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UNIVERSAL LIFE FRIENDS LETTER

March, 1982

6. The "UL Friends" are a small and informal group that meets mostly through written correspondence. We are a new group in the Universal Life Church and at present there are only about fifteen of us. But in a way "small is beautiful", so size does not concern us too much.

Our motto is from an old Quaker saying: "There is that of God in every one". This we understand to be a fundamental truth found not just in Christianity alone, but in all religions. We also feel this to be a truth harmonizing perfectly with the fundamental belief of the ULC: "As an organization we have no traditional doctrine. We only believe in 'that which is right'. Each individual has the privilege and responsibility to determine 'what is right', as long as it does not infringe on the rights of others". The ULC Friends feel that is all the doctrine we really need. Indeed from it an amazing number of things seem to just naturally flow, touching each of our lives in hopefully deep and unique ways.

It is still our intent to have many different circles within the 'UL Friends, such as Zen, Christian, Vedanta, California, Cleveland, New Zealand, and so on. However we are presently so few in number, it seems best to begin by presuming we all have roughly the same interests and can be friends.

In getting to know each other, the first step would seem to be to send us a letter introducing one's self, of course including a few words on one's religious interests. The Clerk will then photo copy it and include it in the coming issue of the "UL Friends Letter".

In general letters should be of a religious nature, but we understand this in a broad sense, so a poem or a song might be perfect. Some might write in the spirit of Quaker silent worship, and define that in a very traditional sense. That would be great, but we have no intention of being so restrictive. Most of us are far too inhibited about such already. It is our hope and belief that our letters will somehow enable us to open our hearts to each other, and be every bit as meaningful and fruitful as the spoken word. Certainly the role of letters in religious communication has been a profound one historically, the ULC being a more recent example of such. We believe that very deep friendships can be developed in this way, even though we may remain far distant from each other.

It would seem natural for a two level correspondence to develop, one being person to person, and the other a common letter to us all. If you want to write someone directly, please address it in care of the Clerk, UL Friends, who will fill in the proper address and forward it on. In that way one's privacy is protected, and after making contact the people involved can themselves decide as to how to proceed.

Letters should be either typed or clearly legible if I am to photo copy them and send them on to the group. Also they should not ramble on endlessly, as our budget is not exactly infinite. Please include permission to print your letters to the group, and perhaps edit them a bit. We will do our best to print everything we get but it should be of a religious nature. We hope to have an issue out every month or two, depending on your response. Your participation is essential, since that is what it is all about.

The "UL Friends Letter" is mostly a volunteer effort, and is sponsored by the "Bodhi Friends", a small group in the ULC. We are not now requesting donations, as everybody seems to be doing these days. Let us each give away something instead.

Our address is "Clerk, UL Friends, 753 44th Ave., San Francisco, CA 94121.

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Rev. John H.
c/o Clerk, UL Friends

Dear Friends:

I'm a former friend, and still a member of the Wider Quaker Fellowship, but now attend Vedanta Church of Boston for worship. I was born July 16, 1928 in Boston. I was raised in the Episcopal faith, which I revolted against at 16, then became a Unitarian, and being a religious chap, the minister of the church urged me to consider the ministry, which I did. However the love of Saints and such were under attack in the Unitarian Seminary, and I could not be made "theologically pure" even after six long years. I attempted to turn to other denominations but they wanted me to go to their seminaries and purify myself of what they all considered heresy. For many years I was very bitter, and wanted nothing to do with any religion. Then the Vietnam war came, and I got into many Quaker action projects. As a result of these, I finally joined Friends meeting about 1970. Of course I took some very strange jobs until I landed with the Harvard Observatory. I got married very late in life, just shy of 38. My wife has broadened my outlook on life. We have three children, all adopted, two boys 15 and 10, and a girl 8.

I have noticed that when I did attend Friends Meeting it was always easier to let someone else speak. It has always been easier for me to write than to speak before a group. I agree that much good should result from these written exchanges.

In India God is perceived as Male/Female, and there is the Divine Mother. Much is made of the female divinity. In Christianity it has been mostly a male show except in the Roman Catholic and High Episcopal faiths, where Mary is prayed to openly and statues of her abound. I think it was this lack of the female divinity that brought me into the Vedanta movement many years ago, and within the last year has brought me back into the High Episcopal faith. The male Jesus is still there, but there are many female images of Mary, where I can light a candle, kneel down, and pray, to explore God's other, or female side.

It is so good to know that there are people like all of you out there.

All the best, Rev. John

Dear Friends:

I would like to join with you and others in a correspondence group of ULC Zen students. I have in recent years read about 8 of Alan Watt's books and intend eventually to cover them all. I believe I have read only one offering of Suzuki though. I discovered Watts through a psychologist while attending a training course in 1978. Simultaneously, I became associated with Siddha Yoga and began the practice of meditation. For the last year I have been a drop out, but an evening listening to Ram Das encouraged me to resume meditation at home. I am still teetering on the brink of action. Soon the neighborhood movie house will have documentaries on Watts and C.G. Jung as a double bill.

Please enroll me in the Zen group with the hopes that I will be a contributor. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ann F.M.
c/o Clerk
UL Friends

UL: Friends Circle:

My name is Don and I'm not at all sure where to begin in an adventure such as this except to fake it. I'm in the Salt Lake County Jail and on my way to the Utah State Prison, and I say it not for sympathy's sake but only because it is my future address for the next year or two. I believe in God, and I also believe some things are kind of predestined, so this seemed in order, and perhaps a way of finding something and someone real in a world full of madness. I've seen a great deal in my 40 years, a large part of it seemingly cruel and senseless, and most of that in these cages. I believe that all things good, bad, or indifferent were meant for some specific reasoning that only God knows and I try to remain strong and cheerful in those simple beliefs.

I spent a lot of time in several fads our country created, but I think the most beautiful and enlightening were the '60's and early 70's. The flower children who wilted in the dried-up world of drugs and people-users - I grew some then, and I continue to grow in that search Neil Young told us about, not realizing we were years ahead of or completely behind in- The Heart of Gold is within each of us, and we need a circle of friends again. A little older, a bit wiser but still the same in our recognition of what Love Child really meant. I got so mixed up in the search I began a twenty to life sentence in Folsom Prison in the early 70's and did 7 1/2 years but I knew love personally in my travels so I stumbled many times, got lost, and circumstances alone brought me here to this, and Utah. A man knows when he is headed towards failure. I think he also knows when the last debt is paid finally so here I am, growing and knowing something, someone, good will come out of this letter even though it leaves much to be said or imagined..

Go love someone whether they're good or bad, and to stand by them with all their faults and we all have them- I for one know it works so I pass it on- Forgive those who've hurt you most, love those who love you least and walk in peace with oneself for you are a reflection of Christ, you are what, and who you are, so be happy in that. Live in that light and give from within. No, I'm not really a religious person outwardly, only inwardly, too many years with my insane biker brothers from the 50's and 60's, too much violence I had to ignore in Folsom, San Quentin etc. because you are not allowed to see or hear or speak out of convict law. I think we all live in some kind of prison and we've all had to turn our heads at death of many kinds-

It's part of life for some, and for others who do not know that side of whatever fence each man straddles I'm sure we all have something beautiful to share, and that is my only reason for writing this particular letter. I seek to know more about you and life, and love, whatever your view might be and I do it sincerely with respect and honesty of heart for I believe that should we die our emotions might just be all we get to take with us-

Om Shanti

Don G...
c/o Clerk
UL Friends

NARCISSA: Continuing Creation

Barbara Byhouwer

(This article appeared in "The "Friendly Woman". Narcissa suggested it as a way of introducing her self. Ed., ULF)

When we decided to do this issue on "Women and the Spirit", we immediately wanted an article about Narcissa. Her whole life seems so centered in spirituality; and she lives her spirituality in such extraordinary ways. Her drawings are both mystical and strongly sensual, almost erotic. She is a Quaker; but she also has a church of her own, which meets in her home. Last year she visited India, out of impulsiveness and adventurousness; the visit made a deep spiritual impression on her. We knew something about all these things; but not much. How did all the pieces fit together? We sat down and wrote her a letter, asking a lot of questions. The result is this article, which is her response.

Without Narcissa, the FRIENDLY WOMAN would have a very different look. From the time we in Illinois took it on, her sheafs of drawings have been arriving in the mail from New Jersey. Beginning on the cover with the masthead, which she designed, her artwork has flowed with grace through these pages, providing powerful images of women's experience. Although our personal contacts with her are irregular, limited to letters and meetings at Friends General Conference, we feel a close bond of friendship with her, and a sense of working partnership.

Narcissa lives in Woodbury, New Jersey, where she paints, gives art lessons and runs a gallery with a friend, called THE ART HABIT. She has four children ranging in age from 11 to 22. She is tall, dramatic-looking and slow moving. Her voice is soft and she seems shy; but what she says is always direct, and often unexpected. Her manner conveys the sense of someone who lives out of her most visceral self, and who makes only the most necessary concessions to convention.

The church came about for a very practical reason. I was teaching art classes in my studio (garage). I have decided the building inspector was the "Angelua", because just before the second series of classes were to begin, I received a letter from the city stating that the zoning laws forbid using a garage for anything except a garage or commercial use. I was very frustrated and angry; it seemed so unfair.

Then I found out that, while the garage could not be used for a studio, the zoning laws permitted a church or church-related school. So I sent away to California to become a minister of the Universal Life Church, and to get a legal charter for a church.

At first, it was a joke, a mixture of spite and curiosity. It did involve a small money investment and a lot of apprehension at trying to "buck the system." But after I applied for the minister part, I went away to Ithaca (FGC.) There, I spent the

week in a workshop on altered states of consciousness and meditation. I identified some feelings, in the course of this. I have been in the Friends meeting for 18 years, but have always felt on the outside, as an artist. This particular year, the conference seemed to "speak to my condition." There was much talk of experiencing the Spirit; of other ways, besides talking, to express God. These ways were familiar to me. For the first time, I really felt on the "inside", kind of ahead of of the game!

I came back and applied for the charter with confidence. I received it on my birthday! After that, everything began to change and go well for me. Everything is the same; yet it all changed.

To justify things about the church, in case I might have to go to court, I began to study, to gather my defense. It took hold of me. I just let it flow, and everything fell into place. Nothing I am doing is contrary to what I have always done or believed in. It all just has a new perspective. The church just puts a frame to my life, in the way a frame enhances a painting. It makes all that I do or have done, have meaning. It is a chance to share ideas and feelings and ceremonies creatively, and to experiment - without needing permission from committees. It is a chance to share and explore gifts of the Spirit that we all have. It has to do with discovering and loving oneself as a unique self. We can rethink ideas about the sex of Spirit and about whether women need to ask permission to minister or share the Light. This was important for myself and my 11 year old daughter.

It's fun, too; and outreach. I begin all parties with a meeting for worship. Why do we divorce our activities if we

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really
believe in
the holiness
of life?

My church is called *Continuing Creation*. I want it to be a creative experience. I remind myself often that it does not have to be like anything or any other church. I do not try to sign up members. We have worship-sharing; we have dancing; but we all find Quaker meeting style best and deepest. We have an "introductory" meeting for worship (a lot of people I come into contact with are not Quakers.) Last month I did a demonstration of the Light Within; my daughter did communion-sharing. We did a workshop using art and psychology: the "inward journey." We had a "Clay Day" for kids in the street. Creativity is such a wide thing. Not just painting, etc., makes the artist; but to live creatively, putting new uses and forms to repetitious old (enduring and endearing) ideas. I see religion not just as a solemn Sunday affair, but as a chance to express the creative life for everyone.

The children easily and enthusiastically respond, accept. To them, it's very real and natural to have a church home and a minister mother! My church chapel is my livingroom, the center of my house. It takes on a special aura. It's peaceful to live in a church. My adjoining studio is the other side of that peace (the active side of meditation: meditation-in-action.)

The garage studio is my church-related school. I am not trying to make anything or anyone (not religions or artists.) I just want to help people grow a little. They help me, too. I also want to illustrate the struggle of the growth with confidence. There is a lot of pain, too.

When I went to India and saw the temple sculptures and paintings with all the voluptuous female bodies, I recognized my own spirit, how the sensuous and spiritual are intertwined. What better way to express oneness than in sexual encounter, embrace. That's as close as most of us can get to the feeling, when our boundaries are merged and there is no feeling of separation. In my paintings, sexuality expresses my personal growth. I am a sexual person, a sexual woman. My body is part of my identity. It defines me; it is the soul-container.

I am getting to an economy in paintings where everything that is not essential to the expression of the feeling can be left out. Even body parts can be left out. It is not men and women but the relationship of self to spirit that I am painting. My painting is of course limited by my spiritual "vocabulary." The artist works starting with the self;

I can't get too far ahead of myself, you see.

Another thing about India: I often had the feeling of "belonging" and "longing" in those old temples, as if I were nearly into a timeless mystery I could not understand. I don't want to say I felt I-had-been-there-before (reincarnation image); but more, it was a feeling that I "knew"; the feeling of being home. Especially the idea of artist-monks carving huge female images into the caves. I also felt the balance of male-female images of God was refreshing, and the fact of God having sexuality, also.

The other thing is that in India everything is religious. There are blessings all over the place: for eating, for

washing. Everything has its holy aspect. People were anxious to share their religious life with me. And there seemed to be a great tolerance for whatever beliefs a person put together.

I felt there were no contradictions - only contrasts and variety. Something for whatever level of understanding you happened to be on. Since I often struggle with feeling vs. thinking, it was calming to just "know" and feel content with that knowing.

I really don't see my life divided into categories like sexuality, art, religion. It often seems as though one is forced to do that. In India, a man said to me, "You can do whatever you want, because you have a pure heart." I do

make a lot of mistakes and can be mean and rotten and depressed; but there is "plentiful redemption." Whenever I feel "finished" or terribly discouraged, God is revealed to me in beautiful and simple ways, through loving people. I despair, and letters come to say "yes" to life. I lose step and direction, and teachers come to show the way again.

You ask, what does Quakerism mean to me. It says, "ongoing" to me, a spiritual generosity (when it is at its best); the way people like Paul Goulding and Arlene Kelly greet and gently draw out my loving self. Quakerism welcomes you to grow, blossom, share leadership: "We love you; pass it on."

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Michael H.
c/o UL Friends

UL Friends

Dear Clark:

Yooo! So here we have the great American Tradition: Letters of Correspondence by Committees of Correspondence like as in the American Revolution. GREAT! Compliments!

Is it Quakerism or Zen or Hugenots. Huenots translated is: Oath Companion thus companion of the Oath: companion can be translated as Friends. So what is the Oath.

Or is it all three and then some more? THE WAY is the way, doncha' know?

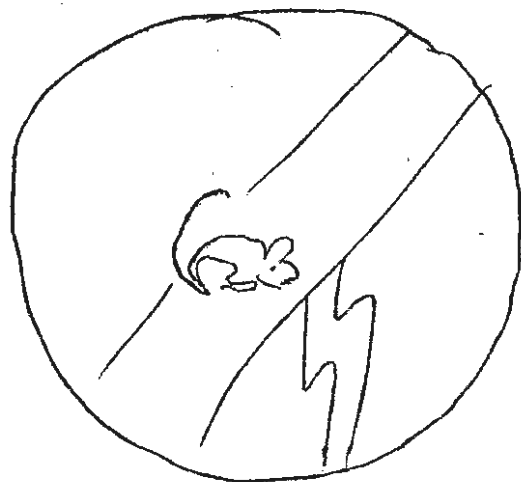
But all things require updating and applied to their own cultural milieu. Its what has been called "new" by men down through the ages. So there must be a total translation of the "truth" into the "new" thing so that people can understand it and relate to it. And whas dat ?????

I use the Amerindian symbolism thing in the identification of the Self:ego, shield, identity as distinguishable from SELF: Center, Christpoint, God within: will, cosmic energy, plow point.

Incidentally the spirit moves me all the time, brother. Don't ask for words from me or you'll be inundated. As Counselor, I welcome anyone, but I deny ALL ideologies and dogmas as the work of the DEVIL:Ego.

So lets see where we go from here. Lets have EVERYTHING UP as the Tantrics say.

Yellow Mouse



Clerk, ULC Friends:

I thought it fitting to write you at this time, after seeing your advertisement in the ULC paper. I'm a native Californian, sojourner to foreign lands, and now residing in bayou country and finding the spiritual dimension here turned back to that of 17th century northern Europe.

The history of Louisiana is quite interesting. The northern half is predominantly Protestant and southern half Roman Catholic. There are still "colonies" of Spanish along the coasts, and of course French speaking (only) Acadians from Nova Scotia in south central Louisiana. Religious tolerance is getting to a point and confrontations are springing up, (In the last month two churches have been mysteriously burned down, and church officials are publicly urging neighborhood watches.), in the central buffer zone. The most interesting aspect of the confrontation is the neo-Montanist movement. In fact this ongoing movement, which started with the Pentecostals in the 1840's in the next town from me (Elton) claim their fore-fathers to be the original beginning of this now national Christian denomination. Of course in becoming organized, the Pentecostals have traded spontaneity for ritual, and thus have become part of the institutional Christian churches (although they would deny this). However, other neo-Montanist movements, having produced at various times a variety of spontaneous spiritual "re-awakenings", are slowly evolving into a single entity by a local Christian radio station established two years ago. At this time the Montanist movement has concluded. But those rejecting the harsher doctrines and confrontations of the major denominations are finding an expression for their religious needs in the smaller, more intimate tabernacles, temples, and fellowships.

After reading this little religious treatise, it should be clear that my religious tendencies are along the lines of Non-Dualism. I believe in degrees of relative truths. And so, my thoughts are the antithesis of the masses of agnostics that inhabit this planet. I declare "There is a God", and in the same breath, that, "There is not a God". Perhaps the most difficult reality of such a position is the maintaining of the equilibrium of faith and works, in the illusion of polarizing desires. But in the balance of theistic and atheistic doctrines, questions are silenced, desires are silenced, illusion becomes non-existent, and all the worldly dust falls back to its source, so that being is realized.

Of course, this has taken much time to reach this goal, nor is it an end, but is instead a door. It takes time to find it.

There is one point I would like to emphasize. Non-violence. Violence is the manifestation of delusions from earthly (worldly, cosmic) entanglements which arise from pride. Even in a military sense, a stationary object, such as a fort, a hill, or even a nation is the worst possible position to defend. And so it becomes an individual responsibility to realize that the dust of the land is not human life, nor man's doctrines. It is a necessity for the government to create paranoia, to provide an external reason (or diversion) for internal failure, or else the internal reaction would destroy existing political systems. The rural movement in the U.S. is quite dangerous to the government now in power. The reason for the recent "communist" success is the agrarian movement. And this is beginning in the U.S. by the rural population

shift. Freedom is not defended. It is exercised. The conservative element in U.S. society desires a winning confrontation with phantom menaces, as a self-justification for ego. Isolation from such involvement is an exercise of freedom.

I have shown several meditations on non-violence with respect to national war. It is a necessity that each person exercise their own freedom, and not oversee the rights of others. The people of Central America are exercising resistance to oppression by existing political power. The U.S. government is threatened by this.

Tat Tvam Asi,

Robert C.F.

Del R., Friendship Church, Fraternity/
Sorority, c/o Clerk, ULC Friends

Greetings Friends:

I just read your ad in ULC newspaper Winter '82. I've been thinking along the same lines for years, but never got it off the ground. I wish you a lot of luck and would like to be a Charter Member. I enjoy reading all types of religious literature from all Faiths. I'm 48 years old, and have spent approximately 20 years on intense studies of different religions. I think I have a lot to share with your friendship group. (See my ad on p. 26 top right Winter '82 ULC paper, 'Philosophy of Life'). Let's get acquainted. Strangers are only friends we haven't met yet.

People are like Glass-Windows. They glow and sparkle when it's sunny and bright; but when Sun goes down their true beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within.

From 1953 Ideals magazine

MEDITATION

—one that I use often "to get me going."

—try it and see what it does for you.

Remember, everytime you say "I AM" you are speaking not of your human self, but of your DIVINE SELF—the Presence of God in you. For the presence of God in you is you—the real you. Let your thought be, "God in me is me" Then meditate as follows:

I AM

. Definite and positive.

I AM

. Constructive and productive.

I AM

. Dynamic, creative, and alive.

I AM

. Loving, beloved, and thankful.

Therefore, I always have
wonderful results,
beautiful experiences,
excitement and happiness.

Love Peace and Friendship,

Brother Del R.

12,
To Clerk, UL Friends

Dear ???

I'm curious ! To my mind, anyone who knows the words "Taoism" or "Vedanta" makes me that way .

I used to live in Marin California and joined the ULC there in 1969 so I've watched the church grow from its inception and know the expense of ads and mailing correspondence, so what's this volunteerism ?

Who's asking ? I've been called many things, studied for the ministry from 1954 to 1964 in: Religious science, Science of Mind, Divine Science and Psychology, but along the way studied and read about most Eastern Religions.

I've been called "Reverend", yet also "Hypnotist". I've been in to and practicing Hypno age regression for 19 years. But also went public as a "Psychic" in 1973 on Radio KFI Los Angeles and on KGO Radio in S.F. in 1978.

I did, past tense, psychic "readings" from photographs and first names only, "seeing" past lives and answering questions.

Now I resent stupidity so badly I write who I choose, when I choose and do as I choose.

I'm more of a pagan, atheist, agnostic, depending on my mood, and above all I'm a mentalist and spiritist. That is, I see the Dead with better than 55% accuracy on the past, and one hit in seven accuracy of the future which equals any public Psychic alive and I have 5 years of records to prove it.

I'm an uneducated, bedridden, dirty old man of 47, a cancer who does biorhythm charts (seldom), and talks too much. I've written 14 novels, 35 short stories, and hundreds of philosophical articles yet have published nothing and don't intend to.

I admired Alan Watts, attended the Vedanta church in Hollywood in 1957, have read the "Way" dozens of times, met Hugh Lynn Cayse, son of Edgar, and know that emotional belief in anything makes it true for the believer, but open-mindedness is rare, if not extinct, because people basically fear the truth and reality because it makes them responsible for their own mess and demands they face their true multi personalitied selves.

I've never charged anyone anything, am retired from any active teaching, preaching, or soliciting of people to "read" and continue dead groups and ancestors daily.

Now why the hell anyone would want to know all that is beyond me, and I suppose no one does.

I won't be recruited into any religion or cult - I've been there! Thanks but no thanks.

Now I'm curious about what you hope to achieve with this ad in the ULC paper. What is your angel or sincere intentions? and which is it?

Just lonely? Promoting something? If you are fanatically curious about reality versus taught opinion historically, then send a photo and ask intelligent, deep, self-searching questions.

If your lonely, send a photo and I'll tell you why.

If you believe in miracles and a saviour, and expect forgiveness and guidance then Napa is not far away, and has a great facility for such self-degradation and loss of esteem.

If I sound bitter you are no good at graphology or psychometry. I'm just curious, and mildly at best, since I know my answers, for me. If I haven't totally disgusted you then know I'm the most honest person alive and drop me a line. My motto is, "Love is the only God we need or have".

SINCERELY, Tom C.C.

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Ananda C. Dalenberg
c/o Clerk, UL Friends

Dear Friends:

I thought it might be best for me to introduce myself with a brief biographical sketch. I was born on July 2, 1927 in a small Illinois farm town near Chicago. I was brought up in the Dutch Reformed Church but I must have been pretty dense because I never did really appreciate the Church, although it was probably a pretty good one. Some time later I met Alan Watts, who really introduced me to Christianity and Zen, for which I am profoundly grateful. Not much later I met Suzuki Shunryu Roshi in San Francisco, and decided to become a Soto Zen priest, going to Japan for two years to study. I returned to San Francisco Zen Center, where I have been an assistant priest and instructor until recently. A few years ago, I joined the ULC.

After a long monkish period, I married and to my frequent amazement find myself to be the proud father of two twin 8 year old girls, who have been teaching me an awful lot. I am now semi-retired, and mostly have the freedom to really "do my own thing", although in a way I've been just that for most of my life, and I don't really have any excuses. Even so, upon discovering the ULC a few years ago, I took a few breaths of what I felt to be real freedom, and have not been quite the same since. I suppose that same freedom should be present in some other religions, such as Zen, but I haven't been able to find it, at least not at the institutional level.

I never have been content with strict sectarian labels, not even that of "Zen". Recently I have again felt drawn to Christianity, but in a way which is not at all antagonistic to Buddhism, and in this respect I am quite happy indeed that there are such fellows as Thomas Merton and Alan Watts. I have attended Friends Meeting off and on for years, believing that Buddhism ought to go well with the Friends, but actually I only felt half welcome there. I did join the Wider Quaker Fellowship, but I haven't found it to be very meaningful. I also feel a deep affinity with Pure Land Buddhism, Vedanta, Deism, and Quietism. I only know of one place where one can feel really free to explore all that and to try to put it all together, and that is the ULC. It even suggests to me a kind of practice I'm beginning to think of as a kind of "Universal Life Yoga". In that spirit then, a few of us have gotten together, and call ourselves the "ULC Bodhi Friends".

The ULC ideal of every one deciding for themselves "what is right" is something I really believe in, and I am quite happy to rally around that flag, and quite a battle it is too. I also believe "there is that of God in every one" as the Quakers say, although I would say "Buddha" here rather than "God". I don't think the names we might use here make an essential difference. I think that is about as much doctrine as I really need. Anyway it is quite enough for me to go around flapping my wings, if not go soaring into the blue.

Sincerely, *Ananda*

P.S. I should also mention that I was a kind of "beatnik" in my earlier years, and a "Dharma bum" along with Kerouac, Snyder and all. That eventually resulted in a kind of pilgrimage for me to Japan, Southeast Asia, and India. Those were the good old days.

Dear Friends,

I hope that you all are in the best of health and spiritual well-being. I have just recently become a minister in the Universal Life Church and I'm pleased to find that others out there are seeking the true spirit of the word.

I am deeply involved in Religious Science and the pure Metaphysical teachings of Jesus Christ our Savior. I have been studying the Scriptures, Egyptian Book of The Dead, the Talmud, and other Theosophical societies. The wealth of understanding and strength that fervent study has imparted to me is something that I would like to share with the group.

Some information about myself is that I'm 27 years old, of Afrikan descent and from Detroit, Michigan. I have lived in Germany and France at one time for five years-- and still speak what little German that I haven't forgotten through lack of use. I'm a sophomore at Sonoma State University majoring in Psychology(counseling) and I am doing this while being incarcerated at San Quentin.

A favorite passage of mine that I feel epitomizes Man as Mind's potential is from the Prophecy of Baruch and reads:

"Learn where is wisdom, where is strength, where is Understanding; so that thou mayst also know where Is length of days and life, where is the light of The eyes and peace."

I hope that all of you will have a beautiful and prosperous day!

Peace and Light,

Rodney A.R.
c/o UL Friends

Dear UL Friends:

I am new with the Universal Life Church Inc.. I received my minister's credentials 9-3-81. This is the first paper I have received since joining. Would you please write and give me an example of what your ad really means?

I would most definitely like to take this seriously. What the ULC means to me is a place where a small person can be on a plane with God. I have no formal education in religion except his love.

My prayer and God's blessings be with you.

Your brother with God,

James A.C.
c/o UL Friends

Universal Life Friends Letter, News & Notes

1. U.L. Pageone writes that their group wishes to contact other ULC Quakers who might be interested in helping to maintain and develop a self-sufficient communal farm in the East coast area, and who are oriented towards prayer and meditation. Write in c/o UL Friends.
2. There were a few letters raising the question of tax exemption. Sometimes it seems to be more trouble than it is worth. It is interesting to note that Hensley does not ultimately believe in tax exempt status, although as long as there is such we deserve it as much as anybody. Note also that the ULC grew to three million before it was granted tax exemption.
3. The biggest response to our ad was from prisoners. Many were looking for romance and maybe a little charity, both of which are in very short supply here at the UL Friends. If you have a surplus your self there is a huge need out there, and you could very easily be inundated with requests. The Clerk responds to all of these inquiries, although maybe slowly, and usually that seems to be as far as it goes. The more seriously relevant responses you will find on the pages of this ULF Letter.
4. Narcissa writes that she has had to go to court to defend her church, and finds it all very discouraging. If anyone has any helpful and above all realistic advice along such lines I'm sure we would all appreciate it.
5. Rev. John H. writes that he has been active in American Friends Service Committee demonstrations for peace, and recently against the sale of weapons and bombers by the U.S.. He and a few others feel that the AFSC would be a natural for us in expressing our social concerns. The AFSC is non-sectarian, so those of us of more unconventional persuasions might feel quite at home.
6. There were several inquiries in regard to the structure of the UL Friends. At present we don't really have any, and are strictly informal. If we get large enough we might have different circles or maybe chapters, and this would probably at first be three- Christian, Zen Buddhism, and non-sectarian Friends. Even then it perhaps best be kept as informal as possible. We invite your comments.
7. If you are willing to have us print your name and address in full, you will have to say so. Otherwise we will presume you would rather have your privacy somewhat protected.
8. If you receive a personal letter from one of our subscribers, and if part or all of it seems to be of some special merit, why not forward it on to us so it can be shared in our ULF Letter.
9. The Clerk is quite willing to type up our ULF letter, so if you can't type don't worry about it. Please try however not to just ramble on and on, as there is some problem of leaving enough space for everyone. If the typing job ever gets too big, we will then try to find some other volunteers.

Clerk, *ACD*