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July, 2018

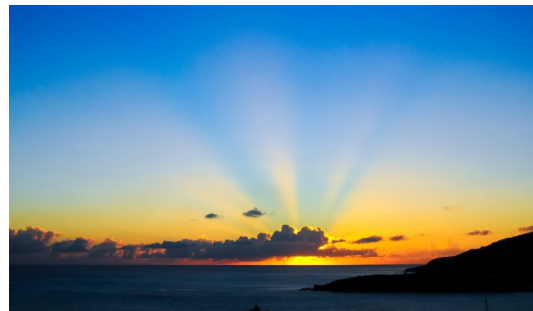


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COMMUNITY ♦ EQUALITY ♦ SIMPLICITY ♦ UNITY ♦ PEACE ♦ INTEGRITY

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Queries

(adapted from American Friends Service Committee: “An introduction to Quaker testimonies”; Intermountain Yearly Meeting; and Young Friends Faith and Practice)

How can I nurture the seeds of peace within myself, my community, and the world? Do I live in the power of that life and spirit that takes away the occasion of

all wars?

How do I work to settle disputes within the organization and the community with love and sensitivity for all involved?

How does our Meeting act to advance peace, to oppose violence, and to support the constructive use of authority in our community, our nation, and the world?

Advices

When we are in accord with God and centered in ourselves, the earth, and all others, we move toward peace. True peace is obtainable only through unity in the life of the Spirit. *Intermountain Yearly Meeting*

The peace testimony is about deeds not creeds; not a form of words but a way of living. It is the cumulative lived witness of generations of Quakers.... The peace testimony is not about being nice to people and living so that everyone likes us The peace testimony is a tough demand that we should not automatically accept the categories, definitions and priorities of the world. We look to the Spirit, rather than to prescriptive hypothetical statements. The peace testimony, today, is seen in what we do, severally and together, with our lives. *London Yearly Meeting*

A good end cannot sanctify evil means; nor must we ever do evil, that good may come of it Let us try then what love will do: for if men did once see we love them, we should soon find they would not harm us. Force may subdue, but Love gains; and he that forgives first, wins the laurel. *William Penn, 1693*



[Draft Minutes - July 8, 2018](#)

Draft Notes on the Meeting for Worship on the Occasion of Business

Attending: Debbie, JoAnn Taylor, Curtis Raynor, Celia Carroll, Andrea Beane, Tamara Hopewell, Abby Adorney, Carol Flint, Richard Plator, Henry Yang, Brian Johnston, Rachel T. Fretz, Cindy Waite, Judith Searle, Tim Vreeland, Cynthia Cuza, Kim O'Brien, Kate Watkins-Shaw, Ann Fuller

Meeting began in worship on queries and advices on our testimony of Peace. Friends reflected on the rising of anger in Meeting about the separation of immigrant families and their children. A Friend's personal guideline to living the peace testimony is George Fox's urging to meet all people with love, answering that of God in them. A Friend recalled Martin Luther King: peace is not the absence of violence, but the presence of justice, and another Friend mused on the difference between the swift and efficient justice in the international hockey league and our country's justice system, especially in the delays in adjudicating cases. AVP's work, in a bloody time, reflects the last advice from William Penn. A Friend cautioned that perception is affected by belief; to use our reasoning brains

not only our eyes.

The agenda was read and accepted. Friends' Meeting for Worship for Business (addenda) was read aloud and distributed to all.

Nominating Committee: Judith Searle distributed the slate for 2018-2019, for first reading. She noted that the term suggested for the clerk of the meeting was for one year only, and explained the role of the convener. Committees that need more participation are Library, Pastoral Care, and Finance; if Friends are led to support the life of the Meeting on those, or other, committees, they can seek out Judith, Ann Fuller, Karsten van Sander, Abby Adorney or Donna Cooper.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Archives will report on their work in September, when we will discern whether its work is done and is ready to be laid down.

The benefits of committee service are two fold: Meeting can function (noting that we do not have paid staff except for a book-keeper, and that committees do the work of discernment and information gathering before an idea comes to meeting for business), and also that there is joy in participating, living as a Quaker in an intimate setting doing something you want to do. Fellowship was suggested as a good way to enter the life of the Meeting, and the committee was thanked for its open-ness to new members and attenders. All committee meetings, except Worship and Ministry and Pastoral Care, are open to all.

On August 12, there will be a called meeting for business to approve the slate of nominees. Please bring concerns to the committee.

Meeting went into worship, with gratitude for the work of Nominating Committee.

Pastoral Care – Celia Carroll described the rewarding work of the committee as the opportunity to work on individuals' needs.

Karsten van Sander was brought forward for membership for the second time. Friends spoke to his depth, good heart and mind.

- **07-18-01:** Meeting approves the membership of Karsten van Sander

Andrea Beane was brought forward for transfer from Austin Monthly Meeting (letters in addenda)

- **07-18-02:** Meeting approves the transfer of Andrea Beane to Santa Monica Monthly Meeting from Austin Monthly Meeting.

Pastoral Care will plan a welcome to our Meeting.

House Committee – Tim Vreeland read the following report (questions and comments are indented below):

1) The House Committee has approved and authorized the **Reserve Study**. Grant has made arrangements with the selected company, Reserve Study, Inc., to visit us and conduct their study Monday, July 16.

- Tim explained that the study will identify repairs over \$1000 to the meetinghouse that can be expected over the next ten years, helping Finance Committee plan.

2) **Repaving Parking Lot.** After examining several more expensive alternatives and finding them wanting, House Committee recommends repaving the parking lot in asphalt, for which we have a low bid of \$12,000. To quote Grant Ramey: "This project would take the least money and shortest amount of time to complete" thus causing the least interruption to our renters. The life span of this paving is about ten years with resealing occurring every three years.

The committee would like to thank Jan Bartholomew and Maggie Hutchinson for the investigative work they did on this project and give a special commendation to Grant Ramey for his assiduousness in exploring so many alternative solutions for this project.

- Friends spoke to our projects as setting examples; that we have a responsibility to the health and sustainability of our environment. Friends had questions about the proposed re-surfacing of the parking lot. Paving stones were mentioned, well-laid for accessibility, cost effective over time, common in Europe and Northern California. The committee has thoroughly investigated a permeable solution, including making a site visit, and found it ADA compliant but too soft and unstable; there was also difficulty in finding a contractor to install it. The proposal to use the low cost asphalt solution was made in hopes that a more sustainable method would come to light in the 10 years the asphalt is expected to last.
- After going into worship twice, the sense of the meeting was that our hearts were not ready to approve this solution and we need more information. Tamara Hopewell, Curtis Raynor, and Brian Johnston stepped forward to assist the committee. The Clerk spoke to the sometimes slow, sometimes swift, process of coming to unity; meeting gratefully acknowledges the amount of care and work put into this question by the committee. Meeting requests a report at the September meeting for business.

3) **Sunshades** in the courtyard (four triangular, one rectangular). The House Committee recommends leaving them in place and scraping the accumulated leaves off them when necessary. Yes, they are soiled, but they may very well contribute to the sound dampening in the courtyard. The Committee has a lot of Minutes and wonders where they should be stored, where they can be archived. Celia Carroll stated that she is chair of the Archives Ad Hoc Committee; Rick Shaw is also a member. There is space in the room upstairs. Minutes will be archived in paper. The disadvantage with digital storage is migration to new systems.

4) **Accoustifence**: We recommend mounting this “hinged gate”, at a cost of \$1500, which can be put in place on Sundays and represents the last thing we can do to reduce the sound in the patio.

- Tim noted that we have already placed green sound dampening mats on the fence around the wooden deck area; the gate will block off that area. Aurelia does not use the wooden deck except for storage, which will remain accessible.

5) As for the **cleaning of the meetinghouse**, our clerk Kate Watkins has made the necessary arrangements.

- It was noted that the carpet, though stained, is clean.

6) As for the three **Surveillance Cameras** Aurelia intends to mount in our building, we have no problems as they will dismantle them each weekend, when they are gone.

7) Finally, the **Friend-in-Residence will be on vacation** for the next eight Sundays, beginning today. He will set up the seating for all eight Sundays if Fellowship will put them away after.

- It was noted that everyone at meeting for worship has this responsibility.

Children's Education – Brian Johnston reported that the committee is meeting regularly, and is attending to increasing the childrens' books in the Library, welcoming families, and signage. He noted that a healthy children's program can provide a respite for harried parents to spend time in worship. Silly Sunday has been re-scheduled; the committee is considering all-ages meetings for worship, and encourages Friends who have not responded to the questionnaire to do so.

The Clerk read a letter from La Jolla Monthly Meeting, which will be sent to Peace and Social Action.

Minutes from May 13, 2018 were read and approved.

Minutes from June 10, 2018 were read and approved, with a change in the wording of Miriam Covington's planned bequest, as follows: replace “for some component of the building remodel” with “with attention to avoiding conflict with the current meetinghouse remodeling study,”.

Announcements: Lucy Duncan will lead a retreat on October 13.

Meeting enthusiastically thanked Kate Watkins-Shaw for six years of clerking meeting with a wise heart and great abilities, and as an example to all of us of learning to temper the urge to get things done.

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

[Labor Day Weekend Silent Retreat: Transcending Suffering](#)

At the end of August, Santa Monica Friends are encouraged to attend the 21st annual Friends' Silent Retreat, hosted at the Benedictine monastery Prince of Peace Abbey. Several Santa Monica Friends have participated over the years, and I got a chance to speak with Cristine Reyneart about her experiences over the past three retreats.

JS: Thanks for taking the time to talk about your experiences at the Labor Day Silent Retreat, Cristine! What has you going back every year?

CR: This piece isn't so unique among quakers, but we're somewhat amenable to silence. For some people the very idea of silence is terrifying, but it appeals to me. Right off the bat this appeals to me. And something that contributes to my personal enjoyment of it, is that I didn't think of the different ways in which the agreement of silence in community could be the perfect combination of that not being alone, while also being... how to phrase it, not responsible for anything other than my own spiritual well-being. They take care of meals and lodging, and I get to be around people without... I'm not responsible for feeling like, “do I want to engage right now?” I'm left to my own devices to go as deep or not as I want, in a way that feels really unique.. If I were completely alone, I could be silent, but it's different. I like going hiking but 2-3 days of being totally alone... that's something different. Having people alone but still being silent is such a gift.

JS: It's funny because I did a 10 day silent retreat and at the end of it, I thought, can we do 10 more.

CR: You know, it's funny because that's a planned retreat, where you're expected to meditate the whole time. This retreat is different in that there are people who sit silently, but there are other activities you could do like art, but really you're free and flexible.

CR: If I had my druthers I'd do this once a quarter, but as it is I do it once a year. I did have a chance to do a similar silent retreat at Ben Lomond, and I feel like the more active I am in various spaces, the more I feel the need for this type of rest and renewal. To feed and provide energy to that. Otherwise I feel myself start to get... I don't know. Because I have such a drive to do do do, and feeling like I haven't done enough or if I could only do this or that, and it can get a little frenzied. And I can feel it creep up on me if I haven't had a chance to step back and have some intentional silence and non-doing. Every year when this is approaching, it's something that I look forward to. Even in July, I'm looking forward to this time. Thinking about all the stuff between now and September, I can say to myself, it's just 3 months away

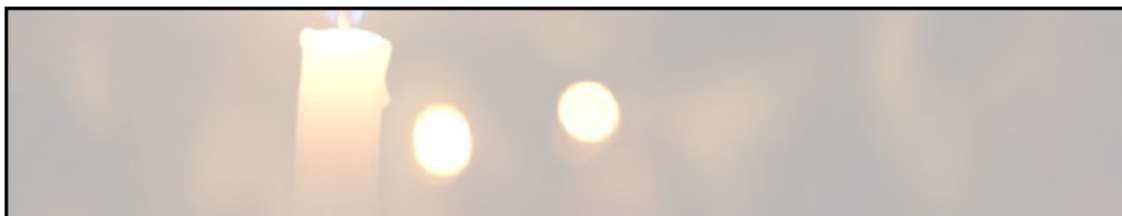
JS: *What would you say to someone who is feeling nervous about several days of complete silence?*

CR: Sure, so the facilitators of the weekend are there to speak with anyone who is feeling uncomfortable and they make it very clear at the beginning that those people are there to fully support... no pressure to stick to silence. It's fine to break the silence if the need is there. One year, I had a great aunt who was having their 80th birthday, and I went to that party and talked at the party and came back. If you were really feeling stir crazy, you could get in your car and go out to town. It's a very flexible vibe. Worst case scenario you leave early and forfeit whatever the price per nice is. You'd be out the monetary portion of it, but the whole weekend is really affordable.

JS: *Is there anything that you want to make sure people know about this experience?*

CR: The setting is beautiful. It's at a monastery, not sure how many monks there are. You're welcome to attend services with the monks. They don't eat with us in the main, but they're in charge of taking care of folks. The accommodations are basic, but completely more than adequate. You have your own room... unless you got a double. You have your own bathroom. It's no ornate room, but perfectly comfortable and adequate. It's not too difficult to get to, it's at Oceanside I think. Travel that way on a Friday afternoon can get a bit thorny, so I encourage people to leave on the early side

So there you have it! If you're interested in learning more about the location of the retreat, [click here](#). To find out more about the Friends' Retreat, please read a complete [description of the event here](#).



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