

in us. After all, our cherished little Planet may one day be blown to dust, but the rest of the Universe will keep on truckin' like nothin' has happened.

For the four billion plus years before humans even appeared on the scene what creature even thought to praise, fear, or love It? Now It may need us to honour It in order to take the next steps in its evolution! Could it be that our role as an intelligent species is to be conscious; to evolve our ethics and morals as our social and natural environment changes? Now we have a situation in which we either cooperate at every level with It or destroy ourselves as a species. Let us get on with the work of understanding the vastness of God/It and what is expected of us as humans in this ever changing world.

*Michael R. Miller
New Brunswick Monthly Meeting*



Michael suggests reading *Fueling Our Future, A Dialogue about Technology, Ethics, Public Policy, and Remedial Action*, by Ed Dreby and Keith Helmuth, published by Quaker Institute for the Future.

A composer and pianist, Michael R. Miller taught music composition and theory at Mount Alison University. Now he lives in Fredericton NB with his wife Edith and musical sons. For CD - PEACE CANTATA on early Quaker quotes, contact truhlar@musiccentre.ca and see www.musiccentre.ca

AWKWARD QUESTION # 2 Is God Male?

The Bible leaves little doubt that the answer is “Yes.” Ditto for most Quaker literature and hymns. But recent responses to spiritual experiences lead some Friends to feel that God is not a person and has no gender. A less radical conviction held by others is that God is a parent and has both genders, a sort of hermaphroditic spirit.

The word “person” is from the Greek for “mask”. God is so far beyond the creature’s ability to grasp, that we create masks to render the unthinkable thinkable. Masks are metaphors. Problems creep in when people believe that the metaphors are real. It’s confusing the pointer with the thing pointed to.

It is possible that God is solely spirit and works through various physical forms. There is a radical sense that the Universe is the body of God. Whether you think of God masked as a gender neutral parent, or as pure spirit, or as the Universe itself, there is no justification in these views for continuing the use of masculine terminology in reference to God. His, Him, Father, and Lord, are ancient masks which we are being called on now to acknowledge as comforting, but also limiting of our fullest engagement with the Absolute.

*Bert Horwood
Thousand Islands Monthly Meeting*

To the Editor:

Regarding Vol. 105, No.2 “Ask Margaret Fell”. As one who is presently a jurist, I take exception to the negative stance as regards Quakers and jury duty. First, if at all possible, it is the civic responsibility of every adult citizen to perform this duty. Today, jurors are not required to swear an oath and for this reason, as stated in your article, “affirmation” is an alternative - however, I don’t consider affirming “weasely”. In fact, most potential jurors are easily excused for all manner of practical reasons, or dismissed by either prosecution or defense. I find the jury experience demanding, educational and emotionally rewarding. Why would a Quaker want to avoid this role? The article does a disservice to Friends.

Richard Lush, Toronto Monthly Meeting