

The Mini Orange Grove Record

The Orange Grove Monthly Meeting Of The Religious Society of Friends

Orange Grove Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends Minutes of the Monthly Meeting for Business

February 11, 2007

Present: Ruanne Peters, Clerk pro tem, Cliff Lester, Minute Clerk, Maggie Beach, Lou Byerly, Brandt Chamberlain, John Chase, Mark Davis, Joe Franko, Claire Gorfinkel, Martha Harper, Aiden Howell, Joan Johnson, Derek Larson, Jean Lester, Dave Morris, David Morse, Phil Rizzo, Anna Root, Alice Rosenthal, Ruth Ross, Percy Severn, Jochen Strack, Dan Strickland, Myungeun Strickland, David Weaver, Michelle White, Juliet Wright

Meeting opened with silent worship.

The Query for Second Month on Spiritual Life was read and answered:

We do seek to know each other in that which is eternal. We've had much study of the Bible and of Friends' history and practice in recent years.

Sharing our spiritual lives with others is the hardest part. Our Wednesday night sessions are an effort to do this and have been successful.

These queries are similar to those posed in the most recent adult education sessions on Pacific Yearly Meeting's Year of Discernment. They are very difficult to answer. A good image of God is hard to come by. We spend our lives trying to find it.

God is not an image but a feeling. One comes to Business Meeting and gets a feeling of God. We contribute to the silence by being here.

Conejo Valley Worship Group has been using the Children's Queries. One young girl, in answer to the question of what she does to contemplate God said, "I go out and sit on the compost pile".

The Tao that can be told is not the true Tao. Getting an image of God can't be done; it's an experience.

Agenda Review

The agenda was reviewed and amended.

Treasurer's report

In the absence of the Treasurer, there will be no report this month.

Ad Hoc Site Committee

Abira Ali will be serving on this committee as the representative for the Children's Education Committee. Peter Day reports that the committee has not met yet but will soon.

Nominating

07 – 04 Meeting approved Frances Brown as a member of Peace and Social Concerns.

Suzanne Rizzo wishes to resign as Clerk of Oversight for health reasons. The Nominating Committee recommends Dan Strickland as Clerk of Oversight to complete her term through June.

Mike McClellan wishes to resign as clerk of the property

committee. The Nominating Committee recommends Jochen Strack as Clerk of the Property Committee to complete Mike's term through June.

These will be considered for approval at next month's meeting.

Clerk's report

Letters

A letter of thanks for Meeting's support of Friends Western School was read.

Union station writes concerning a Mission March for Human Dignity on February 19. We are asked to host an Undie Sunday on February 18 to collect unused underwear (T-shirts, shorts, etc.) for distribution to the homeless.

Welcoming events

- A welcoming party for Jeff and Anita was held.
- The welcoming party for the Strickland's was held December 30, 2006.
- A welcoming party for Maggie Beach and Abira Ali was held.

All Saints Church and the IRS

A report on the current status was presented and is attached. Individuals may add their support to All Saints by contributing to a Solidarity membership. All Saints is waiting for the IRS to go to the courts. There appears to be nothing further Orange Grove Meeting can do at this time. Claire Gorfinkel will investigate whether there is a possibility that an organization such as Orange Grove Meeting might take out a Solidarity membership. More information can be obtained at www.allsaints-pas.org.

FIND Want Ads

Eva Miller, Oversight liaison to the Communications Committee, and Jochen Strack discussed the concern raised at last Monthly Meeting about a process for making the skills and abilities of Meeting known. A proposal for the project, Friends Initiative for Non-Costly Deals (FIND) Want Ads, was presented and discussed. It consists of two parts:

1. A cork board for the placement of want ads located somewhere in the Meetinghouse. The ads would have a time limit of three months on the board. The board would be overseen by Jochen Strack.
2. A listing of want ads sent to the OGM e-mail list once per month. One person would be in charge of collecting the e-mails and sending them to the database clerk once per month.

It was believed that these want ads would serve a community-building purpose (i.e. helping us get to know each other better) as well as a provide a way to announce things/items that are needed or that are available within the Meeting community.

07 – 05 Meeting approved a six-month trial of the FIND Want Ad project consisting of two parts, (1) a special cork board for the posting of want ads overseen by Jochen Strack and (2) a monthly e-mail to the Orange Grove Meeting list. Jochen Strack will develop the mechanics for collecting the e-mail want ads.



Saving someone's life is like falling in love, the best drug in the world.

Paul Schrader

There is incredible value in being of service to others. I think if many of the people in therapy offices were dragged out to put their finger in a dike, or take up their place in a working line, they would be relieved of terrible burdens.

Elizabeth Berg

I can think of no more stirring symbol of man's humanity to man than a fire engine.

Kurt Vonnegut

Quotes from the magazine The Sun.

Orange Grove Monthly Meeting
of the Religious Society of Friends
520 East Orange Grove Boulevard
Pasadena, CA 91104
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PASADENA, CA
PERMIT NO. 90

Our Regularly Scheduled Events

Unprogrammed Meeting for Worship

First Days, Sundays at 11:00am

Potluck Lunch

Second First Day—confusing, aren't we?— of the month following Meeting for Worship (@ 12:15pm or so). Bring any dish.

Monthly Meeting for Worship on the Occasion of Business

While this meeting handles business matters, it is also a worship service that is often quite stirring: "It can be tedious, but it's never boring." It takes place on the second First Day of the month following the Potluck Lunch (@1:00pm or so).

First Day School (FDS) for Children ages 2+

Available all Sundays (except during the summer) from 11:10 a.m. to 12:10 p.m.

Childcare is available during

- The 10:00 Adult Education hour (for all children)
- Meetings for Worship (for babies/toddlers)
- Meetings for Business [2nd Sundays] (for all children)

Adult Education November

4 Do you remember when you were in your mother's womb? Hanna Strack (Jochen's mother) will discuss her theological work on child birth as a spiritual experience. She will also discuss current research in the area of pre-natal psychology.

11 Taking Stock: What Role Does the Meeting Play in Our Lives? How Can we Keep Our Meeting Activities Vital and Meaningful? Worship & Ministry will host the second of three discussion hours in response to Pacific Yearly Meeting's queries for its "Year of Discernment."

18 Peace and Social Concerns Discussion

25 Taking Stock: What Role Should Broader Organizations like Quarterly and Yearly Meeting Play in the Life of the Meeting? Worship & Ministry will host the third of three discussion hours in response to Pacific Yearly Meeting's queries for its "Year of Discernment."

Property

Stone Pines

The Property Committee instituted a program in 1999 for eventual replacement of the Stone Pines. Torrey Pines were planted and expected to grow into replacements for the Stone Pines. Removal of the Stone Pines was to begin five years after the planting. The Property Committee recommends that the Stone Pine which is leaning over the front of the Meetinghouse be removed and, at the same time, have the health of the remaining Stone Pines evaluated professionally.

Discussion followed as to the status of the Stone Pines as protected trees which would require a plan be presented to the city. The question was raised as to whether the trees are still in good health despite their age. It was also noted that it is essential that the branches be properly trimmed. The property committee was asked to engage a professional arborist for an opinion concerning the condition of the trees. A concern was raised that if a tree is removed its wood be recovered for some use (affordable housing, the bench for the meeting, carved into a sculpture in place, etc.).

Use of the guest quarters

The Property Committee recommended the following suggested donations for the use of our guest room:

Weekdays \$20 single/\$25 double

Weekends \$30 single/\$35 double

07 – 06 Meeting approved the schedule of suggested donations for use of the guest room.

Outreach Budget for 2007

The proposed outreach budget for 2007 was presented and is attached. Minor changes from last year's budget are proposed which reflect the decision by the Meeting to include the contribution to the Friends Committee on

Legislation in our general budget.

Unseasoned Concerns

Status of the Chimney

Our un-reinforced masonry chimney is a danger to property and people. The entire chimney, fireplace and footing will have to be removed and rebuilt. This will be a significant expense in the \$15-\$20,000 or more range. It needs to be included in our plans. The City will require permits for demolition and rebuilding. This concern will be considered by the Property Committee.

Leadings

Clearness Committees to help a person with a leading are usually called only at the request of that person. Could a more proactive method be developed a la that used by Central Philadelphia Meeting? More information on their procedures will be sought. Perhaps we need an adult education session on what a leading is.

The subject of Clearness Committees is covered in Faith and Practice, copies of which are available in the library. This should be announced.

The action minutes were read and approved.

Meeting adjourned with a short period of silent worship.

Meeting Clerk, pro tem
Ruanne Peters

Minute Clerk
Cliff Lester

All Saints Episcopal Church and the Internal Revenue Service: Report to Orange Grove Friends Meeting – February 11, 2007

by Claire Gorfinkel

On November 6, 2005 Rector Ed Bacon reported to his congregation: "The Internal Revenue Service has notified All Saints church that we are being examined for possible violation of our non-profit status. The IRS's charge is campaign intervention. They have cited a sermon that our rector emeritus, George Regas, preached on the Sunday before the last presidential election. ...

It is important for everyone to understand that the IRS's concerns are not supported by the facts. George Regas's sermon upheld the core values of this church as a Peace Church. We have been a self-identified Peace Church since a resolution was adopted by the Vestry in 1987. The sermon in question explicitly stated, "I don't intend to tell you how to vote." We at All Saints, of course, will continue from a nonpartisan perspective to teach and proclaim with vigor the core values of Christianity as we stand in the prophetic tradition of Jesus the peacemaker. This is our responsibility as followers of Christ and as Americans who claim our freedom of speech and freedom of religion."

From November, 2005 until July, 2006 the church did not hear anything further from the IRS. Then, in July, 2006, the IRS informed All Saints that it was renewing and stepping up its investigation, and requesting documents and information from the church. All Saints then asked, through counsel, that the IRS put its requests in the form of an administrative summons so that the church would retain the option of having the matter adjudicated by the courts. An uncontested compliance to the request for information would have amounted to waiving their right to take it to the courts. On Friday, September 15, 2006, All Saints church and rector Ed Bacon re-

ceived administrative summonses to appear before the IRS.

All Saints held a Press Conference on September 21, 2006 to announce that its Vestry had voted unanimously to challenge the IRS Summonses, and therefore that All Saints and the rector would not comply with the summonses as requested, forcing the IRS to get the courts to rule on the validity of the case. The press conference was a remarkable show of interfaith solidarity, from which All Saints Solidarity Membership was born.

To the best of my knowledge, there has been no further exchange between the Church and the IRS. But I want to point out that the impact of all this has been very interesting – even paradoxical. On the one hand, the church has enjoyed a huge outpouring of support. On September 17, 2006 Rector Ed Bacon opened his sermon with the words:

I want to begin this sermon by once again expressing my gratitude to the Internal Revenue Service. Those brothers and sisters really know how to shine a spotlight on a struggling church and swell the numbers of worshippers.

On the other hand I know from personal conversations with clergy associated with All Saints that the IRS challenge has intimidated their colleagues in other congregations, making them less willing to speak out, for example, in opposition to the war against Iraq.

At the present time, there appears to be nothing that Orange Grove Friends Meeting – as a meeting – needs to do. However individuals are invited to show their support by becoming solidarity members with a suggested minimum contribution of \$18. Send a check of any size to All Saints Church, 132 North Euclid Avenue, Pasadena, California 91101 with a note that it is a solidarity membership. You can learn more, and/or download a solidarity membership form by going on line to: www.allsaints-pas.org

Orange Grove Meeting 2007 Proposed Outreach Budget

	2006 Budget	Proposed 2007 Budget	Difference	Percentage of Proposed Budget
Quaker Organizations				
Friends World Committee for Consultation	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ -	59%
Friends Western School	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ -	
Friends Committee on National Legislation	\$ 1,450	\$ 1,500	\$ 50	
AFSC - So. California	\$ 1,450	\$ 1,500	\$ 50	
Friends Committee on Legislation	\$ 2,100	\$ (2,100)*		
Non-Quaker Organizations				
Peace Work				
Interfaith Committee United for Justice & Peace	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ -	6%
Death Penalty				
California People of Faith Working Against the Death Penalty	\$ 500	\$ 500		6%
Prison Ministry				
Friends Outside	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ -	12%
Prisoner Visitation and Support (PVS)	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ -	
Homelessness				
Union Station	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ -	6%
Affordable Housing				
Affordable Housing Services	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ -	12%
Vista Nova Home for the Blind	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ -	
	\$ 10,500	\$ 8,500	\$ (2,000)	101%

*Taken out of Outreach and \$2,000 included in General Budget