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Cookeville SOM report

1 message

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Cookeville Friends Meeting
State of the Meeting Report 2023

Cookeville Meeting has had a quiet year of mostly worshipping on Zoom, with a few occasions of gathering in person at nearby parks when the weather permitted. We did this once with our local Unitarian Universalist group joining us in Quaker style unprogrammed worship. We also met for our annual retreat and enjoyed food and fellowship, ending with the creation of bags of needed supplies for homeless folks in our area. Our book club has continued to be a source of fun and growth together as we explore books by and about people of color. We finished *An Abolitionist's Handbook* by Patrisse Cullors and are now discussing *Kindred* by Octavia Butler.

Some of us feel that we have not deepened or breathed new life into our testimonies as a Meeting, mostly because of the continued challenges of the pandemic and other health risks that prevented us from gathering as a body in person. We feel the lack of physically greeting each other and the bonding of social events. There is an energy that we bring when we gather together that does not occur in the Zoom experience. Despite this deficit we have enjoyed the presence of several faithful new attenders, and individually we continue to do our best to live up to our testimonies. There is an expansive generosity of Spirit that thrives in our midst, even on Zoom. We hold a safe space for unprogrammed worship and sharing. Our worship continues to be mostly silent with seldom any ministry out loud. The challenge of being online has led us to use short quotes from various sources to focus our worship, which some find helpful. Occasionally we are treated to a glimpse of our youngest attenders, (Finn, 10 months), and Millie (Seven Years).

We find that we are functioning these days mostly as a worship group rather than a Monthly Meeting. Most First Days find us with a group of 8-10 people at the most. None of us are filling positions of responsibility officially but keeping our community alive by using the gifts we have been given in service to the whole. As some of us pass aging milestones such as turning 80 we feel that this is the best way forward for our community.