

Annual Report of Boulder Meeting of Friends (2016-2017)

The **Oversight and Membership Committee** convened one clearness committee for Membership, and held a joyous welcoming party that included six new members and transfers. They completed the triennial process to update our membership rolls and also completed contacting former Associate Members about the revised policy on youth membership. They provided pastoral care for several Friends. O&M was grateful to three Friends who helped to fill in during absences of regular committee members through the year.

As always, the **Ministry and Worship committee's** primary task was monitoring the quality of worship and the general spiritual health of the Meeting. While they found that both were on the whole sound, they were engaged in the Meeting's efforts to get to the bottom of various longstanding conflicts and to help resolve them. A culmination came with a threshing session on internal conflicts relating especially to the relationship between Meeting and its committees. M&W also sought new ways to enhance communication within the Meeting community, such as the creation of Q-Tips, which will be a short monthly article on spiritual matters in The Miscellany. The committee also plans to renew the Fall Picnic. M&W will coordinate more carefully with the new Welcome and Outreach Committee, with the intention of deepening the sense of community in Meeting. M&W has an interest in streamlining the announcements portion of Meeting for Worship, and a better way of incorporating Joys and Sorrows into worship.

The **Library Committee** continues to provide books, pamphlets, periodicals as well as DVDs and CDs to the members and attenders of Boulder Friends Meeting. It maintains and develops our library collection through timely ordering and processing of new materials, and reminding members to return past due materials. The Library Committee remains committed to its mission to keep our collection accessible, current, and relevant. Highlights of this year include acquiring an attractive brochure holder and new brochures/handouts to inform our newcomers. In addition, a Spiritual Book Group as a project of the Library Committee continued to meet. Finally, the spiritual journey collection continues to evolve with the Library Committee's collaboration with the Web Committee to make the spiritual journeys accessible through our website.

The focus of the **Service Committee** has been on the needs of the homeless and the practical needs of our Meeting community. They also organized an annual potluck and raised over \$900 for supplies for Echo House, an emergency shelter for families with children. In addition to financial support, the Service Committee organizes the Meeting community in providing active support to several agencies that support the homeless and emergency outreach: every third Saturday Meeting members cooked at the Boulder Homeless Shelter (13 Friends involved). On Wednesdays they distributed over-the-counter medications and hygiene products at the Boulder Outreach for Homeless Overflow's shelter locations, in addition to the day shelter. A committee member is involved with Bridge House and the Boulder Homeless Women's Initiative. Year round they continue to collect socks for the homeless. The committee also organized rides to Meeting for those members and attenders who cannot drive and tried to keep track of illnesses, food and other practical needs of members of our community.

Religious Education Committee continues to deal with the challenging reality of having a small group of kids and inconsistent attendance. They have continued to organize First Day School and childcare, staff the classes with teachers and assistants, and follow a Quaker curriculum combined with play, crafts, and loving support of our children. The number of K-5 children has decreased somewhat from the previous year. JYF and SYF were combined this year, and met weekly. Once a month they gathered to hear an adult of the Meeting sharing his/her own personal "This I Believe". This has been a strong program, but will end this May. There has been a special emphasis this year on childcare during every Program Hour. Attendance has generally been very small: only one or two kids. Childcare will likely be rethought over time, particularly with the anticipated new guidelines concerning the number of childcare givers required. There remains the on-going concern for the separation of FDS and young families from the rest of the Meeting. To bridge that gap, they have organized two intergenerational potlucks and game nights, with one more planned this period.

Fellowship — The committee has done the usual tasks, supplying coffee, teas and snacks after 10 o'clock meeting for worship. We have also started providing coffee and hot water for tea for the 8:30 Meeting to encourage attenders to linger and our 10:00 worshippers to come a bit early to meet and get to know our early folks. One of the members hosted 3 barbecue lunches during the summer. They were such a success that Fellowship Committee decided to continue, once a month, hosting a light brunch on the Sundays before business meetings. They maintained the tradition of Christmas and Easter potlucks. They also provide receptions for all memorial services.

The Finance Committee oversees the Meeting's finances and advises the Meeting on financial issues. The committee performed the following tasks: reviewed the Treasurer's quarterly reports, gave assistance and advice to the Treasurer, prepared the budget for the Fiscal Year, updated our contract with New Horizons for the years 2017-2019, sent an annual donation appeal letter to member and attenders in September, documented the policy for expenditures which require the approval of Business Meeting, and set in motion a plan to move the Meeting accounts out of Wells Fargo Bank. They also began discussions to improve the budget process in light of our recent Threshing Sessions about this topic.

The Welcoming & Outreach Committee is a new part of our community life. The committee started with 3 friends in the summer of 2016 and now has 10 members. It is developing programs to help members, attenders and newcomers feel welcome at Boulder Friends Meeting. They would also like to increase awareness in the larger Boulder community that BMF is present and would welcome interaction, mutual support and spiritual growth for all. Their initial projects include updating Friends' pictures in the front hallway and building a network to offer support to new attenders. The committee has been involved in creating a new BFM Facebook page. They are making a welcoming brochure and want to promote to the area community events at the Meetinghouse, such as the film, "Two Rivers".

Our Web committee has finished several usability improvements to the website. A program hour was held to inform the Meeting about the website, how it's organized, how to navigate it, and what kind of information it contains. Web site analytics was implemented to maintain a view of how often the site is accessed and from where. The committee has been in discussions with the Library committee regarding Spiritual Journeys and the web

The Higher Education Scholarship Committee has four members, plus the Associate Clerk. This school year, the committee received five applications from our Meeting's students. The committee approved all five applicants and rewarded each a \$600 scholarship per semester for a total of \$6000 in scholarship disbursements for the year. The committee also corresponded with students and the students reported on their school experiences and work throughout the year.

This year the **Building and Grounds committee** assessed condition of our trees and began a program of trimming and cleaning out deadwood and nuisances around the property. They continued the effort to improve air quality in the meeting house, to benefit several chemically sensitive members. They repurposed a classroom for use by Young Friends. This included new paint and repair of windows. They began improvement in landscaping along parking area. They updated their annual maintenance list and accomplished required items. They also conducted well-attended cleanup days. In addition to routine yard work, they repaired a wind damaged fence and cleaned out unused items throughout the Meeting House.

The Peace and Social Justice Committee determined that they would like to act as a conduit of knowledge, information and hope about social justice and peace issues. They determined that how they do their work could make a difference in how our Meeting is engaged in the wider world. They hope to activate the Meeting as a whole, and also individuals, to live the Quaker testimonies in the world, in addition to simply donating funds to other organizations. They completed the legislative priority process for FCNL. They offered two program hours: "Respectful Listening on Israel/Palestine," and "Black Lives Matter: What Next?" They co-sponsored a minute on Standing Rock, along with the Indigenous Peoples Concerns Committee. They also wrote a letter to Boulder Community Health Center about accessibility for chemically sensitive individuals. They continued the monthly letter writing opportunities during Fellowship. Individual PSJ members were active in peace, environmental, anti-racist, and accessibility causes. They remain interested in reworking their budget and releases to outside organizations.

Program Committee has worked with REC to encourage more attendance by parents and grandparents, by instituting an "experimental" 9-month Child Care program for all post-Meeting planned program hours. Early on, they planned for balance in three program areas of interest: 1) Peace & Social Justice, and Care of the Earth; 2) Communication & Community; and 3) Quaker History & Practice. They continue our long tradition of having individuals share their "spiritual journey" on the first Sunday program hour.

The Indigenous Peoples Concern Committee continues to study the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Two members of the committee, in addition to a member of the Peace and Social Justice committee, attended the White Privilege Conference in Philadelphia. The Standing Rock Sioux "Water Protectors" demonstration, protesting the Dakota Access Pipeline, was a major concern. This concern inspired the Meeting to approve a minute in "Solidarity with the Standing Rock Sioux and Other Indigenous Peoples in Protecting the Earth". The film, "Two Rivers," was shown three times, with audiences between 60 and 100 people each time and raised money for the "Water Protectors." As a result of the film, a working group is underway to consider what "right relationship" with Native peoples could look like in the Boulder Valley. The committee also donated money to several Native organizations and projects.

The committee continues to participated in and support the Toward Right Relationship with Native Peoples ministry. Many committee members participate in Boulder's Inaugural Indigenous Peoples Day celebration. A video was made of Paula Palmer's slide presentation about the Quaker Indian Boarding Schools, and the committee mailed eighty DVDs of the talk to monthly and yearly meetings, Quaker colleges and organizations, and Native organizations. The committee keeps updated on Native American Legislation through FCNL.

Towards Right Relationship with Native Peoples(TRR) continues to be under the care of the Meeting. We provide an oversight committee, fund reception and accountability, and a spiritual care committee for its director Paula Palmer.

The **Nominating Committee** strives to find individuals who are willing and able to accept and commit to nominated positions that are necessary for the functioning of the Meeting. This presented difficulties this year: there were fewer individuals who were available, for a variety of reasons. For positions and committees that are not nominated, they invited people to volunteer by signing up. The two Colorado Regional committees, Nominating and Planning, were not under consideration this year, but will need people in Nov 2017.

Grief and Bereavement committee was available for advice and counsel around death and grief. It conducted two memorial services, one for Aya Medrud and one for Janet Kilby. Our new archivist will continue the task of writing the memorial minutes.

Quaker Activities Assistance Committee uses guidelines for offering financial help to members and attenders in need. A \$500 limit is set for the first member of a family and \$250 for each additional member. We allocated \$4,127 for 3 individuals, 3 families, and 3 for Mountain Friends Camp.

Friends of AFSC grocery card program donates approximately \$5,000 annually to the Colorado Immigrants Rights program of the AFSC. Two new volunteers from our finance committee have agreed to take over coordination of this long active program. Our monthly **Miscellany** newsletter continues to serve and inform us. It is available online and also in print and is still mailed to those who wish to receive a paper copy. **New Horizons** continues to occupy the northern end of our building. This is a bilingual, cooperative 5-Star rated preschool. Most of their Hispanic families have members and friends without legal papers, living now in daily fear. **Share the Spirit** is the Meeting's annual holiday gathering of gifts for needy kids, continues to bless many in the Boulder area.

This year an ad hoc committee to draft a new **Child Protection policy** was formed. Its mission was to establish best practices around legally required mandatory reporting of abuse, plus establishing safe procedures for screening all who work with our children.

Grace and Peace and Joy and Imagination in our Life Together!

Submitted by,
Gale Toko-Ross, Clerk, compiled by Stan Grotegut, Associate Clerk
April 9, 2017