

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: August 21** (for September 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

SUNDAYS (ongoing)

10 a.m. Meeting for Worship

10am Sunday Meeting for Worship is now both onsite and on Zoom. Details inside.

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

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.

(activities below via Zoom unless otherwise noted)

JULY

July 3 Advices & Queries on Meeting for Business, read aloud by Events Committee during worship hour

July 10 No Meeting for Worship on the Occasion of Business in July

July 17 12:30pm PPR book discussion – *Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship*. Contact Susan Burr.

July 24 12:30 p.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.

AUGUST

Aug 7 Advices & Queries on Simplicity, read aloud by Worship & Ministry Committee during worship hour

Aug 14 12:30 p.m. Meeting for Worship on the Occasion of Business

Aug 20 9:30 a.m. (Saturday) Committee Clerks Meeting – hosted by Care of Meeting Committee

Aug 21 12:30pm PPR book discussion – *Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship*. Contact Susan Burr.

Aug 28 12:30 p.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.

Strawberry Creek Sunday Worship

We meet for worship at 10am Sunday mornings, both in person at Berkeley Technology Academy and online. Newcomers (in person or on Zoom) are invited to sign the Guest Book. For Zoom link and Guestbook, see Meeting's website

<http://www.strawberrycreekfriends.org>

See next column for more information.

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

Western North 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.

FGC Gathering July 3-9

Registration is open for 2022 Friends General Conference Gathering (entirely online). Under discernment: Young Adult and Youth (YAY!) *may* be held in-person, see <https://www.fgcquaker.org>

Events are planned for BIPOC Quakers (only)

<https://www.fgcquaker.org/fgcprograms/the-gathering/programs-and-events/events-for-people-of-color-only/>

PacYM Annual Gathering July 22-27

Pacific Yearly Meeting community is invited to gather July 22-27 either in person at Mount Madonna Center near Watsonville, or remotely, via Zoom, under the theme *Beloved Community. What Does it Mean to Belong? To Ourselves? To Each Other? To the Earth?* To read the Clerk's Call (on this theme) and for information, see

www.pacificyearlymeeting.org

Stephen McNeil (His Friends Speak)

This newsletter contains the transcript from the June 9, 2022, Meeting on the Occasion for Holding Stephen McNeil in the Light, see below.

Blended Worship on 1st, 3rd, 5th Sundays
No Tech Worship @B-Tech on 2nd, 4th Sundays
No Changes to Worship on Zoom

For July and August, SCM will have a 'blended' meeting on the 1st, 3rd and 5th First Days only. The vaccination requirement remains in place on the 1st, 3rd and 5th First Days.

Meeting for Worship on zoom will continue weekly as before (10am, same link as posted on the Meeting's website homepage).

On the 2nd and 4th First Days, B-Tech will be 'absent' from its square on the zoom screen. Instead, it will host a no-tech, in-person meeting, requiring no extra volunteer help. In the interest of offering more choice to Strawberries, there will be no vaccination requirement at these meetings. However, we will still wear masks, social distance and have fans for ventilation.

Worship and Ministry's plan is to observe what happens this summer, listen to our experiences with it and learn what we can in order to assess the best way to go forward in the Fall. Attendance at B-Tech in the last 7 weeks has attracted a small, but loyal group of Strawberries and some visitors, too; our hope is that it will grow in the future.

Thanks for your patience and understanding as our Meeting finds its way forward in our new pandemic world. If you have questions and/or comments, please direct them to Worship and Ministry committee (rather than to the list serve).



2022 Summer Book Series discussions of *Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship* continue!

The second and third sessions of the 2022 Summer Book Series will take place on Zoom from 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Sundays, July 17 and August 21, providing us continued opportunity to reflect as a Meeting on the offerings within the book *Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship: Quakers, African Americans, and the Myth of Racial Justice*, by Donna McDaniel and Vanessa Julye.

The first session of the series offered by Power, Privilege, and Race (PPR) Subcommittee of Worship and Ministry took place on June 19, 2022, and focused on material from the first 140 pages. July's session will consider pages 141-288. In August we will weigh pages 290-397.

The first sentence of the preface to *Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship* states:

“The history of the relationship between the Religious Society of Friends and Americans of African descent is a difficult and sensitive one to write.” It is also a history that until this book was researched and published, all too many Friends had very limited knowledge of, or ready access to, this precious history.

Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship is a substantial, spirit led volume of work, and its value immeasurable as we open to its guidance regarding what it means for Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends “to become an actively anti-racist, faith community”.

This is the commitment initiated with SCMM's *Minute on Engagement to Uproot and Dismantle Racism* [February, 2020] and furthered by our Accountability Query, currently being re-evaluated after a year of regular use in Meetings on the Occasion of Business and in a number of Committee Meetings.

Please do join in! For more information contact Susan Burr at susanburr45@gmail.com



Stephen McNeil

(b. January 1950, d. June 18, 2022)

Stephen McNeil was born in Plymouth, Massachusetts. He was the youngest of four children—one brother and two sisters.

He spent his first nine years on a farm and enjoyed solitary time exploring the environs. At age nine he moved with his mother and one sister to live with family in the Anacostia neighborhood of Washington, D.C. This was a tough urban neighborhood and his school classmates were largely African-American.

While Stephen was raised Irish Catholic, he lost interest in the church because of the racial segregation he saw in Washington, D.C. parishes. In eighth grade, **Stephen's best friend Karl Stanley applied to Sidwell Friends, a Quaker school in Washington, D.C. While his friend passed the exam, he was not admitted because he was African-American.** This furthered Stephen's interest in the Civil Rights Movement.

Learn more about who Stephen was and the influences that made him the person we knew.
<https://lgbtqreligiousarchives.org/profiles/stephen-mcneil>

6/9/22 Worship to Hold Stephen McNeil in the Light (Zoom w/107 participants) -- Transcript

(S.T.) I want to just offer that it's clear Stephen has entered the final part of his life, and our time here together is really about offering prayers for comfort and peace for Stephen. I very much appreciate that you are here to hold him in the light with this collection of people. And we will start a recording. If people are comfortable with that, somebody in the chat has asked for that. I'm going to move us into worship at this point, so again welcome.

(C.G.) One of the great delights in my history was holding the chuppah [canopy under which the bride and groom stand during a Jewish wedding ceremony] for Stephen's marriage to Brian quite a long time ago, and certainly before gay marriage was any kind of legal thing, and of course, at that time we didn't expect Brian to last much longer, and he did a wonderful job of lasting a whole lot longer, and bringing much joy to Stephen's life.

My most recent delight in regards to Stephen was being with him at the gathering in Rhode Island for Friends General Conference. Afterwards, Stephen joined us when we went bar-hopping. What a funny thing to have done at Friends General Conference!

Stephen was a dear friend, a colleague. Stephen was someone with whom I shared a passionate interest in the internment of Japanese Americans, and I just wanna say for the record that, losing him -- being on the verge of losing him -- at this time seems consummately unfair to me.

(R.R.) As long as Stephen has been around, no matter what the problem, there has been something interesting and engaging to learn about dealing with it. And as long as Stephen has been around, there's just been a partial or maybe even complete, solution available if we just work on it some more and just keep looking for it. And as long as Stephen has been around, there was always some something humorous or very amusing about mere mortals trying to handle the problems they get themselves into. I will miss all of that.

(P.S.) I first met Stephen right after 9/11, we just moved to San Francisco, and I'd gone down to sit with people and there were all these blankets piling up at the doors and in the hallways, because AFSC -- which was upstairs from the San Francisco

Meeting -- put out a call for blankets for Afghanistan. So I went upstairs to see what was going on, and AFSC even hired me to help with volunteers. The basement was just unspeakable. But it was a huge campaign that the whole community came together around. And then we worked on putting boots at the Civic Center for Eyes Wide Open, which came out the next year protesting what turned out to be a 17 year war in Iraq.

I most recently saw him in New Orleans last month at the French quarter festival. We sat and listened to jazz, and had lunch at the Napoleon house, and he was telling me about that. He had finally gotten around to making plans in case something happened, so that he had long term care, and Roy was going to be his executor. And I was thinking, "Yeah, Yeah, yeah. Now that we're adults, we're all talking about this. Little did I know that it would come to pass so soon. But he is a dear man who introduced me to FCNL and into AFSC, and showed me how to have a Quakerly approach to things along with -- as one of my friends put it -- being a little crispy sometimes. I fervently hope he recovers.

(D.B.) So thanks to Stephen I'm working for AFSC today. I remember he interviewed me for my job with the AFSC ten years ago. I was very stressed out, and felt really like a total stranger to that setting. And there was this old Quaker Oats man there with a white beard. During the interview he said something completely unrelated, about "his husband". And I remember thinking two things. First of all, this is not related to anything; and second, "his *husband*"! I'm quite sure he said that to make me feel at ease and it worked!

Later on he became my supervisor. For a couple of years, and we worked closely together. I learned a lot about his approach to AFSC and to the world, which is a very right kind of realistic view of things. He was critical, funny, scratchy, and yet not letting anything get in the way of doing everything you can to make the world a better place, and to make sure to see a better place.

I love that combination, you know, somebody who is taking on the biggest project like world peace, and is such a total optimistic on one hand and yet really seeing all the flaws of everything all the time, and not looking away from them and being able to even make fun of the situation. So I've learned a lot from Stephen.

(L.J.) Back in the 1980's It was common for people at PYM to confuse me and Stephen for each other. So That's how we got to to know each other some years ago (8 10 years ago, I'm not sure) -- I was chatting with Steven in his office in San Francisco. We both had had a lot of common experiences back during the Vietnam war. We didn't know each other, but we had a lot of comic, common experiences like being at the Pentagon overnight, and stuff like that. We were kicking around that stuff.

And then I turned to how messed up things were then at the present time. Back when we were talking 8 or 10 years ago, I just kind of asked rhetorically, "What happened?" Stephen jumped right back with an answer to my rhetorical question, which was, "We forgot to stay". Yeah, he meant we were there in Washington. We were there at the pentagon. We did all these things. But we forgot to stay [in Washington, and continue the fight]. So let's hold Stephen in the Light. Thank you.

(R.E.) Stephen was so many things. Argumentative, passionate, all good, crusty, focused, and so into what he was doing. One time at night, I remember thinking, "Who is this on dot com?" And then we got to talking, and he told me his kind of origin story where he grew up in a house, family, and all of that. I thought, "What a journey! And here you are! We so happy!" Lucky to have you here. Keep on Going.

(D.H.) A year and a half ago, when I was diagnosed with cancer, I was really worried about all the very important papers that I had to get sent off to AFSC. Steven volunteered and spent quite a few days going through mountains of papers to send off to AFSC. I was deeply appreciative and I think that example is indicative of Stephen throughout his life, seeing things that needed to be done. And when you said you could be helpful, he was right there.

One of the other things I just deeply appreciated about Stephen was his love and appreciation of Bayard Rustin. He did all he could to help other people in AFSC and Quakers and beyond to understand Bayard's life and his contribution to our society and our world. Thank you, Steven.

Read Stephen's 2013 article on Bayard Rustin
<https://www.afsc.org/friends/bayard-rustin-and-march-washington>

(M.F.) There is a story -- in a text that is sacred to some -- illuminating to even more -- about the crucifixion of Jesus, as Jesus is suffering on the cross. The soldiers are at the foot of the cross, bargaining, casting lots for his clothing. They're using it as a game of chance, with his clothing, his possessions, as the prize. So they are already treating him as if he is dead.

Today I am trying to remind myself that Stephen is not dead. He is not dead. I am holding a vision of him as comfortable, free from fear, and on some level, aware of how very many people love him, how very many people are holding him.

(M.T.) When my husband and I moved back to California, 1998, I had not planned on working right away, but the cost of living was higher than I had expected. So I went trotting over to the American Friend Service Committee, having already been in the building several times for Quaker Meeting and I asked if there was anything I could do. I was directed immediately to Stephen, and I, like P.S., was put to work. He put me to work right away with all the donations that were being gathered first for Afghanistan, and then for Yugoslavia. We had a lot of work to do, and I was really happy to be hired to do that work.

Later an office position came up and I took that, so I worked with Stephen for about a year, and he was one of the worst people to work with that I've ever had the experience of working with! He was difficult, he was obstreperous, he was argumentative, he was abrupt. I had to keep reminding myself... I like the man! I actually like him. I respected him. I thought he was super smart. I liked talking to him. I just didn't like working with him.

There were other women in the service committee at the time, of course. As is my habit, I thought well, if I'm having a hard time with this guy, other people must be having a hard time too. So we organized ourselves, not to do anything about Stephen, but just around the role and status of women in the service, especially in our region. We had some meetings and gatherings, and we talked and we wrote a tremendous amount. It didn't really help, although I think it helped us blow off some steam.

I left the job after a year -- I left because of Stephen. I just said I can't work with this guy anymore. The minute I left AFSC and took another job (which took me quite a while to find), the more

I came to like Stephen. When I hung out with Stephen, I really liked him. I thought, "Oh, I really do really like this guy and I do really respect him. He's got a great heart, and the way he took care of Brian just amazed me. His sense of humor, his loyalty, his philosophy in struggling with something that I knew was very, very hard. I'm gonna think we all knew that was hard. It seemed like just an endless amount of difficult work when he was already doing difficult work.

So yeah, Steven is certainly alive and I do I have trouble thinking of him as being anything up other than somebody who'll just get up out of his bed after a few hours and say, "Okay, I'm okay, what's all the fuss about?" It's complicated to have such a big heart and such a kind soul, and ... be so difficult. I think somebody said "crispy" or cantankerous, whatever the word was. But Stephen was all those things. It just reminds me that we're all a piece of work! Yeah, a really good man.

(S.S.) I'm here with K.A. and D.H. I was thinking about that "crispiness" of Stephen's. I've been to visit Stephen a couple of times in the hospital. One of the things that sort of came to me as I was sitting with him is that I think that was a big front. Well, he was very intelligent and he didn't suffer fools easily. And so it showed up in a lot of impatience. But he also had, as many people are saying, an incredibly big heart. and I am thinking about all the people who came into the ASFC. How he got them a desk, and maybe a computer, so they could work on a part of the world that the rest of the world wasn't paying any attention to.

There were the people that were working on Chechnya. There was the young man who had space there for a really long time, who was working on M----, and he actually put together that huge festival of Southeast Asia that happened for years at the Civic Center. There were volunteers that came in who were doing a variety of things, and all of them were people that somehow Stephen met and found space for them. And so many of those people were so interesting and I learned so much about their stories and their countries, and what was happening. I really wouldn't have otherwise had that opportunity if Stephen hadn't always had this open door policy.

I also just wanna say how much I appreciate this community that is here today. There are a lot of people here who are associated with the AFSC. Or FCNL, which are both organizations that Stephen

loved and served for decades. And you know -- we show up. We showed up when Bran Mailman [Stephen's husband] passed. People came from far away, old volunteers that I hadn't seen in years in years. All the staff, we we all came back together for Brian's funeral. I just think it's quite an honor to be part of this community of people who show up for one another and so I want to say thank you to Stephen, and I'm gonna say thank you to all of you.

(B.E.) S. speaks very much the thoughts I have right now. Strangely I've been thinking about my mother's first husband who died in the coal mines. My mom's husband was a coal miner in Illinois and his people weren't Quakers, but they'd know what we are doing. They would have said, we're holding a vigil like when there's a disaster in a coal mine and the people come. They come to be together, to hope against hope there'll be survivors, to hold hands in the face of an unfathomable, unfathomable event, and to act in solidarity.

I very much appreciate this community that Stephen is a part of, and will be a part of. At times like this I'm drawn always to a mantra, a prayer. It's a prayer for the living, it's a prayer for the dying, and a prayer for those dead, a prayer for all of us. It goes something like this:

May the longtime Sun shine upon you, all Love surround you, and the pure Light within you guide your way on. God bless Stephen!

(N.H.) I've not known Stephen long, but our acquaintance has been just so joyful. Since he's joined us at Friends Peace Teams, just as everyone says, show up and show up, and you know, get up and go for the work, it's been just such a pleasure. All our love and warmth and hearts and prayers wrapping Stephen at this time.

(F.B.) I am very grateful for Stephen's friendship, and for the service that that he provided to Pendle Hill when he served in the Board. One of the things that that I shall say about him is that he was always full of surprises. Two years ago I was holding a new book that came out. The title of the book was Dancing in God's Earthquake: The Coming Transformation of Religion, written by Rabbi Arthur Waskow. I am working on campus. This is one of the last times that Stephen was here on the Pendle Hill campus. He asked me, "What are you reading?"

And I said, "Oh, this book just came out, and it was highly recommended and blah blah blah."

And Stephen said, "Oh, oh, my God, this is crazy!" So I learned that day that Stephen had not just a friendship with the Rabbi, author of the book, but was very familiar in serving in certain religious ceremonies with that Rabbi. And then we engaged in a conversation associated with the book, that went beyond the book. And that's how I remember that last encounter with him.

You know you enter into a conversation and it's a doorway. You know as soon as you are engaged that doors are opening, and you are exploring together in that friendship. We did passionate hard work that was a deep anchor for me. This is a great joy to have friends like these in my life. And for Pendle Hill I would say, you guys are great, it's been a joy having such a team, despite the fact that Stephen is no longer serving on the board he has been always making connections and sending people our way.

(P.P.) I would like to bring into our circle the many thousands of people whose lives have benefited from the work that Stephen has done over so many years through Quaker organizations. I just feel this much larger community than those of us who can see each other on these little screens, who have known and loved Stephen, and have benefited from his deep, deep compassion and his brain strategizing.

You know Stephen was kind of Mr. Quaker (ha ha!). He is Mr. Quaker to me in a lot of ways. He gave his whole professional life to working through Quaker organizations, and I can hardly think of FCNL and AFSC and Pendle Hill, and now, friends Peace Teams without appreciating the contributions that Stephen has made and I know that he has more contributions to make. I pray that he is able to take home his bachelor's degree that he's been working on and I hope that he is able to complete the book that he is working on and I pray that he rests now and forever in God's hands.

(J.S.) So I have not known you very long, Stephen. I know we're working this, and so I hope that you get to hear this, and at least hear our voices, and and know that we're here for you. I feel a little bit ripped off, that all of you have these memories, some some quite pleasant, and some a little more challenging.

But I don't have those memories, because we only started working on Friends Peace Teams this past year, and because of the pandemic, we haven't met in person. I've seen his cat as much as I've seen him. I have a bit of a crush on you, Stephen, and a crush to me is every time you get together with someone at the end of it, you look forward to getting together again. That's really what it's been like to work with you on teams.

I love learning about your past, but I also know that I have things to learn in all the time that you have left. I don't know what that learning is and I don't know whether it'll come directly from you or through these many people here, or through other many people whom you have loved and served. But yeah, you know it's difficult to not know you, but I feel like I could go up to somebody and say, "Oh, let me introduce you to Stephen McNeil", and they're like "Yeah, I've known him for 30 years" -- that's how naïve I would be -- and yet he welcomed me into friendship from the first time we met.

So Stephen I'm thinking of you and I'm hoping beyond hope and praying that some miracle will take place, and that you will feel comfortable and cared for, and I am grateful to Roy and to all the nurses there at Kaiser, who are doing their best to make you as comfortable and peaceful as possible.

(A.R.) I'm one of those people that Stephen made room for at AFSC, as S. mentioned. This was after the American response to 9/11, so we were the Afghans for Afghanistan project that Stephen championed. We did that for maybe 15 years. More recently, -- I live in San Francisco -- in his retirement we've really enjoyed connecting over music. He has eclectic taste, great taste, and always game for going to a concert. Well, you know, if there isn't a movie festival, or a paper do, or something, then we go!

I was in Louisiana in New Orleans in April for French Quarter Fest. We'd been talking -- I've been going for years -- and he was always gonna join me and that kept getting postponed with Covid. (But this April we went.) We had a good time. I am so glad that Stephen made the effort to make the trip. It wasn't easy for a lot of reasons, because we were in crowds of people after isolating for so long. It was humid. The streets are hard to walk. I was worried about him. Stephen is so strong and kept pushing and doing exactly what he wanted, and it was hard. It's a hard choice, because you want to

hear every musician and he would usually make it to them. He was always open minded. I was so happy when he enjoyed the same things that I enjoyed, and then we would go. You know, you also want to go to bookstores. What a hard choice! Going to another stage or bookstores. He kept cramming in as much as he could. Then his flight back got cancelled!

Anyway, traveling isn't easy these days, but he keeps traveling. I'm gonna try and come by and visit him. I'm out of town now. I'll bring some of the music Stephen really loves -- John Boutte - a soul singer in New Orleans. He'd heard him after Katrina when he went to do repair work, and then we heard him again on this trip. So music is the answer... I will stop by and bring that with me. Brian Mailman [Stephen's husband] was Jewish you know and Stephen connected with that, too. So I'm saying my *Mi Shebeirach* on Friday night for Stephen, a prayer for healing. Thank you, and thank you Roy, for all your care.

(E.S.) For for the last 3 years, I've been on a committee with Stephen (that Stephen's been clerking), so I've heard Steven checking in once a month. I've gotten to have the pleasure of having him clerk a committee that I know. I was aware that I had come to know Stephen late in life, and that he was holding in-check his feelings of frustration or intolerance or whatever, and it felt like a gift that I was knowing him at a time where he had mastered that. I thoroughly appreciated getting to be with him in that way through this period of him being hospitalized as I haven't been available really to get to know better. And the thing that has made me feel that I have known him better is his friend Roy, who has his medical power of attorney. Who would that person be whom Stephen would have hold his health care directive?

And It has been moving to me to have Roy be the person who is caring for Stephen and his wishes, caring for us, and being so respectful, just the way that Stephen would be so respectful and so I really appreciate getting to know Stephen a little better, through the expression of Roy's care, at a time where Stephen is not so available for that.

(K.K.) I feel like I want to speak for the *hibakusha*, who haven't been able to come to the U.S. for several years because of the pandemic. I am quite certain that they'll be looking for Stephen when they come because he's always been part of the

people who've hosted them, and helped them and supported them when they've come. I just know that there are people in many parts of the world who may not know that they're missing this special human, but will discover it later.

(V.P.) Stephen was my first Yankee. I was a little girl from South Carolina, finding myself in Washington working for FCNL. We were working on the policy committee and it was 3 o'clock in the morning -- and not the first 3 o'clock in the morning! We had seen that we could do it.

And I said to Stephen "You're possibly the meanest person I have ever met!" and he burst into tears! And that was Stephen.

I have adored him for I figure 38 years, and I am so jealous of all of you who are in San Francisco. I know it's not nice or Quakerly to be jealous, but I'm so jealous, because I so want to see him and hold his hand, and tell him what a treasure he's been to me (though I think he knows) and tell him that I love him and that I want every good and wonderful thing for him. Please would one of you out there whisper to him that V. loves him.



Stephen was on the forefront of changing Quaker attitudes about sexual orientation

Hear Stephen's voice describing this struggle:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y8w-S4kE8Gg>
Or read his *Proclaiming Love and Justice* (2016)
<https://www.friendsjournal.org/afsc-lgbtq/>

Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting
Meeting for Worship on the Occasion of Business
June 12, 2022, draft minutes

For review and approval at August 14, 2022, 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. 26 Friends were present.

Lee Douglas read the Finance Committee's responses to the Advices and Queries on The Meeting Community. The Clerk reviewed the agenda, which was posted by the Recording Clerk to groups.io on June 11. The Recording Clerk then read the May, 2022, minutes. The minutes were approved without correction.

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

As this is the beginning of Beth's term as Strawberry Creek's clerk, she expressed her gratitude for the Meeting's trust in her and forbearance with the transition. She read excerpts of thank you letters that the Meeting received for our annual contributions to Berkeley Food Pantry and Dorothy Day House. She shared Elaine Emily's travel minute from Friends United Meeting's Stoking the Fire retreat. She asked other Friends with travel minutes to share them with her, so she can read them to the Meeting. She reiterated the request that committees share their reflections on the anti-racism queries before the end of July.

Old Business

Nominating committee (Barbara Birch) proposed the names that were circulated on groups.io June 1, and all were approved.

Susan Black, Co-clerk, Nominating Committee

Heather Levien, Worship and Ministry

Cindy Trueblood, Worship and Ministry

Randy Matamoros, Facilities

Rick Herbert, whose name was brought forward at May Meeting for Business, was also approved for Finance

Sarah Hawthorne, Interim Clerk, Care of Meeting Committee. (In light of the uncertainty in Stephen McNeil's situation, the word "Interim" in that job title will remain for the time being.)

New Business - There was no new business.

Reports

Treasurer's report (Nancy Wilkinson) gave us an update, which indicated that we are \$4,000 in the red. Given that we just resumed our in-person meeting beginning in May, this is about where we might expect to be.

First Day School Children's Committee (Andrea Perriott) is considering how the Children's Program can be resumed. The requirement that attenders be vaccinated and boosted excludes children under 5 at this time. Furthermore, children under 2 cannot wear masks. Outdoor spaces may at some point be utilized for children as a stopgap measure.

Worship and Ministry Committee (Judith Schumacher-Jennings) - The reopening committee (Kathy Barnhart, Peter Lin, Nancy Wilkinson, James Hosley, Erik Wilson and Ralph Murphy) is being laid down. The heavy lifting of reopening is complete and Worship and Ministry will resume full responsibility for Meeting for Worship. Many thanks to those friends. James will continue training audio techs. Erik will continue clerking Facilities. Peter will continue with his fan stand and supply storage projects.

Vaccination requirements. There is a strong feeling among Friends that the most equitable approach to vaccination is to advise people to get vaccinated but not require proof of vaccination. However, most of the

people who communicate with Judith about vaccination say they have begun to come or will be coming soon due to our requirement for proof of vaccination. A few people have stopped coming but they are not in touch with her to tell her why. Worship and Ministry will be calling them to ask. Worship and Ministry Committee agreed to extend the vaccination and one booster requirement for two more weeks. After that, Worship and Ministry will decide how to proceed.

Use of classrooms. Worship and Ministry Committee is not ready to approve use of the classrooms for other meetings, such as worship sharing, committee meetings, etc., since we are not certain about the ventilation in the classrooms, and the numbers of Covid cases are still in a surge. We also will delay serving beverages in the courtyard since that requires removing a mask to drink. Worship and Ministry can reassess these aspects of meeting once Laura Miller says we are not in a “surge.”

Screen and Projector in the B-Tech Meeting Room. Worship and Ministry agreed to finish our current projects before considering a screen and projector so Zoom participants could be seen by in-person worshippers. In the meantime, Peter Lin, James Hosley, and John McCarthy will meet about the equipment needed for that enhancement. There is also a hope that the equipment will fit in the yet unbuilt storage unit.

Canceling in-person Meeting for Worship. We reviewed the process for stopping an in-person meeting for worship. The criteria for canceling a Meeting for Worship are: 1) if Laura Miller says to stop, or 2) if there aren't enough volunteers to run it. In either case, the Clerk of Meeting, Beth Wrightson, would be called and she would put a note on groups.io that meeting in person was canceled and notify Berkeley Unified School District. Signs would be posted on the 2 entrances to the courtyard. Damond would be contacted by Erik, head of Facilities.

Volunteers. The Reopening Committee has discussed how volunteering staffing numbers could be reduced without coming to any conclusions. Please contact Sarah Hawthorne if you can help with Zoom Hosting. Contact Erik Wilson if you can help with Facilities, and contact James Hosley if you can help with audio tech. If you are attending the meeting and are able, whether in person or on zoom, we need you to be volunteering in order to make this work.

Query - The Clerk invited us to contemplate the query: *“How did our work (and our decisions if relevant) today support us in becoming an actively anti-racist faith community?”* One Friend invited each of us to consider how we could individually become more anti-racist. Another affirmed that inclusiveness has been visible in our meeting today.

Announcements

- Next Meeting for Business August 14, 2022, at 12:30 p.m.
- Power, Privilege, and Race Subcommittee (Susan Burr) The first summer book discussion of *Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship* by Donna McDaniel and Vanessa Julye will be at 12:30 pm, June 19th via zoom. Subsequent discussions will be July 17 and August 21. For more information, contact Susan at susanburr45@gmail.com.
- Communications Committee (Sarah Hawthorne) Deadline for July-August newsletter is June 19th.
- Friends General Conference (July 3-9) registration is open. There are different options available for people who prefer different levels of participation.
- Pacific Yearly Meeting registration is also open, July 22-27, in person at Mount Madonna, and on zoom. Interest groups will be during the session as well as the Sunday before and the Saturday after. People who want to attend interest groups only can contact Heather Levien.

Appreciation was expressed for Beth Wrightson's graceful and caring clerkship.

The Meeting closed with worship at 1:55 p.m.

Beth Wrightson, Presiding Clerk, Elaine Emily, Alternate Clerk, Paul Jolly, Recording Clerk



*Reflections on Advices & Queries
from Finance Committee*

The Meeting Community

We considered *Advices & Queries: The Meeting Community* from several very different angles: the wording of the queries, the logistical demands of maintaining the community as we transition through the pandemic, & the depth we find in caring for one another.

We felt the very first sentence of the Advices was missing a key component. Committee work should be included with Meetings for Worship and Business as the third leg of our spiritual community. In the second paragraph, we also felt that the Meeting provides not just a framework, but also a network, for us to learn & practice mutual care.

We moved into discussion of our experiences of being called on to offer mutual care. Whether in one-on-one topical support meetings, clearness and anchoring committee service, or practical assistance like rides or meals, we have found service to others in our community to be deeply meaningful.

There was a clear sense that such service is a gift to both the specific individual and to the Strawberry Creek community: when it's our turn to need help, the individual we happen to have helped may not be able to return the favor, but the community will. We held various individuals in the Light, and noted that this is the kind of interconnectedness we long for.

We also acknowledged the difficulties the pandemic has imposed. Our community is in some ways more dispersed now, which has made informal connections more challenging. Maintaining a hybrid meeting seems intensive, and we wonder if we can keep it up over time. Yet our hybrid experiment is testimony to how much we value all being together.

Going forward, creating space for both those who can only participate remotely and those who can only participate in person will be integral to the continuing health of the Strawberry Creek community.

**Finding Hope and Connection
in a Time of Climate Disruption,**

by Shelley Tanenbaum, Friends Journal (April/May)
<https://www.friendsjournal.org/finding-hope-and-connection-in-a-time-of-climate-disruption/>

Photo - *Grandson of John McCarthy and
Kathy Barnhart (photographer)*



STRAWBERRY CREEK MONTHLY MEETING

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

TO:

JULY/AUGUST 2022 ISSUE