Among Friends

Winter 2012



Published by Illinois Yearly Meeting

Editor's Note

Winter provides a variety of imagery, metaphors and symbols. Many religious traditions have celebrations related to light that can find some basis in how on the Winter Solstice the lengthening of the darkness of night ends and the time of daylight begins to grow. Dormancy and quietness of fauna and flora provide additional imagery. Light and dormancy find relational contrast through the represntation of the coldness of the weather and the warmth of fire.

On the back cover of this issue is part of a general letter of George Fox, which was to be read in "all your meetings in Barbadoes, New England, Nevis, and sent to Jamaica, Virginia, and Maryland, to Friends there; and to all the parts in the world, where there are Friends." In this letter, Fox tapped into the common use of the Winter imagery of light and coldness, but not as a foundation for spiritual insight, but to contrast the imagery of seasonal change to the everlasting power of God. A Winter salutation can be found in the letter:

> My love to all Friends in the everlasting seed of God, that never changes, which was before changings were, and stands when all changings are gone, that ye may know Christ to reign amongst you, the prince of life, and the prince of peace, and the counselor hearing the voice of the light, the life, the power of God, and truth's voice, which goes before you, who will give you life abundantly, even that which is eternal.

Wil Brant

Published twice a year, *Among Friends* is a publication of the Illinois Yearly Meeting of Friends and provides a forum about activities within the various meetings and worship groups that make up Illinois Yearly Meeting. *Among Friends* also provides pertinent information provided by Quaker organizations and by interested readers. Readers are reminded that signed articles and letters express the view of the writers and not official positions of Illinois Yearly Meeting.

www.ilym.org

Editor:
Wil Brant
300 N. Cavender St.
Hobart, IN 46342
wilbrant☺lavabit.com

Printing and Distribution:
David Finke, Omega Graphics
1106 Maplewood Dr.
Columbia, MO 65203
dfinke☺iland.net

Email addresses are written with ☺ rather than @

Made with post-conusmer paper and soybean-based ink

OMEGA GRAPHICS
A Movement Shop
Worker-owened & Managed

Submission Information

Among Friends is looking for items that contain first person reflections such as spiritual reflections, reflections on programs/project of monthly meetings or reflections on service that have their foundation in one's Quaker faith and practice, as well as reflections on the work of monthly meetings and yearly meeting committees. Poetry, artwork and photographs related to the above are also sought.

All submissions should be sent to the editor. Deadline date for the next issue, Summer 2012, will be May 20, 2012.

Among Friends

Winter 2012

The First Thing I Saw of Pendle Hill was the Green ..... p. 4

The Friends Meetinghouse at McNabb, Illinois ..... p. 8

How We Got from There to Here:
A Review of the Visioning Process of ILYM (2001 - 2011) ..... p. 10

What Makes Visitors Feel Welcome ..... p. 12

Visitors at Clear Creek Meeting ..... p. 13

Friends Peace Team Work Camps ..... p. 14

Monthly Meeting Reports ..... p. 14

From George Fox's Letters ..... Back cover



www.ilym.org

The First Thing I saw of Pendle Hill was the Green

Adrian Nelson, Upper Fox Valley Quaker Meeting

The campus sits in the middle of a verdant wood, its buildings sharing space with maples and laurels, several towering redwoods, and the largest beech tree in Pennsylvania. Trees leaned over us during our meals on the outdoor tables; they screened the afternoon sun outside my window; they shadowed my morning journeys on the trails nearby. You are going into Penn's Woods, someone told me as I left. I would think about early Friends walking through the woods—perhaps not these, but woods like these. It was Pennsylvania, after all.

Connections to early Friends lay in more than just the trees for me. Pendle Hill has been touched by the journeys of thousands of Quakers and other travelers passing through, visiting, teaching, living. And here I was at the place they had shaped, part of the Young Adult Leadership Development (YALD) Program for seven weeks in the summer of 2011. I and nine other young adults between the ages of 18-24 were set to spend the summer exploring our gifts and callings, learning to live in community, and spending 12-14 hour days at work in the program.

This work took many forms: some days, we went into Philadelphia to volunteer at various service sites. Other days, we worked at an assigned work site in Pendle Hill. Most days we had classes. Almost every day we had daily chores, cleaning up or preparing for meals. Once a week we had a speaker in a lecture series come in for us; once a week we would lead community worship. And even in free time there were many things to do: the art studio and the library were open to us; there were discussion groups and some workshops; and there was singing and walking and talking to do, spending time with the multitude of beautiful people who came in and out of Pendle Hill during our time there, whether working, at a conference or retreat, part of a workshop, or simply sojourning. Sleep dropped rather low on my priority list most times, for there was so much to experience and so little time to do it.

The community began with a firm foundation. With our co-leaders Rachel Stacy and Greg Woods, we created a covenant together that set the guidelines and expectations we had of our group. Together, we sat and talked about what we wanted the community to be—How would we handle conflict? What were rules of romantic relationships? Did sex, drugs or alcohol have a place?—and a smaller group drafted a document based on our meetings. As we talked we began to know each other, to understand personal boundaries, to see how we worked together. While we of course had individual differences, the process of drafting a covenant revealed to me a firm commitment on everyone's part to working together so that everyone might get the most of the experience. We were committed to being inclusive and respectful, and to loving each other. While we might at times fail to live up to our own standards—and who is perfect in this?—it was this dedication at the beginning that saw our group through to the end.

My work at Pendle Hill was rhythmic. I had not realized how irregular my so-called regular life was until I entered into this community where the meals were on fixed hours; where worship was a half an hour every day without fail; where daily chores were identical from day to day; where each day repeated its structure weekly. I could feel my body falling joyfully into this rhythm, waking at the same hour without an alarm, hunger pangs striking regularly before each meal, energy levels rising and falling for various tasks. The regularity showed me the small changes passing as the season wheeled around me, whether the flowers blooming or the vegetables ripening, or the shifting of the sun

across the spot that I sat at every breakfast. It also heightened the unscheduled moments, the spontaneity, the chance encounters of breathtaking beauty. My time, then, was marked by both the steady regularity of work and the unexpected moments that exploded in my life, moments where I was sure my fingers had brushed the divine.

I found myself centering around an essay I read early on for my class on the history of Quakerism. I had only vaguely heard of Thomas Kelly, but I was transfixed by his words in "The Light Within." I read of the constant state of inward prayer that may be behind all outward concerns, and I could hardly breathe. I could feel, as if my being were drawn through the eye of a needle, a deep yearning for that state where prayer, as Kelly says,

> rolls through us like a mighty tide. Our prayers are mingled with a vaster Word, a Word that at one time was made flesh. We pray, and yet it is not we who pray, but a Greater who prays in us. Something of our punctiform selfhood is weakened, but never lost. All we can say is, "Prayer is taking place, and I am given to be in the orbit."

I knew then that Kelly had put the words to what I sought in wordless longing, reaching for that state of grace from which I could act, a place of compassion and inward light. I spent the rest of my time at Pendle Hill with Kelly's words in the back of my mind, seeking, turning inward—and forgetting too many painful times, and having to stop, and take a breath, and begin again.

Pendle Hill abounded with small works of art left by whomever had passed through before me, and they would catch my eye around every corner. One of my favorite pieces was a little sign posted on the bulletin board outside of the serving line in the Main House. It read: "Today these vegetables would like to be chopped by someone singing God's name. How does Hafiz know such top-secret information? Because each of us was, at one point, a potato, an onion, or a zucchini." Much of my work involved the kitchen, both at Pendle Hill and at my service site in Philadelphia, and I liked to keep this advice in mind. I was not always successful, but my times in the Pendle Hill kitchen, working with the lively, talented and amazing staff there, remain foremost in my mind. Some days it would be husking corn; prepping vegetables for the salad bar; making bread or yogurt. Other days it would be harvesting greens in the garden, making coveted dessert (which only happens on birthdays, so everyone at Pendle Hill is happy for your birthday) or discovering



Main House at Pendle Hill
(Courtesy of Pendle Hill)

odd-shaped vegetables, like an eggplant with a nose, which were proudly displayed at the serving line.

I worked at my service site in Philadelphia, a homeless men's shelter called Our Brother's Place, twice a week with another YALDer. During my first day I learned that their mission was "to find and care for the abandoned poor and to be family with those who have none." This meant not just providing food, shelter, clothing and other physical necessities, but also looking to residents and guests' spiritual, mental and emotional well-being. My work then involved not just prepping food and serving it in the kitchen, but also sitting down and getting to know people, talking, sharing stories (and often losing spectacularly to the chess sharks there). I was happy to be working for a shelter with a holistic view of human needs, and my partner and I worked to live up to its mission. Seven weeks was only just enough time to make connections that were happily deepening before I had to leave. And this is time, to walk in and out of other people's lives, little aware of what footprints you may leave, but knowing the shape of all the footprints in yours.

I cannot begin to describe the intensity or the profundity of the relationships I had with everyone I knew while I was there. Perhaps it was the shortness of the time we had, or the space that Pendle Hill opened up, or the determination I came in with to live every moment, or the openness of everyone who came through, but I was overwhelmed by the light that shone from every person I met. Somewhere in the course of my summer I had been stripped naked before God, and everything felt raw and new and exquisitely agonizing to the touch. There were conversations, and singing, and hand holding, and walking, and silences, and in all of them, between myself and another person, or people, was a power moving that I am powerless to describe. I do not have Thomas Kelly's, or St. Paul's, or St. Teresa's words to describe the ecstasy of Spirit that moved in my life, but my soul sang in wordless joy. I weep as I write this because words fail me. How do you describe finding out that you have been swimming in love's ocean all along? How do you describe touching another human being beyond all differences you both have to the point where we all meet? "Deep calls to deep," as one of our speakers put it, and my depths were singing.

How do you describe finding out that you have been swimming in love's ocean all along?

These peaks of overwhelming joy were made all the brighter by some of the valleys that lay between them. I do not want to deny their part; they are just as necessary, all the more so because they are dark, and painful. I had my own lapses onto pathways of despair and anger and exhaustion. Towards the end of our program, in the very last week, difficulties arose in the YALD community that were made all the stronger and more painful because they had been left unspoken until that time. Our group was suddenly faced with the prospect of ending the summer with wounds opened and unhealed. There was a deep and terrible hurt in the room as we sat together the last Thursday, and the last Saturday before the program ended on Sunday. We talked, and we listened, and we talked, and frustrations and despair were building. The pain was rising from a different place for different people, and no reconciliation was in sight. I could not bear the thought of the beautiful community we had created falling apart. But in the midst of this sorrow and hurt, something else arose. The thought came to us: our happiness and our needs are different. They cannot be the same. The same thing cannot make us all satisfied. But—but—we can be in the same room together. We can work on the different things we need here, in this space, together. We are different but we can still share this space. And so we did.

I was overcome with awe at the movement of Spirit among us. Because despite our pain we

were all still open, still yearning towards a space where we could all be ourselves, and come out of this program with love, not anger. Because we all wanted this more than anything else, despite our differences—because of our differences, with our differences—we came together.

And this gives me hope. Hope for all of our differences, between individuals, politics, countries, religions, and all manner of things that divide us, for there is still some level on which we can meet. We need different things *but it is possible to be together in this space*, this world. It is possible to live together.

That and a thousand other things is what I carry away from Pendle Hill. I cannot articulate, nor have I yet realized, how much the YALD program this summer has given me. All here has been my experience, and mine alone; I speak only from my own. But I leave with hope, with pain weathered, with joy and love. I hope to continue to carry this space inside of me. I hope for Kelly's faith:

And in brief intervals of overpowering visitation we are able to carry the sanctuary frame of mind out into the world, into its turmoil and its fitfulness, and in a hyperesthesia of the soul, we see all humankind tinged with deeper shadows and touched with Galilean glories. Powerfully are the springs of our will moved to an abandon of singing love toward God; powerfully are we moved to a new and over coming love toward time-blinded human beings and all creation. In this Center of Creation all things are ours, and we are Christ's and Christ is God's. We are owned beings, ready to run and not be weary and to walk and not faint.

But the light fades, the will weakens, the humdrum returns. Can we stay this fading? No; nor should we try, for we must learn the disciplines of His will.



Members of 2011 Young Adult Leadership Program
Adrian is in the front row, center
(Coutesy of Pendle Hill)

The Friends Meetinghouse at McNabb, Illinois

Pamela Timme, Oak Park Monthly Meeting

Geography 101: There is a synergy between people and place.
They build and shape each other.
Their atoms mix, their breath blends;
traditions construct space, form permeates soul.

The old meetinghouse, unadorned, complete,
rests in calm strength on the prairie.
We all feel its radiating peace,
serenity in wood and stone.

Is it possible for the communing of generations
to soak into the walls?
Can a place become a portal
through which elemental magic
bubbles up like spring water?

Quakers are taught to be wary
of outward distractions,
of distinctions between earth and sky.
Windows are unstained,
air is unscented,
circles prevail.

But surely it is more than a trick of architecture or setting,
this gift we discern.
We respond with love and sweat equity,
repairing foundations and replacing beams
that termites have turned to lace.

I walk up the steps, cross the wide porch,
and open the screen door,
taking care not to let it slam.
Inside, I join the quiet circle,
facing the center.
Around me I see blue jeans and sundresses,
above me the curve of the high ceiling
overlaid with fan-shaped brush-strokes,
white on white.
Through the gauzy curtains that frame the tall windows
the cornfields gently swell.
A breath of breeze touches my cheek.

We sink down
to find a deep pool
or resistance
or a leading
or nothing
or a river of energy

A Friend speaks.
Others remain silent.
We all pull together,
individual spokes seeking the center
to turn the outer wheel.

At rise of meeting we shake hands and smile
and go our separate ways, with useful intention,
carrying the connection with us.

Driving from Chicago down to McNabb
is to go from gray to green,
from jangle to birdsong,
from grit to balm.
The way opens, once I choose to go.
It unfurls from my front door
to the expressway
to the interstate
to the county road.
It runs through all the little towns (population 300)
to the last crossroad,
and then to the grassy turnoff into the campground
under the black walnut trees.
I get out of the car, stretch my legs,
and look across the road to the sweep of lawn
with its contingent of Frisbee players,
and then past the lawn to the old white frame meetinghouse,
its porch and doors open in welcome,
serene in the late afternoon sun,
and I know I have come home.

Copyright 2011 Pamela Timme

How We Got from There to Here:
A Review of the Visioning Process of ILYM (2001 - 2011)

Maurine Pyle, Southern Illinois Quaker Meeting

When Jonathan Plummer was envisioning Illinois Yearly Meeting, he imagined a meetinghouse that could seat 800 people. Laughingly, it is said that there must have been much thinner people in those early days. Even so, the 135 year-old building is impressive, and the yearly meeting population is about 1,000 at recent count. Not all members come to the summer sessions, but that is the goal.

The visioning process began in December 2001 in Oglesby, Illinois, to help the yearly meeting to address some long-standing problems and to widen the view of how to use the historic ILYM property. Over the past decade many such retreats have been held, surveys conducted, monthly meetings visited, and countless committee meetings sat through. The question was "How should we, as a yearly meeting, be using our historic property?"

At the very first retreat, a loud and clear message was heard—the desire to restore the ILYM buildings and create a year-round retreat center. As the facilitator of that process, I was frankly surprised and curious about the breadth of that statement. ILYM was an old yearly meeting with few financial resources and some rundown buildings. The goal seemed awfully high to me, but the Spirit was behind it, and the yearly meeting moved quickly forward.



Clear Creek House (Cubist Rendering)

Over the next few months after the first retreat, professionals inspected the entire property and discovered severe termite damage under the meetinghouse. (ILYM Minute 37 – 2002). By 2002, the yearly meeting had began a serious restoration project (ILYM Minute 23 & 44 - 2003). The Site Envisioning Committee was formed in 2003 to propose new buildings on the yearly meeting campus such as a new dining hall and dormitory. Architects worked with the committee to propose designs. Thus began a dream process by Site Envisioning and Development Committee for the creation of designs for some new large buildings, a dormitory and above-ground kitchen and dining room (ILYM Minute 21 - 2008).

In the Fall of 2003, the Peace Resources Committee brought forth a vision of The Peace House on the Prairie, a retreat center that would offer nurture and sustenance for peacemakers (*Among Friends*, Fall 2003). In 2005, the Junior Yearly Meetinghouse was moved to the campground to become the Bunkhouse for teens (ILYM Minute 16 & 42 - 2005). The old dorm, which was a firetrap, was taken apart and materials were salvaged to build six new cabins around the perimeter of the north campground. Now that was recycling!

In 2006, a Dream Gathering Project was conducted where teams of people visited each monthly meeting to ask, "What does the yearly meeting mean to you, and how can it help your meeting?" The findings were reported at the summer session as the Dream Gathering Report (ILYM Minute Book, 2006). Among the gathered dreams was a desire to have a gathering place for

retreats for the monthly meetings.

Although a great effort was made by the Development Committee, the fundraising for the new buildings was not forthcoming, so we waited for God to show us a new way. In 2009, the Mills farmhouse and 6 acres, a contiguous parcel of land west of the meetinghouse, came on the market for $147,000 just before the summer yearly meeting sessions. At annual sessions, funds were raised and approval given for purchasing. Who says that Quakers take too long to decide? Within only a few weeks, the yearly meeting made a bid which was accepted. (ILYM Minute 22 & 53 - 2009).

During the Environmental Concerns Committee retreat in September 2009, the committee made some specific "Recommendations for the Natural Features on the Mills Property" to enhance its unity with nature. These included removing some trees and branches around the Mills House, cleaning up the Old Field for healthy growth and burning the prairie and adding new plantings.

Now that the yearly meeting owned the new property, another question was being asked—What were we being called to do with it? In January 2010, I was once again asked to lead a visioning retreat, which was held in Bloomington, Illinois. This time it was for the entire newly expanded property. The ideas that were harvested included: a center for year-round retreats, a new dorm and dining hall, programming for monthly meetings in various locations. The idea of a retreat center had emerged once again. There was a hunger out there.

Over the years growing from the seedling of an idea about a retreat center, we have faithfully followed God's leadings. I wonder where we will be led next?



ILYM Meetinghouse (Cubist Rendering)

What Makes Visitors Feel Welcome?

Ministry and Advancement Committee

The yearly meeting's Ministry and Advancement Committee met at Clear Creek House in McNabb on October 14-16, 2011. The guest workshop leader, Brent Bill, led an exercise that gave new insights about how first time visitors might feel when they come to worship. Committee members were asked to share what makes them feel welcome when they go to an unfamiliar place. The list included the following:

Finding the place easily: Address listed in Quakerfinder.org., phone book (under Quakers), motel list of religious services, etc.; map on web site; accurate aerial web map, sign or house number readable from across the street.

Going with a member/attender: A potential vistor might be more likely to go if someone the visitor knows would offer a ride or comes with him/her to show the way and ease introductions. It also helps to be able to sit with someone.

Seeing where to enter: Knowing the location of an accessible entrance, if needed, and how to get to the meeting room.

Someone who is there to greet visitors: Especially if visitors arrive early or late, they may need instructions that are reassuring, not critical, and a feeling that the greeter is friendly and willing to answer questions, not simply to say "hello." It is confusing to arrive early and find no one around.

Knowing what to do with children: Is there child care? Religious instruction? If so, where is it? Is the room cheerful and attractive to children? Is it O.K. if the children want to stay with the adult visitor? Are there options if the children become restless or noisy? If children are expected to stay, are there child-size chairs at worship or a "busy bag" with activities like a finger labyrinth or crayons?

Knowing where the restrooms are located: A clear map in an obvious location, signs, or someone to ask.

Seeing the phrase, "You are welcome here"

A leaflet or personal explanation about what to expect: If there is no program or bulletin, how does a visitor know what to do? Is there something happening afterwards?

Meeting space that is light, warm, and pleasant.

Seating that is comfortable, easily accessible, and in the back (or near the door): Visitors may prefer to slip in and out without notice until they decide whether they like what they see and hear. A seat in front, one that requires crossing the room, climbing over others, or "squeezing in" may be uncomforable.

Seeing people like like them: In an unfamiliar setting, it is more comfortable to find others with whom one can identify, whether you are a young family, a single young adult, a single older adult or senior, a couple without children, or someone of a minority race, ethnicity or sexual orientation.

Friendly conversations afterwards and introductions to others: Being approached by and introduced to people who seem genuinely interested in getting acquainted and who really listen to what the visitor might have to say.

An invitation to lunch, particularly to an on-site potluck or someone's home: This relieves visitors from wondering if they brought enough money for a group restaurant meal or whether they might be obliged to someone they just met.

Visitors at Clear Creek Meeting

Gracye Mesner, Clear Creek Meeting

Clear Creek Meeting has a variety of visitors throughout the year.

When fall approaches and local schools start up after summer vacation, a Streator High School teacher encourages his Advance Placement students to visit the historic yearly meetinghouse built in 1875. He had discovered the meeting-house when he traveled from Tonica to John Swaney School (on Quaker Lane west of Rt. 89) about 10 years ago. He thought the meetinghouse would be an excellent teaching tool. The students arrive on a Saturday or Sunday, so sometimes members of the meeting see the students and sometimes they do not. Notes left behind show that they have been there. It is especially enjoyed when the students are able to join for Meeting for Worship. The students return to their school with digital camera pictures and hand-outs to prove they had visited.

Once someone asked, "What would ILYM do without the local Clear Creek Quakers?" The person was thinking about the care and work Clear Creek members put into the local facilities. The response back to that person was, "What would Clear Creek Meeting be without the wider yearly meeting body?" Clear Creek Meeting does not keep track of the many times there have visitors from other members of Illinois Yearly Meeting, but presence of yearly meeting visitors means a lot to Clear Creek members. Sometimes meals are shared with yearly meeting visitors, or meeting time, and almost always Meeting for Worship time. From the Spring groups (Environmental Concerns, Women's Weekend, Memorial Work Weekend) through the yearly meeting sessions and on into Fall, individuals and groups wend their way to the yearly meeting property. It is a special place. Now, with Clear Creek House of Illinois Yearly Meeting being prepared for overnight accommodations, it is hoped that monthly meetings will plan retreats and more committees will plan meetings straight through the winter months as well. Weather is indeed a traveling factor, but how beautiful the landscape can be, covered in white!

And, of course, there are many Sundays when there are no visitors, but that is okay, too. With only Clear Creek people there can be 2-5 or 10-20. Those in attendance have a closeness to and an enjoyment of each other. Each presence is a blessing, a sharing of lives, and it shows a desire to be part of the community. When someone cannot come he/she is missed. Those who gather for worship extend their stay each Sunday by including food so there is a reason to stay around a bit longer. It is wonderful to have a feeling of belonging and to have a peaceful feeling as those who have gathered head for their homes.



ILYM Meetinghouse (Painting by M. Richie)

Friends Peace Teams Work Camps

Each summer the African Great Lakes Initiative of the Friends Peace Teams sponsors work camps to work on community structures. This year work camps will be in Rwanda, Burundi, and Kenya on Saturday, June 23, to Saturday, July 28. In partnership with Mutaho Friends Church in Burundi workcampers will build guest rooms for the Mutaho Women's Group Center. In partnership with Gisenyi Friends Church in Rwanda workcampers will complete work on the offices and bathroom. And in partnership with Lugari Yearly Meeting, Kenya, workcampers will rehabilitate one or more buildings doing cleaning, painting, minor repairs on a farm owned by Lugari Yearly Meeting and a former Farmers Training Center. More information and applications for serving on a workcamp team can be found on the AGLI website (http://aglifpt.org/Program/workcampsdes.htm).

Monthly Meeting Reports

Evanston Monthly Meeting
Nancy Halliday

Evanston Meeting celebrated the marriage of our clerk, Karen Carney and Jeff Carpenter on July 23. The exchange of vows was followed by a reception in our downstairs dining hall.

Sara Mitter returned from Cosa Rica on June 3, full of enthusiasm and joy from her studies at the Peace University. David Summerhays, on the other hand, left for a new life in Canada. We miss his contribution to our music program and wish him Godspeed.

On July 1, we were visited by Shan Cretin, the new director of AFSC, who gave us an illustrated talk on the impressive work AFSC is doing around the world. On July 31, Janet Owen spoke to us of her experiences traveling with a group that visited both Israel and Palestine.

Joey Rodger was presented with the badge of an Interfaith Chaplain/Clergy by the Evanston Police Department in a ceremony at the meeting-house on May 22. Joey also organized a “walk and talk” in Evanston to promote religious and racial diversity for the commemoration of the September 11 terrorist attacks.

We continue our monthly participation with the Night Ministry in delivering food to homeless youth in Evanston and Chicago. A group devoted to nonviolent communication practice meets once a week. Another group is studying Quaker approaches to solving economic inequalities. All six queries from FWCC have been examined by our meeting and our replies sent in time for inclusion in the 6th World Conference of Friends in Kenya next year.

The decision has been made to hold Quaker Quest sessions at Evanston Meeting from January to April of 2012. A schedule has been drawn and volunteers are being recruited.

Evanston Meeting celebrated its 75th anniversary in December 2011.

We were shocked and grief-stricken when our member Sue Tursman succumbed to colon cancer on September 9, just weeks after her diagnosis. Only 52 years old, Sue often spoke in Meeting for Worship with passion, conviction and remarkable insight. She was our faithful representative

to ILYM and was known to many there. A memorial meeting was held on September 18. Royal Buscombe died on October 21 at age 93. A memorial meeting will take place after her wide-flung family has had opportunity to convene. We are writing a memorial minute for Fred Anrod, a former member, who died in June.

South Bend Friends

Monica Maria Tetzlaff

In the past year, South Bend Friends have been worshiping in the Quaker Room of the Charles Martin Youth Center, where large storefront windows shaded by mini blinds still show treetops, a traffic light and the sky near downtown South Bend. The spirit has nurtured us in the not-totally silent room and interested attenders have found us through our streetside window sign or our website, which help our Light shine. One floor below our worship space, three classes of First Day School for babies and toddlers, pre-schoolers, and older children gather fifteen minutes after worship begins. We have been blessed with two new babies this year, as well as two adoptions of children who were already part of the meeting community. It has been a priority to provide religious education for our children and childcare for our adult programs and we are fortunate to have a consistent Friend for childcare as well as college students from St. Mary's College to help us.

In September, we held our annual retreat, beginning on a Friday evening with worship sharing around the query: "What are you feeling to be the spiritual truth or essence of your life right now?" The next day we gathered at a county park to discuss, in small groups, subcategories of the weekend's theme: "Speaking truth with our power." Friends were able to speak intentionally about spiritual matters in a way that was deeper than during times of fellowship at Meeting.

In October, we hosted the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) Linda Kusse-Wolfe and David Wolfe. They talked about what they had learned as the only two publicly-declared Christians living in Qom, Iran, an education center for Shiite Muslim clerics. The theme of this event and the larger world-wide FWCC gathering in Kenya in April is "Salt and Light: Being the kingdom of God in a broken world." Through this small FWCC gathering, we were able to make contact with Brenda and Bill Beadenkopf, who visited from Penn Friends Church in Cassopolis, Michigan, and later invited us to an Underground Railroad tour of Cass County.

We are thankful for all the Friends in our meeting and in the wider community of Friends in ILYM and other yearly meetings who worship and visit and hold us in the Light.

Noticed that this issue was rather short and with few photographs?
You can help improve the next issue.

Do you have something to share with others in ILYM? *Among Friends* is a publication of ILYM that seeks to share our experiences, insights, and engagement of Quaker faith and practice with others in the yearly meeting so to inspire, encourage and nurture each other.

The deadline for the Summer 2012 is May 20, 2012.

From George Fox's Letters

Now the professors may see that the hireling is fled and flies, because he was an hireling, whose religion was for the summer, whilst the sun shined; but in a storm, a tempest, a mist, or the sun clouded, their religion they flee from; his flight is in the winter. So the day manifests all things.



A view over to Pendle Hill from Ribchester, in Lancashire (Sue Bristo)

Our religion is in the power of God, before winter storms and tempests were, mists, fogs, or clouds; in the light which shines over them all is our religion, that does not change, in which there is fruit borne in the winter; by which power of God all their religions are seen, which must have an end, and will have an end, which people run into.

But in the power of God, and the righteousness and holiness of God, which was before the fall was, live; which power of God never alters nor changes, in which is both life and peace, which remains for ever, in that dwell and live; and be faithful and valiant on earth, your hearts established with grace, and your words seasoned with the same; keeping yourselves in the love of God, and in the life, in which is peace, through which ye may be all a comfort one to another, living in the life, in which is the everlasting fellowship. And so in that the Lord God Almighty preserve and keep you all.

George Fox, 10th day of 11th month, 1662.

Letter 221, in *Works of George Fox*, vol. 7, *Collection of Many Select and Christian Epistles, Letters and Testimonies* (Philadelphia: Marcus T. C. Gould, 1831), 225.