

STRAWBERRY CREEK MONTHLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

FEBRUARY 2023
NEWSLETTER

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

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

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

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

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

Newsletter Deadline is the Sunday a week prior to Distribution Sunday. **Deadline: Feb 19** (for March 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)

Feb 5 Advices & Queries on Meeting for Worship, read aloud by Mutual Care

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

Feb 19 1p.m. State of the Meeting Listening Meeting. *Details inside.*

Feb 26 12:30 p.m. Committee Sunday. *Check with your committee clerk for details.*

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 are on our Meeting's website
<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

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.

State of the Meeting Listening Meeting - Feb. 19



As is our custom each year, Strawberry Creek produces a State of the Meeting report to submit to quarterly meeting. This report comes as a result of *"self-examination by the Meeting and its members of their spiritual strengths and weaknesses and of efforts to foster growth in the spiritual life."* (Pacific Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice, 2001, p.218)

Our State of the Meeting Listening Meeting will take place on Zoom at 1pm on Sunday February 19 (Zoom link is on Meeting's website homepage, same link as is used for Sunday worship.) All are invited to listen deeply to one another as we reflect together upon the year that has just passed (2022), and seek to discern how Spirit has been moving among us. This year's Writing Committee is Cindy Trueblood, Jeanne Diller and Andrea English.

Robin Standish passes...

Robin Standish was a member of Strawberry Creek Friends Meeting for many years, although her health prevented her from being active these last few years. On December 26, 2022, David Standish (son of Robin Standish) reported to Susan Strong (on whose Metaphor Project Board Robin served for a long time) that Robin Standish had passed:

“Despite being her perky (albeit in bed) self on Christmas Eve, Robin passed away this morning about 01:30. She was surrounded by all her children and some grandchildren.”

[Note: the newsletter editor did not have much information or photos at time of press]



Western Friend: westernfriend.org

Barbara Birch on
**Elizabeth Fry:
A Quaker Mess**

Podcast 19 to drop
Sat, Feb 4, 2023



Elizabeth Fry podcast w/Barbara Birch

On Saturday Feb 4, 2023, Western Friend releases Episode 19 in its podcast series – a conversation with Barbara Birch about Elizabeth Fry and other imperfect Friends. [Click here for details](#)

Pacific Yearly Meeting Activities

PacYM RepCom Sat Feb 25 & Mar 4

If you would like to attend the sessions of Pacific Yearly Meeting's Representative Committee (RepCom) this year, the dates will be Saturday, February 25, and Saturday, March 4, on Zoom. You can find lots more information about RepCom and also the registration form [HERE](#) (*or follow the link from the homepage of the Pacific Yearly Meeting website*). PacYM officers, committee clerks, and of the Yearly Meeting are welcome! Registration is open through February 22. Meeting representatives to PacYM are expected to attend, but all Friends with interest in the business may attend.



Pacific Yearly Meeting Family Field Trips

A quick overview of family oriented Quaker activities in Spring/Summer 2023:

<https://www.pacificyearlymeeting.org/>

March 5 (Davis) Lunch and birding after meeting

April 1-2 (Santa Cruz & BLQC) beach time, with optional overnight at Quaker Center

April 22 - Southern CA Quarterly Meeting

April 29-30 (Walker Creek Ranch) overnight

May 19-21 - College Park Quarterly Mtg - BLQC

June 17-25 - Quaker Camp (sleepaway) - BLQC

July 2-8 - Friends General Conference Annual Gathering (nationwide) in Oregon

July 21-26 - Pacific Yearly Meeting - Mt Madonna

Doctrine of Discovery – PacYM film showings

If you missed the Meeting's presentation of Doctrine of Discovery film (hosted by Meeting's PESW and PPR), you may want to catch PacYM Indigenous Concerns Subcommittee showing of this film followed by discussion. Sessions are held in two parts, the first being a screening and initial reactions, and the second diving deeper into where we go from here. The session are 2-3:30pm Feb 4 & 18, 7-8:30pm March 8t & 22, and 3-4:40pm April 16 & 30.

Black Quaker Lives Matter Film Festival

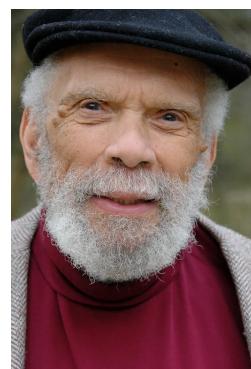
The BlackQuaker Project (BQP) is presents the 2023 Black Quaker Lives Matter Film Festival & Forum, a groundbreaking exploration of Black Friends who made a difference throughout both USA and world history. This year's festival-forum features African American Quakers and others concerned with truth and justice: abolition, retrospective justice/reparations, freedom, education, Black-White relations, non-violence, and anti-violence in response to systemic violence.

See <https://www.theblackquakerproject.org/2023-film-festival-forum> for a listing of films.

BlackQuaker Project (BQP) Founder

Dr. Harold D. Weaver, Alumni Fellow at Harvard University's Hutchins Center for African and African American Research, is the Founding Director of the BlackQuaker Project (BQP).

A pioneer in Africana Studies in the early 1970s, Hal founded and chaired the Africana Studies Department at Rutgers University, through which he was able to focus attention on the neglected legacy of the great Rutgers alumnus: Paul Robeson. For the past 50 years, Hal has worked to restore Robeson's legacy to its rightful place in world history, through publications, lectures, films and film retrospectives, and symposia.



Changed for life by his exposure to Quakerism at Westtown School and Haverford College, Hal combined his faith and activism into the BQP. He has produced several Quaker-related publications:

- FGC Press (2011): *Black Fire - African American Quakers on Spirituality & Human Rights* w/Paul Kriese, Steve Angell.
- Pendle Hill pamphlet (2020): *Race, Systemic Violence, and Retrospective Justice: An African American Quaker Scholar-Activist Challenges Conventional Narratives*

In 2022, he was awarded an alumni Lifetime Achievement Award from Haverford College. He is an active member of the Wellesley Friends Meeting.

Spotlight Kris Muller & Wilbur Hoff



*Kris Muller passed at 5:25am on Tuesday, January 17, 2023.
She is survived by her husband Wilbur Hoff,
who lives at a memory care facility in Castro Valley.*

This article was written March 21, 2021. In my conversation with Kris two years ago, we focused on Kris and Wilbur's 30+ year relationship (they began attending Strawberry Creek Meeting soon after they met). At the time Kris reviewed/approved this text, but it has not been published before.

*Please Mister Postman, look and see
(Oh yeah)
If there's a letter in your bag for me...
-- The Carpenters*

Wilbur B.K. (Before Kris)

At eighteen Wilbur worked with Otomi Indian villagers in Taxhay village (Hildago, Mexico) through American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). Switching his studies away from electrical engineering at Northwestern University (Evanston, Illinois), Wilbur said AFSC changed his life and inspired him to "find an occupation more related to human and social development." Wilbur earned his bachelors in social science (Whittier College), and his master's in public health (University of California, Berkeley).

After a few years in India working in public health, he returned to UC Berkeley to earn his doctorate. Thereafter Wilbur provided training and project evaluations locally and internationally in basic sanitation, potable water systems, and other health-related projects. Working in health departments in India, Nepal, Swaziland, Gilbert Island, and Papua New Guinea, Tibet, Ghana, Bolivia, Mexico City, Wilbur saw himself as a "world citizen."

Seeking Someone

One day in 1991, Wilbur Hoff placed a personal ad in the East Bay Express, describing the importance of family and outdoor activity. At age 64 he was fit and hoping to connect with a woman younger than himself. (Women his own age couldn't keep up!)

Kris Muller read his personal ad with interest. She carefully selected just the right printed notecard to send him. To his reply, her second note included her phone number (Wilbur later teased her for sticking to the tradition the gentleman call first!) Not to be "one among many" of the 26 responses he received, she replied "Go through all of them, and when you are done with the rest, then we can progress."

On June 1, 1991, they met for the first time at Le Bateau Ivre café on Telegraph Ave. Wasting no time, Wilbur suggested the next day they go for a hike in Redwood Park.

Weaving New Patterns Together

By the time Kris met Wilbur, she had over ten years of being a therapist, with a degree in Marriage & Family Counseling (1980). Because her work hours extended into the evening and because she had over ten years of living as a single person (her first marriage ended in 1974), Kris said she soon realized she needed to prioritize her relationship with Wilbur if she was to create something different, something more emotionally intimate than she had experienced before. Soon after they met, she asked Wilbur to join her at a Harville Hendrix couples workshop, so together they could learn techniques for resolving issues.



Photo provided by James Hosley

Wilbur also had experience doing relationship work. With others he founded an Oakland commune called Harwood House, where they ran rap groups in community/sexuality. In addition, Wilbur's work with a chaplain had helped Wilbur accept things as they are, even when things are not as he most wants them to be. Kris comments she and Wilbur have had few big fights, and only occasional disagreements, marked more by sadness, frustration, and disappointment, rather than fueled by anger. Over time Kris became better at "holding her ground" on things most important to her.



Photo provided by Janet Piggins

Over the Years and Thru the Challenges

Kris indicated the most difficult decision Kris and Wilbur ever had to make was probably when they were new as a couple. She loved her life in Walnut Creek, where she owned a condominium. Walnut Creek was also the location of her workplace office as a therapist (her other office was in Pinole). But her place had no garage for Wilbur to set up his tools/ workshop (when not doing volunteer service, Wilbur worked as a handyman and did remodeling jobs). In the end, Kris moved to Berkeley.

Ten years later (2002) another where-do-we-live crisis arose when Wilbur really wanted to spend time living in the cabin he'd built in Santa Cruz (Wilbur also built a house for his young family along Skyline Blvd, Oakland). To accommodate this relocation, Kris opted to retire rather than maintain her Walnut Creek therapy practice.

Although her adjustment was initially difficult as she struggled to re-establish herself there, living in the Santa Cruz cabin led to their participating together in several community/citizen projects, such as removing invasive plants and monitoring the streams for pollution. And they enjoyed gardening and hiking together in the hills. This concentrated period of time together deepened their love.

Kris feels the most significant ongoing challenge is that she and Wilbur's brains "work so differently." E.g., Wilbur was enthusiastic about Ken Wilber's book *A Theory of Everything: An Integral Vision for Business, Politics, Science, and Spirituality* (2001). She tried to read it, but just couldn't get interested. Wilbur was so disappointed.

While respecting his enthusiasm and interests, Kris was not always able to whole-heartedly throw herself into a proposed project. Once Wilbur proposed they co-lead a workshop on relationships. A licensed therapist accustomed to a professional framework, she was uneasy partnering with a presenter who lacked formal training. Although disappointed, Wilbur characteristically accepted her decision and let it go.

A similar misunderstanding occurred times Wilbur asked her to edit his papers. She was usually not confident she had been helpful, and preferred not to be in the awkward position of critiquing his work.

Luckily, soon after they moved in together, they discovered they both loved gardening, and this shared activity has been a sustaining bond throughout their marriage. Kris remembers the layout and design of their garden was entirely her domain, where she had her way with respect to what was planted, and how the vegetable beds were laid out. Luckily, Wilbur was happy digging, pruning and doing the heavy work!

One way to succinctly depict their differences is contrasting their transportation choices: she bought a Prius, whereas he bought a pickup truck (which he later donated to Quaker Center). Kris notes that most of their travel together has been to visit children and extended family (Rhode Island, Seattle, Davis, Arizona, Southern California).

During their marriage Wilbur continued to work out of the country for long stretches. Usually Kris did not accompany him. An exception was his 1999 trip to Aravind Eye Hospital (Madurai, India) on behalf of Seva Foundation. Kris went to observe and write about the eye hospital's program to enable young village woman to work directly with illiterate prospective cataract patients in post-surgery care.

Looking back, Kris is grateful for Wilbur's patience. His acceptance of her expanded her capacity to love. He "stuck with her" as she learned to spend time together in unstructured settings, which led to emotional intimacy and loving more deeply.

Kris Muller's 75th birthday (2014)



Photo provided by James Hosley

Finding a Mutual Faith Community

Wilbur's AFSC work camp experiences had led him to join the Society of Friends, and he raised his children in Berkeley Friends Meeting. Kris grew up attending Unitarian Church and as an adult joined that church. During her college years at University of Michigan, Kris occasionally attended Quaker Meetings at Ann Arbor, and she'd often encountered Quakers at protests. After moving to Berkeley in 1968, Kris sometimes visited Berkeley Friends Meeting, but she and Wilbur never bumped into each other there. She also occasionally visited Strawberry Creek worship group when it was meeting in private homes.

When Kris met Wilbur in 1991, she valued their finding a common faith community. Wilbur visited the Unitarian Church with her a few times, but complained "they talked too much"! Strawberry Creek Meeting seemed the best fit for them together, as both had past experience with Quakers.

When Kris and Wilbur married, they did not do so "under the care of Meeting." Instead they created their own unique marriage ceremony with just the two of them at the top of North Peak, Mount Diablo. Afterwards, a Unitarian minister completed the marriage certificate paperwork. From then until now, the two have attended Strawberry Creek Friends Meeting, except for the years they lived in the Santa Cruz cabin, when they attended Santa Cruz Quaker Friends Meeting. In 2001 Wilbur finally transferred his membership from Berkeley Friends Meeting to Strawberry Creek. By 2018 Kris was sufficiently at ease with the liberal branches of Quakerism to join.



Photo provided by Ragni Larsen-Orta.

June 23, 2021

Slippery Slope

Kris says she was slow to pick up on Wilbur's progressive MCI (mental cognitive impairment), which probably began before 2000.

Aware he was losing mental aptitude, to slow the decline Wilbur took classes, read books, practiced brain exercises, used vocabulary calendars, and learned to play new songs on his mandolin. He had a way of focusing on "what can I do". Usually a private person, Wilbur's nature was not to bring up his problems or to complain. He therefore appreciated Kris asking him to share how he was doing. They talked about changes as they occurred.

Wilbur -- who had always been so good with tools - - was getting fewer requests for his services, even as a volunteer. However, despite the formal MCI diagnosis Wilbur continued to enjoy constructing their backyard deck for their new electric hot tub, doing the design and measurements, which were non-standard but nevertheless worked out just fine.

In 2012 Wilbur was diagnosed with glaucoma, and began using eye drops. When seeking to limit Wilbur's driving, Kris usually found it easier to frame the question in terms of his poor eyesight, rather than his MCI. She began offering to drive whenever he was anxious, such as at dusk and during rainy weather. In the end, it was not his MCI but his eyesight that caused him to fail his driver's test. This was a real blow.

After years of service supporting cataract surgery for others, Wilbur's own cataract surgery was not successful, resulting in retina detachment. Wilbur became fully blind in 2017, and care givers were hired to supplement family help. In Spring 2019 Kris was hospitalized twice for metastatic cancer, including lung tumors. Her pulmonologist told Kris she could no longer care for Wilbur at home.

The thought of living apart was hard for both of them. Wilbur wanted Kris to go with him to the assisted living facility, but leaving their longtime home was not the right thing for Kris. In summer 2019 Wilbur moved on his own to Fairbanks One, Castro Valley, an assisted living facility.

Nowadays, Kris often wishes she knew what Wilbur is feeling and thinking. His responses to her questions may begin on target, but after a few sentences he struggles to find words. Kris wants him to be proud of his many life accomplishments and reads to him from his own memoir. He says with enthusiasm "That must have been so interesting" and Kris will remind him "This happened to you, Wilbur. This is about you."

As words lose meaning, simply holding hands is increasingly an essential way to connect. During the pandemic, physical closeness has not been possible as covid restrictions keep Kris six feet away from Wilbur, who can't remember to wear his mask. Now that they are both fully vaccinated, for the first time in a year, they will be able to touch again!



Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting
Meeting for Worship on the Occasion of Business
January 8, 2022, draft minutes

For review and approval at February 12, 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. 25 Friends were present.

The Care of the Meeting Committee shared their reflections on the Advices and Queries on Spirituality.

The Clerk reviewed the agenda, which was posted by the Recording Clerk to groups.io on January 7, 2023.

The Recording Clerk then read the December, 2022, minutes. The minutes were approved with the following corrections.

- The listening meeting will be held January 29, not December 29.
- A concern was raised for more consideration of how our worship is going through this experimental, covid-inflected time. The concern was not limited to technology.

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

In recent years, there has been a pastoral element in the calls that Nominating Committee made to meeting members and attenders. Given the challenges that Nominating Committee faces, that work will be shared with Care of the Meeting and Mutual Care Committee this year.

The State of the Meeting listening meeting will be held Sunday, February 19th. The committee convening that listening meeting and composing the State of the Meeting report will be Cindy Trueblood, Jeanne Diller, and Andrea English.

Clerks’ correspondence includes a Pendle Hill Pamphlet titled “Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, and Us: using family systems theory to understand and dismantle oppression.”

The 2023 Friends General Conference gathering will be held at Western Oregon University in Monmouth, OR, from July 2-July 8, 2023, with the theme
“Listen So That We May Live”.

Sierra Friends Center has a center for training activists, and a full calendar of retreats and adult and youth craft classes.

The clerk read the following quotes from Faith and Practice.

Clarence Pickett: “We who are members of the Society of Friends have little to fall back on except as our experience with truth. We cannot resort to ritual or creed or ecclesiastical decisions for guidance. We must find our way by seeing the hand of God at work in the weaving of the fabric of daily life.”

Parker Palmer: Friends are most in the spirit when they stand at the crossing point of the inward and outward life. And that is the intersection at which we find community. Community is a place where the connections felt in the heart make themselves known in bonds between people, and where tuggings and pullings of those bonds keep opening up our hearts.

The Clerk noted that Elizabeth Strain was substituting as Alternate Clerk for Elaine Emily.

Old Business - There was no old business

New Business

John McCarthy (Facilities committee) introduced a new job description which includes zoom coordinator, audio visual, and on-site prep and break-down. The proposal, which was circulated via groups.io in December, has been refined to be consistent with the Strawberry Creek job description template. This refinement, which was circulated on groups.io January 7, will be seasoned for a month. If you have suggestions or concerns, speak to John or to Erik Wilson.

Reports

First Day Childrens' Program (Josh Gallup) reported, "Working on a committee having to do with children is a unique experience. You don't just put them in their seats and watch them read, but you must be aware of their whereabouts every second and provide a safe and caring atmosphere. As we move forward to opening we remind ourselves that we need to use patience; show good modeling skills; and be aware of the effect of our actions on the children." He noted that there were no takers when childcare was offered during Meeting for Worship in December, and the program will resume, at an undetermined frequency, some time in the Spring.

Care of the Meeting Committee (Kathy Barnhart) reported they are exploring forming an ad hoc committee on the future of the Meeting. She observed that the 40 scattered or non-involved attenders/members constitute a large fraction of the Meeting's membership of 100.

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?"

In response, it was noted that the Peace Earthcare, and Social Witness and the Power, Privilege, and Race subcommittee plan on showing the Doctrine of Discovery video. This will continue our awareness of the workings of oppression in our society. Another Friend added that the awareness of hierarchy and oppression will enhance our struggle to find new ways of being and working, which will help to address racism. We continue to stumble along the path and to ask God to show the next step.

Announcements

Peace, Earthcare, and Social Witness (Larry Strain) announced the showing with Power, Privilege and Race Subcommittee of the Doctrine of Discovery video January 15. The showing will not be on the Meeting Zoom link; info was shared on groups.io January 12.

The Clerk announced for Paul Jolly that Barbara Birch has a Quaker Center Ben Lomond series on Thomas Kelly that begins in February. Beth encouraged Friends to look at the Quaker Center website for more information and mentioned that the Meeting's QCBL pass might be available for this event..

Treasurer (Nancy Wilkinson) doesn't have exact figures yet, but it looks like we finished 2022 in the black.

Worship and Ministry (Judith Shumacher-Jennings) announced the listening meeting January 29 on our worship experience.

Meeting closed with silent worship at 1:47pm.

Beth Wrightson, Presiding Clerk

Elizabeth Strain, Substitute Alternate Clerk

Paul Jolly, Recording Clerk, and Marc Lambert, Substitute Recording Clerk



Sharing our spiritual lives with one another in Meeting is something we haven't done as often since the pandemic began. We miss the opportunities we had at retreats and adult education sessions to dive a little deeper into our experiences of the Spirit and to have relaxed time together to open up. Taking time to do so during our committee meeting despite a full agenda felt refreshing. We move closer to Spirit and closer to each other when we do so, and it enriches our lives.

Making a regular time for spiritual contemplation is challenging for most of us. We often aspire to do so, but only one of us has a practice of morning prayer and readings routinely. Having a monthly meeting with a spiritual director also helps that effort. We become grounded in Spirit during Meeting for Worship, but sometimes we depend on that rather than adding a personal practice of contemplation and prayer. Quite often Spirit comes in surprising ways, by grace, and not necessarily when we are looking for it. One Friend, looking toward that of God within, has a practice of asking himself "To what am I called?"

One Friend especially likes the sentence "Friends believe that the spiritual path is best found in community." Together we seek a life centered in Spirit, and we try to practice our faith within and beyond our community. This mutual quest links us together in a unique and special way.

Responses to Advices and Queries on

Spiritual Life *from Care of Meeting*

Sometimes it is a valuable practice to try to explain what being a Quaker means, even with those who speak negatively about religion. One Friend mentioned that she feels held by the Spirit when our community holds each other in the Light. We do that well for each other.

One Friend spoke of the phrase "continuing revelation." She feels her work with PPR is an example of that in the sense that there is no clear path forward in being a conduit for what might help our community transform to being an anti-racist faith community. She referenced a quote by John Woolman about stepping one foot at a time across a river in the fog, trusting Spirit for guidance about which rock to step on next. This is a lived experience of "continuing revelation."

The advices and queries ask if the Meeting provides religious education including study of the Bible and Quaker history and practices. One Friend feels odd using biblical knowledge among Friends, not feeling sure that others in the community know the references. It has been a very long time since we have had adult ed that focused on this and we long for it, not just for ourselves, but also for newcomers who might be seeking more spiritual education. We seek to learn more about what has burned brightly for our Quaker predecessors and to deepen our own spiritual lives in community and on our own.

Report from First Day Children's Program (from Co-Clerk Josh Gallup)

Working on a committee having to do with children is a unique experience. You don't just put them in their seats and watch them read, but you must be aware of their whereabouts every second and provide a safe and caring atmosphere.

We plan to open the First Day's Children's Program sometime this spring. We have connected with a few families in our community who are eager to participate in a children's program. After a few years of preparation during the pandemic, we are ready to move forward. Our program provides gentle care for participating children and it contains a curriculum reflecting the advice and queries as well as other Quaker values.

During the last few years, our committee met every month in order for us to stay connected with one another and help each other maintain a positive outlook. As we move forward to opening, we remind ourselves that we need to use patience; show good modeling skills; and be aware of the effect of our actions on the children.

We have some people with teaching experience on our committee and together we are currently planning our curriculum. We are not certain how many Sundays a month we will offer the children's program. We offered babysitting at the event on Dec 18, but had no takers. It was not really part of our program.

I want to thank you, Andrea, Joyce, Ellen, Rhea and Em for your patience and devotion. We will keep you posted.

Care of Meeting Report (from Co-Clerk Kathy)

In the next few months, Care of Meeting is forming a committee to look at our future as a Meeting, to discern our needs and envision possible creative solutions. This is a follow up step to the listening meeting Care of Meeting hosted on December 4, 2022. Those interested should let Care of Meeting know they would like to be considered for serving our meeting in this way (Care of Meeting seeks to constitute a balanced committee.)

Care of Meeting will be making calls to members who are "Scattered Berries" and some other members whom we haven't seen lately. This group comes to a total of over 40 people! This large group of members inactive in our Meeting may explain why on paper we are one of the largest meetings in PacYM, yet we don't have enough folks to fill all our committees. Note: some people aren't aware that every year the Meeting is assessed by Yearly Meeting and Quarterly Meeting for a total of \$100 for every member on our records.