

Queries of Pittsburgh Friends Meeting as extracted from our Faith and Practice

January on Justice and Equality

- Do we answer that of God in every person?
- Do we look for opportunities to establish personal and professional relationships with people of different class, race, gender, age, or sexual orientation? Do we avoid stereotyping people?
- In what ways do we work to change our society so that it provides equal opportunities for everyone?
- What are we doing to remove the institutional causes of suffering and want? Do we help to care for those in need?
- Are we working to end the death penalty?
- What are we doing to humanize the treatment and care of people in institutions?
- In what ways are we utilizing the resources that Quakers and marginalized communities have to offer each other?

February on Simplicity and Moderation

- Is our commitment to simplicity and moderation reflected in our daily lives?
- Are we careful in our use of time and energy? Do we incorporate opportunities for spiritual growth and service into our daily life? Do we avoid wasteful consumption and undue attachment to possessions? Does our recreation reflect moderation, and does it strengthen body, mind, and spirit? Do we avoid harmful practices and substances?
- Do we practice simplicity in our manner of living, avoiding waste and ostentation? Does our commitment to simplicity bring beauty and harmony to our surroundings?
- What privileges do I enjoy and how does my acceptance of those privileges impact the lives of others?

March on Stewardship

- Do we revere life and the splendor of the universe and act as stewards of God's continuing creation?
- What are we doing to conserve natural resources and use them wisely?
- Are we sensitive to the effect of our actions on future generations? How can we best preserve an environment in which diverse species can flourish?
- Are we exercising stewardship of our financial resources so that we can share with others?
- Are we taking good care of Meeting property for ourselves and those who will come after us? How do we use Meeting property to witness to our testimonies?
- How does our ministry to care for the environment connect us to issues of justice and equality?

April on Caring

- Do we care for those around us?
- How do we show respect and consideration for all people, including those with whom we differ?
- When contentions arise, what steps do we take to address them speedily and in a spirit of love and respect? Do we avoid bearing grudges?
- Are we faithful in keeping promises and just and honorable in all our dealings?
- As individuals or as a Meeting, are we supportive of those who are experiencing major changes in their lives?
- In our close relationships, do we assume our share of responsibility for our own and each other's welfare? Are we sensitive to the needs of the individuals affected by the relationship?
- What things do we do or say that continue racism and other types of oppression?
- What would our Meeting be like if everyone felt that they belonged?

May on Participation in Meeting

- Do we participate as fully as we can in the Meeting community and accept our share of responsibility for carrying out its work?
- Do we widen our circle of friendship within the Meeting and welcome newcomers?
- How do we provide for family participation in Meeting activities?
- How do we order our time before Meeting for Worship so that we can come prepared with hearts and minds in a spirit of true devotion and living expectancy?
- Are Meetings for Business held in expectant waiting for the guidance of the Light? Do we seek the appropriate course of action in a spirit of love, understanding, and forbearance?
- In what ways does our Meeting work to build justice in our community and what is my role in that process?

June on Spirituality

- Do we seek to keep ourselves sensitive and responsive to the Inner Light and to live according to its promptings?
- How does our religion find expression in daily life?
- Do we respond to that of God in those with whom we differ?
- What are we doing to develop our own spiritual gifts and those of our fellow worshippers?
- Does our vocal ministry arise from a clear spiritual leading? Do we encourage mutual respect for varying expressions of religious belief among fellow Quakers?
- How do we challenge ourselves to move out of our area of comfort in order to turn our will and ourselves over to wholeness in Spirit and in Truth?

July on Unity in Meeting

- Do we seek to nurture a spirit of unity in our Meeting?
- If a problem or conflict arises within the Meeting, do we make timely efforts to address the issue in a spirit of love and humility? As we seek unity, do we listen to one another carefully and with openness to Truth?
- Are we able to express our views honestly and with respect for those who differ with us? Are we prepared to set aside our individual desires or opinions in order to reach unity in the divine Light?
- Are we willing to wait patiently for divine guidance rather than be hurried by the passing of time?
- When the Meeting has made a decision, do we continue to care for and respect one another, regardless of our differing personal views?
- In what ways are we as a Meeting open to different messages and diversity of expression?
- How do we move from a place of aloneness and separateness into a place of connectedness?

August on Vocations

- Do we perform our work guided by the Light within?
- In following our vocations do we contribute to the well-being of the larger community? Does our work reflect Friends' testimonies of honesty, equality, peace, and simplicity?
- Do we conduct our business affairs so that all parties are treated fairly?
- Do we have respect for all honest work, paid or unpaid, whether at home or in the community?
- Are we open to helping individuals who are making vocational decisions?
- In our work, how do we use our Spirit-given creativity to confront and heal the effects of oppression and racism?

September on Children

- Do we respect the dignity of our children?
- Are we helping our children to recognize and respond to the Light in themselves and others?
- How do our lives exemplify peace and caring? Do we encourage children to live simply, non-violently, and with a concern for others, despite temptations from peers, the media, and society?
- Do we listen to our children so that they learn to value their inner life and strength? Do we continue to love and support them when their actions hurt or grieve us?
- Are we involved in the support, care, and religious education of the Meeting's children? In the First Day School, are we teaching them about the history and practices of Friends and the application of Friends' beliefs to everyday life? Do we teach them about the Bible and about other faiths?

- What are we doing to improve the quality of education in the public schools? In what ways are we seeking to meet other needs of children in our communities?
- What are we doing to model how to confront systems of institutionalized oppression for our children?

October on Home Life

- Do we endeavor to make home a place of friendship, peace, love, and refreshment of the spirit?
- How do we use our shared time to nurture that of God in each of us?
- In what ways do we make our homes places of spiritual and religious growth?
- Do we share our religious insights with those we love?
- Do we respect the needs for intimacy or separateness of those with whom we live?
- In what ways do we recognize, acknowledge, and confront racist biases in our own families?

November on Nonviolence

- Are we working to increase our understanding and use of nonviolent action?
- How well do we apply nonviolence to the settlement of disputes? What are we doing to encourage the use of nonviolent means to settle national and international differences?
- Are we learning to channel our anger, fear, and frustration in healthy, creative, and peaceable ways?
- Do we teach our children how to meet aggression creatively and without violence?
- In our commitment to nonviolence, are we sensitive to the differing claims of the sanctity of life and the quality of life in situations such as unwanted pregnancy or the artificial prolongation of life?
- In situations where injustice exists, how do we use non-violent actions to promote truth, understanding, and reconciliation?

Queries for December: Peace

- Do we live in the strength of that Life and Power which takes away the occasion for all war?
- What are we doing to remove the causes of war? Where there is hatred, division, or strife, how are we instruments of reconciliation? Where there is oppression, how are we instruments of justice?
- How do we communicate to others the basis of our peace testimony? Do we join with them in working for peace?
- Are we ready to stand by our peace testimony when it conflicts with the opinions of others or with established public policy?
- How do we reconcile our peace testimony with the payment of taxes that support war? What are we doing to encourage consideration of alternatives to military service?

- What are we doing to bring about Peace and Justice as opposed to merely settling for the absence of conflict?