In 2018, Tacoma Friends Meeting built on momentum from 2017. Peace and social concerns were addressed with an enthusiasm that resulted in action steps as well as spiritual growth. Several sessions were thoughtfully devoted to FCNL’s invitation to contribute suggestions for legislative priorities. Proximity to the Port of Tacoma, with its immigration detention facility and fossil fuel industries, gave us local opportunities to practice our faith and traditions. We continued to support immigration concerns both financially and through volunteer work at the detention center. Conversations with the Fellowship of Reconciliation, a group that shares our facilities and many of our values, led to Tacoma Friends Meeting writing a position letter to the Tacoma City Council regarding the planned liquified natural gas (LNG) plant at the port. This was the first time in many years that the meeting had united to write such a letter on any issue. It was a big step for us.

Another opportunity for the meeting to rally around was hosting the Western Friends Board at the meetinghouse and providing sleeping and other accommodations. Many people in the meeting contributed in various ways including one who sat in the background at the board’s meetings, simply holding them in the light as they did their work.

In tandem with the rest of Yearly Meeting at Annual Session, Tacoma Friends Meeting did substantial, sincere heart searching on the topic of racism, a recurring theme for the year. This led the Ministry and Oversight committee to recognize the term “Oversight” in its name was problematic. The committee began a renaming process with input and support from the meeting. Another thing birthed out of Annual Session was a renewed desire for mutually supportive spiritual deepening. Use of email, phone and in person conversations provided platforms for deeply listening to Spirit and opening to the Light in one another.

Throughout the year, Tacoma Friends Meeting faced practical matters regarding the meetinghouse. Our obligations to building maintenance, groups that rent the facility, our neighbors and our caretaker were matters of concern on several occasions. We addressed them with attention to our values and traditions as Friends, particularly in the area of conflict resolution.

The meeting was also led to serve in our local community. Radio Tacoma, a public access radio station based at the meeting house, continues to give people opportunity to share their concerns, thoughts and personal experiences. Many in the meeting have done so in the radio station’s “Quaker Moment” program. Several members participated in the Tacoma Mall Subarea planning process and the first meeting of the Tacoma Mall Neighbors Group was hosted at the meeting house.

Overall, 2018 was a year of substantial growth for the meeting. We benefited greatly from an infusion of energy through greater numbers and passionate involvement around social concerns. We practiced listening to each other deeply, laying down personal perceptions and agendas. We trusted each other with our hearts and supported each other in times of need. We took small steps and then greater ones. Thus, we grew and trust we will continue to grow.