2025 Annual State of the Meeting Report
for the
Boulder Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Overview and Challenges

Boulder Friends Meeting currently has 98 members and a growing number of attenders, many of them aged 25 to 40. Worship continues in hybrid format, with a typical gathering of 70 people in the Meetinghouse joined by 15 to 20 on Zoom. The strength of our community and the spiritual condition of the meeting have grown stronger in the past year. Major contributors to this success have been regular Spiritual Journey presentations, which are posted on our website, and our bi-monthly Quaker Chats, which bring newcomers together with seasoned Friends to explore Quakerism in response to newcomers' questions and impressions. The chats typically include more than a dozen people, about half of them below the age of 40. As for action in the world, we continue to maintain our close relationship with the Emergency Family Assistance Association (EFAA) and the All-Roads shelter in North Boulder. We organize two weekly vigils for peace and social justice, one of them led by meeting members of Quaker Indivisible. We have also strengthened support for New Horizons Cooperative Preschool in our own meetinghouse.

Our meeting has three major challenges:

1) How do we live our faith in the world - both in our Friends community and beyond? This challenge includes efforts to improve discernment for charitable giving and support for Friends engaged in outreach and activism. It involves finding more effective ways to support and care for Friends who need help. This challenge also relates to our meeting's engagement with the wider Quaker community, particularly IMYM and CO Regional Meeting.

2) How can we strengthen efforts to integrate newcomers and engage them in the work of sustaining the meeting through committees and leadership roles?

3) Low numbers of children make it hard to sustain the Child Care Program and First Day School. What more can we do to attract and engage young families, children, and youth in our community?

References to these challenges appear in relevant parts of the report below:

Committee and Team Reports

Building & Grounds oversaw regular maintenance, some of it during nine workdays. Major projects included: a new gate system for the irrigation ditch; tree removal; new sidewalk lighting; fence repairs after wind damage; resealing two sections of the roof; installing acoustic tiles for noise mitigation in the Fellowship Room. We also designed and installed a new sign by the road that says: "Boulder Friends Meeting – Quakers." We secured new liability insurance after the previous company cancelled the policy because of a concern about wildfire risk. BFM also rented space to eight community groups, including New Horizons Cooperative Preschool.

Care Committee met formally eight times between May of 2025 and February of 2026 and members communicated via e-mail, text and phone as necessary between meetings to stay abreast of members' and attenders' need and to coordinate support. With high turnover of committee members, and no convener presently, we have asked the three clerks for help with finding more effective ways of providing support and care for Friends who need help. (See Challenge #1 above).

Communications and Technology Teams include many volunteers who participate on a flexible basis according to their interests and capacities. For the second year, our Webmaster has worked with the Web Team to improve and maintain our website, providing information to both our own community and to the public. The Social Media Team manages and posts on our Facebook and Instagram pages, encouraging members and attenders to contribute posts that share our events and spread our Quaker values. Our Zoom Team facilitates hybrid worship and programs. Our Program Tech Coordinator trains program tech volunteers and is developing a notebook to document our procedures. Our Sunday Tech Coordinator recruits and schedules volunteers, always encouraging new participants to support hybrid meetings. We also refined our various communications projects, including the recording and posting of spiritual journeys.

The Continuing Education and Spirituality Team (CSE) continued hosting bimonthly Quaker Chats in the library following worship. These well-attended and robust discussions help integrate newcomers and deepen connections among seasoned Friends. (See Challenge #2 above.) This year, we also sponsored a one-hour gathering to build community among Friends in two groups, those who typically attend meeting for worship via Zoom and those who usually attend in the meetinghouse. We sponsored a series of workshops based on Parker Palmer's *Healing the Heart of Democracy*. We mentored an inexperienced Friend to help him design a Program Hour. We also worked with Spiritual Life and Membership to clarify policies and procedures for hosting Program Hours.

Fellowship Committee consists of approximately 20 members and has been very active. In addition to providing coffee, tea, and snacks each Sunday following worship and memorial meetings, we have organized or assisted in a wide range of other events throughout the year: Easter Brunch, the Intergenerational Ice Cream Social, the ECHO House Fundraiser Potluck, the Fall Harvest Festival, and the Summer All-Meeting Barbeque. Finally, the committee initiated three new Extended Families this year. Growing attendance sometimes makes it difficult to manage special events even though we have a lot of people to help.

Finance Committee hired a Financial Assistant to support the Treasurer with routine bookkeeping and other financial management tasks. The business meeting approved that change in practice in March 2025. Meeting member Sandra Roberts was selected and hired for this position on a contract basis. Patti Olson retired from the Finance Committee after nearly 30 years of service. Bob Arundale stepped down as Treasurer and was replaced by Sue Henderson. A search for an Associate Treasurer is ongoing. The committee updated the Treasurer's Manual and Accounting Procedures and revised descriptions for the Treasurer, Associate Treasurer, and Financial Assistant.

First Day School now meets on 2nd and 4th Sundays, September through May, because families do not want to attend every week. In the absence of a comprehensive curriculum, teachers design class plans according to their interests and abilities. First Day School attendance has been sparse, with 0-8 children each Sunday, some from new families. We have temporarily decommissioned our Jr./Sr. Young Friends program due to lack of attendees. (See Challenge #3 at the start of this report.) The meeting community has enthusiastically welcomed a new program, called Intergenerational Worship, that started in the Fall of 2025. Every other month, children attend the full hour of worship, with quiet activities on quilts in the center of the room, with support from adult helpers. The First Day School Committee (FDSC) continues to host four annual intergenerational events: the Fall Harvest Celebration, the Family Christmas Program, the Easter Gathering and Egg Hunt, and the End-of-Year Ice Cream Social.

Friends of New Horizons is multi-faceted effort to strengthen BFM support for New Horizons Cooperative Preschool, which rents space in the meetinghouse. That progressive, Spanish-English program was started by Friends in 1968 to bring together children and parents from different economic, social, racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. Recent support efforts include fundraising for scholarships and enhancing safety/security in several areas.

Grief and Bereavement **Committee** organized hybrid memorials for Leslie Stephens, Anne Remley, and Pete Baston. We provided support and assistance for a long-time member, Sara Williams-Mann, who conducted a memorial for her mother Helen. In addition, we worked with Spiritual Life & Membership to craft policies in two areas: recording memorial Meetings and creating memorial minutes for long-time attenders as well as members.

Higher Education Scholarship Committee provided grants of $1,000 per semester to one undergraduate. There are few candidates in the meeting for such grants. With business meeting approval, we have expanded eligibility criteria to provide grants for certificate programs apart from undergraduate education. To date, one person has shown an interest.

Indigenous Peoples Concerns Committee (IPC) works to increase understanding and appreciation of Indigenous Peoples, with a focus on building right relationships. We actively engage with and give modest annual donations to Native organizations, including the tribally operated Kwiyagat school on the Ute Mountain Ute reservation. Through participation in Right Relationship Boulder, we build relationships with the Arapaho and Cheyenne peoples whose ancestors were forced out of the Boulder Valley. We support Native and Quaker organizations that work to heal the wounds suffered by generations of Native children in Indian boarding schools. Through FCNL we advocate for justice in federal Indian policies, and through the Native American Rights Fund we support Native peacemaking initiatives. With members from both Boulder and Fort Collins meetings, IPC builds inter-meeting collaborations. We offer workshops and interest groups at Colorado Regional and IMYM gatherings. We discuss current Indigenous issues and grow in appreciation of Native peoples' wisdom and cultures by participating in Toward Right Relationship with Native Peoples workshops and webinars.

Library Committee continues to manage essential tasks, such as shelving books and media, contacting Friends about overdue books, maintaining shelves, ordering new books, and processing books and media. Reviewing in-kind donations has also become a regular part of

library work. We wrote short descriptions of books for the Miscellany to inform and educate our community, particularly newcomers, about varieties of Quaker resources. The Spiritual Journeys program continues to evolve as a vital part of spiritual engagement and community building. We now host hybrid spiritual journey presentations each month in Fall and Spring.

Nominating Committee, with six members, has filled most open positions for 2025-2026. However, we are still lacking an Associate Treasurer and have not yet found representatives for IMYM and Colorado Regional Meeting. (See Challenge #1 at the start of this report.) We held a program hour to encourage Meeting members and attenders to look at committee participation not as work, but as a joyful way to connect with our beloved community. Each February we meet with Friends after Meeting for Worship to answer questions, explain committees, and help people sign up. That effort helps engage newcomers in committee work. (See Challenge #2.) Anne Marie Pois updated all the committee and job descriptions.

Peace & Social Justice Committee (PS&J): This committee laid itself down, with business meeting approval, in December 2025. The committee was shrinking and aging, with nobody willing and able to lead it. The business meeting agreed to make fiscal year donations already budgeted, and to continue that support in the next fiscal year, with assistance from the last convener. These decisions will extend BFM support for numerous programs and give us time to restructure our work to advance peace and social justice. (See Challenge #1.)

Service Committee continued to provide basic household and personal care products for Echo House, thanks to Friends donations to the Echo House Fund. Service Committee organized a potluck fundraiser for the Echo House, which raised over $1,700. We also continued to provide financial support to the All Roads-Boulder Homeless Shelter, Boulder Bridge House, Boulder Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence, ECHO House, the Emergency Family Assistance Association, the Harvest of Hope Pantry, and HOPE for Longmont

Spiritual Life & Membership Committee (SL&M) supports and nurtures the spiritual life of our community. We changed the timing of when the inner doors of the worship space are closed to prevent hallway noise from disturbing the start of worship time. The committee fosters the quality of silent worship for both on-line and on-site worshipers, with special attention to vocal ministry. As always in the Spring, we sponsored several potlucks to build our sense of community. SL&M created and distributed guidelines for programs presented to BFM and distributed a questionnaire to learn how meeting members and attenders live their faith in the wider world. (Discussion about those survey results helped articulate Challenge #1 above.) SL&M coordinated two Clearness Committees for Membership in the past year. We worked with Grief and Bereavement to create policies for recording memorial service. With business meeting approval, we also started preparing memorial minutes for attenders as well as for members.