

4-3-16 Bellingham Meeting, Second Hour

Gathered at 12:15 pm for period of worship

Iris and Jerry

Recognized rich sharing, new clarity, desire to continue since January. Invite new sharing from people who had not shared or who had new light, to share today.

Reviewed worship sharing guidelines.

Not confidential --notes will be taken by Dee Dee and sent to Ministry and Counsel.

Reflection from Arlene Kelly about dealing with difficult situations. Humility, simplicity, rootedness, patience, sense of humor.

Not a decision making time today.

What have I not yet shared or do I feel has not be shared about this issue

Open worship, open to sharing.

#1 Did not speak before. We bit off more than we could chew in the time frame.

Objections were strong and would not have resolved even given more time.

Appreciated work of exploratory committee. Ready to move on and decide what we should do differently.

#2 Did not speak before. Heard what everyone said before. Struck at the opposition of two sides. No bottom line for it. Lack of trust, people didn't feel heard, perhaps just disagreed, not heard well enough. Wish to move on with lessons learned. We learned what not to do. Do right in the future keeping the past in mind.

#3 Iris. Reminder, next query will be about the future.

#4 silence

#5 I am here for the way things are done. Worldly endeavors sometimes make choice for us, not consider how things are done.. Quakers is a way of doing things—in seeking truth in what everyone brings to joint endeavor. Otherwise is just the ways of the world. Hoping to do things differently. Encouraged by the last 5 months, appreciate the work of the search committee.

#6 Troubling about Quaker process- made at meeting for business. Threshing sessions, small groups happened, but decision made at meeting for business. How do we include everyone in decisions if they don't or can't come to meeting for business.

#7 We on M&C have heard that many felt they were not being listened to. As Clerk of M&C, felt responsible for this. Not enough dialogue. Dialogue happens in committees. Appropriate to have exploratory committee. But many concerns not

discussed in other committees. Concerns about real estate and banking system deserved their own discernment process in their own committee. More spiritual questions could have been considered.

#8 Iris—sense a shift. Ready for the next faze?

#9 I didn't speak last time. Rollercoaster. That big building was not the right one. Love one another. We do this. We can respond to needs, but I don't know how to do it. At the time, saw resources available. I haven't tapped into how do we know how to respond to people's need—how to mesh all this together with resources available. How do we express this to the people in the larger community with the resources available?

#10 Iris Ready for next query?

Where do I sense we have unity re: meeting space?

Where do I believe went well in earlier process?

Where do I see that we need to do differently?

What can I bring to this continuing process?

#11 First query—We have unity to not continue to meet here indefinitely. Ask permission to do things from 3<sup>rd</sup> party. Cost of being here. Certain we are ready for an alternative.

#12 Yes unity about change location. Not sure about kind of space for our own needs, in relation to the larger community. Just rent? A house? Or a commons? Need clarity on this.

#13 What went well was an awesome exploratory committee. Now, list factors that are essential and preferences that are negotiable. Need to be clear for meetinghouse staff. In last process, felt something was wrong but I was slow on uptake. I need to spend more time centering to be able to respond more quickly.

#14 Owning vs. renting issue needs clarity. Also, what are the deal breakers.

#15 As a scout we had a list but this process helped refine our list. Now, sharing with like-minded organizations—art or peace organizations. Perhaps what we want it is not out there. When she asked, found that “when building appears, we gathered around it”. If you let committee do research, do better at reporting result of research. Suggestions are taken seriously, not rejected out of hand.

#16 Reasons and reasons, lists can be long, but felt it was magical when they met in meeting for worship. We were able to manage the finances. These were essential things that were right.

#17 I was surprised in process, we don't have deep enough pockets. Surprised when money came through. We had enough. The elephant in the room, was

there was opposition to this particular building, against owning any building, using any banks. Is this a barrier to proceeding? We will be disappointed going forward if people are anti-owning a membership. We all need to be open to spirit, not pre-conceived ideas. There has been tip-toing around issue out of fear of losing our love. Is it productive to go down that road and face the hard issues?

#18 Thinking of how everyone has contributed. We have unity that we do need to gather around as a community to move forward. Well: people passionate and listening and committed to taking steps forward. But it became easy to see people as other or as not part of community. Nice people talk about “poor people” and label them. Start with we are people who may have an opinion. “That is a friend who is on the meeting house committee.” We can only listen as deeply as we are willing to be changed. We can listen differently, not as opposing groups.

#19 Unity around kitchen, chairs, library, wanting access to building other than on Sunday morning. That is the only unity. Options of renting or owning need to consider with our concerns. Basic process went well. Have a culture that encourages all voices. Clarify what is the authority of committees. Ongoing discussion in Quaker communities, role of the authority and scope of committees. We drafted something for the committee. I like idea of having sub-committees explore aspects of the process. Is committee fact finding body to give information.

Continue to deeply listen, honoring the Friends process. Always be fact finding about the worldly facts for worldly decisions.

#20 Felt confusion about the ways the committees worked. Felt our questions were ignored. Committees make decisions since the 1990's. Efficient, but don't feel a part of decision. Communication with God—raises the level. Need to discern what our decision making process is, how to make it flow better. People with questions were told it wasn't not time to speak up yet. In November we were pent up and exploded. How can everyone be cherished and listened to.

#21 People not being heard. “Yes but” cycle. Recognize that there is something beyond what was being questioned.

#22 Let's complete the framework for how to do it better, be more loving, how to hear better, how to know we are being heard. Deep listening is essential. When do I feel heard. Non-violent communication model= empathy shown communicates that they have been heard. Argue long enough to know what we are really arguing about. We were talking to those who agreed with us, justifying our opinions. To avoid this, have a place where other considerations can be aired. Questions were raised outside the exploratory committees strength and light. Listen down to the seed of what is really essential.

#23 What went well- or could have been better—confusion. Exploratory Committee wanted to have information out as it came, but information kept

shifting. M&C said hold off. We were not a decision making group. How do different committees mesh together when there are overlapping areas. This added to confusion.

#24 I feel a rich and deep sharing today. Heart to heart conversation today. We have unity that this is not the place where we want to be in this building. What do we need next time? Discernment process of what would home be. What went right before—some people raised concerns about the banking system, do we trust them? What if we bypass the banking system was a great creative leap. But we couldn't complete the creative leap because not all the issues were fully understood. We didn't get to the root of underlying concerns. We did listen, but it needed more dialogue. Our process was a series of sequential speeches. Dialogue brought the bypass banking system. I had a personal conversation with 2 of the people with concerns, but did not get to all of them. Next time would talk directly to the others as well.

#25 Broader topic for M&C to consider. I have never known a committee to make a decision itself. Ask M&C to raise this as an issue for us to consider.

#26 Jerry – ask those who haven't spoken already to speak.

#27 Adjunct committee for people to bring side issues to, is a good idea. Personal financing is a wonderful way to proceed.

#28 Agree with #27

#29 In Friends practice, it's not always or never. Committee sometimes make decisions, sometimes make recommendations. Committee work helps shorten our process. Committee meetings should be open to others who may want to attend.

#30 M&C will bring the proposal to April meeting for business, 2 pages, on committee structure.

#31 Ask for help. Building is an asset. How does it help us move forward? But how does it help us move forward on our mission for community, reaching out to others.

#32 Outreach and welcoming group. Be more visible, intelligible, and welcoming in the Bellingham community.

#33 What distinguishes Quakers -- is how we do things. What sort of a building do we need to support that?

#34 Iris --Just 15 minutes left, only respond to queries if you haven't shared yet. Perhaps continue in just silence.

#35 I exploded before. Culmination of a process that had gone wrong. When we start to debate or argue, we're not functioning as Quakers. I would like to be involved in looking for another building. I was concerned that there weren't enough of an array of choices. I was distant for too long. To do differently, keep asking if our process is still a Quaker process. Real estate process is antithetical to our process. Perhaps having realtor involved was a mistake. Had lunch with him, and he agreed. His vision for a meeting house diverged from other's vision. Begin again. Rent or buy? Staged process. Perhaps buy a smaller building as practice for a larger building if the meeting grows.

#36 I would like to see different—time crunch was very difficult. Start reconsider what we want in a meeting house, rent/buy. Now it's different, need to redo, new list and prioritize. We need to have more than one committee. Exploratory committee tried to more than they were set up for. Need division of labor. Plan in advance. Start now when we don't have something available.

#37 Iris—ask M&C what's next? Give some sense of next step.

#38 Don Annual Potluck—reflect on where we go from here. Perhaps.

#39 M&C will be meeting this week, will bring proposal to meeting for business. Can also discuss at Annual Potluck. Appreciate thoughtfulness, and creativity of the participation, goodwill and love in this room.

#40 Iris --OK with suggestions made about what next?

#41 Add this --is what we are moving toward in line with our mission?

#42 Proverbs—Without vision, the people with perish.