

# Minutes

Plenary 1, 6th day, April 24, 9:30 am

After being greeted by Zoom Host Evan Nelson (La Jolla), Friends were invited into the Meeting Room, where Meeting began with worship.

Presiding Clerk Jane Blount welcomed all Friends to Spring Gathering. She invited us to create Family Mandalas, should we wish. Robin Durant (Orange Grove), Ministry & Counsel, gave instructions for creating a Mandala. She noted that the process and the conversations you have while creating it are just as important as the design.

Friends then settled back into worship.

Jane gave an introduction to this year's Spring Gathering and went over the planned schedule. She noted that there will be an opportunity later to share mandalas, should Friends wish.

Jane shared an image of Mission Trails Regional Park on Kumeyaay land and invited us to take a moment to acknowledge the indigenous people of the land on which we live.

## **Roll Call**

Jane asked Friends to enter their Meeting/Worship Group into the chat. Recording Clerk Sharon Gates (Orange Grove) transcribed from the chat that Friends from the following SCQM Meetings and Worship Groups were present: Claremont Meeting, Conejo Valley Worship Group, Inland Valley Meeting, La Jolla Meeting, Orange County Meeting, Orange Grove Meeting, San Diego Meeting, Santa Barbara Meeting, and Santa Monica Meeting. One Friend was visiting from Davis Meeting. There were no Friends from Marloma Long Beach Meeting or Whitleaf Worship Group.

While Friends were entering their Meeting names, Jane reminded us to clerk ourselves with regard to the chat. Technical issues can be addressed by sending a private chat to Lawrence Alderson (Orange County). She reminded us to unmute ourselves before we speak and remute after and asked us to use the Zoom raise hand feature to be recognized to speak. She also reminded us to lower our hands after we have spoken.

Jane showed an Interactive Map from the Pacific Yearly Meeting website showing Meetings & Worship Groups within Pacific Yearly Meeting. She then named the Meetings and Worship Groups within SCQM and asked Friends to unmute themselves and say hello when their Meeting/WG was called.

## **Clerk's Report**

Presiding Clerk Jane Blount (La Jolla) read the report, which is Attachment 1. She senses a renewed energy within the Quarterly Meeting and hopes that additional Friends will feel led to step up to serve the Quarter so the work can be shared more broadly. She noted a number of activities that are taking place within committees and the Quarter as a

whole. Jane acknowledged the loss of many dear Friends this year and she shared a passage from Lao Tzu.

### **Nominating Committee**

Katrina Mason (Claremont), Clerk of Nominating Committee noted a change in attitudes towards service and increased caution about taking on too much since the start of the pandemic. A lot of committees lost members since Fall Fellowship, for a variety of reasons. Nominating committee is trying some new things, including nominating two Friends to clerk committees for 6 months to allow them to reevaluate at that point. Katrina then brought the following names for a first reading:

Newsletter/Quarterly Report Editor

- Sarah Rose House Lightner (Orange Grove)

Finance Committee

- Bill Brock (San Diego) 5/21 to 5/24
- Kip McBane (La Jolla) 5/21 to 5/22

Southern California Youth Planning Committee (teens)

- Rebekah Percy (La Jolla) 5/21 to 11/ 21 (clerk)
- Mandy George (La Jolla) 5/21 to 5/22
- Robert Valente-Neighbors (San Diego) 5/21 to 5/24
- Rob Cimorelli (Orange Grove) 5/21 to 5/24

Ministry and Counsel Committee

- Cate Wilson (Orange Grove) 5/21 to 5/24
- Will Barclay (Inland Valley) 5/21 to 5/24

Peace & Social Order Committee

- Kep Peckham (La Jolla) 5/21 to 5/24
- Meeting representatives to P&SO: Keya Kressler (San Diego)

Representatives to Pacific Friends School

- Jan Tappan (Orange Grove)
- Peggy Spear (Claremont)

### **Naming Committee**

Presiding Clerk Jane Blount (La Jolla) brought the name of Mary Jo Housman (San Diego) to serve on the Nominating Committee for a one-year term ending in 2022.

### **Treasurer**

Treasurer Gary Wolff (Orange Grove) shared the Treasurer's Report (Attachment 2). He expressed appreciation for the assistance of the Finance Committee. We have closed the Quarter's Wells Fargo accounts and moved all funds to Interfaith Federal Credit Union. We established a PayPal account, which worked out very well for Fall Fellowship registrations. Gary and the Finance Committee did a full accounting of the Peters Fund so we now have a good sense of where the funds have been used, how much is left, etc. We have reinstated our tax-exempt status with the State of California and with the IRS. We want to invest the balance of the Peters Fund in Friends Fiduciary and are working on an investment policy to guide that investment. Our financial records (going back 5 years) have been entered into Quickbooks, which makes it much easier to see the state of our finances.

Gary then presented the Income & Expense report for this fiscal year. He then presented the Balance Sheet. These reports are in Attachment 3.

### **Finance Committee**

Clerk Sharon Gates (Orange Grove) presented the Finance Committee report and the proposed 2021-2022 Budget. She stated that the committee continued to meet monthly, though the committee has gotten smaller.

The committee found that the Administrative Assistant (AA) position does not meet the State of California's legal definition of a contractor; the AA must be considered to be an employee. The cost of this service to manage the filing and paperwork is beyond what the Quarter can reasonably afford. The current AA has been volunteering since this was brought to the Clerk's Committee in February. In response to this news, the Clerks committee suggested reviving the position of Assistant to the Clerk.

Friends are invited to send donations via the PayPal account, details of which are in the Committee's report (Attachment 4). The committee hopes to bring an investment policy to Quarter later in the year.

A question was raised as to who was consulted regarding the need for a service to cover the costs of an employee. Sharon responded that the Treasurer looked into the filings and records required and determined that they are too extensive to be reasonably completed by a volunteer. Sharon also verified that the Quarter is a legal entity.

Sharon then presented the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2021-2022 (Attachment 5). She noted that the budget was consolidated so that the Fall Fellowship is no longer budgeted separately from the rest of the Quarterly budget. Income and Expenses were based on the Treasurer's accounting. Having data from past years allows creation of a more realistic budget than in past years. The categories for non-Fall Fellowship income and expenses have been slightly revised through consultations between Treasurer and Committee.

The Quarter has previously approved budgeting \$4,000 from the Peters Fund each year. The proposed budget shows the amounts from the Peters Fund that have been used for Fall Fellowship support in recent years and the remainder of the \$4,000 is shown in the general section of the budget. The amount shown for facilities for Fall Fellowship is what was spent on Zoom support (increased capacity and hiring a zoom host). The income for this year is slightly below expenses but is expected to balance once Monthly Meeting donations have been recorded.

A Friend noted that food prices have increased this year and suggested that the Fall Fellowship budget should reflect this. Sharon noted that we have spent less than the budgeted amount in previous years and the Committee feels the amount budgeted is a good estimate, even given higher prices. She also noted that the budget is an estimate and can be modified if necessary.

### **Spiritual State of Meeting Excerpts - Part 1**

Robin Durant (Orange Grove) and Gail Thomas (Santa Monica), Co-Clerks of Ministry & Counsel, presented. We heard excerpted responses to three of the queries for the State of the Meeting Reports. We will hear excerpts from responses to the other two queries this afternoon. Excerpts and full State of the Meeting Reports are in Attachment 6. We then went into breakout rooms and addressed the query *How does our Meeting provide a grounded spiritual center from which to deal with all that is happening around us?*

Plenary 2, 6th day, April 24, 1:30 pm

Meeting began with worship.

### **Pacific Ackworth Foundation and Pacific Friends School**

Gary Wolff (Orange Grove), Representative to Pacific Ackworth Foundation and Pacific Ackworth Friends School (DBA Pacific Friends School), reported on the Pacific Ackworth's mission and current status. His report is in Attachment 7. Gary noted that the amount of Quaker presence at Pacific Ackworth has varied greatly over the years. Based on the Nominating Committee slate, the Quaker presence appears to be increasing.

### **Naming Committee - second reading**

Presiding Clerk Jane Blount (La Jolla) read Mary Jo Housman's (San Diego) name for a 1-year term ending in 2022.

**Minute 04-21-01: Meeting approved Mary Jo Housman (San Diego) for a 1-year term on Nominating Committee ending in 2022.**

### **Nominating Committee - second reading**

Nominating Committee Clerk Katrina Mason (Claremont) reported there were a few minor corrections but no substantive changes from the slate presented this morning (Attachment 8).

**Minute 04-21-02: Meeting approved the slate as presented this morning with minor corrections.**

### **Proposed Budget for FY 2021-2022 second reading**

Finance Committee Clerk Sharon Gates (Orange Grove) reported there were no changes to the budget presented this morning.

**Minute 04-21-03: Meeting approved the 2021-2022 budget as presented this morning.**

### **Spiritual State of Meeting Excerpts - Part 2**

Robin Durant (Orange Grove) and Gail Thomas (Santa Monica), Co-Clerks of Ministry & Counsel, presented. We heard excerpted responses to the remaining two queries for the State of the Meeting Reports. Excerpts and full State of the Meeting Reports are in Attachment 9. We then went into breakout rooms and addressed the queries *What have we discovered? What has surprised us? What has inspired us?* We were a little ahead of schedule, so Jane invited us to share with the larger group things that came up in breakout rooms. Concerns were expressed about transitioning to hybrid meetings.

Minutes were read and approved.

**Announcements**

Sharon Gates (Orange Grove), Recording Clerk, read announcements. Another Friend announced the recent passing of Jane Peers (La Jolla). Her memorial has not yet been scheduled. Another Friend announced that Friends General Conference will take place online in July, making it very easy for Friends to attend.

Friends settled back into Worship and were invited to continue working on their mandalas. Near the end of our worship time, Jane invited those who wished to share their mandalas.

Meeting closed with worship.

## Presiding Clerk's Report

What strikes me most clearly as I reflect on this past year working and worshipping with Friends in Southern California Quarterly Meeting is the dedication, hard work, and love that Friends bring to their service to the Quarter. The Quarter exists to nurture and nourish the spiritual vitality of the monthly meetings and worship groups, and create and support fellowship opportunities through our bi-annual gatherings of Fall Fellowship and Spring Gathering, the monthly Racial Justice Call group, and the occasional workshop. It takes a lot of work to organize these events and there are many Friends pulling hard for our community with a few of them doing a lot of the heavy lifting. I'm aware that Friends in our Quarter have questioned its future - are there enough people willing to serve, should we continue? My sense is that there is new energy carrying us forward and while there are gaps in the nominating slate, and occasional disharmony between Friends, on balance there is good energy, hard work, and love flowing amongst us.

I'm particularly grateful for the work that the Nominating Committee has been doing. They've been working hard to find good fits for people and jobs based on what I call a "resonant yes", rather than trying to simply fill empty positions. Consequently, they've gotten a lot of nos but the yesses they've gotten are full hearted. I'm thrilled that the Teen Program Committee will be revived this year and that we have new members on several other important committees. There is concern, however, that the Arrangements Committee is lacking members and we hope that some Friends might step forward today to serve on this committee to help with the organizing of Fall Fellowship. Though it's not yet clear, we hope we will gather in person at Temescal Canyon in the fall.

The Children's Program Committee is working hard on outreach to connect with families in the Quarter to assess their interest in programming. I'm very grateful for the Finance Committee and the Treasurer for all the work they have accomplished this year which you'll hear about in their reports. I've enjoyed getting to know Gail Thomas and Robin Durant, the co-clerks of the Ministry and Counsel Committee and appreciate their grounded candor, wisdom and leadership.

The Clerks' Committee has been active this year on several other fronts. We have:

- Established an Ad Hoc Website Committee that has migrated our old website to SiteGround, the same host that PacYM uses. They are in the process of fleshing out this new website using WordPress which gives us greater flexibility than what we had before. We ask for patience as the process unfolds.
- Revised our Community Expectations
- Took over the role of the Naming Committee
- Organized a wonderful online Fall Fellowship last November
- Are slowly working on updating the Job Descriptions Handbook

The Clerks' Committee is also in discernment about the Administrative Assistant (AA) position. You'll hear in the Finance Committee's report how the new state rule, AB5 regarding employee versus independent contractor status, affects the AA. I continue to be deeply grateful for the support and assistance I receive from our AA, Allison Kirkegaard. She will be heading East this

fall for graduate school at Vanderbilt University. We will miss her. In the meantime, Allison and I have put some effort towards gathering archival documents for the Quarter, namely past minutes and newsletters. We've compiled a pdf that contains a collection of minutes, reports, and newsletters from 2012 to the present. These documents will be posted to the SCQM website (SCQM.org). There are, however, a lot of missing documents. This could be an opportunity for someone who likes to hunt down documents, perhaps we need an archivist for the Quarter. Contact the Presiding Clerk if you need access prior to the documents being posted.

I also want to acknowledge all the work that the Peace and Social Order Committee did this past year particularly in starting the monthly Racial Justice Calls Group led by Arthur Kegerreis and Holly Anderson. All who knew Holly were shocked and deeply saddened to learn of Holly's too soon death in January. She was a powerful light in many communities and worked passionately for racial equality, social justice, education issues, and the Poor People's Campaign. I know that we have lost many Friends in our Meetings this past year and while we don't have a time specifically set aside for memorials at our Quarters' Spring Gathering I feel I must share the recent sad news that our beloved Friend, Jane Peers died this past Monday, peacefully at home in her sleep. I'd also like to share that PacYM's Ministry Committee is offering a Meeting for Grieving tomorrow, Sunday April 25 from 4-5:30 pm.

In these incredibly challenging and transformative times, I often find solace, inspiration and illumination in poetry. Being a Universalist oriented Quaker, I have found the teachings of Buddhism and Taoism great sources of wisdom and insight. I'd like to share an excerpt of a poem from the venerable old master, Lao Tzu, from the book, the Tao Te Ching, Stephen Mitchell's translation, passage 10.

Can you coax your mind from its wandering  
and keep to the original oneness?  
Can you let your body become  
supple as a newborn child's?  
Can you cleanse your inner vision  
until you see nothing but the light?  
Can you love people and lead them  
without imposing your will?  
Can you deal with the most vital matters  
by letting events take their course?  
Can you step back from your own mind  
and thus understand all things?

May way open for us today as we gather and worship together.

In service, joy and gratitude,

Jane Blount  
SCQM Presiding Clerk  
April 24, 2021

## Treasurer's Report, SCQM Spring Gathering, April 24, 2021

Over the past year, there have been many accomplishments:

- Established new checking and savings accounts with Interfaith Federal Credit Union.
- Closed all Wells Fargo accounts.
- Established a PayPal account for receiving donations and fees.
- With the help of Sharon Gates, Clerk, Finance Committee, accounted for the transactions related to the Ruth Ann Kloepfler Peters Memorial Fund.
- Successfully petitioned the IRS and the state Franchise Tax Board to reinstate our tax-exempt status.
- Drafted for the Finance Committee's consideration an Investment Policy for the Peters Memorial Fund.
- Requested annual donations from our constituent monthly meetings based on membership size.
- Entered financial transactions into the QuickBooks database. Financial statements are now relatively easy to prepare. Please reference the two statements included with this report.

Plans for the next year:

- Establish an investment account with Friends Fiduciary Corporation and transfer the remaining funds from the Peters Memorial Fund into that account when the Investment Policy is approved by the Finance Committee.

The Income and Expense Report, May 1, 2020 through April 18, 2021 and Balance Sheet, As of April 18, 2021 follow.

Gary A. Wolff, Treasurer

April 18, 2021  
Accrual Basis

**Southern California Quarterly Meeting (SCQM)**  
**Income and Expense Report**  
May 1, 2020 through April 18, 2021

---

	<u>May 1, '20 - Apr 18, ...</u>
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>	
<b>Income</b>	
Meeting Donations	1,791
Donations (Individuals)	10
Conference Attendance Fees	2,782
Interest Earned	63
	4,646
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>4,646</b>
<b>Expense</b>	
<b>Committee and Officer Expenses</b>	
<b>Presiding Clerk</b>	
Administrative Assistant	900
	900
<b>Total Presiding Clerk</b>	<b>900</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	71
	71
<b>Total Committee and Officer Expen...</b>	<b>971</b>
<b>Conferences and Meetings</b>	
<b>Fall Fellowship</b>	
Speakers	1,084
Entertainment	500
Facilities	550
	2,134
<b>Total Fall Fellowship</b>	<b>2,134</b>
<b>Total Conferences and Meetings</b>	<b>2,134</b>
<b>Filing Fees</b>	325
<b>Insurance Expense</b>	
General Liability Insurance	161
	161
<b>Total Insurance Expense</b>	<b>161</b>
<b>Technology Services</b>	18
<b>Financial Service Charges</b>	15
	33
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>3,623</b>
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	<b>1,022</b>
<b>Other Income/Expense</b>	
<b>Other Income</b>	
Special Event	(305)
	(305)
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>(305)</b>
<b>Net Other Income</b>	<b>(305)</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>717</b>

April 18, 2021  
Accrual Basis

**Southern California Quarterly Meeting (SCQM)**  
**Balance Sheet**  
As of April 18, 2021

	<b>Apr 18, 21</b>
<b>ASSETS</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
<b>Checking/Savings</b>	
<b>Cash</b>	
Interfaith Fed CU - Checking	661
Interfaith Fed CU - Savings	91,079
PayPal	17
Petty Cash and Postage Stamps	16
<b>Total Cash</b>	91,773
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	91,773
<b>Accounts Receivable</b>	
Accounts Receivable	390
<b>Total Accounts Receivable</b>	390
<b>Other Current Assets</b>	
Deposit, Conference Facility	1,000
<b>Total Other Current Assets</b>	1,000
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	93,163
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>93,163</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
<b>Equity</b>	
Peters Memorial Fund	72,596
Opening Balance Equity	15,844
Retained Earnings	(7,725)
Release of Restricted Funds	11,796
Net Income	651
<b>Total Equity</b>	93,163
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>93,163</b>

## Finance Committee Report to Spring Gathering 4/24/2021

Finance Committee has continued to meet on a monthly basis. Since Fall Fellowship, our Committee has shrunk by two members and we have been working with 2 remaining members plus the Treasurer, who serves ex officio. The following is a summary of our work.

### Employment Status for Administrative Assistant

After much research, the Finance Committee determined that the job of the Administrative Assistant (AA) does not meet California's legal definition of a contractor. The Committee is clear that the AA must be classified as an employee. Once we came to clarity on this, we investigated what would be involved in having an employee. We learned that we would need to engage a service to take care of the various taxes, insurance, and filings required. We also learned that this service would cost at least \$50 per month. We investigated joining with either a Monthly Meeting or Pacific Yearly Meeting to see if we could reduce these overhead costs and found that this is not possible.

SCQM has approved a budget of \$2,400 for the AA, based on an estimate of 10 hours per month at \$20 per hour. In practice, the AA has worked many fewer than the 120 hours per year. Even if they had worked the estimated 10 hours per month, Finance Committee felt that the overhead needed to treat them as an employee was simply too high a percentage of what we were paying for the work. We reported this to the Clerks Committee in February. Clerks' Committee said that we may want to revive the position of Assistant to the Clerk. Since February, Allison Kirkegaard has been doing the AA work on a volunteer basis.

### PayPal

We reported at Fall Fellowship that the Treasurer had set up a PayPal account for the Quarter. The Treasurer has been pleased with the ease of accepting and accounting for donations made through PayPal and many Friends have taken advantage of this option. Money can be sent to the SCQM PayPal account at [paypal.me/scqmtreasurer](https://paypal.me/scqmtreasurer).

### Investment Policy

Finance Committee reported at Fall Fellowship that we were developing an investment policy. We have continued to work on this and are currently reviewing a draft policy. We hope to be able to present this policy to Fall Fellowship.

Finance Committee consists of Rebecca Searl, Gary Wolff (Treasurer, ex officio), and Sharon Gates (clerk).

Southern California Quarterly Meeting  
Proposed Budget Fiscal Year 2021-2022  
(June 1 - May 31)

	2020-2021 Approved Budget	2020-2021 Actuals as of 4/18/2021	2021-2022 Proposed Budget	Notes on 2021-2022 Proposed
<b>Income</b>				
Meeting Contributions	(\$ 3,260)	(\$ 1,791)	(\$ 3,190)	319 members, \$10 recommended contribution
Donations		(\$ 10)		
Conference Attendance Fees	(\$ 14,080)	(\$ 2,782)	(\$ 14,550)	Fall Fellowship income goal is to break even; support from Peters Fund for speakers, entertainment
Peters Fund	(\$ 4,000)		(\$ 4,000)	
Interest	(\$ 1,000)	(\$ 63)	(\$ 1,000)	
Subtotal	(\$ 22,340)	(\$ 4,646)	(\$ 22,740)	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(\$ 22,340)</b>	<b>(\$ 4,646)</b>	<b>(\$ 22,740)</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>				
Fall Fellowship				
Facility Rental	(\$ 7,000)	(\$ 550)	(\$ 7,500)	Zoom support
Supplies & Snacks			(\$ 100)	
Food	(\$ 5,000)		(\$ 5,000)	
Children's Program	(\$ 710)		(\$ 675)	teachers/child care workers + \$75 expense allocation
Teen Program	(\$ 1,040)		(\$ 975)	FRAPs + \$75 expense allocation
SCQM-paid Registration Fees	(\$ 330)		(\$ 300)	Presiding Clerk, Registrar
Entertainment	(\$ 1,000)	(\$ 500)	(\$ 1,000)	paid out of the Peters Fund
Speakers	(\$ 1,500)	(\$ 1,084)	(\$ 1,500)	paid out of the Peters Fund
<b>Fall Fellowship Sub-Total</b>	<b>(\$ 16,580)</b>	<b>(\$ 2,134)</b>	<b>(\$ 17,050)</b>	
Other Committee & Officer Expenses	(\$ 500)	(\$ 71)	(\$ 325)	
Administrative Support for Pr. Clerk	(\$ 2,400)	(\$ 900)		
Peters Fund	(\$ 4,000)		(\$ 1,500)	\$4,000 budgeted less amount for Fall Fellowship
Insurance	(\$ 275)	(\$ 161)	(\$ 250)	
Filing Fees		(\$ 325)		One-time fees to reinstate tax-exempt status
Financial Services Charges		(\$ 15)	(\$ 100)	PayPal
Digital Presence (website, email list, Zoom a	(\$ 300)	(\$ 18)	(\$ 250)	
Clerk's Discretionary Fund	(\$ 500)		(\$ 500)	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>(\$ 22,055)</b>	<b>(\$ 5,757)</b>	<b>(\$ 19,975)</b>	

**Total Income - Total Expenses**                    (\$        285) (\$    (1,112) (\$        2,765)

## State of the Meeting Report Queries 2021

From: Gail Thomas and Robin Durant, Clerks SCQM Ministry & Counsel

*During these times of turmoil, In what ways does our Meeting help us to heal ourselves and others?*

*How does our Meeting provide a grounded spiritual center to deal with what is happening around us?*

*What have we discovered? What has surprised us? What has inspired us?*

*Where is the energy moving In our Meeting? What is our Meeting struggling with?*

*How do we search for the sense of the Meeting on Zoom?*

The Spiritual State of the Meeting Reports can be found in Attachment 9.

**Pacific Ackworth Friends School  
Board of Directors**

**Pacific Ackworth Foundation  
Board of Trustees**

**6210 Temple City Blvd, Temple City, California**

**Pacific Ackworth Friends School Report  
to the 2021 Spring Gathering of Southern California Quarterly Meeting  
of the Religious Society of Friends  
April 24, 2021**

Dear Friends of Southern California Quarterly Meeting,

It's been quite a number of years since the Pacific Ackworth Friends School (School) and Pacific Ackworth Foundation (Foundation) have reported to Southern California Quarterly Meeting. We'd like to give some background as many of you may not be familiar with Pacific Ackworth which some have called "A Quaker Gem in the San Gabriel Valley".

**Pacific Ackworth Friends School (aka Pacific Friends School)**

The School was incorporated in April 1953. In its earlier years, the School served elementary school-aged children. In 1986 or so the School converted to Preschool with a Before and After School Care Facility for elementary age-children. The School leases the property that it uses from the Foundation.

The School's bylaws provide for two representatives from SCQM to serve as members of the Board of Directors. At present there are no representatives from SCQM.

The School's primary source of income is from tuition. The School's major expenses include salaries for the Director and faculty, supplies, and liability insurance. The School holds approximately \$520,000 in investment securities and some limited cash.

At the end of 2019 and the beginning of 2020, the School's Concerns Committee (a less pompous name for the Board of Directors) was consumed with the rehabilitation of our classrooms and some of the School grounds. In the 3's classroom, we removed old and broken ceiling tiles, put in recessed lighting, put in ductless air and heating and painted. The 2's and the 4's classrooms changed to LED lighting and the rooms were painted and the floors were cleaned and waxed.

We were all ready for "The Tour of Schools" in March when COVID-19 hit. We had to completely shut down the School. Kellie McKinley, our Director of 20 years, decided she wanted to receive a severance package, and move to Northern California to be close to her mother. That meant our staff of teachers would go on unemployment and the School would be cared for by the six-member Concerns Committee. A year has passed and, thankfully, our children and staff have survived. We are now pursuing the awesome task of re-opening and it feels like starting over! We have several ideas in the works and the

Concerns Committee is hopeful that we can re-open in June. Our beautiful campus will again be buzzing with children's voices.

### **Pacific Ackworth Foundation**

The Foundation was incorporated in February 1967. The Foundation owns and maintains the property that is used by Pacific Ackworth Friends School. The property is almost 2-1/2 acres in size with several buildings. The property was appraised several years ago at a value in excess of \$5 million.

The Foundation's bylaws provide for six Trustees on the Board of Trustees to be named by SCQM (out of a maximum of 21 Trustees). At present there are four Trustees who were named by SCQM.

The Foundation's primary source of income is from the rental of a 5-bedroom residence on the property plus a token amount of rental income from the School. The major expenses include property maintenance, landscaping services, water, property insurance, and property taxes and assessments. The Foundation holds approximately \$72,000 in investment securities and \$10,000 in cash.

The Foundation is working with the Orange Grove Monthly Meeting Garden Committee in developing a Memorandum of Understanding to sponsor a Community Garden on some of the vacant land on the campus.

The challenges the Foundation faces are to maintain and improve the property with limited income and limited financial reserves.

### **2022 SCQM Spring Gathering**

The School and the Foundation enthusiastically invite SCQM to consider allowing us to host the 2022 SCQM Spring Gathering.

Here is a link to view some pictures of the Pacific Ackworth campus: [bit.ly/32uwide](https://bit.ly/32uwide)

Joyfully submitted,

Gary A. Wolff, Chairman  
Pacific Ackworth Foundation  
Board of Trustees

Sally Spurney, Treasurer  
Pacific Ackworth Friends School  
Board of Directors

## Slate of Proposed Officers and Committee Members

### Officers

Clerk: Jane Blount, La Jolla, 5/20 to 5/23

Recording clerk: Sharon Gates, Orange Grove, 5/20 to 5/23

Treasurer: Gary Wolff, Orange Grove, 11/19 to 5/23

Newsletter/Quarterly Report Editor: Sarah Rose House Lightner

### Committees

#### Finance Committee

Rebecca Searl (**clerk**), Santa Monica, 5/20 to 11/21

**William Brock, San Diego, 5/21 to 5/24**

**Kip McBane, La Jolla, 5/21 to 5/22**

Gary Wolff (ex officio)

#### Southern California Youth Planning Committee (teens)

**Rebekah Percy, La Jolla, 5/21 to 11/ 21 (clerk)**

Cassidy George, La Jolla, 5/20 to 5/22 (teen representative)

**Mandy George, La Jolla, 5/21 to 5/22**

**Robert Valente-Neighbors, San Diego, 5/21 to 5/24**

**Rob Cimorelli, Orange Grove, 5/21 to 5/24**

#### Ministry and Counsel committee

Gail Thomas, Santa Monica, co-clerk, 8/16 to 5/22

Stan Searl, Santa Monica, 5/17 to 5/23

Elva Carter, Inland Valley, 5/18 to 5/24

**Cate Wilson, Orange Grove, 5/21 to 5/24**

**Will Barclay, Inland Valley, 5/21 to 5/24**

Robin Durant, co-clerk, Orange Grove, 5/20 to 5/23

Jack Leshefka, La Jolla, 5/20 to 5/23

Henry Yang, Santa Monica, 11/20 to 11/23

#### Peace & Social Order committee

Arthur Kegerreis (clerk), Orange Grove, 6/15 to 5/21

William Dolphin, Claremont, 11/20 to 11/23

Peggy Craig, Orange Grove Group, 11/20 to 11/23

**Kep Peckham, La Jolla, 5/21 to 5/24**

Meeting representatives to P&SO:

*Note that these names are not approved by the Quarter but are provided by P&SO and listed here for information only.*

Inland Valley: Linda and Mike Dunn, 11/20 to 1/24

Claremont: Alicia Sheridan

San Diego: Keya Kressler

Religious Education Committee (children)

Kate Connell (convenor), Santa Barbara, 5/19 to 5/22

Mayli Castanedo, La Jolla, 5/19 to 5/22

Saima Farrukh, La Jolla, 5/19 to 5/22

Robin Durant, Orange Grove, 2020 to 2023

Louise Sherikar, Orange County, 11/2020 to 11/2023

Retreats Committee

Pat Wolff (clerk), Orange Grove, 5/14 to 5/23

Arrangements

Peggy Craik (clerk), Orange Grove 5/18 to 5/24

Representatives to Pacific Ackworth Foundation

Gary Wolff, Orange Grove

Kip McBane, La Jolla

Michelle White, Orange Grove

Representatives to Pacific Friends School

**Jan Tappan, Orange Grove**

**Peggy Spear, Claremont**

Registrar

Lawrence Alderson, Orange County, 5/19 to 5/22

Nominating Committee

Katrina Mason (clerk), Claremont, 5/16 to 5/22

Betty Guthrie, Orange County, 5/17 to 5/23

Trudy Freidel, Inland Valley, 5/19 to 5/22

**Mary Jo Housman, San Diego, 5/21 to 5/22**

Lonnye Pickels, 5/20 to 11/21

## Ad Hoc Website Committee

Jane Blount, La Jolla, clerk  
Sharon Gates, Orange Grove  
Megan Rogers, La Jolla  
Kerwin Flowers, La Jolla,  
Mitchel Cox, Orange Grove

## Southern California Quarterly Meeting Spiritual State of the Meeting Reports, 2021

### Table of Contents

(Click on any item in this table to go directly to that report)

[Claremont Monthly Meeting](#)

[Conejo Valley Worship Group](#)

[Inland Valley Friends Meeting](#)

[La Jolla Monthly Meeting](#)

[Orange County Friends Meeting](#)

[Orange Grove Monthly Meeting](#)

[Santa Barbara Monthly Meeting](#)

[San Diego Monthly Meeting](#)

[Santa Monica Monthly Meeting](#)

### Claremont Monthly Meeting

Claremont Monthly Meeting has risen to the challenge of Meeting for Worship on Zoom. To our surprise, this has been a time of deeper knowing of one another. When we meet on Zoom, we meet without masks and see each other's unveiled faces within our homes. And after meeting, members and attenders communicate with great honesty. When one speaks, all can hear. Ministry and Counsel stays in touch by phone with members who are not comfortable with Zoom. A newcomer reflected, "I have witnessed great harmony here and respect among members, and want to take part in it next year." The Quaker spirit is here.

We have become a distinct eco-system during this period of covid restriction. Like laurel sumac, eighty percent of the Meeting's mass is underground. Although sumac burns quickly in a fire, within a week of a rainstorm tendrils begin to sprout. All around us, life seems hard, impenetrable, but within our Meeting, everything is scaled back, but alive still.

Individual members have provided green shoots that give us hope. One member organized a Black Lives Matter motorcade through Pomona, Claremont, and LaVerne with local African-American groups. Many were active in the recent election. Still others are involved in community projects in nearby underserved Pomona.

But the Meeting is dormant in terms of public witness. The Claremont Homeless Advocacy Program we started six years ago has been closed during covid, except for referrals. Those who slept in the Meeting House during the years preceding benefitted not only from the overnight shelter and meals, but from the social contact they enjoyed. Guests consecrated the Worship Room with their nightly presence. On the other hand, Meeting members involved are exhausted. Some of the founders left because of interpersonal conflicts. Ministry and Counsel has been asked to revisit the conflicts and try to reconcile them. The number of volunteers dwindled leaving a few with heavy workloads. Depending on a few people to do the work of the Meeting is a recurring theme often resulting in burnout.

We miss the presence of our children. They are screen weary after online schooling. We look forward to the fall when we hope to return to the Meeting House for hybrid meetings and our Children's Programs.

We take heart from our gatherings aside from Meeting for Worship. A series of talks on compassion by Frank Rogers and Alene Daugherty have leavened our spiritual life. In our small group meetings we are bees gathering nectar for Meeting for Worship. The editor of our monthly newsletter has helped build unity among us by soliciting individual contributions related to a relevant theme.

In a time of darkness and isolation, much of our energy is spent in coping. But it is not a time of negativity. We lie fallow, seeking replenishment and gathering strength.

We miss meeting in the Meeting House. We value the commitment of previous generations to erect and maintain a building we use and enjoy. It represents permanence

as contrasted to a facebook group. We miss the presence of our children, too. They are screen weary after online schooling. We look forward to the fall, when we hope to return to the Meeting House for hybrid meetings and our Children's Programs.

When we consider our desire to take on an outreach project, we are reminded that we struggle to find people to do the work of the meeting. But we are mindful of the richness of our individual members, and their impact on other's lives.

We take heart from our gatherings aside from Meeting. Our celebrations of Christmas and Martin Luther King's Day, a baby shower, and new members gladden us. A series of talks on Compassion by Frank Rogers and his wife have leavened our spiritual life. In our small group gatherings we are bees gathering nectar for Meetings. Our monthly newsletter addresses our spiritual needs through individual contributions related to themes suggested by the editor, as well as addressing our practical needs through announcements and Queries and Advices. Here, too, we connect with other selves and other friends, in creative ways.

In a time of darkness and isolation, much of our energy is spent in coping. But it is not a time of negativity. We lie fallow, seeking replenishment and gathering strength.

## **Conejo Valley Worship Group**

Under of care of Orange Grove Monthly Meeting

We have been very much affected, as has everyone, by the Coronavirus. We met on the outdoor patio with masks and sitting 6' to 10' apart in the fresh air until November when weather cooled. We are planning to start meeting in person again on Easter morning.

Some of us have joined in Orange Grove Monthly Meeting's Zoom worship which some of us found satisfying. Of course it doesn't compare to meeting for worship in the Meeting House.

One member had serious brain surgery and will not be able to attend again; however, one member is planning on continuing serving our Friend through music therapy by playing guitar and singing as soon as she has her second vaccination.

We are planning an AVP workshop this summer. One member is fundraising for scholarships for Kenyan women and a water tank. Another is working on funding an Indian village, Ashina, where people had to go when they were forced to leave Calcutta because of Covid-19; the goal is to make the people self-sufficient. Several members are writing people in prison. One member is Program Clerk for FCL-CA and has joined Quaker State-Level Action Network. She serves as FCL-CA representative for Orange Groves SCQ Peace and Social Justice Concerns Committee too.

Covid-19 cannot hold Quakers back! We are blessed to be able to continue working for peace and justice. Kindness and compassion are our norm; diversity is celebrated. We are always led by the Spirit.

## Inland Valley Friends Meeting

On March 21, at the rise of Meeting for Worship, members and attenders of Inland Valley Friends Meeting gathered for a Worship Sharing, reflecting on several queries from the Southern California Quarterly Meeting.

Many Friends responded to the query about Zoom's impact, most quite positively. One Friend mentioned our Meeting's resilience. Others commented on the ease of joining Zoom and on the strengthened connections with out-of-state Friends and Las Vegas Worship Group. Friends expressed gratitude and delight at how spiritual and connected our online Meetings felt. One Friend appreciated that every week was an "interspecies" Meeting, and several mentioned the value of our after-Meeting sharing. Another Friend called Meeting for Worship their hour of "refuge" and "renewal." Some Friends believed that more of us have joined both weekly meetings and extra gatherings than would have attended face-to-face meetings.

On the other hand, we acknowledged that some Friends have stopped attending due to discomfort with the virtual world. One Friend missed potlucks. Another Friend missed after-Meeting socializing. Yet another noted that Zoom was not conducive to children.

As far as the direction of our Meeting's energy, Friends expressed appreciation for the various rise of Meeting dialogues, which have included Quaker process, testimonies, and issues of diversity and inclusivity. One Friend remarked that although our Meeting is small, its reach is long. Several Friends expressed gratitude for our Clerk's caring and dedication. Others mentioned the importance of attending Quarterly and Yearly Meetings—one Friend called them "life-changing." Still others commented on the value of committee work, with one Friend sharing that such work makes them feel "part of things."

We have been delighted by the number of new attenders over the past year. We look forward to building on the energy and expanding into a hybrid meeting, hoping to continue our reach and extend our welcome more broadly.

## La Jolla Monthly Meeting

Twenty-twenty was a year like no other. At the beginning of the year, we were struggling with dwindling attendance, the absence of young Friends, unfilled committee positions, and hurtful interactions among ourselves. Last year's State of the Meeting letter said, "We yearn for a galvanizing cause, a project that will engage us and give voice to our Quaker values." Be careful what you wish for.

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought changes, many of them beneficial. Holding Meeting for Worship over Zoom has enabled more f/Friends to attend. Some find worshiping on Zoom works amazingly well, others note it isn't as satisfying as being in person. We can be more inclusive of people with severe allergies, distant travels, or limited time. Several small children attend. Our increased attendance is due to f/Friends reconnecting - we aren't succeeding at having first-time visitors return.

We have never been a "talky meeting", but the quantity of vocal ministry has gone down. Yet participation in "Joys and Concerns" has increased, and some messages seem to be an

extension of deep worship. Some of our most spiritually enriching events have been the (too many) memorial services, the “Work in the World” talks, the Men’s and Women’s group meetings, the discussions of “White Fragility”, and the retreats. These activities, when there is a lower threshold to speaking, may serve us better than remote silent worship.

Difficult times have led us to focus more on what is important. Spirit seems to be moving within us. Since 2010, there have been several generous bequests to the Meeting. We had used some of the money to help a few asylum seekers, more of it to improve our own or San Diego Meeting’s buildings, but most of the bequest fund sat idle. In January 2021, we came to unity in making substantial donations to help alleviate hunger and assist victims of domestic violence, homelessness, and racial injustice. We are moving towards using our resources to address long-term systemic problems in the world.

We are in some ways recovering from things that were broken or neglected. There has been a revitalization of some committees. Our focus is moving outwards; in 2019, f/Friends were encouraged to read “Effective Apology” to learn how to treat each other with more respect; this year’s readings were about the larger issue of systemic racism, which many among us see as a crucial issue we must address. Meanwhile, our community has been well cared for by M&O and by individual f/Friends reaching out to those in need. We appreciate that some have been willing to ask for help, as caring for them brings us together.

In this year of a global pandemic, many of us have found Light and refuge in our Quaker Community, and we celebrate the Meeting’s commitment and resilience.

## Orange County Friends Meeting

**A Most Unusual and Challenging Year:** The COVID-19 pandemic prompted us to shift to an online format last April. In addition, we began remodeling our new meetinghouse in Costa Mesa. The spirit and vitality of the Meeting has not only endured, but flourished, helping us cope with our personal and collective challenges. And, in response to the painful

events in our nation, a new inward and outward emphasis on racial justice was fostered in the Meeting.

**A Community of Caring** has nourished us. For many, the Meeting took on an expanded role in our lives as we dealt with anxiety and isolation during the pandemic. “Little acts of love and kindness” have been very much in evidence. For example, one elderly couple shared that, throughout the pandemic, members have been leaving groceries for them in the lobby of their senior living facility.

**Meeting Activities** have been a sustaining force for us individually and collectively. OC Friends have participated in regularly scheduled Meetings for Healing, a Book Group, a Crafting Group and a Racial Justice Study Group. “Quaker Explorations”, our adult education hour before Meeting for Worship, is well-attended and a vibrant source of insight and inspiration.

**An Inward and Outward Focus on Social Activism and Racial Justice:** We continued our multi-year sponsorship of Friendly Water for the World, raising over \$1,200 for the “Soap Technology Sustainability Plan” in Matsakha, Kenya. After the murder of George Floyd, members organized six socially distanced, senior and disability friendly vigils in support of the Black Lives Matter movement and voting rights, well-attended by Friends and other allies. A Racial Justice Study group was formed to educate ourselves about white privilege and racism in our country's history, culture, and institutions. We worked to come to terms with our personal “white fragility” and acknowledge our own racist Quaker history. The Meeting approved a minute this past January reflecting the future we envision as a Meeting, entitled, “A Call for Inclusion and Diversity”.

**The Online Format** has enabled us to bring together more people who would not otherwise have had the opportunity to attend, with Friends often joining from their homes in Seattle, England, Sacramento, Minnesota, Mississippi and Germany. It has been a pleasant surprise to see how well most have adapted to the new format, supported by technically savvy members of the Meeting. It has been so successful that we plan to continue the hybrid Meeting format post-pandemic. On the other hand, it can be difficult to

get the sense of the Meeting over Zoom, and the loss of in-person fellowship and shared meals is deeply felt. Our youth presence and engagement has also diminished significantly.

**Our New Landlord** is the Orange Coast Unitarian Universalist Church, bringing new opportunities, such as a joint educational program on ballot initiatives. In particular, we look forward to combining our youth and childcare programs and have been reaching out to foster this relationship.

**The Move to Our New Meetinghouse** has been a major focus, with members contributing in diverse ways, and we are excited to finally be moving into our new home next month. It has been a major expense and administrative challenge for the Meeting, and it has been difficult to adequately support those directly involved. We have experienced some contentious business meeting discussions as the remodeling project cost increased and numerous issues and setbacks arose. Sustaining this effort is our faith in the future of Orange County Friends Meeting, and in Quakerism as a whole.

## Orange Grove Monthly Meeting

Orange Grove Monthly Meeting abides. We wait in expectation that Spirit will move us, as always. We have passed through disease before - the so called "Spanish" flu of 1918 closed the Meetinghouse for a few months. Polio in 1955, influenza in 1957 and again in 1968, HIV in the 1980s. The global pandemic of war and oppression has never lifted. Now we have entered into a form of Quakerism never dreamt of by our predecessors. We closed our Meetinghouse. We isolated from one another and worship digitally. Our diffuse cluster of relationships is spread thinner now. The Spirit that binds us together in Unity can ground and center us no matter how separated we are, but we sometimes find it difficult to remember that. The Light never goes out, only our willingness to let it in fades at times. We abide, connected in new ways by Spirit.

Zooming brings pluses and minuses, losses and gains. A newer Friend suggests that "if cleanliness is next to godliness, Zoom is next to Satan." We agree that Worship via Zoom is better than nothing, but closer to nothing than to ideal. Some find it difficult to settle in in isolation, and that their worship becomes more like meditation. Friends who work via Zoom find Meeting too much like work. Some have stopped attending, yet others who

were formerly unable to come in person can participate now. We have new attenders who have never worshipped with us in person, yet who minister from Spirit not ego. Our Fellowship time finds us with random F(f)riends in breakout rooms, and deep conversations occur as we compare and contrast our individual experiences of the year. Our monthly Q&A session is much larger and more vigorous now. Participation in our week time activities has increased and thrives as we seek connections. We witness the gap between F(f)riends who have easy access to the web and those who struggle.

We are finding our way towards reaching the sense of the Meeting, learning that it is better characterized as unfamiliar and new rather than difficult. So many cues that arose from our physical presence and were taken for granted are deeply missed. Our body language, pheromones, and the synchronous firing of mirror neurons as we empathized with one another - even the yawns that spread contagiously at times - were tools used to discern Unity in meetings. Sharing oxygen and the same background noise were more important than we knew.

Adult Education is well attended but our beloved Spiritual Journey sessions have not translated well to this format. Children's education particularly misses live interaction and we miss the whispering and rustling of their presence when they enter.

Friends risk meeting in small, masked, socially distanced groups. We worshipped together with BLM and at the site of a police killing. We garden in a common plot as Fellowship reinvents itself. We even embrace landscaping work days at OGM as a welcome source of physical engagement. We abide.

## Santa Barbara Monthly Meeting

While 2020 presented serious challenges to our Meeting and community, we are in agreement that we have held together well and the participation in our zoom worship-sharing Meetings is steady. We will respond to the questions posed in the SCQM Ministry & Counsel Committee's instructions.

**Q1: During these times of turmoil, in what ways does our Meeting help us to heal ourselves and others?**

Early-on (March, 2020) our M&C committee chose to switch to meeting on Zoom, and immediately switch to worship-sharing format. We hold a brief check-in with a short query focusing on something positive, then a period of silence, then a brief reading and worship-sharing. The readings mostly come from the advices and queries on the testimonies. This format proved welcoming to newcomers, but frustrating to others because of either the electronic format or the worship-sharing format.

Some like the computer-based Zoom to see at least a few of us, local and remote, and felt a profound relationship to the voice, as good as seeing them with an important sense of being with others and not alone. Others declined to take part in this because of the format, or the fact that they already spend many hours each week on Zoom for their careers.

**Q2: How does our Meeting provide a grounded spiritual center to deal with what is happening around us?**

We see Meeting as an anchor, a regular moment to be outside of the turmoil at a designated time. It helps that we return to a focus on the testimonies and on integrating Meeting with our families and old friends by being on Zoom.

The focus of our Peace, Earthcare and Social Concerns committee this year was on racial healing facilitated by Holly Anderson (RIP) through several rounds of reading groups and threshing sessions.

**Q3: What have we discovered? What has surprised us? What has inspired us?**

The most interesting discovery was how little we know about one another practically; this came to light in the worship-sharing format, and lead to a deepening of our relationships. Many things are said that would go un-said in silent Meeting. At the same time (and not surprisingly) some felt saddened and distant by the lack of in-person Meeting

We certainly had moments of general feeling of a "gathered Meeting" on Zoom (surprise and wonder), and agreed that the cycling through the advices and queries on the testimonies multiple times gets richer and deeper each time.

**Q4: Where is the energy moving In our Meeting? What is our Meeting struggling with?**

We are obviously frustrated by not being able to welcome newcomers in-person, but there is much that we've learned that we'd like to continue. Our Meetings have 12 or so regular attenders plus irregular visitors and newcomers. It is clearly more difficult to keep track of things (messy closet analogy) and we struggle with neglect of the Meeting House and its unavailability to other groups, which cuts us off from the community. We also regret losing touch with those Friends who don't join us on zoom, and worry that programmed Meeting could be a bit less open to immediate movements of the spirit.

**Q5: How do we search for the sense of the Meeting on Zoom?**

We anticipate moving forward and finding the best of both formats: unprogrammed and programmed, in-person and remote between when this is being written and SCQM Spring Gathering.

**To Note**

Friend Holly Anderson (a member of Central Coast Meeting), passed away unexpectedly on Thursday morning, January 14. She was remembered in a memorial meeting on February 20th and will be missed. A memorial minute from Central Coast Meeting is attached.

Friend Mariah Miller and partner Armando Ayala Mendoza welcomed a son, Gael Ayala Miller, born on December 4th, 2020.

## San Diego Monthly Meeting

### **During these times of turmoil, In what ways does our Meeting help us to heal ourselves and others?**

The past chaotic year brought uncertainty to our community and members. In response arose a desire to serve and care for others. A couple of ways included standing as witnesses in immigration court and facilitating housing and offering spiritual care to Honduran refugees. We created an interpersonal pandemic care network that provided supplies, groceries, masks, medical transportation, and spiritual care for several members who were isolated alone at home. Members wrote, and had published by two newspapers, a statement of concern regarding police brutality. They protested alongside *Black Lives Matter* activists.

### **How does our Meeting provide a grounded spiritual center to deal with what is happening around us?**

We did not shy away from controversial issues; and we did create Talking Meetings to discuss uncomfortable and painful topics. These helped alleviate tensions and promoted shared healing.

### **What have we discovered? What has surprised us? What has inspired us? Where is the energy moving in our Meeting? What is our Meeting struggling with?**

Through a series of collaborative racial justice studies with the La Jolla Meeting, we examined attitudes within society as well as within ourselves. Members were inspired to apply their broadened knowledge with an awareness that individuals belong to various intersecting groups.

A Quaker Process session developed between the San Diego and La Jolla Meetings is now shared with other PACYM Meetings. We hope to continue communicating and coordinating with other Quaker groups.

Although we struggled with low attendance as we transitioned to meeting on Zoom, we ensured that individuals had access to pastoral care and the Meeting's spirit through

personal contact, via emails telephone, and personal letters.. We also welcomed new or returning attendees seeking a spiritual sanctuary during this chaotic time. The changes and growth our Meeting experienced brought us joy and challenges.

### **How do we search for the sense of the Meeting on Zoom?**

Zoom meetings made it difficult to gather and discern the sense of the meeting. Still, it offered each member an opportunity to speak of their weekly ups and downs, bringing us closer in communion. Some previously silent members found it easier to share. These challenging events invigorated us and brought us closer together in spirit.

## **Santa Monica Monthly Meeting**

**Healing ourselves and others/sustaining community:** We value the joy of gathering with far-flung Friends but a special effort is needed to stay in community with Friends who are not comfortable online or do not have computer access. One such Friend said “I still feel that I could turn to the meeting as a whole and many individuals within the meeting if I needed support.” Randomly assigned break-out rooms have facilitated new friendships but one Friend said: “I miss the ease of self-directed casual conversation.” One Friend described their experiences in the new Thursday evening meeting for worship as “extraordinary feelings of healing in the Joys and Sorrows that are shared in a deep spiritual space of stillness and sharing.”

**Grounded spiritual center:** One Friend reflected: “We can sense the presence and be present with each other even when we meet virtually, reality is not confined to a physical space.” Meeting committees remained vital and presentations and workshops were well attended. House has been making needed repairs and maintenance on the untenanted meetinghouse. Library delivered requested books. Communications continued to provide a list serve and newsletter and facilitated our online meetings for worship. The work of other committees continued. Some newcomers who began to attend during the pandemic now attend committee meetings and presentations.

**Sense of the Meeting:** Meetings for worship and business now proceed smoothly on Zoom and there is interest in continuing some form of online worship, and perhaps a

hybrid First Day worship.

**Energy:** Santa Monica continued to reach out beyond our walls. Nearly all the Alice Herman Committee budget in 2020 went to food banks and fire relief; few requests were made for grants from our members and attenders. Peace and Social Action and Adult Education led programs on social and racial justice, and initiated a program consolidating donations from individual Friends to local organizations. The Meeting's long-standing sandwich-making continued by taking sandwich making supplies and food to The People Concern Access Center.

**Struggles:** Feelings were hurt and unity has not yet been reached as we struggled with a Friend's leading. We came to realize what good practice advises: a Friend's leading is brought first to a clearness committee, which reports to W&M. If the leading relates to the Meeting as a whole, it is presented at a meeting for business. All actions should be done in love, respect and care for all involved. Peace & Social Action also worked through "learning to rely on each other, not having to do it all oneself, discovering like-minded Friends, relying on group process." Children's Education has struggled with the departure of a very active family and uncertainty about their charge. A committee member reflected that it presents: "a circular challenge: you have to have the program to attract any kids, but if you don't have any kids, is it worth having the program? But if you have no program, you've definitely closed the door to any kids, making it even more difficult to restart." The enthusiastic participation of our teacher Jasmine in joint meetings with Orange Grove Meeting has kept "an outline" alive.