

April 20, 1989

To all Blue River Quarterly Attenders -

I regret that I cannot be with you at this meeting! A Haworth family get-together here was planned for this weekend before the date for Quarterly was set.

Conflicts such as this, of course, is one reason people do not attend Quarterlies. Perhaps the date has to be set up further in advance. Once the date is on our calendars, some conflicts can be avoided; others can't be, which means making a decision. Do we go to Quarterly or do we go to the conflicting activity? This has to be an individual decision, a matter of priority and interest.

Obviously, in recent years, people have chosen to not come to Quarterly. "Why" has been discussed at many Quarterly Meetings and we've come up with the same answers - conflicts, time crunch, travel expense, and the desire to "stay home" after a full work week. We do need "slow-down" time in our busy lives.

I am enclosing sections of minutes from a couple of Quarterly Meetings and also a letter from Lucy Talley. I would strongly suggest a retreat type format for the fall Quarterly with an early request to Lucy or some other resource person. Though I recommend a retreat type format, I feel that the main activity should be on Saturday with no "requirements" of being there on Friday night or Sunday morning.

I will be glad to do the paper work, calling, etc. and work with the host Meeting on this. Will it be at Urbana-Champaign again? Would you want it to be held at the IYM Meetinghouse? Should it be somewhere else? This has all been discussed before, at Quarterly.

I will miss seeing all of you - particularly you St. Louis Friends that I get to see only at Quarterly. As of this writing I don't know if anyone will be attending from Clear Creek. Anna Mary Wilson was planning to come with another couple driving her, but she will be unable to due to health and company.

My thanks go to Peg Morton who has agreed to fill in as clerk - a position she has capably held in the past. We in Illinois Yearly Meeting are going to miss her when she heads west!

Grayce Haworth  
Clerk - Blue River Quarterly

An Invitation to Blue River Quarterly Meeting  
Religious Society of Friends  
April 22---23, 1989  
St. Louis, Missouri

"Should Blue River Quarterly Meeting be laid down?" This question was suggested as a catchy title in the hope that attendance at the forthcoming Quarterly would improve. While it is an extreme suggestion, it does raise legitimate questions about the viability and vitality of Blue River Quarterly Meeting. The poor attendance at Quarterly Meeting has a long history; attempts to enhance it's role in our spiritual development have come to very little. Few come. Nothing seems to have worked in the past. What's wrong? . . . Should it (BRQ) be laid down?

St. Louis Friends rejected the "catchy title" at it's last monthly business meeting, asking the ad hoc committee to try again. What follows is 1) our thinking about the problem and 2) what we would ask you to do in anticipation of the BIGGEST BRQ meeting ever. (The meeting house will hold 150 - how's that for optimism!)

Assumption: We are an intentional community dedicated to the spiritual-religious growth of all those who choose to join us in worship and other community activities. This is why we call ourselves the Religious Society of Friends.

Question ONE: Since the Quarterly Meeting is but a larger geographic entity than the monthly meeting, what is its unique role in assisting and supporting the spiritual-religious growth of those who come?

Question TWO: How can a monthly meeting share with other meetings its successes/failures in the religious development of it's members and attenders?

Question THREE: What role does staying in the homes of host Friends play in enhancing the Quarterly Meeting experience for out-of-town attenders?

Question FOUR: When you attend Quarterly Meeting, how do you prepare for Quarterly Meeting so that you may participate and contribute to the power and excitement of Quarterly Meeting? Do you invite others to come with you?

Queries are the easy part. The hard part takes discipline, dedication, and work.

- 1) Discuss the above questions in your meeting - open, honest sharing is vital.
- 2) Individually and cooperatively set in writing how your monthly meeting is nurturing the spiritual journey of its members and attenders. Bring the corporate report to Quarterly Meeting.
- 3) Would you transmit your intention of coming (mail tear-off at end of this letter) to St. Louis by April 22. Noon lunch will be provided for out-of-towners. First session at 1:00 p.m.

Providing 50-75 beds and meals takes planning and we do want you to come and make it a joyous occasion. It is important to the advancement of our beloved society.

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With warmth and anticipation,  
Your Friends in St. Louis

714 West Green Street  
Urbana, Illinois  
April 16, 1989

Dear Friends,

your queries concerning Quarterly Meeting were considered tonight at our Monthly Meeting for Business. It was agreed that the questions you raise are appropriate and need to be addressed.

The following are some thoughts that arose from our discussion:

We agree that we would be sorry to see Quarterly Meeting laid down. It offers opportunity for members of small meetings to meet with larger groups, and helps overcome the isolation which small meetings often feel; it also offers a chance for personal communications among Friends. The two-day meeting is an easy way for new Friends and attenders to meet a wider gathering where a longer meeting such as IYM or FGC may not be easy to arrange time for.

Quarterly Meeting business should always be conducted in such a way as to contribute to the spiritual experience of Quarterly Meeting. The reading of the State-of-the-Meeting reports is felt to contribute to this atmosphere.

The hospitality offered by host Friends to out-of-town attenders gives us a chance to know each other in a deeper way, and is an important aspect of Quarterly Meeting.

We confess that except for the preparation of the State-of-the-Meeting report by the Ministry and Oversight Committee we do not, in general, make special preparation for Quarterly Meeting.

Our Meeting would greatly appreciate a report on the general discussion of your queries.

It is not clear to us at this time how many people may be able to attend this Quarterly Meeting--perhaps four, with no children. Unfortunately, at this time of year, many of us have previous commitments that make attendance at this Quarterly impossible.

To help you make your plans for the future, we are letting you know that we plan to hold fall Quarterly Meeting in our Meeting House in Urbana on October 21<sup>st</sup>; at that time we will be celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our Meeting, and we hope you can plan to attend the celebration.

Sincerely,

Frances Day  
Co-clerks

Mahlon Day

*Frances Day* *Mahlon Day*

**Urbana-Champaign Monthly Meeting  
Summary of responses to the points raised by the  
Ad-Hoc Quarterly Meeting Committee Report**

- 1) Division of Blue River Quarterly would be acceptable if it was seen to meet the needs of the member monthly meetings.
- 2) It seems to us that it may be somewhat difficult to do much planning beyond picking a date for the next quarterly meeting.
- 3) We prefer this wording "The quarterly meeting planning committee should seek to include at least one member from each meeting in the quarter, and the quarterly meeting Clerk.
- 4) We would like to consider the possibility of having two meetings for business and two retreats for worship and fellowship.
- 5) Some of us felt that actual names were not important.
- 6) The point was raised that the timing of spring quarterly was sometimes bad for many of our members who are associated with the university. However we were unable to suggest any good alternative.

Mildred G. Protzman  
45 Allen Bend Drive  
Decatur, Illinois 62521

Decatur Friends Meeting

Dear Grayce Haworth,

Our State of the Meeting report will be sent to Illinois Yearly Meeting. The person who volunteered to write it did not finish it on time.

We did reply to the question of Blue River Quarterly Meeting but here is another reply. We are in favor of the division and wish Ozark Quarter a blessed beginning whenever they choose to organize.

We do not at this time have anyone who wishes to represent this meeting at Quarterly Meeting. We as you may know, ~~our~~<sup>see</sup> down to five resident members and two attenders. It is difficult to have all members present at Meetings for business, we suffer from poor communication some ~~of~~<sup>or</sup> the time for this very reason.

Love,

Mildred Protzman, Clerk  
Decatur Friends Meeting  
May 6, 1990

Minute on Division of Blue River Quarter  
Columbia Monthly Meeting

Columbia Monthly Meeting is willing for Blue River Quarter to divide into a northern, Blue River Quarter centered about Urbana, IL and a southern, Ozark Quarter centered about St. Louis, MO. Columbia Friends are well aware of the distances that must be travelled for Friends to meet together, and hope that somewhat shorter distances will enable more of our Meeting to meet other Friends frequently enough to become, indeed, friends and a support for each other by sharing individual concerns. Columbia Friends would like to be informed of all Quarterly Meetings in what is now Blue River Quarter, so that those of our members who do have friends among the more northern Meetings may join them as opportunity offers. We would like to see Quarterly Meetings again become the valuable sustaining family events that nurture Friends of all ages in their spiritual journey as many present day older Friends seem to remember from their years as young parents. Columbia Friends request that Quarterly Meeting dates be set and announced 6 months in advance to facilitate planning of other local events.