Eugene Friends Meeting enjoyed a productive year in fellowship and community, at the same time as struggling with how best to bring Light to issues of racism, gender, insufficient membership, and even some internal discord.

We’ve had small gains in membership but watch as our existing membership grow older. To remain viable we want to attract new families with children. Some Friends note that subconscious racism limits our ability to become inclusive and diverse. Despite our deep caring for one another, conflict avoidance adds to strife and missed opportunities for bridging differing perspectives. Related discouragement over the State of Society stems from lack of communication between 9am and 11am Meetings for Worship and only intermittent attention to this issue. Due to the lack of cross-over between the groups, it feels to some like we have not one Meeting, but two.

111 members were recorded in 2018-19, although fewer than 45 attend Meetings for Worship on any given Sunday. We gained two new members - Chris Steffy on 5/27/18 and Bill Walter on 2/24/19; two transfers: Linda Harding from Minneapolis Friends Meeting, and Nancy Sagafi-Nejad from Stony Run Meeting, Baltimore. Three members died in the last year: Harrick Hudson in June 2018, and John Saemann and Sue Monahan in March 2019.

Worship-Ministry-Nurturing Committee still functions as one committee, with additional members needed. The committee enjoyed a successful year being present for Friends in need, creating relevant worship sharings and All-Together Meetings with the children, a winter retreat on “Transforming our Relationship with the Other,” and bringing Friends together for insightful contemplation in addressing blinders around aspects of our privilege.

The Meeting has recently hired a new treasurer and expressed appreciation for the outgoing treasurer. Finance Committee members are highly committed to careful stewardship of the Meeting’s finances as they seek to refine and simplify our Meeting’s finances, including integrating the challenges presented by Annual Session’s new Abundant Financing / Pay-As-You-Are-Led” concept.

Helping EFM give back to the community, the Elementary, Tweens and Junior Friends did service projects, including the Sock Project. They rigorously engaged with social equality issues, wondering about whether or not Meeting is living up to the Quaker testimonies of simplicity and equality. While there are some concerns about a lack of planned curriculum in First Day School, those reporting expressed enthusiasm for themes of “team” and “community” as young Friends used readings and queries to ponder ethics and morals. Their group-led format builds respect and cooperation through garden projects, service work, fund raising activities, and fun card and board games. The Tots were mostly engaged in unstructured cooperative play.

Discussion of the issues of gendered needs in the EFM bathrooms has led to the creation of a new committee, The Water Closet Committee, which has formed to address remodeling design and construction. The committee has just formed and is beginning its work.

Our NPYM coordinating committee was quite concerned about insufficient participation in Quarterly and Yearly Meetings, questioning the future of Quarterly Meeting. Subsequent threshing sessions at both EFM and Quarterly Meeting drew out more volunteers and hopefully some peace of mind for those previously concerned.

The critical mass of Grounds Committee has been pruned a bit this year due to personal transitions and challenges which have limited our scope. While some of our Grounds laid fallow, other areas produced nourishment for body and soul. In June, we dedicated Lois Barton’s Memorial bird bath. We patiently await the designs for a multi-year sustainable grounds project that will integrate storm water drainage and xeriscaping.

The Library Committee successfully completed organizing and numbering books by category, making them easier to reshelve. The library space is a much appreciated quiet area and educational resource. Since the person keeping the database has moved away we need to find someone else with the Light to manage the collection.

Peace and Justice Committee reports an active year in social concern education, exploring immigration and racism. We offered programs on corporate economics and the Israel and Palestine conflict, one being open to the public. After its successful first two years, there is a hope that the Carbon Tax project will gain new momentum.

We are grateful for our co-clerks Ethen Perkins and Helen Park, who continue to inspire our spiritual journeys with their leadings. Overall, the State of Society is active and strong and EFM remains a vibrant community of Friends.
Submitted respectfully by Linda Harding and Roxann Prazniak