Appendix I

Grand Rapids Friends Meeting

April 1, 2007

Deb Wickering and Mark Post, Co-Clerks

Dear Friends,

The June 21, 2005 minute recording my ministry of ecumenism to study and worship with the Seventh-day Adventists need not be renewed. I feel that this ministry has been concluded; I no longer feel a compelling sense of being called into that church. What has been accomplished? A written comparison between the FGC Friends and the Adventists and a book-length journal of the journey; an openness to being in relationship with a faith group with views very divergent from my own and a new evangelical language learned; a willingness to have honest and sometimes difficult conversations about differences between our faiths and practices.

Probably part of the timing of this ending is a result of meeting Amy and entering into a serious relationship with her—I continued (and continue) to study the Sabbath School Bible lessons each week but went to Sabbath School less and less often, and a couple of months ago I had let the group know that I would not be able to attend regularly. They encouraged me to be present when I could and made sure I knew that I’d be welcome. Still, I feel less connected to the individuals than I did earlier and more detached from the church as a whole. Previously when I felt a sense of release, the compulsion to go back to the church returned after a short time; this time it hasn’t. I have a sense that this particular journey is completed.
What might be next in my faith journey? Recently I discovered a group called “Convergent Friends” (or Quaker 2.0) who are having conversations across the 4 branches of Quakerism—there are groups which meet in person (e.g., Marge Abbott, a member of Multnomah Monthly Meeting in Portland, Oregon, wrote a Pendle Hill Pamphlet *An Experiment in Faith: Quaker Women Transcending Differences* (1995) which describes how women from evangelical and liberal branches met together and had meaningful dialogues about their spiritual experiences, which also led to meetings at the Quaker Women’s Theological Conferences), at conferences like the FWCC Convergent Friends Workshop in March 2007 in Providence, RI, and via blogs. This continues an interest I’ve had which led me to invite Walt to visit the Battle Creek Evangelical Friends Church (a year or two ago?). This is a conversation/direction I’ll keep an eye on and will continue to ponder.