

Honolulu Friends Meeting
State of the Meeting Report
Fiscal Year 4/1/2017 - 3/31/2018

“The Heart of the Religious Society of Friends is the Meeting for Worship,” so says the PYM Advices on The Meeting for Worship. The Worship & Ministry committee has performed its task of seeing to the right order of Meeting for Worship remarkably well considering the small number of people on the committee. The Meeting for Worship has been blessed with the addition of several young adults who have been faithfully attending, and also, participating in various activities of the community, including serving on some of the Meeting’s committees.

To encourage that participation, it became apparent that it was time for a comprehensive adult education program that would focus on support of attenders new to Quakerism. This series began with a session in which a list of questions (35 in all) were gathered from all in attendance. The third Sunday Adult Religious Education programs for the following months were planned to answer those questions. Some were better attended by those who had asked the questions than others, but the committee will continue to use this format through the upcoming Spring Gathering in April 2018.

In addition to the Adult Religious Education programs, the Spring Gathering was held in April 2017 with the theme of “Get to Know a Friend.” Twenty-nine (29) people attended all or part of the weekend, with four children there on the last day. The Gathering provides a time for the community to become better acquainted and enjoy each others’ company in a casual, beautiful setting away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. The planning is underway for the Spring Gathering in April 2018.

The Spring Gathering is often an opportunity for Members/attenders from neighbor island worship groups to come to O’ahu for fellowship with the wider community. At the Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business that was held during the 2017 Spring Gathering we welcomed into membership a person from the Maui Worship Group. The Worship Groups throughout the Islands are thriving.

A one-day Silent Retreat was held in November 2017 at Ho’omaluhia Botanical Park. Opportunity for reading, reflecting, journaling, and enjoying the beauty of nature was enjoyed by all who attended.

As spiritual lives of individuals are enhanced by these experiences, so too is the spiritual life of the Meeting. We see the fruits of these activities by the participation in the many opportunities to be of service to the Quaker community and to the wider community.

The hospitality offered to visitors and guests at Friends Center is felt to be warm and welcoming to all who come for a day, for a longer stay, from near or far. Hospitality committee provides greeters to welcome everyone to Meeting for Worship. Thanks to the artistic talents of one new attender the committee now has “thank you for worshipping with us” postcards with a line drawing of the Meetinghouse to send to the visitors.

Hospitality committee extended outreach to the wider community by putting an invitation to Visiting Sunday lunch in the MidWeek newspaper. The Thanksgiving and Christmas meals planned by the committee were an enjoyable time of shared fellowship. Food, fun, and fellowship help to build a loving, cohesive community.

The Peace & Social Concerns committee works hard to offer many different opportunities for Quakers to work in the wider community. Visits to other faith communities for peace actions, parades to celebrate social activists, peace vigils, work with FCNL and Hawai'i Peace & Justice, and organizing programs on social action topics on Fifth Sundays are a few of those opportunities.

The administrative management of Friends Center, the many activities held therein, and the personnel are under the domain of Oversight & Counsel committee. But that work could not be done without the very capable people who come for two-year terms to serve as Residents. The current Residents will be leaving this summer. We wish them a fond “Aloha” and “Mahalo” for sharing their wisdom and talents with us. The new Residents selected by the committee will arrive in time to make a smooth transition of personnel.

Oversight & Counsel committee has also been busy with the responsibility of providing counsel to those individuals in need, whether it be with transportation, finances, membership or just a friendly ear for listening.

HFM is blessed that the wisdom of those who came before us found a way to provide us with the lovely Meetinghouse, which is the hub of the activity of the Meeting. House & Grounds committee is a group of dedicated, hands-on workers who do the laborious job of keeping the older house and the surrounding property in top shape. Their loving care makes it possible to have this peaceful, lovely space in which we worship and fellowship.

Likewise, we are blessed to have an excellent library at our disposal, which was started years ago by our elders and continues to be cared for by a committee headed by a professional librarian. Her knowledge enabled the library holdings to be put in a web-based catalog, accessible via the HFM website.

First Day School continues to be a concern for the Meeting. It often does not have any attendance at FDS on Sundays, even though there are families in the Meeting who participate in the special activities planned by the committee. This year one mother and son attended Quaker Summer Camp at Ben Lomond and reported back that it was an enriching experience for both of them. This is the second year that a parent and child have attended the Quaker Summer Camp and found it a rewarding experience. In our modern times families are very busy, and children have many options for activities. Many faith communities are having similar problems, so we are not alone in our concern for the condition of FDS.

Although the Meeting is very healthy in all other aspects of community life, spiritually, financially and physically, we continue to seek a way forward to meet the spiritual needs of our children and their families through FDS.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Hall, Clerk

