

Monteverde Friends Meeting, Monteverde Costa Rica

2 June, 2019

Dear Friends Everywhere,

“Perhaps the most important thing we bring to another person is the silence in us. Not the sort of silence that is filled with unspoken criticism or hard withdrawal. The sort of silence that is a place of refuge, of rest, of acceptance of someone as they are. We are all hungry for this other silence. It is hard to find. In its presence we can remember something beyond the moment, a strength on which to build a life. Silence is a place of great power and healing. Silence is God's lap.”

Rachel Naomi Remen

The wind is blowing as we gather on first day, some of us walking through the mist and mist bows, some of us in cars with our children. But we come, some for the first time as tourists, some as old friends returning after years of absence, a few who never left. We come to sit in shared silence. Occasionally a message surfaces and is received, a gift. Monteverde Meeting has a good balance between spoken ministry and shared silence. Visitors often express gratitude for being welcomed (silently) into our quiet space. We appreciate the richness added by the many people who have come and gone but stay woven in the tapestry of our lives. For example, in June of 2018 Caryl Cresswell conducted a “Godly Play” workshop which has greatly enhanced children's meeting and our school's kindergarten.

On Wednesday we sit as the raucous sounds of children at play subside to quiet. Even the kindergarten children sit in silence for 15 minutes. The meeting room is filled by Monteverde Friends School students, some fidgeting, some barely controlling silent giggles, but most settle down, maybe with the help of a gentle nudge from a teacher. While students may not appreciate the silence in the moment many of our graduates recall meeting as a special time. We never know what seeds are planted. Pre-meeting is held for every grade and the students provide translation and are responsible for the rise of meeting and greeting. A special time at the end of meeting has been set aside to hold others (sometimes a beloved pet) in the light. Students have contributed to our quarterly newsletter Seeds which provides another way to share our spiritual values outside regular meeting.

Community is about give and take, flexibility, open mindedness and we are grateful to be open to continuing revelation. To make our lives a living testimony continues to challenge us as we seek balance between our needs as a meeting, the larger community around us, and those of the world community.

“Sometimes our light goes out, but is blown again into instant flame by an encounter with another human being. Each of us owes the deepest thanks to those who have rekindled this inner light.” Dr. Albert Schweitzer

In Peace,

Tim Lietzke, Clerk

Harriet Joslin, Recording Clerk

Epistle Committee: Lucky Guindon, Judy Witt, Elena Guindon