

## SCYMF Structures, Roles, and Processes Working Group Report

The SCYMF Working Group reviewing structures, roles, and processes have spent the last four months collecting information via an online survey, group Zoom conversations, and personal conversations with anyone who wanted to participate. We specifically invited former clerks of the yearly meeting and clerks of committees, believing they would contribute input from their firsthand experiences with our structures, roles, and processes. We also invited anyone with an interest to participate through the survey and Zoom meetings announced in the newsletter.

From the survey we gleaned general trends that were reported in the newsletter. Appreciation was expressed for the good work done thus far particularly during the trying times of the pandemic. Some commented on the need for patience as we find our way forward as a still new yearly meeting. The broad concerns centered around a lack of trust and clarity. There were 40 respondents to the survey representing a broad spectrum of responses. The lack of trust mentioned reflected our varied experiences. Our historic mistrust of authority and institutions, our perceptions of the lack of transparency, and personal conflicts that feel unresolved all added to the sense of mistrust by some.

In response to the concern about trust, the working group had many conversations. Addressing the lack of clarity in our decision-making processes and the roles of various committees and of our clerks could be helpful in building a trustworthy community. One of the concerns that has surfaced as primary is the lack of a clear mission, vision, or purpose statement for Sierra Cascades. It is in that light that the working group feels clear to recommend that we focus with diligence on the development of statements that reflect who we believe we are led by the Spirit to be in the world and what we are primarily called to do. In support of the Faith and Practice Committee that has already asked for input for this work we offer the following action item for our October quarterly gathering.

The SCYMF Working Group for structures, roles, and practices recommends that we prioritize the development and approval of official statements that clarify Sierra Cascade's understanding of who we are and what we are called to do.

As I sat with the words and hearts I had heard through the conversations and comments given in the survey, I felt led to write a set of statements describing what I heard Sierra Cascades say about who we are and what I heard as our call to do in the world. I offer them below as a discussion starter to be used as the Spirit directs.

Respectfully,

Leann Williams

Clerk of the SRP Working Group

### SCYMF statements of identity and mission

- SCYMF is a Quaker yearly meeting with deep historic roots grounded in the biblical narrative of Jesus' life and teachings.
- SCYMF was born out of the split of NWYM where meetings welcoming the full participation of LGBTQIA+ people were asked to withdraw.
- SCYMF holds and welcomes diversity in theological perspectives and expressions of faith.
- SCYMF is committed to the Spirit-led Quaker process of decision making at all levels of our yearly meeting.
- SCYMF seeks to find tangible, practical ways to uphold and work out the Quaker values of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, and stewardship in the places we live and work, and in our local and global communities.
- SCYMF exists to provide protection for vulnerable people within our community, provide benefits for our local meetings and their employees, to support the Spirit-led work of local meetings and to provide assistance to those meetings when we are invited and able to help.