

STRAWBERRY CREEK MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

NOVEMBER 2021
NEWSLETTER

Berkeley Technology Academy, 2701 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, corner of Derby St., Berkeley

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

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

Listserv (for subscribers) strawberrycreek@groups.io

Calendar <http://www.strawberrycreekfriends.org/Calendar.html>

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

Distribution Sunday for paper/electronic newsletter is the last Sunday of the each month

Newsletter Deadline is Sunday prior to Distribution Sunday. **Deadline: November 21** (for December issue)

Web Coordinator Amy Dewey amyd@alumnae.mills.edu (to join our Listserv or create a Zoom meeting)

Newsletter Editor & Calendar Postings Sarah Hawthorne editor@strawberrycreekfriends.org

THE CALENDAR (activities below via Zoom unless otherwise noted)

SUNDAYS (unless otherwise noted)

10 a.m. Meeting for Worship (every Sunday) on Zoom. See next page for details.

5 p.m. Oakland Quaker Worship Group (every Sunday at Peter Lin's house)

Nov 7 Advices & Queries on Stewardship & Vocation – read aloud by Loaves & Fishes Committee

11:45 a.m. Quaker Action Worship Group (QAWG). Contact Betsy Morris or Asa Brown.

5:30 p.m. AFSC meets w/Strawberry Creek Friends and Berkeley Friends Meetings. Details inside.

Nov 14 11:50 a.m. Meeting for Worship on the Occasion of Business

Nov 21 9:00 a.m. Worship Sharing based on a query. Contact Bob Langfelder boblangfelder@aol.com

11:50am Centering Down during Worship Hour, led by Rachel Findley

Nov 28 11:50 a.m. Committee Sunday. Check with your committee clerk for details.

12:45 p.m. Young Adult Friends. Click on YAF tab on Berkeley Friends Meeting website.

TUESDAYS

Nov 2 7 p.m. Community Safety Beyond Policing: What to Do Instead of Calling 9-1-1

Nov 30 7 p.m. Community Safety Beyond Policing: Creating Police – free schools: Community Conversation

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 Jiltoniro 510-658-7995.

Strawberry Creek Sunday Worship (Zoom)

We meet for worship at 10am Sunday mornings via Zoom; link posted on SCMM home webpage <http://www.strawberrycreekfriends.org>
The "Virtual Meeting Room" opens earlier at 9:30am. Our worship closes at 11am, followed by holding in the light those in need, announcements, and social time to share. Newcomers are invited to sign the Guest Book on our website homepage.

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)

The Zoom link for Sunday worship may be found online. <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

Quaker Action Worship Group

At 11:45am the first Sunday of each month, Quaker Action Worship Group comes together on Zoom. QAWG's mission is "To discern how our Quaker practice and tradition can more strongly and fully inform our political activism." QAWG draws from Strawberry Creek Friends Meeting, Berkeley Friends Meeting, and Berkeley Friends Church. For more information, please contact Co-Conveners Betsey Morris or Asa Brown.

Sierra Friends Center is BACK!

Woolman is placing a conservation easement onto its property through the Bear Yuba Land Trust, to permanently protect 240 acres from development. The easement enables the Nisenan tribe to protect their values in the land such as grinding holes, springs, village sites, and other indigenous assets. Woolman wants to serve as a model for how landowners work with tribes toward right relations.

Sierra Harvest (Nevada County farmer advocates) helped Woolman Farm grow food again for the first time in three years! And it has 4000 conifer seedlings growing in a tree nursery in Davis, ready for volunteers to plant at the start of December. Find out more at <https://woolman.org>

AFSC Comes Calling...

On Sunday evening, 7pm November 7, everyone in our Meeting is invited to meet with AFSC who will update us on their strategic plan and other activities. Once a year an AFSC representative personally meets with Strawberry Creek Meeting, usually during our social coffee hour. This year AFSC is connecting with us over Zoom (link on SCMM calendar), in a joint gathering with Berkeley Friends Meeting. The invitation has been extended to us by Jason P, Drucker, Ph.D., Associate General Secretary, Advancement.

AFSC series Community Safety Beyond Policing

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) is providing four training series on Tuesdays to explore how communities across the United States are working toward a future where we rely less on police and ensure community safety for all. The first 7pm Tuesday Nov 2 is on "What do we do instead of calling 911". Viewers are asked to watch this beforehand: https://youtube/wGCP5BufH_k
The second is 7pm Tuesday Nov 30 "Creating Police-Free Schools: A community conversation." Discussions are sponsored by Strawberry Creek and Berkeley Friends Meetings. For more information, contact David Rutschman or Sarah Tyrell.

College Park Quarterly Directories Available

To get a College Park Quarterly directory, email Sarah Tyrell sarahtyrell@alumnae.mills.edu
Please do not forward your password protected directory to others.

FGC Gathering In Person Summer 2022

Preparations are underway for the next summer's FGC Gathering, titled "*...and follow me*", which will be in-person at Radford University in Radford, Virginia from July 3-9, 2022. FGC is taking extra steps to ensure the health and safety of all those attending Gathering in person. A special COVID working group under the care of FGC's Executive Committee and convened by assistant presiding clerk, Katrina McQuail, has been approved to create a COVID Health and Safety policy for all FGC in-person events, including the Gathering. The goal is to have the policy approved and in place in early 2022. This will allow FGC to share the policy broadly with the community in order to make your Gathering plans accordingly. For more information, see <https://www.fgcquaker.org>

The excerpt below is drawn from Rachel Findley's April 13, 2007, paper for an Earlham College class and is the third and final installment in the series ...

Strawberry Creek Friends History

Membership

After becoming the South Campus Worship Group, Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting grew numerically in membership, multiplying eightfold in the initial thirty years. The first doubling, from twelve to 25 members, took only three years, from 1976 to 1981, as many attenders joined the newly established Meeting. The second doubling, from 25 to 52 members, took six years, until 1987. The third doubling, from 52 to 103 members, took nine years, until 2006. There have been only two years when membership declined: 1987-1988, with a net loss of two members, and 2006-2007, with a net loss of three members.

These annual membership totals take into account members lost. (Members are continually lost to the meeting, most commonly through relocation but also through death and occasionally through loss of participation.) The statistics in the annual reports are incomplete, but it seems that at least one member is lost for each two people who are admitted to membership. This means that roughly 200 people became members in the first 30 years.

Growth was first mentioned as a problem in 1984, when there were 40 adult members.

The physical growth of our Meeting... has... caused some discomfort... by making more difficult the achievement of intimacy.... [We are] meeting more frequently in small groups both on an informal and an organized basis.

State of the Meeting 1984

Growth has periodically been flagged as a challenge ever since that time. Sometimes this challenge has been recognized as a blessing that carries vital energy for outward witness as well as inward reflection. Former members of Strawberry Creek Meeting, many of whom first encountered Quakers in this meeting, are active in Quakerism throughout the world. But more often growth has been seen simply as a challenge.

Location

Strawberry Creek began as a haven of spiritual retirement and refreshment from the very public, highly visible Berkeley Friends Meeting. In the early years, some people expressed resistance to attracting much public notice. (The Meeting did not have a telephone or a listing in the Yellow Pages until 1991, twelve years after its approval as a monthly meeting.)

For over forty years, Strawberry Creek Meeting has met in houses or in rented facilities. The absence of a Meeting House has meant that Strawberry Creek often rents spaces for evening meetings and for day-long or weekend retreats, as well as for worship space. Often, the facilities have been rented from other Quaker groups, particularly Berkeley Friends Meeting (affiliated with Pacific Yearly Meeting) and Berkeley Friends Church (affiliated with Friends United Meeting).

For over ten years (1985-1996), Strawberry Creek rented the Fellowship Hall of Berkeley Friends Church on Sunday Mornings, meeting for worship during the Friends Church's First Day School hour and gathering for after-worship fellowship during the church's worship service. During some of that time, children from both groups attended First Day School together. This experiment in reaching across the branches was only partially successful, because the Church sought education that was more Christocentric than did Strawberry Creek Meeting.

Particularly during those years, relations among the three Berkeley Quaker organizations seemed quite close. The records describe joint involvement in vigils and witnesses, often jointly organized; Quaker Heritage (organized by Berkeley Friends Church); Christian Quaker conferences; and frequent exchange of visits and adult religious education activities. Doug Gwyn, pastor of Friends Church, led sessions on Quaker history for Strawberry Creek Quakerism 101 classes. The Peace and Social Order Committees of all three groups met jointly in the early 1990's. Some in Strawberry Creek Meeting and Berkeley Friends Church had hopes of eventual unification. But currents in the church were flowing in different directions. Finally, in 1996, under pressure from the church, Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting found other quarters at Shelton's School...

Relations among the three groups continued to be cordial, and they still came together, particularly around issues of public witness such as the murder of Quaker Tom Fox in Iraq, and the continued development of nuclear weapons at Lawrence Livermore Laboratories. Members of the groups participate in clearness committees to guide one another's ministry, sing together, and occasionally share worship.

In 2001, after relocation to Berkeley Technology Academy (Berkeley Unified School District), where the Meeting still meets, it was noted that

One similarity between our old and new locations is that both buildings are located on major thoroughfares, but that our Meeting room itself is a bit tricky to find, because it is tucked away behind a gate, marked by a sign that is only displayed on First Days. This is a literal problem, and perhaps also a metaphor for our relationship as a Meeting to the world outside the gates... *State of the Meeting 2001*

Currently (*pre-covid*), the Meeting displays a large banner outside our rental space, and the room where we worship has several easily accessible doors. We keep the door closed that is closest to the street, and ask people to make their way around the building to another entrance. There is some sense that we are still seeking the quiet garden for Meeting for Worship, rather than a public Meeting.

Importance of Worship

Strawberry Creek was founded by people who were hungry and thirsty for worship based in deep, silent, expectant waiting. Throughout its history, Meeting for Worship has been the organizing center of Strawberry Creek Meeting. It may seem accidental that even in the beginning, there was no joint Ministry and Oversight committee, but rather a separate committee for Worship and Ministry. Visitors to Strawberry Creek, and Strawberry Creek members who travel elsewhere, frequently comment on the depth of the worship. Perhaps the existence of a committee with no other agenda but care for the worship has, over the years, created a communal habit of worship.

Two problems with Meeting for Worship are frequently mentioned with distress. One is the large proportion of people who arrive after the stated hour. Another is the occasional Meeting for

Worship, or the entire season of Meetings for Worship, when bodies seem unsettled, vocal ministry is unsatisfying, and the Meeting itself simply does not seem to gather together.

Strawberry Creek Meeting expects its Committee on Worship and Ministry to protect it from those problems, to fence out the jarring distractions, and to help the Meeting for Worship gather together. The Committee prays, plans, and takes action; often the result is helpful.

Perhaps it is unusual in unprogrammed Meetings to have so much nurturing care for Meeting for Worship. Over the years, Worship and Ministry Committee and other committees have responded to developing conditions through prayer, guidance for individuals in vocal ministry, adult religious education, creating pamphlets, prayer, signs, queries, announcements, workshops, extended worship opportunities, and midweek meetings. Learning about vocal ministry, on the one hand, and deepening the centered and listening silence, on the other, have been goals of this work... The Meeting is seeking to discern how we can rely more trustfully on the work of the Spirit, rather than competently solving our problems for ourselves.

On the Occasion of Business

Throughout the documented history of the Meeting, there is much discussion of listening, trust, and unity. Occasionally Friends are reminded to “watch where the Light leads us.” Deep worship is recognized as a source of unity, and worship takes place during “Meeting *for Worship* for Business.”

...
Business meetings in the early years were very long—often four or five hours. In retrospect, some current members remember with nostalgia those meetings, in which everything was discussed as in a committee of the whole: “We weren’t rushed, we had time for Quaker process to work.” Others have less fond memories. The Clerk of that time recalls “exhaustingly long Meetings for Business—young grad students—I just let them talk, but it was hard on other people.”...

The Meeting records, supplemented by memory and interviews, indicate considerable tension around the question of authority... “God” is not mentioned as a source of authority... Early in its development, Strawberry Creek Worship Group

was not sure that *Faith and Practice* ought to be used as an authoritative document. One prospective Presiding Clerk sought assurance that the group would follow *Faith and Practice* unless the group came to unity to act otherwise.

This concern about how to use written or traditional authority echoes the struggles of the Beans against the misuse of traditional Quaker process, and the extremely minimal discipline of the College Park Friends Association... As the Meeting matured, *Faith and Practice* became a well-honed tool rather than an instrument of external authority... By 2001 members of Strawberry Creek Meeting were serving on the Faith and Practice Revision Committee which issued the new 2001 edition of Faith & Practice. Strawberry Creek Meeting committees suggested substantive changes to the sections on “Home and Family Relationships” and “Harmony with Nature,” which Pacific Yearly Meeting adopted.

There is no evidence of any single leader exerting strong personal authority at any point in the meeting’s history. Traditionally, the Meeting has placed great confidence in the work of its committees, whose positions are filled by Nominating Committee. There have been points when difficulties in the nominating process indicate a fear of a few people exerting undue control.

In 1977 and 1978, some objected to an ad hoc naming committee bringing forward names to serve on nominating committee. And some objected to a closed process to season nominations, which saved nominees from potential embarrassment but made the process less transparent.

In 1998, nominating committee was unable to unite on a replacement when a Presiding Clerk withdrew due to family illness. Oversight Committee brought forward the name of the new clerk.

As shown in this sampling of comments from State of the Meeting reports, Strawberry Creek usually does succeed in reaching a deep unity, even on difficult issues, but the process has not seemed to become smoother as years go by:

Tension in Business Meetings...led to discussions of our acceptance of the guidelines in *Faith and Practice*. *State of the Meeting 1979*

Meetings for business are... shorter... but remain a troubled spot, due primarily to inexperience. We are learning to trust our committees.

State of the Meeting 1980

Conduct of business is more focused.

State of the Meeting 1981

...sometimes find the process of reaching unity on items of business...arduous...

State of the Meeting 1983

A lively exchange of views took place in Meeting for Business before the minute was approved, with one member standing aside.

State of the Meeting 1995

Fewer conflicts seem to underlie our week-to-week interactions than at this time last year. Meetings for Business have also been improving, with better attendance and more silences to wait on the Light. Complex decisions have been made in a spirit of goodwill and seeking.... Our experiences with difficult decisions such as Meeting times and curriculum have required careful attention to many points of view. Our Meetings for Listening have been of great service, and Way has opened for us, above all, through a willingness to experiment and watch where the Light leads us.

State of the Meeting 1998

The sense of deep worship has been carrying over into our Meetings for Business.

State of the Meeting 1999

While the issues change through the years, Meeting for Business seems to remain an area in which ego and misunderstanding must be continually transformed by inward listening... Unity about “small things” – where and when to meet, whom to nominate – seem more difficult than big questions. Meeting for Business seems to test all of our humility, compassion, imagination, listening skills, and ability to yield to the wisdom of the Spirit rather than our own wisdom. We must work for unity every time; the inward voice cannot be heard through routine tricks. We have to get our own voices and our own ideas out of the way, to make room for the deeper wisdom. “It don’t get easy.”

For example, in 2006 the Meeting was shaken by the arrival of an attender who was an avowed “hebephile” (the erotic preference for pubescent

children, roughly ages 11-14). As far as the Meeting was aware, he did not sexually abuse any of the Meeting's children, but many hours were spent addressing issues of boundaries, safety, and inclusivity. The result was a stronger and more formal policy on child safety, as well as increased sensitivity to better supervision and making the Meeting site facilities appropriate for children.

Same Sex Marriage

Concern for the lives of people with different sexual orientations has run through Strawberry Creek's history. At least two presiding clerks have been lesbian. In 1988, the community began to meet in dialogue on same-sex marriage. After four years of hard work, hurt feelings, mutual incomprehension, and tender listening to one another and to the voice of the Holy Spirit, Strawberry Creek Meeting united on a minute on same-gender marriage in 1992.

The minute states that all couples, regardless of sexual orientation, will be offered the same support, clearness process, and meeting for worship on the occasion of marriage. This minute was forwarded to Pacific Yearly Meeting in 1996 for consideration, as PYM discusses its own minute on equality of marriage rights.

In 1996, the Meeting also welcomed "the growth in the number of gay, lesbian, and bisexual members and attenders." A same-sex marriage under care of Strawberry Creek Meeting took place in 1998. In 2004, several same-sex couples from Strawberry Creek Meeting were married in civil ceremonies at San Francisco City Hall.

Role of Activism

Strawberry Creek Meeting gathered during a time of great social and political turmoil, played out in the streets of Berkeley and on the campus of the University of California at Berkeley, as well as reported in the news media. Strawberry Creek Meeting worked very hard to keep the noise and commotion of the political struggle from drowning out the centered quiet of Meeting for Worship... In this, they resemble Joel Bean in his attempt to retire from the struggle in Iowa to the peace of San Jose.

Members of the Strawberry Creek community have felt a strong tension between the need for a place to retire from conflict and gain refreshment from the

Divine Center, and the sense of responsibility to take action as a witness in the world.

Many individuals find expression for their concerns for social justice outside the Meeting. Members of Strawberry Creek Meeting, in small groups and individually, have been very active in personal and public work to express Friends' testimonies through action in the world.

Across the decades, Strawberry Creek Meeting has expressed a desire for an elusive sense of corporate witness.

What are we, as a Meeting, doing to fulfill our commitment to social justice, civic responsibility, and peace?

State of Meeting 2001

Although many individuals [are] active on peace and social concerns, we do not currently find ourselves called to... witness as a Meeting.

State of Meeting 1981

From making public statements on ballot issues to worshipping in public during times of mourning, the Meeting has taken corporate action. There have been long periods when the Meeting seemed to bubble...with witness in the world. The period 1983-1993 seems particularly rich in witness. Friends who were part of these actions, which included civil disobedience, running a food pantry, building houses, worldwide travel, and sanctuary for political refugees, speak of them with joyful reflection in their faces. There may have been no central corporate action, but there was a strong sense of a supportive community network that supported and celebrated the brave, persistent, and faithful witness of so many community members.

Later Strawberry Creek Meeting began to develop corporate witness around care for the earth. Meeting adopted a Dime-a-Gallon program to voluntarily tax members for carbon use, and to use funds raised to mitigate environmental damage...

[The Meeting is now deeply engaged in exploring issues related to Power, Privilege, and Race, led by a group of that name. Who we are in the world is an ever unfolding discovery.]

Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting
Meeting for Worship on the Occasion of Business
October 10, 2021 draft minutes

For review and approval at November Business Meeting

Meeting for Business opened at 11:50 a.m. with silent worship and was conducted via Zoom. Beth Wrightson clerked the meeting. 30 Friends were present.

Rachel Findley shared the reflections of the First Day Children's Program Committee on the Advices and Queries on Social and Civic Responsibility. She shared a quote from William Penn: "It is a reproach to religion & government to suffer so much poverty & excess."

The Clerk reviewed the agenda, which had been posted by the Recording Clerk to groups.io on October 8.

The Recording Clerk read the minutes for the September, 2021, Meeting for Business. The minutes were approved with the following modifications,

- "The [August] minutes were adopted" was changed to "The minutes were approved."
- The spelling of David Rutschman's name was corrected.
- More detail was added to the report on Pacific Yearly Meeting's Annual Session.
- Our Yearly Meeting was consistently referenced as PacYM. This differentiates us from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.
- The ambiguous term "The clerk" was replaced with "Strawberry Creek's clerk."
- Gabriela Alvarado Portillo's name was corrected throughout the minutes.
- The responses to the query on becoming an actively anti-racist faith community were refined.

Query

The clerk read the query: "*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

The Clerk shared an announcement from Nathan Moon regarding Ujima Friends Meeting and Ujima Friends Peace Center in Oakland. The announcement included several of the services that Ujima Peace Center will offer the community. Nathan will post more on the listserv in coming weeks.

The Clerk shared thank you letters from Friends World Committee for Consultation and Friends Committee on Legislation of California for our annual donation, and from the Oakland LGBTQ Community Center for the Community Sharing Fund donation of \$3,000.

Old Business - There is no old business.

New Business - Peace Earthcare and Social Witness (Larry Strain) has decided to give a \$100 donation to Berkeley Reparations /Reparations Now! The committee would like the gift to come from the meeting as a whole. The fundraising campaign is to ensure that a reparations initiative, to be funded by a parcel tax, has a place on the November, 2022, ballot. The GoFundMe site is <https://www.gofundme.com/f/berkeley-reparations>. A more detailed report on the initiative will be on the agenda at next month's Business Meeting, to allow the Meeting to decide whether to participate as a whole in the donation. A friend suggested that a donation from the whole Meeting might be more than \$100.

Reports

Worship and Ministry (Judith Schumacher-Jennings) reported that Laura Miller has advised that we can resume in-person gatherings, with open windows, masks, and vaccination. Elizabeth is communicating with Berkeley Tech about whether their air circulation is sufficient to meet with windows closed. The committee is exploring the technology that will allow people who cannot attend in person to participate.

When we are closer to opening, the committee will schedule another Listening meeting to present modified reopening guidelines, and to take questions and feedback. In the meantime please feel welcome to share your thoughts with Judith and/or Ralph, co-clerks of Worship and Ministry.

Communications Committee (Sarah Hawthorne) reported on its work. After discernment, Communications Committee has concluded that they will not be subscribing to monthly Meeting electronic newsletters, but we will continue to subscribe to printed copies of Quaker publications such as Friends Journal and Western Friend. The Committee will also support our Meeting in accessing the newsletters of other Meetings (most are available online).

The committee is undertaking a redesign of the Meeting's website, in order to better meet Meeting's needs. The hope is to develop a website more flexible and accommodating to the information that Communications Committee is not able to currently post, to use a website program with which a greater number of people are familiar (and can therefore make changes/ additions), and to create an appearance that is more contemporary. In designing the homepage, the top priority will be to make information needed by a newcomer up front and easy to see on the homepage. Communications Committee intends to construct the new website using members of the committee rather than hiring an outside contractor. The committee asks Friends to send photos (past or future) of Strawberries in action - not just standing still and looking at the camera. Photos should be labeled with names of those pictured, date taken, and a general description/label of the activity/event. So far they have most seriously considered two web building programs: Quaker Cloud and Wix. At this point, the committee's sense is that Wix is the better solution.

Care of the Meeting Committee (Stephen McNeil) has appointed Rick Herbert, Joyce Samati, and Leonard Joy as a clearness committee for Chris Hogness. People who have concerns about Chris' membership request or about approving people as members who are living far away are welcome to contact Care of the Meeting. Stephen suggested that we refrain from creating a new category of "remote Friend."

Query

The Clerk invited us to contemplate the query: "*How did our work today support us in becoming an actively anti-racist faith community?*" One Friend shared that our Meeting has several members who are actively involved in an accompaniment team supporting an immigrant from Latin America.

Announcements

Next Meeting for Business will be November 14th, 2021 at 11:50 a.m.

Clerks' and Representatives' Gathering, Saturday October 23rd, 10:00 a.m. to Noon (on Zoom)
Stephen McNeil, Care of the Meeting Committee.

Power, Privilege, and Race Subcommittee (Susan Burr) The committee is organizing a showing and discussion of PBS documentary *Foreigners in Their Own Land*. Oct 31 at 11:50am. Details will be shared via groups.io.

Peace, Earthcare, and Social Witness Committee (Larry Strain). The committee is organizing a discussion of *Beyond Community Policing*, with AFSC and Berkeley Friends Meeting. It will take place November 2nd 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Avoteja Jiltonilro spoke of the need in Puerto Rico. Friends who wish to help are invited to send contributions to her. Details are on her Facebook page. She also invited Friends to attend a concert at Berkeley Conservatory of Jazz 5:30 on the evening of October 10th.

The Meeting closed with worship at 1:20 p.m. Respectfully submitted,
Beth Wrightson, Acting Clerk, Ralph Murphy, Acting Alternate Clerk, Paul Jolly, Recording Clerk



Reflections on Advices and Queries for
Social & Civic Responsibility

By First Day Children's Program Committee

As we talked about the Advices and Queries on Social and Civic Responsibility, the First Day Children's Program Committee responded as individuals, as a committee working with the Meeting's children and their families, and on behalf of Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting as a whole community.

Speaking for ourselves, we talked about how hard it can be to see what is right to do, and do it even when social and governmental norms conflict with right action as we see it.

—trying to intervene to support a woman who was being mistreated by a policeman

—Offering a writing class, and snacks, to people with mental illness who have recently been homeless

—Understanding that people with privilege can become homeless or mentally ill.

—Knowing what is beyond our sense of safety, and how that changes as we grow older.

“There but for the grace of God go I.”

“I gave up my values to be more safe”

“it doesn't feel good to have more.”

“Maybe it's time for younger people to take up the actions”

“What will people think? What do I think?”

William Penn said “It is a reproach to religion & government to suffer so much poverty & excess.” He speaks to our world today as truly as he spoke back then.

“People at farmers' market with their baskets, people living in the streets nearby: could I talk with them about how it came about to be that way?”

“Feeling like a hypocrite living with paradoxes”

“I can get self-righteous and judgmental when I see my siblings embracing their privilege...”

“going on trips,”

“flying into space,”

“converting backyard housing into a gym...”

“I take food down to the homeless encampment..”

it matters what i do and what i try to do...

“smiling... can change the world”

We should pray and seek clearness not only when we are considering noncompliance with a law, but also while we are in action.

Speaking for the Children's Program Committee, we saw that children can help us stop taking things for granted that we may not question.

“Children. Learn from them.”

“Working with kids, doing service with kids, helps the kids & also us.”

“A child came to us so shy they didn't speak. The other kids helped to bring them out of their shell, and the shy child “flowered.””

“Get out of their way so they can grow; that is helping society deeply.”

Speaking for Strawberry Creek, we asked, “How does what we're doing help change the system?”

We work with Quaker organizations like FCLCA, FCNL, QEW and others to change laws, policies, and actions. We are reaching out to local organizations that aren't necessarily Quaker to help us join with our community to make changes toward a better society. We work with Youth Spirit Art Works to bring a vision of Beloved Community into the world.

We have spent much effort to dismantle racism within and around ourselves. Some committee members wondered if we can also work on other kinds of injustice and suffering, such as refugees and migrants, people with mental illness, and poor and homeless people.

Friends are advised to pray before acting on a law that is contrary to God's law, as well as to speak with the Meeting, family members & all who might be affected by the decision. Praying and seeking guidance throughout one's engagement may be very important, not only initially before acting.

STRAWBERRY CREEK MONTHLY MEETING

Box 5065, Berkeley, California 94705

Phone messages: 510/524-9186

www.strawberrycreekfriends.org

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

TO:

NOVEMBER 2021 ISSUE