

Visalia Friends Meeting
17208 Ave 296 Visalia, CA 93292

Newsletter

October, 2009



Personal relationships

In daily relationships with others, both inside and outside the home, our lives as Friends speak immediately and lastingly. In these relationships, our faith may also be severely tested. We are called to respond to that of God in everyone: we are all children of God. Friends celebrate any union that is dedicated to mutual love and respect, regardless of the unique make-up of the family. We strive to create homes where the Spirit of the Divine resides at the center and where the individual genius of each member is respected and nurtured.

Human sexuality is a divine gift, forming part of the complex union of body, mind and spirit that is our humanity. In a loving adult relationship in a context of mutual responsibility, sexuality brings delight, fulfillment and celebration.

The presence of children carries a special blessing as well as responsibility. Children bring unique spiritual gifts of wonder, resiliency, playfulness and more. Recognize and honor the Divine Light within children and treat them with the dignity and respect that is due to all people. Listen to and learn from children; share with them those values and practices that are central to our own lives. Special care must be given to resolving problems between adults and children in a manner that gives equal weight to the feelings and needs of both children and adults. Tender parenting is one of the critically important peace vocations in our society. Make every effort to offer all parents the personal and institutional support that this challenging work requires.

Take a strong stand against any form of abuse, whether that abuse is minor or severe, and whether it is emotional, physical or sexual in nature. The terrible impact of abuse on the most vulnerable members of our families creates lifelong suffering for its victims and is a major source of violence in our society. Perpetrators are themselves usually victims of similar violence and should be approached with compassion as well as firmness.

Do I make my home a place of friendliness, joy, and peace, where residents and visitors feel God's presence?

Are my sexual practices consistent with my spiritual beliefs and free of manipulation and exploitation?

What barriers keep me from responding openly and lovingly to each person?

Do we open our thoughts, beliefs, and deep understandings to our children and others who share our lives and our hospitality?

Do we provide our children and young adults with a framework for active, ongoing participation in the Meeting?

Visalia Friends Meeting

Meeting for Business

October 17, 2009

Members and Attenders Present: Bill Lovett, Beth Lovett, Graciela Martinez, David East, Greg Seastrom, Heather Howard, David Wakely, Joy Marshall, Bob Marshall, Patti Howard, Olga McAllister . Joanne & David Dudley, John & Shirley Dackawich, Dan OConnell, Linn Mclane, Jalene Vincent-Welch, Andrew Glazier, Melissa Alberti-Araujo, Jessi Snyder, Dina Restivo

.....

The clerk reviewed the agenda to be covered for the meeting.

The Meeting Clerk Greg Seastrom first read the agenda. He read from the Daily Readings from Quaker Spirituality on A Change Through Love. Also read was Faith and Practice Advice and Queries on Personal Relationships.

The Meeting began in silence.

Newsletters and Organization Newsletters: Greg reviewed other Meeting Newsletters, Opportunities, and Friends Organizational News. All these are available on the back counter. These items have been place in folders on the back counter.

Agenda Items:

Membership:

Friends heartily welcomed Jessi Snyder as a member of Visalia Friends Meeting. The Meeting presented her with a copy of Friends for 350 Years.

Quarterly Meeting Report: Ginger Curtis will represent the Meeting this quarter instead of Klara East.

Financial Report: David Dudley presented the year-end fiscal report for Visalia Friends Meeting (see attached.) Questions were presented. A Budget Committee will be meeting in order to prepare for next year’s budget. Please see committee members if you have requests and concerns.

AFSC Dinner: There is an invitation to a dinner next Saturday 10-25 in Oakland honoring Proyecto Campesino through AFSC honoring Graciela Martinez, Olga and Bard McAllister. Friends are encouraged to attend. Please call Graciela Martinez for more information. This is a fundraising event. All are encouraged to support AFSC in their efforts.

Naming/Nominating Committees: The naming committee has presented their report naming Patti Howard, Olga McAllister, and Jessi Snyder to the nominating committee. The committee was accepted and will report next month on the nominations for committees for the 2010 year. Please see the nominating committee if you would like to participate.

Playground Proposal: Jalene Vincent-Welch proposed that the children’s play area be moved to a fenced area adjacent to the solarium. She mentioned the benefits to include that it would be closer to restroom facilities and that there would be safety benefits as well. The play area would also be closer to art supplies, etc. The parents feel that they can provide most of the labor and supplies. There may be

some materials needed for purchase. Our children group has grown and the need for better facilities has increased. Jalene spoke on behalf of many of our parents. Questions from Friends were presented. They included concerns for the adequacy of space. Some playground equipment will not be included. There was a suggestion to take the proposal to the Buildings and Grounds Committee. Mallory Marshall – our child care provider – expressed the need and enthusiastically supported the proposal. Jalene noted that the urgency to act quickly for the sake of safety is needed. Melissa also expressed concern about the safety situation. The Clerk asked if Friends if we could agree in principle to the move of the playground. He also asked that the Children’s Committee and Building and Grounds Committee work together as soon as possible. Friends continued to discuss in support of the project. There was a proposal to accept the idea and that committees meet to work together towards planning. There was consensus that the Meeting accept the proposal. Bob and Jalene have convened the meeting Sunday Nov 1st at 9:00 am.

Yoga – Friends will meet for Yoga each Sunday at 9:00 am. See Jessi for more information.

Committee Reports:

- Ministry and Oversight – Bill reported that M&O have met. He encouraged all Friends to ask for help when there is a need. Ministry and Oversight functions to provide help. Recently, our Friend Andrew Glazier has suffered an injury that prevents him from working. Bob Marshall offered to make an offering from all Friends on his behalf. There was a suggestion to set up an ad-hoc account on behalf of Andrew.
- Building and Grounds – Bob Marshall reported that much work was done during the retreat. The play area was renovated.
- Outreach – Graciela reported that they have met and are looking for suggestions on a new sign. Patti mentioned that much of our outreach is done on line. We currently have a meeting website and Facebook groups. We are looking into placing an ad in the Times-Delta.
- Retreat – Jessi thanked all for their participation at the retreat. Our donations covered the retreat expenses. There was some extra money left over. Appreciation was expressed on behalf of Mallory Marshall. The Meeting suggested that the small surplus be given as a gift to Mallory Marshall on behalf of the Meeting.

Meet and Greet with John Zaplac: David East asked if John Zaplac, County Sherrif candidate, could meet with Friends and other interest groups at the Meeting house for a Meet and Greet event. Friends approved and suggested that David contact the South Valley Peace Center for a contact list.

5th Sunday - Nov: We will host 5th Sunday with Fresno Friends Meeting.

AFSC - Proyecto Campesino Office has moved to 141 E. Front St. in Farmersville.

The Meeting ended in silence.

Respectfully submitted,

David East

Recording Clerk