

Friendly Notes

Santa Monica Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

December, 2015

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Advices and Queries — Simplicity

Advices and Queries

"Living simply is the right ordering of our lives and priorities."

Leonard Kenworthy, Quaker Aid Worker

Friends believe in simple living. This has historically meant simple dress, plain speech, and unadorned meeting houses for worship. Through the simplicity testimony, Friends encourage one another to look beyond the outward and to the inward.

In contemporary terms, Friends try to live lives in which activities and possessions do not get in the way of open and unencumbered communication with others and with one's own spirituality. Clearing away the clutter makes it easier to hear the "still small voice" within.

In our work, simplicity requires focusing our efforts on what is most

important rather than diffusing our energies too broadly. In our personal lives, simplicity may mean limiting our consumerism—and resisting overcommitment, so that we have time to care for ourselves and to be present with one another. *Reprinted from AFSC "Quaker Testimonies"*

DO I CENTER MY LIFE IN AN AWARENESS OF GOD'S PRESENCE SO THAT ALL THINGS TAKE THEIR RIGHTFUL PLACE?

Do I know when to say no to work I cannot adequately attend to?

How can I be more thoughtful about what I need and what I acquire?

IS THE LIFE OF OUR MEETING SO ORDERED THAT IT HELPS US TO SIMPLIFY OUR LIVES?

Upcoming Events:

- ◆ Dec. 6, 2015: Adult Education: Practices of Clerking with Cynthia Cuza,
- ◆ Jan. 3, 2016: Adult Education: Gretchen Woelfle reports about her recent work in Africa
- ◆ Jan. 17, 2016; 8:30 a.m.: Adult Education: Kim O'Brien leads discussion about David Johnson's [A Quaker Prayer Life](#)
- ◆ Feb. 7, 2016; Adult Education: Steve Smith: Reading from [Eastern Light](#)
- ◆ March 19, 2016 (Saturday): Adult Education: Diego Navarro, incoming PYM Clerk, leads workshop about leadings and Quaker process

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 - November 15, 2015

Meeting for Worship on the Occasion of Business

Attending: Kate Watkins-Shaw, Maggie Hutchinson, Celia Carroll, JoAnn Taylor, Cathleen Loeser, Michael Loeser, Sarah Rose House-Lightner, Shayne Lightener, Cindy Waite, Grant Ramey, Curtis Raynor, Cynthia Cuza, Stan Searl, Fred Buell, Shelley Blank, Jan Bartholomew, Kim O'Brian, Brian Johnston, Tim Vreeland, Judith Searle, Donna Cooper, Debbie, Richard Chamberlain, Ann Fuller

Meeting began in silent worship on queries and advices on vocal ministry, from Baltimore Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice:

How do I discern when to speak and when not to speak?

How do we encourage Friends to allow ample time to absorb the previous message before speaking?

“If you feel moved to speak, take a moment to test your leading. Is your message from the Spirit, or somewhere else? If it is from God, is it meant only for yourself, or for the entire Meeting? Genuine ministry is often preceded by a physical uneasiness, a “heart pounding weakness”, from which our name Quaker is derived. Remember that silence is not just the space between messages, but a deep and living communion with the “spirit which gives life.” ... Allow adequate time between spoken messages, so that all may listen to God, and truly hear the previous message.

Vocal ministry is not based on a desire or inclination to speak, but on the persistent sense that one is being compelled to rise and allow the Spirit to use their heart and mind to speak aloud. Vocal ministry, then, is not a person's own thoughts and words, but those of the Spirit giving itself a voice through the speaker. For this reason no Friend should come to meeting for worship with either the intention to speak or not to speak.”

A Friend explained that their decision to stand silently in worship was intended to slow down the meeting when it was moving

too fast. A Friend described the distinction between the “heart pounding weakness” and thoughts from the ego or intellect, remembering that in worship we are being a channel for a greater Spirit. A Friend noted that in silence a message may take root which takes years to bear fruit in vocal ministry. A Friend quoted from “Friends for 350 Years”, noting that we are given a portion of the truth “according to our measure”. A Friend said that they had experienced profound ministry from young Friends.

Finance Committee – Richard Chamberlain distributed two reports: a 3rd Quarter report and a full year prediction/estimate. In income, he noted AVP income, higher than expected; contributions from members, significantly lower than projected; the rent deficit caused by ECPC's departure; and the surplus from evening rentals to other groups. The overall deficit is \$6,019. In expenses, he noted that many committees have minimized their expenses, but that annual dues and contributions are not reflected in the report. In answer to Friend's questions, Richard clarified that Our First Place is paying \$1500 a month while we are in negotiations, but did not start until November, and that we have retained a lawyer for advice on the Letter of Intent and negotiations. A Friend expressed gratitude and appreciation for the work involved in preparing the reports, and for their clarity. Richard noted that Susie Rhodes, our bookkeeper did most of the preparatory work, with his collaboration on formatting the reports. In discussion of when to make contributions to the organizations listed on page 3 of the report, Richard said that Finance Committee did not have a recommendation, and was waiting to see what contributions come in from Friends, and urged Friends to make intended contributions well before the end of the year. Friends suggested that since we had committed to contributions at a particular amount, we go ahead, following our commitment as best we can, learning from the experience. The Clerk sensed unity that Finance Committee be directed to pay our contributions now, and asked Finance to bring a report to the next meeting for business. Page 4 of the report is a worst case forecast of our financial situation, leaving a \$4,767 deficit over-all. \$12,000 in member contributions would be required to bring our budget to balance.

After silent worship, Richard asked committee clerks to submit their budgets for 2016 by December 12.

Peace and Social Action – Curtis Raynor read and distributed a committee report on a letter to the Santa Monica City Council in support of their ongoing work on a minimum wage ordinance (attached). In response to Friends' questions, Curtis noted that writing to representatives as constituents is not the kind of political activity that would compromise our tax status, and that local ordinances can take precedence over state law. A Friend spoke from personal experience to the difficulty of providing for a family on minimum wages and to the importance of addressing injustice where we live, for children and families, to being an example. Friends expressed concern that the tiered implementation would not reflect rising costs of living.

11-15-01 Meeting approves sending the following letter to the Santa Monica City Council:

A Message of Support and Gratitude

to the Members of the Santa Monica City Council and to the City Council Staff

from the Santa Monica Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

1440 Harvard Street, Santa Monica

Dear Council Members and Staff,

We greatly appreciate your willingness to increase the minimum wage for workers in our city to \$15 an hour and we commend your diligence in crafting a comprehensive ordinance which will include a sufficient number of paid sick days; effective and expeditious wage enforcement; union supersession; and the distribution of any service charges (in lieu of tips) to the workers and not to the employer. We join you in anticipating that this new directive will serve as a model for other California cities.

Your commitment to helping the working poor and counteracting our society's widening gap of income inequality resonates deeply with our long-standing Quaker Testimonies of Integrity, Equality, and Community.

The Clerk called for worship.

Pastoral Care – Celia Carroll reported on three items:

Meeting will be providing a form developed by Pacific Yearly Meeting for Friends to note emergency contacts, and to express their wishes for marking their death. The forms will be kept in the Friend's file, and can be as complete as the Friend desires.

Pastoral Care will be reaching out to Friends who have been

absent from worship for a period of time.

Jan Bartholomew is brought forward for membership, with approval to be held over until the meeting for business in December. Her clearness committee recommends membership with enthusiasm; any concerns can be brought to Pastoral Care before the next meeting for business.

Nominating – Stan Searl brought forward two Friends for final approval on committees.

11-15-02 Meeting approves Alan Aymie on Fellowship Committee, and Jan Bartholomew on Finance Committee.

Judith Searle is brought forward for the first time for Sandwich Making.

Southern California Quarterly Meeting – Shayne Lightner reported that the Quarterly meeting on November 7 and 8 in Temescal Canyon was well-attended and that Santa Monica's strong representation was noted. The theme was in-dwelling Spirit and out-welling action. Friends spoke to worship sharing being especially meaningful.

Spring Gathering will be on April 23, at Claremont, focusing on business and the reading of State of the Meeting reports.

Pacific Yearly Meeting's RepCom will be on March 4 to 6, hosted by Santa Monica. Sarah Rose House-Lightner will coordinate arrangements, such as housing for representatives.

Pacific Yearly Meeting is on June 17 to 22, at Walker Creek Ranch, in a new configuration from Friday to Wednesday. In 2017, the date will be July 14-19.

Minutes from the October 11, 2013 were read and approved, noting that the section on House Committee in the September 13, 2015 notes still needs follow up.

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

Attached:

Report from Peace and Social Action Committee, read and distributed by Curtis Raynor:

The Minute is in response to a request from CLUE (Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice) calling on communities of faith, especially those within the City of Santa Monica, to express support and encouragement to the Santa Monica City Council and Staff for their willingness to craft a comprehensive minimum wage bill that will, by 2020/2021, raise the minimum wage of workers in Santa Monica to \$15 per hour.

Please Put these Adult Education Sessions on your Calendar!
All sessions will be at the Santa Monica Meetinghouse.

On January 3, 2016, at noon, Gretchen Woelfle hosts a session to report on her recent Sojourning Fellowship to Kenya. She will show a 15 minute film on the work of preventing Cervical Cancer and present photos and anecdotes of her experiences working with US and Africa doctors and nurses to set up cervical cancer screening and treatment programs in small hospitals in rural Kenya.

On January 17, 2016 at 8:30 a.m., Kim O'Brien will lead a Quaker Reading Group about the book, *A Quaker Prayer Life* by David Johnson. The book draws upon early Quaker writings and creates the steps of centering and a prepared heart as part of this Quaker life of prayer. The library has two copies of this book available; however, Kim will provide handouts about the book as well.

Adult Education Program—February 7, 2015
Steve Smith: Reading from His New Book [Eastern Light](#)

Steve Smith's new book, *EASTERN LIGHT: Awakening to Presence in Zen, Quakerism and Christianity* will be the subject of a reading, discussion and book signing sponsored by the Adult Education Committee of the Santa Monica Friends Meeting on Sunday, February 7, 2016 at noon at the Meetinghouse.

As a young adult, Steve drifted away from his childhood Quaker and Christian origins. During this spiritually rootless period, he was overtaken by profound personal crisis, prompting a search for new spiritual footing—leading him to explore the rich traditions of Asian philosophy and religion.

Finding Zen Buddhism to be both intellectually credible and personally transforming, Steve immersed himself in Zen practice. Paradoxically, this immersion in a non-Western religious tradition led Steve to rediscover his Quaker and Christian roots, with a deepened appreciation of their riches.

EASTERN LIGHT (published by Quaker Universalist Press and distributed by *Western Friend*) records how this reawakening has enriched Steve's understanding—of spiritual practice itself, the

Peace Testimony, feminism and gender equality, Quaker-inspired pedagogy, environmental renewal, activism for peace and justice, and the realization in this life of what early Friends called the "Kingdom of God."

Steve Smith was born in 1939 into an Iowa Quaker farm family, graduated from Scattergood Friends School and Earlham College, and earned a doctorate in Philosophy from Harvard University in 1972. For forty years he taught in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Claremont McKenna College, specializing in applied ethics.

Among his publications are three edited books: a textbook, *WAYS OF WISDOM: Readings on the Good Life* (University Press of America, 1983), and two collections of talks on Zen practice by the American Zen teacher, Charlotte Joko Beck—*EVERYDAY ZEN: Love and Work* (HarperCollins 1989), and *NOTHING SPECIAL: Living Zen* (HarperCollins 1993). Steve has led Quaker adult education courses and retreats in numerous settings, including Quaker Center, the Friend General Conference Gathering, and Pendle Hill.

Alice Herman Committee Meeting Enrichment Grants

The Alice Herman Committee (AHC) welcomes written proposals from committees of Santa Monica Meeting to bring speakers/presentations/workshops to our Meeting that will help us deepen or refresh our Quaker practice as a community. In general, the request should be submitted by the clerk of the committee, and/or should include a minute by the committee approving the request. Individuals who are interested in bringing a speaker, should work with the relevant committee to season and approve the request. Please submit your application well in advance of the desired date for the Meeting Enrichment activity. Quaker process takes time. Our budget is determined early in the calendar year. Though applications are considered at any time, worthy projects submitted towards the end of the year may not be approved due to a dwindling budget.

Please keep in mind the following guidelines in determining whether a proposal might be appropriate for AHC funding (though all guidelines may not apply to every

proposal). Your written application should address the following questions, in addition to a complete description of the costs involved in the Meeting Enrichment activity and the specific funds requested from AHC:

1. Is the proposed Meeting Enrichment activity firmly rooted in Quaker principles and practice?
2. Why do you think the Meeting Enrichment activity will be of interest to others at AMFM?
3. How do you hope that the Meeting will benefit as a result of the proposed activity?
4. What will you do to notify and encourage a broad cross-section of members and attenders to participate in the Meeting Enrichment activity?

Please note that AHC provides funding only (for approved Meeting Enrichment activities) and will not bear responsibility for any planning, calendaring, logistics, or promotion related to the event.

Proposals should be emailed to the Clerk of the AHC.

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
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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.

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

