

Strawberry Creek State of the Meeting April 2015

Friends found that our collective worship is our greatest asset and strength. We are struggling with living the testimonies both as individuals and as we worship together. We had a few challenges, but most of our life together has yielded warmth and bonding among Friends. Occasionally we have problems filling positions for certain tasks. Our volunteer base is getting better at discerning tasks they are not called to do.

Our Worship and Ministry committee has found ways to help Friends worship together. This committee is supporting five anchoring and clearness committees, some of which have been helpful for years. We have also found other ways to gather, such as a mid-week meeting and two worship groups that have been developing over many years. The informal Contra Costa County group met on First Sundays, and the Oakland Worship Group, operating under care of the Meeting, meets at 5 p.m. on First days. To these we have added a singing group this year, and have recently begun Discernment Circles which try to determine spirit-led work in the world. We also have had five or six spiritual life sharing groups going at the same time for the last three years. Altogether, at least 24 people have participated in these.

Our Mutual Care Committee helps all our members and attenders of our Meeting to provide pastoral care and support for one another's material and spiritual needs. During the past year this committee provided loans and grants to several Friends and has coordinated various kinds of support for over 40 individuals in our Meeting, including creation of six short-term support and clearness committees.

Our Peace, Earthcare, and Social Witness Committee continues to manage a program called Dime-a-Gallon which we use to tax ourselves for our fossil fuel use. This year we provided five Dime-a-Gallon grants for a total of \$2,249 for emission reduction projects or sustainability education. In addition many on the committee have maintained a focus on divestment of investments in companies that produce fossil fuels. Our Meeting approved a minute on divestment which we sent to over 25 meetings in the Quarter to encourage discussion, discernment and education on the topic.

This year also drew many Friends to the urgency of our African-American communities' "Black Lives Matter" struggle to change the bias we find in law enforcement and other civic entities. Friends have been challenged to support people in our community and have participated in a number of interfaith witnesses as well as dialogues.

The Care of the Meeting Committee took on the role of the site committee for the time being. This became particularly crucial when we suddenly lost our meeting space for the summer, and when we realized that our rented space is not adequate for all committee and after-Meeting activities, especially if we hope to accommodate people of all physical abilities.

Our First Day School had a sudden loss of regularly attending children, as well as a depleted supply of adults who were interested in serving in the First Day School. We spent six months with an ad hoc committee doing work on this. We worked on ways to create a welcoming atmosphere for our families; we have come out the other end. A new teen group is coming together jointly with Berkeley Meeting. The Meeting continues to seek ways for Friends to generate intergenerational learning.

We bring our lives to the Meeting for Worship, and we seem to have matured as a Meeting. We seek truth and attempt to merge that into our spiritual lives.

Co-Moderator: [Signature]