

DRAFT Takoma Park Friends Meeting-Preparative spiritual state of the meeting, 3/15/2020

How do we nurture healthy vocal ministry? How do we nurture ministries of other kinds and affirm one another's gifts? How can we improve the way in which we recognize and speak to one another's gifts?

We encourage vocal ministry by way of singing. There is interest in strengthening this aspect of our worship.

Our period of unprogrammed worship is largely silent. This deep silence seems to work for us, although this is not for everyone.

One of our members leads a poetry discussion second hour. Holding these second hours recognizes this member's gift and facilitates deeper thinking and communication.

Learning about the service that our members do allows us to support this service and become more compassionate ourselves. One attendee said that she had asked a positive minded group how they kept together. They replied: service. Two members of our meeting have performed service over the years by transporting produce from the Takoma Park Farmers Market to Sheperds' Table soup kitchen. This service project is expected to continue in a limited basis. She suggested that we buy t-shirts with our meeting's info on them to let people know that we have been doing this service.

What paralyzes us or prevents us from answering our call? What fears do we experience? Which fears drive us and which fears create obstacles?

We have recognized that our small meeting needs to grow; this involves change. There might be some fear of change, but on the other hand we have taken action such as moving to a different meeting space.

Another fear we might experience is a fear about insufficiency, that whatever contribution one of us makes will not be enough. We might individually feel that because of commitments we can only do a limited amount, but the remedy is to trust that that is all there is—and it will be enough.

Do we have the courage to create space for our human fallibility and vulnerability? In what do we find that kind of courage?

We listen deeply to each other. Our meeting creates a space for intimacy and compassion.

This space allows each of us to express our views without fear of being judged.

How do we feel about the sustainability of our meeting?

Sustainability has been a concern for a long time. At this point, there is a general feeling of optimism. There could be more, for example by growth of our meeting, but we are still here.

An important positive feature has been our successful move to a new space. The process followed kept us together.

We identified problems with our space, made efforts to investigate what was available, listened to each other, and came up with a solution. We didn't identify an ideal solution, but determined that it would work for us and were able to take action.

Conclusion

We feel Spirit filled and that the meeting meets the spiritual needs of its members and provides support that allows each of us to do our work in the world, even though that work is not always easy.