

## **Valley-Sierra Regional Gathering at Chico Friends Meeting 4/13/2019**

### **"Strengthening our Quaker Connections in the Valley-Sierra Region"**

27 members and attenders of nearby meetings and worship groups--Davis (6), Sacramento (2), Grass Valley (3), Lake County (8), Redding (5), Reno/Carson City (2)--joined 24 of us from Chico Friends Meeting on Saturday April 13 for a one-day gathering in our Meetinghouse. We worshipped together, shared community-building activities and explored what's alive in our Meetings in concentric circles, a spatial choice exercise, paired walks, writing and sharing in small groups, worship-sharing and informal conversations. Three children from Lake County and Davis joined in a children's program with Linda Rowell and Susan Hughes leading the morning program and two CSUC students recruited by Tanya Heaston providing the afternoon session. Expenses for the children's program and lunch were covered by contributions from participants.

As CFM representative to CPQM, I presented the proposal to host such a gathering to Meeting for Business in February and it was accepted. Two other members of our meeting formed a planning team with Jim Anderson and me. We met 3-4 times in March and April, as well as communicating by emails and in person. At our first meeting, we outlined a plan and divided tasks (communications, program, food, and children's program). We offered overnight hospitality and provided it for 5 Friends. Two Friends stayed in an out-of-town motel despite having been offered housing.

What we learned:

1. Communications involved multiple emails over almost two months with clerks, other contacts and interested Friends in the nearby MMs and WG, plus paper programs & take-home sheets for feedback, restaurant suggestions, W-S queries.
2. Logistical arrangements are complex (tables, chairs, cleanup, building signage, sign-in sheets, direction of last-minute volunteers, etc), even for a one-day "simple" program.
3. Evaluations repeatedly affirmed doing more of these regional gatherings, strengthening our connections, and learning from each other. Suggestions included: --Having such meetings every six months or so; Meetings could join together to host, plan, bring food if their own meetinghouse is too small, or CPQM helping finance gatherings at smaller meetings where a larger venue might need to be rented. Replacing Winter Quarterly with regional meetings. CPQM could facilitate Zoom calls on open discussion of various topics.

Attached below are (1) Flyer (2) Program sheet for participants (3) Program sheet for planning team (4) Take-home evaluation sheet (also sent out by email after the gathering.



## *CFM Regional Gathering*

Chico Friends Meeting  
1601 Hemlock Street  
Chico, CA

Saturday April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019

9:30am to 4:00pm

### *Strengthening Our Quaker Connection*

Join us as we come together to strengthen the bonds of our Quaker Community and celebrate our joys, address our concerns, coordinate our actions and connect our lives in ways that renew and deepen our lives as Friends.

#### Gathering Schedule

9:30 Greet and meet

10:00 Meeting for Worship

Community Building Activities

12:00 Lunch, provided by Chico Friends

Program

Worship - sharing

4:00 Farewells

Please join us for a day of connecting. We plan a morning of worship and community building. Our lunch will be lovingly provided by Chico Friends. The afternoon plans are an interactive program and worship-sharing before farewells at 4pm. Children's program will also be provided.

*The Religious Society of Friends "might be thought of as a prism through which the Divine Light passes to become visible in a spectrum of many colors: many more in their richness than works alone can express" Faith & Practice of Friends in Britain*



*Please let us know that you will join us, and whether you are bringing children, to Janet Leslie  
janles@igc.org / 530-345-5429*

# STRENGTHENING OUR QUAKER CONNECTIONS

Valley and Sierra Friends Regional Gathering  
Saturday, April 13, 2019 at Chico Friends Meeting  
9:30am - 4:00pm

## Morning program:

9:30-10:00 Arrivals, greetings, refreshments

10:00-10:30 Worship

10:30-12:00 Community-building and sharing experiences--Concentric Circles, Spatial Choice, and Paired Walks:

### Queries for Concentric Circles

1. Why did you come to this gathering? What are you looking for?
2. What is special about your home meeting? How is it different from other Quaker meetings you've attended?
3. How would you describe Quakerism to an inquirer, without using the phrase "there is that of God in every person"?
4. How has being a Quaker changed you?

### Extra questions:

5. What might George Fox think of your home meeting?
6. How much interest is there in your home meeting in wider Friends' community? How do you feel about that?

### Queries for Spatial Choice

(Friends position themselves according to degree of yes/no)

1. My Quaker faith is very different from what I grew up believing.
2. I have taken significant risks for what I believe in.
3. It is very important that a Quaker believe in God.
4. Quakers have a very special role to play in the world today.
5. The Society of Friends is very much in need of a "revival".

### Queries for Paired Walk

1. What brought you into Quakerism and into your meeting?
2. What keeps you here?

12:00-1:00 pm Lunch

Afternoon program

1:00-2:00 pm Reflections on life in a Meeting--writing and sharing

**Queries for Reflections on Life in a Meeting**

1. Reflect on the past year in your meeting: what was alive in your meeting and what was your part in that life?
2. Reflect on the year ahead for your meeting: what possibilities do you see for strengthening and deepening your meeting? How might Spirit be calling you to serve in that work?

2:00-3:15 pm Worship-Sharing

**Queries for Worship-Sharing**

1. How do you see the Spirit of God moving in this gathering today?
2. What has most surprised you about our gathering today? What did you find that you didn't expect? Expect and not find?
3. What one thing would you tell someone in your meeting about your experience today?

3:30-4:00 pm Worship

4:00 pm Farewells and request that Friends let us know about their experience of this gathering:

1. What was your experience overall? What will you tell others in your meeting?
2. What would you add or take away or keep the same, in organizing such a gathering?
3. Is there something that you will do differently in your own meeting as a result of today's experience?
4. How can our connections as Friends living in Northern California and Nevada be strengthened?
5. How can our Quarterly Meeting help our local meetings deepen these connections?

Chico Friends Meeting planning team:

Janet Leslie (janles@igc.org), Jim Anderson (janderson@csuchico.edu),  
Tanya Heaston (theaston4@yahoo.com) and Linda Rowell (livyrowell@yahoo.com)  
Valley and Sierra Friends Regional Gathering  
Saturday, April 13, 2019 at Chico Friends Meeting

We are so glad that you were able to join us today. Please help us support future regional gatherings by letting us know (by mail, email, phone) how the day was for you:

1. What was your experience overall? What will you tell others in your meeting?
2. What would you add or take away or keep the same, in organizing such a gathering?
3. Is there something that you will do differently in your own meeting as a result of today's experience?
4. How can our connections as Friends living in Northern California and Nevada be strengthened?
5. How can our Quarterly Meeting help our local meetings deepen these connections?

Thanks, from the Chico Friends Meeting planning team: Janet Leslie (janles@igc.org), Jim Anderson (janderson@csuchico.edu, Tanya Heaston (theaston4@yahoo.com) and Linda Rowell (livyrowell@yahoo.com)