

STATE OF SOCIETY REPORT--WESTPORT MONTHLY MEETING--2003

This has been a year of challenge. National, international, regional and local events have led us to face up and be faithful to our traditional testimonies. We have tried by vigils, attendance at rallies, newspaper articles and letters and by personal witness to speak truth to power. Despite our efforts we have often appeared to be a voice calling in the wilderness.

We have been drawn together by these challenges. There is simultaneously a sense of frustration and of hope. Some new attenders have been attracted to the Meeting but some families either drifted away spiritually or left geographically. To some attenders we have been able to give help and support on their journeys; others have not found what they were seeking. Three dear Friends died during the year.

Elton Trueblood used the phrase "...raising a standard to which all may be drawn". In a rather "quietist" way we have done this but to many members it seems that we are hiding our light under a bushel. Outreach is not our strong point and we are perhaps less accessible to newcomers than we might be. Later in the year plans were made for a Meeting website which may partly address these concerns. In the meantime "a faithful few" continue to attend, deepen their faith, witness to their beliefs, support each other spiritually and physically and pray for the afflicted in our midst and in the wider world.

Vocal Ministry in Meeting while uplifting is sometimes rare. An additional problem is accoustical. Some speakers have soft voices while others have impaired hearing. This is a problem which is being actively addressed by our Property Committee.

We were challenged late in the year by a request for the Meeting to oversee and take under its care the marriage of a same gender couple. After some discusion and discernment this was agreed to and the marriage will take place this spring.

As a Meeting we enter the New Year with hope and confidence trusting that the Light will guide us in all that we do.