

Friendly Notes

Santa Monica Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

April, 2015

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Advices and Queries — Membership

Queries (from Baltimore Yearly Meeting)

- How do I actively support the meeting community?
- How am I maturing into the fullness of membership in this spiritual community?
- How does the Meeting nurture my spiritual growth and transformation?

Advices

- ◆ Just as Friends have “affirmed the priesthood of all believers,” so we also affirm that each Friend has a direct responsibility for the meeting. As we are all ministers of the Word, so we all are ministers to each other and to the community as a whole...helping to contribute, in whatever ways are most suitable, to the maintenance of an atmosphere in which spiritual growth and exploration are possible for all.
- ◆ Membership carries with it spiritual obligations. Each member is called to participate in the Meeting’s spiritual life and to attend worship regularly. Members need to nurture each other’s God-given gifts and talents. They seek guidance from one another and the Meeting in discerning God’s will for themselves. They pray for one another.
- ◆ The basic spiritual commitment creates practical obligations. The vitality of each Monthly Meeting depends on its members’ investments of time, energy and financial support. Friends put practical meaning into their spiritual commitment through regular participation in meetings for business, service on committees or as officers, regular financial giving, assisting in maintenance of meeting property, and representing Meeting in community and wider Friends’ organizations.
- ◆ Membership is costly...It is not just about belonging, feeling accepted, feeling at home. It has also to do with being stretched, being challenged, being discomforted...We can never be entirely sure of where the venture will lead us...(but) the one thing we can be sure of is that the process, taken seriously, will call us to change. *Helen Rowlands, 1952.*

Upcoming Events:

- ◆ 4/25/15: 9:00-3:00 - SCQM Spring Gathering
- ◆ 5/3/15: Noon - Adult Education Committee: The Meaning of Membership

Minutes - March 8, 2015

Draft Notes

Meeting for Worship on the Occasion of Business

March 8, 2015

Attending: Diane Manning, Dahlia van Gelder, Cindy Waite, Cynthia Cuza, Judith Searle, Richard Chamberlain, Tim Vreeland, Stan Searl, Jan Bartholomew, Rachel Fretz, Lori Reineman, Shayne Lightner, Sarah Rose House-Lightner, Cathleen Loeser, Carol Tantau, Curtis Raynor, Henry Yang, Richard Shaw, Brian Johnston, Kate Watkins- Shaw, Ann Fuller

Meeting began in silent worship on the queries: How do we share our deepest beliefs with our children and youth, while leaving them free to develop as the spirit of God may lead them? Do we invite them to share their insights? Friends noted that our children feel comfortable and respected. As young children are more ego-centered than community centered, we teach by example as they come to see this as their home. Friends noted that older children can find larger peer groups through service camps and other Quaker opportunities. We do not know what brings adults back to meeting after leaving as adolescents, and can only lead by the example of our own participation. As we recognize that of God in everyone, we encourage our children's gifts at whatever stage they are in; for instance, a child may be capable of vocal ministry but not ready to act on it.

Minutes from the February 8, 2015 meeting were read and approved with the following corrections: under Finance, the committee recommended retaining the surplus in capital reserve and Minute 01-15-01 should read: "Meeting approves the transfer of \$2,241 into capital reserve." Under House Committee, the cost of replacing the sign has been approved, and we are awaiting deliv-

ery. A Friend expressed appreciation for the work of the Recording Clerk in capturing the discussion of the State of the Meeting Report.

Worship and Ministry - Cynthia Cuza read and distributed a draft of the State of the Meeting Report, compiled by the ad hoc committee from discernment with individual Friends, committee clerks and Friends' comments at the February meeting for business.

The Clerk called for worship.

Friends said that much in the report was wonderful and speaks to ways we can improve. Friends noted many specific ways that changes have led to more attendance at meeting for business, and the deepening of meeting for worship. A Friend noted that specifics in the report should be in service to illustrating our spiritual state and suggested the sentence: "We grappled with what it is to be a Quaker, on many fronts." A Friend suggested including a reference to the mural, which expresses who we are, included our teens and the larger Quaker community, and was led by our beloved Friend Tanna Moontaro. A Friend suggested including the new energy in the children's program, and an acknowledgement of the service of a long time teacher.

After worship, appreciation was expressed to the committee, and final approval was held over for the April meeting for business.

Pacific Yearly Meeting - Shayne Lightner reported on the interim meeting of PYM representatives to approve PYM and annual session budgets, and to determine the fees, site and schedule of the yearly meeting. Discernment centered on declining attendance at the annual session and lack of diversity. Changing the schedule to accommodate the work week, or to allow sampling, and adjusting the cost were discussed, noting that PYM comprises the largest geographical area of any American yearly meeting. There are scholarship funds available from PYM and from Santa Monica Meeting's Alice Herman Fund, beyond the assistance we

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 - March 8, 2015

provide for any first time attender.

Friends noted the value of meeting and worshipping with other Friends, the quality of worship and the exposure to the practices of other meetings, as well as the beautiful location. Friends suggested considering worship using remote technology, examining the importance of the physical location, and using alternate sites, such as retreat centers.

Questions are referred to Shayne, who is our representative and also serves on the PYM Ministry and Oversight Committee, Sarah Rose House Lightner who has attended annual sessions of PYM for 23 years, or the PYM website.

The Youth Coordinator and her committee has a schedule of inter-generational events, which was distributed.

Pastoral Care – Carol Tantau brought forward Gretchen Woelfle for membership, to be held over until the April meeting for business; Friends can contact the clearness committee which has met with Gretchen and recommends her for membership, with any comments or concerns: Stan Searl, Don McCormick and Carol Tantau.

New Business – A Friend suggested that a group might attend Orange Grove's Fellowship First Days.

The meeting closed in silent worship.

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

Quaker Minute about our Faith and Practice Book

Offered in Prayerful Hope by Stanford J. Searl, Jr. on behalf of Worship & Ministry

Quaker Minute: *Our Faith and Practice* represents the best of our Quaker writings, meaning that it is – essentially and in detail – devotional. What does this mean? It means that by reading in an open hearted, spiritually listening manner, it's possible that the text of our own *Faith and Practice* allows the reader to go more deeply to the Spirit. This is like reading Howard Brinton's *Friends for 300 Years* and Thomas Kelly's *A Testament of Devotion* or my own *Quaker Poems* for that matter. Don't we want to journey into the center of our spiritual lives?

For my own spiritual practices, I can find no better uplift and inspiration then when I read the section in our *Faith and Practice* about clearness and clearness committees (see pp. 139-141).

Listen to the devotional wisdom from our own *Faith and Practice* about clearness and its many gifts.

“One of the special joys of a Friends Meeting is the recurring reminder that each person contributes to the spiritual strength of the loving community, and that the community is a guiding and sustaining force in the life of each individual. This mutual relationship strengthens the Meeting and produces a bond of love and trust among its members, helping the Meeting find unity in its spiritual life and harmony in its actions” (*Faith and Practice*, p. 139). I will now sing the seven-fold amen. This is devotional work.

“A clearness committee meets with the seeker neither as professional counselors nor as colleagues discussing a problem and giving advice, but rather as caring Friends, drawing on the same resources that bind the Meeting together in worship. Listening and patience are essential. All must listen not only to the person in need, but also to the movement of the Spirit” (*Faith and Practice*, p. 140). Listening to this writing, I think: what a wonderful way to enter into worship together?

Book Review — Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time:

The Historical Jesus & the Heart of Contemporary Faith by Marcus Borg

When I taught in the religion department at a local university, I wanted my students to learn about contemporary historical and other scholarship about Jesus, but I didn't really want to create a bunch of agnostics. I turned to the campus minister for advice & he suggested this book. It presents a way to integrate knowledge from current schol-

arship about Jesus with a profound Christian spirituality. It is the one book about Christianity that I have given my son, and that is the highest praise I can offer.

-Review by Don McCormick

Peace and Social Action Committee

Report on the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)

By Tim Vreeland

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) – Tim Vreeland presented the following notes on the history and concerns of AFSC at the February meeting of the Peace and Social Action Committee.

- 1917 AFSC founded in Philadelphia to offer “as service of love in wartime.”
- 1940 AFSC Pacific Coast branch established in Pasadena. Assisted Jewish refugees from Europe to relocate.
- 1942-45 Southern California Quakers protested evacuation of all persons of Japanese ancestry from West Coast and gave assistance in the internment camps.
- 1946-55 Whittier Institute of International Relations provided impassioned speakers for peace during the Cold War years. Later became the AFSC Institute for International understanding.
- 1947-70 AFSC sends relief to Navajo community after a disastrous blizzard. Worked with Native tribes to promote justice and self-reliance.
- 1950-present AFSC has sponsored youth programs to build and refurbish housing and to clean up the environment, to give Quaker youth opportunities to mingle with others of diverse backgrounds.
- 1960 The “era of activism” saw AFSC participating in the Civil Rights Movement and protesting the war in Vietnam.

AFSC Los Angeles today is embarked on a series of programs:

Roots for Peace: Building Healthy Communities works with young people to develop their leadership and community organizing skills around food justice, urban gardening, health and nutrition. From this they acquire skills to critically analyze issues and implement community action programs. Projects are often led by alumni of programs who return as AFSC interns.

Peace Education Program seeks to reduce violence among youth through Los Angeles. In partnership with other organizations, AFSC calls attention to conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan, Israel, Palestine and other parts of the world. Through intensive workshops, the Peace Education Program teaches youth invaluable life skills, helps them understand the meaning of non-violence in their lives, directs them to non-violent career paths, and involves them in community organizing and service.

Part of the Youth Outreach Work of this program instructs participants in the use of digital media. A consequence of this is **Visual Story**, a collection of films, video and photographs illustrating personal reflections and self-expressions of young people to newly-introduced ideas of non-violence in their communities.

Human Rights Teachers Workshop: a two day workshop conducted by AFSC’s Peace Education Program takes K-12 educators from the Los Angeles Unified School District to explore global, national and local dimensions of human rights issues. Issues addressed in the workshops include: environmental sustainability, economic justice, genocide, the media, child soldiers and youth in the military, and human trafficking. Through the workshop teachers become better equipped to encourage tolerance and peace building and to appreciate the critical role human rights plays in the lives of people everywhere.

Friends Peace Garden – in partnership with students of Central High, AFSC is creating an edible and sustainable school community garden. The students are planning to plant and grow a wide variety of herbs and vegetables.

Important Contact Numbers

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	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
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PEACE & SOCIAL ACTION	Brian Johnston	(310) 838-0377
	Curtis Raynor	(310) 954-7783
SANDWICH MAKING FOR THE HOMELESS	Dick Heiser	(310) 645-2149

SCQM Spring Gathering April 25th; 9:00—4:30 La Jolla Meeting

We need to balance reflecting on the past, being in the moment and moving ahead. Spring Quarter is a time to share worship, laughter and a meal together, to smile about our accomplishments, to learn from our shortcomings, and to look ahead with intention and hope. I hope to see you there.

Robin DuRant,
Presiding Clerk, Southern California Quarterly Meeting
We will have a children's program and teen program, and plenty of time for hanging out and visiting with each other and the adults as well. La Jolla in the spring is beautiful, and we will spend some time hanging out at the beach and participating in the California paper crane peace project. We will also begin our planning for fall fellowship. If you are new to Quakerism or to the larger Quaker community, spring fellowship is a great

way to get to know people and strengthen the bonds of trust and community that bring us together.

Please let us know if you are coming (for planning lunch):
One response per person. <http://doodle.com/hv5v2hfznmzmyxy>

Adult Education: The Meaning of Membership May 3, 2015

Curious about the meaning of membership in the Religious Society of Friends? Want to know the difference between a member and an attender? Come to an Adult Education session on Sunday May 3 on Membership in the Religious Society of Friends. We will explore what Faith and Practice says about the meaning of membership, as well as the practical "how to" nuts and bolts. We will also hear from some Friends about their spiritual journeys, and how they came to decide to apply for membership.

Santa Monica Monthly Meeting

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



**WALK CHEERFULLY OVER THE EARTH ANSWERING THAT OF
GOD IN EVERYONE. -George Fox**

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.

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