youth in the Quarter and to get some more energy around youth activities.

I look forward to getting to know the Quarter better over the upcoming months!

Treasurer's Report

HIGHLIGHTS

- Transition to new Treasurer
- Averyl Hall, Coordinator hired as direct employee of CQM
- Payroll services contracted with AccuPay. First paycheck issued. Cash flow secured
- Covenant processing proceeding
- Tuition Grants Issued
- Financial Statement

TOPIC FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

- Tuition Endowment Fund

TRANSITION

Bruce James became the Treasurer of CQM this summer. The transition of accounts at National Bank of Malvern was completed. The transition for Friends Fiduciary will be completed in the coming month. Treasurers of monthly meetings are reminded to forward all financial correspondence to:

Concord Quarterly Meeting
c/o Bruce James
PO Box 263
Westtown, PA 19395
Bruce@BruceSoft.net

HIRING

Averyl Hall was hired on September 22, 2012. Significant time was invested in researching the requirements as an employer in the state of PA. Any members who have direct experience with the required reporting, policies and recordkeeping of an employee in PA AND who can provide time to insure the Quarter has fulfilled its obligations are asked to contact Bruce or Rich.

Beth Lawn continued to provide part-time service to CQM after her official retirement. The total transition expense was \$3000 to date, and was paid from the operating reserve funds from the 2011-2012 year.

PAYROLL

A payroll service (AccuPay, Hatboro, PA) was contracted by CQM to handle direct deposit payroll, as well as the required quarterly and annual filings with local, state and national taxing authorities. The first payroll check was issued. Subsequent paychecks will be direct deposit, to minimize processing costs. The remaining operating reserve funds from 2011-2012 year have been applied to the Coordinator Payroll account, to provide cash flow in between payments from the monthly meetings.

Here are some statistics based on the first paycheck (may vary in the near future): Tax withholdings result in approx 18% withheld from the employee. Taxes paid by CQM are approximately 26% of salary. Payroll processing and filing fees are about 4% of salary.

Currently, more than \$5900 is available for payroll in the coming months. This represents more than 6 pay periods (2 week pay period), or 3 months of payroll. An additional \$1400 is available in the Operating Reserve account, which affords about 4 months of payroll availability.

It is **imperative** to understand the need for cash flow and cash-on-hand for Concord Quarterly Meeting. Without the regular infusion of money, we risk being unable to fund payroll for our employee. It is the recommendation of this Treasurer that 3 months is the minimum reserve we should have for payroll, as that is the same as the payment cycle of the meetings to Concord Quarterly. It is recommended that 4-6 months reserve be maintained to avoid any issues with payroll between contributions from the monthly meetings.

COVENANTS

Covenant payments for Q1 (July 1 to Oct 1) have been received from some meetings. The outstanding balances will be forwarded to the treasurers of all meetings.

TUITION GRANTS

Tuition grants were issued to students at 5 schools who are part of CQM and attend Friends Schools. The grants were \$730.32 per student, for 18 students, totaling \$13,145.82 in grants. The funds were the combination of contributions to the Tuition Operating Fund (TOF) and income from the Tuition Endowment Fund (TEF). So far this fiscal year, \$1,224.50 has been added to the 2012-2013 TOF.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

[FINAL NUMBERS NOT YET AVAILABLE BFJ 10/22/12]

TOPIC FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

TUITION ENDOWMENT AND TUITION OPERATING FUND

The Tuition Endowment Fund has received no additional capital since the decision more than 2 years ago to make payments optional. From a prior treasurer's report (2011?):

"Friends are requested to continue discerning how we can better support the education of the Quarter's children and strengthen Quaker schools over the next two fiscal years and be prepared to discern in April of 2012 what to do with the Quarter's 2013 budget"

The discernment is now past due. This issue should be taken up within the meetings at the next possible opportunity. To assist with preparing members for the discussion, a few concepts are presented here.

The money from the Monthly Meetings is divided into separate channels of support, including PYM Covenants, Coordinator costs, Quarter operating budget, and Tuition. The channels of support are illustrated in the diagram below. (See Concord Quarter's website for graphic.)

Friends should be able to see that the TOF is spent yearly (at the end of the year), but the TEF is an investment that provides interest. It does not grow without continued contributions, as the proceeds year after year are spent in Tuition Grants via the TOF.

For several years, the TEF has not been increased. Although the \$6k/yr interest from the fund is a significant portion of the TOF given to students each year, it must be increased (in capital value) in order to keep pace with the increasing tuitions of the schools involved. The prior value of \$8k/yr contributed to the TEF is 6%/yr, which is similar to the increases in tuition. Friends may discuss whether the \$700/student is sufficient support.

Enrollments are down in our Quaker schools. The \$700/student may not be enough to sway one family's balance sheet in favor of keeping their child in a Quaker school. More money, or a different (other than egalitarian) distribution system should also be discussed. If too many families are removing their students from school due to insufficient funds or financial aid.

For further background, the following chart describes this Treasurer's research on what the Monthly Meetings used to contribute to the TEF. The TEF Value (middle column) is the 2012 value of the money managed by Friends Fiduciary. (See graph on Concord Quarter's website.)

Westtown Monthly Meeting report to Concord Quarter.

Westtown Monthly Meeting has a vibrant community, enriched by our close relationships with Westtown School and Oak Lane Day Care, which all share space in the meetinghouse on Westtown's campus. We are blessed to share First Day worship with Westtown students, teachers, and parents, which creates a uniquely gathered space which we joyfully nurture. Many Meeting members also have roles in these independent but neighboring organizations. Westtown School maintains the meetinghouse and grounds, a financial blessing which frees the Meeting to further its outreach and ministry beyond our own community.

Community gatherings, traditions, and other practices in addition to Sunday worship include the following:

Lake Supper potluck, every Wednesday throughout the summer, provides opportunity for fellowship. Members of the Westtown School community and CQM also come regularly. We are currently working to share covered dish meals over the course of school year as well.

We maintain close relationships with Meeting members in nearby retirement communities, sometimes traveling to their location for worship when they are not able to come to the meetinghouse.

Biannual plant sales benefit our first day school and outreach budgets, and strengthen relationships with our surrounding community.

We share annual traditions such as the Advent Garden, Christmas Eve worship, and New Year's Labyrinth walk.

We have three standing committees: Worship and Ministry, Peace and Social Justice, and Pastoral Care and Concerns. Ad hoc committees are also formed to plan and make decisions as needed.

We have a small but active First Day School program with two classes (elementary school and middle school); to give more continuity to this program, we now pay our two FDS teachers. Young child care is also provided. Several children from our meeting attend Junior Interim Meeting each month, have brought their fund-raising for SHARE to our meeting, and

hope that other children from the quarter will join them.

Last year we made 1,000 cranes to give to a Denis Asselin as he completed his traveling ministry, Walking with Nathaniel. The crane project was born out of member Ginny Sutton's energy and vision, and the hours spent working on this project brought together Westtown students and Meeting members in new ways.

Spiritual life of the Meeting includes attention to queries and other kinds of occasional programming during worship.

Our member Rebecca Mays has been called to work on interfaith dialogue; this takes her overseas and to organizations and communities nearby, and through this work we have also been enriched when visitors of different faiths have shared their gifts with us.

Westtown Monthly Meeting looks forward to strengthening our relationships in these ways, while remaining open to continuing revelation about how to further nurture our faith community.

Marc Dear

Middletown Monthly Meeting State of the Meeting Report

Middletown Friends are facing critical work in the year ahead from the fact that there are about seven regularly active members or attenders at our Meeting for Worship on Sundays. Last year we reported that we considered requesting a change in status from a Monthly Meeting to a worship group. We are not ready to move in this direction. We are all aware that we see ourselves in a situation that we define as "new." None of us has been in this position before. There is excitement in seeing our opportunity this way. It requires us to ask for Divine Guidance as we proceed.

We feel it is necessary for us to reduce our individual responsibilities to those that are most critical and to help one another in accepting and performing these tasks and to accept our situation as it is. We see the critical tasks at this point as to ensure that Meeting for Worship happens weekly and that we hold Monthly Meeting regularly. We hope to have more casual social activity together, encouraging one another to initiate time to eat together, meet face-to-face, communicate frequently on the phone and through emails and welcome personal sharing.

There were two marriages within the Meeting in the last year. One was held under the care of the Meeting. The other was difficult for us; we were unable to find unity in agreeing to oversee it. The request brought to us an issue of how to love the couple that planned a ceremony that would have the groom wearing his military uniform during that ceremony. We agreed to allow the use of our Meeting House for this occasion.

We are thankful for the Property Committee's energy to gather us to care for our grounds and Meeting House. After the hard work was done, we realized how blessed we were to have property and one another to work together. Our worship continues to inspire us with deep, spiritual vocal and silent ministry. We continue our concern to share the Living Word we know inwardly within our Quarter and in the Yearly Meeting. We know that God isn't finished with us yet.

Minute number six,
Middletown Monthly Meeting for Business,
October 20, 2012

Concord Quarterly Meeting Newsletter
Volume 9, Issue 1 January 2013

Averyl Hall, Editor
575 Fellowship Road
Chester Springs, PA 19425

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Treasurer: Bruce James
Coordinator: Averyl Hall

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