State of the Meeting Reports

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STATE OF THE MEETING REPORT


This has been a very full year for Boulder Meeting. In addition to our ongoing busy schedule, we continue to work toward healing divisions in our community regarding priorities and how best to communicate and disagree with each other in honest and loving ways. We have worked to recognize and appreciate each others’ hard work, while we look at issues from pragmatic, legal, spiritual, and idealistic points of view, trying to find the best ways to solve problems and reduce extra volunteer stress where possible.

As the second largest Monthly Meeting in Intermountain Yearly Meeting (IMYM), Boulder Friends share a wide variety of gifts and passions which help to move the Meeting forward. We used and developed these gifts through a large number of committees who work on everything from maintaining our building and grounds and supporting the spiritual growth of our children to working nationally on environmental issues and standing to recognize and resolve injustices inflicted on indigenous peoples and people of color. Our committees work together to support individual leadings, as well as issues that are Meeting wide concerns.

Some Committees form the foundation upon which much of our Meeting is able to move forward, while developing a community based on shared experiences of meeting the needs of others. Our Fellowship Committee, our Nominating Committee, our Finance Committee, our Building and Grounds Committee, and our Web Committee perform work that we need and depend upon:

- **The Fellowship Committee** had a busy year as we expanded our reach into the community. We have done the usual tasks, supplying coffee, teas and snacks after the 10:00 Meeting for Worship. Last year, we started providing coffee and hot water for tea for the 8:30 Meeting for Worship to encourage the attenders to hang around after and meet with those who come for the 10:00 Meeting for Worship. It has proved to be very helpful at bridging the gap between the 2 groups.

  We continued the summer barbecues in June, July and August. After sharing hamburgers, hot dogs and grilled portabello mushrooms, we held a discussion about Meeting wide issues. We have continued hosting a light lunch, such as soup or chili, before the Meeting for Business once a month. We provided refreshments for several memorial services during the year. We held Christmas and Easter potlucks.

- **The Nominating Committee** began the year by updating all of the various committee and position descriptions involved in the Boulder Friends Meeting. We compiled the complete yearly slate for approval by Meeting for Business in April.

- **The Finance Committee** oversees the Meeting’s finances and advises the Meeting on financial issues. The committee performed a number of tasks, including:
  - Prepared the budget for Fiscal Year 2019.
Sent an annual donation appeal letter to member and attenders in September.
Continued to convert financial processes to electronic format.
Established a separate checking account for donations to the Toward Right Relationship ministry and provided Committee members to participate in the TRR Working Group seeking a way forward for the relationship between the Meeting and the Toward Right Relationship with Native Peoples (TRR) project.

The **Building and Grounds Committee** completed several major projects on the property, in addition to conducting repairs, maintenance, and landscaping. Other tasks included:
- Coordinated with the neighbors to the east to bury the overhead power lines
- Conducted a series of analytical tests to determine VOC levels in the Worship Room and Radon in New Horizons and routinely aired the building to mitigate VOCs to the extent possible
- Convened with Peace & Social Justice committee to discuss improvements to the Building Use Policy
- Began an accessibility review for improved access to the Fellowship Room, including sound mitigation
- Conducted an analysis of building insurance
- Renewed our snow removal contract to assure safe and reliable service
- Conducted a planning retreat in January 2019 to address issues over the next 3 to 5 years that require our attention.

The **Web Committee** continues to keep the Boulder Friends Meeting website [https://www.boulderfriendsmeeting.org/](https://www.boulderfriendsmeeting.org/) up-to-date and relevant with the latest information from our Meeting, as well as keeping the website responsive, accessible, and running smoothly. During 2018, we focused efforts on adding Spiritual Journey audio tracks for a total of 18 to date on the private side of the website. We focused efforts on getting announcements sent to us and posted, so that members and attenders can look up what they missed or forgot. Our clerk's thoughtful messages were regularly added as blog posts.

Efforts to foster spiritual growth and develop spiritual community include:

The Meeting has continued to endeavor (through program hours, threshing sessions, meetings with individuals, etc.) to ensure that all members are able to fully participate. We continue to work on listening to each other and to slow down in our decision making in hopes of ensuring that everyone feels welcome to speak their minds and share their concerns as we make decisions. We continue to work with members who feel excluded due to chemical sensitivities and others who have felt we make decisions with insufficient seasoning.

**Ministry and Worship Committee** continued the monitoring and maintenance of the quality of worship and the general spiritual health of the Meeting. We evaluated the experience of Joys and Sorrows—now fully part of the worship experience, and continued to explore with the web committee and Miscellany ways to best share announcement information in a timely and efficient manner. We established a “Circles of Light” composed of Friends who’ve agreed to hold Friends in the Light.
specifically at their request. We also consulted with Religious Ed regarding concerns about the absence of children at worship. Concerns raised by individual about quality of worship experiences were shared with Oversight and Membership and led to conversations with ‘Friends at the Door’ encouraging both care (Quaker process) and flexibility (welcoming of newcomers) in allowing latecomers to feel comfortable without being disruptive. This balance of Quaker process and a welcoming Spirit for newcomers is an ongoing conversation highlighted at both the joint retreat with O&M and the Spring 2019 potluck queries focusing on ‘Quality of Worship & Vocal Ministry.’ The committee planned and coordinated a well-attended and meaningful Christmas Eve gathering.

- The **Oversight and Membership Committee** (O&M) convened 3 Clearess Committees for Membership and facilitated 1 membership transfer. We provided pastoral care to members and attenders as need arose. We held a festive welcoming party to introduce new members and transfers and assisted in organizing a renewal of marriage vows. We met individually with chemically sensitive Friends who have been unable to be in the meeting house since installation of new carpeting, attempted improvements, and published ongoing reminders of the need to avoid chemically scented products.

- The **Grief and Bereavement Committee** arranged 3 memorial services during this year for Andy March, Bob Atchley, and Jane Volkhausen. We offered a series of evening classes at the meeting house for grief counseling. A member who is a hospital chaplain and lawyer held a death café for people to share their thoughts, experiences, and questions about the dying process. He also conducted a helpful program hour on how to prepare for one’s dying. Committee members are working on a comprehensive handbook that will be made available to meeting members, which will include all the important papers that need to be completed, as well as providing information about hospice and other supportive services that can support the dying person and their families.

- The focus of the **Service Committee** has been on the practical needs of our Meeting community and outreach to that part the Boulder Community that is in need. The committee organized rides to Meeting and kept track of illnesses, food and other practical needs of members of our community to offer the support needed. In addition to financial support to several agencies working with the needy and the homeless, the Service Committee organizes the Meeting community in providing active support to several agencies that support the homeless and emergency outreach, including members cooking at the Boulder Homeless Shelter, collecting socks for the homeless and food donations for Emergency Family Assistance Association. We organized an annual potluck to raise money for supplies for Echo House, an emergency shelter for families with children.

- The **Library Committee** continues to provide books, pamphlets, periodicals as well as DVDs and CDs to the members and attenders of Boulder Friends Meeting. We endeavor to keep our collection accessible, current, and relevant. We have new sections this year on Race and White Privilege and on Mindful Communication. Our Meeting's spiritual journey collection, which we maintain in an audiovisual format, is also becoming available on the Meeting's website in audio format, in the password-protected area.

- The **Religious Education Committee** ensures that we have quality childcare workers in the nursery, as well as volunteer teachers and assistants in the three levels that are doing an excellent job. The numbers
of youngsters who come to class continues to be inconsistent, though we have gained a few new families and the K-5 class has seen as many as nine kids. That group follows a curriculum based on Quaker testimonies, with two months reserved for exploring Bible stories and teachings. The junior young friends (JYFs) meet every week with low but consistent attendance. The senior young friends (SYFs) meet twice a month, with one time being a “walk to a coffee shop” with both teen groups in attendance.

We have also had two “intergenerational game nights,” which bring together kids and adults of all ages for a fun evening of food and games. In March, we held a St. Patrick’s Day Dance. Childcare is provided for program hours, business meetings and other special events, though the number of kids using this feature is small. The summer program brings together children and adults who might not usually interact with our young Friends.

- Our Higher Education Scholarship Committee solicited requests for scholarships through the Meeting and received four applications in the fall and five applications in the spring. The committee reviewed applications, corresponded with students and the students reported on their school experiences and work throughout the year. The committee approved all applicants and awarded each a $650 scholarship per semester for a total of $5,850 in scholarship disbursements for the year.

- The Program Committee of the Boulder Friends Meeting organizes weekly program hours on the first, third, and fourth Sundays of each month, from September through May of each year; we also schedule spiritual journeys on most first Sundays. Priorities include requests from BFM’s committees, or issues raised by members and attenders of the Meeting. In addition, we attempt to balance four primary focus areas for our work: building community; Quaker history and practice; spirituality, testimonies, and activism; and spiritual journeys.

Our work this past year also included scheduling additional workshops with Vanessa Julye of FGC, including a Friday night talk on healing wounds from racism within our Faith communities (at the Unitarian Universalist Church, Boulder), and a Saturday workshop on Creating Our Inclusive and Welcoming Beloved Quaker Community at our Meetinghouse.

- The Indigenous Peoples Concerns (IPC) Committee examined apology statements for historical and ongoing harms to Native peoples by Governor Hickenlooper, President Obama, Pope Francis, and Canadian churches. We reviewed our criteria for supporting Indigenous groups and affirmed our support for six Native American-run organizations with whom we have personal connections: the Southern Arapaho Language Program, Right Relationship Boulder, the Loneman School’s Lakota Language Program, the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition; the Indigenous Peacemaking Initiative, and the Tiospaye Sakowin healing camps for youth on Pine Ridge.

The “Towards Right Relationship with Native Peoples” ministry continues to extend its outreach locally and across the United States under the faithful leadership of IPC member Paula Palmer and with the strong support of the committee. Members of IPC are actively involved in Right Relationship Boulder and were instrumental in planning and hosting the very successful “Welcome Arapaho People Home”
events on October 7, 2018 at Boulder High School. This educational, spiritual and friendship-building event was attended by approximately 100 Arapaho people and 600 members of the Boulder community, including many members of Boulder Friends Meeting. Additional elements of our educational outreach included: two Program Hours at Boulder Friends Meeting—Steve Wheelock (Lenni-Lenape and Board member of the Denver Indian Health Service) and Ava Hamilton (Southern Arapaho and member of Right Relationship Boulder); the sharing of examples of IPC’s activism towards social/racial justice at the 2018 IMYM annual meeting; redesign of IPC’s website; and participation in the Pendle Hill conference, “Truth and Healing: Quakers Seeking Right Relationships with Indigenous Peoples.”

- **Peace and Social Justice Committee** continued its program from last year, with focus groups aligned with members’ leadings. The focus areas included Environmental Justice and Stewardship, Immigration and Racial Justice advocacy, and Physical and Mental Health advocacy. We decided to work collectively on issues of Peace Building and Prevention of Violence.

  The focus groups were a way to engage and support Friends and the wider community in our efforts to build a more sane, safe, peaceful and just world, locally as well as nationally and internationally. They also functioned as a way to help discern which organizations Boulder Friends would support financially.

  We sponsored and organized a workshop on Racism with FGC consultant Vanessa Julye, which was well attended by Friends from Boulder, Mt. View and Ft. Collins.

  We advocated:
  - For immigrant rights, including for those at risk of deportation, and those in Sanctuary;
  - For elimination of toxins in public spaces, including pesticides and other harmful chemicals;
  - To eliminate nuclear weapons and waste;
  - For education about climate change, both globally and locally;
  - For education of each other and the Meeting about issues of Brain Health, including support and advocacy for the rights of the mentally ill; and,
  - For improved health care and prevention of gun violence.

  All in all, we’ve continued to foster Quaker principles and improve our relations with various community and religious groups, attempting to live up to our founding goals of spiritual development and religious education in Quaker ways.

Submitted by Stan Grotegut, Clerk
Compiled by Barbara Stephens, Associate Clerk
State of the Meeting Report
Colorado Springs Friends Meeting, May 2019

Joys
• Christmas sing-along
• Consistent attendance at meetings of 12-15 worshipers including several elders and one child.

Leadings
• We continue to look at white privilege and promote peace and equality in the meeting as well as the world.
• We support the Sanctuary Coalition that provides shelter for immigrants who seek asylum.
• Many Friends participated in demonstrations and actions that uphold Friends' values of womens' equality, justice, the environment and opposition to gun violence.

Learning and Nurturing Activities
• Quakerism 101 continues on the second First Day of the month. Currently we are examining the Advises and Queries of the British yearly meeting.
• Previously, in Quakerism 101 we watched the film, “I Am Not Your Negro,” and later we listened to a podcast series on white privilege. We discussed our views.
• We held a “Soup and Sharing” potluck at a Friend's home followed by Worship Sharing. The topic focused on our study of White Privilege and Racism.
• We agreed to put our name on a conscientious objector banner. The purpose of this Banner Project is to inspire military personnel to question their military involvement
• Weighty Quakers came to talk with us about the death penalty in Colorado.
• We held an “End of Life” workshop where we looked at a variety of resources to help Friends update their wishes and arrangements. Colorado has new laws regarding end of life options and Dying with Dignity.
• Additional pot luck topic discussions included two guests who had experienced Ultimate Frisbee in Israel as a tool for teaching Arab and Israeli children conflict resolution and taking responsibility for one's own actions.

Challenges
• Peace and Social Concerns Committee has gone dormant. The energy behind it dissipated. Individual Quakers have individually picked up some projects.
• We continue to explore ways to repair and repaint our front, south facing window. We are mindful of balancing the needs of the meeting with saving the shrubbery.
• We are working on building a handicap ramp by the back door and sound-proofing the first day school area in the basement.
• Our meeting had a sudden change in leadership. Both our Presiding Clerk and the Clerk of the finance committee resigned in late 2018. The resulting upheaval was very challenging. As a result, our finance committee continues to work with ongoing problems.

Looking Forward
• We are working at obtaining funding for the meeting house addition which will bring the bathrooms under the same roof as the main house and add a kitchen facility.
• We continue to uphold the sanctuary committee and activities promoting social justice and peace.
• We are committed to welcoming new attenders and Friends to our meeting and encouraging children from young families to participate in our first day school.
Oh! Feel life in your ministry - let life be your commission, your well-spring and treasury on all such occasions; else you well know, there can be no begetting to God, since nothing can quicken or make people alive to God, but the life of God; and it must be a ministry in and from life, that enlivens any people to God. - William Penn

Seed, Life and Light are words and images that Friends have used to help one another orient to and experience the Divine energy of the Holy Spirit. In what ways did we experience these seeds and this life? In what ways did we experience these seeds in one another? In what ways did we nurture the seeds of Life and Light beyond our meetinghouse walls?

When we are still and watchful, when we allow the eyes of the heart to help us see, we begin to notice the tender shoots of ministry sprouting up in both predictable and surprising ways. When we are still and watchful, we begin to notice the new Life in the cracks of our plans and expectations.

In the last year, we noticed how “way was closing” for our Peace and Social Concerns Committee. And yet, we also recognized that there was a great deal of energy, interest and life around outwardly focussed ministry. We entered into a time of sharing, experimenting and discerning.

We nurtured the shoots of ministry in one another by setting aside time each month to listen deeply to one another share about individual leadings. These leadings included: supporting women living in sanctuary in creative and thoughtful ways (designing and constructing prayer flags, screening films, participating in experimental and ecumenical worship and selling tamales). They included organizing a summit for education, advocacy and action around climate change. They included: living and teaching in remote Diné communities, rescuing animals, accompanying and empowering folks to engage in interfaith dialogue in India among Christians, Buddhists, Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus. They included repairing and maintaining homes throughout the Southwest with the Mennonite Mission Network. They included providing material and emotional support to first generation college students, weaving mats and cooking meals for people living in shelter and singing in concerts to benefit the Colorado Rapid Response Network protecting the rights of immigrants in our community.

And, we were also led to reflect on the relationship between our individual leadings and our corporate body; our private concerns and our collective witness. We nurtured ministry by writing a travel minute which recorded particular gifts and described a covenantal relationship between minister and community. We asked for feedback on this ministry so that we might better comprehend and support both minister and ministry.

We engaged in inner work as well as outer work. When we’re honest with ourselves, we acknowledge that dwelling in the Light means looking into the shadows, those parts of ourselves that we’d rather not see. As we shared with one another at rise of meeting and in our worship sharing sessions, we tried to be open and honest with one another. We confessed our limitations and finitude and shared our troubles. We wrestled with our inward experiences of
Life and Spirit and offered these up, so that we might better understand who we are called to be - as individuals and as a community. We found this inner work to be deeply relevant to our leadings and ministry.

We continued to experience energy and life around our second hour programing which included Quaker studies and worship sharing. For our Quaker studies sessions, we studied Doug Gwyn’s *Apocalypse of the Word: The Life and Message of George Fox*. We found ourselves challenged, inspired, baffled and provoked. We thought about what it means to be part of community and a tradition with roots and particularity. We thought about what that rootedness might mean for us today in our own particular historical and social context.

More recently, we’ve begun to gather on Fridays for Friendly Bible Study. In this space we attempt to hear the Word among the words. We are also free to share our reactions, suspicions and concerns that rise for us in the hearing of the text.

We joyfully accepted several new members into our community. And, we gathered in the Spirit of Love to say goodbye to one of those new members. The memorial service filled the Meetinghouse with folks she’d touched through her teaching, her art and her kindness. We said “goodbye for now” to another new member who answered a call to attend Earlham School of Religion.

Perhaps the truest thing we can say about our little community is that we are held together by the Spirit of Love. We know we are at our best when we are attending to the movement and energy of this Love that is both beyond and within. We pray that we might grow in our ability to notice, attend, and respond to this Real Presence.
El Paso Monthly Meeting has nine members (several of them living elsewhere) and five regular attenders, so our average First Day Meeting for Worship sees 8-10 of us there. We are blessed. In addition, we’ve had a number of visitors over the past few months as Quakers from around the country made their way to El Paso to volunteer with Annunciation House, the organization that spearheads local efforts to help the refugees, primarily from Central America, who come to El Paso en route to friends and family in other parts of the country.

Our role in this humanitarian crisis has primarily been communication, answering questions from Quakers and others asking how they help and directing donations to the proper agencies. Two couples help with laundry from the shelters. We have also helped with cleaning and helping our host church with meals for the refugees. Clerk Ann Birch recently wrote an article for “Friends Journal” titled “El Paso Quakers on the Border Today.”

In addition, several of us visit prisoners at La Tuna Federal Correctional Institution once a month so that prisoners who don’t have other visitors have regular contacts with people outside the prison system. We do this through the Prisoner Visitation and Support program in Philadelphia, Penn. Another of our members teaches personal finance to men and women on parole.

We rally, march, attend Social Justice Education Project forums and Pax Christi films and participate in Interfaith Alliance Community Gatherings, doing what we can to witness to the Quaker testimonies that we try to live by. In addition, one of our members is an FCNL representative and she adds that perspective to our Meeting.

Our multi-session Meeting for Worship for Study this year was reading and discussing Timothy Snyder’s book On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century as we have tried to understand what is happening in the United States at the moment. Snyder comes from a Quaker background and that is reflected in his writing.

All of these activities foster growth in our spiritual life as a Meeting as we witness, serve, communicate, and reflect on who we are as modern-day Quakers, trying to bring Light to our corner of the country and the world.

Peace to all,

El Paso Friends Monthly Meeting
The quality of worship is deep and the sense of community is strong. The expansion of ways and events to become involved in the Meeting has led to an increase in trust, participation and understanding among Friends.

Attendance has continued steady with between 15 to 23 people at Meetings for Worship and between 10 to 15 people present at Meetings for Business. The Meeting has benefited from this increase in input and participation. It also leads to greater understanding of how the Meeting is structured and the benefits of using Quaker process. The people who come to Meeting from Sedona and the Verde Valley still attend regularly. Their dedication and desire to be part of our community, despite the long commute, strengthens our Meeting.

Our Meeting, like Flagstaff, has a turnover of population. Many of the valued participants at Flagstaff Meeting have been here for only a few years or even less, some have Quaker backgrounds, others do not. It has long been the goal of the Adult Education Committee to help people understand Quaker practice and perspective. This year has been particularly fruitful in this endeavor. The house meetings that were begun in 2016, have been continued with Quakerism 101, and then into explorations of the Quaker Testimonies. These house meetings provide time to get to know each other at a shared meal, opportunities for the people who feel led to guide the discussions to gain greater understanding so they can guide the exploration and thoughtful sharing about the topics.

We have increased having speakers after our potlucks. The speakers are drawn from the Meeting and the wider Quaker community and explore a variety of subjects. Our annual retreat was led by Nadine Hoover who shared her extensive experience of both practical and spiritual techniques for discovering and implementing peace in our lives and community. She also shared her knowledge at a well-attended public event sponsored by the Meeting. Another Meeting sponsored event, that was open to the public, was a weekend introductory workshop for the Alternatives to Violence Project led by a member at the Meeting and two other trainers. The Meeting has also had other community involvement. We collected several boxes of items needed by immigrants who are left with nothing by the Immigration Department. They were distributed by Somos America. We continue to help serve a meal once a month at the Family Food center.

We were asked if the Meetinghouse could be used for a memorial meeting for a woman we didn't know, but who had a Quaker background. Although the request was just for the use of the house Friends entered completely into the project making it a meaningful event for all involved. The Meeting was alerted to the presence in town of a group of young people from a Quaker school here on a service project. They were invited to attend a potluck supper which was fun for all as they shared their experience.

We gained a member who transferred from his Meeting in Minnesota. An attender of the Meeting has applied for membership. After several clearness committee meetings with another attender, unity was reached that it was not yet time to become a member.

The growing feeling in the Meeting about gun violence in the nation led us to adopt a minute which was forwarded to AHYM and IMYM and was approved by each of them and sent to lawmakers. After several Meetings it was decided that we did not need a sign or policy about guns. The subject of chemical sensitivity continued to be a concern this year. The Meeting could not come to unity about action to take concerning a sign. Two different signs notifying people of the chemical free nature of the building were tried. Neither of them felt quite right. After more discernment a simpler sign saying that the building was chemical free and a longer explanation on the bulletin board was the course which brought us to unity. The Meeting has agreed to put up a Peace pole in the garden in a spot prepared by the Garden committee. On Peace Day this spot was used for a temporary Peace pole during the Peace Day march. Two people from the Meeting participated in a brief ceremony in the garden. This was the first time the Meeting had participated for Peace Day due to Peace Day and Fall AHYM occurring on the same day.

The first Sunday of each month now has two Meetings, The first one uses Rex Ambler's Light Meditation and ends with worship sharing. The regular Meeting for Worship follows at the usual time.

We are becoming more aware of the influence of the Testimonies in our actions as a Meeting.
State of the Meeting Report for May 2019

Please hold us in the Light as Fort Collins Monthly Meeting struggles to resolve with compassion an issue involving our caretaker. He has not been able to fulfill the requirements of his job and we are working to settle the matter in a way that will meet his needs and also meet the needs of our meeting.

2018-19 saw various changes which continue to require our attention. Like many meetings, we have not found it easy to fill positions. We are operating without a Nominating committee, which presents a challenge. Ministry and Counsel was charged with seeking Friends to serve as Clerk, Recording Clerk, and Treasurer. We are blessed to have found Friends to serve in those capacities. However, all but one Friend is rotating off Ministry and Counsel, and we are seeking a way forward to form that committee, to start serving in July.

We held a threshing session on November 30, 2018, to explore ways of engaging members and attenders in order to do the work of maintaining a vital Friends meeting. One result was the institution of Committee Day, during which Friends may read committee descriptions and also speak with those already serving on a committee, to see how they might fit in.

We have had one Committee Day on February 17, 2019, which was deemed successful and now are discussing follow-up. This work proceeds slowly for various reasons, including lack of a Nominating committee and the factor of living in our stressful digital age. There are so many social justice issues needing to be addressed, and while clicking on an online petition may be easy, it lacks the satisfaction of engaging in collective action as a community.

Lest this report sound somewhat gloomy, it must be said that we are quite optimistic about the future. Our numbers are growing, with both seasoned Friends and seekers who are new to the Religious Society of Friends. Through the generosity of a Friend, our mortgage has been paid in full. Our First Day School serves five to eight adorable children and our monthly adult education sessions are lively and informative. We will be studying Paul Buckley’s book, “Primitive Quakerism Revived,” during the next few months. Paul’s message at Colorado Regional in October 2018 is one that we are eager to explore.

An ad hoc garden committee has emerged, with enthusiastic horticulturalists working together on the land. Several Friends are devoted to keeping our building and grounds in tip-top shape, and newcomers especially seem willing to become involved in that aspect of Quaker life.

We are grateful for the opportunity to gather each First Day, to enter into the silence and listen for the still small voice as we seek the way forward.

Submitted by Ministry and Counsel April 14, 2019
We are people who accept living with uncertainty. From “Differences,” posted at https://www.quakersaustralia. by the The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia.

Uncertainty has definitely been with Gila Friends throughout 2018. We have met it at every turn, personally, within the meeting and in the world around us. We have not achieved the acceptance our Australian Friends describe, and it has taken a toll on us.

As individual Friends, most are elderly, and most are retired. We welcome and are enriched by the younger men and women who pass meeting with us, but illness, injury and diminished capabilities have been the lot of several Gila Friends in 2018, with ongoing impact. Some among us face uncertainty in matters of personal health, mobility and self-sufficiency. Although we continue to have many members who are distant, we have been enriched by some new attenders who have recently relocated to our area. We also have a growing number of part year attenders who come to us from other states to regularly worship with us.

Since November of 2017, after a fire in the church building where we formerly met, we have enjoyed the hospitality and warmth of meeting in a member’s home. Now the church building has been refurbished, and we are exploring its suitability as our regular meeting place for the future.

As a monthly meeting in the larger context of IMYM, we are experiencing a tension between the obligations attendant on participating in the yearly meeting and the obligations individual Friends feel to themselves. Specifically, we struggle with how important the assessment to IMYM and NMRM is. It is the biggest line item in the budget of a meeting that has little money to work with. Several members of Gila Friends Meeting who are not able to participate regularly in the life of the meeting and who have little discretionary money have expressed guilt about feeling they are a drag on the meeting’s finances and would therefore like to drop their membership.

We are clear, though, that the Religious Society of Friends, at all levels, is not a membership club. We are also certain that being a Quaker is a matter of character and principle and spiritual belief that stands apart from material considerations. We must acknowledge, however, the important work done entirely by volunteers at the regional, annual and national meeting levels as well as at the monthly meeting level. It would be unfair to expect these dedicated volunteers to pay for all the expenses they incur while doing such essential work. Yet we are uncertain about how to both renew the faith part of our lives as Quakers and still support the important services provided by NMRM and IMYM and national Friends organizations.

Finally, it is clear in our voices from the silence and from our informal conversations that the uncertainty our nation is facing is having its toll on us individually. The corruption and deceit in our nation’s leadership stands boldly in contrast with our testimonies. So do the human rights violations being visited by U.S. policies on those seeking asylum or economic opportunity at our borders. Friends feel these assaults on our principles deeply, and we are physically and mentally hurt by them. We are tragically uncertain how long it will take to overturn these affronts to decency and justice and get back on a better track.

Gila Friends hope that, in 2019, we will be able to say, We are people who accept living with uncertainty, and that many of the quandaries surrounding us now will be resolved. At our weekly meeting for worship, we come together in the anticipation of finding rest, renewed strength and
discernment as individuals and as a group to faithfully move forward in this time of uncertainty. It may help us to reflect on the words of Eileen Flanagan in *In The Wisdom to Know the Difference*:  
*There are many things that we know should be changed that we simply put up with because change seems so impossible....there are problems that people can tackle together that they could not solve alone.*

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### 2018 Gila Friends State of Meeting Report – Summary of Events

**February**
- Gila Friends Peace and Social Concerns Committee drafted a letter to the editor of the local newspapers in response to the neo-Nazi march of August 2017, and our invitation to others to join us in rejecting divisiveness, affirming the value of each person, and building community. The letter was approved by the meeting and signed by the clerk.

**March**
- Gila Friends joined an amicus (friend of the court) brief in support of the DACA (Deferred Action for Child Arrivals) program.

**April**
- Gila Friends hosted the spring gathering of the New Mexico Regional Meeting.

**June**
- Many members attended IMYM

**July**
- Our FCNL representative hosted a letter writing booth at Gough Park on the 4th of July which resulted in 36 letters being written to Congress.

**August**
- 32nd annual observance of Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings. Attendance included Friends from Las Cruces and El Paso and many community members.
- Gila Friends Meeting had an outreach presence at the Western New Mexico University Welcome Back Bash.
- Many members attended a immigration forum put on by the Immigration Justice Network.

**September**
- Gila Friends minuted financial support for a Member’s work with the Immigration Justice Network.

**October**
- World Quaker Day was celebrated with worship and a video about the ways in which Friends worship around the world. The public was invited.

**November**
- Five people from Gila Friends Meeting attended the convergence on the US/ Mexican Border in Nogales Arizona which was sponsored by School of the Americas' Watch.
- Our representative to FWCC attended meetings of the FWCC Nominating and Representatives Engagements Committees in Portland.
• Two Friends attended the FCNL annual Lobbying effort in Washington DC and hand delivered letters to our senators and congressman.

December
• Four Gila Friends attended a Spanish language carol sing at Tornillo Detention Center in support of imprisoned migrate children on Christmas day.
• Two Friends from Gila Monthly Meeting provided materials and support to Rock House Cafe and Gallery in El Paso, Texas which was providing emergency assistance to migrates who were dropped off at Bus Stop near the cafe with only the clothes on their backs.
Moab Monthly Meeting
State of the Meeting
April 2019

There are still five to seven Friends attending most of our Sunday worship meetings. We continue our practice of having Worship Sharing on the second Sunday with the topic announced in our newsletter.

For community outreach we focus on providing money for needed services or purchases for families in crisis in our community. The non-profit child care center that one of our members is involved in is moving forward. We have provided the library with snacks for children who are there into the early evening. One of our local churches is providing lunch and a food pantry free to anyone who needs it. We are supporting that and Moab Solutions which helps find housing for and gives support to our homeless population.

We have continued to attend the monthly meetings of the Faith Based Coalition. The group has changed their focus a bit, and it is hard to sustain this type of coalition when fewer people start attending. A member has offered to take over attendance for now, but we are not sure if we will continue with this.

Several of our group attended Yearly Meeting last June. Our representative to Representatives Committee was able to attend the meeting in Denver this winter.

We continue to have potlucks most months. Our newsletter has kept us informed and connected. Our monthly worship sharing helps us explore our values and our spiritual journeys. We are grateful for our Meeting and the opportunity it gives us to share our lives with each other.
The most notable development for 2018 was the decision to move from the status of a worship group under the care of Mountain View Friends Meeting to that of an independent full monthly meeting. This move had been discussed the prior year, but there was not discerned enough enthusiasm to move forward at that time.

The proposal was revisited this past summer and was seasoned over the course of several business meeting and adopted October 7. Appropriate communications with MVFM and the clerk of IMYM were done and the name Montrose Friends Meeting was selected. At the same time we requested the transfer of three memberships from IMYM to Montrose Friends Meeting.

We have decided to affiliate with Colorado Region, but have not yet made a formal request.

We continue to meet weekly for worship and monthly for consideration of business. While attendance rarely reaches double digits and vocal ministry is rare, the quality of the silence is recognized and highly appreciated. We have been pleased to receive a number of local visitors and traveling Friends.

Financial support from attenders has more than covered our limited expenses and has allowed us to support local social concerns and the AFSC. Our main focus has been migrant concerns.

submitted by co-clerk Bill Yett
Mountain View Friends Meeting (MVFM) is an unprogrammed meeting of the Religious Society of Friends in Denver, Colorado, affiliated with Intermountain Yearly Meeting. Current membership stands at over 160 adult members and several junior members.

We have Three Meetings for Worship that meet every Sunday, described below in more detail. People from each of these meetings take part in the monthly Meeting for Worship for Business and in committee work. Each of these meetings has continued to grow in attendance over the past year.

Participation in and preparation for Meeting for Business is strong with 40 or more people attending. Meeting for Business is held in the Light by a member of the Worship and Ministry Committee.

**Significant Events and Changes in the life of MVFM**

2018 was a year of growth, loss, change, and joy for the MVFM community. Several valued Friends moved away during the year, and we feel the loss of their presence. Many of the goings on are captured below. As a community which is growing we continue to struggle with existential questions such as how to worship in community while encouraging our individual paths and maintain our Quaker traditions as we welcome new attendees / members who bring new ideas and experiences to the meeting.

**Meetinghouse Revitalization Project**

The Meeting was gratified this year by our progress on a Meetinghouse Revitalization, the building renovation project we began in 2016 with volunteer leadership, lots of sweat equity, and shared trust. Beautiful bookshelves are crafted, painted, and installed in the emerging fellowship area, following guidelines from the Library Committee. The beginnings of a three-level elevator were installed, making all areas of the building soon accessible to everyone. The wall separating the old kitchen from the former worship area was torn down, and new plastering, ceiling tiles, lighting, and flooring integrated the two into a newly defined worship area. Many Friends have remarked at how uplifted they feel by the shower of light now pouring into the worship area from three sides. With the end of construction coming into view, we know we have a way to go before we celebrate. However, we're still inspired by what's felt like a Spirit-led journey, and what we've been able to commit to and accomplish so far.

**Nominating Committee**
Nominating committee is the only committee that annually contacts every member and attender at MVFM to ask a few questions. The central question is “How would you describe your relationship to MVFM at this time?” What the committee found this past year was that enthusiasm and optimism about the meeting was more likely with newer members or attenders. A concerning number of respondents described their relationship as “distant” or some version of disconnected. One longstanding member, for example, said he no longer knew why he came to meeting; he was just following his family and going along on habit. Nominating’s report referred to “the presence of discouragement and division.”

Nominating identified several issues -- both structural and procedural -- affecting committee work at MVFM and made a series of suggestions to business meeting, some of which led to minutes and to changes.

MVFM had two committees that were “sign up,” meaning that nominating did not nominate members of the committee. Those committees were Building and Grounds and Peace and Justice. Both are responsible for budgeted money and have served MVFM for many years. Building and Grounds became a “regular” committee. Work continues with Peace and Justice committee. Nominating also set up a Reorganization ad hoc committee that resulted in Communications and Newsletter committees being combined and the purpose of the newsletter being changed.

Nominating also suggested several changes to how committees function within MVFM. Very few people have experience clerkimg and even fewer have received any training clerking committees or the meeting. Nominating asked that the meeting devote more energy to cultivating clerkings skills and consider sending more people to Pendle Hill for clerkings training. Nominating also suggested that all committee clerks be trained, or retrained, in how to clerk a committee before their term of service begins.

Finally, sticking to term limits and rotating membership, and clerkship, of committees is essential for committee, and meeting, health. Nominating asked people “to consider everything from planning to change roles, training someone to take their place, or making a change this year.”

The general advice given by nominating committee was as follows:

We encourage leaning fully into our Quaker foundations and practices.

*On committees, meet regularly to engage your work with a spiritual foundation. Use our practice of Experience, Reflection, Discernment. Look for Unity and test unity.

*Use worship-sharing to query a topic.

*We are called not only to see the Light in others, but to reflect it back to them.

*Ask for help from the resources that are available for us all – clearness process, Care and Counsel, Worship and Ministry, and the Conflict Resolution Committee.
Dismantling our Racism

In 2018 the Workgroup on Dismantling Our Racism continued its process of learning and soul-searching as we examined the painful consequences of racism and white privilege in our own lives as individuals and as part of Mountain View Friends Meeting. This work of dismantling racism at Mountain View is especially aimed at supporting people to become more deeply aware of how the patterns of systemic and institutional racism impact our thoughts, our behaviors, and the ways we create community. In doing this reflective work, we can then make changes in ourselves and in the community. We knew we wanted to bring these realizations to all of our spiritual community. We struggled and worked on how best to do this, which included praying, studying, taking workshops, and meeting with mentors from around the country.

During the year we continued to offer quotes from and links to resources about racism in the weekly announcements. We also offered films and discussions relating to African American experiences. By the fall we were ready to present a 3-hour workshop on Racial Equity to Mountain View, its purpose to teach skills for recognizing and addressing incidences of racism and white privilege when we encounter them. We offered the workshop three times, with the first session especially directed at committee clerks. We did not intend the workshop to be an intellectual exercise, but one grounded in our lived experiences and to be used in our daily lives. So far about 40 people have participated in the workshops and we have received positive feedback. Two more workshops are scheduled in 2019. We invite everyone to walk on this journey with us.

As Paul Ricketts wrote in Friends Journal, “…we must tap into the power of the Spirit while acknowledging the truth that structural oppression and systemic racism does spiritual violence to us all.”

Meeting Reports

9:00
Glen McGuire used to mark the rise of Meeting; call for joys, sorrows, and/or afterthoughts; ask visitors or folks who hadn’t been there in a while to introduce themselves; call for announcements; and invite us to partake in refreshments and/or fellowship. After his death, one other member took on this role a few times. Then, we decided as a group to rotate this duty around. This affords a number of advantages: clock watching is spread around (otherwise it might interfere habitually with worship); different people have different styles (and may or may not remember all the steps and we get to know each other a bit more); an air of mystery is added (who will it be today)?
The essential aspects of the “Glenosphere” have been preserved in a warm, welcoming atmosphere. As in the McGuire era, worship is silent and vocal ministry during formal Meeting time is rare, although not unwelcome. When it does occur, it tends to be brief, pointed, and from the spirit as Worship and Ministry has recently reminded us should be the case. We often thank each other for the communion of silence.

Speaking of thanks, at the end of one Meeting there was a spontaneous burst of appreciation for our new space. We marveled at the literal light. And we expressed our delighted surprise that the myriad construction efforts had never disrupted our worship. We hope everyone who labored and those who continue to work so mightily and selflessly realize how much the rest of us are grateful to them.

10:30 am
The 10:30 Meeting for Worship at Mountain View Friends Meeting is our largest worship gathering. Fifty to eighty Friends typically attend. An hour of silent worship is followed by sharing of joys and sorrows, introductions of new or returning attenders, announcements, and fellowship. Vocal ministry often accompanies the silent worship. From September through May, First Day School is offered in second floor rooms above the worship space and a nursery is also provided on the lower level of the meeting house. All children join the silent worship for approximately the last fifteen minutes.

Additional activities follow the rise of meeting. Except during the summer months, the first Sunday of the month typically features a meeting attender speaking about her or his spiritual journey. The Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business occurs on second Sundays. Our Peace and Justice Committee delivers a presentation or discussion on third Sundays, and the fourth Sunday is a potluck lunch.

Westside
Our worship practice is that of unprogrammed Friends where there is very careful discernment before any vocal ministry is offered. Vocal ministry is rarely given during worship. The tradition/practice of sharing after-thoughts in the spirit of the meeting after meeting for worship continues. It is generally a rich sharing of inner thoughts, insights and reflections. This is followed by refreshments and more general discussion and conversation. Of the total who regularly worship, approximately two-thirds are members of MVFM or other meetings; the rest are regular attenders of Westside only. Many attendees of Westside are actively involved in MVFM committee work, and the Westside meeting is regularly represented at MVFM business meetings.

There is a strong sense of cohesion among the worshippers, who express their appreciation for the more intimate opportunity for worship in a smaller group (20 attenders is typical). This year about once every 6 weeks, a discussion has been held on various topic related to Quaker worship and process. Every week a mid week worship is held at a rotation of people’s homes. And after the workshop with George Schaefer on aging, (hosted by Care and Council at the Columbine Meeting house) conversations and actions continued around this topic.
Late in the year construction was complete of the new Edgewater Recreation Center. The meeting now gathers here and likely has found a location which will be viable for some time to come.

**Montrose Friends Meeting**

In 2013 Three Valleys Worship Group (TVWG) came under the care of Mountain View Friends Meeting as a preparatory meeting. We made our first visit to TVWG in October 2013 and have continued to make in person visits every fall and spring since then. Our last visit was June 30 – July 1, 2018. At this visit we encouraged TVWG to become a monthly meeting and after their own discernment they have decided to proceed with becoming a monthly meeting.

At meeting for business on January 6, 2019 the name Montrose Friends Meeting was adopted. There are 13-15 regular attenders at this meeting.

https://www.fgcquaker.org/cloud/montrose-friends-meeting-mfm-montrose-co

**CALM (Children in the life of the meeting)**

CALM (Children and the Life of the Meeting) serves approximately 15 children between the ages of birth to 15 years old in their First Day School program, with some regular attenders, some intermittent, and others visiting or occasional. 28 volunteers and 1 paid provider offer a rotating but consistent set of adults in each age category. Older youth tend to gather at multi-meeting social events. CALM also sponsors family friendly gatherings each year, and maintains a concern for the children in meeting for worship and for family support in general.

**Sanctuary**

The Meeting’s ability to be a sanctuary was on hiatus in 2018 with the commencement of remodeling work to our meetinghouse. But the Meeting’s commitment to the Sanctuary Coalition’s work continued with participation in events at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Boulder where Ingrid lives in sanctuary, and with volunteering at Park Hill UMC / Temple Micah where Araceli and her family continue to live in sanctuary. Members of the Meeting have endorsed and supported the People's Resolution, an innovative strategy to promote changes to our immigration laws to provide a path to status for the four Colorado women in sanctuary. During the winter and spring, the Peace and Justice Committee labored with many others to craft a minute establishing a formal Sanctuary Committee to guide the Meeting’s future work. The new Sanctuary Committee has been actively involved in efforts to reorganize the Metro Denver Sanctuary Coalition and is preparing guidelines for resuming our sanctuary hospitality in 2019. The Coalition comprises some thirty different congregations. Most are support congregations as there are only four host congregations.
Pima Monthly Meeting is blessed with 79 members. One Friend left us through transfer and two died. Two Friends became members or transferred membership to Pima Meeting. One Friend resigned. Our average worship attendance is 15 at the early meeting and 35 at later meeting. We hold our Meeting for Worship with Concern for Business with an average of 200 Friends and attenders participating.

This was a year of faith for Pima Monthly Meeting. We held a worshipful discernment addressing the quality of Pima Meeting’s worship after reading the description of a Gathered Meeting from the Intermountain Yearly Meeting’s Faith and Practice. This opportunity allowed a deeper understanding of how we strive individually and collectively to find God’s presence as we gather in worship.

We continue to trust Spirit to guide us without the wisdom of a Nominating Committee. People have followed their personal leading to fill committee positions. When the clerk laid down her service midyear, we started a Clerking Project Committee. Four clerks-in-training test the waters of clerkship with seasoned clerks by their side. The Clerking Project Committee meetings have deepened our experience of Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business by teaching us to hear each other and the spirit working among us. We experienced a gathered MWCB more often.

We deepen the spiritual life of the Meeting through:

- Prison ministry at the federal prison: Friends participate in the Prison Visitation and Support program and the Alternatives to Violence Project;
- Sanctuary for migrants: We held a threshing session to increase our involvement in sanctuary through hospitality, special bond fund, visitation and support of the Tucson Sanctuary Coalition and the Migrant Trail Walk;
- Meeting for Worship with Concern for Business: We continue to offer reports, agenda and consent agenda a week in advance of the MWCB.

We strengthen and sustain our sense of community through:

- Homeless outreach working group: Provide meals at a homeless shelter;
- Migrant Support: Collect and distribute items and make food at Casa Alitas (a temporary shelter for migrants);
- Harvest and Holiday parties and monthly pot luck: Share food, crafts, poetry, music, games;
- Young Adult Friends Wednesday gathering: Share food, conversation, worship and learn more about Quakers;
- Adult Spiritual Development: Twice each month education offerings; a highlight was an intergenerational question and answer session;
- Quakerism 101: Documents available through google classroom;
- Meet and Greet: A gathering of early (8:00) and later (10:30) First Day meetings on the Fifth First Day to enhance fellowship;
- Sewing circle: Once a month gathering of crafters;
- Work Days: Special needs of our meetinghouse are addressed at the two work days held each year;
- Christmas Candle light Worship: Reminds us of the Light of Christmas in a room of darkness;
- Invest in Greening our Meetinghouse: We get all our electricity from the sun and harvest our water.

Opportunities we are led to explore and develop

- Library update: Library holdings are being listed on a data base;
• Children and Families: Exploring our leading to engage more children and families and attend to them with consistent love and care;
• End of Life documents: Each member of meeting will be asked to provide information that will assist Meeting in supporting the person at the end of their life;
• Workshop on the use of our technology: As we move closer to fully use G-suites, we will learn how to communicate within committees and archive our documents;
• Christ Centered Fellowship: We gather twice a month to worship with attention to Jesus Christ’s teachings;
• Increase our meeting’s outreach: We are developing a T-shirt and planning an ad campaign;

A Friend shared that, {We wish to explore} “how to live our lives, as Quakers, in local, national and international arenas. The world is kind of a scary place to be in these days, and I need continual replenishment that what I am doing is important and matters.”

Another Friend stated. “We should not hang on to parts of the past out of nostalgia when they are no longer serving us, or attempt to shove young people into old slots when that’s obviously no longer working. We should also not pander to newer people, compromise values or good procedures, or be less than honest about who we are out of fear of losing young people or desperateness that the visible organization continue.... Really, the Light will lead us forward into the future the Spirit desires for the organization, and is indeed, already doing so. That is a wonderful thing.”

Pima Monthly Meeting
www.pmm.life
Quaker House Santa Fe
State of the Meeting Report 2018

We spent most of the year examining and redefining our status, then exploring how to live into our promises and responsibilities. After eight years as a worship group and three as a preparative meeting under the care of Santa Fe Monthly Meeting, Quaker House took the step this year of becoming a monthly meeting.

Many months of discussion culminated in a threshing session in May, where we sought to discern evidence of our spiritual readiness. A significant number in our community have never belonged to a Quaker meeting. Concerns were expressed about overwhelming our human and financial resources. Some desired to maintain close spiritual and personal ties with Santa Fe Monthly Meeting. Others voiced the concern that the spiritual potential of Quaker House was not being realized by remaining a preparative meeting.

Discussed further at Meeting for Business in June and held over until July, the decision was reached to become a monthly meeting on July 29, 2018. The process has been described as both painful and challenging, though it has also re-engaged a number of Friends who had not been attending regularly.

Meeting for worship has deepened, as we committed collectively to our new status as a monthly meeting. Regular attendance ranged between 10 and 20. Music before worship on occasional First Days continued to serve many of us as preparation for worship. Weekly potluck after worship continued to nourish our bodies and provided occasion for informal fellowship.

More people are taking responsibility for the life of the meeting, as we develop more deeply as a community. New committee members are learning about Quaker process, as well as the commitment required to sustain our worship, our activities, our property and our fellowship. Ministry and Counsel has been finding its way in defining our process for membership. Together, we are learning how to discern the talents and strengths of one another. We have been focusing adult education sessions, held on first First Days, on Quaker faith and practice, to deepen the understanding of both old and new Friends. Building and Grounds continued its care of our facility, making updates and improvements to the property and holding workdays several times a year. Finance Committee faithfully shepherded our funds, so that Quaker House ended the year on sound financial footing.

Throughout the year, Quaker House served as the setting for a number of groups and special events, some sponsored jointly with Santa Fe Monthly Meeting. This included a workshop on The Gathered Meeting, held in September and attended by Friends from several area meetings. Our annual holiday carol sing (with farolitos and cookies) included Friends from Santa Fe Monthly Meeting, as well as several of our neighbors. We were also able to greet, in person, one another’s extended families, in town for the holidays.

This has been a pivotal and intense year in the life of Quaker House, and we ended the year feeling joyful for our new opportunities and grateful for the renewed engagement of our community.
Tempe Monthly Meeting, State of the Meeting Report, 2018-2019

Tempe Monthly Meeting experienced a loss of leadership about halfway through the year, following the resignation of our Meeting Clerk and one of the two Minute Clerks. Others in the Meeting volunteered to clerk the Monthly Meeting for Business from December through April. We are fortunate that a few were willing to step forward. Our Nominating Committee has worked tirelessly to fill positions for the coming year, but they may have to ask members to share responsibility for some of the leadership positions. As is the case for other small Meetings, we sometimes have more jobs than we have Quakers to fill them. This promises to be an ongoing challenge that we must find ways to meet.

Another ongoing challenge is to seek and welcome diversity in our Meeting. At the very least, we need to be sure that we are especially welcoming to diverse visitors. Following through with continuing outreach to those who have visited us is important in retaining newcomers.

We are distressed that agents of our country have treated so abusively the immigrants seeking the protection of our laws and better lives for themselves and their children. Deep in our Judeo-Christian tradition is the reminder to care for the immigrant and to be that Good Samaritan.

We are still in the process of healing our Quaker community. For some, past conflicts remain unresolved, and some members have absented themselves from the community. We hope our recent retreat will help us heal. Our retreat was held during 2nd month and had as its focus: “Building Hope and Resilience in Turbulent Times.” Anne Pomeroy was a very effective leader, and participants felt that they had spent their time well. Anne reminded us of the need to love one another. Her words were reminiscent of Isaac Pennington’s letter to Friends in Amersham in 1667: “Our life is love, and peace, and tenderness; and bearing one with another, and forgiving one another…. and helping one another up with a tender hand if there has been any slip or fall...”

We celebrated the lives of dear Friends Gracia Hiatt and Debrah Lechner in Memorial Meetings during 11th month, 2018. Both women will be sorely missed, especially because they gave so much of their time to cooking for Tempe’s homeless. We feel deep sorrow for their loss but recognize how poor we would be if they had not been with us.

Attendance at Meeting for Worship has been good, especially when winter visitors return. New visitors continue to seek us out and we are happy when they choose to return. For some, Quakerism is not a good fit, but we hope that they leave feeling that they have been welcomed. For the year, we welcomed two new members (both were transfers) and also three sojourners. Pot-lucks and Friendly-Eight meals have been popular and well-attended.

Children's Religious Education needs to respond to the demographics of our Meeting. Since last fall, we have had a program for elementary school children only. Two high school students dropped out because of low numbers attending, and a third has been serving with our youngest children in order to fulfill a volunteer service requirement for school. We
have continued with a program of Faith and Play, Godly Play, and the Testimonies. We rely on supportive children’s literature to illustrate the latter. Each week, two Quakers provide the lesson and the activities. By next year, we will need to provide for two groups, as our elementary group moves up and our nursery school children become ready for lessons. Our children still maintain interest in raising funds for Kurandza: education for girls in Mozambique.

Adult Religious Education has waxed and waned over several years, but has received more interest recently as participants have explored Faith and Practice. Following a visit from Marcelle Martin, a new book group is considering studying her recent book: “Our Life is Love: The Quaker Spiritual Journey.”

Building and Grounds Committee has dealt with a number of issues as our facilities and grounds age. We have had to replace our sewer connection and improve concrete surfaces surrounding our building. We have also added new handrails on a ramp walkway. Our greatest problem was responding to a failed irrigation system and a need to rethink our current landscaping in order to conform to future pressure from climate change. We plan to seek professional help to guide us.

Participation in the wider community has been good. We continue to provide nourishing, tasty meals and also bedding for Tempe’s homeless on the first 6th day of each month. We often have as many as twenty members and attenders helping with the preparation, cooking, serving, and cleaning up. Frequently, newcomers to our community offer their services in order to find out what we do. Meeting children also participate and sometimes bring friends with them. As we share company with people who are on hard times, we often receive more than we give: a reminder of the importance to us of attention to their care.

Several Friends have been working diligently to promote legislation that will slow climate change. One Friend has faithfully attended meetings of the local Inter-Faith Network and reports regularly on matters that need our attention. Recently members have been helping to house immigrants in transit who have been released by ICE. Other members make a monthly visit to inmates in the Phoenix Federal Prison, in Anthem. We will continue to seek ways to help our local and national communities during these “turbulent times”.
Albuquerque Monthly Meeting’s commitment to Sanctuary has had a profound effect on the life of the Meeting. We provided a safe space for our Sanctuary resident, Emma, and the accompaniers who were a constant presence on her behalf. A secure enclosed garden was designed, built, and planted. It not only gave Emma the freedom to go outside, it enhances the appearance of the Meetinghouse grounds.

Becoming a sanctuary church and recognizing that our corporate documents lacked integrity with law and faith motivated us to revise them. We sought to blend seemingly contradictory NM nonprofit law and Quaker practice. After months of deep discernment we heartily approved revised Articles and bylaws.

Being a Sanctuary was among the most important influences in the shifts in the climate in the Meeting as we worked through concerns to become more trusting, more willing to listen, and more open to creativity. Our beloved friend, Emma, left us near the end of the year to pursue progress in her case, and many of us have experienced a sense of loss and miss her presence. Overall, Quaker worship and testimony became woven together and Sanctuary inspired growth in all of us and a deepened awareness of the experience of our immigrant brothers and sisters.

Our children have always been a lively part of our Meeting. This year we experienced a new energy among our youngest. We consciously made our children and families a priority when we decided to create and fund a Children’s Curriculum Coordinator position, which was filled. First Day School has grown in numbers, as well as regular attendance. There are as many as 25 children who attend ranging in age from infant to middle school.

Several clearness committees for membership were organized, two of which resulted in the acceptance of new Friends to this Meeting, one of whom now leads our re-energized Prayer Circle. Visits were made to some Friends in poor health, and rides were arranged for them. Memorial Meetings were held and Memorial Minutes drafted for two beloved members, John Gibbons and Phyllis Hoge. We were also saddened hearing of the deaths of Bez Booth McCauley who was a member for many years and John Powell who was an attender.

All the vacancies for jobs, committee clerks, and committee members were filled by the end of the year. We were pleased that two members agreed to be co-Presiding Clerks. We expressed great appreciation for the faithful work of the outgoing Clerk.
As further efforts to the spiritual growth and community building in the Meeting, we began work on assessing and defining job descriptions for committees and positions. Adapting from Live Oaks Meeting, the Albuquerque Meeting drafted a pamphlet entitled *If this is your first experience of Quaker worship*, which will be available outside of the Meetinghouse welcoming anyone to join us. Two handouts were also produced to provide guidance on spoken ministry and on preparing for worship. We continued providing ongoing small group spiritual deepening opportunities, including worship sharing, adult education, contemplative reading, and mid-week worship.

The Whiteness Study Group continued to guide the Meeting’s 2017 commitment to examining racism and white supremacy through mini-workshops during Meeting for Worship for Business each month, several movie/discussion nights, and workshops on whiteness and bystander intervention. Our library has an expanding collection of resources to help us grow our racial literacy and advocacy skills.

There were two milestones that brought the wider Quaker world to our doors. We were especially fortunate that Pastor Rose Jivetti accepted our invitation to visit the Meeting. She shared with us the initiatives for improving community life and health care she and her fellow Quakers brought to the villages in her region of Kenya. We also had the opportunity to participate in a worship service conducted by Pastor Rose in the manner of her home church. It was a special gift to host the Executive Committee of the Friends World Committee for Consultation Section of the Americas (FWCC) meeting. In providing housing and meals, we learned of many perspectives and experiences of Friends beyond our borders.
As time moves on and things change, we have some new energy along with letting go of some old.

For several years we had a Ministry and Care committee that encompassed all adult religious ed and pastoral concerns within Meeting. But it seems that a new “committee” or “team” has emerged, with young attenders convening a monthly book discussion group, a Wednesday night discussion group, and a Bible discussion group. This is now the “Adult Religious Ed” committee.

Meanwhile, we learned that the confidential issues that arise in pastoral care are best left to more seasoned members of Meeting, and we have retained but reshaped our Ministry and Care committee to focus on its title.

Phoenix Meeting sponsors a scholarship student through the Bolivia Quaker Education Fund. We receive regular updates from our student on her progress at university, her family life, and her life at her Quaker church. In the summer of 2018, four folks from Phoenix Meeting participated in the Bolivia Quaker Study Tour and returned from La Paz with renewed support and a lovely weaving from our scholarship student, which will soon adorn the Library wall.

A few years ago an inmate at Lewis prison requested membership in Meeting. He introduced us to the Stamp Project, now being co-
ordinated by First Friends Church of Indianapolis, from which the proceeds of sales of the stamps go to support the Quaker program Right Sharing of World Resources. We also maintain a regular monthly prison visitation program, shared by three members of Meeting.

The Building and Property Committee is working to improve the condition and appearance of the Meeting campus. We added an inviting welcome banner to our fence along 17th Street and have plans to upgrade the acoustics and lighting in the main Meeting room. Some electrical crises at the Residence required immediate repair. A meditation labyrinth has been fashioned in the northwest corner of the property.

The children’s program, while small, is consistent. Every Sunday we have the four children from one family, and frequently one to three children brought by their neighbors. We maintain a generous cadre of volunteer teachers.

In the spring of 2019 we experienced a crisis of homeless encampments on the Meeting property which was brought into focus when a car with no license and battery, but a gun in the front seat, was removed from the parking lot. While this issue is not fully resolved as to our community’s priorities, it appears that the neighbors and police have had an impact reducing the traffic of campers in the Meeting neighborhood. Individual members of Meeting provide serve meals at Andre house and send clothing, personal items, and diapers to programs more able to meet the needs of poor and homeless families and individuals.
We lost a beloved member of our Meeting, Terry Earp, who had been made a quadriplegic after her bike was hit by an SUV over 12 years ago. A lovely memorial was held for her at the Meeting-house.

The Fiddler’s Dream coffeehouse and acoustic music venue has been a consistent and enriching member of our campus for over 25 years, with many folk musicians from around the country performing there, or in our main Meeting room when the audience is larger.

Membership seems to remain a stumbling block for a number of regular attenders who do not feel comfortable committing themselves to membership in the Society of Friends and/or Phoenix Meeting but who do contribute to the life of the Meeting in a variety of ways.