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Front Matter--Quaker Religious Thought, no. 36

Chris Downing

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Downing: Front Matter--Quaker Religious Thought, no. 36

Prayer in Solitude

John R. Yungblut

Worship as Experienced

T. Canby Jones

quaker religious thought

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The purpose of the Quaker Theological Discussion Group is to explore the meaning and implications of our Quaker faith and religious experience through discussion and publication. This search for unity in the claim of truth upon us concerns both the content and the application of our faith.

Edited by Chris Downing

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Editor's Page

The two essays included here develop the theme of prayer and worship in radically different ways. I deliberately chose not to employ our familiar format with its provisions for response and counter-response since it seemed to me this topic ought not to be drawn into the polemical context that format sometimes creates. Nevertheless, implicitly, indirectly, mostly unknowingly, Canby Jones and John Yungblut are clearly commenting on one another's understanding.

I am especially pleased I could get both to contribute to this issue. John Yungblut and I spent many serious searching hours together when we were both members of the "Working Party for the Future of the Quaker Movement." A grandiose title, perhaps — but still an indelibly important experience for those of us who shared in it. I learned to value then his mystical bent, his concern for the discipline of prayer, his appreciation of solitude. From Canby Jones I received my own first impulse to religious meditation, when I was still in high school and heard him talk of Brother Lawrence. Canby's own theological position has changed in the many years since then, he has become a much more self-consciously Christ-centered Friend, but the power of his witness to the joy of worship has not dimmed. I have wanted ever since I took on the editorship of this journal from him some five years ago to persuade him to write what he has written here.

At its annual midwinter meeting the Steering Committee of the Quaker Theological Discussion Group decided that we will not plan on having a separate conference this summer. We look forward to having one or two panel discussions on the theme "Who Shall Overcome?" during the afternoon free time at Friends General Conference at Ithaca, N. Y., June 22-29. Those interested in participating should write T. Canby Jones at Wilmington College, Wilmington, Ohio 45177. More definite information will be available in the final Conference announcements. We plan also to schedule a business meeting during these sessions.

C. D.