

Glossary

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Acknowledged minister: *A recorded minister.*

Advancement: Promoting the vitality of Friends meetings or of the Quaker movement generally, including both internal community-building efforts and outreach to the broader public.

Advices: Words of advice, issued by a meeting to its constituent meetings or individual members, often in connection with *queries*.

Affirm: To indicate that one's statements are true, particularly when such an indication is legally required, as when giving testimony in court. Friends generally affirm rather than swear, in accordance with Jesus' injunction to "swear not at all," (Matthew 5:34) and to avoid the implication that lies are more acceptable if not sworn to.

After the manner of Friends: Done in harmony with Quaker principles; following Quaker practice.

AFSC: The American Friends Service Committee, a Quaker organization devoted to service, development, and peace programs throughout the world.

Allowed meeting: *A recognized meeting.*

Associate membership: A form of membership accorded in some meetings to children, differing from ordinary membership in that it expires at a certain age, normally in early adulthood.

As way opens: If and when one is spiritually prepared (for a particular course of action) and an opportunity for that action presents itself.

Attender: A person who regularly attends a Friends meeting without being a member of it.

Beanite: A Friend or meeting belonging to the tradition of Joel and Hannah Bean, 19th century ministers who founded San Jose Meeting in California. Beanite meetings are typically unprogrammed, liberal, independent of other Friends organizations, and located in the western U.S.

Birthright Friend: A Friend whose membership was initiated at birth or adoption, by virtue of the parents already being members; or more loosely, anyone who was raised since early childhood in a Quaker setting. Used in contrast to *convinced Friend*.

Birthright membership: Membership in a Friends meeting which is extended automatically to children whose parents are members at the time of birth or adoption. Many meetings no longer grant birthright membership, but it was traditional to do so.

Break meeting: To end a meeting for worship, traditionally by shaking hands.

Called meeting: An “extra” meeting for business, in addition to those held according to the regular schedule, typically to deal with an urgent question which cannot wait for the regular business meeting.

Center down: To quiet one’s mind and settle into worship, so that one is open to the leadings of the Spirit.

Children of the Light: An early name for the Quakers.

Christ Within: The Spirit of Christ, as manifest within each person; the *Spirit* or *Light Within*.

Clearness: 1. Confidence that a decision or action is in accord with Divine will, as revealed by the Light within. 2. Freedom from burdens, constraints or obstacles, particularly of a spiritual nature.

Clearness committee: A committee set up to assist an individual or group in seeking clearness about a decision or concern. Such committees are appointed for couples requesting marriage under the care of a meeting, and for individuals requesting membership in a meeting; they may also be organized at an individual’s request to aid in personal discernment about matters not requiring a meeting decision.

Clerk: An individual appointed by a business meeting to discern when the meeting has reached its decisions, and articulate those decisions back to the meeting for its approval. The clerk also recognizes speakers in meeting for business, signs letters and other documents on behalf of the meeting, and may have other responsibilities as the meeting assigns. See xx–xx.

Concern: A deeply felt and spiritually-based sense that some matter requires attention.

Congregational Friends: *Progressive Friends*.

Conscientious objector: An individual who refuses to participate in military or other activity, on the grounds that his or her conscience will not permit it.

Conservative meeting: A meeting belonging to the tradition of those Orthodox Friends who resisted certain aspects of 19th century evangelicalism. Conservative meetings are typically unprogrammed, but more traditionalist and explicitly Christian than many other unprogrammed meetings.

Continuing revelation: The belief that God continues to guide and inform people through the Light Within, as opposed to the idea that God's revelation was completed at some point in the past, such as with the composition of the most recent parts of the Bible.

Convinced Friend: A Friend who became a member by request, after having become convinced of the religious Truth advanced by Friends, as opposed to a *birthright Friend*.

Convincement: An inner conviction of the religious Truth advanced by Friends, especially as a reason for initiating membership in a Friends meeting.

Covered meeting: A *gathered meeting*.

Discernment: Spiritual labor to discover Divine will, especially through individual or corporate worship, in order to distinguish authentic leadings from other motivations which do not arise from the Spirit; or the outcome of such labor.

Discipline: 1. The procedures and policies by which a Friends meeting operates, including official expectations for members and constituent meetings. 2. A book outlining these policies, procedures and expectations, typically issued by a yearly meeting. Many yearly meetings have replaced their books of discipline with books entitled *Faith and Practice*, such as this one.

Disown: To issue a statement (by a meeting) that a particular individual is out of fellowship with Friends; to terminate a Friend's membership for cause. Disownment is now very rare. The primary purpose of disownment is to clarify to the public that the disowned Friend's actions are not to be regarded as those of a Friend or taken as representative of the meeting. Disownment does not cut all ties with the individual, who normally may continue participation in meeting activities which are open to the public.

EFCI: Evangelical Friends Church International, an organization of evangelical Friends meetings throughout the world.

Elder (noun): 1. An experienced and respected Friend, especially one who exercises leadership in a meeting. 2. A Friend appointed to exercise special care toward the ministers and potential ministers of a meeting, fostering the development of their gifts, encouraging whatever in their ministry seems a faithful expression of the Spirit's guidance, and tenderly offering correction when ministry seems inappropriate or misguided.

Elder (verb): 1. To act as an elder. 2. To criticize or reprimand as inappropriate or un-Quakerly.

Epistle: A letter, especially a formal letter conveying a spiritual or religious message. By tradition, each Friends yearly meeting issues an epistle to other yearly meetings annually.

Evangelical meeting: 1. A Friends meeting incorporating major features of evangelical Protestantism, such as a strong emphasis on salvation through faith, and reliance on the Bible as

a source of religious doctrine. Evangelical meetings are typically pastoral and programmed. 2. A meeting affiliated with *EFCI*.

Exercises: The proceedings or transactions of a meeting; or more generally the course of activity in a Friends gathering, whether part of a business meeting or not. Traditionally, yearly meetings issue an annual “report of exercises” summarizing the major decisions, issues considered, ministry offered, and memorable events at that year’s gathering.

Facing benches: Benches at the front of a traditionally arranged Friends meeting room, facing the main body of the meeting and usually arranged on a raised gallery. Seating on the facing benches was originally intended primarily for ministers, so that they might be heard more easily when speaking; but came to include elders, clerks, and other meeting officials.

FCNL: The Friends Committee on National Legislation, a U.S. Quaker lobbying organization working “to create a world free from war, a society with equity and justice for all, a community where every person’s potential may be fulfilled and an earth restored.”

Feel a stop: To sense that some contemplated decision or course of action should not go forward.

FGC: Friends General Conference, an organization of yearly meetings and other Quaker groups in the U.S. and Canada, including Illinois Yearly Meeting. Originally a Hicksite organization, FGC now includes meetings from a variety of Quaker traditions, though primarily of an unprogrammed style of worship and liberal theological perspective.

First Day: The first day of the week, more commonly called Sunday. Similarly, Second Day is the day commonly called Monday; Third Day is the day commonly called Tuesday, etc. Early Friends did not use the common names of the days of the week because most of them derive from the names of Pagan gods, in whom they did not believe; some Friends continue to have similar scruples, or use the numerical names as an expression of Quaker identity and tradition.

First Day school: A children’s program of religious instruction held on *First Day*, analogous to Sunday School in other denominations.

First Month: The first month of the year, more commonly called January. Similarly, Second Month is the month commonly called February; Third Month is the month commonly called March, etc. Early Friends did not use the common names of the months because most of them derive from the names of Pagan gods, in whom they did not believe; some Friends continue to have similar scruples, or use the numerical names as an expression of Quaker identity and tradition. *Note:* Prior to the calendar reform of 1752, First Month was the month commonly called March, Second Month was the month commonly called April, etc.

FLGBTQC: Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Concerns.

Friend: A Quaker. Adherents to the Quaker movement have called each other “Friends” since very early in its history. A common explanation for the use of this term is that it is in reference to John 15:14–17, but there is little in early Friends writings to corroborate this.

Friends Church: 1. A Friends meeting, especially a programmed or pastoral meeting. 2. The *Religious Society of Friends*. Used especially by Friends belonging to programmed or pastoral meetings.

FUM: Friends United Meeting, an international organization of Friends meetings. Originally an Orthodox organization, FUM now includes meetings from a wide variety of Quaker traditions, though primarily of an explicitly Christian perspective.

FWCC: Friends World Committee for Consultation, an international organization encouraging fellowship and communication among the various branches of the Religious Society of Friends.

Gathered meeting: A meeting in which worshipping Friends feel an unusually deep, quickening sense of connection with each other through the operation of the Spirit; a meeting in which the communal character of worship is strongly or vividly perceived.

Good order: *Right order.*

Gospel order: The order of a community, or of the world more generally, as its members live in right relationship with one another and with God; the pattern of organization into which Divine guidance leads us.

Gurneyite: A Friend or meeting in the tradition of the supporters of Joseph John Gurney in the schisms which divided Orthodox Quakerism in the mid-19th century, characterized by a relatively evangelical perspective with emphasis on the authority of the Bible, and on the atoning power of the outward, “historical” crucifixion and resurrection.

Hicksite: A Friend or meeting in the tradition of the supporters of Elias Hicks in the schism of 1827–28, characterized by a strong emphasis on doctrinal freedom and to some extent by Hicks’ theological views, which downplayed the significance of the outward, “historical” crucifixion and resurrection except as “figures” of the inward operation of Christ’s Spirit in each individual.

Hold in the Light: 1. To place mentally under the healing, beneficial influence of the Light Within; to pray for, especially wordlessly. 2. To examine or consider (a topic) with the aid of the Light Within; to consider while silencing one’s thoughts and setting aside one’s personal desires and rationalizations, in order to better discern Divine will.

Indulged meeting: An older term for *allowed meeting* or *recognized meeting*.

Inner Light, Inward Light: The *Light Within*.

Lay down: To discontinue; especially, to discontinue a meeting. Laying down a monthly meeting means discontinuing its business meeting as a monthly meeting, and is compatible with continuation of the meeting community in some other form.

Leading: A deeply felt, spiritually-based conviction, impelling one to engage in a particular course of action.

Light Within: The Divine presence held by Friends to be manifest in all people, conceptualized in a variety of ways but originally and still by many Friends identified with the Spirit of Christ. The Light Within reveals to us our true natures, makes clear to us what is right and what is wrong, leads us to act or suffer for Truth, and transforms us, as we allow it, into better people. Also referred to as the *Spirit, that of God in everyone*, or in a variety of other ways.

Meeting for business: A Quaker business meeting; a meeting for worship in which Friends gather to make collective decisions pertaining to the meeting community.

Meeting for sufferings: A body appointed to conduct business on behalf of a yearly meeting in the interim between its annual business sessions, so called because such business originally consisted primarily of action in support of Friends who were imprisoned or otherwise suffering for their religious convictions. The corresponding body in Illinois Yearly Meeting is the Continuing Committee.

Meeting for worship: A gathering for the purpose of worship, understood by Friends to be a collective waiting in silence, from which anyone present may speak as led to do so by the Spirit.

Meeting for worship with a concern for business, meeting for worship with attention to business: A Friends *meeting for business*. So called because Friends wait in such meetings to be guided by the Divine Spirit, just as in ordinary meetings for worship where no business is conducted.

Meeting of ministers and elders: Historically, a meeting in which the ministers and elders of a Friends community gathered on a regular basis to consider their ministry and other conduct, and respond to queries pertaining to it. Such meetings have now mostly been replaced by worship and ministry committees.

Member: A person having membership in a Friends meeting, standing in a relation of mutual care and accountability with the meeting community.

Minister: A Friend who ministers to the spiritual needs of others, especially one who feels a long-term, ongoing call to such service and is recognized by a meeting as having a gift for such work.

Ministry: Speech or action which benefits the spiritual condition of others, such as speech offered under a sense of Divine leading in meeting for worship.

Monthly meeting: 1. The primary level of Quaker business meeting, conducting the business of a single local meeting, or in some cases, of a small number of meetings across a limited region. The monthly meeting is the level at which membership resides. 2. The body of Friends whose business is conducted in such a meeting.

Opening: 1. A revelation or new understanding of a spiritual truth. 2. An opportunity for spirit-led action.

Orthodox Friends: A Friend or meeting in the tradition of the opponents of Elias Hicks in the schism of 1827–1828, in modern times represented by *FUM*, *EFCI* and the *Conservative meetings*.

Outrun one's Guide: To say more in meeting for worship than one is led to say by the Spirit; or more generally to allow one's personal will to guide actions which were begun under a sense of Divine leading.

Overseer: Historically, a Friend appointed to labor with those meeting members whose conduct appeared to be inconsistent with Quaker principles, and if necessary, bring their cases to the monthly meeting. The role of overseers later evolved to the coordination of pastoral care for a meeting. Use of the term *overseers* for pastoral care committees is now strongly discouraged, as for some Friends this term may carry connotations connected with slavery.

Particular meeting: A local congregation of Friends, whether organized as a monthly meeting, preparative meeting, or worship group.

Pastoral meeting: A meeting in which a particular individual is appointed as pastor.

Plain dress: Attire chosen in accordance with Quaker ideals of simplicity, plainness and modesty: free of ornamentation or superfluities, and without respect to the vain and changing whims of fashion. Through much of the history of Quakerism, plain dress was understood to involve a long straight coat with a stand-up collar and broad-brimmed hat for men, and a long skirt, shawl and bonnet for women; but such attire has now become rare.

Plain speech: Speech in a style conforming to Quaker ideals of simplicity, plainness and honesty: free of flattery and euphemism, with no honorific titles or honorific pronouns, and avoiding all terminology which is inconsistent with one's religious convictions. Traditionally, plain speech was understood to require the use of the old second person singular pronoun *thee* and its related forms when addressing just one individual; using numerical names for the days of the week and months of the year such as *First Day*, *First Month*; and avoiding the use of certain greetings and leave-takings, such as *good day* and *Godspeed*.

Popcorn meeting: A meeting for worship during which multiple Friends speak in quick succession, with little silence in between, especially if the speaking is regarded as excessive or as detracting from the depth of worship.

Preparative meeting: The business meeting of a single local meeting, forming part of a larger monthly meeting; or the body of Friends whose business is conducted in such a meeting.

Programmed meeting: A meeting with a set order of service, as opposed to a meeting held entirely in waiting worship.

Progressive Friends: A movement which separated from the main body of Hicksite Friends in the mid-19th century, characterized by an emphasis on doctrinal freedom, local autonomy for meetings, no formal recognition of ministers or elders, and robust political engagement. Progressive Friends gradually dwindled away as a separate body, but much of their perspective and practice has been adopted into the wider Quaker world.

Public Friend: A Friend who undertakes extended ministry outside her or his home meeting.

Quaker: A Friend; a member of the Religious Society of Friends; an adherent to the spiritual movement this Society represents. Originally a derogatory term for Friends used by people outside the movement, it has long since been embraced by Friends and lost the scornful tone it once conveyed.

Quarterly meeting: A regional body of Friends, consisting of more than one monthly meeting and forming part of a larger yearly meeting; or the business meeting of such a body.

Query: A question, especially a question posed to guide self-examination and discernment. Historically, meetings were expected to provide regular written responses to a series of queries about their spiritual and practical conditions. Nowadays queries are more often considered by meetings or individuals simply as a contemplative practice, without minuting or reporting the responses.

Quietism: A variety of Quakerism emphasizing separation from mainstream society, strict meeting discipline, and a relatively hierarchical meeting structure. Quietism was the predominant form of Quakerism through much of the 18th and 19th centuries, but the term was not introduced until later.

Read out of meeting: To *disown*; to terminate a Friend's membership for cause.

Recognized meeting: A regularly held meeting for worship, formally established by a monthly meeting but held at some distance from it; a worship group held under the minuted care of a monthly meeting.

Recommended minister: A *recorded minister*.

Recorded minister: An individual who has been recorded in the minutes of a meeting as having an ongoing gift and leading to minister to the spiritual needs of others.

Recorder: An individual appointed to keep the membership records of a monthly meeting.

Recording clerk: 1. An individual appointed to record the minutes of a business meeting, usually sharing with the clerk the responsibility for composing the wording of those minutes. 2. In some yearly meetings, such as Britain Yearly Meeting, a senior staff member charged with a variety of executive and managerial duties for the yearly meeting.

Released Friend: A Friend who has been released by his or her meeting from other responsibilities, in order to engage in ministry or follow a leading. Release is sometimes understood to involve financial support.

Religious Society of Friends: The entire Quaker movement, considered as a single body or organization.

Right order: Practices and procedures which have been found to help Friends in conducting their business and witness according to careful discernment of spiritual leadings.

Rise of meeting: The end of a meeting for worship, when the worshippers leave their seats.

Season: To take under an extended process of discernment; to consider deeply and at length.

Sense of the meeting: The united understanding of the Friends gathered in a meeting for business, regarding some proposed decision or other issue under consideration.

Society of Friends: The *Religious Society of Friends*.

Sojourning membership: A temporary form of membership, in a meeting where one expects to be staying for a limited time. If and when the sojourn ends, membership reverts automatically to one's home meeting.

Speak to one's condition: To touch one deeply and spiritually, in a way which is suited to the particulars of one's inward state.

Spirit: The Divine presence in all people, by which we are guided, comforted, and transformed for the better; the *Light Within*, or *that of God in everyone*.

Stand aside: To state one's lack of unity with a decision in business meeting, while agreeing that the decision may proceed despite this lack of unity.

Stand in the way: To declare opposition on a spiritual basis to a proposal in business meeting, with the intent of stopping a decision in favor of the proposal. Standing in the way does not completely shut down the decision-making process, and normally requires taking some responsibility for helping the meeting find another way forward.

State of Society report: A report prepared by a meeting, outlining its spiritual and practical condition. In Illinois Yearly Meeting, monthly meetings prepare a State of Society report at least

annually, which is read in the quarterly meeting (if any) and published in the yearly meeting minute book.

Steward: One into whose care something of value is placed. More specifically in Illinois Yearly Meeting, one of a group of individuals appointed to manage the real estate and tangible property of the yearly meeting.

Sufferings Fund: A fund administered by a meeting, dedicated to the aid of Friends who are suffering for their religious convictions, or for other purposes as decided by the meeting.

Support Committee: A committee charged with providing spiritual or practical support to a person facing challenging circumstances, or engaged in the pursuit of a leading.

Testimony: A religious truth to which one testifies. Applied in modern Friends usage especially to general concepts encapsulating the principles and values by which Friends aim to order their lives, such as integrity, peace, simplicity, equality, community, and stewardship.

That of God in everyone: The Divine presence in all people, through which every life has value and the capacity for good; the *Spirit*, or *Light Within*.

Thee: The second person singular pronoun. Historically in English, when speaking to just one person, it was usual to address that person using the pronouns *thou*, *thee*, *thy* and *thine*. In contrast, a group was addressed using the plural pronouns *ye*, *you*, *your* and *yours*. By the time the Quaker movement began, it had become common to address a single individual using a plural pronoun as a form of honor or flattery, especially if the addressee was of higher social status than the speaker. Quakers objected to this usage as arising from a spirit of pride, and insisted on the use of *thou*, *thee*, *thy* and *thine* when addressing a single individual, regardless of social hierarchy. (In colloquial Quaker usage, *thou* eventually came to be replaced by *thee*, and the second person singular verb forms by forms similar to the third person singular.) Over the centuries, *you* and its related forms have gradually lost all honorific connotations, and few Friends continue to use *thee* and its related forms; but some do, mainly as an expression of Quaker identity and tradition.

Threshing meeting: 1. In early Quakerism, a meeting with the general public, held to identify those individuals who might be interested in becoming involved with the Quaker movement. 2. *A threshing session.*

Threshing session: A meeting in which an issue is given preliminary consideration and discussion, with no final decision expected.

Travel minute: A minute issued by a meeting, indicating that the meeting supports a particular individual as he or she travels in the ministry or under a sense of religious concern; or, a document attesting that such a minute has been approved by the meeting, which the traveling

Friend carries and presents to any meetings he or she visits, as certification of the home meeting's support.

Under the care of (a meeting): With the official support and oversight of the meeting; in a relation of mutual responsibility with the meeting.

Unprogrammed meeting: A meeting whose worship is held with no planned order of service; a meeting which engages in *waiting worship*.

Unprogrammed worship: Worship with no planned order of service; *waiting worship*.

Vocal ministry: Spoken words intended to help the spiritual condition of other people, especially speech given under a sense of Divine leading in meeting for worship.

Waiting worship: Worship in which Friends wait silently to be moved by the Spirit to speak in prayer or ministry, as opposed to worship with a planned order of service.

Weighty Friend: A highly respected Friend, especially one whose discernment often has a strong influence on meeting decision-making.

Wilburite: A Friend or meeting in the tradition of the supporters of John Wilbur in the schisms which divided Orthodox Quakerism in the mid-19th century, characterized by a strong emphasis on plainness, separation from the world, traditionalism, and a rejection of the evangelical movement.

Worship group: A local group which meets regularly for worship in the manner of Friends, especially if not organized as a monthly or preparative meeting.

Worship sharing: A modern Quaker practice in which the members of a small group share their thoughts or feelings with one another in a worshipful way, usually in response to a specific theme or query.

Yearly meeting: A regional or national body of Friends, normally gathering for business once per year and consisting of multiple quarterly and/or monthly meetings; or the business meeting of such a body.