

STATE OF SOCIETY REPORT 1995
Westport Monthly Meeting of Friends

During the year 1995, Friends at Westport Monthly Meeting, members and attenders alike continued to worship, work, play, celebrate, minister and seek deeply together. We sense a collective feeling of contentment with the course of things as they have transpired, not the contentment that comes of apathy but as in the slow, steady flow of a deep river as it follows on its course. This constancy has allowed us the opportunity to focus on some new areas and the freedom to "be still and wait."

Our ministry in the community expanded in various ways. A series on prayer and spiritual healing facilitated by one of our members was well attended and appreciated by community people, Friends and non-Friends alike. Meeting members' involvement in Interfaith Council, the local school committee, the area's soup kitchen, clergy associations and other organizations has provided us with the opportunity for outreach and visibility. Our active and committed Peace and Social Concerns Committee keeps the Meeting focused on our priorities as Friends. We are glad to have Friends Journal being sent to a Meeting attender who is also enrolled as a student at the United States Military Academy at West Point, as well as to our other young members who attend schools elsewhere. Our Meeting's Finance Committee skillfully provided stewardship of our financial resources, which enabled us to care for our property, meet expenses and support causes that members deemed worthy.

We continue to have an active First Day School. However, the loss of two families who moved away this past year, representing a total of six children, has been difficult. Our Bright Blue Sundays are still a day for us to have family worship times. The younger children "feel taken care of" by the Meeting and especially enjoy the more lively aspects of community such as the singing, worship sharing, pot lucks and the annual Book Fair. Our small group of teens has visited other Meetings and conducted home visits to Friends who were sick or infirm, held lively discussions and attended Meeting for Worship. Ministry and Counsel continued oversight of the Second Sunday discussions which regularly involved subjects of interest and education to our attenders seeking information about Friends. We strive to be attentive to the needs of those who seek and attend Meeting for Worship and "wonder if we are professing our Faith to them in a manner which will encourage them to come in closer." "When is it appropriate to step forward to inquire, nurture and to invite?"

Our Meetings for Worship are largely unprogrammed and continue to deepen in God's Presence. Meetings for Business have been more spirit led with deeper discussions of concerns and problems. As a Meeting we acknowledge a lack of clearness concerning the nature and responsibilities in our sister relationship with Gibara Meeting in Cuba, while supporting Friends who are active with Puente De Amigos. Our experience of hosting NEYM Committee Day and other visitors has deepened our sense of connection with Yearly Meeting. We still have an expressed and as yet unmet need for more music in our worship.

In reflection, 1995 was a "gathering time" as a Meeting family. We accept this period of tranquility as a blessing. We remain confident prayerfully to move forward, with renewed energy, responding to that which God requires of us.