

**STRAWBERRY CREEK MONTHLY MEETING  
OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS NEWSLETTER**

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**MAY 2019**

<http://strawberrycreek.quaker.org>

This newsletter can be accessed by email or at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/StrawberryCreek>

**REGULAR EVENTS & CALENDAR**

**SUNDAYS**

Meeting for Worship 10:00 AM. Berkeley Technology Academy, 2701 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, corner of Derby St., Berkeley. Religious Education for children provided 9:45 AM to end of Meeting for Worship. Please arrive with children before 10:00 AM. After announcements, all are welcome to stay for refreshments. Please bring your own reusable cup and utensils.

Oakland Worship Group 5 PM. At the home of Karen and Peter Lin, 296 Rishell Drive. For more information, call (510) 530-0479 or visit <http://www.oaklandquakers.org>

MONDAYS Quaker Action Worship Group (QAWG) 10:00 AM For location, contact Laura Boles ([boles9552@gmail.com](mailto:boles9552@gmail.com)).

WEDNESDAYS Mid-Week Morning Worship 7:00 AM Berkeley Friends Meeting, 2151 Vine Street.

THURSDAYS Open 12-step Meeting facilitated by Avotcja Jiltonilro 4 PM at the Berkeley Fellowship, 1027 University near San Pablo.

Mid-Week Evening Worship 7:00 PM Berkeley Friends Meeting, 2151 Vine Street. Contact Fred Gey for information at [fgey@comcast.net](mailto:fgey@comcast.net).

**SUNDAY, May 5**

Advices and Queries on Spiritual Life read by Nominating Committee

Quaker Political Action Worship Group 11:45 AM. Contact Laura Boles ([boles9552@gmail.com](mailto:boles9552@gmail.com)).

SUNDAY May 12 Business Meeting 11:50 AM.

SUNDAY May 19 Worship Sharing 9:00 AM.

PPR/QAWG Listening Meeting

Quaker Film Series 1:00 2151 Vine St. Berkeley, CA (Check Berkeley Mtg calendar.).

Newsletter Deadline for June [newsletter@strawberrycreekquakers.org](mailto:newsletter@strawberrycreekquakers.org).

SUNDAY May 26 Committee Sunday after Meeting for Worship.

Paper copy and electronic newsletter distribution.

**SUNDAY, June 2**

Advices and Queries on Meeting for Worship read by Finance Committee

Quaker Political Action Worship Group 11:45 AM. Contact Laura Boles ([boles9552@gmail.com](mailto:boles9552@gmail.com)).

## News and Announcements

### Strawberry Creek Meeting Calendar

Contact the newsletter editor at [newsletter@strawberrycreekquakers.org](mailto:newsletter@strawberrycreekquakers.org), to list your event on the calendar. The calendar is on the Strawberry Creek website (<http://www.strawberrycreekfriends.org/Calendar.html>), on our Facebook Page and in the Facebook Friends Group. Please bookmark it so you can check it easily!

### Strawberry Creek Spring Retreat May 3-5

at Quaker Center in Ben Lomond The retreat is a time for our meeting to come together for fellowship, Meetings for Worship, worship sharing, and exploring some of the 80 acres of redwood forest at Quaker Center. The retreat opens at 4pm Friday and ends at 2pm Sunday. It is too late to register but you might be able to attend during one of the days.

**Worship and Ministry Adult Ed May 19** on the topic of "Spiritual Traditions and Practices that Enrich Quakers." In December we heard from several Strawberries about what Jesus meant to them, and this will be a similar sharing of what other traditions, such as Judaism, Shamanism, and Paganism have meant to the spiritual lives of several Strawberries. There will be time for sharing in small groups after we hear brief presentations from the panel. We know that not all practices and traditions will be mentioned by the speakers, but this is a good way to start learning from each other and deepening our spiritual lives.

### Berkeley CROP Hunger Walk May 19.

Local recipients from the Berkeley Walk are the Berkeley Food Pantry, Dorothy Day House, and Youth Spirit Artworks. The Berkeley Quakers Team consists of members from all three Berkeley Quaker congregations. Last year, the Berkeley Walk raised a total of \$37,658 and placed 29th out of about 800 walks across the country. The Berkeley Quakers Team raised \$5,792.79.

The location is St. Mary Magdalen Church, 2005 Berryman Street. Meet at 1 PM and walk at 1:30 PM. To donate online, go to <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/berkeleyca/Team/View/95115/Berkeley-Quakers>. Checks should be made out to CWS/CROP. Contact Tom Yamaguchi, 510-548-5294 for information.

### Peace Earthcare Social Witness Meeting May 26

The PESW committee has invited Ramon Castellblanch from Berkeley Friends Monthly Meeting to share the BFMM's accompaniment team's experiences. An accompaniment team works with an asylum seeker (and family) to provide (Friendly) support with their first experiences in living in the US. The team may provide logistical support for court dates, help with finding housing, schools, etc. These teams are coordinated by

the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity. We are exploring the possibility of creating a SCMM team.

We will begin at around noon with witness sharing by Mary White (15 - 20 minutes), followed by Ramon's sharing of BFMM's experience with accompaniment.

### Pacific Yearly Meeting Annual Session

July 12-17 at Walker Creek Ranch, Petaluma, CA All members and attenders of Friends meetings, as well as anyone interested in Friends' ways, are invited to attend this week-long summer gathering which combine worship, fellowship and business and many other activities. There are activities for youth organized by interest and age as well as all-ages portions of the agenda. <https://www.pacificyearlymeeting.org/about/annual-session-information/>

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### Friends Journal Submission

Your newsletter editor wrote this letter that appeared in the most recent *Friends Journal* a few months ago. This letter says a lot about QAWG's motivation in working on the Minute on Engagement to Uproot and Outgrow Racism within Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting. The Minute is about acknowledging Quaker hypocrisy in our past treatment of people of color in terms of membership and inclusion, and its residual effects on SCMM. Here is the reference for Vanessa Julye's article, which you might read as a context for

understanding the Minute in its current form: <https://www.friendsjournal.org/racial-diversity/>

*I became a Friend around 1985 for many reasons but one was that, to me, Quakers had always been on the right side of history (well, almost always). I knew about the peace testimony, the fairly egalitarian treatment of women, the abolitionists, and the underground railroad. At some point I wondered why there weren't more African-American Quakers. I reasoned that if Quakers had been so helpful, maybe some former slaves or free people of color would have joined up. I even tried to research the question but couldn't find anything. When I mentioned my question, Friends said that people of color were simply not attracted to our faith.*

*Now with Vanessa Julye's published books and articles, I have the answer to my question. In the past, African-Americans were "fit for freedom, not for Friendship." People of color weren't encouraged to join the Religious Society of Friends; indeed they were excluded, denied*

*membership, and segregated. What's more, Quakers at that time did not question miscegenation and other laws that established the "fact" of races in the United States, and as far as I can see, our faith ancestors did little to challenge them. They also benefited from the privileged position they had, and turned a blind eye to the profound harm that was being done to others. They were largely complicit with the unequal status quo, although perhaps they paid lip service in pitying attempts to "make a difference."*

*To be smug about our past abolitionists and yet to sweep our overt racism under the rug is the ultimate hypocrisy. This has gone on long enough. I am ashamed. I am disappointed. I am deeply saddened. I am disillusioned. Like predatory priests in the Catholic Church, the Religious Society of Friends in the US has deep dark dirty secrets that need some Light on them.*

## **Minute on Engagement to Uproot and Outgrow Racism within Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting**

### **Preface**

Friends in all parts of the racist system are being challenged to live up to the Light in ways that will require us to dive deeply into our understandings of ourselves, our communities and our institutions. We will all be helping each other to seek deeper knowledge and a sense of what Spirit calls us to do.

The Strawberry Creek community is predominately people of European descent, and we seek to build a Religious Society of Friends where everyone feels welcome for who they are. We seek to treat every person with respect and love, based on our belief in the fundamental equality of all humankind. We acknowledge that Friends are not perfect in treating all human beings with equal respect and that there is much work yet to do, both among Friends and in the world, to achieve the vision of a social order based on the Quaker testimony on Equality. While we cherish the leadership of the Religious Society of Friends in Britain and America in ending enslavement, we acknowledge the contradictory history of Friends in the USA on the issue of racial equality, including participation in the slave trade, slave ownership, segregation, and continued expressions of white supremacy.

### **Minute**

Quakers of European descent in Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting have fallen short at living up to the Testimonies we say we believe in. Our Meeting declares that it is time to take responsibility for the failures of the past; we intend to make significant changes in our culture, with the help of the Divine, for a different present and future. We utterly reject the racial status quo in the United States, and we wish to make amends for the past.

Our Testimony of Community gives us a vision of a beloved community based on love, trust, commitment, and honesty, not on unwitting complicity with the larger society. We wish to create a Meeting Community so vibrant and Spirit-filled that all people will feel truly welcome.

Our Testimony of Integrity calls us all to wholeness, and as individuals and as a Religious Society we realize we are broken. Most of us fail to recognize that we have been and still are complicit with the injustice, violence, marginalization, alienation, and subjugation that have taken place and continues to take place in our nation.

Our Testimony of Simplicity calls us to order our lives with Spirit at the center and to avoid taking more than our share of the world's resources. Instead most of us have too often benefited from a society that for centuries has been based on unearned white privilege that unjustly promotes the good of some, while it at the same time profoundly harms those who do not share that privilege.

Our Testimony of Unity invites us to work together with all Friends to discern God's will for us to be connected as one. In our past, many Quakers of European descent found people of African descent to be "fit for freedom but not for friendship." In the present, our Quaker culture often perpetuates divisions between those of us who are "white" and those of us who are "people of color."

Our Testimony of Equality confirms that it is still true that "difficult work remains to rid [our Strawberry Creek community] and the Religious Society of Friends from prejudice and inequitable treatment". Further, we acknowledge that because all human beings are inextricably linked, when some are degraded, all are degraded, and we all suffer together as a result. To move forward, we all must work together to undo unjust structures and promote reparations.

Our Testimony of Peace compels us to recognize that the violence that exists in the world also exists within ourselves, our Meeting, and our Religious Society, in terms of discrimination, white supremacy, and other manifestations of racism. Addressing the causes of racism, we must attend to noticing, naming, and eradicating these forms of violence, as well as microaggressions and white fragility, wherever and however we can.

We seek ways to get closer to the core of Spirit in which our anti-racism work can find deep roots and flourish.

April 2019

### **Advices and Queries on Meeting for Worship**

The heart of the Religious Society of Friends is the Meeting for Worship. In direct communion with God, we offer ourselves for God's will. Our daily lives are linked with the Meeting for Worship, the Meeting for Worship with our daily lives.

Come regularly to Meeting for Worship, even when you are angry, tired, or spiritually cold. Bring your joys and your hurts, and the needs of other people. Accept and support each other in the community where God dwells among us. As you do so, you may find the grace of prayer.

At times the Spirit may prompt you to speak in Meeting. Wait patiently to know that the sense and the time are right. When you are sure, have confidence that the words will be given to you. Listen to the ministry of others with an open spirit. If it is not God's word for you, it may be for others. After a message has been given, allow time to ponder its meaning and to let the Meeting return to silent worship. In speech and in silence, each person contributes to the Meeting.

- Do I come to Meeting with heart and mind prepared for worship?
- In both silent and vocal ministry, do I respond to the leadings of the Holy Spirit, without pre-arrangement and in simplicity and truth?
- Am I careful not to speak at undue length or beyond personal spiritual experience?
- Do we meet in expectant waiting for the promptings of the Divine Spirit?
- Are we drawn together in a living silence by the power of God in our midst?

## Nominations from Nominating Committee

### Officers:

**Clerk of Meeting#^** Elizabeth Strain  
**Alternate Clerk#^** Charlie Blanchard  
**Recording Clerk#** Tom Yamaguchi\*  
**Treasurer#** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Recorder** Peter Lin\*  
**Database coordinator** Peter Lin\*

### Representatives:

**AFSC** David Rutschman\*  
**Ben Lomond Quaker Ctr** Lydia Bryans  
**BOCA** David Rutschman\*  
**CPQM** Tom Yamaguchi\*  
**FCLCA** Shelley Tanenbaum\*  
**FCNL** Stephen McNeil\*  
**PYM Representative** Nancy Wilkinson\*  
(Calendar 2018)  
**PYM Observer** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Calendar 2018)  
**Sierra Friends Center** \_\_\_\_\_  
**PYM UwN** Shelley Tanenbaum\*

### Committees:

**Care of the Meeting** (member in RSoF req'd)  
Stephen McNeil, Co-Clerk#\*\*^  
Rhea Farley\*, Co-Clerk^  
Susan Burr\*  
Shelley Tanenbaum\*  
Sarah Hawthorne  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Communications

\_\_\_\_\_, Clerk  
Barbara Birch, newsletter editor\*  
Amy Dewey\*, web coordinator  
Elsa Glines, newsletter distribution\*  
Ragni Larson-Orta  
Raven Moon, librarian\*

### Events

Francie Nurkse  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Facilities

Erik Wilson, Clerk\*  
Marianne Kearney-Brown\*  
Lydia Bryans\*  
Peter Lin\*  
Betsy Morris\*  
Dick Strong\*

### Finance

Larry Strain, Co-Clerk#\*\*^  
Richard Leath\*, Co-Clerk  
Carl Anderson  
Frank Satterwhite\*  
Renee Watkins\*  
\_\_\_\_\_/Treasurer *ex officio*

### First Day Children's Program

Josh Gallup, Co-Clerk\*  
Joyce Samati\*, Co-Clerk  
Rachel Findley  
Ellen Levin\*  
Nathan Moon\*

### Loaves and Fishes

Phyllis Malandra, Clerk\*  
James Hosley\*  
Rachel Keeler\*  
Laura Miller  
Cindy Trueblood\*  
Matthew Trueblood\*  
Marian Yu\*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

+ 3 people available to fill in

### Mutual Care

Judith Schumacher-Jennings, Co-clerk\*  
Nancy Wilkinson\*, Co-clerk  
Rick Herbert\*  
John McCarthy\*  
Barb Tittle\*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Nominating (Calendar 2017)

Charlie Blanchard, Clerk#\*  
Laura Boles  
Patricia Dienstfry\*  
Nancy Wolf Jackson\*  
Tom Rothschild  
Kat Stenstedt  
Dusty Sykes

### Witness

Susan Black, Co-clerk\*  
David Rutschman, Co-clerk\*  
Avotcja Jiltonilro\*  
Leonard Joy\*  
Mary White\*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Reps to AFSC, BOCA, FCLCA, FCNL, PYM UwN *ex officio*

### Worship & Ministry

Kathy Barnhart\*, Co-clerk^  
Laura Magnani, Co-clerk^  
Lynne D'Angelo\*  
Lee Douglass\*  
Janet Piggins  
Roberta Schutz  
Al Thompson  
Peter Trueblood\*

# Positions or individuals with positions followed by a pound sign (#) serve on the Board of Directors of Strawberry Creek Meeting by virtue of their position.

\* Individuals whose names are followed by an asterisk (\*) are continuing on that committee.

\* Individuals whose positions are followed by an asterisk (\*) are continuing in that position on that committee.

^ Positions followed by a caret (^) are positions requiring membership in Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting.

**Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting**  
**Meeting for Worship on the Occasion of Business**  
**April 14, 2019 Minutes**

The meeting opened at 11:56 am with silent worship. Ralph Murphy clerked the meeting. 43 Friends were present. Rachel Findley gave the response of Worship and Ministry Committee to the Advices and Queries on Harmony with Nature. The Meeting returned to silent worship to reflect on the response.

**Approval of the Minutes of the March 10, 2019 Meeting**

The Recording Clerk read the minutes for the March 10, 2019 Meeting for Business. The minutes were approved with the following change: Race, Power, and Privilege is a subcommittee, not a working group.

**Correspondence and Clerk's Business**

The Clerk received thank you letters from Ben Lomond Quaker Center and Alternatives to Violence Project for our meeting's \$150 donations.

The clerk received cards announcing the following events:

Friends Music Camp will be held at Earlham College in two, three, and four-week sessions, beginning on July 7.

East Bay Sanctuary Covenant will be honoring its 2019 Sanctuary Champions on Friday, May 3, from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm, at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 2300 Bancroft Way in Berkeley.

**Old Business**

*State of the Meeting Report* (State of the Meeting Report Writing Committee, Raven Moon)

Raven Moon read the report that has been seasoning for one month. A copy of the report is attached. The report was approved. College Park Quarterly Representative Tom Yamaguchi will send the report to CPQM's Ministry and Oversight Committee.

*Request to authorize a \$600 budget line for a banner* (Finance Committee, Sarah Hawthorne)

The proposed budget line item has been seasoning for one month. Sarah Hawthorne reported that no concerns were received by Finance Committee. The authorization was approved.

*Additions of Dorothy Day House and Youth Spirit Artwork to our list of annual donations* (Finance Committee, Sarah Hawthorne)

The additions have been seasoning for one month. Sarah reported no concerns were received by Finance Committee. One Friend asked that our point person for Dorothy Day House keep us informed of any opportunities to be involved with that organization's work.

The proposed additions were approved.

**New Business**

*Slate of Nominations for 2019-2020* (Nominating Committee, Patricia Dienstfrey)

Patricia presented the slate of nominees. There are a number of vacancies to be filled, including Treasurer. Friends asked that the slate be posted on the meeting's Yahoo Group and printed in the newsletter. A Friend asked that Nominating Committee identify any positions that require meeting membership.

*Discussion of Pacific Yearly Meeting joining Friends General Conference* (Pacific Yearly Meeting Representative, Nancy Wilkinson)

Nancy provided background on the proposal to have PYM affiliate with FGC. She provided paper copies of a report from PYM's Ministry and Oversight Committee and has posted it to the meeting's Yahoo Group. PYM intends to be making a final decision at this summer's annual session.

Nancy explained that many PYM Friends have found strong connections to FGC, including attending the annual gathering. They argued that Friends benefit from the services of FGC, whether they attend the annual gathering or not. Historically Friends opposed to affiliation cite PYM's position on maintaining independence. Other concerns included financial obligations and commitments to send representatives to FGC meetings. Several Friends spoke on the proposal and were in favor of the affiliation. Friends with questions, opinions, and concerns may contact Nancy Wilkinson.

*Minute on Engagement to Uproot and Outgrow Racism within Strawberry Creek Meeting (Power, Privilege, and Race Subcommittee, Susan Burr)*

Susan Burr provided background on the proposed minute, which is attached to these minutes. Last summer, the subcommittee led a reading group on the book *Set Free*. The book was written by three Mennonites, specifically as guidance for the Mennonite Church. The authors concluded that in order to be a peace church, they need to be an anti-racist congregation. Susan said she was especially impressed by the comment "We didn't get to this hopeful place by chance." The subcommittee decided to find a way to take the Mennonites' work and use Quaker process to end racism in our meeting. That has led to the drafting of this minute.

The minute will season for one month. During the seasoning process, the subcommittee will have a discussion Sunday, April 21, at 11:50 am. Susan said the subcommittee is also working with the Quaker Action Worship Group on anti-racism. Friends may speak to Susan Burr for more information.

## **Reports**

*Peace, Earthcare and Social Witness Committee (David Rutschman)*

David provided the paper copies of the notes from the listening meeting on the Dime-A-Gallon fund. There is agreement that the climate crisis is urgent and we need to move beyond the Dime-A-Gallon fund. The committee plans on creating a study group on the Green New Deal and another listening session on Dime-A-Gallon.

*Treasurer's Report (Richard Leath)*

Richard presented the report for the period of January to March. The report shows that the meeting has outspent its income by \$14,853.46. A line has been added for other special activities (7986). Funds have been transferred to CDs that pay higher interest.

## **Announcements**

- Next Meeting for Business will be held on May 12, 2019 at 11:50 a.m. at Berkeley Technology Academy.
- Strawberry Creek Spring Retreat will be held May 3-5, 2019 at Ben Lomond Quaker Center
- College Park Quarterly Meeting Spring session will be held May 17 to May 19, 2019, Ben Lomond Quaker Center.
- CROP Hunger Walk will be held on May 19, 2019, at St. Mary Magdalen Church, 2005 Berryman Street. Contact Tom Yamaguchi for more information.
- Stephen McNeil announced Strawberry Creek and Berkeley meetings are co-sponsoring "Ending the Endless War: Repealing the AUMF" on April 28, 1:00 pm at Berkeley Meetinghouse. Stephen will be presenting on behalf of the American Friends Service Committee and will be joined by José Hernandez, Deputy District Director for Congresswoman Barbara Lee.
- Avotcja Jiltonilro is collecting donations for another shipment of supplies for Puerto Rico this week. She recommended the exhibit "Remember Los Siete" at Acción Latina Gallery in San Francisco.

The meeting closed with silent worship at 1:31 pm

Submitted by: Ralph Murphy, Clerk, Rachel Findley, Alternate Clerk, and Tom Yamaguchi, Recording Clerk.

## **Response to the A&Q on Harmony With Creation by Worship & Ministry Committee by Peace, Earthcare, and Social Witness Committee**

We found that the Advices and Queries reflect an earlier time, when it seemed possible that individual choices and responsible public policy could bring humanity into a right relationship with the natural world around us. Then, the beauty of the natural world and its balances and interrelationships seemed to offer a natural path toward a harmonious future; the 2001 Advices and Queries do not project a sense of urgency.

Now we face the possibility of an uninhabitable planet, and grief and overwhelm and even despair are here for all of us.. We have screwed things up, and have not done enough to put things right. Now the storm is upon us.

Powerful political actors push back against even acknowledging there is a problem. We seek to break down the barriers that prevent obvious steps toward solutions.

Yet we also find that this is a fertile time of possibility, when we and other people are awake to our dangers, and responses are seen in individual choices, in political platforms of some candidates for national office, in international agreements, in state actions.

We seek movements or people who are pointing a forward path that makes sense. We need a greater plan on a global scale. Individual choices and demonstrations are not enough. The Climate Citizens Lobby, a carbon tax, and the Paris Accords are beginnings.

Pacific Yearly Meeting could set a goal to achieve Zero Carbon emissions on a world level, and we could reach that goal.

We need to build a culture that lives in harmony with creation, not making a profit off the earth. A culture of connection with all people and with the whole of creation, not viewing any human being or any other being as alien “other” or mere tools for our use, would go a long way toward healing the impact of our life on earth.

### **Strawberry Creek Friends State of the Meeting Report, March 2019**

Our Meeting for Worship remains at the core of our spiritual lives. In Meeting, our members and attenders find centeredness and depth, a precious feeling that we belong together. Even as we as individuals move in and out of Meeting, as a community we are a unified whole, strong and graceful. We are grateful for those who have stewarded Strawberry Creek for many years, creating this spiritual home.

Meeting for Business continues to provide opportunities for us to further our worship, honor Spirit, and find unity among ourselves. It also allows us to be mutually supportive, not just of our personal needs, but of our witness in the world. Celebrating the leadings of others is one of the most powerful things that we do, and in supporting each other in our personal leadings we are following the inward Light. In particular, we have tried to be instruments of Spirit in serving the homeless, pursuing racial justice and protecting the earth.

The size of our large community is both a challenge and a gift. Despite our concerted efforts at welcoming and inclusion, it can still be difficult for newcomers to gain a foothold into our community. There are so many of us that it can be difficult to meet the needs of any one individual. On the other hand, our love for each other and our desire to meet each other’s needs makes us stretch and grow. We become companions and witnesses on our journey together.



We wrestle with providing a safe space for all to be heard and held, a place for us all to “come as we are” and celebrate our individual gifts. We continue to reach out to our LGBTQ members and attenders, providing avenues of open expression, education and support.

Addressing our collective role and responsibility in our Meeting’s racial dynamics continues to be a challenge. There is a call for further education, as well as for tangible action that will establish our meeting as an inviolable space for people of color. There is a tension between being too timid in our education efforts and being so forward that we might leave some behind as others forge ahead. We are committed to deepening our efforts to learn and grow beyond our current understanding of racial politics, to be ignited by the deep and brilliant unknown.

We sense Spirit in our careful, loving care of each other and in the good work of our Mutual Care committee. Our community is bigger than First Day, and we need to continue reaching out to all members and attenders, for both spiritual and practical companionship and support. Some of our committees do struggle to attract sufficient members, and some members serve on several committees. This can lead to spiritual as well as physical exhaustion. Even if at times we lack sufficient resources, we are still driven towards action, and strongly desire to magnify our efforts together in the world. This desire must be weighed against what is possible so that we can conserve our energy for what Spirit is calling us to do. We must also continue to guard against gossip and the pressure to conform to one point of view; our differences are our strength.

Often our struggles are places where we as a community are most alive to Spirit. We open up for guidance when we need a centered, Spirit-led solution to a problem, and we rely on worship and deep discernment when we handle difficult issues. Our depth of conversation and our labor to build compassion and understanding binds us together. In a similar way, our small groups and worship sharing circles allow us to know each other with more intimacy and intensity, enhancing our spiritual lives.

Deep listening and vocal ministry are both so important in the unprogrammed experience. Some find peace in the collected silence while others yearn for transformation, and it can be difficult to find a balance. Our meeting has worked hard to find the Light in some messages that were difficult or painful to hear. There is also much work we can do to raise up the voices of those who rarely speak, especially attenders who have much to add to our community but who may feel inhibited by non-membership or unfamiliar practices. Many Strawberries do find deep acceptance in our meeting as well as support that allows their unique voice to come forward. One particularly moving Meeting for Worship honored the numerous survivors of sexual violence who attend Strawberry Creek.

Our children are working seriously to understand our Advices and Queries and Testimonies. The whole meeting benefits from the special and lively energy of the young people who come into Meeting to share a report of their First Day experience. We are grateful to them, and we aim to be so dynamic and thriving that they can’t help knowing us and seeing who we are.

As solid as we feel as a community, we are not alone. We are part of a greater caravan of Quakers, and our relationship to other monthly meetings increases our strength and resilience. Together, we are journeying inward and seeking a deeper vision about what we can manifest in the world. Let us continue to come to Meeting, alive with expectant waiting, excited for the Light.



**STRAWBERRY CREEK MONTHLY MEETING**

Box 5065, Berkeley, California 94705

Phone messages: 510/524-9186

<[strawberrycreek.quaker.org](http://strawberrycreek.quaker.org)>

**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**

**TO:**

**May 2019 ISSUE  
TIME VALUE**

**FIRST CLASS MAIL**