

State of the Meeting Report: Boulder Meeting of Friends (2017-2018)

Boulder Monthly Meeting activities for 2017-2018 combined to foster spiritual growth while developing internal and external community relations to move forward on Friends' principles. As the second largest Monthly Meeting in Intermountain Yearly Meeting (IMYM), Boulder Friends share a wide variety of gifts and passions which help to move the Meeting forward.

We used and developed these gifts through a large number of committees who work on everything from maintaining our building and grounds and supporting the spiritual growth of our children to working nationally on environmental issues and standing to recognize and resolve injustices inflicted on indigenous peoples and people of color. Our committees work together to support individual leadings, as well as issues that are Meeting wide concerns.

Some Committees form the foundation upon which much of our Meeting is able to move forward, while developing a community based on shared experiences of meeting the needs of others. Our Nominating Committee, our Finance Committee and our Building and Grounds Committee perform work that we need and depend upon:

Our Nominating Committee discerned whom to invite to serve in the various nominated positions that the Meeting needs each year (21 for 2018-19). It also provided descriptions of non-nominated (volunteer) positions and encourages the community to serve where they feel called. They endeavored to make members and attenders aware of the many committees and individual kinds of work needed for our community to thrive.

Our Finance Committee prepared the annual budget, reviewed the Treasurer's reports (providing assistance and advice as needed), sent an annual donation appeal to members and attenders, updated the Treasurer's Manual, improved the budget process to make it more accessible and understandable, and conducted two Program Hours (Finances 101 and 102) to help the Meeting better understand what we do with money and how we make and document those actions.

The Building and Grounds Committee did major landscaping and building repairs, along with regular upkeep and routine maintenance. They met with Chemically Sensitive members to develop an Approved Chemicals policy for use of cleaning supplies for the Meetinghouse and began stocking same. They upgraded garbage service, outdoor lighting, and their operating and capital budgeting processes, renewed the snow removal contract. They replaced items as needed and managed relationships with our neighbors and New Horizons School (which rents part of our building to host a bi-lingual preschool.) They conducted 6 workdays which encouraged members and attenders to contribute physical assistance in keeping our Meeting location clean, repaired, and welcoming.

Our Service Committee focused on meeting the practical needs of our Meeting community (transportation, food, support during illnesses, etc.) and supporting Boulder's homeless population through regular cooking at the Boulder Homeless Shelter, distributing over-the-counter medications and hygiene products, and year round collection of socks for the homeless, along with sponsoring a potluck that raised almost \$900 for supplies for Echo House, an emergency shelter for families with children. Our Meeting also collects non-perishable food for the Emergency Family Assistance Association (EFAA) in Boulder.

Efforts to foster spiritual growth and develop spiritual community

We support spiritual growth and knowledge through various program hours and sharing spiritual journeys, which we videotape for our library and to share the audio on the members-only portion of our website.

The Meeting has continued to endeavor (through program hours, threshing sessions, meetings with individuals, etc.) to ensure that all members are able to fully participate. We continue to work on listening to each other and to slow down in our decision making in hopes of ensuring that everyone feels welcome to speak their minds and share their concerns as we make decisions. We continue to work with members who feel excluded due to chemical sensitivities and others who have felt we make decisions with insufficient seasoning.

Our Ministry and Worship (M&W) Committee conducted a Quakerism 101 course, published short articles on spiritual matters (Q-Tips) in our monthly newsletter The Miscellany, changed how we share joys and sorrows in worship, and held program hours on subjects such as Elder Wisdom. We welcomed John Calvi, Quaker healer, for a weekend in February. We've recently begun experimenting with a Fourth Wednesday evening worship period followed by soup and a chat with the clerk.

We continued to develop our spiritual community with a Fall Picnic for Meeting fellowship, a Christmas Eve gathering for worship and singing, followed by a series of Spring potlucks to consider queries on the theme "How does Worship help us survive in difficult times?"

Our 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, they convened 6 Clearness Committees for Membership and recommended membership for Margaret Wallace, Molly Greacen, Leslie Myers, Kevin Moore, Sandra Bierman, and Grant Marylander. They also facilitated transfer of membership for Conner Middlemann and Peter Woodrow. Last fall, they held a welcoming party for the new members and transfers; about 50 people attended the fall potluck supper to learn more about our new members and to enjoy fellowship.

They reviewed the requirements for a Quaker Chaplaincy and recommended that the Meeting endorse Grant Marylander as a hospital chaplain, which it did.

They organized and led a Program Hour on Membership, which featured a panel of Boulder Friends who told of their experiences in making the decision to join (or not yet to join) the Meeting. They began a review of the procedures for becoming a member of the Meeting.

Our Library Committee continues to provide books, periodicals, pamphlets, DVDs and CDs to members and attenders. The Spiritual Book Group continues to meet and remains open to new attenders.

Several Spiritual Formation and SNUG groups continue to meet.

The Religious Education Committee coordinates services to our children, whose attendance is small and inconsistent. Meeting implemented a set of guidelines meant to keep our children safe from

those who might harm them. Childcare is provided for program hours, business meetings, and other special events, though the number of children using this feature is small.

We have gained a few new families and the K-5 class has seen as many as 9 attendees.

We have had several “Intergenerational Game Nights” with food and games, which were well attended and fun. Second Sunday is reserved for teens to hear and interact with an adult from our meeting and there is a “walk to a coffee shop” once a month. Both programs are usually well attended.

Our Higher Education Scholarship Committee stays in touch with our college students who have received small grants from the Meeting. This year, we were delighted to award 6 scholarships for \$650 per semester to our Senior Young Friends.

Our Fellowship Committee has expanded its reach into the community. In addition to the normal tasks of supplying coffee, teas, and snacks after the 10:00 Meeting for Worship, they now provide coffee and hot water for tea after our smaller 8:30 Meeting for Worship to encourage attenders to mingle and meet with other members of our community. The Committee continued with summer barbecues this summer, sharing discussions about Meeting-wide issues following hamburgers, hot dogs, and grilled Portobello mushrooms. They host a light lunch (e.g., soup) before Meeting for Business every month and hosted the Christmas and Easter potlucks. They provided refreshments for several memorial services as we said goodbye to: Ralph Lugbill, Nelder (Med) Medrud, Ken Spies, and Paul Wehr.

This year, we also hosted the IMYM Arrangements Committee in January.

Our new Welcoming and Outreach Committee works to offer support to new attenders and to let the greater Boulder community know we are here. A number of projects are planned for the coming year.

Our Web Advisory Committee continued to make usability improvements and added more content to our website <https://www.boulderfriendsmeeting.org/> this year, including a blog page, a Spiritual Journeys page with links to audio files, a Clerk’s Corner, and an Announcements page. We also have a Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/boulderfriendsmeeting/> which is going to be updated by our Welcoming and Outreach Committee in the coming year.

Our Quaker Activities Committee awards financial aid for Quaker events to enable Friends to attend. Traditionally, this has meant providing assistance to people attending the Quaker Women’s Retreat, InterMountain Yearly Meeting, the Mountain Friends Camp, and occasional national events such as FGC. This year, we provided \$7,500 to assist Friends. We are not sure how this will be impacted by IMYM’s change to “Pay as Led.” With the belief that our children are our future, support for Mountain Friends Camp increased this year.

- Stands taken on Friends’ principles
- Relations with community and other religious groups

Program hours relating to these subjects included:

Healing the Heart of Democracy (based on Parker Palmer's book);

Immigration & Sanctuary presented by Diana Maiden from the Unitarian Universalist Church of Boulder;

Spirituality in Action;

Steve Wheelock presenting "Storytelling perspective from a Delaware/Lenape Indian living in Boulder";

Quaker Voluntary Service (with Damon Motz-Storey discussing a possible Quaker House in Denver).

We became a congregational member of the Metro Denver Sanctuary Coalition and many Meeting members and attenders have contributed time and money to support Ingrid Encalada LaTorre, who is in sanctuary at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Boulder. We also became a congregational member of Green Faith Circles, a relatively new interfaith group dedicated to environmental concerns. Our Meeting also sells grocery and gift cards and donates 5% of their face value to the Denver chapter of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC).

Our Indigenous Peoples Concerns (IPC) committee coordinated with our Peace and Social Justice Committee, the Boulder "Showing up for Racial Justice," the Boulder Unitarian Universalist Church Racial Justice Ministry, and the Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center to organize the presentation "Are We Living Racial Justice" by Debbie Irving (author of the book, Waking up White) and Reverend Dr. Dawn Riley Duval.

Boulder Meeting, as a whole and in committees, continued to support the leading of Paula Palmer in conducting Toward Right Relationship with Native Peoples ministry, including workshops and screenings of the documentary film "Two Rivers," which has led to formation of the group "Right Relations Boulder." Paula traveled with two local Native women to the Southern Arapaho reservation in Oklahoma and the Northern Arapaho reservation in Wyoming to learn how they would like to build relationships with the people of Boulder, since we live on their traditional lands. Boulder Meeting included advocating for rights of Indigenous peoples as one of its priorities for legislative lobbying by FCNL.

The IPC Committee also continued study of the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and directed the distribution of Meeting funds to assist several Native American organizations.

Peace and Social Justice Committee members focused on funding and Meeting involvement in the following areas: Race and Immigration Issues, Peace and Disarmament Issues, Environmental Concerns, Healthcare, Mental Health, and Homelessness issues. They worked on campaigns for universal healthcare, local environmental issues, accessibility issues in public buildings (including the need for access for those who are chemically sensitive), disarmament, anti-racism, etc.

Submitted by Stan Grotegut, Clerk

Compiled by Barbara Stephens, Associate Clerk