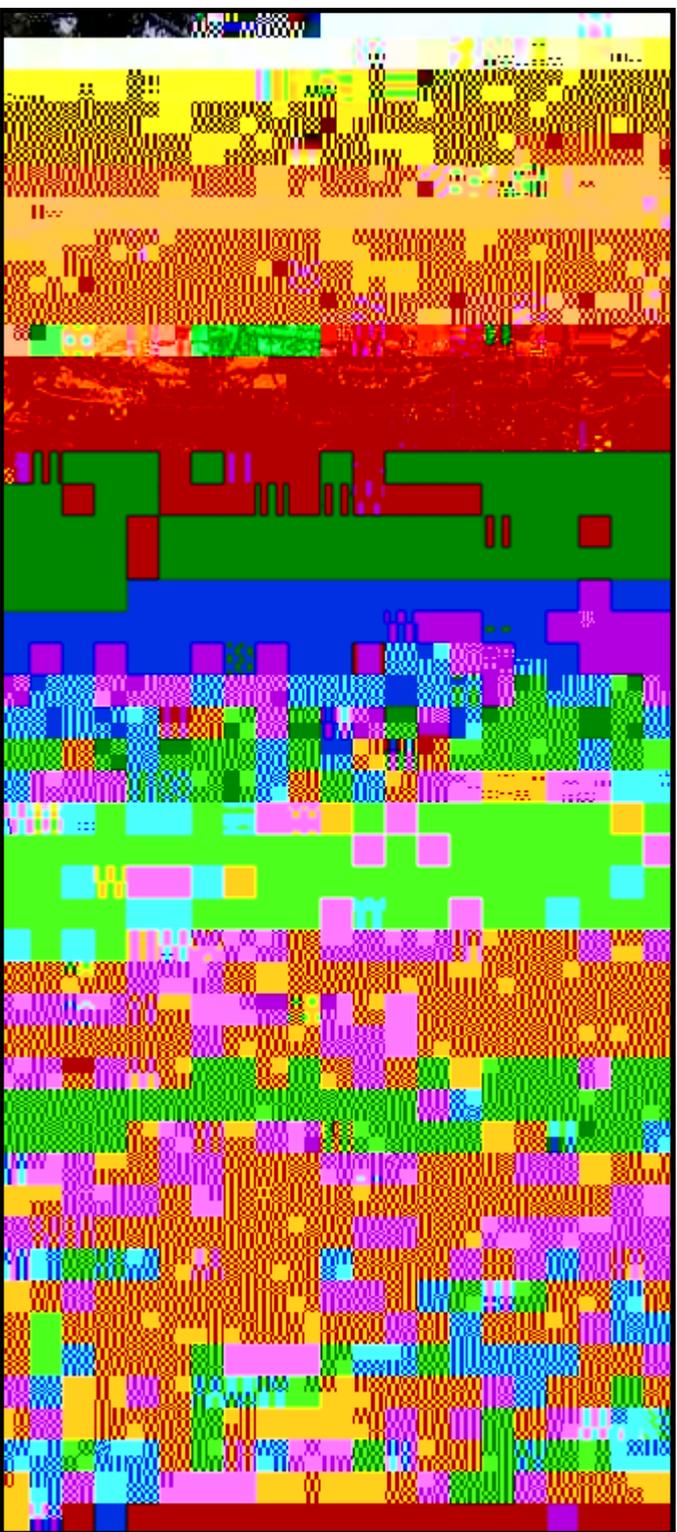


Middlebury Friends Meeting

April
2008



**Middlebury Friends Meeting
Monthly Meeting for Business**

16 March, 2008

Clerk: Sas Carey

Recording Clerk: Priscilla Baker

Present: Tom Baskett, Joanna Colwell, Win Colwell, Tom Dickinson, Sam FodF, Brud Leedh

they will start is the annual update of the Meeting Directory which includes the opportunity to check in with everyone in the current directory.

08.03.05 Fellowship Committee: Fran Putnam reported that the next potluck will be on Friday, April 11, at Carrie Reed's.

08.03.06 Outreach and Social Action Committee: Karen Nawn-Fahey acknowledged that a number of Friends have referred projects and concerns to the committee which will help them focus their activities. The *Addison Independent* included a 2008

MIDDLEBURY FRIENDS MEETING STATE OF THE MEETING, 2007

In 2007 we recognized that, to flourish, we needed to know each other well and to trust each other. This past year featured a focus on us as a community and inspired us to look at our structure and recognize that we had some stress points. We note that we have really grown with many new babies and attenders, which will bring major change for our Meeting and First Day School Program. This is a great opportunity and challenge for us.

Restructuring was a response to our growth. We were able to take the burden off a few people and help more people feel involved. We kept the closeness cherished by so many by preserving vital traditions such as Friendly Eight Circles, Men's Group, Women's Group, and others that allow us to know one another. Our restructuring provided a model for Quarterly Meeting as it underwent its own restructuring this past year.

We continued our practice of community service projects by hosting one of the Friday night Community Suppers at Middlebury Congregational Church, a project that involved members of all generations of our Meeting. This was a good example of our Meeting's effort to try to do things in a more intergenerational way. We served a record 130 -1.1818t the supper. We recognize that service is a very good way to include our youth, and we look forward to expanding these efforts.

We rejoice that our young teens still want to come to Meeting and that they especially value the Healing Circle that begins our meeting for worship. We note that our First Day School Program remains challenged by irregular attendance of families and a small pool of tructurunteer teachers and that, while we've made progress in child care by committing more funding, it remains hard to get adequate coverage. We wonder how we might gear our tructucal ministry more to our youngest attenders. We want to sustain having our youth report on what they have done as a way for them to develop and oices and note thiir consequent progress in this regard.

We recognize the value of music and the need to address it better. The anonymous donation for new, easily accessible hymnals will assist this by providing words for both organized and spontaneous song leadings. We continue to enjoy our repeated songs, such as our birthday song.

We appreciate thi financial benefits of sharing a building with Havurah and want to continue to work on issues of iuadequate storage, iuadequate parking, and poor acoustics. We are aware that while thi upstairs rooms are sunny and conducive to

instruction, they don't offer much soft seating, noise buffers, or space for babies and toddlers. We also note that, while we had more people giving sizeable gifts, fewer people overall have given to the Meeting and that periodic encouragement may be helpful. Our corporate commitment to peace and justice support is evidenced in our contribution to a greater number of benevolences this year.

We note that while our vocal ministry is stronger, deeply spiritual, and coming from newcomers as well as longtime attenders, it continues to be hard to hear for many in the Meeting, even with reminders to speak up. We appreciate those who stand to deliver messages as a good practice for easing us into being ready to receive messages while helping with acoustics.

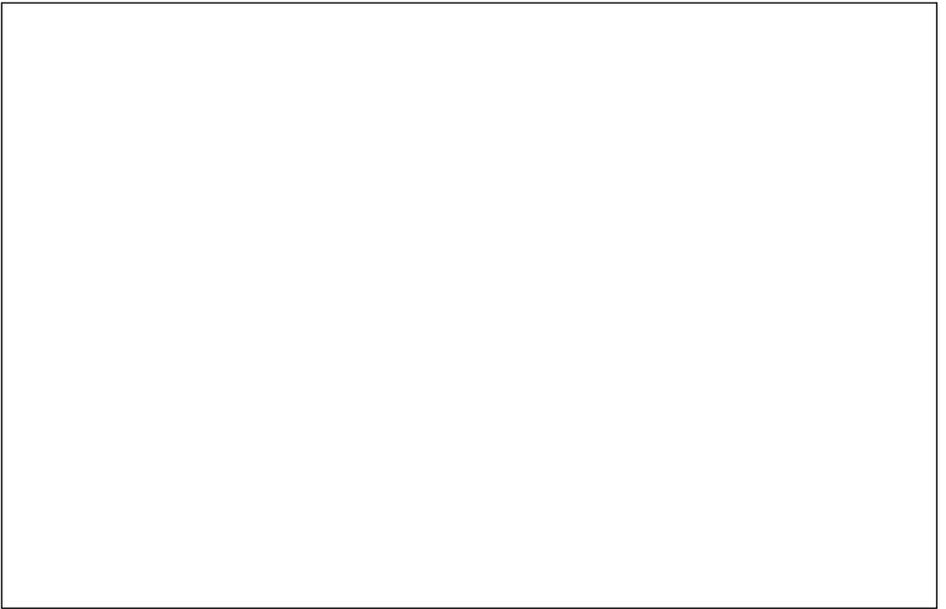
We recognize that our peace and justice work functions well at the individual level, but could be strengthened at the corporate level. While our individual testimony is appreciated by the larger community, many wish to see us be more visible as a Meeting in peace and justice work in this time of Great Turning. We note the value of helping our youth see what Friends in our Meeting do and how it relates to Quaker values. We agree that our presence in parades and outreach efforts should be sustained and expanded to increase our visibility. We also hope to increase our outreach to newcomers to learn about their needs or concerns.

In gratitude, we note several accomplishments including our continued food collection, serving as community hosts to Middlebury College international students, newsletter, list serve, support for new babies and parents, extra care for our elders and those with health needs, support of leadings, food for Peace and Environment walkers, and holding in our care the Ticonderoga and Wake Robin worship groups. We also celebrated the wedding of two participants. Especially, we thank Ministry and Couasel and the Restructuring Ad Hoc Committee for their dedicated work in this critical year of planning change and transition.

In summary, we note and honor our desire to better serve each other and our larger community through our new structure, sustainable practices, and spiritual leadings.

News of Quakerly Interest

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MIDDLEBURY FRIENDS MEETING
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