INTRODUCTION

The following three sections attempt to articulate the particular charism of SotS and how it is revealed through its program of *Silent Retreats in the Manner of Friends*. It is our hope that it demonstrates the foundation and intention which supports, expresses, and offers a particular character to this program. It is not the only way in which a Silent Retreat may find expression and bear fruit, but it is the way in which SotS has been given to express this ministry.

This document arises from a story. That story began at least as far back as 1962 when a practice of silent retreats was begun at the Sadsbury meetinghouse (see Appendix A). These retreats were taken under the care of SotS in the early 1990s, under the leadership of Sonnie Cronk, Kathryn Damiano, and Virginia Schurman, when they were described as extended Meetings for Worship (see Appendix D). From the late 1990s, the retreats expanded their venues to include Powell House, the retreat center of New York Yearly Meeting, and Aircastle, a rustic cottage located in the Pocono Mountains. Since 2000, the retreats have become a regular annual feature at Powell House, with SotS co-sponsoring these events with Powell House under the leadership of Linda Chidsey and Carolyn Moon.

Since 2010, SotS has felt God's call to give greater intention to the Silent Retreats. In 2011, it held a retreat at the St. Raphaela Retreat Center in Haverford, PA, and in 2012 initiated a Mentoring Program to nurture new retreat leaders (see Appendix E). Two mentees were chosen for a retreat at the Transfiguration Spiritual Center in Cincinnati, OH, in September. The first leader lifted up in that program took up responsibilities at a retreat at Powell House in January 2013. This document is one more fruit borne of SotS's faithful response to God's call.
1. CORE CHARACTERISTICS  
as approved by the SotS Board in 2008

SotS’s Core Characteristics attempt to define the seamless garment by which we conduct our life as a ministry, whether it be around the table of the Board, within the teams of teachers and retreat facilitators, or among the community of each program’s participants. In all these venues, the Ministry:

• Is rooted, grounded, and lived out in prayer and expectant waiting upon Divine guidance.

• Understands our spirituality and spiritual journeys in the context of the ongoing Judeo-Christian story.

• Combines a clear Christian grounding with the ability to listen and recognize spiritual openings and committed journeys in whatever form they appear. This rare combination helps to lead one into deeper spiritual understanding and brings forth a greater tenderness with each other.

• Fosters a deeper appreciation of the rhythms of the contemplative life as lived out within a faith community.

• Strengthens understanding and appreciation of the roots of Quakerism, its theology, practices, and traditions.

• Enhances the understanding of the life of a faith community grounded in God and the service of members within it, thereby building up the Religious Society of Friends.

2. CORE PROGRAM PRACTICES

It has been SotS’s experience that the following Core Program Practices enable SotS’s programs to be opportunities for grace and transformation.

1. Grounded in prayer.
   • Intentional prayer is practiced before, during, and following a program.
   • Prayer is engaged in by many circles, both individually and corporately, including the teaching team, their support and care committees, the SotS Board, and those tending the site of the program.

2. Inviting participants to their growing edges. Ways in which this may happen:
   • By meeting oneself in silence, solitude, and community.
   • By being challenged to hear where the words come from in the sharings of others – to listen in tongues.
   • By being apart from the familiar, for example, in a non-Quaker setting.

3. Following a contemplative rhythm.
   • Involving times alone and times together, times with an agenda and times for simply being, offering an order and spaciousness to each day.

4. Anchored in community.
   • Community impacts what happens for the individual and the individual impacts the community.

5. Opening the Bible.
   • Names the Christian grounding of Quakerism.
   • Works with the Bible in a way that is invitational and not prescriptive.

6. Including small spiritual reflection groups.
   • Provides opportunities for more intimate sharing and allows participants to practice listening to themselves, God, and one another.
   • Meets more than once.

7. Quality of the leadership.
   • The leader accepts that Christ is the Teacher and expresses leadership with humility and love.
   • Plays a facilitative, invitational role that reflects the teacher’s faithfulness, not expertise.
   • Called to the specific work of the particular program.
   • Is part of a leadership team that includes at least 2 persons and more often 3, with one designated as an elder or person-of-presence.

8. Designed to nurture the individual, his/her family and faith community, and the wider world.
3. PARTICULAR PRACTICES for SILENT RETREATS

These Practices for Silent Retreats were developed through reflection on this ministry’s Core Characteristics, its Core Program Practices, and by living into the leadings given to leaders while planning and facilitating retreats. The Practices are not intended to be exacting performance standards or a rigid formula but rather to give some form to how the essence of the work is expressed in the design and activities of Silent Retreats.

1. Length of at least 3 nights, allowing sufficient time for separation from the world and the necessary spaciousness for inward work to take place with the invitation to be responsive to what emerges out of the silence.

2. Setting is home-like and inviting with a preference for leaders and retreatants having single bedrooms.

3. Daily corporate worship, including prior to the first meal.

4. Times for solitude.

5. Time for being in the midst of doing.

6. Opportunity to experience specific spiritual practices, including praying with the Bible.

7. Meals in silence.

8. Evening of active silence.

9. Opportunities for spiritual sharing, including one-on-one with the leaders.

10. Invitation to reflect and share what has been gleaned at the retreat and what may be taken home.

APPENDICES

A. Patricia Loring, Bill Stilwell’s Legacy: A Retreat Based on Corporate Silence

B. Gilbert Kilpack, The Idea of a Retreat

C. Linda Chidsey, Reflections from Powell House

D. A Selection of SotS Brochures

E. SotS’s Mentoring Program
A Retreat Based on Corporate Silence

Bill Stilwell’s Legacy

by Patricia Loring

Sadbury Meetinghouse is set in the
rolling countryside of eastern Lan-
caster County, Pennsylvania.
Around it Amish and Mennonite farms
dip and roll in a seasonally varied pat-
tern. In the spring and fall a small
group of Quakers retreats come to
spend a weekend in shared silence at the
old stone meetinghouse.

Until his retirement and death in 1985,
Bill Stilwell and his wife, Caroline Stil-
well, had coordinated this retreat for
Quakers for 23 years. Properly speak-
ing, it should be called the Cahn Quarter
Retreat. It began with Bill’s sense that
his quarterly meeting needed greater op-
portunity for silence, worship, and
prayer away from the atmosphere in
which committees and business are
usually conducted. He thought it would
be conducive to deeper ministry in
future meetings for worship and in
Friends’ spiritual lives to have a pro-
longed time of quiet together.

The retreat was held for several years
at Pendle Hill. In 1985, it was held twice at Cape
Mary, New Jersey, 11 times at Kirksville,
and once at Reading, Pennsylvania.
Mounting expenses caused Bill and
Caroline to visit several sites before ac-
ccepting the invitation to use the newly
restored and beautifully renovated old
meetinghouse by Sadbury. In time there
came to be a regular contingent of
retreatants from Pendle Hill staff,
students, and former students, along
with Cahn Quarterly Meeting Friends
and others. Over the years 45 retreats

have been held with more than 400 par-
ticipants.

Bill and Caroline gradually developed
a format and a few rules of thumb
which they felt worked best for the
Friends who attended the retreat. In
1985 the format was successfully con-
tinued with Virginia Schuman of
Homewood Meeting of Baltimore co-
ordinating. That year it was trans-
planted to New England Yearly Meeting
as well, where eight Friends conducted
a retreat on the Sadbury model in a
born in Maine. It’s a very simple model
which can be used whenever Friends
From an expanded retreat schedule.

Friends gather on Friday evening in
time for dinner, arranging areas of
the meetinghouse where they will camp out
with sleeping bags for the next two
nights. In Sadbury, the ministers’ gar-
geries on the former men’s and women’s
sides of the meeting are popular. One of
the Stilwells’ rules is that there should
not be more than 18 persons—plus con-
sideration not only of space but partic-
ularity of how many people may easily
come together in the Spirit in this way.

One of the characteristics of this
retreat is the Quaker understanding of
what takes place in silence. Friends
meetings at their best are more than
simply a collection of individual medi-
thators each seeking his or her own way,
worshiping with individual problems. As
in meeting for worship, Friends at these
retreats come together in holy experi-
cience that waiting together on God
may be gathered in worship in a way that
is different from private devotional
or from spending a quiet weekend in the
country.

In fact, the retreat is arranged and
conducted as a long meeting for wor-
ship. After supper is cleared away and
the dishes done, the retreatants gather
around a fire in the corner (usually of
the former women’s meeting room.
Then, the silence and the meeting for
worship begins.

On Friday evening, meeting is not
broken. Friends stay as long as they
choose an hour or two or three, watching
the fire die or moving out of doors into
the night, into other rooms, or into their
sleeping bags. Wherever they are, as
ever they are doing, the meeting for
worship continues until the rest of the reg-
ular Sadbury meeting for worship
begins. Taking such a long time for
worship, considering all the activities
as part of waiting on God, can be for
many a powerful way of feeling the pres-
ence of God. It is also a powerful way
of becoming more open and attuned to
that of God in one’s fellow retreatants.

Bill and Caroline found if best not to
have the usual get-acquainted activities
on Friday night. Friends simply intro-
duce themselves by name and meeting,
sometimes by occupation, at surprise.
The rest of the weekend is spent becom-
ing acquainted in a far more immediate
way than is usually possible. In The Sign
of Jonas, Thomas Merton says, “Silence
and solitude teach me to love my broth-
ers for what they are and not for what
they say.” Stripped of verbiage, ideol-
ogy, and past experience, Friends come
to see one another more directly in the
weekend’s activities in meditation,
prayer, and worship: working in the
kitchen, preparing the food they have
brought to share, writing, drawing,
arranging flowers, doing needlework,
One’s capacity to see is enhanced under
such conditions. The most frequent ex-
perience is a growing sense of respect,
tenderness, openness, and commun-
ity. (This growth of community has led to

December 15, 1986 

Friends Journal
Appendix B

Gilbert Kilpack, *The Idea of a Retreat*

(Pendle Hill Publications, n.d.)

Note: In recent years, this eloquent essay has been shared with retreatants prior to their retreat.
THE IDEA OF A RETREAT

by GILBERT KILPACK

THE idea of a retreat is nothing new in the history of man. The impulse to retire from the confusion of cities, to break away from the monotony of ordinary life and in a place of seclusion seek a renewal of life has always lain at the heart of man's journey after God and Truth. When Jesus had retired to a solitary place for three days, it is clear that the temptation which fell in the way of all who aspire to spiritual growth was to become ensnared in God. George Fox in the first pages of his Journal tells us: “I walked along in solitary places many days and often took my Bible, and sat down under boughs and unseen places till night came on,” and it was then, having left the tumultuous assemblages of people, that he made his great experimental discovery: “There is one, even Christ Jesus, who can speak to the condition.”

This is to mention four outstanding individuals who have found that we must retire in order to advance: unnumbered numbers of obscure yet not the least of them have risen from the world, bent path into the narrow one of devotion that they might drive life into a corner and discover experimentally the meaning of human existence.

Now the world’s sinner is so vitally poignant, the necessity of making a retreat is greater than ever. The conception of man’s mechanism and the complexity of our mechanistic civilization have robbed us of all human seat of war. The war has revealed its inward bankruptcy: to the world it has revealed how invalid is our everyday orientation to the religious. It has revealed our own selflessness to see that truth must be wrestled with anew in each age. In a world where so much that has been said and done in the past is now falling apart, some new basic effort must be made to lay hold of divine certainty; nothing must be left out and experiments must not be tried. It is not that we have no clue for our search; we have it in Jesus of Nazareth and in all the saints who have illumined the centuries, and the clue is that Spirit which has been as a spring of life to men in all ages and in all places.

But we must let that Spirit find its peculiar incarnations in our century—that is our great adventure. Perhaps we shall discover nothing new, nothing more profound than that the kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed, but at least it will be our truth, before seeking we shall have received the right to claim it.

Is the time ripe for a new generation of retreats? The answer must be that it shall soon be utterly lost without them. The dark valley of despair is at hand for the American people. We have been long in coming to it, and we must unhesitatingly enter it, for it can be a holy despair. It is not the despair of weakness but rather the despair of those who honestly look at our human predicament. A people which have lived as we have must enter into this dark valley before they can be lifted up to see the dawn.

Have we the means? By having faith in our government of people, without realizing that people are only people and unless they hold God in awe a people's government becomes as despotic as any reign of kings. The people of God have said to me: “Do you not believe in our people? I have been an apostle to children, and we have become as children to each other.” It has told us to be humble and poor and to become proud and wealthy; it has told us to love all people as our brothers and we have united in the most useful, common bond that the God of this good earth has ever had occasion to look down upon, such a people will have to enter into a valley of deep despair, despair in making impossible the ways of the world apart from them in the presence of God. When we have given up ourselves and become children of God our Creator, He will lift us up, wipe away our tears, restore our hearts and minds, and lead us as a new part.

Not all the people of this world will give up to holy despair, nor more in the presence of our most awful carriages, but that is the reason that those who do have the small voice in the midst of the storm and calling in cloudy obedience. Yet, having discovered, we know not what to do with ourselves or with the world. This is a crucial moment. We can do little for ourselves or for the world apart from Him who made us for Himself. We must rest in that science where the world of the shadows is forgotten and where the shadows are revealed and become new pupils in the school of the Lord's Teacher.

Everywhere people are feeling the need to make a retreat in the company of a small group of earnest seekers in a place of solitude and spiritual beauty. Not because our activities are artificial nor our goals of spiritual life under-estimation, nor the patterns of group discovery are not yet mapped out, but perhaps the finding of a new holy pattern of retreat is the divine adventure for our dark age.

Surely we can sense upon the most essential premises for our search. The first premise of retreat is that God is never far from any one of us. At any moment we are all of us aware of the power of beauty, but the present disposition of modern secular society steeps away our days and years in the very presence of our best intentions and we are left with our poor social affairs and a drift of wakening reason. So unless we say to ourselves: "Here, now, in this little spot of time in all eternity I am going to put something aside except the fact that God is the good end of life for me," and unless we write upon such moments with joy, in the words of the Book of Lamentations, our chances of ever truly facing are slight.

The second premise is simply that we are terribly dependent upon the great heritage of our spiritual forefathers and upon the wisdom and love of our contemporaries as making a retreat. Some persons will be led to make individual retreats, others will need the benefits of companions. With the group retreat, the idea is not that a leader should impose his control upon the participants; the idea is
rather than that there is a truth and a power which can never be denied by one individual for another, but which can be resisted when a fellowship of people are humbled in corporate prayer and seeking. There naturally will be leaders, persons whose experience is more fully developed, but they too will have come to seek and not to secure or to dominate.

Silence is another precept for retreat. It is not a rigid rule of silence that is desired but rather the spirit of silence which is so deep that it contains even as we speak. It is necessary that retreats are prepared to enter into times of silence when such seem necessary to the individual or the group. For some it is a burden to be silent and for others it is a burden to speak, but each person carries his own burden.

Retreat is a time to lay aside thoughts of business and personal cares, not because they have no rightful demand upon us, but because we ordinarily permit them to encroach upon the whole of our life, and they must be deliberately laid aside as times like these offer us spiritual opportunities if we are to lay hold of the Source of life. "The world is too much with us late and soon, getting and spending, we lay waste our powers." Little have we found in the creeds that is ours by the ownership of experience.

Retreat is a time to lay aside our argumentative and reasoning mind and become a loyal worshipper, believing that if we seek we shall find, that if we ask we shall receive; if we knock it shall be opened. Reasoning and even argumentation may have a place in the religious life, but Jesus did not say, "Blessed are the philosophers" but "Blessed are the meek." He said:

"Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the poor...for they shall inherit the Kingdom of God.

Retreat is a time to ask oneself the most elementary questions. Who am I? Am I? Is there any point in my life and would anything be lost if I should be answer to an end? How much of my life is being consumed by the diseases of the "sentimental world"? What is the meaning of life anyway? How can I order my life so that prayer will become a spontaneous act of dedicatory and as sleep at night? How can I lead the life of contemplation and interest centred in the needs of a society devoted to conflict and communism? What is the world's true need? To some it seems virtuous or useless to ask the meaning of life and death, good and evil, but in the seeker the quest of these volumes true food and shelter.

Retreat is a time for spiritual honesty with oneself. This is the hardest thing of all. It is not an easy step from being religious to the assumption that one is religious. It is so tempting to come to a conclusion that the moral and decide that "I have gone as far as my limited nature will allow." Augustine speaks of those who "love much when the enlightened, they hate her when the reprobate" and that is the catch in spiritual honesty. We love to be the discoverers of truth but we have been deceived by her yet those necessary flashes of absolute honesty which expose the darkness of our lives and reveal our petty pretensions are necessary to clear the ground for growth.

Retreat is a time for worship. It is not through self-inspection or even perfect honesty that the miracle of human transformation is finally achieved, but through times of worship, when the evil in us is one down and the good raised up and the love of God comes in as a great invitation. God's love for man is all-containing, it is all that concerns it is the summit of worship and if it is not the great reality of life the fault lies not in our fault but in our normal experience in our environment, nor in our limited knowledge, but simply in our unwillingness to respond to His overwhelming concern for us. We are near and we are ever near, we see Him down the nights and down the years, but with the years, the pace of life becomes more rapid. Retreat is an attempt to restore the balance of life by putting worship at the center. We must seek to know ourselves, to understand what strange elements we are and why. Still, when all our self-analyses are done, we find that most human problems are not solved but uncovered. We can conquer our old selves only as we discover a great Object of worship.

Retreat is a time for discussion; not a time for discussion of the political issues nor the superficialities of the life of the soul, but rather a quiet discussion of travel- ers who have come from afar to learn from one another of the way. We are travelers in search of St. John, some of us have heard of him, some have seen him afar, and others have touched the hem of his garment. We can learn much from one another if we will assume ourselves to the corporate mind of search.

Retreat is a time to study the ways and lore of spiritual discipline. There is no formula for living the Christian life; there is only the Lord. But there is a great heritage of deep counsel which has been forged out in the fires of unnumbered souls, tears, and years of all ages and it will assist us in bringing out from under the divine center. The retreat is an occasion to study some of this discipline and.

Retreat is a time for vision of the world renewed in the likeness of God. George Fox made a retreat on Pendle Hill, and there he was given a vision of a mighty thing of people gathered together into the new kingdom of God on earth. We must open the vision of service, but strongly enough, we must be prepared to serve. Simon Peter was willing to humbly serve himself by knelling and hugging his Lord's feet, but he was not to serve that awful humiliation of seeing his Lord kneel to bar his feet. Some of us are willing to serve the Christ but are not patient enough to let the Christ serve us. The retreat must remain without being served is the awful memory of our age. We must be humbled and brought low and filled with the truth; we must be assured to serve the whole word. The retreat must be reformed, but the retreat must start from within—within ourselves.

Of course none of us has time to make a retreat, no time to adventure—no time to live. Soon or later, if we are really to live and not just exist, we will discover that the lesser must be resolved to serve the greater. Those moments when we enter into the life of the Spirit and the whole world becomes suddenly luminous are the moments when we really live and the destiny of human life is to be its true fulfillment. and then we know that these years, this moment, this momentous time is the great time of human life. The only great tragedy of life is the tragedy of having never lived. The call to make a retreat is a call to live, a call to know God through love, through worship, and through service.
Schedule

Traditionally, the retreats begin with dinner on Friday evening and conclude after lunch on Monday. The leaders meet for worship before dinner on Friday and are usually joined by Ann Davidson, director at Powell House. On occasion participants who have arrived early join the worship as well. For future retreats we intend to include opening worship for all on the schedule, meeting just prior to dinner.

The silent retreats are not exclusively silent per se. Rather, through solitary prayer and corporate worship, retreatants are invited into an expectant silence out of which words and images may emerge. Retreats include early morning and evening worship each day. In addition to time for individual prayer and solitude, sessions are planned for full group participation. On Friday evening there is an introduction which provides an historical context and describes the intention and rhythm of the weekend. The schedule is reviewed, introductions are made, and participants share why they’ve come and what they hope to experience. This session sets the stage and begins the process of entering the silence together. Other full group sessions include chores done in silence or a form of meditative/prayerful activity that involves bodily movement; devotional reading and sharing around the texts; active silence; and a final session during which participants reflect on their experience and speak their intentions as they turn toward home. On Saturday and Sunday participants may participate in small spiritual reflection groups; also, every effort is made (depending on the size of the group) for one-on-one meeting with retreat leaders.

Each of the session activities has been chosen to introduce or provide an opportunity for participants to experience a variety of traditional spiritual practices. The invitation to participate is extended in an encouraging way and most participants choose to join in. At the same time, participants are encouraged to attend to their own needs and leadings as the weekend unfolds.
Retreat Space and Number of Participants
While we have had retreats with as few as 8 or 9 participants and as many as 26, experience has shown that between 15 and 21, not including the leaders and person of presence, seems to work best. This number allows for a diversity and richness of experience that each participant brings and helps maintain the group observance of the discipline.

These retreats work best in a warm and more homelike setting. Other aspects of the retreat space that facilitate the experience include: single rooms, small group meeting space, large group worship and meeting space, a library or reading room, grounds for walking and sitting; that it be a place that is routinely prayed in and where those who reside there uphold the retreat and its participants in prayer; that there be a written policy and procedures for dealing with challenging or emergency situations that may arise (facilities, medical, etc.) with a point person to contact.

APPENDIX D

A Selection of SotS Brochures

1993 – 2012
QUICK MORNINGS

Friends have traditionally practiced "times of retirement," i.e. times for being with God and giving care to God's inward work in our lives. These monthly Saturday evening gatherings are for those who would like to join with others to participate in this spiritual practice.

The mornings will include worship in the manner of Friends, contemplative listening (listening to each other from that place within), and active silence (being with one another in silence through the use of gentle spiritual disciplines).

During active silence, there will be a relaxed atmosphere where one can curl up in a chair for a quiet activity such as journaling, devotional reading, prayer, knitting, drawing, correspondence, or just being with God. Participants may also take meditation walks outside.

During lunch, there will be opportunities for sharing, contemplative readings and music, and some silent meals. Please bring a bag lunch.

WHEN: Nine Saturdays from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Sept. 16; Oct. 20; Nov. 17; Dec. 15, 1993
Jan. 19; Feb. 16; Mar. 16; Apr. 13; May 11, 1994

Gatherings are on the third Saturday of every month except in January. We hope participants will make a commitment to attend regularly.

WHERE: The home of Margarette & John Elton
Bryn Mawr Home Residences
1150 Plymouth Road
Southampton, PA 18966

FACILITATORS: Katharine Damiano and Sandra Creek, core teachers in the School of the Spirit.

A series of four one-day retreats exploring God's invitation to us to live fully and completely in a loving relationship with God and with one another. Each one-day retreat will be a time for worship and reflection on Jesus' teachings with a focus on the gospel of John, often called the "Quaker Gospel." There will be opportunities to enter into the experiences of these teachings, and to meditate on their meaning for our own spiritual lives. We will explore how we are being called through these encounters into forgiveness and wholeness of life.

In order for a worshipful community, participants are asked to attend all four retreats.

DATES: Four Saturdays from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.
March 4, 11, 18, and April 1, 1994

WHERE: Nottingham Friends Meeting, School, PA (just off Rt. 1, midway between Philadelphia and Baltimore)

LEADERS: Virginia Schuman, teacher and retreat leader, among Friends, supported and assisted by Bill Samuel. They are co-clerks of Baltimore Yearly Meeting's Committee on the Nurturing and Recognition of Ministry.

FEES: $20 for each 4 retreats. Additional contributions gratefully accepted.

REGISTRATION: It is very helpful in planning to have participants register as early as possible. Registration and payment must be received by March 15 to receive the advance mailing of directions to the Meetinghouse and the readings for the first session.
CONTEMPLATIVE LIVING AND PRAYER

Contemplative prayer is practices the presence of God. Through quiet times and daily life, contemplative awareness is a significant part of all religious journeys. For some people it is a central way the Spirit shows us an intimate relationship with Christ and to minister in the world. This series is for those people.

The gathering opens with a weekend retreat at Pendle Hill, followed by seven Saturdays monthly. There will be time for research, small group sharing, and exploring together selected themes:

- Silence and solitude
- Community as spiritual
- Contemplative path to ministry
- Uncompressing, rest, and the body and God
- Intensification prayer, dance and spiritual formation
- Participating in the restoring Christ
- Contemplative relationship with God

TIME: Three Saturday gatherings: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.,

DATE: Opening retreat: Sept. 10-11, 1993

Seven Saturdays thereafter:
Oct. 8-9, Nov. 13, Dec. 11, 1993
Jan. 15, Feb. 12, March 12, Apr. 9, 1994
Closing retreat: May 14-15, 1994

PLACE: Pendle Hill, Wallingford, PA

SILENT RETREATS AT SADSBURY FRIENDS MEETING (near Lancaster, PA)

Silent retreats are the Friends tradition of taking periods of time for meditation and silent "waiting on the Lord." They are like extended Meetings for Worship which extend over a weekend, with time for community and individual worship as well as quiet walks in the Amish countryside. There is time for:

- moving more fully and deeply into the Spirit's presence
- finding rest, refreshment, strength, and direction for serving God in the world
- opening up time and space for the Spirit's agenda to unfold
- entering into God's presence with others, forming a lively community
- knowing others in a new way beyond words
- finding an alternative way of being in our modern, excessively busy, overstimulated secular world

DAYS: Friday 6 p.m. to Sunday 2 p.m.
May 21-23, 1993
May 14-16, 1994

FEE: $300 (includes retreats & all Saturday gatherings)

PAYMENTS OPTIONS:
1. Full fee
2. Deposit of $150 with application
3. Balance due first week of class

CONTRIBUTION ENDED

Registration opens two months before the retreat.

ON BEING A SPIRITUAL NURTURER

Spiritual nurturers are those who are called to pay particular attention to God's transforming, guiding, and healing work in our lives.

This program will include study and reflection on such themes as:

- Understanding God's spiritual formation of our lives
- Answering and leading God's call in individual and congregational contexts
- One-on-one spiritual guidance and communal modalities of nurture
- Serving the Quaker elder as nurturer
- Exploring patterns of formation in Quakerism and in ministry, monasticism, Brethren, and other traditions

Each session will also include time for deepening our relationship with God through corporate worship, personal prayer, and the practice of spiritual disciplines.

PARTICIPANTS: Those who are called to a variety of spiritual natures, layministry, e.g., formal and informal spiritual friendship, one-on-one spiritual guidance, hospitality, nurture of meetings or congregations, pastoral presence.

TEACHERS: Sara Crook, Kathryn Durando, Frances Taber and visiting teachers from a number of seminaries, Quaker schools, and religious communities.

FORMAT: A year-long program beginning with a 5-day opening session, Sept. 1-6, 1993, and 6-week sessions from Oct. through April, and a 5-day concluding gathering in June, 1994.

PLACE: Main location: Tremonti Retreat Center, West Chester, PA

FEE: $300
Early registration fee: $250
(for those who register by May 31, 1993)

Scholarship aid is available.

Application procedure required: Write for a detailed brochure and an application form.
A Ministry of Prayer and Learning Devoted to
The School of the Spirit

1994-1995

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A Project of the Worship and Ministry Committee of
Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Religious Society of Friends

THE SCHOOL OF THE SPIRIT

The "school of the spirit" is God's inward work of forming and transforming our lives. We participate in this experience in many ways, through both our personal and communal lives. Friends have sometimes called the traditional meetings of ministers and elders a school of the spirit. In these gatherings Friends have learned to discern the movement of the Inward Teacher and test their discernment with one another. Many people discover they are in the school of the spirit after they make an initial religious commitment and God begins to guide them through times of deepening, stripping, and inward preparation for ministry.

This ministry is devoted to helping all who wish to be more faithful listeners and responders to the inward work of Christ.

FUTURE PLANS

We have received very positive responses to our In-Depth Programs which use a weekend residential format. In 1995-1996, we plan to offer two programs using this multiple weekend format.

The original "On Being a Spiritual Nurturer" course will be offered over a two-year period. There will now be four sessions each year. This format will make traveling easier, especially for those coming from a distance.

We are also considering a two-weekend series or a summer residential program for those who wish to do more reflection on the contemplative journey and contemplative ministry. Your preferences about format would be useful in our discernment process.

The offering of in-depth residential courses is dependent on the availability of financial aid for participants. Your contributions are welcome. All financial gifts are tax-deductible (for U.S. income tax purposes).

Please make checks payable to: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting/Barnard for Ministry/School of the Spirit

Mailing Address: The School of the Spirit
3027 5th Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19104
(215) 961-4296

PRAYER AND LEARNING

Prayer and learning opportunities arise out of a contemplative grounding in silence, solitude, Quaker worship, scripture reading, spiritual friendship, koinonia groups (small accountability and support groups), and community life. Study as a spiritual discipline is an integral element in offerings related to preparation for ministry.

The 1994-1995 program will include:

Silent Retreats
Starting May 12-15, 1994
and two-year-long programs
starting in September, 1994

Spiritual Community and Meeting Life
Discernment:
How Can I Know What God Is Asking of Me?
Contemplative Living and Prayer

NINE-DAY PROGRAM
A nine-day residential Contemplative Living and Prayer program will be held June 18-27, 1999 at the Dominick Retreat Center in Elkins Park, PA (a suburb of Philadelphia).

FIFTEEN-DAY PROGRAM
A series of three five-day sessions on Contemplative Living and Prayer will be held at St. Margaret's Retreat Center on the grounds of the Episcopal order of St. John Baptist. Each session begins on Wednesday and concludes on Monday.

Dates:  
Oct. 6-11, 1999  
Feb. 9-14, 2000  
Jun. 7-12, 2000

These dates may seem far in the future, but personal planning for these programs may require substantial lead time. Let us know of your interest in these offerings by using the tear-off panel on this brochure.

Contributions

The offering of in-depth residential courses is dependent on the availability of financial aid. Your contributions are welcome. All financial gifts are tax deductible (for U.S. income tax purposes).

Please make checks payable to:  
Philadelphia Yearly Meeting  
emphasized for Ministry/School of the Spirit

Mailing Address: The School of the Spirit  
U/S Kathy Dumanos, 450 Bancroft Road  
Moylan, PA 10655; (610) 891-6796

A Ministry of Prayer and Learning Devoted to

The School of the Spirit

1998-2000

Contact Persons:

Linda Bishop Childs  
61 Mead Street  
Natick, MA 01760  
(508) 655-5910

Kathy Dumanos  
450 Bancroft Rd.  
Moylan, PA 19665  
(610) 869-2876

Sandra Crandall  
31 Evergreen Circle  
Princeton, NJ 08540  
(609) 923-3065

Frances Talbot  
4035 Andy Ridge  
Baterville, OR 97103  
(707) 935-1928

A Project of the Worship and Ministry Committee of  

Silent Retreats

A location in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania will be the site of the silent retreat weekends in 1998.

A small, three-story cottage perched on a mountainside has:

- Private and double bedrooms (some with walls that may be raised to bring the outdoors in);  
- A fully equipped kitchen and dining room, perfect for the retreat tradition of bringing and sharing food;  
- Several complete bathrooms;  
- A living room and an open deck for group gatherings and quiet times.

The house is winterized. It remains cozy if the weather turns cool. There are beautiful spots for meditation and lovely walks and roads to wonder.

Silent retreats arise out of the Friends tradition of taking periods of time for retirement for silent "waiting on the Lord." They are like an extended meeting for worship which continues over a weekend, with times for community and individual worship as well as quiet walks in the woods. There is time for:

- entering more fully and deeply into the Spirit's presence;  
- finding rest, refreshment, strength, and direction for serving God in the world;  
- opening up space and time for the Spirit's agenda to unfold;  
- coming into God's presence with others, forming a living community;  
- learning each other in a new and deeper way beyond words;  
- finding an alternative way of being in our modern, excessively busy, overstimulated secular world; and  
- worship-sharing.

Dates: May 15-17, 1998  
October 6-8, 1998

Cost: $30 for the weekend, to be paid with registration. Financial aid is available. (See tear-off panel.)

Participation is limited to 12 people. Registration two months in advance is advisable in order to arrange and receive details about the weekend.

Participants are to bring food to share, sheets, pillowcases and towels. Special arrangements regarding food and bed linens may be made for those coming by public transportation.

For more information, please contact the facilitators:  
Darren Abel, 95 Footlight Court Road,  
Stamford, CT 06906; (203) 361-5031.
THE SCHOOL OF THE SPIRIT

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This ministry is devoted to helping all who wish to be more faithful listeners and responders to the inward work of Christ.

OFFERINGS IN THIS BROCHURE

- Silent Retreats
  - On Being A Spiritual Nurturer: A Program-in-Depth
  - Come Away to a Quiet Place: A Powell House Weekend
  - Contemplative Living and Prayer

COME AWAY TO A QUIET PLACE

A weekend at Powell House co-sponsored by Powell House and the School of the Spirit Ministry.

Participants are invited to take this time apart in order to spend quality time with God. There will be opportunities for community and individual worship, walking in the adjoining bird sanctuary, and for quiet, restful renewal.

Presentations will explore finding God in our everyday lives and establishing a daily prayerful rhythm.

Teachers: Kathryn DeArment is a member of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. She brings a commitment to a life of solitude and prayer. Kathryn is a co-founder of the School of the Spirit Ministry which offers spiritual life studies for Friends across the country.

Linda Chisholm is a member of New York Yearly Meeting and clerk of her yearly meeting's Ministry and Counsel Committee, carrying a concern for spiritual nurture and pastoral care. She has volunteered for hospice work and is a former Head Start director. In 1998, she was honored by the ministry of NYYM.

Date: March 22-24, 1998
Cost: $120

To Register Contact:
Powell House
514 E. 2nd St.
Old Chatham, NY 12136-5410
(518) 794-9851
Fax (518) 794-5840
E-mail: powellhouse@aol.com

Further information and application procedure:
Please return this form to Powell House, 514 E. 2nd St., Old Chatham, NY 12136-5410. Additional information is available on request.

For further information and application procedure, please contact Powell House, 514 E. 2nd St., Old Chatham, NY 12136-5410.

The School of the Spirit Ministry is a member of the Yearly Meetings of Pennsylvania Yearly Meeting (UNCA).

Please return this form to Powell House, 514 E. 2nd St., Old Chatham, NY 12136-5410. Additional information is available on request.

For further information and application procedure, please contact Powell House, 514 E. 2nd St., Old Chatham, NY 12136-5410.

The School of the Spirit Ministry is a member of the Yearly Meetings of Pennsylvania Yearly Meeting (UNCA).
A MINISTRY OF PRAYER AND LEARNING DEVOTED TO THE SCHOOL OF THE SPIRIT

This ministry is devoted to helping all who wish to be more faithful listeners and responders to the inward work of Christ. The "school of the Spirit," for which this ministry is named, is God's inward work of forming and transforming our lives. We participate in this experience in many ways through our personal and our communal lives.

In the past, the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) sometimes referred to the traditional meetings of ministers and elders as a school of the Spirit. To these gatherings Friends learned to discern the movement of the Inward Teacher and let their discernment guide them through times of deepening, strengthening, and inward preparation for ministry.

The programs of this Ministry are open to those from all denominations.

CORE TEACHERS

Michael Green is a member of Chapel Hill (NC) Friends Meeting and of Piedmont Friends Fellowship. He completed the Spiritual Nurturer program in 1997. He carries a concern for the nurture and care of family and communal life, and with his wife is active in the Couple Enrichment program of Friends General Conference.

Carrie Trotzky is a member of Friendship Friends Meeting in Greensboro, NC, and of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative). She completed the Spiritual Nurturer program in 2000. She is drawn both to personal and meeting spiritual nurture work, as well as to understanding the traditional ways of Friends and how they may be preserved and interpreted today.

Silent Retreats
Aircastle
(Pocono Manor, PA)
October 11 - 13, 2002

Aircastle, a three-story cottage perched on a mountainside in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania, is the site of silent retreats.

Silent Retreats arise out of the Friends tradition of taking periods of time for silent "sitting upon the Lord." They are extended meetings for worship, centered over a weekend, with times for communal and individual worship as well as quiet walks in the woods.

You are invited to:
- come and form a loving community,
- enter more fully into the Spirit's presence,
- find rest, refreshment, strength, and direction for serving God in the world,

Cost: $160 for the weekend, to be paid with registration. Financial aid is available.

Participation is limited to 12 people. Registration two months in advance is recommended.

Participants bring their own food, sheets, pillows, and towels. Special arrangements for food and bed linens may be made for those coming by public transportation.

For more information:
David Miller, 153 East 9th St.
Coosholeck, PA 19427
610-942-9570; davidmiller1@comcast.net
quirker.org/seminary/

On Being a Spiritual Nurturer
A two-year program of prayer and study

Spiritual nurturers are individuals who are called to pay particular attention to God's transforming, guiding, and healing work. Nurturers may be called on to listen, encourage, discern, interpret, teach, and pray for others. At root, nurturers are called to love others toward wholeness and faithfulness.

Over the 2 years of this program, participants spend 32 days in 8 residential sessions at the Franciscan Spiritual Center in Aston, PA, west of Philadelphia. Each session combines study, practice, and reflection, providing time for personal prayer, spiritual friendships, small support groups, and corporate worship. Teaching emphasizes both corporate and individual spiritual formation, undertaken by the core staff (see below) and by visiting teachers.

Between sessions, participants commit to a daily spiritual practice, complete readings & assignments, and meet monthly with an oversight committee from their home faith community. The program encourages the exploration and deepening of participants' inward spiritual lives as well as their nurture ministry in the family, faith community, work place and beyond.

Since the first session of the On Being a Spiritual Nurturer program in 1996, 62 individuals have completed the program. Twenty participants are enrolled in the 2002-03 program, including Friends from 8 yearly meetings and individuals from 2 other denominations.

The next program will commence in the fall of 2003. For those interested in the program, introductory weekends will be held at various locations in the first half of 2003.

To be added to our mailing list for future mailings about this and other programs, please contact us at:

School of the Spirit Ministry
on Michael Green
1306 Hillborough Rd., Chapel Hill, NC 27516
mgreen@mail.princeton.com • (908) 929-2339
http://quirker.org/seminary/

DWELLING DEEP: AN EXTENDED MEETING FOR WORSHIP
A Silent Retreat co-sponsored by Powell House and the School of the Spirit Ministry
January 17-20, 2003
Led by Linda Chilosky

Friends are invited to enter more fully into the silence, and experience the deeper rhythms in which we might live. Come and simply BE with God; listen and attend to the Divine stirrings of the soul.

Linda Chilosky, a member of Catoctin Valley Meeting, is a recorded minister in New York Yearly Meeting. She carries a concern for spiritual nurture and pastoral care. Linda currently serves as clerk of NYYM.

Cost: $200. Scholarships available.

To register, call or write: Powell House, 524 Pitt Hall Road, Old Chatham, NY 12136-3416 (518) 794-8811, fax (518) 794-8815, www.powellhouse.org
A Ministry of Prayer and Learning devoted to the School of the Spirit is dedicated to helping all who wish to be more faithful followers and respondiers to the inward work of Christ.

Within the Religious Society of Friends, the traditional meetings of ministers and elders are sometimes referred to as a “school of the Spirit” in which worship is heard. Friends learned to discern the movement of the inward Teacher and test their perceptions of one another. This teaching continued into every aspect of their lives. Living into the way of being is not easy, we often resist, preferring to ignore God’s promptings into an ever deepening mystery. But the still, small voice will not be quieted, and with discipline and the support of others, we can find ourselves becoming more faithful.

The Ministry in contact and programming has these Core Characteristics:
- Focused, grounded, and lived out in prayer and repentant waiting upon Divine guidance.
- Understands our community and spiritual journeys in the context of the ongoing, Interspiritual, Christian story.
- Combines a clear Christian grounding with the ability to listen and recognize spiritual openings and committed journeys in whatever form they appear. This rare combination helps to lead one into deeper spiritual understanding and brings forth a greater tenorsness with each other.
- Fosters a deeper appreciation of the rhythms of the contemplative life as lived out within a faith community.
- Strengthens understanding and appreciation of the roots of Quakerism, its theology, practices and traditions.
- Enhances the understanding of the life of a faith community grounded in God and the service of members within it, thereby building up the Religious Society of Friends.

A Silent Retreat in the manner of Friends
at St. Raphaela’s Haverford, PA

This retreat is made possible with grants from the Tyson Memorial Fund, The Shoemaker Trust, and The Legacy Granting Group.

REGISTRATION FORM
(available at www.schoolorthespirit.org)

NAME ____________________________
ADDRESS ____________________________
PHONE ____________________________
EMAIL ____________________________
METRO/CHURCH ____________________________

COST ____________________________
EARLY BIRD FEE (by Aug 31, 2011) $ 330
REGULAR FEE (after Aug 31, 2011) add $ 40
CLAIM A SCHOLARSHIP (up to $120) add $ 120
PROVIDE A SCHOLARSHIP (to enable another to attend) add $ 100
TOTAL ____________________________
CHECK ENCLOSED (minimum $40) $ 40
DUE AT RETREAT $ 40

*Please attach a brief explanation of your need. You may include the cost of travel when considering your full cost of attendance.

FOOD OPTIONS (check those that apply)
- Vegetarian (meat and milk products)
- Vegetarian/Vegan (no animal products)
- Gluten free (no wheat)
- Other (specify) ____________________________

QUESTIONS: Contact Mike Green at (515) 920-2938 or email him at mysticstreetwrench@gmail.com

TO REGISTER, make out your check to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (not to SoS) and mail with this form to
SoS, 601 10th St., Durham, NC 27707

A Silent Retreat at the St. Raphaela Retreat Center, Haverford, PA
Friday, Sept. 30 – Monday, Oct. 3, 2011

About the retreat

Come and simply be with God and attend to the divine energies of the soul.

In these days of fast-paced living, multi-tasking, and continual connectivity, more than ever we need times apart, times of "retirement," as early Friends used to say, for communion with God and the refreshment of the soul.

While many silent retreats are characterized by solitary prayer and reflection, participants in this retreat will also experience the distinctly Quaker manner of knowing solitude in community.

Along with individual times for prayer, reflection, a walk in nature, and meeting one-on-one with retreat leaders, participants will share meals in silence and bring handbooks, reading, journaling, drawing, letter writing to the gathered group in times of "active silence." In addition there are opportunities for group spiritual reflection and Lectio Divina (sacred reading).

Our fee schedule for this retreat encourages you to register early (space is limited to 25). Thanks to the generosity of the agencies named on the front of this brochure, for this retreat you may claim a scholarship for a significant portion of the fee if the full fee is beyond your means. If you live a distance from Philadelphia, you may consider the cost of travel in estimating your need. We ask that you include a brief explanation to substantiate your scholarship request. No other form is necessary. You may also include a donation to support another’s attendance.

About the retreat leaders

Linda Childsey is a recorded minister in New York Yearly Meeting and former clerk of the yearly meeting. Carolyn Moore is a member of Gwynedd Friends Meeting (Philadelphia Yearly Meeting) and a member of the School of the Spirit Ministry (SoS) Board. Together, Linda and Carolyn have for many years been leading silent and contemplative retreats at Powell House, New York Yearly Meeting's retreat center. These retreats, co-sponsored by Powell House and SoS, continue in January and June of each year.

About SoS's intention

The School of the Spirit Ministry is discovering a call to offer the opportunity for silent retreat in locations across the country. It is our desire for people to experience the joy and beauty of a silent retreat in the manner of Friends. As part of this discovery, we are consulting for Friends who may have a leading to silent retreat leadership. If you have experienced such a leading, or know someone else who has, please let us know.

For more information about the School of the Spirit Ministry and to sign up for its quarterly e-newsletter, visit www.schoolorthespirit.org.
A Silent Retreat in the manner of Friends
Silence in Solitude and Community

Transfiguration Spirituality Center, Cincinnati, Ohio
September 27 – 30, 2012

Come and simply be with God and attend to the divine stirrings of the soul.

In these days of fast-paced living, multi-tasking, and continual connectivity, more than ever we need times apart, times of silence, to re-orient our lives and to re-focus our attention to where God is leading us.

During this retreat, participants will experience the distinctive Quaker manner of knowing God. The inward stillness of the soul, often referred to as the inward witness, is the foundation of Quakerism. During this retreat, participants will engage in silent meditation, prayer, and worship. The goal is to create a space where participants can experience the presence of God.

Space is limited, so please consider registering early. There is a payment plan for those who wish to participate but find the costs prohibitive.

Retreat Leaders
Linda Childress is a Quaker Friend and a member of the Quaker Friends Meeting, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, and a Lay Elder at the local meeting. She is an experienced retreat leader and has been leading silent retreats for many years.

Mentoring Program
It is our hope that Linda and Carolyn will be accompanied by at least one or two people who may be called to the facilitation of silent retreats. If you believe you may have a calling to this work, please visit our website for more details about qualifications and what mentoring entails.

www.schoolofthespirit.org
INTRODUCTION

Are you called to a ministry of silent and contemplative retreats in the manner of Friends? Do you wish to be mentored in this calling?

The School of the Spirit Ministry (SotS) holds a vision of expanding silent retreat offerings as way opens. Since the late 1980s, SotS has had under its care a program of silent and contemplative retreats. In recent years, it has co-sponsored silent retreats at Powell House twice annually under the leadership of Linda Chidsey and Carolyn Moon. These same leaders recently facilitated a retreat in Philadelphia.

SotS currently seeks Friends who have a call to a silent retreat ministry. These Friends will initially be mentored by Linda and Carolyn. Friends may be called to serve as ministers and/or elders at these retreats, and we are open to a pair of Friends who have already discovered the complementary gifts of ministering and eldering.

The silent retreats we offer are not exclusively silent. Rather, through solitary prayer and corporate worship, retreatants are invited into an expectant silence out of which words and images emerge. So while these retreats are largely in silence, including at all meals, there are designated times when the group is led in the devotional reading of scripture, where reflection on that reading is invited, and at other times when there are opportunities for spiritual reflection in small groups.

As our brochure reads, “In this retreat, participants will experience the distinctly Quaker manner of knowing solitude in community. Letting ourselves settle into the silence is key; having opportunities to give voice to the words emerging from the silence is a gift. Having the words touch the silence in one another gathers and binds us in the blessed community.”

Below we outline the qualifications and expectations of Friends who will be mentored by Linda and Carolyn in preparation for a silent retreat at the Transfiguration Spirituality Center in Cincinnati, Sept. 27-30, 2012. In addition to the mentoring provided, those chosen will receive free room and board for the retreat and the reimbursement of travel expenses in line with SotS’s reimbursement policy.
If, after reading the qualifications and expectations, you are called to the ministry of silent retreats and to being mentored for this retreat in Cincinnati in September, please complete the online application and submit it by May 30, 2012.

ABOUT LINDA AND CAROLYN
Linda Chidsey is a recorded minister in New York Yearly Meeting and is a former clerk of the yearly meeting. She served for many years on the SotS board and is a member of Housatonic Monthly Meeting. Carolyn Moon is a member of Gwynedd Monthly Meeting in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and currently serves on the SotS board. Together, Linda and Carolyn have been leading silent and contemplative retreats for several years, often with Linda in the role of minister and Carolyn in the role of elder.

QUALIFICATIONS
- Active call to a contemplative rhythm of life which is grounded in prayer and which values both solitude and community.
- Attentive to the inward work of Christ, the life of the Spirit, in oneself, in others, and in the world.
- Grounded in the Judeo-Christian story while also having the ability to listen and respond to the journeys of others in whatever language is used.
- Experience in being invited to listen to the spiritual journeys of others, both in one-to-one and in small group settings.
- Practiced in the use of scripture and other sacred readings devotionally; familiarity with lectio divina helpful.
- Senses a call to a ministry of silent retreats, whether as minister or elder, and is free to make the time and space available to give of oneself to this ministry.
- A deep sympathy for the Core Characteristics of the School of the Spirit Ministry, particularly with its Christian grounding. (See below)
- Member of the Religious Society of Friends.

EXPECTATIONS
Prior to the Cincinnati retreat:
- Joins with Linda and Carolyn on conference calls at least once monthly.
- Shares openly of their spiritual journey and sense of call to ministry.
- Participates with Linda and Carolyn and in the spiritual and practical preparation for the retreat.
- Prepares inwardly through daily spiritual practice to include some form of prayer, devotional reading, and prayerful holding of the retreat.

During the retreat:
- Arrives a day early to worship with Linda and Carolyn to prepare and ground the space.
- Serves as greeter and registrar (as coordinated with SotS’ Administrator).
- Meets with Linda and Carolyn to reflect upon the flow of the retreat and the condition of the group of retreatants.
- Facilitates a reflection group.
- Interfaces with the retreat center staff as needed.
- Upholds the group in prayer.

After the retreat:
- Participates in debriefing as soon as possible following the retreat.
- Consults with leaders regularly as the call to retreat leadership is more fully responded to.
- As way opens, is accompanied by Linda and/or Carolyn in first retreat offerings.
- If mutually discerned, comes under the care of SotS’ retreat committee and joins with the committee on its conference calls.
APPLICATION (by May 25, 2012)

Either apply online at www.theschoolofthespirit.org or submit by mail. Include in your application:

- Name
- Contact information (full address, email, phone-home and cell)
- Meeting/church affiliation
- Name and Contact Information for one reference*

In addition:

A. Write a summary (1-2 pages) of your call both to a contemplative rhythm of life and also to silent retreat facilitation. In your summary, reflect upon how your callings rise out of your personal faith, faith community, and life experience.

B. Respond succinctly but fully in writing to the following questions. These questions are meant for your own discernment as well as for ours.

1. What is your level of comfort with the Christian grounding of Quakerism and Christ-centered language? Describe your ability to listen and recognize spiritual openings and committed journeys in whatever form they may appear.
2. Describe your experience in leading small groups.
3. What is your experience in being supported on your faith journey by (a) a small group of dedicated listeners (e.g. as a support/care/clearness committee) and (b) by your faith community.
4. Are there any personal needs that demand your attention at this time? How will you make the time available to commit to (a) preparing for the retreat in September, and (b) leading similar retreats in the future?

Finally, please ask one person to write to us regarding:

1. your readiness and aptitude for this mentoring program;
2. your emotional and spiritual maturity;
3. your preparation to enter this program; and
4. your new areas of growth as well as your demonstrated gifts.

* Please request that your reference send us their recommendation no later than May 25, 2012.
Recommendations by e-mail to info@schoolofthespirit.org are acceptable.

Please submit your application by May 25, 2012 to:

The School of the Spirit Ministry
1010 Wells Street
Durham, NC 27707

Questions? Please call or email Linda Chidsey at (860) 567-4063 / lchidsey@optonline.net or Carolyn Moon at (215) 283-7389 / doncarmoon@msn.com.