

# STRAWBERRY CREEK MONTHLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

APRIL 2023  
NEWSLETTER

Berkeley Technology Academy, 2701 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, corner of Derby St., Berkeley  
Phone: 510-524-9186. Mailing Address: P.O. Box 5065, Berkeley, CA 94705.

Website <http://www.strawberrycreekfriends.org> (with Zoom link for Worship Hour)

Listserv (for subscribers) [strawberrycreek@groups.io](mailto:strawberrycreek@groups.io)

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Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/StrawberryCreekFriends>

Calendar <https://www.strawberrycreekfriends.org/calendar>

Current Newsletter <http://www.strawberrycreekfriends.org/newsletter>

Newsletter Editor & Calendar Postings Sarah Hawthorne [editor@strawberrycreekfriends.org](mailto:editor@strawberrycreekfriends.org)

Distribution Sunday is last Sunday of each month (newsletter posted online & subscribers are emailed)

Newsletter Deadline is Sunday before Distribution Sunday. **Deadline: Sunday April 23** (for May issue)

## SUNDAYS (ongoing)

**10 a.m. Meeting for Worship** is both onsite and on Zoom. *Details inside.*

**5 p.m. Oakland Quaker Worship Group** (at Peter Lin's house, see <http://oaklandquakers.org>)

*(activities below via Zoom unless otherwise noted)*

April 2 - Advices & Queries on Personal Relationship, read aloud by Worship & Ministry  
12:30 p.m. *In the Name of Christ* (Mennonite film on Doctrine of Discovery) by PESW

April 9 - 12:30 p.m. Meeting for Worship on the Occasion of Business

**April 16 - 12:30 p.m. Kris Muller Memorial Meeting** - Berkeley Tech Academy & SCMM Zoom

April 23 - 12:30 p.m. Committee Sunday. *Check with your committee clerk for details.*

**April 29 (Sat) – 2 p.m. Robin Standish Memorial** - Berkeley Friends Meetinghouse & SCMM Zoom

April 30

## WEDNESDAYS (ongoing)

7 a.m. Mid-Week Morning Worship. For information, call Peter Lin 510-530-0479.

## THURSDAYS (ongoing)

4 p.m. Twelve-Step Meeting (open to all). Contact facilitator Avotcja Jiltonilro 510-658-7995.



### **Strawberry Creek Sunday Worship**

We meet for worship at 10am Sunday morning. Every Sunday at 10am there are two options for attending. One is in person at Berkeley Technology Academy (see cover page for address). The other option is attending online via Zoom. On the first and third Sundays of the month the Zoom and in person gatherings are connected electronically (blended). On the second and fourth Sundays, the onsite gathering and the online gathering are separate, with no shared technology connection. Meeting's online calendar shows which Sundays the two gatherings will be linked or not:

<https://www.strawberrycreekfriends.org/calendar>

In person newcomers are welcome to sign our hard copy Guestbook, and Zoom newcomers are invited to sign our online Guest Book. Zoom link and online Guestbook can be found at <http://www.strawberrycreekfriends.org>

### **Oakland Quaker Worship Group - Sundays**

Sundays at 5pm the Oakland Quakers meet in person at the home of Peter Lin. Contact Peter or go to their website

<http://oaklandquakers.org>

### **Berkeley Friends Meeting (BFM)**

For more information about Sunday worship, see <http://www.berkeleyfriendsmeeting.org>

### **Quaker Center Morning Worship (Zoom)**

Every morning (7:30-8am) Quaker Center Ben Lomond offers worship, and once a week it offers worship sharing (Wed at 10am). For these and other Quaker Center events, see

[www.quakercenter.org](http://www.quakercenter.org)

### **Western N.American Experiment w/Light**

At 6:30pm on the fourth Wednesday of every month, the Western North American Experiment with Light group meets on Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6820730575>

For more information, contact Barbara Birch.

### **Mennonite film on Doctrine of Discovery**

On Sunday April 2 at 12:30pm on Zoom (same link as Worship Hour), Peace, Earthcare, and Social Witness Committee will show a Mennonite film called *In the Name of Christ*, which relates to the Doctrine of Discovery.

### **Kris Muller Memorial 12:30pm Sun April 16**

Sunday April 16 there will be Meeting for Worship to celebrate the life of longtime Strawberry Creek Friend Kris Muller, who passed on January 17<sup>th</sup> of this year. Attend in person at Berkeley Technology or via Zoom (same Zoom link as used for Sunday worship).

To volunteer to help or ask questions, please contact Jeanne Diller [jeanned@initcomp.com](mailto:jeanned@initcomp.com) or Elizabeth Moses Strain

[elizabethmosesstrain@gmail.com](mailto:elizabethmosesstrain@gmail.com)

### **Robin Standish Memorial 2pm Sat April 29**

Saturday April 29 there will be Meeting for Worship to celebrate the life of longtime Strawberry Creek Friend Robin Standish, who passed on December 26, 2022. The gathering will be held at 2pm at Berkeley Friends Meetinghouse, 2151 Vine Street. Berkeley. For more information, contact Susan Strong.

### **FHA Grants for Quaker History Research**

Friends Historical Association is pleased to offer funding to support contributions to the field of Quaker history. All opportunities run on the same cycle, and **applications are due April 15, 2023**. [Details about each opportunity and application instruction are provided at this link.](#)



### **Seeking a Newsletter Editor**

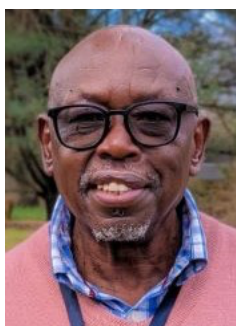
Serving as newsletter editor is a highly creative way to serve, and to connect with people across the whole Meeting. Plus it keeps you “in the know” about what’s happening! Find out more, contact [editor@strawberrycreekfriends.org](mailto:editor@strawberrycreekfriends.org)

## MULTIFAITH SOLIDARITY FAST

In support of the unjustly incarcerated  
hunger strikers at Mesa Verde and  
Golden State Annex.

**April 2-8, 2023**

**Learn More & Register:**  
[bit.ly/MultifaithSolidarityFast](https://bit.ly/MultifaithSolidarityFast)



**The River of Life:**

### **We Are What We Have Been Becoming**

**4:30-6pm (Pacific time) Apr 3, 2023**

*Free! Via Zoom. Registration required.*

Pendle Hill's Friend-in-Residence Nim Njuguna shares a framework of personal exploration that has opened his eyes to the broader issues of social justice from a spiritually transformed mindset. He has been a Baptist minister, university and prison chaplain, and restorative justice trainer. He has taught spiritual direction courses at the London Centre for Spirituality and tutored courses on spiritual accompaniment and racial justice at Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre, and a trainer and therapist in Kenya. He has written a number of articles, mainly on racial justice, for Quaker publications in the UK, as well as for *Quaker Religious Thought*. To register, go to <https://pendlehill.org>



**FGC Gathering 2023**

**Western Oregon University,  
Monmouth, Oregon  
July 28, 2023**

*An advance program is now available online.*

Find more information at [FGCgathering.org](https://FGCgathering.org)

Or ask Michelle [michelle.l.bellows@gmail.com](mailto:michelle.l.bellows@gmail.com)



### **Berkeley CROP Hunger Walk Sun April 30**

This year's Berkeley CROP Hunger Walk will be held on Sunday April 30 to benefit international relief programs of Church World Service, as well as Berkeley Food Pantry, Dorothy Day House, and Youth Spirit Artworks. Gather at 12:30 pm at St. Mary Magdalen, 2005 Berryman Street. The walk begins at 1:00 pm. Join Berkeley Quakers team or donate online at <https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2023/team/berkeley-quakers> For info on the walk, contact 510-548-5294 or [tomyamaguchi@mac.com](mailto:tomyamaguchi@mac.com)



### **QUAKER VOLUNTARY SERVICE**

Applications for Quaker Voluntary Service are now being accepted. QVS is a year-long Fellowship program in which young adults between the ages 21-30 build intentional community, work full time at social service and social change agencies, and explore themes of spiritual and personal growth with local Quakers. Fellows receive housing, transportation, food, support for health and wellness (including access to health insurance if needed), and a small stipend, while engaging in regular self-led workshops and retreats that allow for continuing education in social justice, faith, and community building topics. See <https://quakervoluntaryservice.org>

## Amy Dances in her New Hula Skirt

Article by Amy Dewey (3/3/23)

This winter, I was tasked with making a new pa'u (skirt) for hula class. The full assignment was to write my hula story, create a pattern, seven inches tall, that abstractly tells the hula story, print that pattern using red paint on black fabric, and use that fabric to make the pa'u. The pattern is following the style of 'ohe kāpala, an Hawaiian tradition of stamping.

My pattern contains 4 stamps that repeat (though I carved them into a single stencil I used for the final piece, NOT the traditional way to do it). One stamp is about my ancestors, another about play, the third about discipline, and the fourth stamp is about spirituality, which I particularly want to share with you. Here is what I said in my essay about that stamp:



Spirituality and having a deeper meaning is what really draws me to hula more than some other dances I've done. I like that deeper meaning, having a deeper context. It gives another dimension to the play and another dimension to the discipline. The Quaker idea is "that of God in everyone," which speaks so much to my idea of how to be in this world. Another way that is seen is "the inner light". This stamp has solid objects with holes for the light to shine through. It is humble.

Sarah included the picture of my pattern (look left) in the January newsletter when I first finished that. Tonight, four months later, I've finished the skirt. It has taken so much time and I'm so relieved to be, and yes, I'm excited about the final product!

**Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting**  
**Meeting for Worship on the Occasion of Business**  
**March 12, 2023, draft minutes**

*For review and approval at the April 9, 2023, Meeting for Business*

Meeting for Business opened at 12:30 p.m. with silent worship and was conducted via Zoom. Beth Wrightson clerked the meeting. Thirty-five Friends were present.

Larry Strain shared the reflections of the Peace, Earthcare, and Social Witness Committee on the Advices and Queries on Peace.

The Clerk reviewed the agenda, which was first posted by the acting Recording Clerk, Charlie Blanchard, to groups.io on March 10, 2023.

The acting Recording Clerk then read the February 2023 minutes. The minutes were approved with corrections of dates, times, and the spellings of names. The clause, “having been approved for the position in January” was added following “Ragni Larsen-Orta remains our Pacific Yearly Meeting representative.”

**Prompt**

The Clerk read the prompt: “We are reminded to consider how our work and decisions today support SCMM in becoming an actively anti-racist faith community.”

**Correspondence and Clerk’s Business**

None.

**Old Business**

Nominating Committee reported that no concerns were received regarding last month’s nomination of Julia Bazar as the Pacific Yearly Meeting observer. Meeting approved the nomination with appreciation for Julia’s service.

Kathy Barnhart reported that after communicating with Brian Erickson, both Brian and Care of Meeting Committee are clear to recommend that Meeting accept Brian’s request to lay down his membership. The clerk, Beth Wrightson, will communicate this decision to Brian. One Friend asked if anyone knows what Brian is now doing and Andrea English provided a summary. Another Friend remembered with appreciation Brian’s presence in the early days of Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting.

**New Business**

The draft State of the Meeting report was read by the writing group, Cindy Trueblood, Jeanne Diller, and Andrea English. The report was drawn from multiple sources, including the State of the Meeting

listening meeting, written comments sent to the committee, newsletters, and Meeting minutes. The committee has tried to include diverse voices, shown as quotes or paraphrases in italics.

Friends expressed gratitude and appreciation for the report, noting that the committee has prepared a deep report, pulling together many threads, expressing both tensions within the Meeting and a sense of community. One Friend asked if Berkeley Friends Meeting and Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting might work together to use their limited resources more effectively.

Another appreciated the way that the report highlights the importance of speaking one's truth and accepting differences of understanding among Friends. A Friend asked that the report recognize the work of Worship and Ministry Committee in nurturing Meeting for Worship through a difficult period. Another felt that the report illuminated the breadth of the Meeting very well.

One Friend noted the importance of recognizing, as the report does, that simply returning to past practices is not appropriate; there is a need to support each other more fully. Another Friend felt that the report is beautifully researched and provides insight for the Meeting's vision of itself. The report will be seasoned for a month, during which time Friends are encouraged to provide suggestions to the writers. Email messages should be sent to Jeanne Diller.

## **Reports**

Kathy Barnhart, with Beth Wrightson, reported for Care of Meeting Committee. An ad hoc Revisioning Committee has been created, comprised of Beth Wrightson, Paul Jolly, Elizabeth Strain, and Charlie Blanchard. The committee has begun meeting and will be interviewing committee co-clerks and others. In response to a question, Elizabeth Strain noted that the purpose of the committee is to consider how our current committee structure serves the Meeting and how that might change to reflect current and anticipated needs. Two Friends asked if the Revisioning Committee will consider Meeting's physical location; Elizabeth indicated that location would be examined as the committee continues its work.

Judith Schumacher-Jennings, reporting for Worship and Ministry Committee, thanked Care of Meeting Committee for forming the Revisioning Committee and supporting the Events Committee. The January 29 listening meeting indicated that online and blended meetings are both important to the Meeting. There will be some changes to the dates when blended meetings occur: second and fourth instead of first and third First Days, beginning in May. Worship and Ministry Committee has begun searching for another room for Meeting for Worship at Berkeley Technology Academy pending further discernment by the Revisioning Committee. Greeters have been experimenting with not checking vaccination cards. Friends noted that the web site should be revised to indicate that Meeting asks people to be vaccinated if attending in person, with wording to be established by Communications and Worship and Ministry committees. Friends expressed thanks for the work of Worship and Ministry Committee.

## **Query**

The Clerk invited us to contemplate the query: "How did our work and our decisions today support us in becoming an actively anti-racist faith community?" A period of silent worship followed.

## Announcements

Next Meeting for Business April 9, 2023, at 12:30 p.m. on Zoom.

First Day Children's Program announced that the first in-person Meeting with children will be March 19 beginning at 9:45 a.m.

Communications Committee stated that Nominating Committee is seeking people to help fill two positions, librarian and newsletter editor, beginning in June. Please contact Sarah Hawthorne for further information about those positions.

One Friend noted that the web site still lists the time for Meeting for Business as 11:50 a.m., which will be revised to reflect the current starting time of 12:30 p.m.

Meeting closed with silent worship at 2:03 p.m.

Beth Wrightson, Presiding Clerk

Elaine Emily, Alternate Clerk

Charlie Blanchard, acting Recording Clerk

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### Reflections

*on Advices & Queries on*

### Peace

by Peace, Earthcare & Social Witness (2/26/23)

The Peace testimony calls for us to oppose all wars.

The war in Ukraine was in our thoughts and influenced our responses. We spoke about war and institutional violence and not so much on what it means to live in the virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars.

The war in Ukraine is testing our understanding of the Peace Testimony.

We recognize that we have no answers.

It is easier to oppose “unjust” wars than “just” wars. WWII was seen as a just, necessary war, a response to a great evil, the war in Ukraine feels like that. It was easier to oppose the Vietnam war because it wasn't a just war. All wars are unjust, pornographic and sick. They do horrible things to the people who fight in them.

The people who start them and cause them to happen don't fight in them, they send others to fight in them.

Wars don't happen without armies.

We need to focus on peacemaking and long term strategies to dismantle armies, oppose and call out arms manufactures, and oppose institutional violence.

It is important to recognize the humanity in our adversaries and our friends adversaries.

**State of the Meeting Report (draft)**  
**March 10, 2023**

*Writing Committee: Jeanne Diller,  
Andrea English, and Cindy Trueblood*

For Strawberry Creek Meeting, this past year has been one of transition on multiple levels, and the process has been challenging. We have shifted from Zoom-only to "blended" (Zoom and in-person) Meeting for Worship. We have examined our diverse spiritual and physical needs for accessing worship. We now recognize that we won't be returning to the Meeting we once were, and are seeking new ways towards thriving again.

**Meeting for Worship** centers our community. Careful planning by a dedicated re-opening committee led to resuming Meeting for Worship in-person in early May 2022, connected to Meeting on Zoom. Creating our blended worship has been particularly challenging because we are renters. A core tech team stepped up to implement the necessary technology, and to recruit, train, and organize the extra volunteers needed to set up and take down equipment each Sunday.

Among those most involved, there are feelings of being well-used, but also of being worn out. One says, I am a bit drained after working 2 ½ years on re-opening and tech activities ... I enjoy supporting the meeting's need with my knowledge, but... I feel like others could be a bit more engaged in the process of making our 'blending' function.

To lighten the load and try new possibilities, we are now experimenting with blended worship twice a month and "parallel" (separate Zoom and in-person) worship on the other weeks. What have been our experiences of worship over the last year? Some can sink into deeper worship in person, some can connect only via Zoom because of disability, geography, or health issues, some find Zoom or in-person

equally rich spiritually, some find the technology distracting on Zoom or in-person, and some find Zoom more convenient.

There is much appreciation for the greater inclusivity of the blended Meetings, and for those who make it possible for us to hear and see one another. Typically, 30-40 people attend on Zoom, and about 15-20 attend in person. A few have expressed concern that Meeting now may be an on-line community with an in-person component.

Concerns regarding lower in-person participation have felt hurtful to others. One person shared: I am not able to go in-person because I'm immuno-compromised. I'm unbelievably grateful for Meeting on Zoom. I feel threatened when someone says that they don't like people not coming in-person. There are also differing views about having parallel Meetings on some weeks: some think this is needed because it requires fewer volunteers, some find it desirable because they appreciate worship without technology, and some are uncomfortable with having separate Meetings. One person asks, Is "separate but equal" alright, or even right?

**Mixed viewpoints and feelings** have been expressed in several recent listening meetings; sometimes the same individual feels pulled in conflicting directions. The following are some examples:

A. I feel grateful and protective of Meeting, and I also feel tempted to walk away. It has been so hard, under our new conditions, to build the depth of worship.

B. Meeting is strong, but also floundering.

C. I'm both grateful and drained; purposeful and burdened.

D. I feel pride and concern; appreciate the resilience and patience; know the importance of our Meeting community to all.

E. I have good memories of being in-person, feeling a strong gathered sense, and I haven't felt that via Zoom. I can't come in person. Many of us don't have a choice about how we attend meeting. I'd like it to always be blended, but want it to be a positive experience for everyone.

**Listening Matters** Our process for voicing our needs, listening to the needs of others, and making life-giving decisions, is a work in progress with room for improvement.

One person shares: There is a burden when so many folks don't seem to listen to other's needs ... I realize that change can be difficult, but we need to relax a bit as we discover our new possibilities. Be happy ... we are together!!!

Another says: I do wish to be part of SCMM, unless it gets too uncomfortable for me because of not being listened to.

Another person shared: Our Meeting is not a product, but rather a web of relationships. When you're on a roller coaster ride, you are kind of paralyzed, just trying to survive. When you get off the roller coaster you can notice that you have a cramp in your leg. You pause and see what's happened. We are just a little cranky. I get to know who you are when you're cranky. ... At a deep level we are doing well.

Another says: I'm feeling pretty exhausted by the state of the world, which can hinder my full attention to Spirit. What helps me is community and all the ways that we care for each other, support each other, mourn our losses, celebrate our joys. After three years of stressors, we are experiencing some rough edges, but also the deeper connection that comes from speaking honestly, listening with tenderness, and seeking to make Spirit-led decisions.



## **Members and Attenders**

**Joys:** There is joy in worshipping again in-person, in continuing to worship by Zoom, and in being connected through blended worship. Welcoming newcomers who attend on Zoom or in-person also makes us glad, though there have been few over the past year.

**Losses/Longings:** We have mourned the loss of three beloved members who passed away last year. A few members have chosen to lay down or transfer their membership, and others are inactive. We feel the absence and loss of these Friends once active in the Meeting. Another significant loss has been the absence of children. News about children is received with enthusiasm, and we are hopeful that they will return this spring. One person shares: I need a multigenerational community to be helped in listening to Spirit. 'Out of the mouths of babes...' I believe youth sees things with fresh eyes and open hearts. Their absence in our community pains me. We long for more young adults in our midst and the enhanced vibrancy that the presence of younger voices can bring.

**Avenues for Connection** Familiar opportunities for spiritual sharing in small groups have been missing this year: Friendly Sevens, Spiritual Life Learning Groups, spring and fall retreats, Quaker Action Worship Group, and worship-sharing on third Sundays. On the other hand, we have benefitted from our relationships through committee work, after-meeting programs on Zoom, and conversations in Zoom break-out rooms and in the courtyard following worship.

Two ongoing elders groups share life's joys and struggles; and there is rich content in our monthly newsletter. A small group meets for mid-week worship by Zoom, and the Oakland Worship Group meets on Sundays at 5pm at a member's home. Our Mutual Care committee has responded to individual needs for grocery shopping, rides, and house visits; has organized sending caring notes to those ill or bereaved; and has provided a helping presence for several

Friends approaching their final days of life. We value connection: It's the network of relationships that has got me through; I feel we're forming the future as we find deep connections with the testimonies and each other; Connection is what I need and get from the meeting. More small group gatherings next year will enhance the connecting flow of spiritual life among us.

**Ministry rooted in our Meeting** The ministries of individual members are rooted in the Meeting community, which helps guide and strengthen their work through spiritual sustenance, accompaniment, eldering, anchoring committees, and expressions of gratitude for their contributions. These ministries include Earthcare, anti-racism, eldering, housing security, disability rights, indigenous concerns, hospice, and leadership in Quaker organizations, such as Pacific Yearly Meeting, Quaker Earthcare Witness, and Friends General Conference.

Our Testimony on Earthcare (2010), Minute on the Climate Crisis (2014), and Minute on Uprooting and Dismantling Racism (2020) continue to inspire us. Through Zoom sessions organized by Peace, Earthcare and Social Witness committee, and our Power, Privilege, and Race subcommittee, we have explored these complex issues. Most recently these two groups partnered with PYM Indigenous Concerns Subcommittee in showing a film, Christian Doctrine of Discovery; they are planning two additional sessions on historical and ongoing negative impacts of the Doctrine of Discovery on Indigenous peoples and all of life on this planet. Our understanding of the interconnections of Earthcare and anti-racist concerns has grown.

One person said, The Minute and the Testimony are not different at all, we need to grapple with them as one concern. ... We can't look at it in terms of results. It's just the fact that we're

doing the work and each time we go a little deeper. I'm grateful our meeting is doing this work together.

It is heartening that many Friends are consistently participating and building trust with each other to go deeper. Through our ongoing commitment to engage with these challenging issues together, we keep hope alive.

### **Reassessing and looking towards the future**

There continues to be much gratitude and appreciation expressed for our Meeting and for one another. We also recognize that our capacities are reduced due to aging and diminishing numbers. The energy needed for transitions and new formats has been exhausting, even divisive, when we don't listen well. Stresses created by the pandemic have exacerbated the task for Nominating committee to fill our many committees. At a recent Re-visioning meeting, we shared priorities, along with how things might need to change.

Suggestions included reducing both the number of committees and the number of people on committees, relying more on short-term volunteering, and changing the location of in-person worship. We are regaining our footing, and now see that longing for, or even expecting a return to the past, is neither possible, nor desirable. Through listening to our diverse voices and following the leadings of Spirit, we are beginning to envision the future of our Meeting community, recognizing that the fundamental way we worship together is still the same, no matter what the format.

We seek to listen deeply, with open hearts.

