Meeting for Worship is experiencing a dynamic consistency and several participants report having experienced moments of personal insight, direction and healing during worship. It was great to have The Oregon Extension group attend during their Fall semester. We have experienced a sense of community and warmth among attenders and members. While the schedule for shared meals is looser than in the past, newcomers are welcomed and conversations seem to delve more deeply than in past years. Between renewed interest in understanding the spiritual basis of Quakerism and the increase in leadings adopted by the Meeting, competition for discussion hours has been lively and attendance at these discussions has increased.

We continue two midweek groups on the Meeting schedule for personal spiritual development. At least one of these groups has a membership which extends beyond those attending on Sundays, is well attended, and supports strong bonds of friendship.

Friends are bringing to the Meeting their involvement in important service activities in the community such as the homeless shelter and accompaniment in Honduras to Meeting and they are finding willing monetary help from the Meeting and willing volunteers to join them for the local efforts. Meeting participants founded a community group to foster understanding and respect between political factions; another fosters connection through participation in the Ashland Interfaith Clergy Circle and husbands the Meeting's work to understand and uproot our unconscious racism, Some inform us of political opportunities to support our values through letter-writing, and others contributed to a display addressing gun violence. A meeting participant was instrumental in developing a charter school to foster personal well-being and social awareness in children, others volunteer with a monthly laundry event for those in need, and several are part of community groups to address other issues such as the climate change, racism and antisemitism, nuclear weapons, and FCNL advocacy. In general, there is positive encouragement to embrace ongoing self-challenge and to engage in social action as led without producing guilt in those who do not participate that way.

Looking to the future, we are hoping to create more opportunities for informal sharing on Quaker spirituality in relation to individuals' own experience, better outreach to SOU students and to occasional and few time attenders, and stronger connection to larger Quaker bodies and issues that arise there and in Quaker online forums.

Respectfully submitted,
Melody Ashworth, Clerk
South Mountain Friends Meeting