

## **Westport Monthly Meeting of Friends**

### **State of Society 2018**

The spiritual centers of our worship and our faith community are one, and like a mandala, grow outward and deeper in new and beautiful patterns. The strength of our worship stems from our collective patience and waiting on the presence of God to provide an opening for inspired, heartfelt, and provocative messages. We are not compelled to fill this quiet space but rather be nurtured in expectant waiting for what God might have for us. This is a profound experience that is deepened by our music ministry and the simple beauty of the space in which we worship.

The centeredness of our worship extends to our experience of our faith community as one that is grounded in love and acceptance for one another. Our community is welcoming and over the years has been equally enriched by young families and single adults; attenders and new members. As in worship, presence is our greatest gift to each other. Members of our faith community have faced significant challenges and difficulties over the years. As a community, in ways both big and small, we have held each other in the Light and have been a source of caring and love. We are carried by a deep sense of gratitude for one another and a sense of joy that extends from our worship through our community.

We have seen our Meeting grow from this center in ways that have strengthened our outreach and spiritual growth. In recent years, the Peace and Social Justice committee has become active with renewed interest from members and attenders. The committee is engaging the Meeting community in confronting White Privilege and Racism. The Meeting has also sponsored a Seekers Group that has provided a deepening spiritual experience for members, attenders, and persons outside of the Westport faith community.

With our sense of joy and gratitude we also share in a yearning for deepening and extending the reach of our faith community. Many of our young families have busy schedules that limit their presence at Worship. We yearn for ways to be more accessible to our young families in ways that deepen our relationship to young people. We yearn for opportunities that can nurture the spiritual journeys of parents. And we wish we had the opportunity to learn from those who no longer attend our Worship in order to grow as a welcoming spiritual community.

We have lost many dear Friends over the years. We have grieved and now we have emerged stronger and more vibrant with a spirit-based energy that feeds us. It is as if we are standing on the shoulders of those who have come before us. Are we the patterns and examples they were for us? We are expectant for new endeavors and experiments that will deepen our worship and both widen and strengthen our community. Whatever the pattern into the future, we shall be nurtured as long as our center remains true to God's presence in our lives.

*Approved by Westport Ministry and Counsel Committee July 1, 2018*

*Approved by Westport Monthly Meeting of Friends July 22, 2018*