

Universalist Friends

The Journal Of The Quaker Universalist Fellowship

In This Issue

- 3** From the Editor
By Patricia A. Williams
- 5** Free Will and Justice, an Unfortunate Duality
By Alfred Roberts
- 10** The Bible and the Light
By Patricia A. Williams
- 18** Quaker Universalist Fellowship: Its History
By Sally Rickerman
- 22** In Memory
of Carolyn Nicholson Terrell
- 24** New Books!!



Quaker Universalist Fellowship

The Quaker Universalist Fellowship is an informal gathering of persons who cherish the spirit of universality that has always been intrinsic to the Quaker faith. We acknowledge and respect the diverse spiritual experience of those within our own meetings as well as of the human family worldwide; we are enriched by our conversation with all who search sincerely. Our mission includes publishing and providing speakers and opportunities for fellowship at regional and national Quaker gatherings.

Universalist Friends and a QUF pamphlet are published twice a year and are available free to on-line subscribers. These publications are available as web pages (HTML) for browsing, ebooks (PDF) for on-line reading, and pamphlets (booked PDF) for printing. Visit our website at <http://www.universalistfriends.org> to enter a free on-line subscription.

If you wish to receive printed copies of these publications by regular mail, send an annual subscription fee of \$12.00 to QUF at our mailing address below. Selected past QUF publications are available free to our on-line subscribers. We will send available printed copies of past publications upon request and on payment of a fee.

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From the Editor

I recently returned from the annual meeting of the Friends Association for Higher Education, which met this year at Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana. The topic for the meeting was “Scholars for Peace, Justice, and Sustainability.” There were plenary sessions, many concurrent workshops, and—new and perhaps the highlight—small groups that met together every day for discussion. Earlham also supplied an on-location bookstore, and the library remained open on Saturday so we could look at our email. I go to conferences as vacations, and this was one of the best I’ve enjoyed in years.

The purpose of the FAHE is to strengthen the Quaker mission in higher education by facilitating fellowship, sharing scholarly research, and looking for unity among spirituality, intellect, and justice.

Next year, the FAHE will meet overseas for the first time, at Woodbrooke in Birmingham, England, June 19-22. The topic is “Where Faith and Practice Meet.” As an added extra, at the end of the meeting, a tour of important Quaker historical places is available. The email contact for the conference is Ben Pink Dandelion, benpd@compuserve.com. Contact for the FAHE is Kori Heavner, fahe@quaker.org. If you are in higher education (or highly educated) consider joining. It’s a great group of Quakers, though not all are universalists.

I gave a workshop there titled “Jesus against Justice.” (I couldn’t resist!) Several of Jesus’ parables suggest that justice can impede mercy, even divine mercy.

And here, in this issue of *Universalist Friends*, we have a paper by Al Roberts that also seems against justice. I disagree with what Al says, because I find us remarkably free to choose what we do or don’t do, but I think his ideas worth presenting

The mission of The Quaker Universalist Fellowship is to foster the understanding that within everyone is a directly accessible spiritual light that can lead people to equality, simplicity, justice, compassion and peace.

QUF Steering Committee, November 2005

SUBMISSIONS

We are seeking articles from 500 to 3,000 words. These may be essays on personal experience of arrival or maturation in Quaker universalism or of worship or they may be scholarly works focused on Quaker universalism, history, biography, sociology, scripture, and theology, both Christian and non-Christian. We also welcome book reviews, poetry, personal essays, and letters. Use inclusive language. Please send your submissions by U.S. mail on diskette or CD in WORD to Patricia Williams, P.O. Box 69, Covesville, VA 22931 or as WORD attachments to email to theologyauthor@aol.com. Please put UF in the subject line. We do not accept anonymous submissions without very good reason. **Deadline for next issue: December 15.**

and discussing. Evolutionary psychology says reciprocity is an evolved disposition, very human, and we find it at the base of both our justice system and our economic system. As an evolved disposition, it is not divine, so perhaps our insistence that God be just is merely a human projection and fails to characterize God (if there is a God, and if we could ever characterize God).

The other paper here is mine, on "The Bible and the Light." I go back to Robert Barclay's criticisms of the Bible, which remain cogent and receive support from modern biblical criticism and science. The Bible's light being so dimmed since Barclay's time, should Quaker universalists bother to read it at all? I offer reasons to think so.

Following on John Linton's letter in the last issue, Sally Rickerman, one of our founders, adds another chapter to the history of the Quaker Universalist Fellowship. Thank you, Sally!

This summer at the Gathering, the Quaker Universalist Fellowship sponsored a lecture by the Jesus scholar, Marcus

Borg. Borg's lecture, which focused on the universality of the great commandment Jesus gave, to love God and neighbor, was received enthusiastically, and he spent an additional hour answering questions and discussing issues raised by members of the audience. Earlier in the day he gave a less formal talk and signed copies of his books in connection with QuakerBooks, the FGC bookstore. Like the Spong lecture, Borg's address was taped and will be available to Friends through FGC.

Patricia A. Williams

Free Will and Justice, an Unfortunate Duality

Alfred Roberts

Perhaps the one concept which most characterizes the moral and legal structure of western culture is that it conceives that we humans, unlike all other beings, function ultimately on the basis of *free will*. It presumes that our conscious behavior is determined by ourselves as free and responsible beings in the eyes of God and humanity. Although the differences between right and wrong are considered to be self evident, in real life we know that distinctions between the two are often much less than obvious. Further there are multiple and varying criteria among our subcultures for making such judgments. There is the additional reality that our personal motivations are influenced and complicated by experience and by our changing relationships through time. Nevertheless our moral and juridical judgments are based upon the presumption that adults ultimately are fully responsible for their behavior. (In court and socially, exceptions may or may not be made for youth or mental disability.)

It would seem evident that this presumption of personal responsibility has as its foundation a religiously derived concept which characterizes our three major western religious groups, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. These, having much of the same cultural basis, place particular emphasis on the idea of individual responsibility and freedom of one's will to behave accordingly. This orientation is the keystone of the moral injunctions which characterize our culture and with which we indoctrinate our youth and justify the proceedings within our criminal courts. Here punishment for wrong-doing is referred to as retribution, never as revenge. (Any real difference between the two escapes my discernment.)

It has of course been claimed through millennia that punishment and the threat of it for wrong-doers deters and hopefully prevents further undesirable behavior. However, I

am not aware of any research by psychologists or sociologists which confirms that punitive measures in the nurturing of children or in the processing of criminals ultimately deters bad behavior. On the contrary I suspect that such measures stimulate hostility in response to which miscreants find justification for further delinquency. One would think that we would learn from all of history and from personal experience that violence breeds more violence, but I suspect that we do not change in spite of the obvious because ultimately we are invigorated by the challenge of aggression and the threat of danger. This is very evidently expressed in our preoccupation with physical sports which no longer occur with the violence of such spectacles as were performed in the Roman Coliseum but as a milder equivalent. Note though that much of modern entertainment centers on drama notable for its portrayal of violence.

What then is an alternative to this self-perpetuating system of crime, blame, and retribution followed by more of the same which characterizes the way we presently think and react? Perhaps there is nothing that will significantly change events in the near future. It may be that these attitudes are so fundamentally a part of our culture that we will never change. My fervent concern is that without such reform, this orientation, productive of endless and escalating cycles of hate and revenge, could well result in the end of humanity by irresolution perhaps combined with the ultimate tool of destruction, the nuclear bomb.

There is, however, some basis for hope. It is that for the most part, every day most of us behave in a caring manner when we interact with one another and we find such involvement essential to our sense of wellbeing. We are above all else social beings who find our fulfillment ultimately in our relations with others. Further it is evident that human relationship is most fulfilling when experienced as equalitarian, that is, where there is little or no hierarchical difference

experienced by the participants and where each has full recognition and acceptance by the others. Expressions of anger and frustration are relatively infrequent though sometimes seething beneath a feigned appearance of calm acceptance. And though a part of us might prefer out and out combat to repression of our feelings, we dare not express our anger for fear of the loss of a meaningful relationship either by creating a hierarchy of dominance or by purposely avoiding one another.

Historically within the Society of Friends, for the most part, there has been an effort to avoid dominating hierarchies and to maintain the basic and defining concept that all participants have equal access to the essential truth. This is notably expressed in the equality of the division of old meeting houses between the men's and women's sides. Although men and women were considered to be equal within the society and "in the eyes of God," they were thought to be so different in their concerns that Monthly Meetings should be held at the same time but separately. Thus we have the panel which can be drawn down to divide the meeting room into two sections. Also, I believe, this separation of the men from the women traditionally was maintained during meeting for worship although with the separating panel raised.

Notably, within the Meeting, our disposition is to avoid dominance of one another, and it is a mode characteristically favored within the Quaker family. Our history, however, is replete with episodes where such values were put aside much to the loss of Quakerism and so ultimately to the wider society. There are frequently episodes of stressful disagreement within Meetings as have occurred at Willistown within recent years. Infrequently such differences have resulted in separations as occurred in Philadelphia in 1827 when the Yearly Meeting divided into the so-called "Orthodox" and "Hicksite" groups. In retrospect the stated reasons for the separation now seem more petty than realistic. Characteristic of the writings at the time representing either side is an attitude which blames the

other for **willfully** failing to recognize **the truth**—this in spite of the reality that all felt fully justified in the light of their own best judgment.

The same presumption of *freedom of the will* pervades our relations in both national and international politics. We assume that our politicians and those governments with whom we disagree are **willfully** and insincerely taking a stance in opposition to us. We, who are on the side of the right and of God, justify our hostility to such oppositional governments even to the extent of war with its mutual vilification and potential for devastating destruction.

I agree with Voltaire, an outspoken philosopher of the eighteenth century, that, “It would be very odd if all of the planets must behave according to natural laws but that a puny animal five feet tall should behave according to his own caprice.”(1) Like the planets our behavior is the product of infinitely intricate causation. We are not autonomous entities and independent of the rest of reality. We are integral to all of nature such that the idea of “free will” has no rational basis as applied to humans or any other entity in the universe. Would not then the human condition be much ameliorated if we would fully accept the view that condemning and punishing others for behavior of which we disapprove is ultimately self-defeating in that it creates endless enmity and is therefore notably ineffective in creating positive change. In that living is uniquely experienced by each of us as a result of the broad variability of the heredity and environment which impinges upon us, it is irrational to blame one another for behavior of which we disapprove. Another’s behavior may be validly recognized as destructive but rancor and punishment will not correct it. In fact it is more than likely that they will aggravate the situation by creating a reaction of anger and alienation. This is not to say that we should not express disagreement with a given idea or disapproval of a certain behaviors. There are of course circumstances where even physical opposition may be required

in the preservation of what we and society believe to be valuable and worthy of protection including the welfare of the offending person or group. That we can have opposition without rancor is a concept which is difficult to maintain in view of our predilection for self-righteousness and disdain for those who disagree with us. The concept of **justice** in most of its applications is based upon the idea of retribution for behavior deemed wrong or immoral by the given social structure. It is such a firmly implanted concept within society and notably within our western religious dogma that to oppose it as ultimately destructive would appear misconceived if not heretical. And yet that is exactly my view since I believe that it is a major underlying basis for human travail from simple ill will to crime and the horror of war. Further the absence of blame and recrimination is the mode of relationship within a fully democratic society as ideally occurs among Quakers and not so incidentally is the ultimate feature of truly Christian behavior. To refer again to Voltaire with a paraphrase of his statement about Quakers who intrigued him during his three year retreat to England: *Here among thirty religions was the boldest sect of all, the Quakers, who astonished all Christendom by behaving like Christians.*(2)

1. Taken from a recorded lecture by Professor Daniel N. Robertson, Oxford University.
2. Quoted from *The Story of Philosophy*, p.158, by Will Durant.

The Bible and the Light

Patricia A. Williams

The last two issues of *Universalist Friends* carried articles on universalism in the Bible. Surely, understanding the Bible's increasing universalist tendencies is important, for the Bible has deeply influenced our culture by its universalist as well as its parochial messages. However, I think it important now to ask just how vital the Bible is for Quaker universalism. To do so, I reach back to the great work of Quaker theology, Robert Barclay's *Apology for the True Christian Divinity* (1676)¹ and ask what he said about the Bible, which was quite critical. Then I note that modern biblical criticism combined with science more than justifies Barclay's critique, but suggest, nonetheless, the Bible retains some value for Quaker universalists.

A brief cultural excursion may be in order. Quakerism arose in England in a time of religious and political ferment. In 1649, after a bitter civil war, the victors relieved King Charles I of his head, and rule fell to a Parliament of Calvinists, many of them Presbyterian. They felt the English reformation under Henry VIII and Elizabeth I failed to go far enough. These new reformers earned the designation *Puritan* for attempting to purify the Church of England which, although it had cast off the Pope and five of the seven sacraments, claimed authority rested on three legs: Scripture, reason, and tradition. The Puritans wanted the church to stand on one leg only: Scripture. Scripture was to be the supreme authority, as it was for the continental reformers. So, those in England who wanted something different mostly argued against the Puritans rather than against Rome.

Quakerism began in this milieu in 1652 when George Fox had a vision on Pendle Hill of "a great people to be gathered." The Quakers wanted something different. They understood that depending on the authority of the Bible failed to bring unity, for all sides in the civil war trusted the Bible, yet even the winners were divided among themselves about exactly what

sort of church polity and liturgy the Bible commanded. The New Testament offered hints, but not specific instructions.

This lack of guidance did not disturb the Quakers, for their core belief was that the divine Light, universally within each person, provides the main authority, and the way to stand in the Light was to pay attention to it: to turn within and wait for the Light to shine, the still small voice to whisper. Such was their simple way of worship. Because Quakers understood the universal divine Light to be the primary authority rather than the Bible, which was not universally known, Barclay develops arguments to undermine the confidence in the Bible that Protestantism requires² whenever it embraces the reformers' doctrine of "Scripture alone."

Barclay begins with the canon, the list of books considered sacred. He explains that the first centuries failed to agree on which documents belong in the canon. Moreover, the canon may be incomplete, for books now lost might be found and added to it. In addition, says Barclay, to proclaim scripture the only rule of faith, then request readers have faith in a canon not listed in scripture, is a mistake. He wants to know how we can prove the Epistle of James authentic.³

Barclay's second argument is that transmission of the text is uncertain. We lack the originals, and mistakes creep into hand-copied texts. Barclay knows two textual traditions for the Jewish Scriptures, the Hebrew version known as the Massoretic text, and the Greek edition called the Septuagint, both existing before Jesus' time. The texts differ, and Barclay asks, where they differ, which should we trust?

Third, he argues that most people must read the Bible in translation, for most know neither the Hebrew of the original Jewish Scriptures nor the Greek of the original New Testament. But, observes Barclay, "Even the latest translations require many corrections and amendments." Barclay must have known several English translations, for portions of the Bible appear in English as early as the tenth century, and the whole emerges before

Barclay's time in a variety of translations. By Barclay's day, the King James Version (1611) had superseded the others, but it was only the latest. Some of the translations differ from each other substantially.

By the twenty-first century, rational biblical criticism strengthens Barclay's arguments, further undermining the authority of the Bible.⁴ On Barclay's first point, increased knowledge renders the canon even more uncertain than Barclay thought. The early church collected the letters it believed Paul wrote by its crucial criterion for inclusion in the canon: anything incorporated must be apostolic. If Paul composed all the letters credited to him, they are apostolic. However, scholars are now sure someone other than Paul wrote at least four of the thirteen letters bearing his name and perhaps two others, also. Thus, almost half the Pauline corpus may be inauthentic. Perhaps the canon should reject these inauthentic letters.

In contrast, due to more than a century of manuscript discoveries, we now hold fragments, at least, of more than thirty different Gospels. One of these Gospels—we possess it whole—the Gospel of Thomas, contains one hundred fourteen sayings of Jesus, more than half similar to sayings in the Gospels in the New Testament canon. Possibly, this Gospel offers more accurate versions of Jesus' sayings than Gospels now canonical. Perhaps the canon should include it, as Barclay anticipated.

Moreover, not all Christian churches claim the same canon. The Protestant and Catholic canons differ, the Catholic collection of Hebrew Scriptures containing more books. However, both agree on the underlying text, the Massoretic text of the Leningrad Codex, the oldest complete copy of the Hebrew Scriptures in existence, dating to about 1000 C.E. However, the Eastern Orthodox Churches reject this text in favor of the Septuagint, the Bible the early Christians used.

Perhaps the greatest discovery ever of biblical manuscripts is among the Dead Sea Scrolls, huge caches of documents found

near the Dead Sea beginning in 1947. This collection contains fragments, and sometimes complete scrolls, of every book in the Hebrew Scriptures except Esther. All the copies date to before the common era. Several copies of some books survive. Some copies closely resemble the Massoretic text, but others mirror the Septuagint. Still others reflect a third tradition. Not only was there no established canon before the common era, there was no authenticated text. What, then, established the canon? The answer is uncertain. Nonetheless, it is clear that no ecclesiastical council affirmed a canon until the Council of Trent (1645-63) met in reaction to the Protestant Reformation and Luther's rejection of some previously accepted books. And, of course, the Bible itself never lists the books to be considered canonical.

Barclay's second point is that transmission of the text is uncertain. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls told scholars two things: the Massoretic text transmitted with uncommon accuracy since the first century B.C.E., and texts differing from the Massoretic were read as scripture before the common era. As a result, no one knows which text most closely resembles the original. Trent approved a single text—the Latin Vulgate, translated by Jerome in the fourth century and copied by hand until after the invention of the printing press in the fifteenth century. The text actually authenticated was soon found to have at least 3,000 errors. Barclay may have known of this fiasco.

For the New Testament, a slightly different issue arises. We know the King James Version is faulty because it rests on a Greek text based on a few late Greek manuscripts and a Greek edition Erasmus produced in 1516 that sports some unfounded conjectures. Barclay was correct. Even the best Greek text of his time contains major errors.

Scholars know this because, since the mid-nineteenth century, a plethora of new manuscripts has been discovered. As a result, we now possess more than five thousand different

Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, although some are very fragmentary. The oldest fragment dates to the second century. No original text exists; no two copies agree. There may be up to 300,000 differences, more than the number of words in the New Testament. Many are unimportant, accidents of transcription easily corrected, but some are significant, yet scholarly consensus fails to select one as the most original text.

To develop a single Greek text of the New Testament, scholars use the ancient manuscripts, plus earlier scholarly editions. Therefore, the best modern Greek text of the New Testament is a changing, human compilation from thousands of manuscripts, none original.

Barclay's third point deals with translations. All anyone need do is compare our surfeit of English translations to one another to know they differ. In its effort to use inclusive language, the New Revised Standard Version preferred by most scholars sometimes mauls Paul's meaning. Galatians 4:1-7 is about a radical change in status upon becoming Christian. In the Greek, the new Christian's status changes from the "slavery" of childhood to adopted son and heir in Christ. The NRSV makes converts go from minors to children—not a change in status at all! Sometimes, translations go seriously awry.

Although Barclay anticipated much modern biblical scholarship, he did not foresee science's blows to the authority of the Bible. Galileo's battle with the church (1633) occurred before Barclay wrote, but Newton's *Principia* (1687) was still to be published. Both men undermined the Bible by placing the Sun at the center of the universe, whereas various passages of the Bible placed Earth there. Modern cosmology places Earth in the heavens, circling a modest star near the edge of a common type of galaxy in a universe measured in billions of light-years across and still expanding. Modern cosmology spins the bodily ascension of Jesus into nonsense.

By the late eighteenth century, geology refuted a dozen estimates derived from the Bible that placed the creation of

the universe and the Earth at about 6,000 years ago. Stratigraphy said Earth was much older. The discovery of radioactivity in the late nineteenth century allowed geologists to date rocks. Earth is now dated at 4.6 billion years old, the universe at 13.7 billion years old. Geologists in the nineteenth century gave up trying to weave the biblical flood into their explanations of the origin of geological formations. The Bible is wrong about major events.

By the second quarter of the eighteenth century, biologists had discovered and catalogued too many species to fit into Noah's ark. Moreover, they realized that organisms could never have arrived at their present locations if they had migrated from the mountains of Turkey, where the Bible says the ark landed. In the nineteenth century the discovery of glaciation, and in the twentieth the development of plate tectonics, helped explain the geographical location of current organisms and their fossil ancestors.

In 1859, Darwin upset the Genesis account of organic creation by using natural causes to explain the apparent design of organisms and their organization into nested hierarchies. New discoveries have buttressed his work, showing how inheritance provides genes for the forces of nature to mutate and how species change. Moreover, as Darwin thought, all organisms on Earth spring from a common ancestor, as the increasing availability of DNA information showed in the late twentieth century. Biology's discovery of the mechanics of conception through DNA renders the virgin birth impossible.

Archaeology undermines the Exodus as the Bible tells it, the conquest of Canaan as the Book of Joshua recounts it, and the account of the Davidic dynasty as the Bible relates it.⁵

The seventeenth century contest for authority between Quakers and Puritans, between the Light and the Bible, seemed so balanced, each side declared itself winner. Now, when modern biblical criticism and science have so weakened the Bible, the contest is far from equal. As the Bible's authority

dims, the Light shines brighter in comparison. It has always been more universal.

Given the Bible's reduced status, is there any reason for Quaker universalists to read it now? I think there are three. First, the Bible remains a significant artifact of western culture. Unacquainted with it, we cannot understand western literature, art, or music. Second, parts of it provide patterns of spirituality. Indeed, Barclay is again correct when he comments that the Bible is not about doctrines, but about the spiritual experiences of ancient peoples from which we can learn.

Third—and importantly for Quaker universalists—the same biblical scholarship that dissolves the Bible's authority allows scholars to draw a plausible sketch of the historical Jesus.⁶ Here I refer not to the “historical Jesus” of the early Quakers, for they confounded the man, the theological construct, and the Light. Rather, I refer to the human being who grew up in Nazareth, portrayed the kingdom of God in unique and poetic parables, and was crucified by Rome about 33 C.E. In contrast, the theological construct is a figure who was the divine son of God, descended from heaven to be born of a virgin, died for our sins, was resurrected, and ascended into heaven to be with God. These are not historical events, but theological notions. Historical method cannot study them. The Light, or risen Christ, or Holy Spirit, again in contrast, is the power the early Quakers knew as a personal power within them that transformed their lives, raising up the good and putting down the evil in them, as Barclay says of the power available in his experience of Meeting for Worship.

The historical Jesus this scholarship discloses rejects blood sacrifice and elevates divine mercy over justice, undermining major strands in Protestant theology. Even before our concept of the historical Jesus developed, Jesus' life provided an example for Quakers. Indeed, historical Jesus scholarship leads Quakerism in a virtuous circle back to its founder, George Fox. Taking into account vastly different cultures, his life

resembles Jesus' life as biblical scholarship portrays it.⁷

Jesus' life is important for Quaker universalism for two reasons. First, his uniqueness and awareness of the divine presence, both in his own life and spread across the Earth, suggests he lived fully in the Light and, therefore, models a life Quaker universalists might emulate. Some do. Second, Jesus is universally revered—not only in Judaism and Islam, but in religions from the East.

Critical biblical scholarship and science undermine the authority of the Bible. Meanwhile, biblical scholarship sketches the historical Jesus. Both support Quakerism's rejection of the authority of a provincial Bible, thereby encouraging Quakers to trust the authority of the universal Light.

- 1 All references are to Dean Freiday's *Barclay's Apology in Modern English*. Newberg, Oregon: Barclay, 1991.
- 2 All discussion of Barclay on Scripture is taken from Proposition 3, "The Scriptures," in *Barclay's Apology*, 46-65.
- 3 A century earlier, Luther tried to remove the Epistle of James from the canon. Although he failed, he did remove several books from the Hebrew Scriptures that the Catholic Church considered, and still considers, canonical.
- 4 For much of the information included here, see Ehrman, Bart D. *Lost Christianities: The Battles for Scripture and the Faiths We Never Knew*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- 5 See Finkelstein, Israel and Neil Asher Silberman. 2001. *The Bible Unearthed: Archaeology's New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of Its Sacred Texts*. New York: The Free Press.
- 6 For a simple summary, see my *Where Christianity Went Wrong, When, and What You Can Do About It*. Philadelphia, Xlibris, 2001, pp. 44-55.
- 7 See my "Jesus as a Friend," *Friends Journal* **49**, 2003, pp. 11-13, 35.

Quaker Universalist Fellowship: Its History

Sally Rickerman

There seem to be two major reasons that people are driven out of the comfort of their homes and their arm-chairs. The most frequent force is their dissatisfaction with the views of others which oppose their own. If this dis-ease is sufficiently large they will, no doubt, take reactive action. The other great influence for stimulating action, in this case positive, is the concern of people who wish to preserve their integrity and to be faithful to their ideals by following a positive and corrective course. Thus, the motives for action or reaction are derived by our either being “driven” or “led.”

Both these motives were present in stimulating Friends to establish the Quaker Universalist Fellowship as a formal Quaker entity in May 1983. During the previous year, Judy Arness of Hartford, Connecticut, as well as others had learned of John Linton’s work in starting the Quaker Universalist Group in Britain. Linton had spent a great part of his professional life in India, where he worshipped in the small Quaker Meeting in New Delhi. There he came into contact with a variety of faiths on a weekly basis and grew to appreciate their gifts. He also gradually abandoned his youthful indoctrination that orthodox Christianity was both exclusive and superior to all other world faiths. When Linton returned to England to retire, he talked with Friends who held similar views. Together they founded the Quaker Universalist Group in 1978-79 as a haven for other like-minded Quakers.

Arness and her friends felt that Linton and this new organization “spoke to their condition,” so they raised money and invited him to come to the US on a lecture tour. After his tours, those who had arranged them called a Meeting of interested persons to help them launch their next move. This “called Meeting” was held at London Grove Meetinghouse,

not far from where I live. Friends arrived there who lived along the Eastern seaboard from the south at Patuxent, Maryland, below Washington D.C. on the Chesapeake, and the north—all the way up to New London, Connecticut, on the Long Island Sound. Those present decided to continue meeting at least twice a year with featured speakers, to call the new group the Quaker Universalist Fellowship to indicate our kissing-cousinship to the British group, and to publish a newsletter/journal. Judy Arness was to be the editor; a clerk, recording clerk, and program clerk were chosen quickly. Then came the need for a treasurer, and during the long pause that followed, I found myself saying, “It’s not that hard!” For I had served as treasurer, as well as handling membership records, printing, and distribution for a local watershed association. Before the fifth newsletter was due out, we were able to procure 501(c)3 status (at that time religious organizations did not need to be incorporated) and received a bulk mailing non-profit permit from my local post office. Our first newsletter was mailed out in October 1983. In the years that followed, the mailing list hovered around 300, with anywhere from one-fourth to one-third being freebees and sent to Meetings, Quaker libraries, and Quaker journals in exchange for their publications.

In the beginning, many who saw no need for a new Quaker organization felt we seemed to be creating another split—much like the one in 1827. Still others felt in starting up QUF that we were doing unnecessary work. “Aren’t all Quakers universalist?” they would ask. There was no single impetus behind our founding constituency, but perhaps the largest group were those who felt their Quakerism threatened by what they perceived to be a “take-over” by Christo-centric Friends led by Lewis Benson, author of *Catholic Quakerism*. His followers were concerned by the so-called Hicksite view which they saw as deviating from the understandings of George Fox and other early leaders. Hicksite Friends were and are apt to be mystics and follow the teachings of Jesus rather than relying on his

being the Christ. (I have just read Benson's book for the first time and feel that his adherents took his message far further than he may have intended it to go.)

Others who became active members of the QUF seemed to want a safe harbor for their views and were not aware that, if they refused to accept Christo-centrism in Quakerism, they were not being truly universal. Finally most of those who stayed with QUF over the years believed we could be a reconciling and healing group which emphasized that the Quaker universal tent was large enough to hold the diverse religious understandings that, today, are found in unprogrammed Quakerism.

During our initial years we managed to send out two newsletters, as well as putting into pamphlet form each of the two lectures given that year. As we began to lose steam with too much for too few to plan and execute, we co-sponsored lectures—two with Pendle Hill and one with the Religious Education Committee of Pennsylvania Yearly Meeting. We also published those talks. Then we searched for other sources containing little-known and pertinent essays so we could continue to provide a viable service for our members, a service we are still providing. Today Jim Rose, our present webmaster, is putting all publications except books on our Web site in a downloadable PDF file. They are also available in hard copy for \$12.00 per year.

Dan Seeger, the current clerk, is our most popular author with five pamphlets to his credit! Mulford Sibley comes next with three published posthumously. The other 20 pamphlets could be classified as follows:

- Two 17th century pamphlets not previously republished since that time;
- Two collections: One from several early talks at early Annual Meetings and the other from essays appearing in the *Friends Journal* over a ten year period on Quaker theology;
- Two reprinted texts of pertinent *Backhouse Lectures* given at Australia Yearly Meeting;

- Two from 20th century Quaker scholars;
- A chapter from Avery, Cardinal Dulles's book, *Models of Revelation*;
- One with three essays from *Friends Bulletin*, the official publication of the three western unprogrammed Yearly Meetings;
- Four by present or past QUF Steering Committee members;
- One, a report of a survey on Quaker non-theists;
- Various original essays submitted to us and deemed worthy of publication by our several pamphlet editors.

In Memory

Carolyn Nicholson Terrell died of heart failure on February 20 at her home at Medford Leas in Medford, New Jersey. She was 86. Carolyn worked for the Friends General Conference in Philadelphia, served on the board of *Friends Journal* and several other Quaker-related organizations and was clerk of the Quaker Universalist Fellowship and its Journal's editor for many years. She helped write *Quakers on the Move*, a history of Quakers in the United States told through episodes from different generations of her ancestors.

Born in Philadelphia in 1921, Carolyn was the oldest of four children of Rebecca Carter Nicholson and Vincent Nicholson, the first executive secretary of the American Friends Service Committee. She lived in Moorestown (NJ), Philadelphia (PA) and Silver Spring (MD) before attending Westtown School and Oberlin College.

After graduating from Oberlin with a degree in religion, Carolyn was a teacher in West Philadelphia. She had many admirers, rejecting more than a dozen offers of marriage before marrying Huntington Terrell in 1950. They settled in Hamilton, New York, where Dr. Terrell was a professor of philosophy at Colgate University. They had four children, including a daughter who died soon after birth. After their divorce, Carolyn moved to Philadelphia and later to New Jersey. Huntington and Carolyn remarried in 2000.

She edited the Friends General Conferences' *Directory for Traveling Friends* in 1992, and was an avid traveler, including a two-week trip with much of her family to Hawaii in 2004, where she snorkeled and hiked on volcanoes.

Carolyn had a deep desire to understand the world and Quakerism. In her later years, she was particularly passionate about understanding and sharing her views about nontheism.

Many will remember Carolyn's work as a Sunday school teacher. Students from her class in Hamilton still talk about its

impact on their lives. She also assisted with First Day School at Germantown and Mount Holly Meetings as well as the children's program at the annual gathering of Friends General Conference.

Carolyn had a remarkable ability to connect with young people and engage them in meaningful projects. She loved to collect tadpoles and watch how they turned into frogs. She made wooden blocks used by generations of young people. She had great appreciation for classic works of children's literature, such as Kenneth Grahame's *Wind in the Willows* and Marjorie Flack's *Ask Mr. Bear* and *Tim Tadpole* and *The Great Bullfrog*.

Carolyn was a serious gardener, from her home on Preston Hill in Hamilton to her community garden in Philadelphia to her final years at Medford Leas. With her brothers Christopher, John and Francis she created a family-owned corporation to run their beloved vacation spot on the Rancocas Creek in the Pine Barrens near New Lisbon, New Jersey. While at the cabin, Carolyn loved to pick blueberries, canoe, sit in the sun and chat with family members. She always reported that the image of the cabin stream flowing along brought her a sense of peace during stressful times.

Carolyn is survived by her brothers Christopher Nicholson (Helen) of Philadelphia and John Nicholson (Bertha May) of Kennett Square and sister-in-law Jean Nicholson, her sons Nathan Terrell (Anita Foeman) of Mullica Hill (NJ) and Bruce Terrell of Petaluma (CA), her daughter Cynthia Terrell (Robert Richie) of Takoma Park (MD), five grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews. Instead of flowers, which she indeed loved, Carolyn wanted people to honor her memory with gifts to the American Friends Service Committee, 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102.

Sally Rickerman

New Books!!

Our editor, Patricia A. Williams has authored a new book, *Quakerism: A Theology for Our Time*. It describes the theology of the early Quakers, especially Barclay, then shows how well their theology fits modern biblical criticism and science, which support Barclay's theology even as they undermine orthodox Christianity. *Quakerism* is universalist and has a separate chapter on universalism. The first four chapters would make good material for Quakerism 101.

Pat's book is theology, not history. For a new history, try Pink Dandelion's *An Introduction to Quakerism*. He sets out the history clearly in two parts: "The History of Quaker Theology" and "Worldwide Quakerism Today." His book is too complex for 101, but could be used as supplementary material. Pink's book and Pat's complement one another.

Our very own Fellowship has published a collection of contemporary Quaker universalist writings, derived from the journals of the Quaker Universalist Group in Britain and the Quaker Universalist Fellowship in North America. Edited by Patricia A. Williams, the book is titled, *Universalism and Religions: Quaker Universalist Reader #2*.

Forthcoming from the same sources is *Quaker Universalist Reader #3*, titled *Universalism and Spirituality*. Look for it this fall!

All these books are available at www.quakerbooks.org.