

Friendly Notes

Santa Monica Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

May, 2015

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- ♦ 7/13/15-7/18/15 - Pacific Yearly Meeting Annual Gathering, Walker Creek Ranch



Advices and Queries — Service and Vocation

Queries

Live adventurously. When choices arise, do you take the way that offers the fullest opportunity for the use of your gifts in the service of God and the community? Let your life speak. *Quaker F&P*

Do we regard our time, talents, energy, money, material possessions and other resources as gifts from God, to be held in trust and shared according to the Light we are given? *Baltimore F&P*

What are we doing as individuals and as a meeting to nurture our gifts? *Baltimore F&P*

Advices

Every stage of our lives offers fresh opportunities. Responding to divine guidance, try to discern the right time to undertake or relinquish responsibilities without undue pride or guilt. Attend to what love requires of you. *Quaker Faith and Practice*

As individuals, we are called to use our time, our various abilities, our strength, our money, and our material possessions with care, managing them wisely and sharing them generously. From the indwelling Seed of God, we discover our particular gifts and discern the service to which we are called. *PYM Faith and Practice*

Remember your responsibilities as a citizen for the conduct of local, national and international affairs. Do not shrink from the time and effort your involvement may demand. *Quaker F&P*

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 - April 12, 2015

Business Meeting, April 12, 2015
Minutes

Attending:

Donna Cooper, Kim O'Brien, JoAnn Taylor, Cindy Waite, Cathleen Loeser, Wendy Christensen, Tim Vreeland, Simon Simonian, Brian Johnston, Shelley Blank, Grayson Schick, Richard Shaw, Fred Buell, Maria Manetta, Gretchen Woelfle, Grant Ramey, Stan Searl, Henry Yang, Rachel Fretz, Julie Murphy, Richard Chamberlain, Kate Watkins-Shaw, Rebecca Searl

1. Worship/ Advices and Queries. Meeting opened with silent worship on the Queries: 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? Vocal ministry touched on the importance of being present, and the transformation that comes with membership and leads to a sense of an enriched environment.

2. Approval of last month's minutes.

Minutes from the March 8, 2015 Business Meeting were read aloud. The minutes were approved as written.

3. Finance Committee report. Richard Chamberlain and Julie Murphy presented the First Quarter Finance Report, which appears to show a surplus; however, the details portray a different picture. Details on the budgeted/actual income were presented. The budget calls for \$15,202 income in the 1st quarter; however, the actual income was only \$13,597. In summary, after the various issues are considered, Meeting's income is down about \$3,000 for the 1st quarter. Automatic deposit of contributions was emphasized to even income throughout the year. A perspective that could reassure any concern is to look at patterns for contributions throughout the year to see if the pattern this year is any different from the past. Our major tenant has given notice as of May and we are actively seeking a replacement. This creates uncertainty in our projected income.

On the Expenditure side, 1st quarter budget

for Expenditure was \$15,202, but actual Expenditures totaled \$10,431, for a total of \$4,771 positive balance. The possible causes for the unspent funds were discussed. Expenses for the House were a little higher than the quarterly amount would project; however, the cause is not known. Children's Education has spent substantially less than expected.

4. Worship and Ministry. Stan Searl read aloud the State of the Meeting report, and summarized the process used to draft the report. Clerk reminded friends that the report has been reviewed at a prior Business Meeting and on the listserve, and the need today is to approve the report for submission to Quarterly Meeting on Monday.

Clerk called for some worship following the reading of the State of the Meeting Report. Gratitude for the Report was expressed, which is very deep and thoughtful.

The Report was approved with the correction of a typo.

5. Adult Education

There will be a session on Membership in May that will be co-led by Carol Tantau and Kate Watkins-Shaw. Members who have gone through the membership process this year will be present to share their experiences.

Stan reported on a 'listening session' about Meeting input to the new *Faith and Practice*, and summarized the ideas already shared. The queries that provided the focus for reflection included:

- Overall, what is your experience of using the current *Faith and Practice*? How have you used it and what has it meant to you?
- From your experience, how have we searched for unity in our business Meeting process? What is the role of our committees in the process? How does this compare to what is currently written in *Faith and Practice*?
- Where do you have difficulty with the current *Faith and Practice*? Where do you have comfort with the current *Faith and Practice*?

The following comments are among those that came out of the session: *Faith and Practice* is used as a manual or reference handbook as well

Minutes - April 12, 2015, continued

as a source for spiritual and inspirational guide. Meeting should do more with *Faith and Practice* in terms of Adult Education. People appreciate the quotations and the connections they represent with other Quakers. Several recommendations from individuals emerged: the need for a section about what people do in the worship silence; we should re-visit the place of birthright membership in *Faith and Practice*; more spiritual depth is needed, possibly drawing on other *Faith and Practice* from around the world; the section about the Simplicity testimony seems a little narrow and could be revised to be more inclusive; *Faith and Practice* should include a section about non-theistic Quakers; have a new section about Quaker values about the elderly.

New insights and reflections were called for to grow out of the worship silence. The following suggestions emerged.

- We need to articulate a position on same-sex marriage.
- It's very important to take our spiritually-base peace and social action concerns outside the Meeting, into the broader society, and to exert some leadership.
- We need to emphasize the importance of reaching out to other faiths to create an openness and understanding, and somehow bring this into *Faith and Practice*
 - What's going on in interfaith and ecumenical concerns, especially in terms of contribution values of peace and harmony should be included in *Faith and Practice*
 - Issues of women of faith in a diverse context could be included. Certain religions seem denigrate women. With an accepting approach, women could have an inter-faith dialog.

Question was raised about what will happen next with these

SIERRA FRIENDS CENTER NEWS (Woolman)

The Woolman semester students began the month of April with the Food Intensive trip, one of several field trips in every semester.

Don't forget to check out the Woolman blog – read about the snow on April 7, and about Nicole's youngest goat. I foresee more very yummy goat cheese! <http://blog.woolman.org/>

Coming up on May 9 is the firing of the chambered hillside kiln. If you have seen this kiln, you know it will be a major all-day event. Friends are welcome to attend. Please RSVP in advance for Woolman events via <http://woolman.org/events>

The Woolman Spring 2015 Graduation will be May 23rd at 9am, after the Baccalaureate presentation of their projects at 7pm on May 22nd. Friends are welcome to attend.

Registration is open for Family Work Camp, June 14-21, and there is still space in Camp Woolman (9-14) and Teen Leadership Camp (15-16).

thoughts about *Faith and Practice*. Further discernment is not anticipated in an organized way by Santa Monica Meeting, but the responses will be forwarded unedited to Pacific Yearly Meeting. This will not be the last time we are asked for input to *Faith and Practice*; we expect to have other opportunities for input to the revision.

6. Pastoral Care. Cathleen Loeser reported that the membership of Gretchen Woelfle is presented for reflection and approval, following the initial proposal last month. "She is a member already in my heart."

Minute 04-15-01 The membership for Gretchen Woelfle is approved.

7. Nominating Committee. Stan Searl reported on three nominations that are being presented for the first time, and will be held over 1 month for approval next month: Jan Bartholomew for Peace and Social Action Committee; and Gretchen Woelfle and Judith Searle, both for Nominating Committee for one year each.

8. New Business

Rick Shaw announced that the new addition to the sign has been installed.

Meeting closed with a period of silent worship.

Respectfully submitted,
Kate Watkins Shaw, Clerk
Rebecca Searl, Acting Recording Clerk

SANTA MONICA FRIENDS MEETING NEEDS YOU!

Come join one of our committees - the selections are numerous and the company is congenial. If you haven't received a call from the Nominating Committee, you can call them...or email...or speak to them at Meeting. That's Stan Searl, Donna Cooper, Judith Searle, or Gretchen Woelfle. They are all in the directory - or email Clerk Stan at stansearl@gmail.com.

State of the Meeting: Santa Monica Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends 2014

Our Identity: We have grappled with what it means to be a Quaker today, particularly within the Los Angeles/Santa Monica cultural context, and how to better share our values, and put them into action. Led by our teens and an artist member, in cooperation with SCQM, many of us joyfully shared in creating a mural, which embodies who we are as Quakers. Focused on the testimonies, this mural presents a colorful, creative symbol about our spiritually informed, creative identity. As one Friend said: "Our sense of vitality is outstanding." We experienced a depth of spirituality with critical use of Quaker discernment and adherence to Quaker process while deeply conflicted by differences over the words, "We gather in silence to wait upon God," on our Meeting sign. As a community, we struggled to become clear about our understandings of "God," trying to accommodate the profound differences among us, which raised questions of our Quaker identity. Quaker Quest invited us and challenged us to go further in identifying who we are as Quakers. Participation in Quaker Quest fell significantly short of the called for 100%. We conclude that as a Meeting we are not ready to do the Quaker Quest public sessions, although we are very grateful for the experience, which has spurred us to greater self-reflection.

Community: Even though elusive, the theme of community has had deep spiritual resonance over the past year and beyond. We are making space for communal discernment; we are able to explore and grow together spiritually; there is a feeling of love and caring. One member said: "I found the group to be very powerful in its help to me." Although many attend only sporadically, the Meeting has been able to grow spiritually. We have facilitated the spiritual growth of individuals by sponsorship of first time attendance at PYM and of a yearly pass at Ben Lomond Quaker Center. Our Children's program continues to flourish following a painful transition; we offered love and deep respect for our valuable, long-time teacher, as changes in curriculum were called by our Children's Education Committee. We celebrate the success of our all-ages worship Meetings, which call us to greater unity. One member said: "The Meeting welcomes families; it's a spiritual calling."

Newcomers: We continue to consider how to be more welcoming. We would benefit from more small groups and more communal events in which all are welcome. It's

important to note that being together socially, sharing meals, and playing together are crucial to growth of our community. As one Friend put it, "we want new people to have a great experience about who Quakers really are." While some newcomers have expressed dissatisfaction, many newcomers feel warmly welcomed in conversation during fellowship after Meeting. We have also asked ourselves how best to reach out to those in the wider community who may find a spiritual home at Santa Monica Meeting.

Quaker Process: It's a challenge to integrate our unique Quaker process into our lives, both as a community and through our individual actions. We need to make more manifest the Quaker process in our committees; we need to empower people through this Quaker process to listen deeply to others and participate in one another's lives.

Worship: We prayed and acted together to deepen our worship. To hold the stillness of our space without disruption, we have closed the sliding doors for the first 15 minutes of worship. In our Worship and Ministry Committee, in Business Meetings and through queries and advices, we are attempting as a community to discern and encourage vocal ministry that deepens our collective experience of the Spirit. We offer an opportunity following worship for sharing of joys and concerns distinguished from ministry during worship. We are working to provide a physical and spiritual container to enhance the worship space and its meanings. While not perfect, we have worked hard and mostly effectively to draw the worship experience into deeper places.

Peace and Social Action: We are working on how best to expand our Peace and Social action concerns and how we might lift up the individual testimonies to become social and communal ones. It is important to have an entire community, young, old, everyone as part of a group effort on behalf of peace and social action. We seek to work more closely with other Quaker organizations. We wish to connect the spiritual with the social and provide ways – in the future – to act together as a unified Quaker whole in these efforts on behalf of justice and peace.

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	(310) 922-1434
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

Clerk's call to 2015 Pacific Yearly Meeting Annual Session Walker Creek Ranch, 13 – 18 July 2015 *FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT: LOVE AND JUSTICE*

Intertwined themes of love and justice are featured at the 2015 PYM Annual Session. Our keynote speaker will be **Lloyd Lee Wilson**, a member of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative), and a deeply-grounded author on Quaker spirituality. His many writings include *Essays on the Quaker Vision of Gospel Order* and a recent Pendle Hill Pamphlet, *Radical Hospitality* (#427). Wilson has written eloquently of the need to center our Quaker activism in the gestalt of Quaker practice, knit together in a faithful Quaker community by the redeeming spiritual power of loving-kindness. He writes that when

that spiritual grounding is absent, "In our hasty desire for the fruit of right social order, we have neglected the Root from which all good fruit springs."

We will also hear a presentation by **Jose Aguto** of FCNL on the challenge of worldwide environmental decay, and from **Paula Palmer** of Intermountain Yearly Meeting, who will present her powerful workshop, *"Roots of Injustice, Seeds of Change: Toward Right Relationship with America's Native Peoples."*

Register for Yearly Meeting

Please go to the PYM website
<www.pacificyearlymeeting.org> and click on the link:

"Register online for PYM 2015" to find relevant information, and then to register.

We encourage you to register online if feasible; if not, click on the link: "Download and print the paper registration form" and send in this registration form.

Note that the deadline to receive a 5% discount for early registration is Mon., May 18, 2015. Registrations submitted after June 8, 2015 include a 5% late charge.

Scholarships for PYM

Shayne Lightner, PYM/SCQM Representative for Santa Monica Meeting, reminds us that Meeting has scholarships/financial support through its Alice Herman Fund and PYM has scholarships as well. So hopefully money will not be a barrier to your attendance.

Contact Shayne about questions related to PYM and the Annual Session (Thislightneris@gmail.com). For questions related to financial support and the Alice Herman Fund, please contact Alice Burston and/or Carol Hoffman.

Santa Monica Monthly Meeting

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Phone: (310) 828-4069

<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.

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

