

Monteverde, May 2015

To Friends everywhere:

This past year has seen a deepening of the Spirit among us and a revitalization of energy for many. Members and visitors alike have expressed a renewed feeling of love and connectedness amidst the many undertakings that our small Meeting is asked for and the perennial challenges of being a small meeting governing an extraordinary K-12 school. The religious education committee continues to offer a wide range of opportunities for us all to deepen our understanding of Spirit, through our listening and connecting in community. We see excitement among members and attenders that continue into a third season of small Spiritual Sharing Groups, many expressing gratitude for the opportunity to strengthen friendships and understanding. Our active Children's Meeting has provided enriching experiences for both the children and the adults involved and they joyfully share their activities at the close of Meeting for Worship. With the addition of bi-monthly Friendly Reflections and weekly Friendly Bible studies, our Meetings for Worship feel fuller and more meaningful.

This year the Meeting invited Arthur Larrabee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in the U.S. to facilitate workshops on Spirit-led decision-making in the manner of Friends. Arthur spent a week among us and presented insightful workshops to the Meeting, the Monteverde Friends School, and the community. Arthur's counsel, laughter, insights, and joyful energy was greatly appreciated. We have had sometimes difficult conversations about the dynamics between us around the Meeting-School relationship, and, drawing on our long-term commitment to each other and to the school, we find that through this process the Spirit continues to invite us to grow and learn how to work and communicate better with each other.

This year we lost several long-term and treasured community members: John Trostle, Roy Joe Stuckey, Rene Montien, and Turid Forsyth. We gathered together to grieve and to celebrate their lives, strengthening our awareness of the love and support that is present in our community and recognizing the importance of searching for deeper spiritual understanding and relationships. We welcome new members Barry and Leslie Liang as they have transferred their membership to our meeting.

As a Meeting we are blessed with many visitors, for both brief and lengthy stays, and we are grateful for the many gifts they bring. We seek to be faithful to our mission to the world that comes to us and trust that the seeds of our outreach will take hold and grow. We also seek to develop a shared vision of what is important to us. We recognize the need for continued work on how we convey that vision to those who are with us for a relatively short time.

We are grateful, once again, for the gifts of fellowship and commitment in love, which help us transcend our shortcomings and grow, as we seek to live in the power and guidance of the Spirit.

In the Light,