

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

### **January on Justice and Equality**

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

### **February on Simplicity and Moderation**

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

### **March on Stewardship**

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

### **April on Caring**

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

### **May on Participation in Meeting**

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

### **June on Spirituality**

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

### **July on Unity in Meeting**

- Do we seek to nurture a spirit of unity in our Meeting?
- If a problem or conflict arises within the Meeting, do we make timely efforts to address the issue, in a spirit of love and humility?
- As we seek unity, do we listen to one another carefully and with openness to truth?
- Are we able to express our views honestly and with respect with those who differ with us? Are we prepared to set aside our individual desires or opinions in order to reach unity in the Divine Light?
- Are we willing to wait patiently for divine guidance rather than be hurried by the passing of time? When the Meeting has made a decision, do we continue to care for and respect one another, regardless of our differing personal views?

### **August on Vocations**

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

## **September on Children**

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

## **October on Home Life**

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

## **November on Nonviolence**

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

## **December on Peace**

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