

**STRAWBERRY CREEK MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS NEWSLETTER**

FEBRUARY 2018

<http://strawberrycreek.quaker.org>

This newsletter can be accessed by email or at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/StrawberryCreek>

REGULAR EVENTS & CALENDAR

SUNDAYS

Meeting for Worship 10:00 AM. Held at the Berkeley Technology Academy, 2701 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, corner of Derby St., Berkeley. Religious Education (Sept–June) and childcare (year-round) provided 9:45 AM. to end of Meeting for Worship. Please arrive with children before 10:00 AM; no guaranteed childcare after 10:15 AM. After announcements, all are welcome to stay for refreshments. Please bring your own reusable cup and utensils.

Oakland Worship Group 5 PM. At the home of Karen and Peter Lin, 296 Rishell Drive. For more information, call (510) 530-0479 or visit <http://www.oaklandquakers.org>

WEDNESDAYS Mid Week Morning Worship 7:00 AM Berkeley Friends Meetinghouse, 2151 Vine Street.

THURSDAYS Mid Week Evening Worship 7:00 PM in the parlor at Berkeley Friends Meetinghouse.

SUNDAY, Feb 4

Advices and Queries on Social and Civic Responsibility read by Mutual Care Committee during the first 15 minutes of meeting for worship

Twelve Step Meeting. 12:00 PM. Anyone in any 12 step group is invited. Contact Darcy Stanley at (415) 595-2348 or darcy393@gmail.com

Quaker Political Action Worship Group ~~11:45 AM~~ (cancelled) and Mondays at 10:00 AM. Contact Laura Boles (boles9552@gmail.com)

WEDNESDAY, Feb 14 (2nd Wednesdays)

6:00-8:30 YAF (Young Adult Friends) Monthly Meeting at Berkeley Friends Meeting. Contact Cat Schmidt at hi@cath.land for information.

SUNDAY, Feb 11

Business Meeting 11:50 AM

SUNDAY, Feb 18 Worship Sharing 9:00 AM

YAF Lunch 12:30. To RSVP or get information email Cat Schmidt, hi@cath.land.

Quaker Film Series 1:00 2151 Vine St. Berkeley, CA. See below for more information.

SUNDAY, Feb 25 Committee Sunday

Newsletter Deadline for February newsletter@strawberrycreekquakers.org

SUNDAY, Mar 4

Advices and Queries on Stewardship and Vocation read by Peace Earthcare and Social Witness Committee during the first 15 minutes of meeting for worship

Twelve Step Meeting 12:00 PM. Anyone in any 12 step group is invited. Contact Darcy Stanley at (415) 595-2348 or darcy393@gmail.com

News and Announcements

Strawberry Creek Meeting Calendar

Contact the newsletter editor at newsletter@strawberrycreekquakers.org, to get your event listed on the calendar. The calendar can be found on the Strawberry Creek web site, <http://strawberrycreek.quaker.org/calendar.php>, on our Facebook Page and in the Facebook Friends Group.

Memorial for Barbara Graves 2/24

It is with great sadness that Strawberry Creek Meeting announces that our beloved member, Barbara Graves passed away on 12/22/17, at the age of 104 and a half. The memorial celebration of her life is scheduled for Saturday, 2/24, 2:00 p.m. at the Berkeley Friends Church, Sacramento and Cedar Streets. Please help us spread the word to anyone you know who would want to join us.

If you are inclined to contribute to this effort we have the following needs and contact people coordinating those aspects of the event:

Flowers, Ushers, Set Up help: Contact Joyce Samati (Jsamati@aol.com)

Finger Food for the Social Hour or clean up help: Barb Tittle (rbtittle@gmail.com)

If you have pictures we might want to display or messages from people who can't be with us, please send them to me. Child Care will be provided as well as an opportunity for children to join us in the memorial, with quiet activities for them. We will need to know by 2/20 if you will be bringing children and their ages.

Please contact Laura Magnani, friendlauramagnani@gmail.com

We encourage people to car pool or take public transportation. The church is two blocks from the North Berkeley BART station. Special thanks to the Friends Church for their generous partnering for this. Barbara was loved by so many.

State of the Meeting Listening Session 2/4

after the social hour. Location TBA. Kathy Barnhart, Philippa Baron, and Rick Herbert will be the writing committee for this year's Report. Please attend this meeting to express your thoughts and feelings about the state of our meeting.

Political Action Worship Group 2/5

The Quaker Action Worship Group (QAWG) meets every Monday from 10-11 AM at people's homes, and the first Sunday of the month at Strawberry Creek Meeting at 11:45 AM to 1:20 PM except Feb 4 because of the Listening Meeting (see above). For more information, please contact Laura Boles (boles9552@gmail.com)

Quaker Films Series BFM

2/18 Freedom Riders This film chronicles a chapter of American history that is an astonishing testament to what can result from a combination of personal conviction and the courage to organize against all odds.

3/18 20th Century Quaker Documentaries I highlights the AFSC's good work.

4/15 20th Century Quaker Documentaries II looks at various Quaker organizations, including the Friends Committee on Legislation of California.

YAF Lunch 2/18

The YAF Lunch will be on Sunday, 1/18, 12:30. The lunch is jointly organized by Berkeley Meeting and Strawberry Creek Meeting, and will be at a restaurant TBD near Berkeley Meetinghouse. Some funding is available for the lunch, so don't hesitate. To RSVP or get information email Cat Schmidt, hi@cath.land.

Power, Privilege & Race Working Group Program 2/18

Perspectives on Race by Individuals from Different Cultures: Same? Different? How?

Four selections from the NY Times series of short videos on "A Conversation on Race" will provide the basis for listening, reflecting and discussion. Please attend this important Meeting event.

Open Meeting to set priorities for FCNL 2/25

This year SCMM will again help set Friends Committee on National Legislation's legislative priorities at an open meeting of the Peace Earthcare and Social Witness Committee on Feb 25, a draft from that session will go to business meeting for discernment on March 11, an open adult education session will be held on March 18th, and final consideration on April 15.

Quaker Heritage Day 2018 3/10

Quakers and the Eco-Reformation, 9 am- 3:30 pm
The speaker, Cherice Bock, is co-clerk of the newly formed Sierra Cascades Yearly Meeting of Friends. She teaches in the Creation Care Program at Portland Seminary, and is pursuing a PhD in environmental studies. A lifelong Quaker, Bock sees environmental concerns as one of this generation's most important social justice issues. Visit her website at www.chericebock.com. For info about the event, check <http://www.berkeleyfriendschurch.org/qhd/>

Housing Needs

There are a few people in SCMM who need assistance with finding new housing. If you hear of housing solutions, please make them known on the yahoo group list email. Thanks!

SCMM Friendly 7s

Friendly 7s are being organized to give Strawberries an opportunity for informal fellowship in each other's homes. Friendly 7s are small potluck dinners where seven (or so) Friends (one host and several guests) collaborate on a meal/social gathering on a weekend night in the host's home. There will be queries available for the gathering, if you choose to explore them.

Hosts are Friends who are comfortable with hosting one dinner in their home. Hosts will prepare a simple main dish. Hosts will also be the conveners-- each host will invite a number of guests to gather together via email and/or phone. Hosts will coordinate with guests to find a date/time that works for everyone. They will ask guests to bring a dish to serve or beverage to share.

Guests will commit to responding to the host's invitation, attending the dinner, and bringing a side dish or whatever else is decided.

Strawberries will have additional options to sign up either by emailing zbkoehler@gmail.com or birchcarl@live.com or by signing up after meeting in the next few weeks. We will be sending out a survey via Survey Monkey to gather the necessary information.

17th and 18th Quaker Splits/Schisms

The Berkeley Meeting Library Committee is sponsoring an adult education class to begin evenings in the first week of March. Readings will be available on their website. The course is preliminary to a more extensive one which will begin in September, covering the conflict leading to the Hicksite Split, subsequent Hicksite divisions, and the eventual healing of the split. We will follow the trajectory of liberal Quakerism in the US, but will also look at the process that led the British Friends in the same direction. If you are interested in attending or have questions, please contact Sue Friday at asuefriday@gmail.com.

Women's March Oakland

Friends from SCMM, Berkeley Friends Meeting, and Friends' Church met, worshipped and marched in the Women's March together. The joint Meeting for Worship was held at the Alameda County Courthouse steps, 1225 Fallon Street at 9:00 a.m. Many Friends marched with the Quaker Action Worship Group banner "Let Us See What Love Can Do/ Quaker Witness."

PESW What is Thy witness? (by Nancy Jackson)



Friend Avotcia Jiltonilro's witness was that spirituality and creativity walk hand in hand, and that her creativity is released when the spirit speaks to her. Avotcia's creativity was nourished by her father, who taught her to listen. She said, "I was always in love with sound, I hear music in water dripping from the faucet." She reminisced about an

occasion she was stranded in a car, unable to attend Meeting, and found spiritual replenishment listening to

the sound of rain on the roof. "The raindrops, are mother nature's saxophone."

Avotcia observed that traditionally Quakers downplayed creativity. In the past Friends were shunned for dancing or acting. She believes that the Creator is the ultimate artist. She tells us that "if we have a gift, we must use that gift. Whatever you do can be a work of art, you become a healthier person if you use that creativity." Conversely, Avotcia noted that there is a long history of tyrants who did not use their creative genius. "The most dangerous person on earth is a frustrated artist." Frustration sometimes makes people do ugly things.

Avotcia invited us to consider how we use our own creativity. She separated participants into groups to discuss our spirituality. Among the insights gained was this important thought: The thing we don't want to do today, is to give greater weight to life's obstacles than to our own creativity.

New Member Statement: Jay Cash



Jay grew up in a small farm town in Western Michigan, where his family was active in the Dutch Reformed Church. At the height of his involvement, Jay attended services or participated in group activities in the church three days a week. Jay's mother and family support his Quaker religious and spiritual life;

they feel that God has led him to the right. Jay cherishes his Christian upbringing, and, while not a traditional Christian, Jay considers himself a Christian-Quaker.

After graduating from Michigan State University, Jay discovered Buddhist meditation while living in Chicago. Still, he felt something lacking and did not agree with the Buddhist concept of Karma. He took an online quiz and found he was "92% Quaker." After reading a description provided by Britain Yearly Meeting, Jay realized he was a Quaker. For him, it was the most powerful, delightful, and absolutely clear moment of his lifetime so far. In fact, he doesn't consider himself to be a "convinced" Quaker because he believes he was a Quaker from the day he was born. He also cannot imagine whom he would be without the connection and active involvement in a Friends Meeting.

In 2006, Jay attended the New Year's Retreat at Ben Lomond Quaker Center. The experience led him to become more involved as a Quaker. He visited several local meetings prior to visiting Strawberry Creek. Upon his first visit, Jay recognized that his spirit felt joyfully home at Strawberry Creek and he began attending regularly.

While Jay continues to live in San Francisco, he is now more easily able to participate in the life of Strawberry Creek, in part thanks to his discover of bicycling. His commitment to improving outreach has led him to service on Communications Committee. Jay has a

yearly pass to Ben Lomond Quaker Center and would like to see more people take advantage of the meeting's annual pass.

Jay feels that all persons are equal and unique and that while their actions can be judged, their souls are divine and beyond human judgment. He feels that we are all children of God and that God helps us to mature. He feels that God doesn't want us to be servants and that God doesn't need us to be his employees, but that God simply wants us to grow into adults and for God's relationship with us to mature to a level where we are both God's adult children and God's divine friends.

Jay sees a balance in his life through the silence. He tends not to speak during meeting for worship and considers this a time to learn through listening. He accepts that membership includes regular attendance at business meeting and making financial contributions to the best of one's ability.

Quaker Center News

If you are interested in using SCMM "pass" to defray the cost of your attendance at a program at Quaker Center in Ben Lomond, CA, please contact Lydia, lbryans@outlook.com. The programs coming up are:

Quaker Service and Art Camp 6/23-30 for kids entering 5th-9th grades. Campers will experience a multi-generational community with activities, service projects, or travel to Santa Cruz. They will explore Quaker practices through town meetings, experiential learning, inter-generational kitchen and cleaning crews, games and music. Learn more and register your child early at <http://www.quakercenter.org/youth-camp/>

Get inspired by Diane Randall from Friends Committee on National Legislation Feb 23rd-25th to explore What Canst Thou Say? Finding our Quaker Voice in Public Life. We'll look at how our inward experience of Spirit can be manifested in our outward public witness, even in political activity. Learn more and register early at <http://www.quakercenter.org/finding-our-quaker-voice/>.

Come to experiment with Awakening to the Presence from March 19-24th with Bob Runyan, Janet Leslie, Jim Anderson and Kathy Runyan, who will facilitate experiences of individual worship, the gathered meeting, listening to how Spirit has been at work in the lives of others, and witnessing the work of Spirit in us. Find out more and register online at <http://www.quakercenter.org/awakening-to-the-presence/>

Advices and Queries for the Month of February: Social and Civic Responsibility

In the words of William Penn, "True godliness don't draw men out of the world, but enables them to live better in it and excites their endeavors to mend it." Elsewhere he commented: "It is a reproach to religion and government to suffer so much poverty and excess.

Poverty within a wealthy society is unjust, cruel, and often linked to skin color, gender, and language. We must examine our own privilege and role in the economic order that deepens this disparity. Friends should be alert to oppression and injustice, and persistent in working against them.

We value our part in shaping the laws of our country. Our task is to see that laws serve God's purposes and build a just social order. Our first allegiance should be to God, and if this conflicts with any compulsion of the state, we serve our country best by remaining true to our higher loyalty.

If, by divine leading, our attention is focused on a law that is contrary to God's law, we must proceed with care. Before acting, Friends should pray for further guidance and speak with the Meeting, family members, and all those who might be affected by the decision. If a decision involves disobedience to the law, we should make the grounds of our action clear to all concerned and be prepared to suffer any penalties without evasion. As a community, we must care for those who suffer for conscience's sake.

- *What am I doing to carry my share of responsibility for the government of our community, nation, and world?*
- *Am I persistent in my efforts to promote constructive change?*
- *How do we attend to the suffering of others in our local community, in our state and nation, and in the world community?*
- *Do we try to understand the causes of suffering, and do we address them as a Meeting?*
- *How do we, individually and as a Meeting, support the organizations that work to bring the testimonies of Friends into reality in our society?*

Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting
Meeting for Worship on the Occasion of Business
January 14, 2018 Minutes

The Meeting opened at 11:55 with silent worship. Ralph Murphy clerked the Meeting. Thirty-three Friends were present.

Beth Rodman shared responses from the Care of the Meeting Committee to the Advices and Queries on Simplicity. Friends returned to worship for further reflections.

The minutes for the December 12, 2017 Meeting for Business were approved with the following correction in Old Business/Membership in BOCA (Berkeley Organizing Congregations for Action): “The Meeting approved joining and thanked David Rutschman for agreeing to be our representative temporarily until the Nominating Committee names a representative. The Meeting thanked Kathy Barnhart for her earlier work with BOCA.”

The agenda was reviewed. Correspondence consisted of a thank you from Quaker Earthcare Witness for our \$150 donation. Quaker Heritage Day with Cherice Bock, clerk of the new yearly meeting, Sierra Cascades, will be on March 10th at Berkeley Friends Church (registration will be at www.berkeleyfriendschurch.org/qhd and more information on ecotheologian Cherice Bock is at www.chericebock.com). The clerk named Kathy Barnhart, Philippa Baron, and Rick Herbert to the State of the Meeting writing group. They will hold a listening meeting on February 4th.

Old Business:

Marks Fund Distribution (Peace, Earthcare and Social Witness Committee, David Rutschman) David Rutschman updated the details of the grant: restorative justice expert Bill Say will work in the East Bay with about 30 Youth Spirit Artworks (YSA) youth in six two-hour workshops. YSA will report on this third year of funding at the end of the trainings. The Meeting approved the distribution of the grant.

New Business:

Letter of Support for SB 100 (Peace, Earthcare and Social Witness Committee, David Rutschman) David Rutschman and FCL-CA Representative Shelley Tanenbaum, in response to a request from Friends Committee on Legislation-CA to endorse Senate Bill 100, asked the Meeting to do so. The bill would set State standards to reach a point by the year 2045 when all electricity comes from renewable and zero-carbon resources. Shelley noted that environmental concerns are relatively new to FCL-CA. The Meeting approved signing on to the faith-based letter endorsing passage of SB 100.

Membership Request of Amelia Victoria Mederos-Streetz (Care of the Meeting Committee, Beth Rodman) The Recording Clerk read the report from the Clearness Committee (Beth Rodman, Sarah Hawthorne, Raven Moon, and Judith Schumacher-Jennings) on the membership request of Amelia Victoria Mederos-Streetz. The Care of Meeting reached unity with recommending the request to the Meeting. The membership request will season for a month. Any concerns should be brought to the Care of the Meeting Committee.

Reports:

First Day Children’s Program Committee (Shelley Tanenbaum): Shelley Tanenbaum reported that the members of the committee were Joyce Samati, Mary White, Nathan Moon, Ellen Levin, Janet Piggins, and Josh Gallup. The children’s attendance ranges from 8-12 per week with ages ranging from 2-10+. The format has been to open and close in a circle where there is a brief time in worship and sometimes sharing of a thought, then reading a few books related to the topic, followed by a project or exercise. Previously the topics have been the Testimonies. Currently they are following the Meeting’s schedule on addressing Advices and Queries, rewriting them in their own words. They are also inviting speakers from the Meeting to share some part of their lives. Ari Standish, an older teen, is helping lead the activities, at least until June. Teen aides Alma and Tansy Moon ably assist.

Announcements: Avotcja Jiltonilro thanked all for the Meeting's support of relief efforts for Puerto Rico, Domenica, and Texas. Updates are being posted on the Meeting's Facebook page.

Tom Yamaguchi reported that the College Park Quarterly Meeting is being held on January 20 at San Francisco Friends Meeting. The Church World Service CROP Walk is April 29th and benefits the Berkeley Friends Pantry and YSA among other groups.

Beth Rodman announced that there will be an Adult Education Session on January 21: Nominations: Growth or Decline? The panel will be Miftah Leath, Beth Rodman, John McCarthy and Charlie Blanchard.

Susan Burr announced that on February 18, the working group on Power, Privilege and Race will hold a discussion with listening and reflection based on four selections from the NY Times series of short videos, "A Conversation on Race."

Betsy Morris said that the Quaker Action Worship Group has been working with homeless activists who may need bail as a result of their activities. Those interested in the creation of a bail fund, please see her.

The Meeting closed at about 1:20 p.m. with silent worship

The next Meeting for Business will be held on February 11, 2018, at 11:50 a.m. at the Berkeley Technology Academy.

Submitted by: Ralph Murphy, Clerk, Rachel Findley, Alternate Clerk, and Stephen McNeil, Recording Clerk.

Care of Meeting Committee Responses to Advices and Queries on Simplicity

The care of the meeting committee met on Dec 17 to consider the Advices and Queries on Simplicity in Faith and Practice. Later, we made clarifications and edits via email. Our responses came in two broad categories. Some responses were how we incorporate simplicity into our individual lives. This query also stimulated ideas about how we could simplify operations of Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting.

Personal Reflections.

One Friend focused on the Thomas Kelly quote, "Life is meant to be ... serene." His personal clutter is not serene. But this Friend sees needs for passion and activity, which contrast with the word "serene." He cited the work of Gerard C. Smith, a diplomat who focused intently on his task. It was tense work, emotionally very difficult because he had to retain the trust of superiors who were "sharks." He was able to do great good, even though it wasn't about simplicity. Another response was to a different kind of simplicity -- "right kind of equanimity" -- being passionate AND having equanimity. Being calm about missing deadlines that don't really matter. It "helps to be utterly careful about [taking on] commitments." It's about testing the right internal measure, "which is not what my ego wants" -- it's a deeper sense. A third response mentioned the work of Elise Boulding. She said that simplicity is a "byproduct" and a "constant struggle," with glimpses of connection in between. She called for "Quakers to be alive in the political world," to "be kind to us all," to "strive for simplicity but fail regularly." Another responder noted the use of God in the opening words of the query as "A life centered in God..." The word "God" seems to exclude other religions. He prefers the use of "Spirit" instead. Another responder referred to the quote "Make every thing as simple as possible but no simpler," which is attributed to Einstein (not a literal quote). Another responder considered that although many parts of modern living are very complex, there is great value into looking at our life to simplify the part of our life that brings real richness. Another responder noted that a part of our being is reserved to be filled only by Spirit. If we don't allow Spirit in, we feel dissatisfied. We try to overcome our dissatisfaction by filling our lives with unnecessary things and actions. Our lives become complicated and we still are not satisfied. One simple thing is necessary: to allow Spirit in. Friends' practice of simplicity has been uneven. Some early Friends in Philadelphia would only wear grey, but the cloth could be silk. Currently Friends do not proscribe standards of living. Instead, our community nudges us to be aware of how our use of resources can be used for helping social equality and caring for the earth. This Friend likes a saying of Augustine: "Love God and do as you please".

Simplicity related to how we run Strawberry Creek Meeting

One of the major roles of our committee is considering how we can improve the operation of our meeting committees and organizational structure. We found this query very relevant to that aspect of our work. During

the past several years, our Meeting has gone through two rounds of dropping committees. However, we didn't drop responsibilities. For instance, there was a Hospitality Committee but its work was transferred to Care of Meeting Committee. Although we have reorganized our committee structure several times in the last few years, we noted that we could have been more careful about simplifying the work of committees rather than putting the same work into different boxes. Perhaps as our committees start their work each year, they should consider organizing their work so that they cover their primary jobs well, leaving the less important items for a later time.

Care of the meeting committee has been considering how to bring some activities like welcoming/outreach and religious education back into our Meeting without overburdening our existing committees. Are there other creative ways to prioritize or otherwise simplify the tasks our Meeting considers essential?

Query: How do these thoughts inform you?

At Nelson Mandela's memorial, former President Obama also spoke about **Ubuntu**, saying, *There is a word in South Africa – Ubuntu – that describes [Mandela's] greatest gift: his recognition that we are all bound together in ways that can be invisible to the eye; that there is a oneness to humanity; that we achieve ourselves by sharing ourselves with others, and caring for those around us.*

Desmond Tutu spoke of the Xhosa and Zulu word **Ubuntu**. *Ubuntu [...] speaks of the very essence of being human. [We] say [...] "Hey, so-and-so has ubuntu." Then you are generous, you are hospitable, you are friendly and caring and compassionate. You share what you have. It is to say, "My humanity is caught up, is inextricably bound up, in yours." We belong in a bundle of life. We say, "A person is a person through other persons."*

Al Thompson's Worship Sharing Query 1/21

STRAWBERRY CREEK MONTHLY MEETING

Box 5065, Berkeley, California 94705

Phone messages: 510/524-9186

<strawberrycreek.quaker.org>

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

FIRST CLASS MAIL

TO:

February 2018 ISSUE

TIME VALUE