

Friendly Notes

Santa Monica Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

February, 2015

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Advices and Queries — Meeting for Business

Queries

Do I regularly attend meeting for business and in a spirit of love and unity? If unable to attend, how do I attend to my responsibility?

Am I familiar enough with our church government to contribute to its disciplined processes? Do I consider difficult questions with an informed mind as well as a generous and loving spirit? If I cannot attend, do I uphold the meeting prayerfully?

Are our meetings for worship with a concern for business held in the spirit of worship, seeking the guidance of God?

How do we respond if we notice the meeting has lost an understanding of the presence of God?

Advices

The purpose of our Meetings for Worship for Business is precisely this: we meet not to make decisions, but to build a community of witness: what have we found corporately? Jan Hoffman, 1988

Among Friends, the decisions made by a group are enriched when all members commit themselves to regular attendance ... Remember that to everyone is given a share of responsibility, whether through silence or through the spoken word. Be diligent in attendance and in inward preparation. Be ready to speak under the leadings of the Light.

Sense of the meeting is not synonymous with consensus. **Consensus** is...a secular method, involving a rational process and producing general agreement. The authority is the group. **Sense of the Meeting** is a religious method involving a spiritual process and producing a spirit-led decision. The authority is God as discerned by the group in worship. *Baltimore Yearly Meeting*

The goal of Friends' decision-making is a Spirit-led sense of the meeting, a crystallization of the search for clarity on the topic under consideration. Even in the face of strong difference of opinion, that goal is achievable when there is spiritual unity. Our search is for unity, not unanimity. We consider ourselves to be in unity when our search for Truth is shared; when our listening for God is faithful; when our wills are caught up in the presence of Christ; and when our love for one another is constant. A united meeting is not necessarily all of one mind, but it is all of one heart. *Philadelphia Yearly Meeting*

Spiritual discernment lies at the heart of Quaker spirituality and practice. It is grounded in the central Quaker conviction of the availability to every person of the experience and guidance of God, immediate as well as mediated. Discernment is the faculty we use to ...sense the right course for the meeting to take in complex or difficult circumstances. *Baltimore Yearly Meeting*

Upcoming Events:

- ◆ 2/1/15; Noon - Adult Education Committee: Religion as Poetry, Quakers & Others with Judith Searle
- ◆ 3/1/15: Noon - Adult Education Committee: Poetry as Ministry with Stan Searl & Betty Smith
- ◆ 4/1/15: Noon - Adult Education Committee: Conversation about Faith & Practice

*Contributions to
Friendly Notes*

*Friendly Notes welcomes
submissions by Friends.
A quotation, poem or
short essay that speaks to
you in your spiritual
journey, or something that
you have written yourself,
can enrich others seeking
the Light. Please give a
copy to the Editor,
Friendly Notes, by email
(rebeccatillberg@yahoo.com)
or in written form at
Meeting.*



Minutes - January 11, 2015

Draft Notes

Meeting for Worship on the Occasion of Business

Attending: Richard Chamberlain, Richard Shaw, Wendy Christensen, Cindy Waite, Stan Searl, Shayne Lightner, Grayson Schick, Brian Johnston, Jonathan Heston, Donna Cooper, Shelley Blank, Fred Buell, Dahlia van Gelder, Julie Murphy, Carol Tantau, Howard I. Smith, Grant Ramey, Dean Wahls, Curtis Raynor, Tanna Moontaro, Alan Aymie, Tim Vreeland, Judith Searle, Cathleen Loeser, Kate Watkins-Shaw, Ann Fuller

In worship sharing on queries related to vocal ministry, Friends spoke to deepening the silence as strengthening the connection to Spirit and each other. Friends spoke from their experience, advising careful discernment of the difference between messages received for oneself and those which are to come through oneself for the meeting as a whole. Friends also advised waiting until ready to pass on the message concisely.

Minutes from the meeting for business on December 14 were read and approved with three corrections: 1) Shelley Blank was nominated for Finance Committee, not Nominating Committee; 2) under Finance Committee, the second sentence in point 2 should read: "Curtis Raynor noted that AVP does expect to contribute \$1500 in income 2015", and 3) House reports that renting parking spaces was not found to be viable, either at night or during the day.

Worship and Ministry - Inspired by the responses to the queries on vocal ministry, and M&W's current discern-

ment, Stan Searl sang the text of his report, "Breathe on Me, Breath of God". The health of our worship together is assured, if we come prepared to worship in a deep way, open to being conduits of the Spirit.

Fellowship Committee - Cindy Waite requested guidelines on what food should be provided for the fellowship hour after rise of meeting. Current attempts to simplify have been met with many unfavorable comments. After Friends responded, the Clerk sensed unity on simplifying the preparation and cleanup work and the variety of food, by providing one standard, simple, vegan item. On First Days with a meeting for business, something more substantial could be provided. The committee might consider a monthly potluck to involve the community and add something tasty. Friends are referred to Cindy with alternatives to crackers and peanut butter. A Friend expressed gratitude to Cindy for her calm and devoted service.

Pastoral Care - Carol Tantau brought forward Alan Aymie for membership. As she waited with Alan outside the meeting room, Friends spoke to his devoted participation in meeting, with his family, as attender and teacher. The Clerk sensed unity.

1-15-01 Meeting approves Alan Aymie as a member of Santa Monica Monthly Meeting.

Alan spoke to his feeling of welcome and the centrality of Faith & Practice to his spiritual practice.

Finance Committee - Richard Chamberlain distributed copies of 3 documents:

1. Final numbers for 2014, comparing actual and budgeted amounts. In sum, since contributions from Friends are

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slightly over budget and expenses \$6725 under budget, there was a surplus of \$6418.

2. Budgeted contributions by the Meeting. All have been made and our dues to PYM and SCQM were slightly less than budgeted due to a reduced number of members.

3. A report on House Committee expenses.

After Friends' questions about the disposal of the surplus, and worship, meeting approved transferring \$6418 into the capital reserve fund. Our general fund stands at approximately \$30,000 (including a \$20,000 amount that appeared decades ago from a source now unknown); the capital reserve for major House expenses stands at \$30,000, which Richard states is low for replacement of a Southern California property. Richard noted that the Alice Herman Fund investments have a market value of \$299,646 currently and their checking account is at \$634.00.

Finance Committee requests that Friends consider automatic transfers to help the committee plan.

1-15-02 Meeting approves the transfer of \$6,418 to the capital reserve fund.

Richard Shaw distributed copies of the proposed 2015 budget, noting three corrections. (Copy of final budget attached) Total income is estimated at \$58,807; total expenses at \$60,608. In response to Friends' questions,

he stated that the deficit shown reflects an authentic picture of expenses requested by committees and expected income. Usually, committees spend less than their budget. Friends are reminded that the budget is an estimate of our financial affairs, and that many variables can be expected during the year, for example, a new tenant paying market rate would bring a large increase in income.

Friends expressed appreciation for the heroic work of preparing the budget.

1-15-03 Meeting approves the budget for 2015.

A Friend thanked the committee for helping Fellowship Committee prepare a budget.

Nominating Committee - Tanna Moontaro brought forward three Friends for final approval.

1-15-04 Meeting approves Joe Morris on Library, Kim O'Brien on Peace and Social Action, and Shelley Blank on Finance (as a consultant on fund-raising) committees.

Tanna introduced Julie Murphy, and brought her name forward to serve on Finance, with gratitude.

Meeting ended in silent worship.

Respectfully submitted,
Kate Watkins-Shaw, Clerk
Ann Fuller, Recording Clerk

Invitation to Adult Education Sessions

On March 1, 2015 at noon, Adult Education will present a session by Stanford Searl and Betty Smith, a Quaker Elder, about "Poetry as Ministry: Silence, Poetry and Hymns." Drawing upon a group of fifty poems from *Quaker Poems: The Heart Opened*, these Quaker poems celebrate and investigate some of the possibilities of spiritual openings to Quaker silence, waiting and contemplation through the medium of poetry. The session will be an hour and there will be opportunity for Quaker worship sharing out of the silence within that time.

On April 5, 2015 at noon, Adult Education will present a two-hour conversation about the current *Faith and Practice* on behalf of the Pacific Yearly Meeting's Discipline Committee (involved in a revision of *Faith and Practice*). This threshing meeting will be clerked by the committee and will consider the following and related queries:

- How does our Meeting use and understand the current *Faith and Practice* (2001)?
- What are the nuts and bolts of how our Meeting reaches unity in our Business Meeting process? What is the role of various committees in this process? How does this compare to what is currently written in *Faith and Practice*?
- Where do individuals in the Meeting community have difficulty with the current *Faith and Practice*? Where do individuals in the Meeting community have comfort with the current *Faith and Practice*?
- What is your personal spiritual experience with any aspects of the current *Faith and Practice* and how was this meaningful to you?

Calendar - February 2015

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 10:00 Meeting for Worship 10:15 First Day School 12:00 Adult Education: Religious Poetry	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 10:00 Meeting for Worship 10:15 First Day School	9	10	11 7:00-8:00 pm Meeting for Healing dlancer@verizon.net	12	13	14
15 10:00 Meeting for Worship 10:15 First Day School 11:30 Business Meeting	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 10:00 Meeting for Worship 10:15 First Days School	23	24	25 7:00-8:00 pm Meeting for Healing dlancer@verizon.net	26	27	28

Doing to Fulfill the Will of God, Christ, Light, Spirit, and Evolution on Earth, Which we Co-own and Share Permanently

By Simon J. Simonian, from a vocal ministry on February 1, 2015

God and Evolution are holy, creative and permanent. They evolved us in their image with love and enjoyment to fulfill their evolving needs and purposes on Earth, which we co-own and share permanently. We humans are equal members of their family, loving, grateful, holy, creative, willing to enjoy to work to continually evolve their work, our lives, natural, cultural, civilizational and societal, for ourselves, our neighbors, our needs, and our neighbors' needs. We strive to have discipline: solve problems to evolve and grow; prioritize and complete tasks; take responsibility; are dedicated to reality; and balance to evolve all needs. We strive to be: moral and right, ethical and good, sane and real, wise and just. We strive: to take

the lead to choose our right ends, manage to work to complete them in the right way and we collaborate with our co-workers. We strive to: make a living, loving relationships, learn and teach new things, create, innovate, integrate, transform, evolve and grow. As Quakers we strive to practice: unity, justice, simplicity, integrity, community and equality. We strive to: love ourselves, and our neighbors, to enjoy working continually for the betterment, evolution and growth of ourselves, our culture, civilization and society to fulfill the purposes of God and Evolution on Earth which we co-own and share permanently.

Important Contact Numbers

CLERK OF THE MEETING	Kate Watkins Shaw	(310) 475-7139
ASSISTANT CLERK	Celia Carroll	(310) 450-4118
RECORDING CLERK	Ann Fuller	(323) 936-0558
CORRESPONDING CLERK	Curtis Raynor	(310) 954-7783
TREASURER	David Wolff	(323) 465-4807
FRIEND-IN-RESIDENCE, CALENDAR	Grant Ramey	(310) 828-4069
ELECTRONIC DIRECTORY	Monica Faulkner	(310) 391-3705
LISTSERVE	Alice Burston	(310) 396-9816
NEWSLETTER	Editor: Rebecca Searl	(310)204-4225
	Distribution: Yang family	(310) 373-9558

COMMITTEE CLERKS

ADULT EDUCATION	Stan Searl	(310)204-4225
	Grayson Schick	
AVP (Alternatives to Violence Project)	Tanna Moontaro	(310) 399-0315
ALICE HERMAN	Alice Burston	(310) 486-7423
	Carol Hofmann	(310) 455-7212
CHILDREN'S EDUCATION	Heather Aymie	Aymies@att.net
COMMUNICATIONS	Rebecca Searl	(310)204-4225
FELLOWSHIP	Cindy Waite	(323) 841-4131
FINANCE	Richard Chamberlain	(310) 443-1490
HOUSE	Richard Shaw	(310) 475-7139
LIBRARY		
MINISTRY AND WORSHIP	Cynthia Cuza	(213) 925-5998
NOMINATING	Stan Searl	(310)204-4225
PASTORAL CARE	Carol Tantau	(310) 902-1931
PEACE & SOCIAL ACTION	Brian Johnston	(310) 838-0377
	Curtis Raynor	(310) 954-7783
SANDWICH MAKING FOR THE HOMELESS	Dick Heiser	(310) 645-2149

Religious Poetry: Many Traditions, Many Splendors Presented by Judith Searle under the care of Adult Education

February 1, 2015

Reviewed by Stanford J. Searl, Jr.

The thirty-three poems chosen by Judith represented a multiplicity of voices, styles and periods, from men and women in equal measure, poems from the Bible, much from other aspects of Judaism, Christian mystics, Chinese Taoism, Sufi poetry, Hinduism, native American songs and chants, Zen Buddhism, African-American spirituals, plenty of wonderful Catholic and Anglican poetry, and poems from Quakers, including Whittier, Whitman, Stanford. Throughout the presentation, Judith offered concise and helpful overviews about the poems and poets. One Friend said to me as we were leaving that this felt like taking a semester course.

Judith entered into the reading of the poems with a profound sense of both their music and their meaning. Her reading demonstrated how the heart and mind can work together to bring poems alive into the present moment – no small feat in itself.

While there were many themes and dimensions, including writing about the soul and God, underneath the surface I heard the theme of a deep, mystic unity of everything, including Judith's own poem near the end.

Thank you Judith, for the many gifts of research, performance and insight.

Santa Monica Monthly Meeting

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<https://www.quakercloud.org/cloud/santa-monica-friends-meeting>



WALK IN THE LIGHT WHEREVER YOU MAY BE.

Contributions to the Meeting

While the Meeting values everyone's contributions of time and energy, it also depends on financial contributions to support its many activities. Please give what you can.

Please make sure your name and street address are on your check, and mark it as 'Donation.'

You may also drop checks in the contributions box in the library area. If you wish to contribute by automatic deposit, please contact the Clerk of Finance Committee.

Mail to:
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1440 Harvard St.
Santa Monica, CA 90404

