

To Northwest Yearly Meeting of Friends
From Scotts Mills Friends Church
5/31/17

In response to the restructuring of Northwest Yearly Meeting, Scotts Mills Friends Church reviews our history as part of the Friends Church in the Northwest. Quaker land buyers in Oregon advertised lots in the grand new town of Scotts Mills to Friends throughout the United States. As Friends began to immigrate, a First Day meeting of six families was held at Scotts Mills in 2nd month 1893. Scotts Mills Monthly Meeting was officially approved by Salem Quarterly Meeting 6th month, 7th, 1893, and was an integral part of the establishment of Oregon Yearly Meeting 6th month, 27th, 1893. The Friends Oregon Colony continued to draw settlers, and membership of Scotts Mills Friends Church peaked at 206 by 5th month 1896.

In reviewing our history it is important to note two things that helped establish the character and theological underpinnings of Oregon Yearly Meeting (later Northwest Yearly Meeting.)

The long-time Quaker families who came to Scotts Mills were those who had experienced the renewal the Holy Spirit poured out on Friends in the last part of the 19th century. Along with relying on the Holy Spirit for daily guidance, their families studied the inspired written word as an unfailing source of truth, and their meetings released ministers, male and female, for pastoral service. The first minister to serve as pastor at Scotts Mills was John Henry Douglas, an evangelist who traveled widely among Friends. Our meetinghouse is soaked with the prayers, tears, and joyful breakthrough of many who have sought and found the Lord Jesus.

From Scotts Mills, there ensued a “Quaker Diaspora” as Friends moved out to Salem, Newberg, Portland, and other Northwestern areas. The dedicated orthodox Friends from Scotts Mills had strong influence as they filled many positions in Oregon Yearly Meeting administration, missions, and camps, and also in other monthly meetings.

As a committed part of NWYM, Scotts Mills Friends Church witnesses to the unfailing truth of the Bible, given by the Holy Spirit through centuries. The Faith and Practice document of NWYM, crafted by earlier Friends, summarizes doctrines we still believe. We recognize the Lord God leading us to new and renewed faithfulness of life through the Holy Spirit, and look forward to a new life that will be given by the Lord Jesus, as renewal was given to our forebears. Much as they left old practice to follow the Lord’s leading, we expect this new life to look different from what has gone before. We rejoice that it will be an exciting new growth of God’s Kingdom as we turn from our failings to the glory of God, recognize the high priority of our identity as Jesus’ family, grow in the Spirit, and love our neighbors. May Jesus Christ be lifted up!

Working for the Kingdom of God,
Scotts Mills Friends Church