

Heartland Friends Meeting
State of Society
Fifth Month, 2018

Love is the hardest lesson in Christianity; but, for that reason, it should be most our care to learn it. William Penn, 1693, Quaker Faith and Practice, Britain Yearly Meeting, 22.01

It has been three hundred and twenty-five years since William Penn said these words and they still ring true today. Love is the challenge. How do we love each other when we don't agree? How do we love our neighbor when that spark of 'Light' within is difficult to find? How do we love others if we don't feel loved ourselves? The testimony of Community is our guide and encourages us to support and cherish one another. We are both appreciative and challenged with the energy and faith it takes to be open to the differences we have within our own community. Whatever our flaws, we are family.

Heartland members are busy active individuals who offer their gifts, talents and time to a wide range of activities. Our FCNL Advocacy Team is energized and engaged, building bridges with our Kansas members of congress. Recently (R.) Sen. Moran added his support for an audit of Pentagon spending which is due in the Fall. The Team's diligent work has opened doors for dialogue that was not happening a year ago. Also, Team members have been successful at getting letters to the editor published locally. Another Heartland member uses musical gifts traveling to schools and groups locally and around the country, leading song writing workshops that encourage sharing of feelings and fostering the love of music. One Heartland member continues to guide and help us to utilize the Everence Sharing Fund, which enables us to multiply our ministry outreach dollars.

In March, 2018 a Heartland member travelled to the James Lawson Institute in Nashville and attended a non-violent direct-action training, in preparation for the forty days of action that is part of the Poor People's Campaign. The Poor People's Campaign is a National Call for Moral Revival to challenge the evils of systemic racism, poverty, the war economy and ecological devastation. Kansas is one of forty states participating in this call to stand up for love and justice for all.

Wichita Friends School, our neighbor, continues to use Heartland for their Monday morning worship. Using Faith & Play/Godly Play, a Heartland member leads the worship experience for the school children and leads Heartland children on the first and third Sundays. The positive feedback we receive about and from the children, their experiences worshipping, and their love of Heartland is uplifting. Our adult education hour has been enriched by the use of technology with added wifi that allows for streaming QuakerSpeak and other videos of interest.

We are encouraged to find more ways to share Heartland. We have hosted a poetry evening, a monthly directed spiritual study group, family events for members and Quiet days. We also hosted an open house for FUM Triennial visitors, who expressed enthusiasm and appreciation for our developing Path of Quaker Testimonies project as they walked our grounds last July. We continue to feel joy and happiness as we receive a steady stream of visitors for unprogrammed worship throughout the year.

In our world of challenges regarding racism, gun violence, war and corruption many of us are able to find renewal in our tenderly bound family at Heartland who cherish and support one another. Our meetinghouse and grounds offer a place of respite and joy in the neighborhood with the addition of meditation benches and contemplative space. We continue working on our grounds, creating a memorial garden space and adding to our path of testimonies. We have chosen to be DIY both to save our funds for other ministry needs and to build community while deepening our personal relationships working together. This year our building and grounds committee designed dedicated art display spaces for members to share creative creations, crafts and collections, opening a new way of knowing, enjoying and learning about each other. We are aware that we are blessed, even in troubled times, and have an obligation through our faith to share who we are and what we have. We are called to be kind, present, and accountable.

We are called to love.

On Behalf of Heartland Meeting
Angela Young
Presiding Clerk