

# Quakerism 101

## Unit F Getting Down to Business

February 14, 2010

### Reading

Brinton Chapter 6

Michael L. Sheeran, *Beyond Majority Rule*, pp. 47 – 71, 91 - 106

### Background on Readings

Michael L. Sheeran, a Jesuit Priest, researched Quaker decision making in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting for two years while doing doctoral study at Princeton University, *Beyond Majority Rule* resulted from his research.

### Reflection

Please reflect on the following questions as you read and once you have read the reading.

How would you briefly explain Quaker business procedure to a non-Friend?

What is Quaker “unity”? What means ensure that minority views are not overridden by the majority? How can Friends make their dissent from a decision without blocking it?

Describe a decision made in Meeting for Business in which you believe Quaker process has worked well. What contributed to the positive outcome? Describe a situation in which a decision was reached in a less satisfactory manner. What was missing or what happened that hurt the decision making process?

What are some of the dangers in the Quaker way of reaching decisions?

How doe the “sense of the Meeting” differ from “consensus”? How can Friends avoid falling to the “lowest common denominator” in making a decision?

Briefly describe the role of the clerk in Meeting for Business. If you have served as clerk of a Meeting or Quaker committee, what advice would you give a new clerk?