2024 Annual State of the Meeting Report
for the
Boulder Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Our meeting community has strengthened in many ways during the past year. Weekly attendance at Meeting for Worship has grown and the average weekly attendance ranges between 40 and 70 people. Total membership remains at 101 people. Several young people now attend regularly and serve on committees. Twice-monthly Quaker Chats offer lively discussion for both newcomers and experienced friends. Hybrid presentations of individual spiritual journeys have resumed. Multi-week educational programs on various topics have attracted strong attendance. The meeting website has become more robust, and our social media presence has increased. Boulder Friends Meeting has a strong financial base and a dedicated financial management team that supports long-term sustainability and good stewardship of resources.

Nevertheless, we do have four significant challenges: 1) Filling leadership positions in both the Meeting and the wider Quaker community is still difficult. 2) Low numbers of children make it hard to sustain the Childcare Program and provide an engaging First Day School experience. 3) There is no regular discernment process by the business meeting to guide committee donations to nonprofit organizations; disunity about that practice is a growing concern. 4) Friends engaged in outreach and activism often feel unrecognized and unsupported. How can we foster a robust and constructive dialog about good stewardship of financial resources to support outreach and activism in accord with Friends principles?

Building and Grounds (B&G) Committee

Our year has been very busy with only four or five committee members and numerous tasks. We replaced our elderly shed with a new one, installed a section of fencing beside the large grate in the sidewalk, and did electrical work in the kitchen. The meetinghouse roof is over thirty years old and requires resealing, which we are doing in stages. We installed a flood door panel for the back door of the meetinghouse and had our section of the irrigation ditch dug out. We consulted a sound engineer about sound quality issues, particularly relating to zoom gatherings, and identified a sound mitigation company to install acoustic panels in the Worship and Fellowship Rooms. Beyond this extra work, B&G continued with routine maintenance tasks and hosted nine workdays.

Care Committee

The Care Committee was created in 2024 as part of an ongoing reorganization effort that grew out of a larger project to revitalize the meeting. The job description for the committee states: “The Care Committee’s primary concern is the wellbeing of the meeting’s individual members and attenders and their connection with the meeting. The committee is charged with encouraging all members and attenders to stay connected with one another in a spirit of loving care.” The committee discussed the importance of not only connecting with those we know are facing challenges but also reaching out to those who have not come forward to express a need. With that in mind, the committee developed a contact list using the meeting directory, giving each member a list of individuals and families to reach out. The committee is also developing two lists of resources to post to the meeting’s website: a list of local non-profit organizations and government agencies that provide services that may be of use, and a list of resources available within the meeting community to help in a variety of ways, including driving people to medical appointments or taking them grocery shopping

Communications

The Webmaster and Web Team designed and maintains the website that provides information to our

community and the public. Ongoing improvements in website security help protect the meeting from hackers. The Social Media Team manages and posts regularly on Facebook and Instagram, sharing our Quaker values and boosting our visibility both locally and internationally. A large but informally organized Zoom Team facilitates hybrid worship and program hours, including AV and the camcorder in the meetinghouse. The Communications Team posts website announcements, maintains the website calendar, and writes the online Friday Bulletin to facilitate meeting communications.

Continuing Spiritual Education Working Group (CSEWG)

The Continuing Spiritual Education Working Group evolved from two previous working groups formed at the Revitalization Retreat in April 2023. CSEWG has achieved the following:

- Designed and printed 3x5 cards describing Quaker Worship in English and Spanish;
- Initiated "Quaker Chats" held first and third Sundays in the library after rise of meeting, from 11:30-noon;
- Presented two Program Hours on worship sharing and spiritual growth, and a program on compassion based in part on the book *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life* by Karen Armstrong.

Fellowship Committee

Our current committee consists of 16 members, all of whom have been active in some way. We've offered coffee, tea, juice, and snacks weekly for the past year. We've also hosted or assisted in hosting many activities during the past year, including the Easter Brunch Potluck, the Colorado Regional Meeting Potluck, an Intergenerational Ice Cream Social the ECHO house Fundraiser, the Fall Gathering Barbeque Potluck, and Christmas Breads. These well-attended events sometimes had over 60 people. We also did a kitchen clean-up and reorganization in the late fall.

Finance Committee

Recruiting a Treasurer and Associate Treasurer has been a challenge for many years. By eliminating the membership requirement for these roles and hiring a Financial Assistant, we lightened the workload for these positions. These improvements helped recruit a new Treasurer and Associate Treasurer.
With the addition of four new members to the Finance Committee, we now have a highly effective team. As part of this effort, the committee took a variety of steps to clarify financial operations, including drawing up a comprehensive list of the duties that need to be performed.

First Day School Committee (FDSC)

The First Day School Committee was formerly known as the Religious Education Committee (REC). That committee no longer oversees the Childcare Program and changed its name accordingly. Going forward, the Childcare Program will be managed by two coordinators, without committee oversight.

The First Day School Committee has five members who meet each month. Most teach First Day School. We continue to sponsor several intergenerational events each year--Fall Harvest celebration (outdoors), a Christmas program, Easter 'Reverse' Egg Hunt (outdoors), and end-of-year Ice Cream Social (outdoors). The committee monitors FDS classes through regular reports from the teachers. We continually seek ways to engage new teachers and assistants.

The low number of children in our meeting community makes it difficult to provide an engaging First Day School experience for older children and youth. Because of low attendance, the First Day School only meets twice a month now, with 2-4 participants on those days. Most Sundays we have only one or two children under the age of five. The committee is making changes to strengthen attendance and

attract newcomers, including new signage outside the meetinghouse and posting First Day School dates on the meeting website.

A Child Protection Policy Review Team has started to review, revise, and update the 2019 version of that policy, with oversight from FDSC and SL&M. The updated policy will apply to both the Childcare Program and First Day School.

Grief and Bereavement Committee

Grief and Bereavement supported Craig Hafner and relatives in holding a memorial for Pat Kelley. Most of the work was done by the family. Thankfully, there were no other deaths.

Higher Education Scholarship Committee

The Higher Education Scholarship Committee provided grants of $1,000 per semester to three undergraduate students. With few college students in the meeting, the committee is exploring options for expanding eligibility criteria to include certificate programs apart from undergraduate education.

Indigenous Peoples Concerns (IPC) Committee

Indigenous Peoples Concerns Committee (IPC) works to increase our understanding and appreciation of Indigenous Peoples with a focus on building right relationships. For example, during the IMYM gathering Paula Palmer, Tom Thompson (Fort Collins) and Nan Uhl (Durango) visited the Kwiyagat school on the Ute Mountain Ute reservation. We also try to respond to the requests of Indigenous Peoples for support in exercising their rights and achieving their goals. Our meeting joined other Quakers across the U.S. in making a generous gift to help the Nisenan Tribe purchase 232 acres in California that had been their traditional homeland.

We also asked Friends and others to urge representatives and senators to support legislation to create a Truth and Healing Commission to address multigenerational trauma stemming from the boarding schools experience. Bob Shively, a member of Ft. Collins Meeting, is co-convener of IPC. This enables BFM and Ft Collins to collaborate. Finally, IPC provides modest financial support to several organizations engaged in work toward creating right relationships with Indigenous Peoples.

Library Committee

Though the Library Committee has only two members, it has kept up with essential library tasks like shelving books and media, and ordering and processing new books and media. The committee also wrote short descriptions of books for the Miscellany to inform our community, particularly new attenders, about varieties of Quaker resources. Meanwhile, the spiritual Journeys program continues to evolve. First, more members have volunteered to give their spiritual journeys—by May of 2025, seven members will have participated. Second, our Zoom Program Hour Facilitator has updated and improved the Zoom recording process. The Webmaster posted those video recordings on the website.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee gathered regularly on Zoom to work on staffing committees and individual positions with volunteers needed for the meeting to function as an effective and meaningful community of faith. Diligent efforts by the Restructuring Working Group helped reduce the committee's workload, enabling us to present the April 2025 Business Meeting with a nearly full committee and position roster. To facilitate deep personal discernment about service to the meeting, the committee hosted a March 2024 Worship Sharing Program Hour: "Exploring Spiritual Gifts." Recruiting people for key leadership roles remains a significant challenge for this committee. To some extent, that challenge increased when the meeting adopted a new leadership structure, with one-year terms for the Associate Clerk, Clerk, and Past Clerk. High turnover in those positions requires the committee to recruit a new

Associate Clerk each year.

Peace and Social Justice (PSJ) Committee

Peace and Social Justice Committee members remain active in several areas, including immigration issues, peace advocacy, climate action, and anti-racism. We have written and gained meeting approval for a minute of conscience on immigration issues another on Israel/Palestine. We met in person with staff members for Representative Joe Neguse about Gaza and Immigration issues. One Friend in our meeting helped organize and lead the IMYM PSJ Roundtable, which several of us and other meeting members have attended and supported.

Restructuring Working Group

The Restructuring Working Group was formed at the Revitalization Retreat on 4/8/23 with the broad goal of improving the effectiveness and sustainability of the meeting's organizational structure. Three pressing challenges received priority attention. The Meeting was unable to recruit a rising clerk, because the duties seemed too onerous, Committees with responsibility for Ministry & Worship and Oversight & Membership seemed overwhelmed, and some positions stayed vacant a long time. The Nominating Committee was also having great difficulty filling positions that required meeting membership. The working group laid itself down in February 2025 by giving a summary report that listed the following accomplishments:

1. Three Clerk Leadership Structure: Approved 9/10/23. Three people make a three-year commitment, each serving one year as Associate Clerk, Clerk, and Past Clerk. Good teamwork makes leadership more manageable, effective, and enjoyable than previously.
2. Combine Two Committees: Approved 11/12/23. Committees on Oversight & Membership and Ministry & Worship merged to form a six-member Spiritual Life & Membership Committee (SL&M). This reduced the Nominating Committee's work, because each of the previous committees required six meeting members, for a total of twelve.
3. Establish a Care Committee: Approved 11/12/23. This new committee narrows the responsibilities of SL&M and establishes a care role for Friends who are not meeting members.
4. Committee Support: Approved 7/14/24. We transferred responsibility for committee support from SL&M to the three clerks.
5. Treasurer Requirements: Approved 10/13/24. We eliminated the membership requirement for the treasurer and associate treasurer. Background checks, including a credit report, provide betters ways to help identify financially capable and trustworthy candidates.
6. Building and Grounds Nominations: Approved 11/10/24. Limit the Nominating Committee's responsibility for the Buildings & Grounds Committee to recruiting conveners. Other committee members will be self-nominated or recruited by the convener.

Service Committee

We hosted a potluck fundraiser for ECHO House, which raised $980. We collected basic household and personal care products and delivered them to Echo House to support their good work. Members collected food for the Emergency Family Assistance Association (EFAA) and provided hot meals at the Boulder Shelter for the Homeless (which recently changed its name to All Roads). Members also participated in outreach efforts to support unhoused people at Boulder's Central Park. Finally, the committee provided financial support to seven different service organizations in Boulder and Longmont. In the past year, the Service Committee also assisted people in the meeting community in various ways. However, that coordination responsibility has shifted to the new Care Committee, with

everyone in BFM encouraged to help provide that support.

Spiritual Life & Membership (SL&M) Committee

This committee was created by merging the Oversight & Membership and Ministry and Worship Committees. The merger reduced the number of meeting members that the Nominating Committee must recruit for these functions. SL&M hosted several community-building events, with support from the Fellowship Committee. The committee works with CSEWG, which designs many educational programs on spiritual life. SL&M hosted both a Program Hour and a one-day workshop on vocal ministry led by Benjamin Lloyd, a Philadelphia-area Friend. These dynamic and well-attended programs grew out of the committee's effort to foster respectful eldering practices to help sustain a positive worship experience in accord with Friends teachings. SL&M also coordinated two Clearness Committees for Membership.

Compiled and Submitted by Lee Quinby, Clerk
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