WALLA WALLA FRIENDS MEETING
STATE OF THE MEETING REPORT

June 27, 2020

Walla Walla Friends have been a preparative meeting since 1980 under the care of Eastside Monthly Meeting of Bellevue. Recent numbers of regular attenders have been very small, including Nancy Ball who has most recently been our assistant clerk and clerk of ministry & oversight; Dan Clark, meeting clerk and treasurer; and Barbara Clark, recording clerk, along with Norm Osterman, clerk of peace and social concerns, joined by a few others.

After nearly 40 years of weekly meetings, we now meet for worship and business only on the second Sunday of the month at 10 a.m. in the Glover Alston Center at Whitman College, 26 Boyer Avenue.

Nancy Cronin Ball, one of our founders and clerk of our meeting many times over the years, passed away on March 7, 2020 at the age of 93. The following are excerpts from the memorial website Nancy’s family has put up at www.nancyball.org.

The first known Friends activity in Walla Walla was in the mid 1960’s when Nancy and George Ball began a worship group in their home with Friends Chuck and Etta Marie James, who had moved to Walla Walla for a period of work, and several others. In the later sixties when the Jameses moved back to Seattle, that group ended. In the Spring of 1971, when Dan and Barbara Clark moved to Walla Walla, the Balls and the Clarks formed an unaffiliated worship group called the Friends Meditation Group, which began meeting on Sunday afternoons in the Fireside Room at the First Congregational Church. The Clarks had attended the Berkeley Friends Meeting while attending law school and organized an unaffiliated Friends group in their home in Napa, California in 1969. The new group included the Balls, the Clarks, one or two others who had attended the prior worship group at the Balls’, and several people new to Friends. The group continued to meet until 1977, when some of the older members were no longer able to attend. In 1980, the Balls and the Clarks decided to form a formal Quaker meeting in Walla Walla affiliated with North Pacific Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, and invited others to join with them. On Easter Sunday, 1980, about twenty people gathered in a room at Whitman College. From 1988 to 2018, the Walla Walla Friends Meeting met weekly, except during school holidays, when schedules varied. Since then, the unprogrammed meetings have been held monthly, with Nancy serving as the Clerk, or presiding officer, alternating with Dan Clark throughout the life of the meeting.

Though the Friends Meeting has always been small, many peace and justice initiatives have come out of this little group and its members over the last forty years, with Nancy often playing a leading role.

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