2019 State of the Meeting Report
from Whidbey Island Friends Meeting
to Pacific Northwest Quarterly Meeting

Mailing Address:  PO Box 691, Langley, WA 98260
Email:  whidbeyquakers@gmail.com
Meeting Website:  www.whidbeyquakers.org includes a public and member calendar of events
Meets at:  Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Whidbey Island,
          20103 State Route 525, about two miles north of Freeland

Regularly Scheduled Events

- Meeting for Worship: held each Sunday at 4:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church, Freeland, WA
- Meeting for Worship for the Purpose of Business: held on the third Sunday of the month following Meeting for Worship
- Singing before Meeting for Worship: first Sunday of the month at 3:00 p.m.
- Leadings Sharing (see below) and Potluck after Meeting for Worship: second Sunday of the month following Meeting for Worship
- Meeting for Learning: fourth Wednesday of the month in members’ homes. Potluck at 6:00 p.m. followed by meeting from 6:45 to 9:00
- Men’s Spiritual Nurture Group: every other Thursday from 7:00 to 9:00 in men’s homes.
- Women’s Spiritual Nurture Group: first Thursday of each month from 7:00 to 9:00 in women’s homes

Highlights of 2019

Life of the Meeting
In January 2019 Ministry and Counsel began serving the functions of clerk of meeting since no one had been led to step into that role. M&C discerned and instituted ways to care for the community and to welcome visitors who attended meeting for worship. Some WIFM members and attenders expressed concern that not having a designated clerk, and instead having a committee function as such, was creating a lack of cohesiveness to the group, especially following the terms of the two previous clerks who were strongly pastoral and provided a center for the meeting. There was a sense that the community had lost commitment and vigor, with many committee and clerking roles unfilled.

In September we held a community meeting for discernment where we prayerfully considered how we were being led as a group of faithful Friends. In November we conducted an online survey asking which meetings and activities of Whidbey Island Friends brought people spiritual sustenance, and in which areas people might be interested in serving. The survey got a good response and in December M&C considered the survey results as we continued to discern our path.

As 2019 drew to a close, all clerks and committees agreed to continue in their current roles until the end of March, to allow time for new structures to be worked out. A meeting for the whole community was planned for the second Saturday of January 2020 to use the information gleaned from the survey to help discern our way forward in sustaining the life of the meeting.

The work of delivering email communication to the WIFM community was taken over in January by a member who created another attractive and inviting iteration of the Friendly Flyer newsletter. Our meeting is grateful for this bi-monthly mailing that brings news of WIFM and other Quaker and relevant community groups, and ends with a quote from a prominent Quaker.

May 17, 2020
WIFM purchased copies of the new *Faith and Practice* so that all who wanted a copy could have one. The new edition was warmly received by our members and attenders.

Our ongoing series of members and attenders’ monthly sharings on “Leadings” came to an end in September. We greatly benefitted from these deep and tender insights into the myriad ways we each experience the inner leadings of Spirit.

**Committees**  
Ministry and Counsel’s annual check-ins with groups and committees under their care showed that some groups and committees continued to function while others were not meeting or were struggling with too few members.

In March the Men’s Spiritual Nurture Group held their twelfth annual retreat, this time in Sequim, WA. The Women’s Spiritual Nurture Group continued to meet monthly in one another’s homes.

**Engagement with the Wider Community**  
In a year dedicated to looking inward, WIFM sponsored only two events that were open to the wider community. On March 9 we held Quaker 101, a half day workshop on Quaker spirituality that was attended by about 20 people. In November, as partners in the Greening Congregations Collaborative, we participated in screening the film “Behold the Earth” for the Whidbey Island community.

Two members attended a clerking workshop held at University Friends Meeting in Seattle in November. This resulted in new initiatives to bring life to Meeting for Business.

Traveling Friend Emily Provence, from New York, visited Whidbey Island in December. She held a morning workshop on “Six Steps of the Seeker” outlining the process and resources people use that lead from investigating Quakers to being invested in the life of a meeting.

Whidbey Island Friends Meeting participated in the Greening Congregations Collaborative (GCC) on environmental activities with other faith communities. We participated in an Earth and Ocean Month (April) Way of Sorrows station illustrating “simplicity.” Six members participated in the three-month Taming Bigfoot challenge to reduce their carbon footprint. Our representative initiated a grieving meditation to effectively act on environmental degradation. WIFM member Katherine Davies’ book *Intrinsic Hope*, on hope in a time of climate disruption, was published in May.

Many members and attenders of WIFM continued to be involved individually in political, social justice, and Earth justice activities on local and national levels.

**Looking Forward**  
As 2019 drew to a close, Whidbey Island Friends looked forward to a whole-community meeting in early January 2020 to discern new structures to sustain the life of the meeting. Our love for each other and our commitment to silent worship and to Quaker testimonies remains strong as does our faith that Way will open.

Prepared by Diana Butler and Sarah Schmidt, Co-Clerks  
Whidbey Island Friends Meeting