

## Practical Hints for Clerks

*The following list was derived from suggestions made at the FGC Ministry and Nurture consultation for yearly meeting clerks in 2005. It is offered here for monthly meetings in the spirit of viewing all clerking as ministry, whether for a monthly or yearly meeting committee.*

- Ask one or two Friends to hold the meeting in prayer during meeting for worship to attend to business. If a committee is experiencing difficulty, a committee clerk may also request a prayerful presence during the committee meeting(s).
- If needed, invite Friends to return to Silence to help find the sense of meeting.
- Be aware of teachable moments.
- Have phrases you can use in needed moments – some clerks bring meaningful phrases with them that they can turn to as needed.
- Be aware of where you are on any given concern brought before the meeting and stand aside if you are too involved to be able to clerk a particular piece. (This should not happen too often.) This includes moving physically away from the clerks' table for all discussion of the concern through the minuting of an action. The assistant or recording clerk usually serves as clerk during that time.
- Remember that clerks don't have *the* answers - our work is to help discern the sense of the meeting.
- Remember that you don't have to call on everyone whose hand is raised. The person called on may have spoken to others' concerns as well. Calling on everyone can serve to encourage Friends to repeat themselves and carry on discussion well after the clerk has come to clarity of the sense of the meeting.
- If many have spoken the clerk may ask a person whose hand is up if this is something new or if he/she is affirming what has already been said. This helps Friends come to understand that they have reached a sense of the meeting and that it is time to form a minute.
- Things the assistant clerk can help with include: helping clerks find clarity; serving as clerk if the clerk needs to stand aside or be absent from a session; honing a difficult minute; helping the clerk keep tabs of physical energy in the meeting...stretch breaks etc.
- When facing a problem of too little time and too many agenda items, the meeting can help make the decision of what to leave out and how best to use their remaining time.
- Pray without ceasing – we are servants of God