Ministry and Care
November 5, 2026

Ministry and Care met on November 5 on Zoom. Judy, Denise, Jillian, Julie, and Rebecca attended.

On October 25, Friends worshipped with all generations present for the hour. Friends found the experience to be deep and rewarding, with the children participating fully. Rebecca opened worship with a Faith and Play story, and closed with a "wondering question" at the rise of meeting. We are looking forward to getting feedback from Friends (of all ages) and to repeating the intergenerational worship. We appreciate the effort that the Religious Education committee put into planning the experience and preparing the adults and children.

A large number of visitors have attended worship in the last few weeks, with some returning or otherwise expressing great interest.

A Friend raised the question of being a Quaker presence at local universities, a practice we followed in the past when we had several faculty members attending worship. We will continue to discuss and work out a plan for reaching out to chaplains, Offices of Student Life, professors of religion classes, etc.

Meeting for worship will be held on December 24, Christmas Eve, followed by our traditional simple potluck meal.

Many family members and friends attended the memorial meeting for worship for David Bristol, with many wonderful stories of their experiences with David. The love in the room was palpable. The memorial minute to be submitted to South Central Yearly Meeting is appended to this report.

We are planning the memorial for James Goslin, to be held on Saturday, December 5 at 3pm. Friends and family will remember James, who carried light and spirit with him always.

The plaques for the memorial wall will be included in the Ministry and Care budget for 2026, two per year at $250 each.

In addition to being posted on the door to the worship room, the clerk of meeting will read the query on the First Sunday of each month. We will resume the practice of having small copies of the query available at the welcome table for Friends who would like to take a reminder home.

Query for December: *Early Friends did not celebrate the holy days and feasts of the church because they believed every day was equally holy. How do we, as modern Friends, continue to make every day holy even when the world feels very ordinary?*

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, December 15, 2026 at 6:30 on Zoom.

<u>David Bristol Memorial Minute</u>

David was born December 8, 1942, and died September 1, 2026. His father died when he was three years old, and David and his brother were raised by their mother, who was a teacher and a librarian. She had plenty of help, as David was from a very close and active extended family, and much time was spent with grandparents, aunts, uncles, and a large group of cousins. David was described as lively and adventurous from an early age, with a notable sense of humor. David's love for animals came from much time spent with his

grandfather, who was a blacksmith and a farrier. His brother says that Bullitt, "the wonder dog" and Delight, a favorite mount, should be given honorable mention in terms of David's early loves. He was determined to be a veterinarian from a young age.

After he met this goal through Texas A&M University, David enlisted in the Army and was assigned to the Veterinary Corps in Vietnam, with more than 200 dogs under his care. David was discharged from the Army in 1969, but he immediately returned to Vietnam to care for his young family. He worked as a veterinarian, treating animals from families on both sides of the war without distinction. A friend from that time mentions the risky travel during the war, and David's untiring sense of service, both to the people he met and their animals. Upon his return from Vietnam, he moved his family to Montana, setting up a clinic outside the western entrance to Glacier National Park. This brings us to a deep love of David's that is mentioned by everyone who knew him: his pure joy in being out in the wilds of Nature. He had cleared trails during the summers in Glacier Park, while he was in college and vet school, and he grew to know Glacier Park intensively. Friends say he climbed every mountain in the park, climbed Mt. Rainier with friends and twice climbed the Grand in the Tetons. He is described as indefatigable on a trail, and unflappable in setting out in difficult weather or (one memorable time) in a leaky boat. In his later years, he transferred this love to Big Bend National Park and took many companions on long hikes up the South Rim and beyond.

There are countless other aspects basic to who David was; he did not do anything by half measures. He was a veterinarian for 55 years and mentored many young doctors and technicians. David returned to Southeast Asia and worked with the American Friends Service Committee in a project in Cambodia to train veterinary technicians and treat cattle and water buffalos, vital to rebuilding the war-torn economy. He returned to Vietnam with his family and reintroduced his children to the culture, the language, and to their extended Vietnamese family. When David became interested in the Quakers, he traveled to the Pendle Hill center for an extended retreat. He started most days with his journal, writing entries, poems, and short stories. At a difficult time in his life, he traveled to Lebh Shomea, a Catholic silent retreat center, and stayed for 5 months, becoming close to Father Kelly Nemeck and Sister Marie Coombs. David was a spiritual anchor for our Meeting. He coordinated several silent retreats, helping Friends find stillness, perspective, and a deeper sense of connection with the "Great Love." While in foreign countries, he worked to master the languages, no easy task in Southeast Asia. He became close friends with an undocumented Mexican who worked on his property and traveled with him for two months to Oaxaca, Mexico. In Quaker Meeting, he became close to an elderly Friend, and saw Charles through his final years and, when in need, through his final days and hours. And then, imagine that same joy and commitment extended to those he so loved - his wife, Lee, his children, stepchildren, and grandchildren, as well as his continued devotion to his friends and members of his extended family. In many of these stories, what they remember best are the memorable hikes that David would share with them.

One of the last spoken ministries that David gave was so revealing of his loving sensibilities. He told the story of his last 13-mile hike in Big Bend when he became weak and unable to hike down the steep trail. He was moved not by the permanent medical setback of his Parkinson's disease, but by a stranger. A young man coming up the trail came upon David and saw he was impaired. David spoke with grateful awe that the young man stayed with him, gave him water and then offered to walk David down the trail. David protested, but the young man insisted, said he "needed" to return, and stayed with David until they were safely down the mountain. David's ministry was about kindness to strangers, and he was moved in telling it, as he always was when speaking of what he called "the Great Love." So many of his ministries were on this theme, instances in which the Great Love manifests in our lives.

It is best to finish with a short haiku-like poem David wrote, a Big Bend poem, which reveals what he experienced in Nature:

A mountain thunderstorm
Walks into the desert
Spilling a ribbon

Of Holy water.