



THE SCHOOL OF THE SPIRIT

A ministry of prayer and learning.

STATE OF THE MINISTRY

EIGHTH MONTH, 2021

MINISTRIES

FAITHFUL MEETINGS

School of the Spirit's (SotS's) newest program, Faithful Meetings, is under way! Mary Linda McKinney has answered a call to develop this ministry, which will take place within Friends meetings and churches, offering opportunities for spiritual and community growth grounded in Quaker faith and practice.

Through individual spiritual practices, small spiritual formation groups, and large group learning and practice, Friends will come to better know themselves and one another in that which is eternal.

If it be consistent with Divine will, interested meetings will soon be invited into discernment about bringing the year-long program to their community. If you would like to know more, please contact us at faithfulmeetings@schoolofthespirit.org.

PARTICIPATING IN GOD'S POWER

The 2019-21 PGP class met via Zoom for its last teaching session in January 2021, pausing until they could safely meet for an in-person closing retreat. The participants' openness, depth, spiritual risk-taking and interconnection were a joy to witness. The group plans to meet in September 2021 to share the growth they experienced in the program and how its impact has continued to resonate in their lives since its semi-conclusion. Looking forward, Angi York Crane is clear not to continue on the teaching team, and Christopher Sammond is still in discernment.



First Participating in God's Power class in January, 2020.

CONTEMPLATIVE RETREATS

With no face-to-face contemplative retreats possible during the pandemic, SotS retreat leaders, mentees and elders piloted day-long electronic retreats in December and April. They plan to continue offering these even when in-person retreats become possible. We're currently reconnecting with retreat centers to determine when this can happen. We also began what we hope will be an annual series of 90-minute contemplative experiences to attendees at the Friends General Conference Summer Gathering 2020 and 2021.

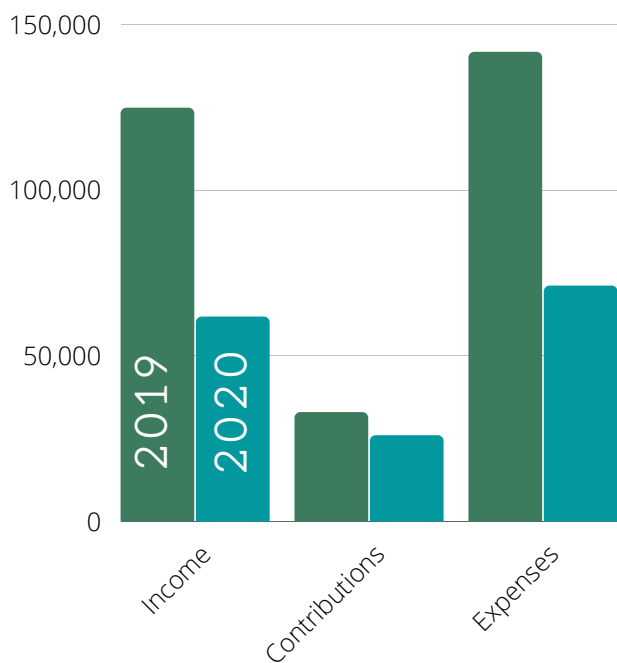
SPIRITUAL RENEWAL & COMMUNITY

Ideas are bubbling up as the SR&C committee explores ideas for spiritual renewal and for deepening connections within the SotS community. Sharing these ideas through a survey is a standard practice, but we are looking for a deeper and more personal approach. Committee members (Jan Ansell, Jan Blodgett, Kate Bregman and Steve Olshewsky) will be reaching out this fall to a pool of past participants to engage in conversations around what spiritual renewal can look like and what kinds of community connections can help support spiritual journeys. With over 250 names on our list, we won't reach everyone. If you have ideas to share, you don't need to wait to be contacted. Email info@schoolofthespirit.org to join in.

BOARD REPORT

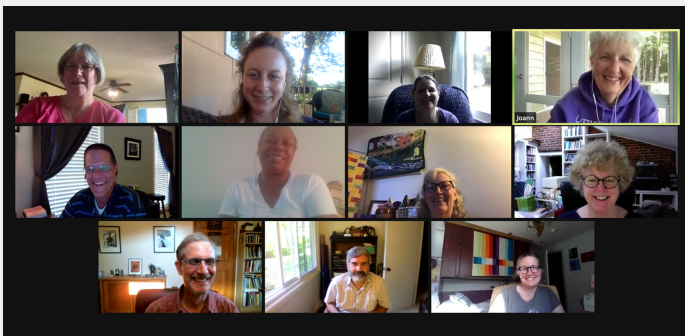
During our 2020 sabbatical year, the SotS board received a clear call to a larger vision of service and ministry. In 2021 we have moved into a “building year” in which new and reframed ministries are taking shape. The programs we describe here are animated by new life and shaped by 2021 needs and conditions. But they are guided by our abiding sense of call to extend invitations to those drawn to the rhythms of contemplative practice and radical faithfulness.

Our bare-bones small board of 5 has grown by two new members, and when we meet (with the accompaniment of our administrator, treasurer and teaching teams) we sense the Life and Breath of Spirit charting our course. Thanks for coming along on the ride. Let us see what Spirit has in store.



FINANCIAL CONDITION & COVID-19 IMPACT

As you can see, 2020 was not a typical fiscal year for SotS, and we are grateful for the many faces and names who have continued to support this “Ministry of Prayer and Learning.” At a time when many non-profits and faith communities have been sharply curtailed, we have continued to be able to act in faithfulness because of your contributions. Deep thanks to those of you who were part of the successful 2020 Annual Giving campaign.



The Board meets via Zoom in May, 2021. Board members include Judy Purvis, Mary Linda McKinney, Joann Neuroth, Scott Wagoner, Nikki Mosgrove, Jan Blodgett, Catherine Bly Cox. Also pictured are Olivia Chalkley (administrator), Brad Shaw (treasurer), Christopher Sammond and Angi York-Crane (teachers).

Please support the School of the Spirit today by donating securely through our website schoolofthespirit.org or by mailing a check to

**4 Long Shoals Rd. Ste B484
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Thank you!