

## State of the Meeting Report – June 2014

### The Spiritual Condition of our Blessed Community

Spirit has grown quietly within Red Cedar Friends this past year. School of the Spirit is drawing to a close for the four members attending this session, and for their care committees also. A rich variety of twice a month offerings has been sponsored by Adult Religious Education, that we find useful for sharing our journeys. Spiritual Formation is in its fifteenth year and Meeting for Healing continues into its 21st year. Many clearness and care committees meet each month. And, an extremely successful retreat led by Merry Stanford and Peter Wood taught 35 people a dialogue process that focused on the topic of “leadings.” We are discovering that offering a variety of ways to connect and build personal relationships helps us share our spiritual lives thus deepening our sense of community.

### Young Friends in our Blessed Community

A strong religious education program is a commitment Red Cedar has made to our children and families, and we continue it even though our Young Friends count is down to about half what it was at its peak several years ago. We have been able to offer a consistent program that parents can depend upon, but only with the assistance of an estimated two-thirds of our meeting volunteering to teach. We recruit volunteers by emphasizing the spirituality of service, by encouraging them to ask for assistants, and by offering a structure from which to teach rather than asking them to develop lessons from the beginning. This requires a lot of asking and a lot of yes saying, but we think it is worth it so that our children know and are known by the adults in Meeting and hear about a variety of adults’ spiritual experiences.

This year the RE committee initiated intergenerational worship on six First Days. Three of the six days children were prepared to joined adults in Worship. They left early to share in the experience with each other. The other three days adults were invited to join young Friends worship where they taught worship using mandalas, worshiped by traveling on sound, and learned from AFSCs Criminal Justice staff.

Almost every year we graduate a young Friend from high school with a worship sharing send off to the next episode in their lives. This year our graduates are two young Friends who arrived at Red Cedar as infants. The sharing was deeply felt by everyone in the room.

What we are discovering is that in attending to the needs of young Friends in Meeting we feed our own spiritual lives and the spirit of the blessed community.

### Service in our Blessed Community

Red Cedar continues to have members active in the wider world. In Quaker circles we have members active on Friends General Conference Central Committee and Gathering workshop leaders and the American Friends Service Committee Board of Directors serving on the nominating committee. Another member serves on the Quaker United Nations Committee. Members have actively worked with Friends Committee on National Legislation urging our United States Senator to approve a federal budget that reflects more investment in human needs and less Pentagon spending. We have among us LEYM committee clerks and committee members, and Friends who travel under the care of Traveling Ministries and Yearly Meeting.

Red Cedar Peace and Social Justice has been working with Church of the Brethren on a project to aid people who live in Guatemala. Our commitment to caring for Michigan Eyes Wide Open has brought us to making hard decisions regarding the practical movement of the exhibit. We have made it smaller and easier to move around the state without losing the power of the displayed boots.

We find that this service enriches our life here at Red Cedar, and try to make ourselves available to support one another to continue it. We are told that those who travel in service are strengthened by a sense of being anchored in the spiritual root of our meeting.

### A Home for our Blessed Community

We are entering the fifth year of worshipping in our own home. We are grateful it was not necessary to close our building in the face of harsh weather including the miracle of electricity returning just as we

settled into Worship on Christmas morning. Ironically we are grateful to have real building issues to deal with as we are growing as a community while we deal with them. The harsh winter exposed a leaky ventilator that when corrected improved the productivity of the air and heating system. We installed a sound absorption panels in the social hall, which has enriched the usefulness of that room. We hosted the LEYM representatives meeting. And finally, we experienced a deeply covered Meeting for Business while in discernment about the wording on our meeting sign that represents us to our community.

The site upon which we built our home was once industrial property and contains contaminated soil. We continue to invest in brown field management by wearing gloves, long pants, long sleeves and removing dug-up contaminated soil as we create beauty around our home. Each year the map attached to our annual report represents the commitment we have made to maintain a Due Care Plan in perpetuity.

What we have discovered is continued joy in our decision to seek a home of our own. Here we can worship throughout the week. Here our children are nurtured and sent into the world with love. This building and the Spirit within we take with us as we travel in service. And, we have this sacred space to share with a wider community.