

Hominy Monthly Meeting State of Society Report 2021

Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will surely help you; I will uphold you with My right hand of righteousness. So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. Isaiah 41:10

This year has been one of contrasts. Due to the pandemic we have at times felt isolated and cut off. At other times we have been blessed with a sense of community and connections, especially to those at some distance from us. Like the rest of the world, we have faced the hardship and tragedy of the pandemic. Many prayers have gone up for those who survived and for those we lost. We give thanks to the Lord that we are able to physically gather again in group settings.

Our GPYM Clerk successfully applied to FWCC for a grant on our behalf. This enabled us to purchase a cellular modem/wifi router. The balance of the grant is paying the monthly data fee. We are grateful to now have internet access at the Meetinghouse. It has helped us continue to stream meetings for worship via FaceBook Live. This helps us maintain connection with non-resident members and has led others to come worship with us.

After we resumed worshipping together in the Meetinghouse, we did not feel it appropriate to encourage people to attend. As a result, our numbers have been small for the most part. This has limited our impact on the local community as well as our income. However, as some options diminished, others have emerged.

After years of working to produce a new edition of our cookbook, we were finally able to have it printed last fall. The printing costs were covered by donations and a pre-order from the Osage Nation Cultural Department, so that 100% of every donation for a cookbook is available to help meet our needs.

A large order of 500 cookbooks provided sufficient funds to enable us to replace one of our HVAC systems at the Meetinghouse. Our contractor made us an offer to replace both systems that we could not turn down. A successful fundraising effort enabled us to raise the additional \$3,500 we needed to complete the project. It was wonderful to hear from so many Friends near and far. We felt lifted up and supported and give thanks to God for bringing this all about.

We have been blessed to receive a new member who has strengthened our meeting in many delightful ways.

As the school year began, we held a special worship program for the children, teachers, and adult students to let them know the meeting supports them and wishes them the best in the coming school year.

Christmas was a lot different for us. We decided against holding our annual Christmas Eve celebration in which members and visitors normally gather in the worship room for a Christmas play put on by the children followed by singing carols in the fellowship hall while waiting on Santa Claus. Instead the children were recorded taking turns reading the Christmas story. This was then shared over our FaceBook page Christmas Eve. We still put up a Christmas tree, sacked candy and fruit, and received gifts. Members took the treat sacks and distributed them to the families who usually attend our events in person. Food and toy donations were also presented to the Hominy Ministerial Alliance for their food baskets.

We decided to go ahead with our annual Wild Onion Dinner fundraiser in Third Month, as a take-out only event. We had made some improvements to the kitchen which were helpful. The food was excellent, but it was a challenge as customers kept coming faster than we could keep up. For those of us working and for those who patronized our event, it was a joyous celebration of hope and new beginnings. It was good to see faces we had not seen for many months as it turned out to be our largest dinner in many years. We were delighted that Sue Wine of University Friends made the trip from Wichita to be with us.

The week prior to Easter local churches take turns hosting what has come to be called "Lenten Luncheons" sponsored by the Hominy Ministerial Alliance to which Carole Revard serves as our representative. Usually food is served by the host church followed by a time of worship. This year there was no food, but we took our turn during the lunch hour Tuesday. David Nagle shared a devotional message, prayers, and led the singing of two hymns.

Though we were a small group with few kids Easter Sunday, we enjoyed an Easter Egg hunt and a fellowship feast. As each family brings two dozen eggs to hide, the kid's baskets were overflowing by the time the hunt ended. Each child also received prizes for their participation.

The weather cooperated and we celebrated Mothers' Day with our annual cookout. Years ago we would go to the City Lake, but in recent years have found it more convenient to eat in our fellowship hall. During worship each female was presented with a rose.

5/22 we held a workday ostensibly for the parsonage, but which also included the Meetinghouse. Karen Takemoto of Fayetteville Friends arrived and was a great encouragement. While we made some progress, the fellowship was equally important. Good fellowship continued the next day as following worship we held a surprise reception to recognize our minister's retirement from teaching. David hopes to now be able to spend more time in Hominy. Many tasks remain and we welcome assistance from other Friends.

We continue to feel a burden for Ramona Friends. Recent phone contact revealed that Jim Perkins had visited them the previous First-day. This also led Karen Tucker, a key member there, to contact Green Country Friends. Ramona Friends have found someone to lead their worship each Sunday and are feeling optimistic.

Tahlequah Friends Fellowship continues to meet each Fifth-day evening and this spring we moved up our meeting time to 7:00. In Third Month only Nagle family members were present and then others began to participate via Zoom. As conditions have allowed us to resume gathering in person, we have found it simpler to discontinue using Zoom, but are open to providing this option when there is a specific request. The pandemic and family travel have resulted in a few cancelations. After several minutes of sharing prayer requests and what is new in our lives, we read aloud an Advice from the Ohio Yearly Meeting Book of Discipline before settling into worship. Recently two regular attenders expressed how they value the sense of refreshment as they find their spirits lifted up by attending our quiet worship. We look forward to resuming efforts to invite others to worship with us and reaching out to the community to make our presence known.

Our minister has made numerous trips to Council House this past year. Much work was done on the kitchen and bathroom, and the hot water heater and plumbing have been replaced, all with help from Stan and Will Johnson. The Johnson family also painted several of the downstairs rooms and finished replacing the old downstairs windows with energy-efficient vinyl units. Will has paid rent for the coming year and his belongings now grace the home. David replaced the damaged door to the Wallace Memorial Building and the toilet in the men's room has been re-secured. He has overseen the transfer of responsibility for the cemetery to a new manager, Casey Leading Fox. Recent broader involvements by community residents demonstrate the potential for new life at Council House. They continue to meet for worship most Sundays at 10:30 a.m. with Shane Rush presiding. A brief report from Council House is appended to this report.

Quivering Arrow Camp was not held last summer nor will it be held this summer. Using camp funds, Brad Wood and David Nagle purchased a commercial stove (and other equipment) last fall from a restaurant in Muskogee that appeared to be in good shape. Upon cleaning it up, it was discovered that the oven top was rusted out. Brad intends to purchase a brand-new stove for the Council House Meetinghouse kitchen using GPYM camp donations toward that end. We are all hopeful that Quiver Arrow Camp can resume in 2022.

Several of us plan to travel to Wichita for our 2021 Yearly Meeting. We look forward to the fellowship and spiritual nourishment of our first time of coming together in person since the pandemic began. We pray all who participate, whether in person or via Zoom, will feel blessed and encouraged. May God's Love cover us all.