



“I am not free while any woman is unfree, even when her shackles are very different from my own.” -- Audre Lorde

The year 2020 marks the 100-year Anniversary of Women’s Suffrage in the United States. *Heartland Friends Meeting* proudly remembers and honors the following women whose lives, testimonies and membership contributions are a rich part of our history and growth. We cherish the memories of these exceptional women and we miss their humble wisdom.

DOROTHY J. TROUTMAN
(9/3/1913 – 2/17/1995)

LOIS ANDREW
(6/12/1916 – 5/2/2005)

FLORENCE ROBINSON
(7/20/1922 - 5/3/2012)

MYRLISS HERSHEY
(5/9/1928 – 6/14/2019)

BARBARA PERKINS
(7/23/38 – 4/21/2002)

COLLEEN DAHLMANN
(1/3/1929 – 12/28/1996)

Heartland Friends Meeting . . . State of Society Report . . .

June 2020 . . .

Given the state of our world on this day in June of 2020, the task of writing such a report seems both ominous and mundane. Where does one begin? To collect the events, the activities, the goals, the accomplishments of a year in the life of Heartland Friends Meeting without superimposing the very large, over-reaching and impactful implications of COVID-19 and the “Black Lives Matter” movement is a challenging and emotion-filled responsibility and task.

We at Heartland Friends Meeting have been profoundly affected by the current events going on in our communities and in our world, both personally and on a corporate level. As the COVID-19 virus spread across our nation and into the state of Kansas, we mourned the loss of being able to gather in our Meetinghouse with each other for Meeting for Worship. With regular communication via technology, Friends discovered a great comfort and connecting spirit in distance worshipping while remaining in our own homes. At present, we continue to search for ways to safely gather, and we share an unshaken spirit that guides our mutual love of/for the Light and Joy that permeates our Heartland Community.

The 100 year Anniversary of Women's Suffrage in the United States is a bittersweet celebration. One hundred years ago, women were granted access to the voting booth. But. . . , Women had to fight for and "earn this right" to vote, to be considered equal in the eyes of justice and the Constitution of the United States of America.

Human rights, human dignity and justice for all continue to fall short of anything acceptable throughout the cities and states of our nation. Our brothers and sisters of color continue to be oppressed and discriminated against in many capacities across the broad spectrum of daily life in America. We are saddened by the ongoing racial disparity and discrimination that exists for so many human beings who should not have to "earn the right" to be treated with fairness, dignity, respect and compassion. This reality is heavy on our hearts at Heartland Friends Meeting. The rallying cries of our brothers and sisters beg us to both individually and corporately speak out against hatred and violence toward our fellow humans. We honor and lift up the names of recent victims of racial hatred, police brutality and ongoing oppression in this country: **George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor.**

We at Heartland Friends Meeting continue to thoughtfully, intentionally and with the greatest of love work our way forward and through the opportunities we are given during these times, calling on the best of ourselves and our Meeting.

As we continue to reflect for this writing, Heartland seems to have lived with two very disparate identities: before the pandemic and after the pandemic. In 2019 and early 2020, some positive energies rose to action. We welcomed three new members and one (4-year-old) associate member to the Society of Friends. We rejoice in the blessings of these new members of our Meeting.

In late Spring of 2019, a member shared a leading to host a mid-week unprogrammed worship opportunity. In Sept. 2019, members and attenders began gathering on the first and third Wednesdays of the month for an evening hour of quiet worship together. The number of Friends gathering for this time of worship has varied from two to ten, and we have felt tenderly drawn into, "When two or three are gathered in my name..."

In late summer of 2019, a Friend shared a leading to host a women's yoga class once a week at Heartland. Several "Friends" and friends have been gathering on Friday afternoons for an hour of gentle yoga practice and spiritual connection.

In August 2019, Heartland Friends hosted the gathering of family and friends for Myrliss Hershey's memorial service. From the vantage point of this writing, we are deeply grateful that a large group was able to gather in memorial worship for Myrliss, a long-time Heartland Friends member and well-known lover of and advocate for education.

Heartland was pleased to welcome and host the Friends World Committee for Consultation Executive Board for their meetings in September 2019. We know such large Spirit-filled gatherings will happen again, and we will cherish those opportunities to be together with renewed gratitude.

Heartland Friends Meeting has been fortunate during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic and community wide shut-down to work with an Everence Sharing Fund and assist with several community-based requests for persons in need. We value this ministry opportunity and our fortunate ability to respond.

During the time when the COVID-19 worldwide pandemic became a critical “stay-at-home” reality, we at Heartland relied on Spirit’s nourishment of our community. Our hearts were tender with love as we held two members in healing Light during their journey through COVID-19 illness and recovery. Facebook, email and text messages became valuable keeping-in-touch tools for daily connection and support.

In the midst of the difficulty of being in a mode of great “pause” for daily routines, many Heartland members found themselves drawn to our meetinghouse. We had time to accomplish more spring-time work than usual -- trimming, weeding, planting and transplanting. We realized a pandemic “benefit” in getting to know some of our neighborhood adults, teens, children and dogs -- enjoying casual chats as children played and adults walked their dogs around our campus. We are grateful to be a place of quiet beauty for many to enjoy.

At this writing in June 2020, Heartland members and attenders are worshipping at Heartland – some inside the Meetinghouse, others on Path of Testimonies benches, and others in lawn chairs scattered (“socially-distant”) around our grounds. Rise of Meeting brings us together in the parking lot for mask-wearing greetings and conversation.

In recognition of the 100-year anniversary of Women’s Suffrage, this State of Society report is offered by the women of Heartland Friends Meeting. We are grateful for the gifts and nurturance of our fore-mothers (listed above), who have gone before us fully into the Light. We continue as a community to work for equal justice for all, to love mercy, and to walk humbly in the Light.

Submitted on behalf of Heartland Friends Meeting,

Gail Kinzer and Connie Adams