PRC Report to Continuing Committee
March 2011

For some time, Peace Resources Committee has given much study to how to continue to engage Friends of Illinois Yearly Meeting in exploring their relationship to the Peace Testimony. At our retreat in January 2011 at Evanston Friends Meeting we experienced movement in that direction – quite literally in one aspect.

Several years ago PRC developed the Peace Testimony Workshop, the intent of which was to encourage Friends to explore their relationship to the Peace Testimony. A few ILYM Meetings invited us to facilitate the workshop with them. Others expressed interest, but invitations did not materialize. We eventually concluded that the workshop format, which entailed a reading list that would have fueled at least two graduate-level courses and lengthy discussion beforehand, was too cumbersome for most Meetings. But we also sensed an interest among Meetings to engage in this exploration.

What emerged at our January retreat was this: That PRC members simply offer to travel to Meetings and engage them in exploring their relationship to the Peace Testimony through the meeting-for-shared-concerns format. No length reading list, no advanced preparation. This interaction could also include a mindfulness-through-movement exercised that has been developed by Madelyn George.

We also discussed at length an idea that originated in an earlier discussion among members of the ad hoc committee on Quaker service. The idea is that we collect stories of Quaker service from Friends within ILYM. The stories could be collected by PRC members as they travel from Meeting to Meeting in the above effort. They also could be collected during times set aside during the annual gathering. Breeze Richardson gladly offered her skills as a radio producer to help us record these stories. PRC further discussed the possibility of using these stories to develop First Day teaching curricula for young and not-so-young Friends.

PRC will develop these ideas further at its meeting the last weekend in March.