

December 21, 2011

To the Members of North Carolina Yearly Meeting,

As I write this letter, I am in my last few days in North Carolina Yearly Meeting as your Superintendent. I am preparing to move into a new chapter in my life and the yearly meeting is at the dawn of a new chapter in your history. It's time for me to move on and I pray that the yearly meeting is preparing to move upward together.

I'll be leaving the yearly meeting as Superintendent, but not geographically, emotionally or spiritually. I arrived with a strong but limited appreciation of North Carolina Yearly Meeting's values and history. Years ago in an endeavor to redraft the Faith and Practice in my home yearly meeting, Indiana, I looked to the Faith and Practice of North Carolina Yearly Meeting as a model of what I hoped a strong faithful community of Christ-followers after the manner of Friends might be like.

Through these past fifteen years my appreciation for the North Carolina Yearly Meeting has only increased.

As I followed God's leading and answered the call from the yearly meeting to be Superintendent, I soon learned that this was where God wanted me to be during this stage of my ministry.

I have many good memories of the work that we have done together. During this Christmas season, when we celebrate the birth of the Savior, we can also give thanks for the gifts that God has bestowed on our yearly meeting. The yearly meeting has been abundantly blessed with many strong programs and events. Along with cooperation and hard work of yearly meeting members, here are some of the significant ways North Carolina Yearly Meeting is stronger and better equipped to be of service.

Together we have agreed on a mission statement and a vision statement. Statements are worthless unless we put into action and in our hearts the sentiments that we have expressed in our written words.

Together we have undertaken and successfully completed two major capital campaigns and one smaller one. There have been two campaigns for Quaker Lake improvements and one for the ministers' retirement fund—Share The Blessing II.

We have successfully transitioned from an upstairs office facility on Friendly Avenue to a one level office complex on Hilltop Road.

We have undertaken a vision project that hopefully has benefited the yearly meeting and will continue to guide our programs and function in the years to come.

Programmatically we have expanded the work of Quaker Lake camp to be on the way to a more useable year-round facility. Land and buildings have been added there to enhance the ministry experience and opportunities that we are committed to do.

We acquired and have continued the ministries in Alabama at the MOWA Friends Center as well as expanding the ministry work in Jamaica and Mexico.

With a wonderful staff of ministers in their own right we have added an intern program, Campus ministries to several colleges in North Carolina, and a summer youth ministry program with S.O.U.L. (**Serving Others, Unleashing Love**)

North Carolina Yearly Meeting's greatest strength is what I found on my arrival. We are *a faithful, passionate, growing community of Christ-followers, drawn together by God's love and truth as continually revealed through the Saving Grace and the Light of Jesus Christ and the Holy Scriptures...* (Italics are from North Carolina Yearly Meeting vision statement.)

We are continuing to draw on our Quaker foundations and current truths revealed to us through Christ Jesus as we work to share with each other and in areas beyond our yearly meeting boundaries of the love and transforming power of God.

Mary joins me in thanking you all for the opportunity to be part of the North Carolina Yearly Meeting family. We are both especially appreciative of the cards, prayers and concerns that were shared with us during her recent health issues. We are hopeful and praying that these health concerns are largely behind her now. We look forward to what God may have in store for us individually and as a couple.

We are praying that North Carolina Yearly Meeting will be in good hands with Randy Quate as your new Superintendent and we hope that you will welcome him with enthusiasm.

There are far too many individuals who have worked tirelessly to help in the positive things that God has enabled us to do to thank individually and personally, so I express to all of you a huge thank you from the bottom of my heart for the opportunity that Mary and I have shared with you during these past years getting to know, love and labor with you yoked together with God in the work of His Kingdom.

With warm Christian Friendship,



John P. Porter