

State of Society Report- Westport Monthly Meeting 1990

After 275 years of continuous witness and service to the community Westport Meeting looks back, ahead and inward to ask "what has God wrought?" As always we are challenged to be in the world but not of it. At a called Worship Sharing session members and attenders struggled to express the condition of the Meeting, to measure by their individual spiritual sextants where the worshipping group is on its journey.

In previous years we have spoken of our numerical growth which has enabled us to maintain a thriving First Day School. It has also helped us to keep our non-pastored tradition. Twice a month members and attenders are asked to bring prepared messages as they feel moved. Increased attendance has also made our unprogrammed worship a more fertile source of vocal ministry and openings of the Spirit. We are grateful for all of this -- the breadth of vision revealed, the lack of dogmatism and the absence of human institutional burdens in our seeking.

Our members have been increasingly active in Quarterly Meeting, in Youth Retreats, and in Yearly Meeting Committee work. Our attendance at Yearly Meeting sessions in August 1990 reached a recent high of 26 persons.

In an effort to update our membership list, pairs of Friends from Ministry and Counsel have undertaken family visits to those with whom we are out of touch. So far these visits have proved useful and enjoyable. Our young people have started to make First Day calls on some of our elderly "shut-ins", visiting and sitting with them for periods of meditation.

Encouraging as growth and activity may be we have to enter some caveats. Our spiritual outreach in Westport has been limited. As the year ended we were confronted by the old dilemma of faithfulness to the Quaker Peace Testimony versus the orchestrated enthusiasm of our nation's leaders bent on war. Whether we were able to define our position to ourselves, our youth or our neighbors is debatable. As we enter the new year we feel secure enough in our spiritual base to embrace such conflicts rather than to retreat from them.

Francis Thi Kaldy
Clerk