

Boise Valley Friends Meeting Annual State of the Society Report 2020

Members: 6
Attenders: 12
Visitors: est 5-10

The body of our Meeting: This entire report should be viewed through the lens of understanding the challenges and joys of a rather small Meeting with a mostly aging group. Without a meeting house we have a certain lack of easy visibility in the community; but when we held Meeting for Worship in our rented facility (pre-pandemic), the prominence of our rented facility helped us be located by those visitors searching for a Quaker experience. This year one of our long time devoted members moved to Virginia. His presence and many contributions to the life of meeting are dearly missed.

Committees: Ministry and Oversight (M&O) is the only committee which requires membership in Meeting. M&O plans and leads our worship sharing as well as attending to the spiritual life of our meeting. Our small meeting makes sure no one is left behind in the distribution of tasks as attenders take on major responsibilities; we have a talented and conscientious treasurer, an NPYM representative, a webmaster (or in our case, a webmistress). And when we could meet in-person we had a dedicated host who opens the Meeting house early each First Day and closes up when the last talkative Friend bids adieu. We even have one attendee in charge of all group notices and invitations.

A young couple requested that their marriage be taken under the care of the meeting. *Faith and Practice* provided excellent guidance and we proceeded with a Clearness Committee. The process was deepening for all participants. Because of pandemic concerns the marriage celebration is postponed and is eagerly anticipated.

The Workings of the Spirit: We have been called to review our stewardship of funds in our care. In this time of extremity when so many individuals and organizations are struggling, we decided to draw down our savings and donate more than what we have in the past.

Hospitality: we continue to welcome visitors and give them an opportunity to join our mailing list while urging their attendance to our social gatherings. As we have had to move to Zoom very few visitors have joined us in worship. Our custom at the conclusion of Meeting for Worship was to gather around a table with snacks and tea. We circle the table, each stating our name with any news from our lives, any concerns, questions, requests for help and invitations to attend movies or other community events. We practice this part of our meeting in much the way Worship is conducted. There is a minimum of crosstalk so that each person has the group's full attention. We have missed the intimacy of this custom; but we continue the sharing time on Zoom after concluding Meeting for Worship.

One of the interesting ways we have deepened our understanding of one another is through our annual poetry potluck. Attendees are encouraged to bring a poem to share...either one of their own composition or one they have found that they want to share. Through this activity we have discovered one another's joys, one another's sorrows and often one another's humor. We have an active ZOOM book club that is now on its second book.

Quaker service: Our Meeting has concentrated our monthly donations to environmental, social justice, and organizations serving the those in need. Meanwhile individuals within the Meeting are active in the Alternatives to Violence Project in both Idaho and Oregon prisons and in a local FCNL group.

Meetings for Business: Are well attended. The ongoing work of supporting a monthly meeting is a shared responsibility and members and attenders shoulder the workload. Each month we decide upon an organization for a financial contribution. Even though we have been unable to occupy our rented space for Sunday worship, we have continued to pay rent so that The Cabin can continue to operate.

Struggles: The COVID 19 pandemic presents us with many challenges, Zoom has enabled us to have Sunday worship while we can not meet in person. Last summer and autumn we met in a grove of sheltering trees as long as the temperature was at least 45 degrees and air quality satisfactory. This outdoor setting attracted several visitors who had their first Quaker Meeting experience and some our members and attenders found the outdoors more congenial than Zoom. Our Zoom meetings have consistently attracted 12 or so. Interestingly, it has enabled those who travel and those who relocate during the winter to continue attending worship with their Boise Friends. Sadly we have no children in need of First Day School and so we have not faced the challenge of meeting their needs.

Summary: Boise Valley Friends continues to thrive. Several young people have become involved and share in the responsibilities of our work. We have had surgeries, illness, and decline and new grand babies. With all of that we are blessed with each other's presence, commitment to one another, and the spiritual sustenance from our community.

Submitted by: Lou Landry, Clerk
March 26, 2021