

State of Society Report
University Friends Meeting
May 2018

During the past year, members of University Friends Meeting have come together to pursue a variety of spiritual, social and service activities.

In society with one another, we enjoyed activities such as board games, trivia and movie nights, yoga classes, a Super Bowl party, and women's groups. We came together for several special occasions, holding a family Christmas party, a Consecration Sunday Thanksgiving meal with a reader's theater performance, and an Easter breakfast. At "Friendly Evenings" on Sunday nights, we shared meals, sang songs and grew together spiritually.

Family Promise, a local needs mission, continued this year. UFM provides meals and overnight hospitality to homeless families four weeks per year, in partnership with Family Promise of Greater Wichita. UFM has a group of volunteers who have shown great commitment to this ministry. Family Promise continues to grow and thrive in response to a great need. A Phase II of Family Promise has commenced, with seven new churches joining and moving Family Promise toward a goal of 14 new host churches.

Friends participated in work days and otherwise volunteered to help maintain our meetinghouse. A member of the Boy Scout troop that UFM sponsors became an Eagle Scout, and we were blessed that he chose to complete his service project requirement by undertaking an extensive renovation of the church playground. When Pastor Cliff Loesch had heart bypass surgery in March, members and guests stepped forward to deliver the Sunday message and help with other duties. We are blessed that Cliff's recovery went smoothly and that he has returned to his ministry as our pastor.

Two adult Sunday school classes met regularly over the past year, and our children's ministry program has continued to be active. In addition to regular Sunday school classes for children, UFM hosted an all-ages Vacation Bible School; the theme was "Campout."

On Sunday, July 16, UFM held a meeting for worship that included about 200 guests who were in Wichita for the FUM Triennial. In addition to guests from around the U.S., we had visitors from Kenya, Cuba, Belize, Ireland and Canada. Following the meeting for worship, we hosted everyone for lunch. Both the Fellowship Hall and the gym were filled with tables and chairs – and food. Many Friends volunteered to help with events both at the church and at Friends University.

Meeting for Worship continues to be central to our fellowship. We enjoy the opportunity to greet one another, followed by the pause as we center down to begin our worship – longer than just a pause, it is a real centering down to realize we are there to worship the Lord. Unprogrammed time during the meeting is much appreciated by many.

Special occasions like weddings, Graduation Sunday and the annual Sunday visit by Friends University's Singing Quakers have provided opportunities to experience joy this year. How special it is to share the joys of the birth of a baby in our midst. The faithful Fellowship Committee creates a lovely, special time during baby showers with the couples and their newborn children.

Looking forward, our discernment group has continued to meet and has productively brainstormed ideas and new initiatives for us to pursue. Each of UFM's standing committees was challenged to respond to queries and take a fresh look at how their work can contribute to the vitality of the meeting. We look forward to a future of continuing friendship, fellowship and spiritual togetherness.