

## State of the Meeting report for Salmon Bay Friends Meeting, Seattle for 2017 – March 2018

Salmon Bay Friends Meeting (SBFM) has continued to thrive with roughly 16 members, 20 regular attenders and 13 regularly attending children. We accepted one Friend into membership by conviction.

Our Adult education has explored spiritual formation, inclusivity, social justice topics, and community building. Many topics have related to the challenges and joys of living our faith, and reflecting on what we learn through practice to encourage growth. This year, our First Day School focused on Community, Quaker History, Worship Around the World, and Dealing with Conflict. The children have also renewed an environmental stewardship project at Carkeek Park, strengthening both their and SBFM's involvement in our wider community and nature. The children joining the full meeting for the last 15 minutes of worship has allowed them to experience a deep quality of silence and the sharing of messages.

SBFM endeavors to embrace radical inclusion with regards to health, mental illness, criminal backgrounds, and politics and more. We have diversity of those who consider themselves Christian and those who do not, rejoicing together as Quakers. The Meeting has made strides to be inclusive of members, attenders, and children with disabilities, with examples reflected in our leadership, and adjustments made in doorkeeper duties to assist those with mobility challenges. Following the adoption of the Minute on Gender Inclusivity, resources were collected to highlight ways in which we can practice being welcoming to all genders, particularly how we use pronouns. Sharing pronouns on nametags and during introductions is invited and optional. New attenders have recounted that they chose to attend SBFM in part because of our adoption of the Minute.

Ongoing discussion of what to do with an unattributed line item in our budget called 'Fund X' was resolved. Renamed the Fund for Spiritual Enrichment and Social Concerns, it will be made available for spiritual enrichment experiences identified by members or attenders, as approved by Meeting. We are also refining the budget to meet our employment obligations.

We established a Social Concerns Committee to season requests and ideas from individual members of meeting that propose social justice actions involving the meeting as a whole. This year, the Worship, Ministry, Care and Counsel Committee had enough support to form two separate committees.

SBFM has members and attenders continuing to be active in the Quaker world, serving our Friends community on boards and committees of Quaker organizations, facilitating workshops at gatherings, and more. These commitments have grown from a strong spiritual base. In an effort to broaden our engagement with the local community in Seattle, SBFM is examining our communication strategy with particular attention to redesigning our website.

### Letting Our Lives Speak

In 2017, SBFM discerned and supported members and attenders in a variety of community and stewardship actions:

- One Friend continued his traveling ministry for Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) to Meetings in the Pacific Northwest.
- One Friend has received grant funding and a scholarship to continue work on her Quaker Novel, A Kendal Sparrow.
- Our Meeting has maintained our spiritual partnership and financial support of the Aurora Commons, where at-risk neighbors living along Aurora Avenue have a safe space to rest, prepare food, obtain clothing, connect with community, and find/receive resources, judgment-free.

One SBFM member continues to serve on the Aurora Commons board, and her daughter, as well as several other Friends, regularly volunteer at the Commons as well as make/serve food at Women's Night. Two members are training to become a Chaplain of Presence there, one of whom also now leads Men's Night. A majority of the children of SBFM have been involved in our partnership with the Aurora Commons, made possible with the strength of their parents and the support of our community.

- As in previous years, our Meeting supported the attendance of a young community member at Friends Committee on National Legislation's (FCNL) Spring Lobby Weekend. In 2017, we sponsored a Seattle area Friend with a background in criminal justice policy. This Friend shared reflections on their experience at Adult education.
- Several members attended Washington State Quaker Lobby Day in Olympia again this year, and SBFM renewed our financial support of Quaker Voice.

### Growing Through Challenges

As we rejoice in the pursuit of spiritual and community endeavors, our Meeting recognizes that acknowledging struggle is an important part of vibrant growth. In 2016, SBFM engaged in concerted worship and conversation around displaying a Black Lives Matter sign on our main Meeting sign. That discussion was laid down, but we recognize dissatisfaction with not reaching a resolution this year. We acknowledge an ongoing desire to be welcoming to all minorities whether visible or invisible, and continue to explore ways in which to do so.

### Spirit-Filled Community

We look forward to another fruitful and vibrant year in community. We are grateful for the way Meeting holds and sustains us, especially in challenging times.