

FAITH AND PRACTICE

Friends Meeting of Ballplay

157 Ballplay School Road
Tellico Plains, Tennessee

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Part I: Friends History, Belief, and Practice

CHAPTER I: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1. WORLD WIDE HISTORY

In seventeenth-century England, there arose many groups of seekers who were dissatisfied with the rigid forms of the Church of England and were searching for a more inwardly satisfying way of worship and life. George Fox (1624-1691) went, as a young man, to many priests seeking inner peace and received only irrelevant answers. One day he heard a Voice saying, "There is One, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition." Joy filled his heart, and from this experience the central conviction of Friends was born – that the living Christ can speak directly to the need of every seeking soul.

In 1652 George Fox climbed Pendle Hill and was deeply moved by what he saw. Later he wrote in his Journal: "The Lord let me see a-top of the hill in what places He had a great people to be gathered." At Firbank Fell he preached for over three hours to a thousand people, and out of that gathering the Valiant Sixty arose to work with Fox in evangelizing all of England. In spite of severe persecution, Fox went about speaking in churches, homes, and fields with multitudes of people attracted to hear his message.

Since religious freedom was as yet unknown in England, these early Quakers were imprisoned in great numbers under the foulest conditions. In spite of these sufferings, the number of Quakers multiplied greatly, and eventually they won – not only for themselves– but also for all, the Act of Tolerance which guaranteed religious freedom (1689).

From 1650 to 1690 Quakerism spread rapidly throughout the British Isles and to other parts of the world, including the English colonies on the western shore of the Atlantic Ocean.

Historians have labeled the Quaker Movement during those forty years as the fastest growing movement of the Western world.

At that time no church was permitted to exist except the Church of England; hence the followers of Fox called themselves "Publishers of Truth", "Children of Light", and "Friends of Jesus", and later "Religious Society of Friends." The origin of the word "Friends" is from John 15:14 when Jesus said: "You are my friends if you do what I command." The nickname "Quaker" was originally a term of derision and insult, but through the years has become a symbol of integrity. In more recent times, Friends of evangelical persuasion have used the term Evangelical Friends Church.

Restoring primitive Christianity was the goal of early Friends. They defined it as authentic, apostolic Christianity based on New Testament teaching with no frills. In other words, preaching the essentials and omitting the non-essentials. They were a people gathered as followers of Christ, baptized with the Holy Spirit, and communing with God (often in silence) as they waited for guidance of the Holy Spirit to share, whether in prayer, message, or exhortation based on a deep concern.

In the 18th century, Friends seemed almost to forget the Biblical basis for their faith, putting a premium on silence as a way of worship. Speaking, reading Scriptures, and praying were considered intrusion. Called the Age of Quietism, unprogrammed meetings declined as they became active in social issues, such as fair treatment for Indians, refusing to participate in war, and responding to John Woolman's call to simplicity, frugality, and tolerance. As an itinerant preacher bent on abolishing slavery, Woolman carried his message to plantations of the South, boldly preaching equality for all. It is noteworthy that prior to 1800 – more than 60 years before the Emancipation Proclamation – every Quaker in North Carolina had liberated his slaves. During the Civil War Friends assisted runaway slaves by establishing the "underground railroad," a secret route to freedom in the North.

As the American West opened up after the Civil War, Friends migrated in great numbers. In the latter part of the 1800s, revivals and camp meetings throughout the Midwest were part of what has been called the "Great Revival." Thousands were converted, and churches, including Friends churches, were crowded with new converts. It was at this time that pastured meetings came into vogue in order to disciple new believers. Also emphasis was placed on ministering to children and youth in Sunday Schools and including music in a programmed worship format. While the majority of Friends were simple, God-fearing people, there were some who became widely known. These include William Penn,

founder of Pennsylvania and peaceful negotiator with the Indians; Robert Barclay, Scottish gentleman, scholar, and theologian; John Woolman, best known for his anti-slavery work; John Greenleaf Whittier, poet; Stephen Grellet, French nobleman, who, escaping from the guillotine, became a vibrant Quaker evangelist in the remote parts of the United States; Elizabeth Fry, noted for prison reform in different parts of the world; and Joseph John Gurney, banker, scholar, theologian, and preacher who called the Society back from quietism to an evangelical position.

London Yearly Meeting, founded by George Fox, is the original organization from which all others have developed. Although boasting of never having had an official division, London Yearly Meeting has nevertheless changed over the years, reflecting some of the tensions which led to divisions in other parts of the Society of Friends. In the 19th century it was strongly evangelical, but in the 20th century it followed the trend of modern liberalism and became closely akin to the General Conference of Friends.

Currently there are five major groups of Friends: Hicksite, Orthodox, Conservative, Independent, and Evangelical Yearly Meetings. In their character they reflect major divisions which have occurred among Friends.

Friends General Conference (Hicksite) is a combination of Yearly Meetings which have their origins in the separation of 1828-29. The followers of Elias Hicks, who had been influenced by rationalism and unitarianism, separated from the Orthodox Friends. Today their meetings are united in keeping the tradition of unprogrammed meetings but are in serious tension between those with a humanistic philosophy and those who are Christocentric.

Friends United Meeting (Orthodox) came into being at the turn of the 20th century as the Five Years Meeting. With a more appropriate name-change, since they meet every three years, it is currently a federation of Yearly Meetings of diverse character. The majority are predominantly evangelical, but there are a few Yearly Meetings whose liberalism has made them very comfortable in joining both the Hicksite and Orthodox branches of the Church.

Conservative Friends is a term applied to a group which has great cohesion without having a formal organization combining their Yearly Meetings. These have their roots in the teaching of John Wilbur, whose opposition to Joseph John Gurney led to separation in 1854. The difference was not so much doctrinal as it was a matter of older traditions concerning manner of worship in silence, Quaker garb, and other practices. Wilbur so emphasized the "Inner Light" that it sounded almost

like infallibility. Gurney, on the other hand, laid great emphasis on the Scriptures as the guide for salvation.

There are several Independent Yearly Meetings which are not affiliated with any larger grouping of Friends. However, they honor their Quaker roots and basically seek to share the message of Friends as they interpret it.

Evangelical Friends believe in the Biblical teaching of entire sanctification (I Thessalonians 5:23) as a second work of grace. This is the position of George Fox, Robert Barclay, and Joseph John Gurney. The emphasis on the Holy Spirit, always characteristic of Friends, made the Wesleyan-Arminian teaching on holiness congenial to these Friends also. The baptism with the fullness of the Holy Spirit is the way God cleanses from the sinful nature and makes believers holy (Matthew 3:11-12). George Fox said, "and Christ did baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire and did thoroughly purge his floor and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Holiness is deliverance from the pollution, nature, and love of sin. The experience is called "perfect love". John tells us, "because as he is so are we in the world" (I John 4:17-18).

2. LOCAL HISTORY

Friends Meeting Of Ballplay began as two Friends Meetings: Farr's Chapel Friends and Oak Grove Friends. Farr's Chapel, named for Friends minister John Farr, was established by him about 1885. Services were first held in the church buildings of other denominations and in a schoolhouse. About 1899, a church building was erected on Kitchens Mountain. Later a frame building was built, followed by a new meetinghouse down the mountain from the old location in 1950. This meeting was served ably by many wonderful pastors including: John Farr, Fred McMillan, Charlotte Scott, J. Edward Ransome, Howard Yates, Moss Hunt, Edgar Barcus, Cafer Marley, Mike McCormick and Don Cunningham.

Oak Grove Friends was also founded by John Farr about 1885-1886. A meetinghouse was built about 1893 on land donated by the Best family. This building continued in use until 1927, when the present structure was built. In 1893, David Sanders, a friend from Lost Creek in Jefferson County, Tennessee, came as pastor. He served until ill health forced his retirement in 1920. That same year, the Five Years Meeting of Friends (now Friends United Meeting), with assistance from Wilmington Yearly Meeting of Friends, Ohio, took charge of the work in Monroe County, Tennessee. J. Edward

Ransome came on the field as pastor in 1920, and served until 1945. Other pastors who have made a great impression on the ministry at Oak Grove include: Edward and Violet Linton, Fred McMillan, Franklin and Lillian Chant, Hershel Hill, Howard and Margaret Yates, Carl and Eunice Darnell, Alfred Wilson. Edgar and Davina Barcus, Carlton and Sandra Cates, Glenn and Rachel Moore, Mike and Nancy McCormick, and Don Cunningham.

The year 1999 brought a new chapter in the history of Farr's Chapel and Oak Grove Friends. Under the leadership of Pastor Don Cunningham, both meetings approved a merger under the umbrella of Friends Meeting of Ballplay. This was the first time that two Friends meetings had successfully merged in Wilmington Yearly Meeting without laying down one of the meetings. This had to be God's plan, since the meeting has grown not only in number but in its ministry and outreach. Pastors of Friends Meeting of Ballplay since the merger in 1999 include: Don Cunningham, Jack Nantais, Carroll Best and the present pastor, Scott Knight.

Friends Meeting of Ballplay officially withdrew from Wilmington Yearly Meeting and Friendsville Quarterly Meeting in 2018. Since that time we have continued to serve the Ballplay community as an independent Friends' Meeting and have compiled our own Faith and Practice.

(Additional information on the early history of Farris Chapel and Oak Grove Friends, as well as other Friends Meetings we have been associated with, may be found in a publication entitled "Wilmington Yearly Meeting 1891-1991". This publication was printed in 1991 by Gaskins Printing, Sabina, Ohio)

CHAPTER I I-- BASIC BELIEFS

Friends believe that apostolic (New Testament) doctrines are essentials of Christianity.

Fundamental truths considered as vital and life-giving are: the Fatherhood of God; the deity and humanity of Jesus the Son; the ministry of the Holy Spirit; Christ's atonement which reconciles believers to God; the resurrection of Jesus Christ which assures true believers of life after death; the high priesthood of Christ who gives access to the Father by forgiving sins; and the individual priesthood of believers who may approach God directly without human intervention.

While Friends do not stress a formal written creed, they do state the primary principles of their faith in order to make their doctrinal position clear. Not wishing to be overbearing, they record certain beliefs which are held as basic to their faith. The statement of faith of evangelical Friends may be summarized as follows:

The Bible is the inspired rule of faith and subject to the Holy Spirit's interpretation.

God is sovereign.

Jesus Christ offers vicarious atonement through His death and resurrection.

The Holy Spirit brings people to experience salvation.

People are sinful, but redeemable.

Salvation comprises both forgiveness and sanctification.

The Church is the visible expression of Christ; it will be fulfilled in the final resurrection and judgment.

Inner communion and the baptism with the Holy Spirit are spiritual realities beyond outward symbols.

Christian witness is given through word and deed both in general and specific ministries.

The following amplify the subjects mentioned above:

1. The Bible. The Holy Bible was given by the direct inspiration of God. It is sufficient to inform people of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. The Bible is the written authority by which all guidance should be measured for truth. God's Holy Spirit, who inspired the Scriptures, also interprets them, working through those yielded to Him within His Church. Genuine guidance from God is in accord with the Holy Scriptures.

2. God. There is one sovereign God who is revealed through the Bible in the person of His son, Jesus Christ. God is the Maker and Preserver of all things; He alone is worthy of worship. In the unity of the Godhead exist three equal and distinct, yet inseparable, persons: the Father, the Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

3. Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is the second person of the Trinity and is God's revelation of Himself to the world. He was divine and yet human, being conceived by God's Spirit and born of a virgin. Through the blood He shed dying on the cross, Jesus Christ became the atonement for sin, thus providing direct access to God by His priesthood. Upon His resurrection from the dead, He ascended again to the right hand of His Father, assuming the role of Intercessor and drawing people to God by His Spirit. When Jesus Christ returns to earth, He will receive His Church and judge the world.

4. The Holy Spirit. The third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit, proceeds from the Father and the Son but is equal with Them. The Holy Spirit convinces people of their sin, gives life to penitent believers, and sanctifies the child of God. He enables one to love God supremely and to give evidence of the Spirit's presence in their lives. The Holy Spirit works through individual lives as well as in corporate groups of the Church, enabling people to serve in various ways as the Spirit chooses.

5. People. Created in the image of God, at first man and woman enjoyed unbroken fellowship with their Maker. By their disobedience they incurred the displeasure of God and the penalty of spiritual death. Consequently, all are born in a sinful state; there is no inherent principle which naturally leads people to salvation outside the atoning provision of Jesus Christ for all mankind. While people are sinful by nature, they can be redeemed from sin's penalty, which is eternal death, because Christ paid this penalty in full. Through His sacrificial death, Jesus Christ destroyed the wall separating all persons from God. By the individual priesthood of believers, everyone stands equal before God and may approach Him directly.

6. Salvation. Salvation is a personal matter between people and their Maker. It consists of forgiveness for sins as well as sanctification or the

cleansing of sinful human nature. People can be redeemed because of the atoning death of Jesus Christ and the direct work of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit restores people to fellowship with God the Father and enables them to love Him wholeheartedly. Salvation does not depend on outward ceremonies or symbols.

Sanctification is the work of God which is accomplished through the baptism with the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer who is yielded totally to God. The believer is thus empowered to witness to the living Christ. Sanctification is both an act in which one's heart is cleansed and a process in which the life is continuously disciplined to God's holy standards.

7. The Church. Those who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior are born again into His kingdom by His Spirit. These persons make up the true Church of Jesus Christ which is spiritual in nature and universal in scope. By His Spirit, Christ is present whenever two or three meet together in His name. Such a meeting is a local church which is a visible manifestation of the Church Universal. Every believer should be related to a local visible part of Christ's Universal Body in order to worship, witness, and work more effectively for the glory of God. Every believer is committed to be involved in the stewardship of God's Kingdom through the Church until the Lord returns.

8. Liberty.

Christian liberty is to be granted in all areas not essential to one's final salvation. Due to human imperfection there are differences of faith and practice among God's children, but they anticipate a time of greater unity in the faith. Until that time there must be unity in essentials but liberty in non-essentials, with love in all things.

9. The Lord's Return. We have experienced the coming of the Living Lord among us, the foretaste of God's glorious reign and basis of our hope. At His second coming, Jesus Christ will return in power as King of kings to consummate His rule over individuals and nations by the final triumph over Satan. The dead shall be resurrected, some to eternal life, others to everlasting punishment. All shall be judged by God and receive just recompense for their deeds.

The blessed ones shall live forever in heaven, but the lost suffer eternally in hell.

CHAPTER III -- FAITH IN ACTION

A .TESTIMONIES REGARDING SACRED WORSHIP

1. Prayer and Praise. No practice in Christian living is more often spoken of in the Scripture than prayer and praise both as duty and as privilege. The Bible gives examples of and instruction in these practices. In the Old Testament Daniel is an outstanding example, because he faithfully and openly prayed to God three times a day, in spite of the King's decree to the contrary. The Psalms are filled with prayer and praise to God. Reading them, the Christian learns of the rich rewards from such practices. Our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, as our sure example in holy living often gave Himself to prayer and praise. He also often instructed His disciples, and thus Christians of all generations, to pray faithfully and to expect God's answer. (Matthew 7:7; John 16:23; James 5:16b)

A sense of need is a sufficient call to prayer. Hence the burdened sinner may come boldly to the throne of grace and find a welcoming Father from Whom forgiveness can be obtained.

Similarly, burdened Christians can find in prayer the assurance of God's love and relief from their burdens as they cast all their care on the Lord. (1 Peter 5:7)

Prayer is the life breath of Christian living and gives the Christian unbroken access to his Heavenly Father. It is thus essential to the maintenance and development of the Christian life.

We believe that it should be the daily exercise of individual Christians within our fellowship; that our families should set apart a time for collective prayer, Bible reading, and praise; and that in our public services of worship we should give importance to prayer and praise.

2. Christian Worship. Worship is a privilege of the Christian. It is a spiritual experience in which believers give themselves to communion and fellowship with the Heavenly Father, a time when they consciously feel and give adoration and love and gratitude to God. It is a time of reverent coming before the Almighty God as a child of His by grace. The first preparation for profitable worship is a humble spirit which recognizes the grace of God in giving us this privilege. Equally important is a contrite spirit which is submissive to His Lordship and superior will for our daily living. When these attitudes prevail, worship is full of meaning and reward. (Psalm 51:17)

Worship may be silent or vocal, taking various forms; it does not depend on certain ceremonies or traditions. Worship is a natural outgrowth of union with Christ and should be directed by His Spirit. The service of worship will usually include times of prayer, praise, and preaching. During public worship services we should also allow sufficient time for reflection, meditation, and decision. Inasmuch as public worship aids Christians in their growth in grace, is the focal point of the church's local ministry, and is a testimony to the surrounding community of the importance of worshipping God, our members should attend the services of their congregation regularly and faithfully.

They should impress upon their children the same religious practice,

believing that thus they will aid in leading their children to salvation and to the worship of God.

From the beginning of His earthly life (Luke 2:6,7) and throughout the ages of time (Revelation 4:10-11), the Lord Jesus Christ has been, is, and will be the object of worship. We make Him the center of our worship and delight in collectively and personally giving Him praise and adoration as God. Without His presence through the Holy Spirit our worship would have neither meaning or depth. Believers are committed to the work of God, not only to manifest personal righteousness as the fruit of a new life, but also to share their faith. All Christians are called upon to witness by word and deed, in Christ likeness demonstrating love, forgiveness, and the way of peace. Certain ones are called and ordained by God for a special service of leadership in His Church; their service may be that of teaching, evangelizing, pastoring, or administration. The church should recognize such special gifts among its members and encourage their use.

3. The Ordinances. True baptism is the inward receiving of God's Spirit by asking in faith for Him to become the Lord of one's life. Communion is the continuing fellowship with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Both baptism and communion are spiritual realities beyond the mere physical, outward ordinances.

Friends, impressed with the abuse which substituted the outward ceremony for the inner spiritual reality, placed their emphasis upon the spiritual content and let the outward symbols fall into disuse.

Communion, the observance of remembering Jesus' last supper and His instruction to partake together in remembrance of Him, is practiced often in worship. This is done in various ways depending on the Spirit's leading within the individual worshiper. It can be in quiet waiting before the Lord, in verbal witness, through prayer, sharing of the Holy Spirit's witness in one's life, or in the expression of needs or concerns. Although it is rooted in the historical act of Christ's body being broken and His blood shed, communion depends upon obedience to Him. As a testimony or outward sign of inviting and accepting Jesus as Lord, the new believer is encouraged to publicly acknowledge that decision and commitment.

B. TESTIMONIES REGARDING CHRISTIAN LIVING

Early in their religious lives Christians learn that it is necessary to make many decisions about behavior. They discover some practices which, though common in society about them, will seriously hinder their Christian growth and witness. Hence making right decisions about such matters will determine their growth in life and witness. Knowing that it is growing Christians who have greater delight in their own lives, Friends hold the

following testimonies as guidelines toward Christian growth which we understand to be taught in the Bible. It is our desire that Christians within our fellowship experience speedy and rich progress toward the attainment of fullness in Christ.

1. Harmony in the Church. Harmony in the church family is essential to its good witness in the community and to its worship of and service to its Head, the Lord Jesus Christ. Watchful care should therefore be taken to maintain that harmony. The congregation, and especially the pastor and officers, should be concerned that nothing be permitted to bring disruption to the peace and unity of their fellowship. They should be quick to discern conflicts among the members of the congregation. In the event that dissension or resentment does arise, the pastor and officers should admonish all parties of the serious threat involved in their attitudes and make every effort, especially following the pattern laid down by our Lord Himself in Matthew 18:15-20, to reach a speedy reconciliation. (I Peter 1:22; Hebrews 13:1; 1 John 4:21; Matthew 5:23-25).

2. Simplicity of Living. Because the pressures to follow a style of life like that of the non-Christian society are so great upon Christians, Friends insist that our citizenship is not of this world. The New Testament command, "Be not conformed to this world," reminds us that in all our living we must take care that our manner of dress be modest and decent in every way. We must also take care that we not be seduced by the attractions and abundance of earthly goods and thus fall into covetousness.

3. Funerals.

Knowing that our bodies have been made of dust (Genesis 3:19) and shall return to dust, Friends ought to avoid extravagant and expensive funerals and memorial stones.

4. Memorials. When a congregation feels that it would be a fitting tribute and possible testimony to others, Friends may prepare a memorial statement of the exemplary life of the deceased member. The statement should be forwarded to the Presiding Clerk, for possible presentation at the next business session

5. Unwholesome Habits. Friends should be especially watchful against being involved in the unwholesome habits characteristic of this evil world. Both II Corinthians 7:1, where we are instructed to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit," and I Corinthians 3:17, where we are told that "if any man defile the temple of God (which temple is our bodies), him shall God destroy," serve as a basis for our testimony against such habits.

Unwholesome habits include the use of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs and gluttony.

Abundant suffering has resulted to those who have been ensnared by these practices. Such suffering has included a waste of health, mind, money, the home, and often the very life of the one who indulges in such habits. In addition to the personal harm suffered, the Christian's godly example is also damaged.

Because of these grave considerations, Friends should avoid such habits and refrain from assisting in the manufacture or promotion of the use of such substances. If new Christians find it difficult to break any of these habits, loving care should be extended to them along with every assistance so that they may come to freedom from them.

6. Amusements. With the increase of leisure and the wide availability of entertainment of every kind, Friends should consider most carefully the recreation and amusements to which we give ourselves, our interest, our time, and our money. Amusements can and do have a large influence upon character and life.

Our members should avoid attending or being involved in movies, dances and theatrical performances of a demoralizing nature, and in other activities that may be injurious to Christian growth. Members are not to be involved in lotteries, wagering, or any kind of gambling. Friends should take care to avoid pornographic publications and publications tending to undermine their faith in the authority of the Scriptures and to hinder their Christian growth.

Though acknowledging certain benefits and the potential for Christian ministry in radio and television, Friends must also recognize and avoid programs which are unwholesome or demoralizing in music, language, or action portrayed.

C. TESTIMONIES REGARDING CHRISTIAN FAMILY

1. The Family. The family is the basic unit of human relationship, and as such is also the foundation unit of society and of the church. The many Biblical references to the family assure us of its divine origin and of God's concern for the family and the home.

2. Marriage. Marriage is the union of a man and woman into a oneness which no other human relationship can provide. Made before God and others, the marriage vow unites a couple so fully that they "become one flesh". Marriage also, even more importantly, involves mental, emotional, and spiritual union. Friends should therefore enter into marriage under the full persuasion that it is a life-long commitment and union.

A union so solemn is to be entered into only after much forethought, planning, and prayer.

Friends should seek earnestly the will of our Lord concerning their choice of a mate, remembering the apostolic injunction, "do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers". (II Corinthians 6:14a). Parents should use watchful care to help their children find mates of Christian character and commitment.

3. Weddings. Since the wedding ceremony is solemn and holy, Friends feel that it should be simple and reverent. While wishing it to be an occasion to be remembered for its beauty, we should nevertheless avoid ostentation and extravagance. We should take care to make the entire ceremony one of Christian celebration, watching in the choice of music and all other parts of the service that it be an occasion of seeking God's blessing on the union and His guidance in the establishment of the home.

4. Divorce. Since the only clear Biblical allowance for divorce is adultery, Friends discourage seeking a divorce on any other grounds. (Matthew 5:31,32). The sanctity of the marriage vows requires Friends to seek earnestly to nurture their relationship, to prevent serious marital discord, to seek Christian counseling when needed, and to make every effort toward a happy, harmonious, and holy marriage.

The break-up of many marriages in our day lays great responsibility upon the congregation to be sensitive to the needs of those becoming involved in such crises and to be quick in loving concern for them. If divorce occurs, the church should offer a redemptive ministry to all members of the broken family. When they are called upon to conduct weddings for divorced persons, we ask our ministers to consider the circumstances carefully, perhaps in consultation with the leaders of their congregations, before deciding whether to perform the ceremony.

Persons who have been divorced and are living consistent Christian lives should not be hindered from being members of the church nor from working in it.

5. Parents and Children. The responsibility of parenthood is given by God. (Psalm 127:3). The Scriptures often speak of this responsibility and give guidance for bearing it.

Parents should early and continually turn to God for wisdom and guidance in the rearing of their children.

The Bible commands, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord" (Ephesians 6:1), and throughout its pages examples clearly support its teaching that obedience is the right attitude of children to parents. On their part, parents should be sensitive to the concerns and needs of their children so that they can freely speak their hearts to each other.

Parents have great spiritual, as well as physical, material, and educational responsibility for their children. Knowing that their children face the pressures of temptation from all sides, particularly in their schools, Christian parents have a great responsibility to guide them into a real understanding of what they believe and what they should do in the face of such temptation. Parents should from the beginning have a concern that their children come to know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. This concern will move them to pray faithfully with and for their children, to try to build a home atmosphere that will draw them to God, to encourage them in regular attendance of services of worship and in Christian service, and to provide them with Christian instruction in the home.

D. TESTIMONIES REGARDING CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

1. General Ministry. Believers are committed to the work of God, not only to manifest personal righteousness as the fruit of a new life, but also to share their faith. All Christians are called upon to witness by word and by deed, in Christ likeness demonstrating love, forgiveness, and the way of peace

2. The Public Ministry. Friends believe certain men and women are called to be ministers of the Gospel; for the edifying and equipping of the church, the Holy Spirit confers on them the gifts of ministry (Ephesians 4:11). This calling to the ministry will be evidenced in the life and work of the public minister. While there will be those who also have administrative ability or unusual insight into the Scriptures, it is this distinctive call of God which sets apart a person to serve in the Gospel ministry. Freely received, this call and gift should be freely and devotedly given in service to God and the Church.

We want to be especially clear regarding the role of women in leadership. From our very beginnings, we have found no significant scriptural basis for limiting certain leadership and ministry roles to men. Today, we continue to affirm, not as a concession to modernity but in obedience to the Bible and the Holy Spirit that the Lord is calling both women and men to serve as leaders and pastors in His church.

3. Stewardship. Friends believe that the Old Testament practice of bringing one-tenth (the tithe) of the increase of one's labor to the temple as God's storehouse is the most satisfactory basis for Christian Stewardship. Jesus commended sacrificial giving which exceeded this, implying that true giving extends beyond the tithe.

Time, money, talents, and strength belong to the Lord. As His stewards, Christians hold them in trust to be used for His glory.

It is recommended that Friends should make their wills while in health and strength of judgment so that distribution of their estates may be done in justice and wisdom, to the satisfaction of their own minds. They are urged to consider financial needs of the various ministries of the local church and, where possible, remember them with suitable bequests.

4. Use of Church Buildings. Because church buildings have been dedicated to the service of God, and especially as places for His worship, Friends believe that they should be treated with care and respect. At times parts of these buildings may be used as meeting places for fellowship, but even at these times the buildings should be remembered as dedicated to the service of God.

The primary purpose of the buildings should always be the worship of God, instruction in the Christian faith, development of Christian fellowship, and Christian service to the community.

We encourage Friends to construct and maintain their worship facilities with prayerful consideration of their function, remembering the moderation and simplicity which is becoming to the testimony of Friends and to the Church of Jesus Christ.

5. Business Practices. Friends should seek divine direction in all their business affairs.

They should undertake endeavors only after prayer and seeking God's guidance. While it is to be hoped that we will have adequate income, we must nevertheless remember that the search for riches is a threat to Christian life. Careful attention should be given to all our dealings in order not to bring dishonor to our testimony or to the church. Friends should be especially careful to pay debts and to fulfill all commitments. If business failures occur, we must do everything possible to fulfill all obligations.

E. TESTIMONIES REGARDING CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIP TO GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY

1. The Poor. The Christian virtue of love should characterize Friends in caring for the material needs of the poor within our membership. Also, as means are available, such care should be extended to others' needs, remembering that we are admonished to do good to all, especially those of the household of faith. (Galatians 6:10).

2. Schools. Friends should take real interest in the educational programs affecting their children and all children of our communities. We should work for the election of suitable members of the boards of education, the employment of teachers of Christian character and example, and the

development of educational programs which consider the influence of their contents and activities on the children involved.

3. Civil Government. Friends are convinced that the New Testament requires the Christian to hold the government and its leaders in respect, and that the basic principles of government can be directly traced to the Scriptures. Therefore, it is necessary that we obey the laws of the nation insofar as they are not in conflict with our obedience to God. When it becomes necessary for Friends to disagree with the practices and requirements of government, we should do so out of concern for the promotion of righteousness and not out of delight in controversy or strife. Friends should use the ballot, with prayer and guidance, to vote for candidates and measures which will promote righteousness, giving much consideration to the personal and spiritual qualifications of candidates regardless of political affiliation.

4. Capital Punishment. The Bible emphasizes the sacredness of human life and the worth of each person before God. Capital punishment, Friends feel, is a pre-emption of the authority of God, the righteous Judge, over life. The restraint of evil can be more effectively handled by other methods than the death penalty.

5 War and Peace During the first 300 years of the Christian church its members abstained from military service as being a violation of the teachings of Christ. This attitude changed only when Constantine made Christianity the state religion and introduced the notion that it was right to fight in support of an officially-Christian government. Since that time there has been division in the practice of Christians as to the support of war.

Evangelical Friends renewed the testimony of the primitive church against war.

George Fox said that he "lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion for all wars" and with eleven other Friends in 1660 declared publicly to King Charles II that "We utterly deny all outward wars and strife, and fighting with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretense whatever; and this is our testimony to the whole world – that the Spirit of Christ, which leads us into all truth, will never move us to fight and war, neither for the Kingdom of Christ nor for the kingdoms of this world – therefore, we cannot learn war anymore." Standing upon this conviction, many Friends suffered imprisonment, cruelty, and death rather than violate their conscience.

In the matter of war, as in many other areas, the Christian is caught in a tension between the Scriptural command to "be subject to the governing

authorities" (Romans 13:1) on the one hand and the conviction on the other hand that "we must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). Even among Friends this has led to differing convictions as to how these commands shall be applied in specific situations. We respect individual conscience and surround our members with loving care whether they for Christ's sake refuse military service or feel obligated to serve in some capacity in the armed forces.

This liberty is not to be interpreted as any softening of our firm conviction that war is wrong as a method of settling disputes, being unchristian, destructive of our highest values, and productive of the seeds of future wars. We are concerned to find alternative solutions based upon justice and righteousness for all peoples. (Psalm 34:14; Proverbs 12:20; Ecclesiastes 3:8)

6. Oaths. Friends seek to evidence Christian holiness by conducting their personal, family, business, and civic responsibilities with honesty. Personal integrity includes consistency of speech. In allegiance to Christ and obedience to His clear commands, Friends refrain from profanity of speech and from swearing to legal oaths. (Matthew 5:33-37; James 5:12). One should tell the truth whether under oath or not. A form of affirmation is given in the following paragraph.

("You do most solemnly and sincerely, and truly declare and affirm that the testimony you will give in the cause now in hearing will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and this you do under the pains and penalties of perjury.")

We are grateful that the civil authorities have long granted us, and all others of like mind, the right to this practice.

7. Secret Societies. Many organizations make attractive appeals for membership and involvement. Friends must study carefully such organizations--the time, commitment, and money required, as well as the likely influence of the organization upon them. Especially, we will then avoid affiliation with secret societies, which base their rituals on a distorted understanding of the Bible and directly or indirectly give Jesus Christ less than divine nature, even though they may appear to have spiritual value. The oath bound character of such societies seems not only unnecessary, but also likely to prove harmful to honesty.

8. Equality of Persons. Friends have long been convinced of the equality of all persons and find that Scripture compels us to this view. We are, therefore, concerned for those who are underprivileged, neglected, and victimized by injustice and persecution. Friends repudiate discrimination on

the basis of sex, race, social class, or nationality. In all their dealings they seek to bind up the hurts of those who are injured, to be just, respectful, sensitive, and moved by the love of Christ. Any person should find freedom to worship and participate in the life of our congregation regardless of these differences. We witness to the dignity and worth of all before God. In regard to racial intermarriage, Friends recognize the social problems involved and would counsel their youth accordingly. However, by Christian fellowship, they seek to allay the burden society often lays on interracial families. Friends support the right of every person to enjoy access to public accommodations, employment on merit alone, use of qualified leadership, and suitable housing. Friends should support such concerns in all ways that are non-violent and that maintain respect for authority and law.

9. Stewardship of the Earth and its Resources. Friends believe that when God in the beginning gave man and woman dominion over the earth He did not grant them license to do whatever they might wish with its riches, but that rather He made them the stewards of what was and remains God's by creation and rulership. We, therefore, are permitted the use of the earth and its resources, but as stewards must use them wisely, carefully, and as under the eye of their owner. Unplanned increase of population and wasteful and destructive use of the earth's resources, Friends believe, are foreign to good stewardship. Moreover, the use of natural resources to support an extravagant style of life while others must exist in poverty and squalor is contrary to the Scriptures: "Whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?" (I John 3.17 NASB). Consequently, both in our own practice and in what we urge upon the governments of the world, Friends should be conscientious examples of acceptable stewardship.

10. Abortion. Friends believe that all life is a gift of God (Genesis 2:7; Job 33:4); therefore, when the matter of an abortion is being considered, neither the life of the mother nor of the unborn child is to be lightly treated. We hold that abortion on demand or for reasons of personal convenience, social adjustment, or economic advantage is morally wrong. We believe it may be employed therapeutically to safeguard the health or life of the mother, but only after spiritual, medical, and psychological counseling have been obtained. Friends believe an appropriate and morally acceptable alternative to abortion is to arrange for immediate adoption upon birth. They believe that married couples have the right to exercise their preferences as to means of preventing or avoiding conception.

11. Homosexuality. Authoritatively, the Word of God declares that homosexuality is not God's will for His children. We are told in I Corinthians 6:9-10 that homosexuals shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

The cause and downward progression of homosexuality is traced in Romans 1:21-32. It begins with failing to worship God and being unthankful and ends with encouraging others to participate in evil. We believe we must stand against this evil and that God's judgment will come against those who practice and encourage such activity.

We are assured in I Corinthians 6:11 that the homosexual can be cleansed, set apart for the Lord's work, and made right in the sight of God. Through the blood of Christ, many such have been transformed and all such can be. Although we oppose homosexuality as a violation of our God-given sexual nature, we wish to make it known that we do not reject the homosexual as a person. We believe they are redeemable people for whom Christ died.

F. TESTIMONIES REGARDING CERTAIN ISSUES

1. Security of the Believer. Friends believe that the security of the believer, even for eternity, is indicated in God's Word and witnessed to by the Holy Spirit to the individual, but we do not hold this security to be unconditional. As repentance and faith are the human condition of acceptance of God's free offer of salvation, so obedience and faith are necessary to continuance in that salvation. (Hebrews 5:9, 1 John 2:4).

2. Healing. We believe that God provides divine healing in response to believing prayer, in ways which must be considered miraculous. There are also times when God does not heal.

Though we do not understand this, the apparent lack of healing does not necessarily result from individual sin or lack of faith. (John 9:2-3). Despite this mystery we are deeply confident of the love and power of God and urge Friends to continue to pray for the healing of the sick. We also caution against teachings which are divisive and do not build the kingdom of God in love. We do not accept the view that a person is guaranteed to be divinely healed in this life as a part of the atonement.

3. Gifts. The Holy Spirit is the indwelling agent of leadership for each Christian. He always leads in harmony with the Holy Scriptures. Growth and maturity come as the Spirit is allowed to control the individual life, producing love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Gifts, or abilities, are also given by the Spirit to be used to encourage and strengthen each other. (Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4). While each gift is Spirit-given, Friends emphasize seeking the Giver of those gifts.

Those who claim any of the gifts should avoid the snare of assuming exalted spiritual power or authority. Such "holier than thou" attitudes are not in keeping with the true fruit of the Spirit.

As believers receive gifts, love will provide the motivation for the best use of each one; however, no one gift is given to all believers. (I Corinthians 12:11, 29-30). The evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life is the fruit resulting from His control. (Galatians 5:22-23).

4. Glossolalia (Speaking in Tongues).

There are differences (among our members as among other Christians) of interpretation of the Scriptures which speak of glossolalia as to whether the term refers to actual languages or to ecstatic utterances and whether this is a valid gift for our time. Nevertheless, we agree on the following points:

a. The will of God as revealed in the Scriptures is our conformity to His holy character as manifested in a holy life. All spiritual experiences, gifts, and fruit of the Spirit are means to that end. (Romans 8:29).

b. Speaking in other tongues does not constitute the essential sign of the baptism with the Holy Spirit. (I Corinthians 12:8-10, 28-31).

The evidence of the fullness of the Holy Spirit is the fruit of the Spirit, and especially divine love, emanating from a truly transformed life.

c. "Speaking in tongues" should not be made an occasion of division or strife among us. (Galatians 5:22).

d. In order to maintain unity in spite of our differences, we must practice mutual submission. In order to avoid becoming divisive, we should voluntarily refrain from certain freedoms, the practice of which may become a stumbling block to those for whom Christ died. (I Corinthians 8). We acknowledge that some use the gift of tongues in private devotion. However, it is our decision that we voluntarily refrain from the use of tongues in public services. If individuals or churches are led by the Holy Spirit to use tongues in public services, we point to the explicit guidelines set forth in I Corinthians 14:5,26-28..

5. Cults and Related Practices.

Friends believe that the numerous cults, such as Transcendental Meditation, the Hare Krishna movement, and the Unification Church led by Sun Myung Moon, preach other gospels than that of Jesus Christ and offer other saviors than Him.

Some are based more or less openly on non-Christian religions such as Hinduism. We also reject the false interpretation of Scriptures put forth by such groups as Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons (The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints), Unity and Christian Science.

We, therefore, upon authority of Scripture (Galatians 1:8-9), take our stand against all such false teachings. Friends believe that all access to God is through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, and that therefore the use of

mediums, clairvoyants, fortune tellers, astrologers, and any other alleged means of extraordinary knowledge or help is contrary to the will of God. We oppose all dabbling in spiritism, spirit possession and worship, and Satanism, as well as the denial of the reality of Satan. Rather, we believe in the existence of the Evil One, "that old serpent which is the Devil, and Satan," (Revelation 20:2) who tempted our first parents to sin, and through their disobedience brought about the fall of our race, with all its attendant degeneracy, unhappiness, and misery. We believe that Satan has revealed this evil character and purpose in his mighty opposition to Christ in the temptations in the wilderness and to His reign in all ages. But we also believe that his power is limited, and that in God's own time he will be chained AND FINALLY CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE.

PART II -- THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT

CHAPTER I -- THE DENOMINATION OF FRIENDS

1. The Bond of Union.

A bond of union should be maintained with other like minded Friends Meetings, whether individual meetings or members of a yearly meeting, by correspondence among them; by issuing and receiving certificates of membership in cases of removal; by joint participation in religious and benevolent enterprises.

2. The Form of Government.

Friends believe that Jesus Christ is the head of the Church and dwells in all believers. He enlightens and gives guidance so that believers may do His will.

As the head of the Church, Jesus confers gifts upon members of the body which are to be used for the edification of the Church. Members have equal rights and privileges as they exercise their giftedness in faithfulness to Jesus, the head of the Church. Therefore, Friends practice both a theocratic and democratic form of government.

3. Admission to Membership.

The Friends admit into membership all who make a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose lives testify to their union with Him, and who accept the teachings of the Gospel as held by the Friends.

4. Positions of Leadership.

Positions in the organization result from official recognition of these gifts by the body. Each member has duties to perform and special responsibilities to meet, and the business of the organization is conducted in recognition of this equality of rank in the membership. There are no distinctions in the rights, privileges, or responsibilities of the members because of sex, color or race.

5. A Friends Church.

A Friends Church is comprised of Christians freely united by faith in Jesus Christ and mutual concern to worship, to nurture one another and to maintain a public witness to their faith.

A congregation of members, fully established, is called a local church or local meeting of Friends. (These two terms are synonymous and for the purposes of this document "local church" is used.) A local church is under the supervision of its pastor and the Ministry and Counsel.

6. Transaction of Business.

Friends conduct their business in the framework of worship during announced meetings, called business sessions. All members are urged to participate in the business of the church. This organizational pattern is designed so that members will develop and exercise their gifts in personal ministry.

The Ministry and Counsel is the church in interim, authorized to take any action that is necessary in the interest of the church.

CHAPTER II -- THE ORGANIZATION OF THE MONTHLY MEETING

SECTION 1. Organization and Functions Duties and Responsibilities

1. Composition. The Friends Meeting of Ballplay is an organization which consists of all of those persons recorded on its list of members. Each member has the right and obligation to participate in the business and work of the church.

2. Regular Meetings. Sunday and mid-week services of instruction, worship, and evangelism are held, in conformity with the schedule adopted. Business sessions are held at regular intervals to keep members informed and involved in major decisions. All major items should be brought to the business meeting for decisions. In all such sessions all members are encouraged to be present and to take part in reaching decisions.

3. Called Sessions. A special business session may be called when it seems necessary in the judgment of the presiding clerk and/or the pastor. Such a called session, or a session adjourned to meet at the call of the clerk,

is announced in the regular Sunday morning service prior to the selected date of the session.

4. Functions. The local church is the general policy-making body. It is charged with the administration of the affairs of the church and has authority to call and contract pastoral services; to adopt the annual budget; to receive, transfer, and dismiss members; to deal with offenders and grant appeals; to consider and act upon all questions affecting the membership; to hold and administer real estate and other property in the name Meeting for the use of the church; and to consider, adopt, and carry out measures for the improvement of the spiritual interests of the church and of the community at large.

5. Authority. The local church is the final authority in matters of business. Elders and ministry teams should be careful to report actions to the business sessions through the Ministry and Counsel and not to assume authority that has not been granted.

6. Communication.

Communication is very important for harmony within the church. It is strongly recommended that minutes of meetings and full treasurer's reports, with beginning and ending balances, be made public to the congregation by posting on the bulletin board or printing in a newsletter or bulletin insert.

7. Incorporation.

The church is requested to take the necessary steps toward incorporation with their particular state governments. Such incorporation shall be in harmony with the meeting and state laws.

SECTION 2. Appointment of Officers

All officers of the Monthly Meeting shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee not later than December of each year and shall take office after being dedicated the first Sunday in January. They shall serve until their successors are appointed.

1. Nominating Committee

In January of each year, the Ministry and Counsel with the pastor will select a nominating Committee of 3 to 5 members, and shall give the name or names to the January Monthly Meeting for approval or disapproval. They shall serve for 3 years, one third of the number shall be appointed each year. . In the selection of persons to serve, the committee should seek to discover the gifts and abilities of people in the congregation, and try to

match giftedness with the different realms of responsibility. The committee shall nominate persons to fill any vacancy that occurs during the year.

2. Clerks

Upon nomination of the Nominating Committee, the Monthly Meeting shall approve a Presiding Clerk, an assistant Presiding Clerk (OPTIONAL) and a Recording Clerk.

a. The Presiding Clerk shall prepare an agenda ahead of the Monthly Meeting session; shall see that all business is properly presented, that sufficient time is given for prayerful consideration of each item of business, announce decisions when made, sign documents on behalf of the Monthly Meeting and see that the decisions and actions of the Monthly Meeting are carried out. He or she may meet with the Monthly Meeting committees and work with the pastor and other members of the Meeting to the end that the program of the Meeting may go forward.

b. The Assistant Presiding Clerk shall preside when the Presiding Clerk is absent. He or she shall assist the Presiding Clerk in other matters as requested.

c. The Recording Clerk shall keep an accurate set of minutes showing all matters acted upon by the Monthly Meeting. After the minutes have been approved by the Monthly Meeting, they shall be kept in permanent form in a minute book. The minutes of each meeting should be signed by the Presiding Clerk and the Recording Clerk and dated correctly.

d. The Recording clerk shall keep correct record of all matters relating to membership, such as births, marriages, and deaths; members joining by application or transfer and members transferring to other churches.

If neither the Presiding Clerk or Assistant Presiding Clerk is present, the meeting shall be called to order by the Recording Clerk, after which a temporary Presiding Clerk shall be named.

3. Treasurer

The Nominating committee shall nominate a Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer to be approved by the Monthly Meeting. The Treasurer shall receive and disburse funds as directed by the Meeting. He or she shall keep a regular account of money so received and disbursed, and submit a

complete financial report at the end of the fiscal year. He should submit a monthly report to the Monthly Meeting.

4. Trustees

The Nominating Committee shall nominate for approval by the Monthly Meeting three or more Trustees who shall serve for three years, one third of the number shall be appointed each year. The Trustees shall act under direction of the Monthly Meeting. The Chairman of the Trustees shall be named by the other Trustee members each year. They serve as the "duly elected" legal agents of the church with specific duties as follows:

- 1) Hold and care for all church properties.
- 2) Arrange custodial service.
- 3) Secure and maintain adequate insurance.
- 4) Establish policies relating to use of church facilities.
- 5) Provide for custody of all except current church records.
- 6) Receive and administer all proceeds of wills, endowments and other gifts as directed by the donors and the church.
- 7) Transact real estate purchases and sales as directed by the church.

It is recommended that the Trustees meet on a regular schedule.

SECTION 3. Committees

In addition to the Nominating Committee mentioned above, the Monthly Meeting shall name such other committees as are needed to care for the operation of the church. **Such committees may include:** Finance and Stewardship, Christian Education, Christian Social Concerns, Outreach. Finance and Stewardship, and camp.

1. The Finance and Stewardship

The Finance and Stewardship Committee shall have charge of securing and dispersing funds for the operation of the meeting.

2. Christian Education

The Christian Education Committee shall have general oversight over the Sunday School, selecting teachers, superintendents and other officers, which shall be approved by the Monthly Meeting. This Committee shall select lesson materials and shall be concerned for training of the teachers and for the promotion of the Sunday School.

It is urged that Sunday School Superintendents see that teachers will be present and prepared for Sunday lessons.

3. Christian Social Concerns

The Christian Social Concerns Committee shall be concerned with the application of Christian principles to individual and community life. It shall promote the use of peaceful methods of settling differences in all areas of conflict and the promotion of good will among men. It shall provide information and education in opposition to abortions, the use of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, harmful drugs and other harmful narcotics. It shall be concerned for social justice and for the physical and spiritual well-being of individual and group life.

4. Outreach

The Outreach Committee shall be concerned with the spread of the message of Jesus Christ through evangelism at home, in neighboring communities, in the State of Tennessee, and to other areas of the world.

5. Camp

Promote the values of Christian camping as a ministry to people of the church and community. Encourage support of Friends Youth Camp. Encourage all ages to attend the camps provided.

6. Reports

Each Committee shall make reports to the Monthly Meeting at least once each year and may report whenever there are items of importance and concern.

SECTION 4. Ministry and Counsel

Membership on the Ministry and Counsel shall consist of persons who are active members living consistent Christian lives. They shall be persons who possess the proper spiritual gifts and qualifications of spiritual maturity and understanding of the Scriptures in line for the duties of elders. (I Tim. 3:8-12)

1. Membership of the Ministry and Counsel

Each Monthly Meeting shall have a minimum of three elders in addition to the pastor who make up the meeting on Ministry and Counsel. The Presiding Clerk of the Monthly Meeting may also attend meetings of the Ministry and Counsel, but shall have no vote on business matters.

Members of Ministry and Counsel shall be nominated by the nominating committee and approved by the Monthly Meeting for a term of three years. Approximately one-third of the members should be appointed each year. It is recommended that immediate family members not serve on Ministry and Counsel at the same time.

2. Organization

Upon nomination of the Nominating Committee, the Monthly Meeting shall approve a clerk and a secretary for Ministry and Counsel from among the membership of Ministry and Counsel. Written minutes of the business of Ministry and Counsel shall be signed by the Clerk and the Secretary and shall be kept in permanent form. Meetings of Ministry and Counsel shall be held each month. Special meetings may be called by the Clerk or at the request of any two members of the Ministry and Counsel.

3. Duties

The Meeting on Ministry and Counsel, in cooperation with the Pastor, it shall be their duty to exercise watchful care and affectionate oversight for the maintenance of a consistent moral life by the members of the Meeting; to extend care and reproof in all cases of disobedience, and to restore, if possible, such offenders to an orderly life and to full fellowship with the Meeting. All matters of membership shall be presented to the Ministry and Counsel before being considered by the Monthly Meeting. It is the duty of this body to stimulate regular attendance at services of worship, to encourage the development and use of spiritual gifts given to others, to encourage associate members to become active members as soon as they are ready, to be concerned with the worship activities of the church and to work with the pastor for the extension and well-being of the church.

Monthly reports on all business handled by this Body shall be given to the Monthly Meeting. It is the duty of this committee to have general oversight of the shepherding of the flock, to be watchful of the interests of absent members, to visit families of attenders of meetings, to extend a special care to those attenders who are not active members and to invite them to join in membership when they are prepared to do so. They shall extend a watchful care over the Associate members, and encourage them to become Active members as soon as they are prepared to do so. Names of members who have died during the year shall be recorded and memorials prepared. The Ministry and Counsel is the church in interim, authorized to take any action that is necessary in the interest of the church, especially to chart and implement its major goals. It reports its actions to the regular business sessions.

Feeling the weight of responsibilities resting upon them, elders will be prayerful in the active performance of their duties, which specifically include:

- Cooperate with, encourage and strengthen the pastoral ministers in all their duties, giving counsel and advice.
- Assist the pastor as the spiritual needs of the membership and congregation may require.
- Counsel members regarding their spiritual welfare.
- Initiate disciplinary action when necessary.
- Encourage those who give evidence of true spiritual gifts when taking part in public meetings for worship, but restrain others who do not give such evidence.
- Consider persons who may have a gift for ministry. If the person meets the qualifications, the procedure for recording may be initiated.
- Work with the Monthly Meeting in the calling of a pastor when needed.

SECTION 5. MONTHLY MEETING RECORDS

Monthly Meeting minute books and valuable papers shall be Carefully preserved and, if possible, be placed in a fireproof safe or vault.

SECTION 6. STATISTICAL SECRETARY

The Statistical Secretary shall keep a correct record of all matters pertaining to membership, such as births, marriages, and deaths; members joining by application; transfers of junior members to adult members; and transfers of members to and from other Monthly Meetings and other denominations.

The Recording Clerk may serve as the Statistical Secretary.

SECTION 7: CONDUCTING CHURCH BUSINESS

Procedures

It is a Quaker conviction that the Lord of the Church is present in its times of decision making as well as in its times of worship. This conviction in no way lessens the need for clarity of presentation or thoughtful reasoning, but rather reinforces it so that every thought is made captive to Christ, who is present with his people for their corporate as well as individual judgments (see Acts 15). This conviction supports the following suggestions for business procedures.

A Devotional Period

Every session should begin with a short devotional period, a time when the clerk may read a Querie or a short passage of scripture, followed by prayer.

The Opening Minute

Business begins with the reading of the opening minute by the Recording Clerk. It is worded somewhat as follows "Friends Meeting of Ballplay has met in regular session January ____, 20____, at _____ p.m.

The minutes of the previous meeting should be printed for distribution, or read aloud; their presentation at this time is for the information of those present. Usually the Recording Clerk formulates the minutes as business goes forward and reads them at the close of the session for correction and approval. If this has not been done, approval of the previous minutes is the first agenda item.

Presentation of Business

From an agenda drawn up by the Presiding Clerk, the meeting moves through old business, then postponed matters, then to reports and recommendations by standing and special committees, then to matters of new business on the agenda, and finally to new matters introduced from the floor of the meeting. Every active member of the church has a right to participate and therefore to introduce new business. It is customary among Friends to present matters of business in the form of a proposal or a suggestion rather than a motion.

Consideration of Business Matters

Persons proposing action do so, not with the idea of championing an idea and bringing the church to that point of view, but with a desire for united action based upon the Divine will. Accordingly, it is incumbent upon members to speak freely to the issue, from their particular perspectives. When this is done in humility and godly fear, it is frequently the case that the common thought of the people may shift to one or the other side of the proposal. When all who wish to do so have expressed their judgments, the Presiding Clerk gathers the collective judgment, asking for approval. When approval is voiced clearly, the clerk announces the will of the church, in words such as these "It is my judgment that Friends approve the action, but are there those who do not feel clear about it?" Unless objections are raised, or clarification required, the clerk then announces that it is the decision of the meeting. The Recording Clerk then formulates a minute embodying the proposition and the decision. The business session resorts to voting only

when clerk feels it is in the best interest of the meeting or a decision cannot be reached otherwise.

The Concluding Minute

After all matters have been considered and there is no further business to be presented, the Presiding Clerk, perceiving that all minds are clear, reads or has read a concluding minute, for example, "The session adjourned, to meet _____, 20____, or at the call of the clerk."

SECTION 8: Recording of Ministers

In accordance with Quaker tradition, Friends Meeting of Ballplay recognizes that all are called to minister, in and out of meeting. However, some ministries require special attention, nurture and accountability from the Meeting. These ministries may be brief or prolonged, they may be exercised among us or in other locations, but they will be in harmony with the Faith and Practice of Friends Meeting of Ballplay and will benefit the Society of Friends.

We recognize that God gifts and calls some individuals to sustained and public service. We recognize that God ordains these individuals. Friends can only recognize and record their gifts and calls. The purpose of this recording is to nurture and hold accountable these individuals and to give them the benefit of community discernment in the exercise of their gifts for the benefit of Friends and the world.

The process of recording is observational. We record ministry which we see exercised in our midst. Such ministry will be consistent, persistent, public, and fruitful and to the specific benefit of our Monthly Meeting and the wider Quaker world.

Individuals who feel led to minister, test their leading by doing ministry. Individuals led to sustained public ministry are encouraged to talk to Ministry and Counsel about their leading. Prayer and guidance will be given to them.

When Ministry and Counsel has observed such ministry over time, and sees the need for nurture and accountability of the minister, they will start the process of consideration. The Monthly Meeting will be notified, and if they approve, a meeting for clearness will be held with the individual to commence a season of discernment and preparation. Ministry and Counsel may assign a mentor, or ask the individual to enter into a spiritual direction process with a Quaker minister. While no particular degree is required to be a Friends minister, some education or study may be suggested or required.

A series of meetings for clearness may be appropriate. Other formational activities may be suggested. When Ministry and Counsel feels that the observed ministry is solid and sustained and that the season of discernment has produced clearness, they will make a recommendation to the Monthly Meeting that the minister be recorded. The Monthly Meeting will do the final discernment.

Friends Meeting of Ballplay will receive recorded ministers by transfer. Ministry and Counsel will contact the previous meeting at the time of the transfer of membership to make sure that the recorded minister was in good standing at the time of transfer.

Friends Meeting of Ballplay may record a minister by recommendation of Ministry and Counsel if that minister has been previously recorded by a Friends body, and voluntarily surrendered that recording in order to join Friends Meeting of Ballplay. If a minister is discontinued solely because of their membership with Friends Meeting of Ballplay, that minister's recording may also be taken up. In these cases, Ministry and Counsel will consider the circumstances and standing of the minister and make a recommendation to the business meeting.

All ministers recorded or ordained by Friends Meeting of Ballplay will be given a certificate of recording. At the minister's discretion, they may submit their certificate to the county clerk and according to the laws of the State of Tennessee; they shall have all the rights and responsibilities granted to ordained ministers of other denominations.

Recordings are open ended. Recorded ministers are accountable to the Monthly Meeting. Ongoing nurture and accountability will be provided through minutes of service and traveling minutes. Recorded ministers can also arrange for nurture and accountability through other means that they desire, such as requesting elders, clearness or care committees, or spiritual direction. Our pastors are cared for and held accountable directly by Ministry and Counsel. If a minister feels that their call is fulfilled, they may lay down their recording by notifying Ministry and Counsel and the Meeting. By recommendation of Ministry and Counsel and action of the Monthly Meeting, a minister's recording may be terminated if it is clear that the individual is no longer living consistently with their ministerial gift. This action will not take place without significant prayer and consultation and the individual will have ample opportunity to meet with Ministry and Counsel before such a recommendation is made. If they transfer their membership to another Monthly Meeting or Yearly Meeting, their recording shall be transferred with their membership, unless the receiving Meeting discerns that the recording

cannot be taken up. The presiding clerk would facilitate the process of transfer.

PART III -- PRACTICES OF GOVERNMENT

CHAPTER I -- MEMBERSHIP

Section I -- Participating Membership

1. Qualification and Definition.

A participating member of the Friends Church is a person--adult, young adult, or advanced adolescent--who has made a credible profession of faith, and who, either on that profession or by certificate from another Friends church, has been admitted to full membership by the church. Participating members are those who show an active interest in the local church by giving it the major part of their attendance and support. Such members make the church what it is by their ready participation in its activities and services, their genuine interest in its objectives, and their faithful and loyal material support in tithes and offerings.

2. Application for Membership.

A person desiring to be united with a local church may make application in writing or in person to the local or extension church through the pastor, or other members of the Ministry and Counsel.

3. Report and Official Action.

It is the duty of the Ministry and Counsel, before presenting the name of an applicant for membership, to ascertain whether the person makes a credible profession of faith in Christ as Savior, the applicant's sincerity being attested by manner of life; whether the applicant accepts the teachings of Christian religion as held by Friends Meeting of Ballplay, whether the person will conform to these Practices of Government. Its judgment on these matters is passed on, with the application, to the local or extension church, which acts to accept or reject the applicant. The clerk notifies the applicant as to the action of the church.

4. Public Reception.

Announcement of the reception of new members may be made publicly in a meeting for worship, that all the members may extend to them a welcome.

Section II -- Non-Participating Membership

Those persons who have been participating members of the church, but who currently do not show an active interest in the local church by attendance, financial assistance, correspondence, prayers, or in other ways may be listed as non-participating members.

The Ministry and Counsel should contact individuals personally or by letter, seeking to encourage them to become active, both before and after they are listed as non-participating members.

Non-participating members are to be listed on the annual statistical report.

Section III -- Associate Membership

1. Qualification and Definition.

Children born or adopted into the homes of members are, with the consent of the parents, enrolled as associate members. Children of those applying for membership may be so enrolled on their request or the request of the parents. They are thus recognized, but not because of their birthright or family connections. They can become such only by experiencing the new birth by the Holy Spirit. This recognition is made partly because of the promises in the Holy Scriptures to believers and their households. Also true Christian parents will make their children the objects of loving prayer and instruct them in the Gospel.

Parents will strive to pray with their children in such a way that they will surrender their hearts to God early in their youth and take a natural interest in the church as they do in the family of which they are members.

2. From Associate to Participating Membership.

Persons thus enrolled as associate members are enrolled as participating members when they have made a credible profession of faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord and have accepted the teachings of the Gospel as held by Friends. If an associate member does not make such a profession of faith by the time he or she reaches the age of 21, upon recommendation by the Ministry and Counsel and approval by the church, the name is then removed from the list of members.

Section IV -- Affiliate Membership

In situations where persons not Friends (or Friends temporarily located) are actively interested and engaged in the work of a church, such may be admitted to affiliate membership without severing their relations with another denomination or the home church. Affiliate members recognize and fulfill the obligation of regular attendance in the services, active moral support of the church and its work, and liberal giving toward its financial program. They may hold offices in the church, subject to the discretion of the local church. They are not counted in the annual reports of membership but may be reported separately if desired. Children of such members may become affiliate members also, or at the request or by the consent of their parents they may become associate members of the church. Affiliate members may be received into full membership when they so desire.

Section V -- Transfer by Certificate or Letter

1. Among Friends.

When members, or associate members, desire to unite with another meeting, they request their church to issue a certificate of membership. Such a transfer of membership may be initiated by the local church when it

deems best to do so. Transfer of membership is not complete until the church accepting the certificate has informed the church which issued it.

2. With Other Denominations.

When an applicant for membership produces a letter of recommendation from another denomination, the church may receive the applicant on this recommendation or on the person's own profession of faith, or may reject the applicant as is judged best. If a member wishes to unite with some other body of Christians, the church may grant to the church of the member's choice a letter stating the member's Christian standing; thereupon the person's membership with Friends terminates.

3. Record of Transfers.

The acceptance and issuance of all certificates are to be recorded in the minutes of the churches, and the lists of members corrected accordingly.

Section VI -- Resignation and Forfeiture

1. Resignation.

Resignation of membership may be submitted in writing to the presiding clerk of the church. The church may then exercise its discretion as to accepting it.

2. Uniting with Another Denomination.

When a member has united with another religious body which functions as a denomination, information concerning the fact authorizes the church to remove that person's name from the list of members; the church should inform the person of its action.

3. Forfeiture.

Members who move away from any Friends church should correspond with their churches, and the churches, through their Ministry and Counsel, with them. In case no communication has been received from a non-participating member for a period of three years, the board having made reasonable effort to get in touch with the member, the church, at its discretion, may instruct the recording clerk to remove the person's name from the list of members

CHAPTER II -- PASTORS AND OTHER CHRISTIAN WORKERS

section I -- Duties and Privileges of Pastors

1. Initiation of Pastoral Service.

The initiative in arrangements for the pastoral ministry is taken by the Ministry and Counsel. The local church, when satisfied with the report (to

include an agreement on terms of financial support), extends the call. It is suggested that the local church formulate a written understanding with the pastor regarding the length of service, whether it is for one year, for a specified term of years, or for an indefinite time. It is of mutual benefit for churches and pastors to plan for longer terms of service

2. Pastoral Care.

Pastors must carry on their labor in harmony with the principles of the denomination and agreeable to the provisions of this book of Faith and Practice, taking care that opportunity be afforded in all meetings for worship for the free exercise by members of the congregation of any gifts for service which the Lord may have conferred.

The pastor and the Elders Board share the responsibility for the spiritual care of the flock.

The pastor may fulfill his or her part by carrying on, in addition to pulpit ministry, a program of systematic calling in the homes of members and other attenders, by individual counseling, by giving attention to the sick and bereaved, and by helping the needy in the name of the church. A pastor should, moreover, endeavor to encourage the departments of the church, such as the Sunday School and the Friends Youth, by presence and counsel. The pastor is an advisory member of all the committees appointed by the church and exercises necessary supervision over their activities, lending incentive and encouragement when needed and giving advice and instruction for the proper functioning of these agencies. The pastor may assist them further by presenting special messages (or giving way for an invited speaker to do so) on the special phases of their work. Pastors should not in any sense dominate the work of the church, but should strive to bring every officer and committee to full activity and efficiency, with each reaching and maintaining complete responsibility for the performance of its duties.

3. Unrecorded Pastors.

In cases where it seems advisable for a church to employ as pastor a person who has not yet been recorded, the Elders of the Church should issue to such pastor an Annual Certificate. This certificate authorizes the pastor to fulfill the usual functions of a minister, including the performing of wedding ceremonies when proper arrangements have been made with the civil authorities.

4. Performance of Marriage Ceremonies.

One who has been recorded as a minister of the Gospel has all the rights and responsibilities usually pertaining thereto including the performing of wedding ceremonies. The minister should exercise discretion in using the powers of performing wedding ceremonies, giving adequate counseling to those being married. In the use of such authority, and any other which

involves legal procedure regulated by civil law, pastors must be careful to observe strictly all demands of such law.

5. Annual Report of Pastoral Activities.

Every pastor employed within the local meeting should meet with the Elders concerning their work and activities annually.

6. Continuation or Termination of Pastoral Service.

The pastor may be called for another year or term of service at the discretion of the local church; this should be done not less than three months before the close of the pastoral year. When possible, termination should coincide with the close of the pastoral year. Pastors feeling that their work is done may terminate this relationship by written notice at least three months in advance. If the local church feels dissatisfied with the pastoral relationship, the Elders Board should meet with the pastor to discuss grievances. At their discretion, the pastor may be asked to be absent while the final decision is being reached. If a pastor's services are no longer required, the pastor should be given written notice at least three months in advance.

In certain situations an immediate removal of a pastor may be required, due to failures in morals, spiritual values, or integrity. In such instances the local Elders Board and/or the Yearly Meeting Elders Board may take such action for the good of the local church and all parties involved. Care should be given to provide a redemptive ministry to the pastor involved and to care for finances for a reasonable period of time to allow for adjustments to be made.

Section II -- Other Christian Workers

1. Appointment.

The Elders may from time to time recommend, and the local church may appoint if it sees fit, members who are not ministers to perform some special types of service for the church. These may include assistant pastors, parish workers, musical directors, vocal or instrumental musicians, young people's workers, or helpers for any other service which contributes to the spiritual program of the church.

2. Liberation and Recommendation.

When a Christian worker as defined above feels led, and an opportunity has been offered, to perform some special type of service temporarily outside his/her own local church, the worker presents the concern to the Elders Board. If this board unites in the concern, it recommends to the church that a certificate of its unity and approval be granted. If the church concurs, it may grant the certificate, affirming the worker's good standing and

usefulness in the church and commending that person to the fellowship of those among whom he or she will labor.

3. Special Speakers.

Local meetings should exercise care in allowing persons to speak in their meetings, even though they may represent themselves as being involved in some form of ministry. Care should be taken to make certain that those who are members of other meetings are in good standing with their meetings. In relation to those who are not Friends, care should be exercised to determine if these have the approval of the proper authorities of their own church. A special caution should be noted in relation to persons who denounce the church or teach contrary to Friends' belief and practice.

CHAPTER III -- DEALING WITH OFFENDERS

Under normal conditions problems arising from dealing with offenders are handled originally on the local level by the appropriate committee. Care should be taken to examine thoroughly all facets of the problem in a spirit of Christian love.

Section I -- Ministers

1. Grounds for Investigation.

When there is evidence that a minister has lost the gift in the ministry and usefulness in his or her station, or no longer represents Friends Meeting of Ballplay in the ministry, or is not in harmony with the doctrines and practices of Friends as stated in this book of Faith and Practice, a person's right to retain recognition as a minister is brought into question.

2. Initiation of Action.

Action requesting that a minister be investigated may originate in the Ministry and Counsel.

3. Final Action.

The Ministry and Counsel, or a committee appointed by them, then investigates the case and report its findings at the earliest opportunity. If the Elders Board after laboring with the minister in question with love and prayer, find the charges are sustained, the Elders Board approves the person's deposition from the ministry.

Section II -- Erring Members

1. Causes for Action and Preliminary Measures.

Any member who fails to live a consistent moral life, who is guilty of disorder or of conduct unbecoming to a Christian, who habitually neglects attendance of meetings for worship without reasonable excuse, or who denies the

fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion, is dealt with in love and prayer by the local Elders Board. It is the board's responsibility to take the initiative in such a case.

2. Formal Complaints and Further Dealings.

When the board has exercised proper care without avail, it lodges with the church a formal complaint in writing against the erring member. It must be evident that the board members have conferred with the member in love to seek to show the error and to lead the erring member to repentance and confession, that he or she may be reclaimed from their erring way and restored to fellowship with the church.

3. Final Action.

If the exercise of due care and forbearance proves to be without avail, the offender maintaining a willful course or continuing to neglect meetings for worship (the latter for a space of three years), the church executes a minute of disownment, and the clerk furnishes the offender a copy thereof and reports to the next business session of the church that this has been done.

Section III -- Appeals

1. Filing An Appeal.

When a member who has been under discipline as an offender is dissatisfied with the decision of the church, the member may file with the local church at its next regular session or the one succeeding it, an appeal to the Ministry and Counsel for a review of the case. The church enters the same upon its minutes, sends a copy to the Ministry and Counsel, and appoints a committee of three to represent it in the case before the Elders.

2. Procedure Setting Aside the Judgment of the Local Church.

If it is found that the offense has not been correctly adjudged, or that the charge has not been sufficiently sustained, or that by any irregularity in the proceedings the rights of the appellant have been infringed, the board sets aside the judgment of the local church.

CHAPTER IV -- MARRIAGE

1. Its Spiritual Nature.

Since God instituted marriage, His will should be sought prayerfully by those who consider marriage. Minors are to get the consent of parents or guardians prior to marriage. Those who plan to marry should know each other well and realize the responsibility involved in setting up a new home. If marriage is entered properly, it can be a happy, beautiful relationship beyond one's anticipation.

2. Legal Requirements.

Those who unite in marriage and the ministers who officiate in the ceremonies shall be careful to meet all legal requirements of the state in which they reside, such as the registration of the minister, the securing of the marriage license, the authorization of the ceremony by the minister, the minister's certification of it to those who are wed, and the minister's report to the proper civil officers.

3. Forms of Ceremony.

Those who wish to unite in marriage may do so according to the traditional Friends custom or in any other way which they may prefer. It is urged that a religious ceremony be chosen above a civil ceremony and that needless ostentation and expense be avoided.

CHAPTER V -- THE QUERIES

These Queries, with the related passages of Scripture, are intended to serve as a reminder of Friends standards of moral and spiritual life.

They should be read at least once a year in the local business sessions, and on occasion in the worship time. Their use can help individuals examine themselves to see if their lives are consistent with Christian principles. Serious consideration of these questions should tend to promote the spiritual welfare of the church as a whole as well as that of individuals.

1. Do you earnestly seek to maintain a life in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you practice the daily reading of the Scriptures in your families, giving time for waiting upon the Lord? Are you watchful not to be unduly absorbed by temporal affairs? Are you careful to avoid all places and amusements inconsistent with a Christian character? "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind, and with all your strength." (Mark 12:30 NIV)

2. Do you love one another as becomes the followers of Christ? Are you careful of the reputation of others? When differences arise do you make earnest efforts to end them speedily? "A new command I give you; Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:34-35 NIV)

3. Do you attend regularly the services of your church and participate in them actively? Do you prayerfully endeavor to minister, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in humble dependence upon Christ, the spiritual gifts with which you have been entrusted? "Let us not give up meeting together,

as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching." (Hebrews 10:25 NIV)

4. Do you provide for the suitable Christian education and recreation of your children and those under your care, and endeavor to train them for upright and useful lives? Are you thoughtful and careful to supervise their social activities and to guard them against harmful reading and evil associates? Do you encourage them to read and study the Scriptures? Do you prayerfully seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in your efforts for their conversion and growth in grace? "Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord." (Ephesians 6:4 NIV)

5. Do you abstain from the use of alcoholic liquor as a beverage? Do you abstain from the use of drugs, except as prescribed by and under a doctor's care? Do you faithfully encourage the enforcement of all laws relative to the selling and use of alcoholic liquor and narcotics? Do you intelligently and lovingly use your influence to limit the use of alcoholic liquor, tobacco, and narcotics and seek to minister to those already damaged by such use? "The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: . . . drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God." (Galatians 5:19-21 NIV)

6. Do you consistently practice Jesus' spirit and teaching of love and goodwill to all people? Do you endeavor to make clear to all whom you can influence and especially our own youth that war cannot be reconciled with the spirit of Christ? "Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy, without holiness no one shall see the Lord." (Hebrews 12:14 NIV)

7. Do you try to observe simplicity in your manner of living? Do you frequently inspect your affairs and settle your accounts? Are you careful to live within your income and avoid involving yourselves in business beyond your ability to manage? Are you just in your dealings, punctual to your promises, prompt in the payment of your debts, and free from defrauding the public revenue? "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness." (Matthew 6:33 NIV)

8. Do you make diligent effort to acquaint yourselves and those under your care with the spiritual and material needs of the world? Do you support by prayer and systematic giving those who are laboring to extend Christ's kingdom, and do you make evident your loving sympathy with them and their service? "If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and truth." (I John 3:17-18 NIV)

9. Do you exercise your rights and duties as a citizen to vote, to fulfill jury duty, and in other ways to bring Christian influence in all levels of government? "Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor." (Romans 13:7 NIV)

10. Do you uphold the doctrinal beliefs of The Friends Meeting of Ballplay and support its ministries? "Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them. . ." (I Timothy 4:16a NIV)

Suggested Application for Active Membership

I (name) _____, having acknowledged Jesus Christ as my Savior and having studied the Christian beliefs of the Friends Meeting of Ballplay Church and accepted them, desire to become associated with fellow Christians of this faith and do hereby apply for active membership in Friends Meeting of Ballplay Friends Church.

I am ready to take advantage of opportunities for spiritual growth offered through the various ministries of the church and to take an interest in the business of the church.

I understand that membership implies an obligation on my part to support the church in the following ways:

1. by living a consistent and godly life (Romans 12:1),
2. by using my gifts in ministry and service as God directs me (1 Peter 4:10),
3. by attending the regular meetings for worship and fellowship unless hindered by reasons I can conscientiously give to my Lord (Hebrews 10:23-25),
4. by making regular financial contributions to the ministry of the church (2 Corinthians 9:6-8).

I am prepared to uphold the statements of Christian belief of Friends Meeting of Ballplay, but if at any time I can no longer work in harmony with the faith and practice of Friends, I shall ask that my name be removed from membership.

(Signed) _____

___ Phone _____

Address _____

Birth date _____

Single _____ Married _____

Are you now a member of another church? _____

If so, where? _____

Recommendation to the Business Meeting:

The Ministry and Counsel accepts this applicant and presents _____ for active membership.

Date _____

(Signed) _____, Clerk of Ministry and Counsel

Date _____

Date of business meeting and action taken _____

Suggested Application for Affiliate Membership

I (name) _____, having acknowledged Jesus Christ as my Savior and having studied the Christian beliefs of Friends Meeting of Ballplay, desire to become associated with fellow Christians of this faith and do hereby apply for affiliate membership in _____ Friends Church. I am not yet ready for active membership for the following reason _____ (a) temporary residence, _____ (b) tentativeness about Friends beliefs, or _____ (c) other (specify)

I am ready to take advantage of opportunities for spiritual growth offered through the various ministries of the church and to take an interest in the business and work of the church .

I understand that membership implies an obligation on my part to support the church in the following ways:

1. by living a consistent and godly life (Romans 12:1),
2. by using my gifts in ministry and service as God directs me (1 Peter 4:10),
3. by attending the regular meetings for worship and fellowship unless hindered by reasons I can conscientiously give to my Lord (Hebrews 10:23-25),
4. by making regular financial contributions to the ministry of the church (2 Corinthians 9:6-8).

I am prepared to respect the statements of Christian belief Of Friends Meeting of Ballplay, but if at any time I can no longer work in harmony with the faith and practice of Friends, I shall ask that my name be removed from membership.

(Signed) _____
_____ Phone _____

Address _____

Birth
date _____

Single _____ Married _____

Are you now a member of another church? _____

If so,
where? _____

Recommendation to the Business Meeting:

The Committee of Elders accepts this applicant and presents
_____ for active membership.

Date _____

(Signed) _____, Clerk of Committee of
Elders

Date _____

Date of business meeting and action
taken _____

Suggested Certificate for Active Membership

This is to certify that _____ has been granted active membership on the basis of a credible profession of faith in Christ Jesus as Savior and Lord, a manner of life consistent with that profession, an

acceptance of the beliefs of Christianity as held by The Friends Meeting of Ballplay, and a unity with its spiritual disciplines.

Children uniting as associate members:

(Name) _____ Birth
date _____

(Name) _____ Birth
date _____

(Name) _____ Birth
date _____

Approved in business session on
(date) _____

_____ Friends Church

(Signed) _____, Presiding Clerk

Suggested Certificate for Affiliate Membership

This is to certify that has been granted affiliate membership on the basis of harmony with one of the following:

1. The Faith and Practice of Friends Meeting of Ballplay
2. The following essential Christian doctrines: the sovereignty of God; the deity and humanity of Jesus Christ; the atonement through Jesus Christ by which persons may be reconciled to God; the resurrection of Jesus, which assures the resurrection of all true worshipers; the gift of the Holy Spirit to believers; and the authority of the Scriptures.

Accordingly, _____ is granted the privilege of participating in the worship and business of this church within the limits set forth by Faith and Practice, and the obligation of faithful attendance at services of the church, active moral and spiritual support, and considerate giving toward its financial needs. This membership will be reviewed annually and may be terminated at any time by the member or by the church.

Approved in business session on (date)

_____ Friends Church

(Signed) _____, Presiding Clerk

Suggested Certificate for Persons Received by Transfer

This is to certify that _____ has been granted active membership on the basis of transfer from _____ Friends Church, which has issued a certificate of good standing and a commendation to Christian care and fellowship. Children uniting as associate members:

(Name) _____ Birth
date _____

(Name) _____ Birth
date _____

(Name) _____ Birth
date _____

Approved in business session on
(date) _____

_____ Friends Church

(Signed) _____, Presiding Clerk

Suggested Certificate of Transfer

This is to certify that _____, who wishes to transfer to (church/address) _____ is a member of good standing with us, and we commend him/her to your Christian fellowship. On behalf of _____ Friends Church, (address)

_____ and by official action
(date) _____. The transfer will be made official upon
acknowledgment of this certificate.

_____ Friends Church

(Signed) _____, Presiding Clerk

* * * * *
* * * * *

Acknowledged on this date _____ by
_____ (presiding officer),
_____ Church.