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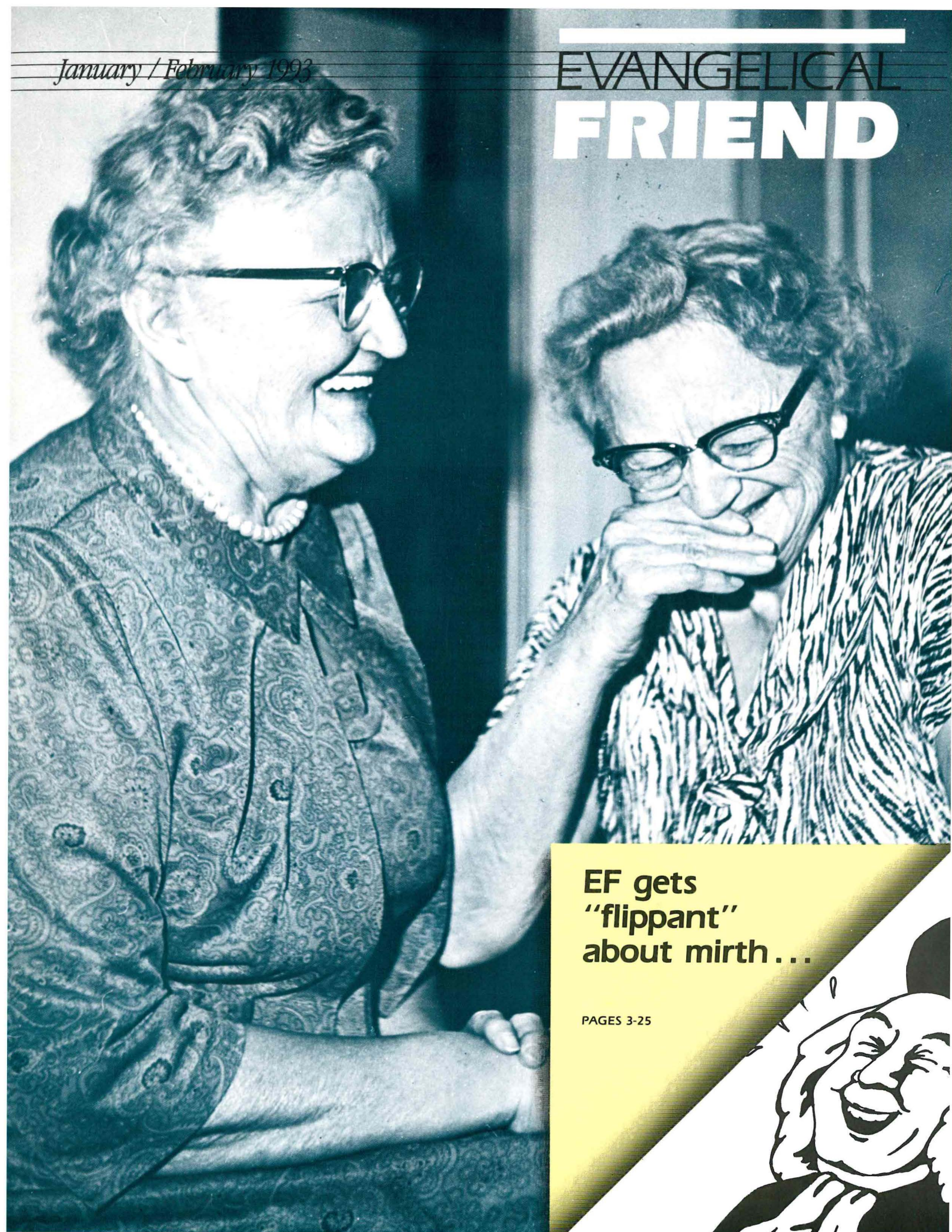
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January / February 1993

EVANGELICAL **FRIEND**



**EF gets
"flippant"
about mirth...**

PAGES 3-25



Funny Things Happen



on the Way to the Cemetery

BY TOM MULLEN

THIS ARTICLE IS NOT a collection of stories shared while riding in funeral cars. In fact, the title refers to a metaphor for life, which is full of funny things, even though we all move steadily toward a cemetery.

A sense of humor is the gift of observing the passing parade and laughing at appropriate moments. Life itself provides raw material for laughter, and those with eyes to see and ears to hear will discover opportunities for grins and guffaws, snickers and titters, chuckles and sidesplitting, tear-bringing, body-shaking howls.

God has given us permission to enjoy incongruities, absurdities, and other normal experiences. Life is both funny and sad. The issue is when and why to laugh, and we're given no neat formula that enables us to decide. Because life is serious, in the back of our minds we recall we're eventually heading for the cemetery. Fortunately,

the Christian faith says the graveyard is not the last stop. Thus, we're free to enjoy funny things that happen along the way.

Christians, however, are not well-known for their ability to laugh. Our reputation centers around a *serious* call to a devout and holy life, and some Christians are stereotypes of a dark and somber faith. Way back in the fourth century, Bishop Ambrose warned that "joking should be avoided even in small talk, so that some more serious topic is not made light of." Bishop Ambrose maintained that "not only loose jokes but jokes of any kind must be avoided."

One of our own guys, Robert Barclay, the 17th-century Quaker theologian, wrote, "It is not lawful to use games, sports, plays nor...comedies among Christians...which do not agree with Christian silence, gravity, and sobriety; for laughing, sporting, gaming,

mocking, jesting, vain talking, etc. is not Christian liberty, nor harmless mirth." Bishop Ambrose and Robert Barclay were no fun at all.

Christians often carry a vague but persistent uneasiness about humor. Merriment is more at home in the pool hall than the church. And let the record show that Christians have good reason to be serious. Laughing because we are unwilling to deal with serious matters is, indeed, a serious matter. It is a distortion of reality.

Our long-standing uneasiness with humorous laughter, however, has caused us to neglect nurturing a capacity for being "in fun." I contend that being "in fun" is not a pause for breath before we get back to living life as Christians. It is part of the pilgrimage, and a joyous one. As Conrad Hyers says, "Humor apart from holiness may be irresponsible, but holiness apart from humor is inhuman."

Good humor depends upon good relationships. "Laughing with" presupposes "laughing" (a playful mood) and "with-ness" (a positive relationship). "Laughing at" is humor at the expense of someone else. "Laughing with" builds rapport. We become kindred spirits.

"Laughing with" can build bridges across racial and ethnic barriers. People of different races can even share racial jokes if intimacy, trust, and mutual respect exist.

"Laughing with" can also bridge religious differences, but the same risks—hurting and offending—prevail, and the same rules—trust and a playful mood—apply.

Certainly being *unable* to laugh with others different from ourselves makes things worse. There is no humor in slogans like "Love it or Leave it" or "All Power to the People." There is only what Milton Mayer calls "unrelieved earnestness," for which laughter is the only known cure.

Humor is worth its risks because laughter has healing properties. Humorous laughter is directly connected to good health. It is a survival mechanism, too, enabling us to forgive and remember what we can't forgive and forget. The ability to laugh in a world like ours is an act of faith, a declaration of belief in a God who can be trusted.

Humorous laughter in the face of tragedy depends upon an intimate relationship with God. It is like being "in fun" with the Creator. To laugh with God is

to see life for what it is—full of foibles but ultimately worth living.

A sense of humor increases longevity. Those who laugh often live long. One gerontologist said that the stereotype of old people as grumpy is a myth. Some old people are, indeed, grumpy, but they were probably grumpy when they were young. In fact, she said, "If people are too grouchy too long, they don't get old. They die."

As one pundit put it, aging is not so bad when you consider the alternative. Laughing is surely a healthier response than attempts to deny aging by cosmetics, superficial surgery, and false this-and-thats.

The ability to laugh in the face of serious physical handicaps is remarkable in its effects, both for the persons who are handicapped and those close to them. I know one blind woman, remarkable for her independence and self-sufficiency, who continually freed others to accept her handicap for what she thought it was, "a major inconvenience."

Her cheerful spirit manifested itself again and again in her ability to laugh at the unlaughable, her own blindness. On one occasion, a friend volunteered to give her a

ride to a meeting they were both to attend. The blind woman accepted and then remarked, "Remember, if you arrive and all the lights are out, that does not mean I've already left!"

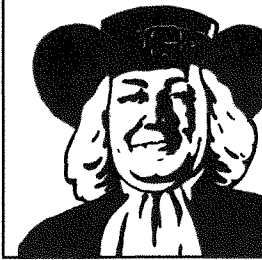
Laughter is not the denial of pain. It neither indicates masochism on the part of the sufferer nor sadism on the part of others. Done "in fun" and in the context of a caring relationship, laughter represents an attitude of gratitude for life itself.

Proverbs 17:22 is right: "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine; but a broken spirit drieth the bones."

Humor can provide a genuine healing of memories. We survive painful or frustrating events, major or minor, and time and a sense of humor transform them into anecdotes. As a result, healing occurs.

Most of us have attended funeral or memorial services in which funny events in the deceased person's life were remembered and the positive effect of helping

(Continued on page 17)



*If people are
grouchy too
long, they don't
get old. They die.*





A God Who Laughs . . . and Weeps

BY PAUL ANDERSON

DO YOU THINK God laughs? Do you think God weeps? These are hard questions to answer with any certainty. But if Jesus indeed reveals to us what God is like, both of these questions may be answered with a "yes."

"Jesus wept." This is the shortest verse in the English Bible (John 11:35), but apart from that fact, it is far more noteworthy for another reason. It shows us the truly human side of Jesus. He loved His friend Lazarus and wept at his tomb.

Seeing the other side of Jesus' personality, we can imagine Him throwing His head back and enjoying a side-splitting laugh with the disciples in a boat on Lake Galilee. According to John 2:1-11, Jesus' first miracle served to enhance the merriment of the Cana wedding celebration. And, when Jesus set out to overthrow the powers of darkness, He used all weapons available—the casting out of

Daddy!" The boy was right. Jesus used humor far more than the common reader acknowledges, and He did so for good reasons.

For one, points made with humor are remembered better. Straining a gnat, but swallowing a camel; calling the self-righteous "white-washed tombs"—presentable outwardly, while decaying inwardly; a camel trying to pass through the eye of a needle; the absolutely ridiculous idea of trying to perform eye surgery on someone else while having a log in one's own eye—these are all unforgettable images precisely because they are so ridiculous. I would be surprised if anyone who has heard one of these anecdotes could ever forget it entirely. Aided by humor, Jesus' audience would warm to His message more quickly and retain it longer.

Another advantage of the point made with humor is that humor works like a plow. As the hearer of an unlikely anecdote finds himself laughing, he is being prepared unknowingly to start laughing at some ridiculous action or belief of his own. As the plow turns over the earth and prepares it to receive the seed, so humor exposes the undetected inadequacies and contradictions of our assumptions. Humor makes us receptive to the convicting power of truth.

"So, you want to blame your sins on your hands, your eyes . . . and other body parts; go ahead," says Jesus to His contemporaries, calling their bluff, "cut them off!" The ironic point being made is that sin does not originate with our body parts. It stems from our hearts. Here irony cuts through our defenses and confronts us at the core of our beings with the truth.

A third aspect regarding Jesus' use of humor that deserves attention is what it shows us about the Kingdom of God. Many of the parables are celebratory. They describe all Heaven rejoicing when a lost sheep, or a lost son, comes home and is found again. The Kingdom of God is like a festive banquet to which

the deserving are invited but refuse to attend. So the doors are opened to the masses, and the celebration of God's presence is experienced by all who simply respond to the invitation.

Ironically, the ones portrayed as missing the celebration are those good religious folk, or those so otherwise preoccupied by mundane matters, that they fail to perceive the presence of the Kingdom of Heaven right there—in their midst. Jesus shows us that the Way of the Kingdom is one of joy and celebration, as well as earnestness and commitment. And this is a lesson especially appropriate for us Quakers.

Finally, Jesus may have used humor because it is health-producing. Not long ago, Norman Cousins attributed his victorious bout with cancer to having surrounded himself with laughter-producing people, books, and films. He literally laughed himself back to health.

Now this is not to say that all illnesses can be cured this way, but it does imply that developing a gracious and positive approach to life can maximize one's own health as well as the health of those around us. A joke per day may indeed "keep the doctor away," but one is also reminded—and often—that it helps a great deal if the joke is, at least to some degree, funny. Therein lies the challenge.

We Quakers tend all too easily to be somber and serious, probably due to the weightiness of our convictions. But if our core aspiration is to embody the Kingdom of God here on earth, we are helped by the example of Jesus. Jesus reveals to us a portrait of a God who laughs and weeps. As we seek to become more like Him, may we be granted the freedom to do the same. **EF**

Humor works like a plow

demons, healing the sick, preaching the Gospel . . . and utilizing humor.

In his book *The Humor of Christ*, Elton Trueblood describes his amazement at his preschool-aged son, as he broke out into laughter during a family Bible reading. They had just read the passage about not trying to get a speck out of another person's eye until one has first removed the beam from one's own, and when Elton asked him why he was laughing, he exclaimed, "It's funny,



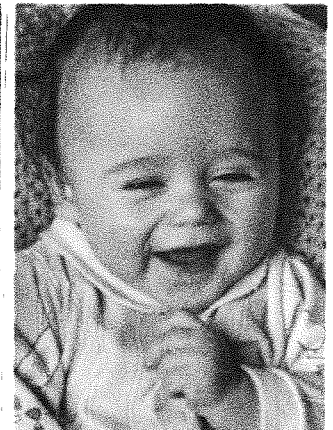
COVER: A sense of humor goes a long way toward making life not only bearable, but a joy to experience. For your edification and delight, writers in this issue take a look at this imponderable subject from several angles.
(Photo by Gary Macy)



page 6



page 12



page 16

- 2** Funny Things Happen on the Way to the Cemetery *By Tom Mullen*
Does humor have a place in the holy life?
- 6** Comic Reversal and Cosmic Reversal *By Stan Thornburg*
A stand-up routine in Galilee
- 9** Laughter Defies Gravity *By Howard R. Macy*
Comedy: a choice of faith
- 12** Tales of a New Convert *By Evan Jay Lee Kell*
A light look at life among Friends
- 14** Humor as a Survival Tactic *By Jim Teeters*
Hope, trust, and healing
- 16** A Time to Laugh *By Jack L. Willcuts*
The use and abuse of levity
- 19** What's So Funny?
Overheard, overlooked, overjoyed, overrated, and overdone

REGULAR FEATURES

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 4 Speaking the Truth | 13 Friends Write |
| 8 Friends Read | 18 Hot off the FAX |
| 10 To the Point | 20 What About Our Friends? |
| 11 On the Growing Edge | 28 Ponderings and Bustlings |

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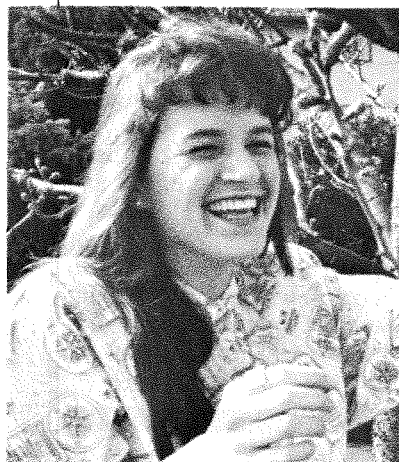
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Comic Reversal

BY STAN THORNBURG

and Cosmic Reversal

ALMOST everyone likes humor, right? I mean, if the timing is right. No one likes humor right after a household pet gets accidentally run over by an 18 wheeler. But MOST OF THE TIME people like humor. I decided to try to find out what it was that made humor so universally appealing. So I did an extensive poll among all my friends asking them the same in-depth question:



"What do you like about humor?" Both of them gave the same answer. "It's funny. Now go away." I went away with a couple of new insights, the first being that I have never really liked my friends. The second, that I should instead have asked them what made humor funny. But maybe we can figure that out ourselves.

Let's start with some humor. A man walks into a psychiatrist's office with a pelican on his head. The psychiatrist asks, "May I help you?" The pelican replies, "Yeah. How do I get this guy out from under me?" About half my friends thought that was funny, but did he know why it's funny? I'll let you in on a secret: It's the element of surprise. We all expected the

man to speak; or at least for the pelican to say something else. Right? Like, "How much do you charge?" or "Can't you afford a secretary?" But instead, the pelican speaks and asks something totally unexpected. That's humor for you. It hinges on surprise.

Another thing that makes humor funny is what the experts at the Federal Bureau of Humor call "comic reversal." Comic reversal occurs when what we perceive as normal reality is suddenly reversed. Example: A man walks a woman to her door after a first date. He says, "If I tried to kiss you would you call for help?" She replies, "Why, do you need help?" Now that's funny! The man appears to demonstrate sensitivity to the woman's vulnerability (and is certainly aware of his own as a potentially liable trespasser), but she is revealed to be in charge and fully autonomous. What began as a calculating ploy for advantage becomes thwarted and exposed as foolish impotence. Talk about a reversal of situations!

Guess who was the master of comic reversal and shocking surprise. Give up? Jesus! Jesus' teaching is full of comic reversal and surprise. Jesus is always talking about the Kingdom of God, which He claims is the exact opposite of our conventional world.

The Kingdom of God is like the "parallel universe" with which we are all familiar. At least I assume that everyone knows about the parallel universe. It's where our socks go when we put them in the clothes dryer. I mean, think

about it. These socks can't be simply misplaced, or we could eventually see them. After all, there are 180 million households in the United States alone. Each household loses at least one sock a week. That's over 9 billion socks a year. Dryers have been in use for over 40 years, so that amounts to 360 billion socks. Does it make sense that there are 360 billion socks lying around somewhere and we can't see them?

Get real! Obviously, there must be a parallel universe in which people look into their dryers and say, "Honey, where did all these socks come from?"

IT IS THE same place money goes. Think about it. At the first of the month everyone has lots of money. In less than thirty days, though, it's all gone. No one has any money left. Not even the banks or the businesses—all are waiting for the first of the month. It has to be somewhere! In the parallel universe, husbands are balancing their checkbooks and getting irritated at their wives.

"Where did this \$400 come from?" Can't you keep a simple checkbook?" In this parallel universe, people find extra VCR remote controls under the cushions in their couches. Swing sets come with extra sets of instructions. Secretaries find their paper clip holders constantly overflowing. The elastic in people's underwear gets tighter the longer they wear it ("Honey, where did all this elasticity come from?"), and sometimes T-shirts and socks have to be surgically removed. They fit too well.

I'll admit it is odd that we don't get much from the other universe. The only thing I know of that comes to us from the parallel universe is keys. In every one of the 180 million households in America there is a junk drawer with a couple of sets of keys in it that don't fit anything. Am I right? No one knows where they came from or what they fit, but they look vaguely familiar, so they never get thrown away.

Yes, there are Quakers in the parallel universe, too. Quaker pastors in that universe are saying, "Where did all this power and authority come from? Why do the elders keep doing everything I ask? Whose leisure time is this, anyway? Why does this church always want to do something new; what's wrong with the way it's always been done?"

Sunday school teachers complain, "What are we going to do with all this chalk?" Nominating committees are constantly being pared down because of too many volunteers.





Anyway, the Kingdom of God is like this parallel universe, except it's supposed to be realized right here, in this dimension. Jesus taught about this Kingdom with a dazzling display of comic devices. Our problem is that we take them seriously. We fail to see the irony and miss the real points of His teaching. Just think about the comic reversals and the elements of surprise found in the Sermon on the Mount alone.

Imagine Jesus is seated on a grassy knoll and people gather from all over the country. Jesus works the crowd like a stand-up comedian. He looks around the crowd, "How many from outside Judea?" (lots of clapping) "Okay, that's great! Anyone from Samaria?" (clapping, boos) "I hear that in Samaria, to die is redundant!" (the crowd goes wild) "No, seriously!" (turns to young man seated) "Is this your first visit to Galilee? Next time you're in Jerusalem, why don't you stop by the pool of Bethesda and have something done about that nose!" (clapping, laughter) "No, seriously folks, I want to talk about My Kingdom. In My Kingdom there is a new order of blessedness. In My Kingdom the poor in

spirit are blessed; in fact, the whole Kingdom belongs to them." (scattered laughter) "No, seriously, and the meek are blessed because they will inherit the earth. (Laughter . . . heckler shouts, "Yeah, sure! I suppose those who mourn are blessed too!") "That's right," Jesus says, "in fact, they will be filled with joy!" (Crowd is splitting with laughter.) "No, seriously! In My Kingdom, women are esteemed." (note: major surprise) "It's true! To sexually exploit a woman even in one's heart is as bad as committing adultery." (Mega-comic reversal; the crowd can hardly stay in their seats for laughing.) Jesus has them in the palm of His hand. "Did you hear about the guy that loved his neighbor and hated his enemy? Well, my followers learn to love their enemies, and then pray for their persecutors!" (Heckler: "Yeah, sure! It's all I can do to love my kid let alone those fascist soldiers.") "Then you're no better than the tax collectors. Even they do more than that." (Crowd responds, "Woaaaah!")

"Okay, here's a riddle for you. What has a big head, long arms, and sounds a trumpet? Give up? . . . a hypocrite giving alms!" ("Ohhhhh!")

from the crowd). "In My Kingdom one's giving comes from the heart, and no one takes pride in the show of giving." "Did you hear about the Pharisee who drove his horse off the cliff? He climbed to the top and was looking down crying, 'My horse! My horse!' A Roman soldier came along and said, 'Son, don't worry about your horse, it looks like your left foot has been torn off.' The Pharisee looked down and wailed, 'My Birkenstocks! My Birkenstocks!'" (Crowd is choking with laughter) "In my kingdom, horses and sandals are considered junk; and service, ministry, and love are treasured. You can't drive them off a cliff, not even on the Jericho road."

DID YOU hear about the guy trying to take a splinter out of his sister's eye? . . . He had a log in his own eye!" (The crowd cries for mercy. They ache from laughter. Jesus mercifully takes a break.)

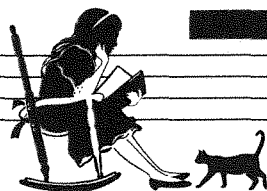
Was I right? Was Jesus a crack up or what? Did you get all those comic reversals? The shocking surprises? The first will be last and the last will be first. And, he who wishes to save his life will lose it. I can't believe it. A

kingdom exactly the opposite of our world? What a hoot!

The really sad part is that some people caught Jesus use of humor, but they mistook it for kidding. They say, "Jesus wouldn't *really* expect people to turn their other cheek or love their neighbors as themselves. Would He now?" Not only did Jesus use the merciless tactics of surprise and comic reversal to teach us His ways, but in doing so, He also knocked the false props out from under our superficial perspectives on the world. The big surprise is that the way of the kingdom is one of "cosmic reversal."

Well, I hope you've enjoyed this digression on humor. I'll do further research . . . when I find a couple of new friends. Meanwhile, see if you can figure out what Jesus was trying to prove with all that Kingdom talk. I can't figure it out to save my life (cosmic reversal). **ET**

Stan Thornburg is chair of the pastoral team at Reedwood Friends Church in Portland, Oregon. He enjoys the use of humor in his preaching at Reedwood, speaking for special sessions in various yearly meetings and an assortment of other contributions.



Taming the Dragons

Brenda Wilbee
HarperSanFrancisco, 1992
214 pages, \$12.00

Women (and some men, too, says the writer) who "look at the world from a pain-riddled perspective" could profit from Wilbee's search for conflict resolution in her own life. Greatly affected by

Carol Pearson's book *The Hero Within*, Wilbee used it as the foundation for her book that describes the same behavior patterns.

Wilbee, however, has made them her own through "naming and renaming" and adding her own stories.

She uses an unusual approach by weaving together examples from Bible stories, the Wizard of Oz, real-life situations, literature, and fairy tales. Some may find this pattern distracting, but through it Wilbee offers men and women the evidence that they can make behavioral choices. "Choice," she says, "is what ultimately brings about the redemption we seek."

Wilbee's reference to the Old Testament story of Ruth as "the Bible's own fairy tale" may startle some readers. Not everyone will, in fact, agree with all she says. Still, these ideas that came from her academic study have rejuvenated Wilbee's own life. They can bring hope and help to others, also.

—Betty M. Hockett

Caring and Commitment

Lewis B. Smedes
Harper & Row Publishers, 1989, 153
pages, \$17.95

The author, professor of theology and ethics at Fuller Theological Seminary, writes, "We would go crazy, wouldn't we, if we could never count on anybody to make a promise to us and keep it. To find our way between the craziness of life without commitment and the cruelty of bondage to all past commitments—this is my reason for writing the book."

Summing up, he says, "We cannot survive, cannot preserve our humanity, without enduring relationships of caring love."

In short, easily read segments, the book is valuable for all persons who believe in commitment yet are facing problems of making commitments or enduring broken relationships, perhaps especially for newly married couples and parents. The section "When two commitments collide" contains valuable counsel for those torn by awakened conscience and for those who have serious questions about forgiveness. If a trust has been broken, the author advises that "we need grace to renew our commitments if we can, and the wisdom to know when we should walk away."

What we need most is hope. And that is found in the God "who will be there," the One who is unconditionally committed to us.

—Phyllis Cammack

The Quakers

Hugh Barbour and J. William Frost
Greenwood Press, 407 pages, \$65.00

We already have several one-volume histories of Quakerism; at least two of these concentrate on Quakerism in America. Why should we need yet another history of American Quakers?

Two possible reasons suggest themselves. First, most Quaker historians have distinctive points of view, which show clearly in their interpretations of Quaker history. Our understanding is helped if the historians make their interpretive views clear. For example, most Quaker historians and interpreters agree that by the second generation there was a decline from the vitality of the original Quaker movement. In contrast, Barbour and Frost assert, "The early eighteenth century was not a time of regression or decline from the religion of the First Publishers of Truth." But they do not really clarify or explain that remarkable claim. We are left puzzled about what views actually underlie the interpretations of these historians.

A second unique factor is more hopeful. The book concludes with brief biographical sketches of 90 American and early English Friends. These are

attractive word pictures, with research information for readers who would like to follow up on the life or writings of any of these Friends. These mini-biographies are valuable enough to make this book worth having in any well-stocked meeting or church library.

—Vail Palmer

Partners in Education: Wilmington College and Wilmington Yearly Meeting of Friends

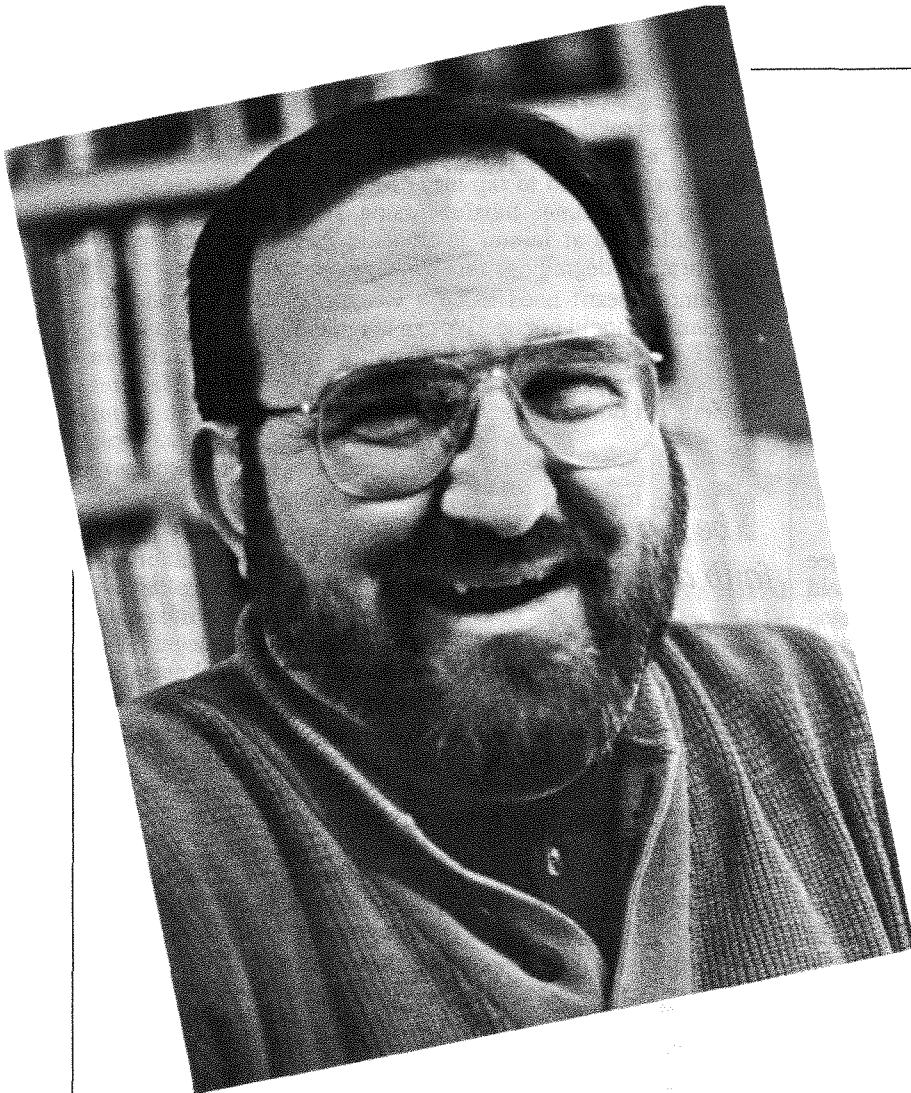
Wilmington College Study Committee
Wilmington Yearly Meeting, 1992,
166 pages

It can accurately be said that Wilmington College was the product of Quaker evangelism, for John Henry Douglas, a Quaker evangelist, had spent several months in the town of Wilmington in rural southwest Ohio in 1870, leading and preaching at daily evangelistic meetings. The enthusiastic response and Douglas's extensive contact with Quakers in the area that year led him to the conviction that Friends should step forward to purchase the college at a sheriff's sale. Friends purchased the land and a nearly completed large building for what had been established unsuccessfully as Franklin College a few years before.

Wallace Collett, Barbara Olmsted, and the other members of the Wilmington College Study Committee have accomplished something very significant in completing the book *Partners in Education* as part of Wilmington Yearly Meeting's just-completed Centennial observance.

It might seem to some that this book would be of interest primarily to members of Wilmington Yearly Meeting and those involved with Wilmington College. But Wallace Collett was very conscious of the numerous other Friends colleges and the partnerships that exist with their sponsoring yearly meetings as he urged the study committee to complete this work. He has since expressed the hope that the book will inspire others to use this as a pattern in studying and reporting on the varying partnerships between Friends colleges and sponsoring yearly meetings.

—Lon Fendall



Laughter Defies Gravity

BY HOWARD 'A' MACY

MY BEST ONE-LINER for several weeks was to tell people I had been invited to speak on the topic "Quaker Levity." Which I had. It amused people to hear "Quakers" and "humor" in the same phrase, and, I suppose, to think that I had agreed to such an assignment. It would be like speaking on "The Wit and Wisdom of Jack the Ripper."

A student first prompted me to think about Quakers and humor when she asked, "Did Quakers ever laugh?" The question surprised me, frankly, because I had known so many Quakers who laughed easily, who joked and loved to tell humorous stories. Probably not all of them were nice people, but most of them were at least respectable. Of course, I had also known grimly pious Friends who with one look could wipe the friendly grin off the oatmeal box. So what's the truth?

The truth is that though some Friends seem genetically or doctrinally incapable of laughter, such earnest sobriety can be overcome in Christ. Historically, part of the joke is that Quakers learn to laugh in spite of themselves. The truest things we know eventually made us laugh.

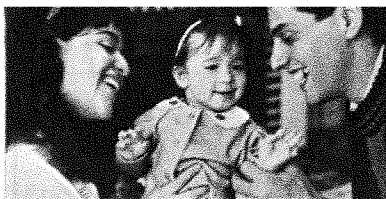
Like the rest of the Puritan family, the earliest Quakers seemed close to outlawing laughter. Robert Barclay's instruction is characteristic: "It is not lawful for Christians to use games, sports, plays, comedies, or other recreations which are inconsistent with Christian silence, gravity, or sobriety. Laughter, sports, games, mockery, or jests, useless conversation, and similar matters are neither Christian liberty nor harmless mirth." In *No Cross, No Crown*, William Penn gives reason for such counsel: "Man was made a noble, rational, grave creature." "Grave" suggests a dead earnestness that borders on grim.

Some Christians still yearn for the gift of keeping a straight face. A friend told me not long ago that the Baptist congregation in which she grew up made it very clear that no one should ever laugh in church. She also laughed (outside of church) remembering how this practice puzzled and frustrated unsuspecting music-drama groups who tried to do humorous sketches there.

Frankly, I doubt that persimmon piety characterized even early Friends. George Fox's companions reported that he was pleasant to travel with, and even though George didn't do stand-up comedy, he apparently enjoyed the laughter of those who watched him confound judges in court. He also told Friends that, as they became "patterns" and "examples" with lives that "preach," they would "walk cheerfully over the earth." How could the light-hearted not laugh?

The best things that Quakers know make laughter inevitable. When we're honest about ourselves and the human condition, when we see the great surprise of God's love in Christ, of the too-good-to-be-true coming true, we eventually have to laugh. So we have. We have had wonderful storytellers like William Bacon Evans, Rufus Jones, Elton Trueblood, Jack Willcuts, and many others. Friends have produced collections of anecdotes (some of them funny) and books on humor like Trueblood's *The Humor of Christ* and Tom Mullen's *Laughing Out Loud and Other Religious Experiences*.

It's not enough to say, though, that Friends giggled and guffawed or, doubling over in laughter, split the seams of their Quaker grays. The reasons and the ways they laughed can help us laugh, too.



T*ragedy is inevitable, but comedy is not.*

First, our humor can simply be "in fun." Tom Mullen argues that God created us to be in fun, to laugh when we see the quirks and silly things around us. Humor is a gift to us, intended for our good. So we can just let life strike us funny, as often it will. Kids are in fun naturally; adults shouldn't outgrow it.

Second, our humor should be truthful. It should help us see and express the true proportion of things. Dorothy Canfield Fisher believes that it is our concern for integrity and seeing things truly as they are that gives Quaker humor its distinctive quality. It nurtures "jokes that give that rare blessing, a hearty laugh which leaves behind no sting, no shame, no resentment, no blame."

Truthful humor can help us see distortions of reality that would mislead us. Will Rogers once said, "I guess I wouldn't be very humorous if it weren't for the government. I don't make jokes; I just watch the government and report the facts."

Perhaps Rogers would have reported on the underground nuclear test the United States conducted last spring. The test bomb was twenty times more powerful than the one that killed at least 100,000 people at Hiroshima. Yet when officials were asked why they conducted the test, they said they wanted to make sure the bomb was "safe"! A lot of the people who "just report the facts"—with a touch of lightness—make us laugh and make us see our condition.

Of course, just because we laugh doesn't mean that the joke was truthful. People often use humor to distort the truth and win our hearts by skirting our minds. So, even while we're laughing, it's smart to ask, "But is it true?" Truthful humor helps us to recognize the human condition and to laugh at ourselves. It opens the way for growth and change.

Third, our humor can also be compassionate. Contemporary humor is often hostile and destructive. It intends to hurt others

To the Point

One mistake that we have made in our Christian social witness is that we have been too uniformly serious. When we are disappointed with our fellowmen and with ourselves as we inevitably are, laughter is a solvent. It helps us greatly to know that Christ laughed, and to sense the variety of His humor. Some of His teachings, which are completely mystifying on the assumption that He was deadly serious, suddenly become clear if it is recognized that He was joking. . . . It is highly pertinent to our own situation to know that some of the best of Christ's humor refers to the predicament of the unlaughing Pharisee. The claimant to self-righteousness is always a bit ridiculous, but he could be saved from the worst excesses if he would stop and laugh heartily. The recovery of laughter would be more than a relief; it would be a genuine social service.

—D. Elton Trueblood

and, in doing so, to build up those who laugh. In a recent book about comedy writing, one of the author's main premises is that humor is a way of expressing hostility and that successful comedy writers need to tap into people's anger. We see examples of it all the time: hurtful teasing, racial and ethnic jokes, barbed attempts at humor in political campaigns, and many other forms of degrading, abusive laughter.

Humor doesn't need to be a weapon of hostility, and for Christians it should not be. We can laugh with rather than laugh at. We can puncture pomposity while recognizing our own propensity to pride. We can chuckle at the foibles and failures of others, yet do it with a spirit that acknowledges them as our foibles as well. Surely a people that refuses guns for Jesus' sake should measure carefully the firepower of their jokes.

T*he laughter of faith and hope is the laughter of astonishment and surprise.*



Compassionate humor embraces more than it embarrasses. As we laugh arm-in-arm, we can go forward together in all our human weakness and human possibility.

Fourth, our humor should express our faith and hope. Much of our laughter tells us of the discrepancy between what is and what ought to be, between the reality we live in and the reality we hope for. It is possible to resign ourselves to this gap, to become bitter, to say that things will never be better. We could yield, as many have, to cynicism and resignation.

Frederick Buechner writes that tragedy is inevitable, but comedy is not. Comedy, the comedy that warms and lifts and heals us, is a choice of faith. Laughter of this sort is knowing that we need not—indeed, that we should not—say it will never be better. Instead of saying never, we say not yet, because we know that God's victory is already secured and is even now at work in our midst.

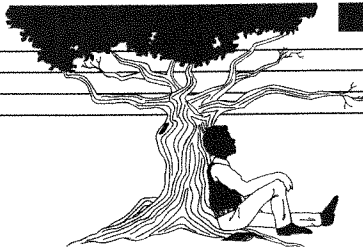
The laughter of faith and hope is the laughter of astonishment and surprise. It's the laughter that comes from knowing that what is too good to be true is actually coming true.

It is Abraham and Sarah having a baby in the geriatric ward. It is the exiled Judeans actually being brought back home and finding their mouths "filled with laughter." It is Jesus' disciples grinning and giggling and whooping and slapping their thighs at seeing Jesus alive again. It is the leaping laughter of a man who had never walked and thought he never would.

It is the laughter carried in George Fox's words to Friends under persecution: "Sing and rejoice ye children of the Light, for Truth doth flourish like a rose in this thick night of darkness."

Laughter can tell of our hope and faith. After all, it is Jesus, who is laughing now and will have the last laugh, who said, "Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world." (John 16:33) If lesser good news filled the Judeans' mouths with laughter, surely this news gives us the sober duty to laugh! **FF**

Howard Macy is Professor of Religion and Biblical Studies at George Fox College in Newberg, Oregon. Howard is author of *Rhythms of The Inner Life* (a devotional exploration of the Psalms soon to be re-issued by Barclay Press with the addition of a study guide) and is an associate editor of the *EVANGELICAL FRIEND*.



Make Them Laugh

BY CHARLES MYLANDER

AN OLD adage for communicators says, "Make them laugh, make them cry, make it burn."

Good counsel! Communication improves when it touches the emotions.

Years ago the Walt Disney film studios produced *Snow White*. It did not do as well in box office receipts as their other movies. They analyzed it to find out why. The story line was a classic tale. The animation was top quality. The narration and flow of the story were excellent. But finally they found the key. What it lacked was laughter and tears. From then on they made sure all their movies contained humor and sorrow—with great success.

Jesus certainly had a sense of humor, and it shows through in His teachings. It's hard to imagine that no one smiled when He described the plank in the eye, giving a snake instead of fish, or grapes growing from thornbushes (Matthew 7:3-4, 9-10, 16). He teased James and John by naming them "sons of thunder," possibly because of their hot tempers.

While He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, our Lord also had a perfectly balanced emotional life. That means He knew how to laugh when it was time to laugh. It's hard to believe the prostitutes and sinners always wanted to eat with Him if He was a sourpuss.

Some people have a gift for humor. They can entertain on command. The turn of the phrase to get a laugh comes easily to them. Frankly, I envy them. (Forgive me, Lord.) For the rest of us who speak, it takes work to put some

humor into a talk. It means reading jokebooks or humorous illustration books. It means looking for ways to lighten up. Most important it means praying for God's inspiration for laughter and tears.

When I talk about missions, I like to tell about the cannibal who ate a missionary. It made him sick. He complained to a fellow cannibal. His friend asked what the missionary looked like. "He was short and plump. He wore a robe with a rope around the middle, a

makes a point, relieves tension, and opens up the inner person for God's truth. If this weren't so serious, it would be funny. What kind of mortals are we, anyway, mixtures of mud and spirit, that need laughter and tears to open the doors of our souls?

Humor has more uses than public speaking. For 20 years my dad worked at the Greyhound Bus Depot in Boise, Idaho. Not exactly the setting for sanitary conversation. But as a Christian he kept a well-stocked supply of clean jokes.

Every time someone told him a dirty joke, he countered with a clean one. Everyone loved him. Instead of putting people down, he used humor to build them up.

Some of us need a little more humor in our homes. Our daughter Lisa loves to laugh. From the time she was little she made all her girlfriends giggle. Now that she's at George Fox College, she's the life of the party—which always seems to be going on in her room!

Sometimes my wife, Nancy, and I ask ourselves, "Where did she

come from?" The rest of us in our family are all quite serious-minded. She's definitely a gift from heaven since God knew we needed some smiles around our house. (Lucky the man who marries her! She will be fun to live with.)

In communication, in witnessing, in daily life, clean humor is God's gift. It's the seasoning that makes our conversation taste a little better as it comes out of our mouths.

Go ahead. Make them laugh. They will be glad you did. **EF**



flat cap on his head, and sandals on his feet."

"How did you fix him?" asked the second cannibal.

"Why, I boiled him in my pot, of course."

"Oh, that's your problem," his friend said. "He was a friar." (If you don't get it, smile here anyway.)

This is more than mere entertainment. It is making the message communicate, get through, stick. Something about the right mix of humor holds attention,

Tales of a New Convert

BY EVAN JAY LEE KELL

AS A NEW CONVERT, I mean convinced Friend, I was on my way to the church, I mean meeting-house, the other night to attend my first congregational business session—sorry, I mean monthly meeting. I had heard by the grapevine, I mean telephone, that a number of strongly opinionated members, I mean weighty Friends, had a complaint, I mean concern, to air out in the meeting.

Naturally, being new to the Quaker religion, I mean Society of Friends, I mean Evangelical Friends Alliance, I mean Evangelical Friends International, I wanted to see how a problem is resolved.

Upon arrival at the business meeting, I mean meeting for business, I discovered the issue, I mean concern, was of utmost urgency. The issue—several members wanted the church, I mean meeting, to replace the old pink and gray linoleum in the basement, I mean fellowship room, with commercial carpet. Unquestionably an earth-shaking question, I mean concern.

The chairman, I mean chairwoman or chairperson, I mean clerk, finally called the divided cliques, I mean groupings of concerned Friends, together to begin the meeting. The clerk, I mean presiding clerk, called the meeting to order by requesting

that everyone be quiet, I mean enter into a period of meditational waiting.

Upon revealing the topic, I mean concern, for that warm Wednesday in the middle of last July—I mean fourth day, third week, seventh month—anyway, the comments, I mean concerns, began immediately.

First to speak for the carpet was a young couple who expressed the thought, I mean concern, that the church building, I mean meetinghouse, needed to be attractive and contemporary.

The older woman, I mean concerned ageless Friend, right behind me whispered bitingly that they were Quaker yuppies—

a term I couldn't find in my Friends glossary.

Rallying behind the young couple's suggestion, I mean concern, was a middle-aged man in a business suit, suitably Quaker black. The man, I mean concerned Friend, emphasized enthusiastically his point.

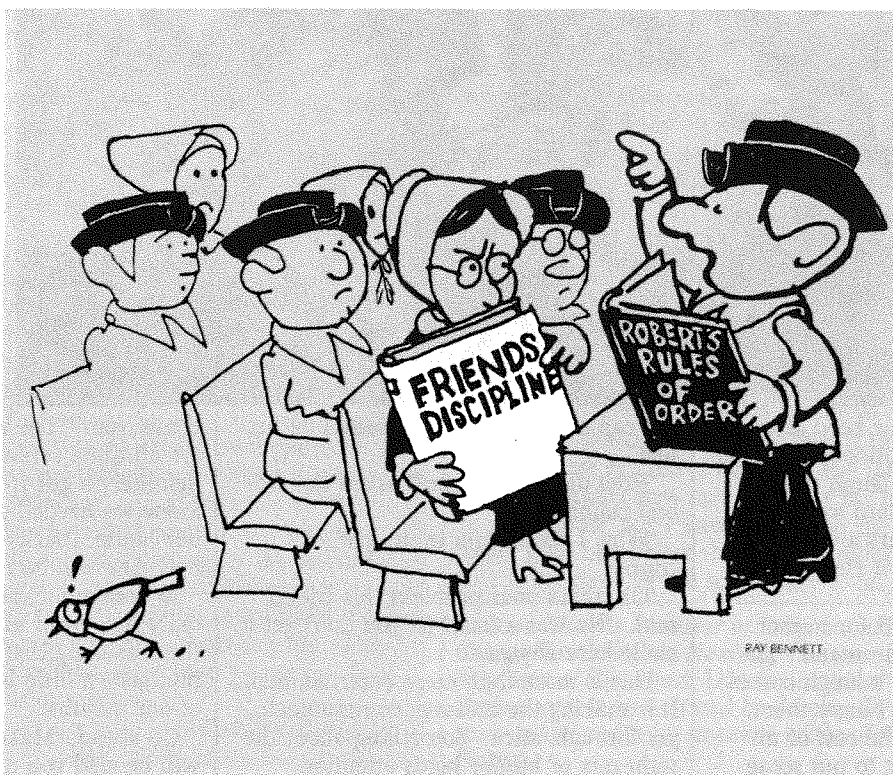
"Quakers," he said, "once opposed music and organs even in their homes, but now not only do many meetinghouses have musical instruments, some are even playing Bill Gaither tunes on them. Carpet, then, is a natural progression of our faith!"

Already Quakerism was challenging my spirit and mind, for I had never thought of carpet as a progression of faith. A novel proposal, indeed.

However, opposing viewpoints, I mean concerns, rapidly followed. A rather plain and simply dressed fellow, I mean man, I mean concerned Friend, rose and spoke from a book, I mean a journal, by John Woolman:

We were challenged to be concerned about the dyes, the toxic wastes, and the acid rains created by the companies, I mean multinational cartels, that produce these carpets.

A couple in the back reiterated this concern, I mean... CONCERN about the



Finally, the presiding clerk began talking about the sense of the meeting of which I hadn't seen a whole lot . . .

enormous environmental impact of a 20-foot by 40-foot piece of carpet.

Promptly, a rather assuming man of say 70 years of age gave a rather lengthy, I mean boring, speech about why he was one of the weightiest of weighty Friends—something about seven generations of Quaker lineage, and none of them had tried anything new. His final conclusion, I mean concern, was that he wasn't going to try anything new either. "After all," he said, "if linoleum was good enough for George Fox, it's good enough for me."

Sensing that the atmosphere was getting a little warm, the preacher, I mean minister, I mean pastor, stood and talked about a compromise. Naturally, he didn't use

the word "compromise" but something about the middle avenue, or was that the middle boulevard . . . or maybe it was the middle way?

By this time, I wanted to propose we just take a vote and go home, when someone spoke about consensus. While I did believe consensus might be possible on some faith matters, I didn't see it forthcoming on such a dinky, I mean big, issue, such as the carpet debate had become.

Finally, the presiding clerk began talking about the sense of the meeting of which I hadn't seen a whole lot, but evidently she did. I was later told that usually a presiding clerk uses the term "sense of the meeting" to describe either

"majority" or "the presiding clerk's opinion."

I was not sure, considering the state of our present world, how much time a person should give to praying about carpet.

But new to this faith, I was willing to try. Who knows, there might be some great spiritual revelation looming nearby.

"Would Friends approve this action and the minuting of tonight's discussion?" the clerk asked. I was shocked. All this and I didn't even get to raise my hand.

"Approved!" the relieved Friends shouted. Then they all honored the name "Friends" and joyfully dismissed to an ice cream shop next to the church, I mean meetinghouse.

But I couldn't help noticing as we mingled in the shop that most who were for the carpet ate soft vanilla ice cream in a sugar cone while most who were opposed ate frozen yogurt on a stick. As for me, the lemonade was downright refreshing. EF

Evan Jay Lee Kell, New Convert, I mean Convinced Friend, otherwise known as J. Stanley Banker, senior pastor of First Friends Meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, was formerly editor of Quaker Life magazine, for which he still writes a regular column under the pseudonym "Q. A. Kerrhill."



FRIENDS WRITE

The Meaning in La Mancha

Your article "When Tempted by Sanity" in the Sept/Oct. issue was especially meaningful to me. Quixote's philosophy "to see the world as it is, or to see the world as it could be" was first brought to my attention at a Marriage Encounter Weekend.

Of course the context was centered in the relationship between husband and wife. The parallel between this relationship and Christ's relationship with the

church is, as you undoubtedly know, based on Scripture (Ephesians 5:25).

I have thought that the profound meaning of this homely, secular story written so long ago was one that needed to be introduced to the greater body of believers beyond that of Marriage Encounter. The realization of the potential in Christ is so often hampered by the blindness we experience in reality.

Soon after our Marriage Encounter Weekend I found the record of *Man from La Mancha* on the \$1.97 shelf. Every so

often I have to listen to it to try to recapture the realization that I must look at what I and others can be rather than what is. Lord, help us not to be too proud or afraid of this kind of insanity!

We appreciate you and your staff and the fine work you are doing on the EVANGELICAL FRIEND. Of course we look with special interest for evidence of Janelle's handiwork.

LYLE WHEELER
Pratt, Kansas

Humor as a Survival Tactic

in Life and Ministry

I Gaze at God and Laugh

By Jim Teeters

*I gaze at God and laugh
surprised
by the love, the mercy
the grace
the smile on my Redeemer's face*

*I gaze at God and laugh
amazed
by God's wide open arms
the grace
the smile on my Redeemer's face*

*I gaze at God and laugh
in praise (relieved)
I drop my burden down
and rest
while I enjoy this cosmic jest!*

I LOVE TO laugh. I love to make others laugh. It comes naturally to me somehow. Or, I may have learned it by osmosis from my father early in life. As I look back, in some vague way I remember him much of the time having a glint in his eye. He also was an addicted prankster, which was more or less appreciated by those he targeted. This was mostly my

mother who would just say, "Oh Harold!" and look appropriately perturbed. I think his humor was his survival tactic as a traveling salesman who didn't do so well as a breadwinner. Our family was dragged across the northwest states in a small mobile home in his search for those endless "leads." But we did a lot of laughing.



My sense of humor, expressed mostly in my ability to create one-liners to ease the tension in groups (I never could tell a bona fide joke), slipped into my interpersonal toolbox and became my survival tactic as a child. During those frequent moves we made I was thrust into many school classrooms as the "new student." I developed into the class clown whose mind went searching for the opening to insert that funny line.

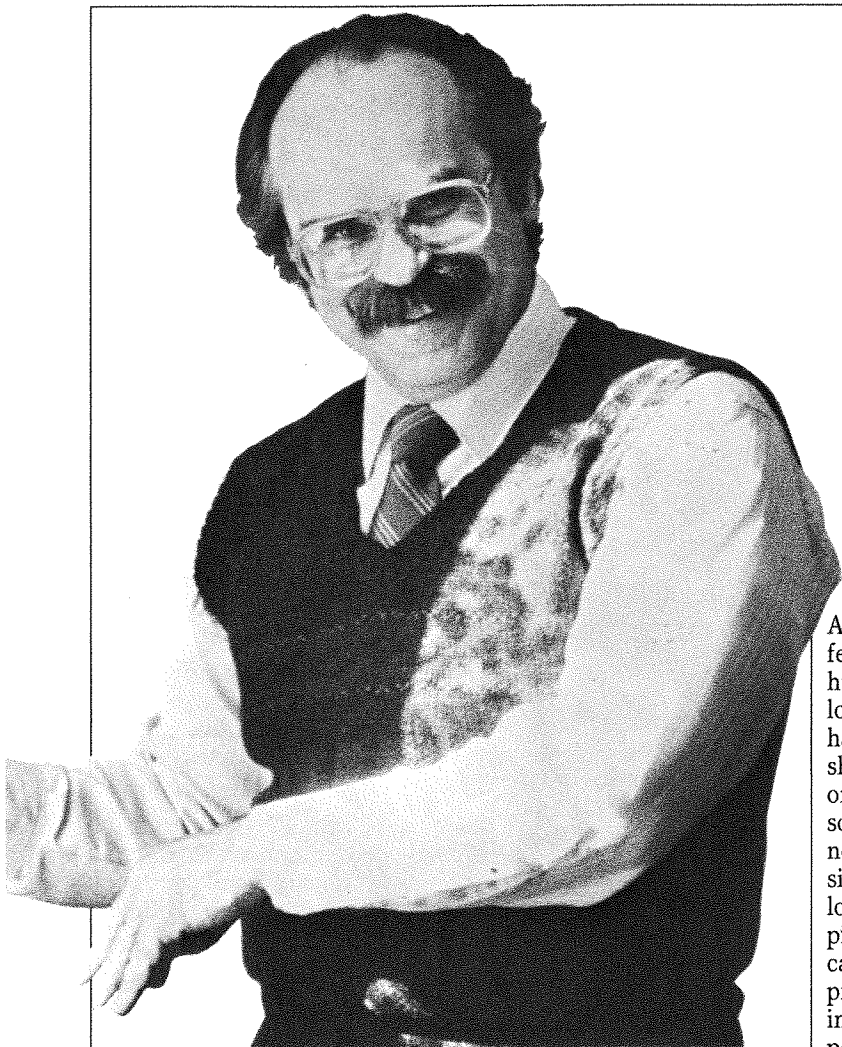
And with perfected timing, zingo! I had the students and most of the time the teacher in stitches (getting the teacher to laugh was key in my survival tactic) and I would sit proudly surrounded by giggles that I produced. I had planted the line, and now I harvested the laughter.

Humor and Laughter and the Bible

The gift of humor is not mentioned in Paul's epistles.

Laughter in the Scripture is mostly connoted as mockery. For example, to the foolish, the author of Proverbs says, "So when you get into trouble, I will laugh at you. I will make fun of you . . ." (Proverbs 1:26 GNB) To the godless nations in Psalms we read: "From his throne in heaven the Lord laughs and mocks their feeble plans." (Psalm 2:4 GNB) James even warns the faithless to "change your laughter to mourning." (James 4:9 GNB) However, the emotions of joy, gladness, and enjoyment that are often expressed with laughter and merriment are considered very positively in the Old and New Testaments.

WE ARE ALL familiar with Abraham and Sarah's laughter at God's audacious suggestion that she could become a mother in her postmenopausal state. (What a joke!) And when Isaac was born the surprise



caused a joy-filled laugh (Genesis 21:6). Isaac's name means "he laughs" or more accurately (according to *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*—Abingdon) "let God laugh" (or enjoy the birth with them).

IN THE POEM "I Gaze at God and Laugh" I wanted to express how I caught a glimpse of the wonderfully unexpected grace and loving-kindness of God through Christ. To laugh here is evidence of complete abandonment in joy, confidence, and hope in God. In my imaginary view of Heaven I perceive much merriment, singing, laughter, gladness, and enjoyment of the Lord and His Church. What a party!

The Ministry of Laughter as a Survival Tactic

In ministry, humor is an essential survival tactic. When called to serve as a pastor during the 1980s out of

the secular world of the bureaucratic middle management maze into the Spirit-focused domain of the church, humor could take the edge off an often-too-serious, high stress, 24-hours-per-day plunge into a "Jesus-is-no-laughing-matter..." kind of world.

As an extension pastor, I felt the added expectation of making a church grow, and therefore making the yearly meeting as well as the Kingdom of God grow, and things got out of hand. The stress factor hit the upper limits of my endurance and instead of "letting go and letting God" I found myself trying to be the supermanager that I felt was expected of me.

That's when I learned about the *ministry of laughter*. I think it began at a pastor's retreat. Some pastors and spouses gathered in a cabin at Twin Rocks Conference Center on the Oregon coast.

An invitation was offered to a few hardy (and hopefully humorous) folks by the frivolous folks in our cabin. We had a "little known talent show," which meant that each one gathered must perform some obscure talent they had, no matter how ridiculous or silly—in fact the more ridiculous the better!! And now, picture this—your sophisticated pastor and his prim and proper wife lying on the floor in a circle of belly-laughing pastors and spouses popping and sizzling in an attempt to convince us that their talent was being able to act just like bacon frying. Or that clever pastor who asked us if we wanted to see his imitation of a duck. Of course we did. He simply ducked down as if dodging a flying object—his imitation of a duck—get it? Very funny, particularly when pent up, stressed out pastors had gotten together alone with no fear of judgment.

THIS ministry of laughter was brought to wonderful heights as extension pastors gathered occasionally. The pressure can be intense for those whose role it is to work with the unchurched, or marginally churched, who may literally hate the church and its representatives. And yet, there is no more wonderful release than to pray, cry, study, and in grand communion with one another and before God himself, to laugh ourselves silly until, while

holding our sides and half choking, we find ourselves wonderfully filled and spent all in the same time and place.

I AM CONVINCED that you have to have much trust and much respect for one another to be able to laugh until the tears roll down your cheeks and you need to blow your nose. It may, in fact, take more trust to belly-laugh in the company of others than to cry, since the laughter is perceived as a voluntary act and crying occurs because you couldn't help yourself. To laugh "uncontrollably" and be a fool in the midst of others either takes personal daring, or it relies on such fellowship and *koinonia* as to resemble the true Body of Christ. In spite of the pain of facing difficult odds in the ministry, I found hope in these miraculous moments in the ministry of laughter. As Sarah said, "God has brought me joy and laughter. Everyone who hears about it will laugh with me." (Genesis 21:6 GNB) **EF**

Jim Teeters is a recorded minister in Northwest Yearly Meeting and is currently a social worker for the State of Washington, Division of Children and Family Services. He has conducted workshops for social workers on "Humor as a Survival Tactic" and attends the Easthill Friends Church in Kent, Washington. Jim credits his father for his love of laughter and the two are pictured above.



A Time to Laugh

BY JACK L. WILLCUTS

LAUGHTER, a bubbling sense of humor, having a really funny time—these are not usually included in the list of truly spiritual experiences. To be spiritual has somehow become synonymous with being serious. Somber, grim countenances seem to be essential for saints. Smiling portraits were unknown less than a century ago, especially among Quakers. We

have accounts of witty Quakers, but not too many are pictured laughing uproariously. Isn't that funny?

There is a time for being serious, for agonizing, for burden bearing. But there is also a time to laugh. The Bible says so (Ecclesiastes 3:4). And let's not kid ourselves; we all enjoy laughing.

One of the blessed benefits of a ministers' conference, or even a yearly

meeting, is the exchange of the latest good jokes and hilarious stories, blunders in preaching, faux pas breaking up a committee or even a church meeting.

God intends us to laugh. It's one of those special human characteristics that sets us apart from the animal kingdom. It makes life, preaching, even worship, more interesting. It puts people at ease. It releases tension. A sour meeting can

be sweetened with a sprinkle of humor. Laughter is a conduit for bringing in spiritual truth. Humor is attractive. It has drawing power.

I recall a Friends pastor who started his message with a funny story that had an inescapably clear application. It was a perfect introduction to an unfunny fact—that people resist useful changes in church customs. "A wife decided to move the furniture around to see how it would look," he informed the congregation. "She moved the bed from one side of the room to another. Her cranky husband was so disturbed by this he slept three nights on the cedar chest where the bed 'was supposed to be.'" The ensuing laughter paved the way for some disturbing thoughts about changes in church life.

Jesus apparently used the same approach, using ridiculous comparisons, getting people to chuckle while seeing truth in the lessons.

Like any of God's gifts, laughter can be misused. Sarcasm or foolishness can cheapen real humor. Paul warns about

Blessed is
the person
who can tell
a good joke
well.

"foolish talk," the silliness and shallowness that might accurately describe much of TV humor. It is possible to overuse laughter, to carry a joke too far. Excessive humor can be annoying and sometimes obnoxious. Laughter can also be misused as an expression of disbelief or ridicule. Laughter as a weapon can hurt someone, make them feel inferior or unappreciated. Laughter can sometimes cover up true feelings, like fear, ignorance, nervousness, and hurt. It is

sad, not funny, when Christians laugh at crudeness or vulgarity.

But blessed is the person who can tell a good joke well. It is worth practicing as a skill.

State-of-the-art story telling is close to godliness. We need to laugh. We were made to laugh. Even our facial expressions and features get all out of shape without smiling and laughing a lot. We take ourselves far too seriously.

For most of us, the easiest place to see something really worth laughing about is a glance in the mirror. It's also been said that anyone who can look at his bare foot without laughing has no sense of humor.

Actually, laughing is not sinful at all. It may even be spiritual. So go ahead, laugh. **EF**



This article is from The Sense of the Meeting—the editorial writings of Jack L. Willcuts—and was originally published in the April 1985 EVANGELICAL FRIEND. Jack L. Willcuts (1922-1989) was executive editor and then editor-in-chief of this magazine for its first 18 years. He was superintendent of Northwest Yearly Meeting for 12 years, a missionary in Bolivia for eight, and a pastor for more than 25 years.



Funny Things Happen

(Continued from page 3)

therapeutic grieving to occur was obvious. Thank the Lord for humor!

When we go through the loss of a loved one, we wonder: Will I ever laugh again? And one day we laugh, and it is as if God has reminded us that sorrow does not cancel joy anymore than present laughter precludes future tears. Laughter in, around, or in spite of grief is an affirmation that death itself is not final. Leslie Weatherhead put it this way: "The opposite of joy is not sorrow. It is unbelief."

In a workshop on the healing power of humor, participants were asked to compose in one or two sentences their own epitaph that would capture how they wanted to be remembered. Most of the epitaphs were predictable. They were modest or serious or bland. One man, however, was more profound than he knew when he wrote his epitaph. What he wanted written on his tombstone, he

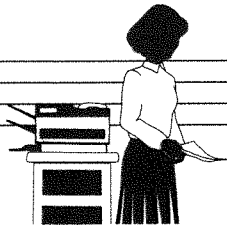
said, were these words: "I'd rather be home in bed with my wife."

That was a tribute to his wife, and, in a way, to his faith. We choose life but death is a reality. A life of faith allows room to laugh in the face of tragedy. Ultimately in God's scheme of things, in light of the resurrection, the joke is on death.

And that's why the Reaper is Grim. **EF**



Tom Mullen is Associate Professor of Applied Theology at Earlham School of Religion in Richmond, Indiana. Tom is author of numerous books on the ironies and foibles of Christian every day life, and the above essay represents his reworking of the first chapter of Laughing Out Loud and Other Religious Experiences especially for the EVANGELICAL FRIEND.



Alaskan Friends Visit Russian Eskimos

Friends will be making a fact-finding trip to visit the Russian Eskimo people. A group of six Alaskan natives representing Alaska Yearly Meeting will leave Kotzebue on February 22 for the two-week trip which will include making an evangelical witness in five coastal villages in Siberia.

Plans for this trip were reported at the meeting of Evangelical Friends International/North America Region held at Black Forest Conference Center, Colorado Springs, Colorado. The meeting was held January 14-17, 1993, with representatives from Rocky Mountain Yearly Meeting, Mid-America Yearly Meeting, Northwest Yearly Meeting, Evangelical Friends Church—Eastern Region, and Alaska Yearly Meeting. Also present were Christian education personnel from Friends United Meeting.

Robert Sheldon, superintendent of Alaska Yearly Meeting, will lead the 1,200-mile expedition into Siberia. The group hopes to make the entire journey by snowmobile, but if the Bering Strait is not frozen for safe travel they will be ferried across the 50-mile strait by airplane.

Four years ago Alaska Friends sent a \$1,000 gift to the EFI meetings in Colorado for the new outreach in Rwanda. This year, children in Rwanda sent their vacation Bible school offering of \$29.63 for the outreach to Siberia.

Ron Stansell, Council Director of Evangelical Friends International, plans to make trips this year to both Africa and Asia. He hopes to support, nourish, and encourage missionaries and national church leaders. One of Stansell's particular goals is to challenge the EFI churches of Africa and Asia to be missionary-sending churches.

Missions Commission: The Missions Commission is pleased to have a number of new candidates. Norval Hadley, executive director of Evangelical Friends Mission, introduced Roy Twaddell. He and his wife Jinky are interested in pursuing ministry to unreached Muslim people groups in the Philippines.

The executive committee of EFI-NA was pleased to approve sponsoring the formation of Mexico Yearly Meeting. The yearly meeting will include approximately 13 Friends churches located throughout the country.

Christian Education Commission: The Commission officially announced the retirement of Dorothy Barratt, Christian Education Consultant for EFI-NA, effective July 1, 1994. Dorothy will have served in this position for 26 years. The Commission will begin a national search to fill this position.

A new edition of *Let's Be Friends*, denominational curriculum for high school students, will be released March 1, 1993.

WordAction will introduce a brand new curriculum starting September 1993 for pre-school through senior high classes. This is the culmination of a 3-year process and will include Sunday school, children's church, and vacation Bible school materials.

The 1993 Easter offering will have a goal of \$100,000 to be used for growing and planting churches in Rwanda and Mexico.

Publications Commission: *Evangelical Friend* magazine is encouraging young writers through the creation of a Youth Essay Contest. (See page 20.)

Forthcoming themes for the *Evangelical Friend* magazine include evil and the victory of Christ, Christian vocation, traces of God, play and re-creation, and forgiveness.

Youth Commission: Plans are well underway for the "Life in the 90s" series. This series of flyers, written by evangelical Friends, will introduce a Quaker perspective to current issues facing young Friends. Several of the fourteen topics for study are: music and media, evangelistic opportunities in a new world order, the value of life, and substance abuse. Materials will be available by mid-spring.

Progress continues for YouthQuake '94. This conference involves young people from more than 15 yearly meetings and will be held at Glorietta, New Mexico, on December 27, 1994, through January 1, 1995.

Evangelical Friends International—North America Region will hold its next annual meeting January 6-9, 1994, in Canton, Ohio.

* * *

Alaska Yearly Meeting is seeking a work team to help renovate a building for their Bible Training School. Inquiries about this project should be addressed to Robert Sheldon, superintendent, P.O. 687, Kotzebue, Alaska 99752; 907/442-3906.



Overheard,
Overlooked,
Overjoyed,
Overrated,
and Overdone

What's So Funny?

OOPS!!!

Quaker pastor trying to inspire his congregation-
"Let's all stand together and sing lustfully to the Lord."



The very first Friends Meeting to be called First Friends Meeting and thus inheriting the enviable title, First First Friends Meeting.

Plain Truth

John Woolman's simple accuracy of speech was so well known that two Friends thought they would trap him into an incorrect statement. One Friend called and sat in the parlour with John. The bell was rung by the other Friend -- John went to the door, whilst the first Friend slipped out of the window. In answer to the enquiry if his friend were there, John Woolman replied, "I left him in the parlour."

President Hoover showed the cautious speech of his Quaker upbringing. A companion on a train journey remarked, "Those sheep have been sheared." To this, Hoover replied, "Well, on this side, certainly."

By permission. *More Quaker Laughter*, by William H. Sessions of York, England. Available from Barclay Press. \$7.00.



MID-AMERICA YEARLY MEETING

Building Churches

The two churches that were targeted by the Extension Division of the yearly meeting held their opening services in October and November. Lake Community Friends Church held its first service at the Brookwood Elementary School in Clear Lake, Texas. It was a victorious occasion as nearly 125 people met with pastor David Hearon.

The McPherson Friends Church in McPherson, Kansas, met for the first time on November 8, with Jerry and Vicky Mercer as the pastors. Over 105 people attended the worship service, which was

held in the middle school building.

The Langham Creek Friends Church in Houston recently moved into its own facilities, after having met in a public school building since their beginning in 1988.

Building Leaders

The Leadership Conference that was held in October in Oklahoma City was attended by 21 pastors and 29 laymen. The focus was on capturing the vision of intercessory prayer, focusing on the godly leadership model of Joshua.

The Young Teen Leadership Conference met at Camp Quaker Haven October 9-11. The theme of the conference was "Back to Basics" and dealt with issues of faith and redemption. Royce Frazier, superintendent of youth, was the director with Eric Mason, youth pastor at Hutchinson

(Kansas) Friends Church, guest speaker.

A Volunteer Youthworkers Conference was held November 6-8 at the Meridian Plaza Hotel in Oklahoma City.

The theme for the conference was "Putting Life into Your Program." Paul Romoser, youth pastor from Haviland (Kansas) Friends, was the main speaker.

Missions

Susan Johnson, missions committee chairman, and Shelli Kadel, Christian education director, represented the University Friends Meeting at the dedication of the Ruhengeri church on October 25 in northern Rwanda.

The meeting raised over \$13,000 to pay for the construction of the church building.

Youth

The Haviland Friends Youth, under the direction of Paul Romoser, youth pastor, and his staff had 50 high school youth in attendance at their kick off night. Some of the activities they have been involved in were the "See You at the Pole," national program, and a youth retreat with the Hutchinson and Northridge (Wichita) youth. This retreat was held at Hutchinson, Kansas, with Eric Mason, youth pastor at Hutchinson, as speaker.

Outreach

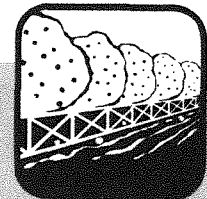
The Friends Disaster Service has been very active in the past few months helping to relieve some of the suffering felt during the tornados in Kansas and the hurricane in Louisiana.

In early September a caravan of six vehicles went to Louisiana, taking supplies and spending several days helping in the small community of Loreauville, near New Iberia.

The weekend of September 17-19, a total of 44 people

came from Michigan, Ohio, Iowa, Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas to help with the "barn raising" project on the Rex Thompsons' farm southwest of Beloit, Kansas. They also helped with other projects in the community.

October 31 was the date for the second annual Friends Disaster Service Auction at Friendswood, Texas. A barbecue luncheon kicked off activities at noon. Donated crafts and goods were sold.



NORTHWEST YEARLY MEETING

Youth Anticipate Annual Tournament

Bump! Set! Spike! High schoolers from across Northwest Yearly Meeting are honing their volleyball skills in anticipation of the 12th annual Friends Youth Volleyball Tournament April 16 and 17 on the campus of George Fox College.

With an average of 550 students participating (55 teams from 35 churches), the tournament has become the single most attended youth event annually.




David and Karen Mains to Address Yearly Meeting Attenders

David and Karen Mains, authors and directors of *The Chapel of the Air*, will be featured speakers at Northwest Yearly Meeting sessions, July 17-23, 1993.

The Chapel of the Air, a 15-minute radio program heard

Take Note!

The *Evangelical Friend* announces its first youth essay contest, entitled "Publishers of Truth." We invite essays from each of the three age groups:

-  Grades 5-8
-  Grades 9-12
-  College/Career (ages 18-22)

A prize of \$100 will be awarded for the best essay in each age group.

The theme for the contest this year is "Traces of God" (or ways we see God at work in the world around us and/or in our own lives).

Essays should be typed, double-spaced, and 500-700 words in length (2-3 pages). April 16, 1993, is the deadline for submissions and the winning essays will be printed in the July/August 1993 issue of *Evangelical Friend*.

Send submissions to:
Evangelical Friend
P.O. Box 232, Newberg, Oregon 97132

Essays will not be returned, so be sure to keep a copy. Also include a statement signed by a parent, guardian, or witness that the essay is your original composition.

Samuel School... Mongolian Barbecue... Jet Cadets



David and Karen Mains



more than 500 times daily throughout North America, focuses on spiritual and church renewal.

"The 50-day Spiritual Adventure" has highlighted the program each year; the "Adventure" offers participants an opportunity to experience accelerated spiritual growth while following basic disciplines of the Christian faith.

The Maineses have coauthored seven books.

Samuel School Encourages Young Leaders

More than 50 seventh and eighth graders from Northwest Yearly Meeting met at Twin Rocks Friends Camp November 6-8, 1992, to learn how to hear and do the will of God.

The weekend retreat, called Samuel School, began as a vision of Dr. Arthur Roberts ten years ago, who felt that junior high students are tender to the Spirit and need guidance in learning to hear the voice of the Lord in their lives.

Cherry Grove Celebrates 50 Years

A 10:00 a.m. worship celebration on Sunday, February 7, will kick off a day-long celebration at Cherry Grove Friends Church, Battle Ground, Washington, as the congregation commemorates 50 years of ministry.

Friends and former attenders of Cherry Grove are invited to participate in the worship celebration, luncheon (12:30 p.m.), and historical presentation (2:00 p.m.).

Medford (Oregon) Friends Church celebrated its 50th "birthday" in October, 1992.



**ROCKY MT.
YEARLY MEETING**

Benkelman Holds Missions Marathon

BENKELMAN, NEBRASKA—The McGill family members (Bonnie, Tim, Nathan, and Angel) were guests of Benkelman Friends for the Mini Missions Marathon in early October.

The McGills, a missionary family associated with the Morrison Academy in Taiwan, currently live in Stromsberg, Nebraska, while on deputation. For part of the session, the McGills cooked a Mongolian barbecue for the meeting.

Omaha Begins Jet Cadet Program

OMAHA, NEBRASKA—Evangelical Friends Church in November began a new junior youth program named Jet Cadet, which includes Scripture memory and biblical themes for gatherings.

Additionally, young people in the program will be making crafts for different people. In an effort to help the youths learn about giving to others, some of the crafts will be shared with patients in a nearby nursing home.

First Friends Burns Mortgage

COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO—First Friends Church conducted a mortgage-burning celebration after the morning services August 30.

Norma Freer Visits FDFC

DENVER, COLORADO—Norma Freer, retiring missionary from India, spoke at morning and evening worship services November 28 at First Denver Friends Church.

Huff Speaks at Paonia Meeting

PAONIA, COLORADO—Del Huff, field director for Friendship International, spoke here in an evening service in September. The ministry is an outreach of Gary Wright Ministries.

Plainview Names New Pastor

PLAINVIEW, NEBRASKA—Plainview Friends has named Ron and Karen Beardslee as new pastors of the meeting.



**E.F.C.—
EASTERN REGION**

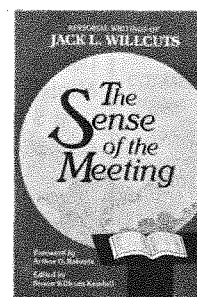
Spreading the "Good News"

Immanuel Friends (Eden, North Carolina) has set a goal to spread the good news of Jesus Christ "until every home in our city has the plan of salvation."

Begun in September 1992 and continuing through 1993 members walk door-to-door with doorknob hangers containing a church information pamphlet, a gospel tract, and a church imprinted pen.

NEW RELEASE

"The words of Jack Willcuts slice through the twentieth-century weed patch of ideas and isms to clear a path for truth."



THE SENSE OF THE MEETING

selected editorial writings of Jack L. Willcuts

What can we do with Christians who are wrong? How does our view of gender limit the ministry of the church? Are we committed or just committed? THE SENSE OF THE MEETING addresses these and many other issues with the wit and wisdom of one of this century's best loved Quaker leaders and writers.

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Golfers stroke away to benefit pregnancy center

Cornerstone EFC Off to a Great Start

Cornerstone Friends (Madison, Ohio), a church-planting project of Willoughby Hills Friends, launched their ministry in October with 350 people in attendance, 250 of whom were newcomers from the community. Direct mail advertising was a significant tool; five eye-catching weekly mailings were sent prior to opening services.

Friends Disaster Service Working in Louisiana

Throughout November and December 1992, FDS volunteers have been repairing and rebuilding homes in Jeanerette, Louisiana, ravaged by Hurricane Andrew last August. Dean Johnson, coordinator, reports heart-breaking devastation to some very poor and very needy people. Louisiana was chosen because there are more areas of poverty and they are not receiving as much aid as Florida from U.S. and volunteer agencies. Its close proximity and the assistance of Texas FDS also factored into this choice.

Youth Explosion

An incredible 750 youth from Eastern Region attended November's "Youth Explosion '92" with Bart Campolo as speaker, held at Willoughby Hills (Ohio). Over 60 of these signed commitment cards at the altar, giving their lives to Jesus.

Happy 40th Longview

October 18, 1992, was a special day for members and friends of Longview Friends Church in Danville, Virginia. A filled church and three former pastors present made Homecoming a special occasion.

It seemed proper that C. T. Mangrum give the keynote address, since he was the first to have a vision for a church 40 years ago.

Choirs Combine for Christmas Extravaganza

The combined choirs of five Michigan District churches joined to present the cantata *Gloria—a Christmas Festival of Praise*. Raisin Valley, Raisin Center, Rollin, Tecumseh, and Ypsilanti Friends rehearsed throughout the fall for the beautiful December 13 performance.

Recreation for Charity

Alliance Friends (Ohio) participated in a Golf Scramble to benefit their local pregnancy center. Pledges were made for each stroke. Over \$2,400 was raised through this community-wide effort, organized by Alliance member Carl Gustafson.

Recreation Ministries at Canton First Friends (Ohio) organized the '92 "Run for Humanity" to benefit Habitat for Humanity. Held in October, the 5-K and 1-mile races were cosponsored by a local bank, sporting goods store, and Christian radio station. Recreation Minister Greg Linville reports over \$1,500 earned by the 214 runners.

OUR RECORD OF FRIENDS

Births

BLACK—Kaitlyn Marie, to Becky and John, Wichita, Kansas, 10/18/92

BLEVINS—Kayce Rae, to Gary and Denise, Hutchinson, Kansas, 9/28/92

CHESTNUT—Joseph Lee, to John and Kim, Hanoverton, Ohio, 9/9/92

CHRISTY—Daniel Roy, to Michael and Peggy, Beloit, Ohio, 9/24/92

CLARK—Katie Lynn, to Roger and Lisa, Glencoe, Ohio, 3/15/92

COCKMAN—Lindsay Marie, to Don and Tammy, Robbins, North Carolina, 10/9/92

CRIST—Houston Bryan, to Tommy and Rhonda, Amarillo, Texas, 9/25/92

DAVIS—Tyler James, to J. D. and Marsha, Lisbon, Ohio, 9/30/92

FOX—Andrew Jack, to Dan and Kristin, Newberg, Oregon, 9/18/92

GATZ—Jacob Isaac, to Jim and Cindy, Pratt, Kansas, 9/13/92

GAZELLA—Seth James, to Stan and Debbie, Willoughby Hills, Ohio, 10/20/92

GURUNG—Seth Ryan, to Hari and Joy, Alliance, Ohio, 10/21/92

HALL—Megan Denise, to Greg and Denise, Haviland, Kansas, 10/2/92

HOLLIDAY—Tanner Alan, to Brad and Nichole, Haviland, Kansas, 10/2/92

KELLUM—Chelsea Dawn, to LeRoy and Kim, Memphis, Tennessee, 10/7/92

MARTIN—Eli Ambrose, to Scott and Shelly, Lisbon, Ohio, 9/12/92

MATTEVI—Lukas Daved, to Randy and Carolyn, Lisbon, Ohio, 9/19/92

MEYER—Laramie Clark, to Dan and Danice, Haviland, Kansas, 7/6/92

MICHELLE—Michael Allen, to Tom and Diana, Flushing, Ohio, 3/13/92

Malone Positions

Business Administration/Economics: Tenure-track position, rank open, beginning August 1993. Academic and experiential background in marketing, management, and international business desired. Must be willing to teach some classes at off-campus sites requiring one hour of travel one way and assist in development and implementation of business-related master's program. Ph.D. or D.B.A. desired; will consider doctoral candidates or superior applicants with master's degree. Deadline for application is February 15, 1993.

Chemistry: Tenure-track position, rank open, beginning August 1993. Candidates must hold a Ph.D. with major emphasis in organic chemistry. Primary teaching responsibilities include organic and general chemistry. Opportunities exist for the development of other interests. College teaching experience preferred. Research/student-faculty research encouraged. Deadline for application is January 29, 1993.

Early Childhood Education: Tenure-track position, rank open, beginning August 1993. Undergraduate and graduate level teaching, supervision, and advising. Background in integrated early childhood programs helpful. Doctorate in the area of early childhood or specialization in a related field. Experience as an administrator/teacher of preschool/child care programs. Deadline for application is January 29, 1993.

Nursing: Several nursing faculty positions (full-time and part-time), beginning August 1993. Needs for this growing baccalaureate program are at the Sophomore Level (Basic Concepts; Health Assessments) and at the Junior Level (Medical/Surgical; Family/Children Health). Applicants need to be MSN prepared with 2-3 years of relevant clinical practice. Deadline for application is April 1, 1993, or until positions are filled.

Send curriculum vita, which should include a statement of philosophy of Christian higher education, to Dr. Ronald G. Johnson, Provost of the College, Malone College, 515 25th Street NW, Canton, OH 44709-3897.

Malone College is a Christian liberal arts college affiliated with the Evangelical Friends Church—Eastern Region and is an Equal Opportunity Employer, M/F/H/V.

Elementary Ed still available at Barclay



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Azusa, CA 91702-7000 • Phone: (818) 812-3049*

We do not discriminate regarding color, national origin, gender or handicap.

MLAKER—Michael Sebastian, to John and Maria, Wloughby Hills, Ohio, 10/20/92

OTERO—Tiffany Milady, to Edwin and Mary, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 8/25/92

PETERSON—Marguerite Rose, to Brent and Polly, Newberg, Oregon, 11/7/92

PRIVATTE—Ethan Aaron, to Roy and Kim, Westland, Michigan, 10/31/92

REID—David, to Rick and Kristin, Sherwood, Oregon, 9/22/92

ROSHONG—Anne Janea, to Ed and Janelle, Canton, Ohio

SMITH—Kenneth William, to Mike and Tammy, Portland, Oregon, 10/27/92

TILLERY—Rachel Ann, to Ray and Julie, Mechanicsville, Virginia, 10/7/92

UTLEY—Niki Leigh, to David and Kelly, Ashland, Oregon, 10/16/92

WALLER—Darby Daniel, to Dan and Liz, Flushing, Ohio, 3/17/92

WALLACE—McKenley Braden, to Barry and Anita, Eden, North Carolina, 7/15/92

Marriages

Diana Frazee DOYLE and Charles Todd GEARHEART, Wichita, Kansas, 10/25/92

Elizabeth Anne FREEMAN and Daniel Robert BANHAM, Vancouver, Washington, 10/10/92

Mary Jane FURBAY and Rafael DELGADO, St. Clairsville, Ohio, 8/29/92

Amanda GREEN and Sean GILSTRAP, Bayshore, Texas, 10/16/92

Stacy JANTZ and Brandon HOSCHEIT, Haviland, Kansas, 10/10/92

Sarah Joy JOHNSTON and Steve Gregg ARMENDARIZ, La Mirada, California, 11/23/92

Linda LEE and Thomas YAU, Baltimore, Maryland, 8/8/92

Jodi MARTIN and Ray SARKO, St. Clairsville, Ohio, 10/3/92

Jane RAUCH and Roger DUNN, Hubert, North Carolina, 9/26/92

Pam SHAW and Brian KLASSEN, Paonia, Colorado, 10/3/92

Tonya Lynette TURNER and Kevin Lee BESCHER, Martinsville, Virginia, 9/16/92

Jennifer WEIR and Mark SEMM, Talent, Oregon, 11/12/92

Valerie WRIGHT and Roger MOORE, St. Clairsville, Ohio, 9/19/92

Karie WYSOCKI and Jeff HUNKLER, St. Clairsville, Ohio, 8/8/92

Deaths

BARNETT—James Russell "Russ," 75, West Liberty, Ohio, 3/3/92

BIRT—Leroy, Sr., 88, West Liberty, Ohio, 3/3/92

COLEMAN—Ernest J., 55, Lawrence, Kansas, 9/29/92

DANIEL—Ouida DeShon, 94, Lawrence, Kansas, 4/17/92

JACKS—Lucille, Haviland, Kansas, 10/30/92

JONES—Edith, Wichita, Kansas, 10/4/92

MILLS—Ethel, 94, Adrian, Michigan, 8/28/92

PHELPS—Earl, 56, Barberton, Ohio, 8/18/92

RETFERFORD—John M., Marion, Indiana, 9/19/92

RITCHEY—Ruth, Wichita, Kansas, 9/28/92

SNYDER—Elden B., 82, Barberton, Ohio, 10/16/92

STADIER—Mae Stanwix, 99, Lawrence, Kansas, 6/30/92

WYSCAVER—Hazel, Gate, Oklahoma, 9/18/92



Barclay Joins Tabor to Offer Elementary Ed Certification

Barclay College has entered an agreement with Tabor College of Hillsboro, Kansas, to offer a cooperative program in elementary education. Previously, the program operated under the direction of St. Mary of the

Plains College in Dodge City, Kansas. This arrangement will end at the conclusion of the 1992-93 school year.

The entire program is available on the Barclay College campus in Haviland, Kansas, with Tabor supervising the program and awarding the teaching certificates. The program will include all of the components of the Tabor program.

Barclay College is currently the only four-year, accredited college in southwestern Kansas.

George Fox College Cross-country Team Serves Community

More than 20 members of George Fox College's cross-country team spent several hours Wednesday, October 28, working on community service projects.

Members of the women's team did yard work and painted the hall and bathroom for Harvest House, a shelter for homeless women and families. Both men and women helped tear down an old carport at the college's Humanities House. Several of the team's members also helped sort scrap metal for the plant services department.

Rolf Potts, cocaptain of the cross-country team, organized the service projects along with Student Ministries Coordinator Denise Beed. Both were pleased with the large turnout and positive attitude of the athletes.

"We want to be recognized as more than a bunch of

sweaty athletes," said Potts. "As a team we have a Christian emphasis that includes devotions and service."

This is the first time the team has done service projects as a group, Potts said. He hopes to see the service projects continue.

Demand High for Textbook Written by George Fox Professor

When Craig Johnson, a communication arts professor at George Fox College, began writing *Leadership: A Communication Perspective*, he believed there was a niche to be filled. He and coauthor Michael Hackman had no idea how big.

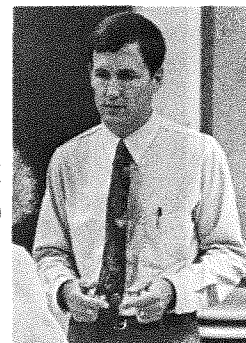
At last count the textbook has been adopted for classes by more than 70 colleges and universities, and the list continues to grow.

Those colleges include Michigan State, Notre Dame, Northwestern, the University of Illinois-Chicago, Cal State, and internationally as far away as New Zealand.

The text contains case studies and examples from Johnson's personal experience in leadership and uses some accounts given by students in George Fox's degree-completion program for working adults, many of whom are in management positions.

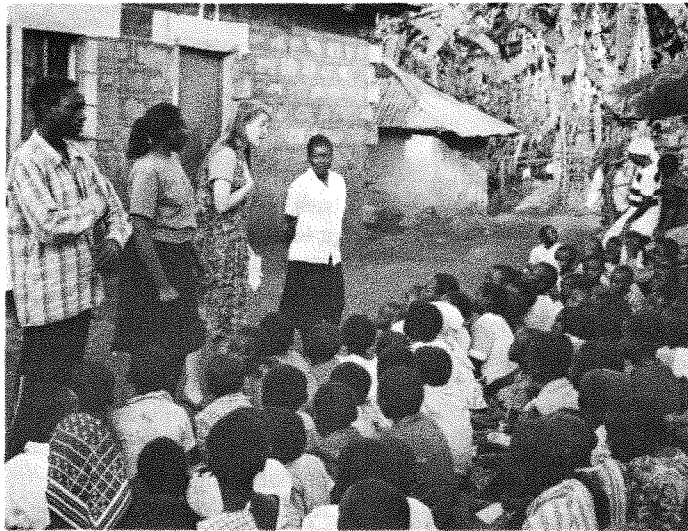
GFC Students Participate in Study in Africa Program

Being mugged in Nairobi, Kenya, wasn't the cultural experience George Fox College senior Jerrie Lyda planned on when he signed up for the "Study in Africa Program,"



Craig Johnson

GFC students receive Kenyan education.



Debby Harney tells over 200 children about Jesus during a ministry team's trip to a village of the Kikuyu people.

but it was one of the many dramatic memories he and four other GFC students brought back after spending a semester at Daystar University College in Nairobi.

Lyda, junior Debby Harney, junior Jill Kaniut, and senior Dave Paschane spent from January to May studying at Daystar, an African Christian college, in a program sponsored by the national Christian College Consortium. Daystar has strong programs in religion, communication, and business, so while GFC students are encouraged to take unique courses—such as African culture and history—they can also fulfill requirements. Credit for courses taken at Daystar is transferred to George Fox.

The Study in Africa Program was an education in life in a place a world apart from home.

"Each day was an adventure," said Lyda. "It was much different from Newberg. The entire campus covered one acre. You can imagine how crowded that was with 500 students."

The classes were in English, Kenya's official language, but the George Fox students were an obvious minority.

"We really stuck out," said Harney. "The only places we saw white people were at hotels and expensive restaurants."

On a trip to a Western-style hamburger restaurant, Lyda

and a couple of other students were approached by a boy in his early teens begging for money. The Americans allowed their friend, Moses, to choose his food. When the food arrived, Lyda said Moses could hardly wait while they thanked God for the food.

"I've prayed many times for food," said Lyda, "but I don't think I've ever been more thankful."

Leaving the restaurant with Moses, Lyda said he knew he had done the right thing. "I felt like we had done what Christ himself would have done."

The trip affected the students' views of American life.

"It gave us a new perspective on our materialism," said Kaniut. "We don't appreciate what we have. I rode in a car three times the whole time I was there. The transportation system is totally different. They'll stick 35 people in a mini-van."

George Fox College has been involved in the Study in Africa Program since the 1990-91 school year. Senior Peter Norquest currently is at Daystar, the ninth GFC student to attend the four-year college.

Hearth Publishing Announces Release of Kansas Book

Hearth Publishing has announced the release of the book *Prairie Sketches* by Ray-

mond Nelson, professor emeritus at Friends University, Wichita, Kansas. This book follows the highly acclaimed book of poetry titled *... and the Kansas Wind Blows* (1991).

The 96-page paperback book includes etchings depicting natural disasters on the prairie and authentic illustrations of law enforcement officials, desperadoes and their notorious acts, political reformers, and famous artists.

Raymond S. Nelson, Ph.D., has now published five books of poetry.

Past-president of the Kansas Authors Club, Nelson also provides programs to civic organizations and schools. Artist Stan Nelson, Nelson's son, is a museum specialist at the National Museum of American History (Smithsonian), Washington, D.C.

THE WIDER WORLD OF FRIENDS

FCNL Plans 50th Anniversary Jubilee

The Friends Committee on National Legislation will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary with a "year of jubilee," inviting Friends across the nation to join them in honoring the service of past and present FCNL staff.

The Committee, which turns 50 in June, was founded in Washington, D.C., during World War II, when it often focused on wartime problems. Since then FCNL has worked in the areas of civil rights, economics and employment, housing, education, and health care.

Friends Committee on Scouting Names New Clerk

The Friends Committee on Scouting has named Clarence Cunningham as its clerk for the upcoming term.

Cunningham replaces Bruce Johnson, who has headed the FCS central committee since its formation in 1989. Johnson founded the FCS because of his concern for Friends involvement in the national scouting program.

SWYM Looks Toward Russia

A Blue Ribbon Task Force on Russia has been named jointly by the Mission Board and Board of Administration of Southwest Yearly Meeting. They are free to co-opt other members as deemed helpful.

The primary purpose of the task force is to discern if it is God's will and time to launch a new mission field in the former Soviet Union or Eastern Europe.

The task force will give a preliminary report in January.

The final report is due at yearly meeting time, June 16-19, 1993, at Azusa Pacific University.

Registration for the 1993 Triennial Sessions to Begin

The 1993 Triennial Sessions of Friends United Meeting are being conducted with the theme "Proclaim the Year of the Lord" July 13-18, 1993, at Hamilton College, Clinton, New York.

Registration forms are available through the Triennial registrar, Sandra Baisley, at Friends Central Offices, 101 Quaker Hill Drive, Richmond, Indiana, 47374, or by phone (317) 962-7573 or FAX (317) 966-1293.

Called to Be Peacemakers Book Published

New Call to Peacemaking has released a 100-page book,

Mexico Yearly Meeting... Robertses retire



OUR FRIENDS MISSIONARY OUTREACH

Called to Be Peacemakers, by John K. Stoner. Designed to help groups and individuals take their next step as peacemakers, the workbook defines peace as a mission for everyone, rather than for a select few.

Campaigning for a Peace Tax Fund

April 21, 1993, through April 23, there will be a legislative seminar and annual meeting of the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund in Washington D.C.

Sessions will take place at the William Penn House near Capitol Hill. For information call or write: National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund, 2121 Decatur Place N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008; telephone (202) 483-3751.

Peacemaking in the Power of the Lord

Southeastern Friends held the annual FWCC regional conference at Memphis, Tennessee, Friends Meeting on the weekend of October 30—November 1. The theme of the conference was addressed through two principal speakers and a variety of workshops. One of the speakers was Sunanda Gandhi, who with her husband, Arun Gandhi, founded the M. K. Gandhi Institute for the Study of Nonviolence. T. Canby Jones of Wilmington and Ohio Valley yearly meetings also addressed the conference.

J. M. Retherford Passes On

John M. Retherford passed away on September 19, 1992, in Marion, Indiana. He had been a pastor in the Friends Church for over 50 years, pastoring churches in Indiana, Washington, Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Colorado. He also served in Kenya, East Africa, as secretary of evangelism from 1952 to 1956.

Mexico

Praise God for answered prayer in the important October 19-23 meeting to plan the formation of Mexico Yearly Meeting. The meeting was attended by delegates of various Friends groups (EFM, North Carolina YM, Southwest YM, Guatemala YM, and others) who drew up and approved a proposal for yearly meeting organization and scheduled the first yearly meeting sessions for the summer of 1993.

The new Satellite group held its first Sunday worship service October 18.

Pray for new leaders, Victor and Elvia Dorantes, being trained for the work at Ecatepec.

Philippines

Norval Hadley, EFM executive director, visited Friends churches in the Manila area October 16-20. He requests prayer for the church-planting efforts of Pastor Jaime Tabingo and the national workers he has trained.

Rough Rock

After completing a three-year term of service, Mark and Wilma Roberts returned home to Greenleaf, Idaho, for retirement in late November. Friends recognize with gratitude, many years of missionary service Mark and Wilma have faithfully given in Bolivia, Peru, Mexico, and at Rough Rock.

EFM still plans to turn leadership of the work at Rough Rock over to the Navajo church elders. For the present Tim Begay, a Navajo Bible translator who had agreed to move there, is unable to go. EFM still has a

goal of developing a training center at Rough Rock. Continue to pray for Navajo Friends and churches in the area.

Rwanda

Roger and Lois Wood of Gilead Friends Church in Ohio arrived in Rwanda on November 14 for a short term of six months.

Dedication services for new church buildings at Ruhengeri, Kanombe/Kigali, and Bugesera/Gatarara in October and November were well

attended. Dedication of the new Remera/Kigali church was postponed until December.

India

Norval Hadley visited Carl and Peggy Hunerwadel and family at Mussoorie briefly in October while touring Friends mission work in Asia. His visit also included Eastern Region fields at Chhatarpur and in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Prayer is requested for the Hunerwadels' ministry at Woodstock School; they have

PERSONAL



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Susie Stanley, Ph.D.
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started a Bible study for Indian laborers at the school and plan to spend their winter break in the villages. They sponsored a gospel music team to minister in schools, churches, and hospitals in Delhi for several days in October.

Other

The survey trip of two EFM representatives to visit eastern Siberia with Alaska YM leaders was again postponed in October for various reasons. During the time the trip had been planned, Paul Miller, one of EFM's representatives, and some Alaska YM leaders attended a very helpful meeting near Anchorage of leaders from several missions planning to work in Siberia. Alaska YM leaders hope to make an initial trip by snowmobile to Siberia in February; later they will be joined by EFM representatives on a follow-up visit.

After some delay due to illness, Paul and Leona Thorn-

burg visited Eastern Region churches in October. They were also in Rocky Mountain and Mid-America yearly meetings this fall.

Internships

Quaker United Nations Office—New York—Opportunity for two interns at the Quaker UN Office from September 1993 to August 1994. Interns follow disarmament, human rights, economic justice, development, environment, women & children, indigenous people, and regional issues at the UN; research/write articles and briefing papers; arrange/attend UN and other meetings; assist with office administration. Candidates must be college graduates or have equivalent experience, 20's, interest in international affairs and commitment to Friends principles; writing/computer skills. Stipend/medical coverage.

For information and application form write: Quaker UN Office, 777 UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017.

Deadline for submission of application and references—**20 March, 1993.**

Wider Fellowship

Mailings from Wider Quaker Fellowship offer spiritual nurture for Friends and non-Friends around the world. Consider gift membership(s). Donations voluntary.

Call/write WQF, 1506 Race St., Philadelphia, PA 19102, phone: (215) 241-7293. A program of FWCC, Section of the Americas.

Work Desired

Mature, experienced man seeks maintenance position as sexton or building and grounds person.

For further details contact: Joe Nolan, 1600-52 Rhododendron Dr., Florence, OR 97439, phone: (503) 997-1752.

Ministry Opportunities

Field Staff, Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas, three part-time openings. Work with yearly meetings representatives, support committees, visitation, organize conferences. West, Midwest, third location to be determined. Starting January-June 1993.

Also Right Sharing of World Resources Secretary. Manage small development grants plus linked program of economic stewardship education. Part-time; may be combined with field staff role. Seeking candidates with demonstrated skills, broad experience of, and commitment to Friends testimonies.

Write: Asia Bennett, FWCC, 1506 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102.

Legislative Interns

Three positions available assisting FCNL's lobbyists. These are eleven-month paid assignments, usually filled by recent college graduates, beginning September 1, 1993. Duties include research, writing, monitoring issues, attending hearings and coalitions meetings, and maintaining files.

Applications close March 15, 1993. Friends Committee on National Legislation, 245 Second Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002, phone (202) 547-6000.

Pews for Sale

Blonde oak church pews, excellent condition, graduated lengths, 9 to 14 feet.

The Wesleyan Church, Box 116, Syracuse, KS 67878. Call (316) 384-5828 (FAX), or (316) 384-6983, or (316) 373-2903.

Loans Available

For building or improving Friends meetinghouses, schools, and related facilities. We are Friends helping Friends to grow! For information contact: Margaret Bennington, Friends Extension Corporation, 101 Quaker Hill Dr., Richmond, IN 47374-1980, phone (317) 962-7573. *Affiliated with Friends United Meeting*

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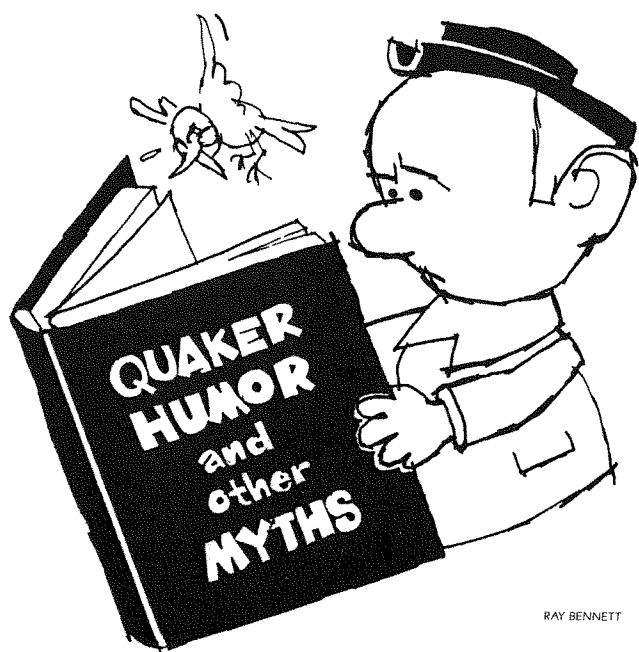
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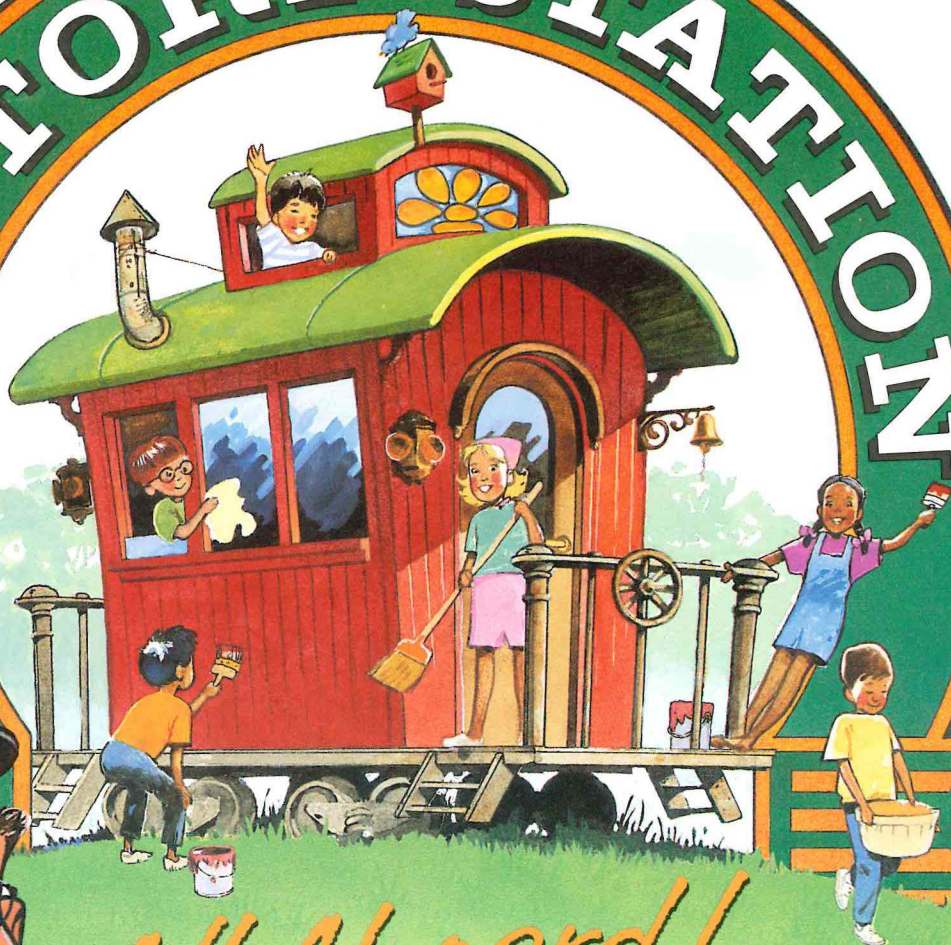
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VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



With a Hee Hee

BY JANET JOHNSTON

I TRIED BITING my tongue, looking down at the floor, and coughing, but that didn't stop the laugh that was building. As I sat in a business meeting, I became side-splittingly aware that what was said and what was meant could have two very different interpretations. One of the pitfalls in visiting several yearly meetings is the unexpected comment that stirs one's sense of the humorous.

For instance, during a serious presentation on endowment funds—"After you're dead and gone, you'll still be revolving." From the speakers' platform—"I'm so glad to be here today and to be able to look down on all of you." Heard during committee reports—"We women are spread all over the state." And, "There are so few children in the youth program, it makes me wonder what the women of _____ Yearly Meeting are doing!" Finally, from a trustee's report—"The purchaser didn't make the payments on the property so we had to foreclose on the Great and Glorious Church of Jesus Christ." The gentleman sitting next to me commented, "The gates of hell can't prevail against the church but _____ Yearly Meeting can foreclose." That time, there were two of us trying to smother our laughter.

Recently I was looking through a religious catalog that specializes in small gifts for awards, class gifts, etc., and found myself getting more and more amused. Here are some of the ads (the capitalization is the company's). I'm afraid I can't resist commenting, but I'll put my remarks in brackets so those of you who want to make up your own insightful comments can just skip the brackets and write your own.

(1) 2 oz. non-toxic RELIGIOUS BUBBLES in a 3¼" plastic bottle w/wand. [No distinction here between Protestant, Catholic, etc. so maybe that's why they

are nontoxic. If they touch you and burst, is this a new form of baptism? And what do heathen bubbles look like?]

(2) 12" plastic RELIGIOUS WIGGLE RULER [Maybe this is for people who can't measure up to the golden rule, or for those who try to bend the rules.]

(3) 6½" plastic "Jesus Loves You" POP A POINT PENCIL [Agree that this is a point well made, but does it pop out and write it each time you use it, or does it verbally make its point whenever you click the top?]

(4) 1½" plastic RELIGIOUS STAMP PAD ASSORTMENT [Is this the infamous "rubber-stamping" we hear about? These are 2 dozen per display unit, but it doesn't say if they are theologically assorted, like fundamentalist, conservative, liberal, or evangelical, or all one kind. If you weren't sure, you could use washable ink and be stamped whatever you wanted to fit the occasion.]

(5) 4" vinyl RELIGIOUS FLYING DISC ASSORTMENT [Seems ideal for witnessing. Find a tall building or tree and zoom the gospel witness all around. At only \$2.40 per dozen, it would be far less expensive than missionaries or preachers, and maybe people would take

them more seriously thinking they came down from above.]

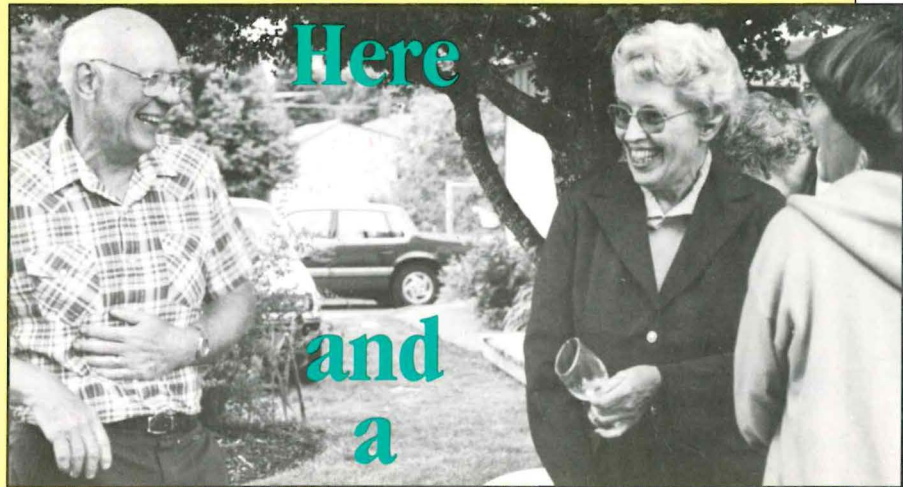
(6) 2½" RELIGIOUS CLACKER ASSORTMENT [Since these are assorted, I'm sure it includes Quaker Clackers, which means they are quieter than the other clackers.]

(7) GOD IS LOVE SCRIPT HEART ERASER [You won't need to have a "create in me a pure heart" prayer anymore because you can have your own heart eraser. If you rub too hard, will you become heartless?]

(8) RELIGIOUS PRISM in assorted neon colors and designs [I have only seen rainbow colors in a prism, but this says "neon colors." Does looking through a religious prism help one to have a better worldview?]

(9) 2" metal RELIGIOUS YO-YO ASSORTMENT [Not referring to persons, I think. This is perfect because with it you can go up and down on any religious issue you want.]

These are just a few of the articles from one catalog. When some of these start showing up as premiums on religious TV shows, I'll start to be concerned. Meanwhile, pondering these just makes me laugh. EF



Ha Ha There

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