

## **STATE OF THE MEETING REPORT BOULDER MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (2019-2020)**

The Boulder Meeting of Friends, the second largest Monthly Meeting in Intermountain Yearly Meeting (IMYM), is a community of faithful individuals with diverse leadings, needs, and strengths. Without the willing gifts and commitments of all our members and attenders, we could never have met the challenges, suffered the losses individually or corporately, or experienced the joys of the past year. This included working our way through painful committee and personal conflicts while seeking to respond to *that of God in all*, and remembering that we are indeed “better together.”

We do our work in committees. And then bring that work forward for decisions made as a whole in Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business. While not always successful, we remain Seekers in “Quaker process” who work to value each others’ gifts and passions, who worship to discern the Spirit of the whole, and who wait for Light to open our Way. This report offers a small window into the tremendous amount of personal and committee work required to keep our Meeting’s body and Spirit nurtured.

**Ministry & Worship Committee** watches over the spiritual life of the Meeting and seeks to strengthen and deepen the spiritual life of individuals within the Meeting community.

We organized Spring potlucks, as a way for Friends to get to know each other and talk about our spiritual life together. The potluck discussion topic was “Quality of Worship and Vocal Ministry.” We had ongoing discernment around quality of worship, welcoming newcomers, and Quaker process, especially as it concerns the Meeting's committees. We sponsored a well-received series of Quaker Studies meetings over six weeks in Fall 2019. More than 20 Friends attended the sessions, which served both as education for newer attenders and a place for seasoned Friends to discuss our Meeting's traditions. We responded to concerns about the health of several committees, offering guidance and assistance where needed. We also planned a very well-attended and meaningful Christmas Eve gathering.

**Oversight and Membership (O&M) Committee** oversees care of the membership, coordinating with the Service Committee and the M&W Committee as needed.

This year, we worked with Religious Education Committee and Lee Quinby (O&M Liaison) to review and update our Child Protection Policies. We convened 1 Clearness Committee for Membership, 1 Clearness Committee involving conflict, performed the triennial membership accountability, transferred memberships for the Clarke-Sathers to Duluth Meeting, accepted a membership transfer of Sharon Chase from Herndon Friends Meeting, and recommended full membership (from Associate Membership) for Flora Quinby.

**The Grief and Bereavement Committee** hosted memorial services this year for Richard Segel and Sami Pauzé; Presented a book to the Meeting “Going into the Light” that offers support for families who are experiencing the death of a loved one and also is a way to look ahead in one’s life, create Advanced Directives, and prepare for a peaceful death. We hosted a well-attended Death Café and a program hour led by member Grant Marylander (chaplain, Boulder Community Hospital), answering questions how to set up advanced directives, etc. We also offered a program hour where we invited the Natural Funeral Home from Lafayette to talk with our members about green funerals and other services that they offer.

**The Library Committee** continues to provide books, pamphlets, periodicals as well as DVDs and CDs to the members and attenders of Boulder Friends Meeting. We maintain and develop our library collection through timely ordering. We endeavor to keep our collection accessible, current, and relevant. Our Meeting's spiritual journey collection continues to grow and we have also made DVDs of notable program hours’ workshops available. In collaboration with the Web Committee, most of our Meeting’s spiritual journey collection has become available on the Meeting’s website in audio format.

**The Religious Education Committee** is a strong, though small committee of six members. Besides quality childcare workers in the nursery, our all-volunteer teachers and assistants in the elementary, junior and senior levels are doing an excellent job.

The number of youngsters who come to class continues to be inconsistent, with the K-5 class having between four and nine participants. That group follows a curriculum based on Quaker testimonies, with two months reserved for exploring Bible stories and teachings. The junior young friends (JYFs) meet twice a month with between one and three participants. The senior young friends (SYFs) also meet twice a month, with one time being a “walk to a coffee shop” with both teen groups in attendance.

REC has organized two (so far) family food and fun Sunday afternoons as a new avenue for fellowship among our young people. Childcare is provided for program hours, business meetings and other special events.

The summer program has been based on a nature or cultural theme. It encourages adults, who might not usually teach during the year, to volunteer their expertise and interests and also get to know the young people better.

The **Fellowship Committee** had a busy year. We have done the usual tasks, supplying coffee, teas and snacks after both the 8:30 and the 10:00 Meeting for Worship. It helped to bridge the gap between the 2 groups. We held three summer barbecues. After hamburgers, hot dogs and grilled portabello mushrooms we have been holding a discussion about Meeting wide issues. We have continued hosting a light lunch such as soup or chili, before the Meeting for Business. We held the regular Christmas and Easter potlucks.

It's been a lot of work but we all feel that that the work is important to the Meeting community. Several Friends who are not on the committee have helped us clean up after the potlucks.

The **Program Committee** of Boulder Friends Meeting organizes Program Hours after Meeting on three First Days of each month, from September through May.

Priorities include requests from BFM's committees, or issues raised by members and attenders. The primary focus areas for our work include: 1) building community; 2) Quaker history and practice; 3) spirituality, testimonies, and activism; and 4) spiritual journeys of members. 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Singing is always a highlight with other programs last year including presentations on Indigenous Peacemaking, a panel on the question: "What does Jesus have to do with it?", the work of the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) and Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO), building an anti-racist Quaker Meeting and a presentation by George Lakey on Nonviolent Action and Social Change.

**Service Committee** We remain true to the long-held leadings of Quakers to help those in need, near and far, and address social concerns. We organized and/or volunteered to support Friends and these local organizations: Offer respite time and support group services for caregiver Friends; Be available to provide food and transport for Friends in need; Fall Echo House fundraiser to stock household supplies in one unit offered to homeless families; Donate/deliver non-perishable food items to EFAA (Emergency Family Assistance Association); Cook/serve one meal per month at Boulder Shelter for the Homeless; Volunteer at the Safehouse (SPAN) crisis phone line as it provides shelter, food and basic needs for domestic abuse survivors; Donate and deliver a non-perishable food donation to the Harvest of Hope food pantry; Support Bridge House in its Ready to Work program offering paid work experience, housing and case management for homeless people.

**Indigenous Peoples Concerns Committee** seeks to build respectful relationships between Friends and Native Peoples through educational programs and financial support. This year we facilitated a 3-day seminar at IMYM hosted a Program Hour with Brett Shelton (Oglala Sioux) who directs the Indigenous Peacemaking Initiative of the Native American Rights Fund; collaborated with Right Relationship; Boulder's Indigenous People Day event; helped plan and fund a Language/Culture Camp for Arapahoe youth; renewed our relationship with Isna Wicca Owayawa Loneman School of the Pine Ridge Reservation; hosted educational film screenings and discussions; and continued to support Paula Palmer's Toward Right Relations with Native Peoples ministry as it became part of Friends Peace Teams.

**The Peace and Social Justice Committee** (PSJ) has had a busy year. We sponsored a number of workshops. We worked closely with the Building and Grounds Committee to craft a new Building Use Policy that was approved by Meeting in February 2020. We keep Boulder Friends informed and involved through a monthly letter-writing campaign, which deals with topics of national (as suggested by FCNL) and local interest (including legislation at the state level).

The highlights of the past year were the two workshops that PSJ sponsored in February of 2020. Regan Byrd presented on Racism on February 15<sup>th</sup>. George Lakey presented a workshop on nonviolent activism on February 29<sup>th</sup>.

PSJ currently has 4 active members, so there are only a limited number of issues we can actively work on. The issues are aligned with our 3 focus areas: Environmental Justice and Stewardship, Peace Building and Prevention of Violence, and Immigration and Racial Justice.

**Finance Committee**, oversees the Meeting's finances and advises the Meeting on financial issues. Among the many activities the committee performed, it spent many hours converting our QuickBooks procedures to maximize digital ease and accuracy; reviewed the Treasurer's reports and gave assistance and advice to the Treasurer; prepared the budget for Fiscal Year 2020; sent an annual donation appeal letter to members and attenders in October; released finances of Toward Right Relationship to Friends Peace Teams and laid down Grocery Card Program.

**Building & Grounds** committee completed several projects. Among others: Expanded the western landscape bed and retaining wall, including the planting of xeric plants and trees and finishing with mulch. Continued six energy saving updates; routine repairs and maintenance; and investigated needed improvements to airing, accessibility and sound mitigation in the Meeting. Met with an engineer to discuss the meetinghouse's vulnerability during floods.

**Nominating Committee** struggled initially due to Nominating Committee vacancies. But while we had a late start, our process for discerning whom to invite for the nominated committees was ultimately fruitful. We had two difficult-to-fill positions (Associate Treasurer and *Miscellany* Editor) for the current year that were eventually filled. A few stubborn vacancies persisted throughout the year. As the time for nominating a new slate approached, we worked to make members and attenders aware of the need for volunteer committees and individual work. We encouraged the community to volunteer where they feel called for the volunteer committees and other positions needed for our community to thrive. We compiled the yearly slate for approval by Meeting for Business in April. There are many, many faithful Friends who do the work of Boulder Meeting, for which we are all grateful. Nevertheless, it seems that we need to continually strive to right-size the amount of work that we set out to do by identifying and prioritizing the work that is essential to the health of our Meeting.

**Higher Education Scholarship Committee** met about four times last year to get the word out about the availability of the scholarships, to consider financial sustainability of the fiduciary fund, to identify our high school students who are likely to apply and those who are graduating. Five students received scholarships of \$650 for the Spring semester, and 5 students received \$650 for the Fall semester. The total 2019 scholarships awards were \$5,200. The committee encourages college graduates to give a 5-10 minute presentation of their studies.

**Web Committee** strives to keep our website relevant, inviting, responsive, secure, running smoothly, with up-to-date content, and useful to both our Meeting and the larger community. The Committee continuously puts effort into working with all committees, the clerk, and other Friends to ensure that the website is a place where everyone in our Meeting can go to find the information they need. And yet, that information is only as good as the information that is given to us by our community. Our goal is also that our website be a place where our community can share with each other, via our blog, photos, spiritual journeys, art work, and more.

Submitted by Barbara Stephens, Clerk  
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