

*Minutes of*  
***Iowa Yearly Meeting  
Of Friends (Conservative)***

**2020**

***143rd Annual Session  
Held Online  
Seventh Month 25-27, 2020***

# Iowa Yearly Meeting of Friends (Conservative)



Hickory Grove Meetinghouse  
Scattergood School and Farm

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of Friends (Conservative)

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## Iowa Yearly Meeting of Friends (Conservative)

143rd Annual Session

Seventh Month 25 to Seventh Month 27, 2020

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### Sixth Day – Friday morning - 07/25/2020

At the 143rd Annual Session of Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) held online from Seventh Month 25 to Seventh Month 27, 2020.

*“With fumbling words, we give ourselves to prayer: We want to be rid of that which comes between us and Thy vision. Teach us how. We are but little children stumbling in the darkness. Do not reject even our weakness, O God, but accept us totally as we are. Work over us, knead us and fashion us until at last we take on the character which is Thy Spirit and the mind which is Thy Mind... Amen.”* —Howard Thurman *The Inward Journey*

This year, these visitors blessed our gathering with their presence during our 2020 online sessions held over three days this year:

From **North Carolina Yearly Meeting (C)**: Mark Wutka, Mary Linda McKinney, Nan and Tom Bowles, Darlene Kay Stanley (also of New York Yearly Meeting), Ray Treadway, Deborah Shaw and Sid Kitchens, all of Friendship Friends Meeting, Andrew Wright of Durham Monthly Meeting, Edward Pearce, Rich Square Monthly Meeting, Nancy Craft, Virginia Beach Monthly Meeting.

From **Northern Yearly Meeting**: Lynne Jensen and Lael Gatewood, Twin Cities Friends Meeting, Elizabeth Evans, Milwaukee Monthly Meeting.

From **Illinois Yearly Meeting**: Alex Lippett, Oak Park Monthly Meeting, and Janice Domanik, on behalf of **Friends General Conference**.

From **Western Yearly Meeting**: Tom Roberts, Noblesville Monthly Mtg.

From **South Central Yearly Meeting**, Nell Warnes, Live Oak Friends Meeting.

On behalf of **Friends Committee on National Legislation**, Susan Nahvi and Jose Woss\* **Baltimore Yearly Meeting** Friends Meeting of Washington.

On behalf of **American Friends Service Committee**, Jon Krieg.

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We approved the following appointments suggested by our representatives:

- Exercise Committee - Lorene Ludy & Marshall Massey
- Epistle & Special Replies Committee - Deborah Fisch and Bob Yeats
- Auditing Committee - Carol Winkleblack and Bob Winkleblack

Readers for this morning's business sessions are Tom Hinshaw & Marshall Massey.

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Hearing the Farm, the Head and Financial Reports gave us an overwhelming sense of hope. Even with the described deficit, the informative and clear financial report helped us to see that the facing costs are very bearable considering the promised future return that is in the richness of the school. These beautiful reports shared how Scattergood offers a rootedness and blossoming for the future. This vision encompassed in these reports was deep and encouraging beyond what words can express.

## **2020 Farm Report to IYMC**

Dear Friends,

As we have all settled into the practices of physical distancing and compulsive hand washing, for many years industrialized agriculture has used isolation and sanitation in their biosecurity plans. At the Scattergood Farm, though, we have sought to invite and increase human, insect, microbial, plant, and animal diversity by adding habitat and livestock, reducing tillage, and welcoming friends and strangers.

Though the last year ended unpredictably, we still invited students to use the farm as a learning laboratory while sharing our stories and our food with many others.

The school year began with Farm Term, which offered classes in Harvest Rites and Farmlore, Climate Change and Agriculture, and Animal Behavior. Students experimented, learned, created, and developed presentations that were shared first with the Scattergood community, and then during our fall Open House. Several students also took part in a farm PE class that included a lot of harvesting, while others joined a farm club and attended the Savannah Institute Annual Gathering and the Practical Farmers of Iowa Annual Conference. As part of the Youth Climate Strike in September, several staff and students joined Tom and James Wahl in planting 120 chestnut trees. The ninth-grade biology class researched and made recommendations of how to convert one acre of pasture to an orchard with a native plant understory, an endeavor funded by a SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education) Youth Educator Grant.

In addition to the work with SARE, the Scattergood Farm also partnered with Practical Farmers of Iowa and The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation to host a field day in September featuring pollinator habitat restorations and native tea plants. Throughout the year we welcomed guests from Taproot Nature Experience, Willowwind School, Mount Mercy University Sustainability Club, and researchers from the Luther College Biology Department. We assisted a Central College student researching institutional Farm to Table programs and gave many tours to student families and prospective staff members. Mark was recognized as a Master Researcher by PFI and presented at their annual conference. Students provided childcare at that conference, as well as the Johnson County Food Policy Council Annual Meeting. We have, with the Rodale Institute, begun to explore no-till vegetable production, and have started a Saturday vegetable market for local folks and have donated food to Table to Table, the Center for Worker Justice, and the Iowa City Catholic Worker House.

Many have been involved in the work of tending the farm, preparing the food, and teaching the students. Thanks go to Ben Bowman who has cared for the livestock the past six years, Jenny and Leah Beben who are working on the farm this summer, Dana Foster who will guide the Middle School in farm chores and

exploration, and our primary cooks, Irving Treadway and Karen Huff, who continue to find creative ways to get students to eat their vegetables. Special thanks go to Thomas Weber who recognized and celebrated the educational, culinary and outreach potential of the Scattergood Farm.

The Scattergood Farm is an organism that cannot contract COVID-19, so it will continue to build resilience with diversity and hospitality, instead of distance and sterility. The farmers, though, must go wash their hands now.

Respectfully submitted by  
Mark Quee, Farm Manager

## **Scattergood Friends Head of School Report to IYMC July 2020**

Dear Friends,

Echoing the words of my report to you in 2019, it has remained a mysterious and deep blessing, especially amidst the dramatically enhanced uncertainties brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, to report to you as the outgoing Head of Scattergood Friends School. I am so grateful to have been given stewardship of this community for the last seven years. The Light that shines here for young people has sustained us as we were called to work here.

Five students received diplomas June 7th as the Class of 2020 with letters of admission to colleges and universities: **Halima Behroz, Evelyne Esther Dresner, Carly Thomas Elder, Grace Ireland Shortt,** and **Lucille Davis Gilmore Slotta**. The occasion was celebrated via use of video and internet technologies. Nevertheless, over 80 participants were able to worshipfully gather in silence, hear from the voices that spoke, and wish our most recent graduates their best.

### **Program**

For three quarters of the academic year, Scattergood saw the recognizable and enduring qualities of student experiential learning in community with their peers and with the staff. Poems, equations, kitchen clean-up, swine castration, leaf raking, and clean-room checks were some of the myriad elements of the annual ritual.



When circumstances changed with Covid 19, instruction and meaningful interaction continued with surprisingly few complications. Indeed, we already had a vibrant and healthy community that carried us all forward into the new online world. While being separated in this way was difficult, our energy and creativity carried us to a successful conclusion of the academic year. We even celebrated “Sweet Week,” which celebrated learning and community. While students came on separate occasions with their parents to pick up their possessions (wearing masks of course), most found a moment to jump into the pond and say hi to staff before heading back to their homes.

### **Staffing**

We give thanks and wish farewell to the following staff who are moving on:

- Dilek Aksu---Admissions
- Ben Bowman---Livestock and Landscaping
- Jane Purcell---Humanities and Social Studies
- Dave Reeve---Math
- Harold Jamison---Facilities
- Ari Brouwer---Humanities and Biology

And we welcome the following staff to the school for the upcoming year. Each has unique and strong qualifications for their positions and I’m particularly gratified with the early success of our searches to fill these positions before July:

- Shari Sollars---Admissions Director
- Dani Evans-Schreiber ----Humanities, East Dorm Sponsor
- Ethan Huelskamp ----Life Sciences, West Dorm Sponsor
- Jamie Newton----Middle School Head and Lead Instructor

### **Enrollment**

After counting additions and departures to the student body during the year, we finished with 23 full enrollments, and we expect to see high school enrollment levels in the mid-twenties in the upcoming semester. That said, we have had the strongest and most sizable freshman and sophomore classes in years, which bodes well for long-term growth. These students bring a wonderfully positive

energy and genuine dedication to the Quaker testimonies. They include faculty children, alumni children, siblings of alumni, and students with no prior relationship to Scattergood. Together they are promoting retention with each other and have enthusiastically engaged in outreach and hosting of prospective enrollees.

The Middle School initiative, begun formally two years ago, has now finally borne fruit with at least 12 expected enrollments. Not only will this generate new high school enrollment, but the Middle School is expected to grow in size as the good news of their start emanates in the Iowa City market.

The onset of the COVID pandemic and its economic impact has rightly raised significant concerns about Scattergood's viability as a tuition-driven organization. Yet the crisis has also bred an opportunity for the future, as students and parents have all expressed genuine desire to return to campus. They see its location and program as uniquely safer than the other options available to them, and they value the community bond that sustains us all in this time of stress and turmoil. As a result, attrition has been minimal, and we are conservatively predicting numbers similar to the previous year.

### **Financial Review and a Look Ahead**

We ended the 2019-20 fiscal year by reducing the projected deficit from \$105,000 to just under \$62,000. This was despite an almost \$100,000 shortfall in expected net tuition revenue and increased expenditures on admissions and personnel. Our balance sheet remains similarly strong, with \$157,000 in cash assets, long-term and short-term liabilities amounting to less than \$101,000, and a zero balance on our short-term line of credit for the entire year. That said, cash assets remain relatively small to handle monthly needs and we continue to closely manage cash flow. Our cash position was greatly enhanced with the approval of a \$158,000 PPP Grant as a result of recent Federal legislation to support organizations and businesses during the pandemic. Of that grant, \$142,000 was spent and at least \$136,000 will be forgiven.

Using a combination of discretionary segments from the School Foundation disbursements, portions of estate gifts, and other sources, we will continue to provide supplemental funding to admissions marketing and travel, to John Zimmerman's first year as the new Head, and as seed money for a growing fund that will

finance dorm renovations. Admissions spending is needed to grow high school enrollment, and we have contracted with firms to help us with short-video production, website enrichments, and digital marketing. Ironically, the pandemic and the public schools' plans for the fall have stimulated new interest and enrollments in both the Middle and High Schools in the coming 2020-2021 year. Significantly the Middle School has already enough enrolled to launch its first historical year and will bring a new source of income to the School.

My last weeks at Scattergood have been in part spent on planning and drafting a new budget for the 20-21 year. A small group of us have met frequently, using a financial planning tool that allows us to develop multiple scenarios in light of the economic uncertainties of the pandemic's persistence for the next 1-3 years. We can likely expect continued deficit management in the next two years unless we see significant increases in tuition income and in donations, and this tool will allow for more nimble management of resources to sustain the school during the uncertainties ahead. I'm grateful to Kim Jones, Lisa Kofoed, and Alex Lippitt for their work with the budget planning and continued engagement with John and the School Committee in the coming year.

### **Major Capital Improvements and Needs this year**

I am grateful to Matt Gauder, Harold Jamison, and the Facilities subcommittee to the School Committee for what has been accomplished in the past 12 months:

- Upper Instruction building apartment renovated and now ready for new Head of School and family
- Several septic and drainage improvements
- Lower Science building apartment renovation largely complete
- New well site and work now planned for eventual project.

Also ahead for the school:

- Ongoing work to advance the sprinkler installations—combined with other renovations to East and West Dorms.
- Ongoing attention to eventual expansion of I-80 and its environmental impact.
- Eventual construction of a new farm center.

**Outreach**

My outreach this year was more limited, given my desire to support our new Dean of Students (Sonja) and Directors of Admissions (Dilek) and Development (Kendall) in their first semesters at Scattergood. Moreover, a lot of travel was cancelled due to the pandemic. Chief new projects included the establishment and advertisement of significant scholarships to student applicants who are associated with Friends meetings, closer work with the Center for Worker Justice of Eastern Iowa, and the initiation of relationships with a fledgling Kiwanis chapter in West Branch and the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Mississippi Valley.

**Concluding remarks**

Amy and I are deeply thankful for the support of the Yearly Meeting, its monthly meetings, the Scattergood Foundation Trustees, and especially for the School Committee for their work and their unwavering support of our efforts. I remain convinced that the mission of the school is the right path into the future. The school’s DNA which underpins that mission - community, that of God in each, and the quest to understand - remains highly relevant to youth in these times, and the School is uniquely able to respond nimbly and indeed joyfully to the challenges presented by the pandemic and by the current economic, social and cultural turmoil that engulf the country.

Respectfully submitted,  
Thomas Weber, Head of School Emeritus '20



We appreciated the clarity of the Scattergood School Committee report and especially appreciate the faithful work of the committee and the School Committee clerk. Even though we are not together in person\*, the spirit of Scattergood flourishes across physical boundaries: not only among the current student staff, and alumni, but also among others that are out there waiting to be part of our community. We have much to give the world and much to learn from likeminded others. It is vital for us to share the light and guidance of the Scattergood community ...the world needs what we offer!

*Clerk's note: During our online sessions the School clerk and a member of the School Committee, as well Scattergood staff joined us from the Hickory Grove Meetinghouse on the Scattergood grounds.*

## **Scattergood School Committee Report**

*Not everything that is faced can be changed. But nothing can be changed until it is faced.* James Baldwin

What a year, dear Friends, what a year. We have been riding the roller coaster of emotions for multiple reasons: as we deal with the losses and effects of a virus called COVID-19, and also as we must face and address the losses and effects of the devastating pandemic called racism that has nested within our systems since the beginnings of our country. At the School and on all fronts, we strive to be truthful with ourselves and each other, to walk the walk in the Light, and to stay centered in Divine Love.

Re-imagining and co-creating are key words for the times, and we are grateful for good-news examples coming from our school. This spring the Scattergood staff and students adapted quickly to the pandemic and have done an amazing job of transitioning to online learning with numerous platforms, while maintaining a sense of community by holding daily worship, community meetings and evening activities via Zoom. We are encouraged by how successful the programs have been, and grateful for the careful and hopeful work underway to safely bring students to campus in August.

Words do not suffice in expressing our gratitude to Thomas and Amy Weber. Since 2013 they have been a part of the community and have led, buoyed and nurtured both people and the School through thick and through thin. How strange to not say farewell in person, but we look towards celebrating together with them at a future Homecoming. We will miss their steady leadership and wish them well.

The other side of a farewell is a greeting to our new head of school! We warmly welcome John Zimmerman and his family who have transplanted from Princeton Friends School in New Jersey to our campus in the fields of Iowa. We're grateful for these leaps of

faith, as well as the commitment and creativity that will help usher Scattergood into its next chapter.

Along with countless organizations, Scattergood is feeling the economic impact of COVID-19. With many thanks to our business office, we received a PPP loan to assist with immediate cash flow needs for personnel expenditures. Over the next few years, however, we anticipate increased need for students' tuition assistance, so we have been working with forecasting tools to plan budget scenarios and will closely monitor the situation. These added strains have unfortunately meant reducing and restructuring some positions at the School. The School Committee is also considering additional sources of financial assistance.

Last November the School Committee, with Thomas Weber and Sam Taylor, participated in a retreat (hosted by Tracy Chaplin of Co-Nexio) to help us see the broader picture and discern direction for the School. We worshipfully considered a number of future possibilities, from small innovations to radical changes, that allowed us to hold the large questions, envision outcomes, and experience the process of intentional choice. This retreat was not meant as a place to make decisions, but rather a time to explore and consider ways that the Scattergood community might thrive and adapt to a rapidly changing world while also remaining centered.

The strong theme which came through in the retreat (and was reinforced these last few months) is that the heart of the School's mission is as important, needed, and relevant as ever, and that we are committed to continuing this Quaker educational community. We also realized there was **great** need and interest in developing deeper relationships with entities that are aligned with our mission; we can become more vibrant, relevant and enduring if we work with others to foster this mission.

The School has already been doing the work of adaptation over the last seven years, from the Farm Immersion Program, to researching a Gap Year program, to the Middle School that will be starting this fall. Our new head, John Zimmerman, brings fresh ideas and connections that complement the work already happening. The School Committee is also adapting. In keeping with 'not wasting a crisis', as the pandemic forced us into conducting meetings online, we are opening the doors to new members who love what we do and possess skills that we need, but are geographically far away. We feel the next step is to continue and expand our visioning

conversations with the wider Scattergood community to consider possible evolutions that will contribute to the school's well-being.

In these times of change (some that were unexpected and some that were long overdue) the words of Paulo Freire from *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* feel especially poignant. *“Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity, or it becomes the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world.”*

The leadership, staff, and students at the School have been walking the walk with hard work, creativity, and grace amidst these challenging and uncertain times; their resiliency and courage continue to fuel our commitment to finding ways forward. We are so grateful for their lights shining brightly, as we all grow in self-understanding while seeking a new path of justice and equity, and participating in the transformation of our world.

In peace and gratitude,  
Ruth Hampton  
Scattergood Friends School Committee, clerk

We now adjourn our morning session to meet again this afternoon at 1pm.

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**Sixth Day – Friday afternoon – 7/25/2020**

We return to the business of the Yearly Meeting.

*And this is it. This is the life we get here on earth. We get to give away what we receive. We get to believe in each other. We get to forgive and be forgiven. We get to love imperfectly. And we never know what effect it will have for years to come. And all of it... all of it is completely worth it.* Nadia Bolz-Weber, Accidental Saints: Finding God in All the Wrong People

Nancy Jordan and Bob Yeats have been appointed readers this afternoon.

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We listened to the Yearly Meeting Trustees Report and appreciate the work these Friends do for us, as well as that of the Scattergood Foundation Trustees. We approved the recommended changes to the Yearly Meeting Bylaws.

**Yearly Meeting Trustees Report 2019**

We have appointed Lowell Wilson and Dan Treadway to continue to serve as Scattergood Foundation Trustees with terms ending in 2024. The activities of the Foundation trustees are described in their annual reports, which are attached to this report.

We have drafted a slightly revised version of the Yearly Meeting By-Laws, which we are presenting to the Yearly Meeting for approval. If these revised By-Laws are approved, we request that they be published in the 2020 Yearly Meeting minutes so that they will be readily available for future reference.

Disbursements of Trust funds during the past fiscal year were all related to number of maintenance items on the meetinghouse tended to in 2019. Our available funds were more than sufficient to cover the cost of all these repairs and improvements, and we anticipate that our current funds will be sufficient to cover additional Meetinghouse maintenance projects in the coming year, including some interior painting.

**Trustees Financial Report 2020**

Initial Balance 7/1/2019	\$5467.93
From Iowa Yearly Meeting (C)	\$1000.00
From IYM Entertainment Committee	\$1210.00
Interest	\$ 5.77
Total Funds Available	\$7683.70

Disbursements

Repairs and Improvements to Hickory Grove Meetinghouse	\$1040.52
Total Disbursements	\$1040.52
Bank Balance 6/30/2019	\$6643.18
Funds Available 6/30/2019	\$6643.18



The auditors reported to us that our Treasurer’s report was clear and easily understood. We approved both the Auditor’s Report and the Treasurer’s Report, and are grateful that they do this work for us. This year’s Audit Committee members were Carole Winkleblack and Bob Winkleblack.

**Audit Committee Report**

Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) Treasurer shared 2019-20 financial records with the Audit Committee the day before Annual Sessions. We met outdoors and observed social distancing precautions. We find her records easy to understand, complete, and in good order. Our thanks to Rebecca Bergus for keeping complete and clear records and for preparing reports for Yearly Meeting.

Bob Winkleblack and Carole Winkleblack

**Yearly Meeting Treasurer's Report**

Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2020		
<b>INCOME</b>	Budget	Actual
<b>Total Apportionments</b>	<b>\$72,400.00</b>	<b>\$72,400.00</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Contributions		
American Friends Service Committee	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Friends Committee on National Legislation	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Friends General Conference	\$200.00	\$200.00
Friends World Committee for Consultation	\$700.00	\$700.00
Iowa Peace Network	\$100.00	\$100.00
Nebraskans for Peace	\$400.00	\$400.00
Friends Peace Teams	\$500.00	\$500.00

National Religious Campaign Against Torture	\$100.00	\$100.00
Pendle Hill	\$500.00	\$500.00
Peace and Social Concerns Committee	\$1,100.00	\$1,100.00
Quaker Earthcare Witness	\$300.00	\$300.00
Quaker United Nations Office	\$200.00	\$200.00
Right Sharing of World Resources	\$400.00	\$400.00
Scattergood Friends School	\$54,000.00	\$54,000.00
Scattergood Facilities	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Quaker Voluntary Service	\$300.00	\$300.00
<b>Total Contributions</b>	<b>\$62,800.00</b>	<b>\$62,800.00</b>
<b>Delegate Expenses</b>		
FCNL	\$1,200.00	\$0.00
Friends Peace Teams	\$600.00	\$0.00
FWCC - General	\$1,200.00	\$0.00
Quaker Earthcare Witness	\$1,200.00	\$0.00
Conservative Yearly Meeting Visitation	\$1,200.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Delegate Expenses</b>	<b>\$5,400.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Yearly Meeting Expenses</b>		
Archives Committee	\$200.00	\$0.00
Clerk's and Other Adm. Expenses	\$400.00	\$30.80
Committee Expenses (Other)	\$300.00	\$0.00
Conscientious Objector PSC subcommittee	\$100.00	\$0.00
Friends Travel & Conference	\$3,000.00	\$600.00
Iowa Yearly Meeting Trustees	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Junior Yearly Meeting	\$1,500.00	\$192.58
Pendle Hill Scholarship Match	\$400.00	\$0.00

Publication Committee	\$3,500.00	\$2,474.79
Website Committee	\$450.00	\$420.88
Quaker Youth Camp Scholarship	\$500.00	\$0.00
Special Needs Committee	\$750.00	\$0.00
Young Adult Friends	\$300.00	\$0.00
Young Friends	\$1,500.00	\$1,334.69
Midyear Planning Committee if receipts inadequate*	\$500.00	\$0.00
Clerk's Contingency Fund	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Yearly Meeting Expenses</b>	<b>\$15,400.00</b>	<b>\$6,053.74</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$83,600.00</b>	<b>\$68,853.74</b>
<b>BALANCE SHEET</b>		
July 1, 2019		\$18,095.72
Income	\$72,400.00	
Expenses	\$68,853.74	
June 30, 2020		\$21,641.98
Cash Reserve Fund	\$8,000.00	
<b>Funds Available for 2020-2021 Budget</b>		<b>\$13,641.98</b>

Iowa Yearly Meeting (C) received more funds than were spent this year. This unusual occurrence is due, in part, to the travel restrictions caused by COVID-19. For example, a program at Pendle Hill that a member planned to attend was canceled, and no one traveled to attend other Yearly Meetings.

Members were also generous, donating their own funds to carry out Yearly Meeting business. FCNL Annual Session in November 2019 was well attended by our representatives, but no financial assistance was requested. We encourage all our members who contribute to the yearly meeting in this manner to submit these expenses to the Yearly Meeting treasurer. It is important that we recognize those gifts and are aware of the actual costs of the Yearly Meeting.

We want all members to be able to participate in wider Quaker activities. We urge everyone to reach out to the Yearly Meeting for assistance whenever it is needed.

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We listened to the Midyear Meeting Report and remembered how satisfying it was spiritually for us. The Midyear Meeting Planning Committee clerk has served this committee faithfully over the years, and we appreciate all his hard work to create these deeply rewarding experiences. We discussed our desire that Friends recognize the often-hidden costs and expenses that these gatherings incur, even when they are held online.

### **Midyear Meeting Report**

Midyear Meeting was scheduled for Fourth Month, 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> at Bear Creek Meetinghouse. The pandemic forced us to not meet face-to-face, so our speaker, Cheryl Sutton of Bear Creek, agreed to give her presentation via internet platforms. Approximately 75 people participated.

Cheryl spoke on “Engaging Community, Conflict and Connection.” She began by asking us to think about several queries. What are the gifts in my community that nurture me? In what ways do I nurture community? How do I deal with conflict in my meeting? These are all challenging questions, but she left us with five queries on enlarging our faith communities.

1. If we are called to change the world, as our testimonies tell us, do we need to find like-minded people to work on solutions?
2. Do Friends think it is God’s responsibility to decide who will find their way to our faith tradition?
3. Do we as individuals and as a meeting do enough to bring new people into our faith community? If not, why?
4. When new people come into our community, do we have a way to help them understand how our faith community transforms our lives, and how Quaker history speaks to us today?
5. Do we talk about our spiritual experience with one another and, when opportunities arise, with non-Quakers outside of our meeting?

We acknowledge with thanks the *Ad Hoc* Committee that supplied the expertise to navigate the technical problems of the virtual gathering.

**Financial statement**

|                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Donations          | \$151.45        |
| Speaker’s expenses | \$101.45        |
| Clerk’s expenses   | \$ 50.00        |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>\$151.45</b> |

Submitted by  
A.M. Fink, clerk



We listened to the 2019 Entertainment Committee Report and were glad to remember the successful gathering last year they helped create for us.

**2019 Entertainment Committee Report**

For this Session, Laughing Waters Preparative Meeting, Lincoln, Omaha and Paullina Monthly Meetings served on the Committee. The theme was “Accompaniment and Giving Voice.” Collection presenters were Bill Deutsch, Deborah Fisch, Shirley Scritchfield, Alice Hampton, Lucy Marsh, Elizabeth O’Sullivan, Marshall Massey and Lorene Ludy.

The evaluations were generally positive and supportive of the idea of a shorter session next year.

The committee united in recommending that future Entertainment Committee work be done by a core group which would serve as an on-going committee. This on-going group would do the basic work that must be done every year — working with Scattergood, producing and distributing the registration/schedule, etc. The present rotation of monthly meetings would continue to plan the program aspects of the session— evening collections, First Day morning speaker, Bible study, workshops.

Jean Eden, committee convener

**2019 Entertainment Committee Financial Report**

**Receipts**

|                               |                    |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Forwarded from 2018 Committee | \$ 2,000.00        |
| Contributions                 | \$13,210.00        |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>\$15.210.00</b> |

**Expenses**

|                              |                    |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Scattergood Friends School   | \$12,000.00        |
| Other Expenses               | \$0                |
| To Yearly Meeting Trustees   | \$ 1,210.00        |
| Forwarded for 2020 Committee | \$ 2,000.00        |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>\$15,210.00</b> |

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Publications Committee is responsible for creating and sending the printed minutes of our annual sessions. This historical record of our yearly meeting, as well as the directory of members and meetings is very useful for us. We thank them for their work.

**Publication Committee Report**

The Publications Committee of Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) is charged with preparing, publishing, and distributing the Minute Book of our annual sessions. The committee always appreciates the timely and accurate receipt of the Minutes and committee reports from our yearly meeting clerk.

The cost of printing the Minute Book and the cost of postage in mailing these books to each monthly meeting are listed with this report. Also listed is the cost of mailing books to a few individuals and institutions who have requested our annual publication. The committee will continue our practice of asking each monthly meeting clerk for the number of spiral-bound and spine-bound copies they would like for their members/attenders. We always ask meetings to be conservative in these numbers to save the cost of printing/ mailing and the cost of resources.

The *Iowa Yearly Meeting Directory of Members and Attenders* has been prepared by Nat Case of Laughing Waters Preparative Meeting, and he deserves our continued appreciation for compiling this information so often used by members of our yearly meeting.

Assistance and printing came from Bob Goodfellow Printing in Iowa City.

**Printing and Postage Costs for the 2019 Minute Book**

Minute Books for 2019	233@ 10.31	\$ 2,314.03
Shipping and Freight	154	\$ 61.75
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$ 2,474.79</b>

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## CONSERVATIVE YEARLY MEETING EPISTLES

Traditionally IYM (C), Ohio Yearly Meeting and North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) exchange epistles with each other. This year we have received epistles from both meetings.

We appreciated hearing the epistles from our Conservative Yearly Meeting family and are especially glad to have so many Friends from North Carolina Yearly Meeting (C) joining us here today. We learn so much when we hear how the spirit is working in these yearly meetings. The great number of visiting Friends from many meetings, as well as first time attenders from our own yearly meeting remind us of the time when our gatherings were larger. Holding these sessions online seems to be offering us the gift of wider participation among us.

### **Epistle from North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)**

North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)  
PO Box 4591 Greensboro, NC 27404 ncy mc.clerks@gmail.com

To our dear Friends of Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative),

We received and welcomed Friends Cheryl Sutton, Shirley Scritchfield, Robert Yeats, and Deborah Dakin from your yearly meeting, grateful for the continued visitation between our yearly meetings. We feel a special kinship with Iowa Friends resulting from our continued intervisitation between our yearly meetings. If according to Divine will, we anticipate that our yearly meeting will have representatives present when you meet later this month.

*I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. It is right for me I feel this way about all of you since I have you in my heart for whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. Philippians 1: 3-7*

We are gathered via Zoom for our 323rd annual sessions, Seventh Month 8-12, 2020. The above reading from our gathered Meeting of Ministry and Oversight on Fourth Day expresses our continued connection with you and our prayer for God's grace upon you. Our theme this year is "Living Faithfully in a Fractured World." The following opening reading by clerk, Gwen Gosney, reminds us of our gathered intention to worship as our ancestors and rekindle the gifts of the Spirit of gratitude, joy and the power of love and self-discipline.

*I am grateful to God—whom I worship with a clear conscience, as my ancestors did when I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. Recalling your tears, I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy. I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you. For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline. II Timothy 1:3-7*

As always in the sharing of our State of the Society and other reports, we have a sense of the challenges and joys our meetings have experienced this year. Friends reported the various ways they found to continue to gather in community when it was not possible to continue in person during the pandemic. Friends have expressed desire to find ways to continue use of virtual gatherings in the future. The ability of Friends everywhere to join our meetings by Zoom has enriched our worship and sense of community experience. Each meeting has devised ways to keep in touch with members and attenders who are unable to access the technology to attend functions, in an attempt to keep our communities connected. Our meetings have kept the concern for the health of all, both physically and spiritually, as a priority. Many meetings expressed how they are being changed by the national focus on addressing systemic racial inequity and violence against People of Color. Meetings are looking at their own patterns of behavior both individually and corporately. Friends are also engaged and active in protests, vigils, and efforts for



social change throughout the region. It was felt that this is vital and critical work.

Please find the included Summary of Exercises to learn more about our time together. We welcome continued visitation among all yearly meetings and pray that Friends may feel open to join us next year when we intend to meet at Guilford College, Seventh Month 14-18, 2021.

On behalf of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative),  
Gwen Gosney Erickson, Clerk

### **Epistle from Ohio Yearly Meeting (Conservative)**

Ohio Yearly Meeting of Friends (Conservative)  
61830 Sandy Ridge Road, Barnesville OH 43713 USA  
Eleventh Month 19, 2019

*But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. - John 4:14*

Dear brothers and sisters in Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative),

As we have met in worship this year, we have been repeatedly baptized in the awe-inspiring, yet sweet presence of the Lord. We were told of the river of the Life-giving waters of Truth, that flows from the heavenly country, and the streams thereof flow to every side, to water the land, and bring Life overflowing to renew all the Earth.

We are few in number, yet still the Presence of God has been as a cherishing wing extended over us, keeping us in a close, confiding love with the Father and with each other. Our circle is enlarged by love, as many visitors join us, some for the first time, and some who have been constant in returning. We rejoice in fellowship with Friends Chagala Ngesa from Kenya, Nancy Craft from North Carolina Yearly Meeting, Tom Roberts from Western Yearly Meeting, Samantha Smith from Pendle Hill, Jim Eblin from Oregon, Patricia Dallman of Marlborough Meeting, Heather Mikolaj of Chesterfield Meeting, Sean Lentz of White Lake, Michigan, William Pomeroy of

Zanesville, Ohio, and John and Elizabeth Edminster of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting.

In years past, we have been blessed by the presence of Friends from Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative, and we hope that the flow of Friends back and forth between us will be resumed, that each of our yearly meetings might again be strengthened by the other.

As we began our Yearly Meeting, Christ drew us into a blessed, deep stillness. Ministry was given, calling us to see how our cup is overflowing with God's blessings, which we receive fully by sharing with others. We gently entered into decision making and planning in a contemplative and Spirit led manner, seeking to keep our thoughts in tune with our Guide and sensitive to each other. Our business process, as much as our times of fellowship, can be used by the Spirit to strengthen our love for each other; to bind us together and make us open to individual concerns from members of the body.

Thankfulness fills us as we hear epistles from Friends yearly meetings that often speak to our condition. Morning Bible reading and scriptures before business prepare our hearts. And even in our committee reports about familiar responsibilities, we have felt God's blessing that we are entrusted with this work, and feel thankful that we are served by such careful, faithful Friends. Our members who are able to actively partake in the work of the Yearly Meeting are few; and we seek with God's guidance for ways to lighten their burdens.

This year we seek Divine help as we try a new approach to the questions of dwindling membership and multiplying tasks. A Prayer and Listening Committee has begun the service of listening to, and praying for our Ohio Yearly Meeting family. One Friend reminds us that even before we understand we have a problem; God has been preparing a way forward for us. Indeed, God's care is blooming all about us, and we find that wrestling with organizational ideas, conversations with Friends, fellowship opportunities and evening activities, often give us yet another illuminating piece of the picture.

Throughout our exercise, we have been counseled to focus on and extend those things which build our communion together and bind us to Christ: reliance on the Presence in waiting worship, readiness to share in spoken ministry, and ministering care for each other and our community. We ask God to help us to be able and obedient to share these blessings more broadly.

A Friend reminds us of the excitement and energizing life that is given when we share our faith with others, as through the Friends Center. He recalled the vision of an elder Friend some years ago who saw the walls of the meetinghouse coming down to accommodate all the people being drawn here. He went on to say that although the description of the original vision mentioned only the walls, it is more important to recognize the foundation under the walls, which is the immovable rock of Christ. The truth of His promise on which we depend, is the only sure unchanging ground.

Another Friend noted the many windows set high in the meeting room streaming with sunlight. She urged that we not block our metaphorical windows with opaque habits, but rather keep our windows open wide, letting Christ's Light flow out beyond our walls.

We celebrated the encouraging report from our Walton Retirement Home, including a good vision and planning for future independent living facilities in a faith-based community. The enthusiasm and dedication of their administration, staff and board is clear, and reflected in the smiles of residents. A beautiful array of flowers frames the buildings which is created by caring residents. At the Walton Home Corporation meeting and open house, Friends enjoyed a history presentation by Marie Bundy which included slides from its founding 75 years ago to the present.

In an evening session, Seth Hinshaw diagrammed the development in Biblical thought of how God speaks to or acts upon us through dreams, visions, voice and prophecy, etc. He led us up to that unproductive stuck place where all our human plans and efforts are going to fail and we are at our end; and then God is able to bring us where he wants to begin with us. For this possibility, we need to ask God to intervene, then accept the new creation that rebounds from His leading.

A panel of Friends of various ages shared memories and answered questions about growing up in Ohio Yearly Meeting. Recollections from our oldest Friends were so precious to hear. Deep experiences and humorous ones engaged us and helped us get to know each other better. We look forward to an evening program on Meeting the Spiritual Needs of New Attenders tomorrow. Our time together will round out with creative presentations by Junior Yearly Meeting.

Friends, we are comforted to think of you, to exchange epistles with you, and to be able to visit some of your gatherings. We

lift up a prayer of thanksgiving for faithful Friends around the world and we welcome your prayers for us. As we are obedient to the motion of Christ among us to love one another, may we become as the leaven mixed into the bread, which makes it nourishing. Surely Christ, the Great Friend, continues to gather a people to himself all over the world. May we in live in the love and power He extends over us and thereby hold high the Light that draws and guides those He is calling.

*But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. - Isaiah 40:31*

In Christ,  
Philip W. Helms, Clerk

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We briefly adjourn for a resting break before returning to Business at 3:15 pm

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We return to the business of the Yearly Meeting.

Tom Hinshaw & Carole Winkleblack have been appointed readers this afternoon.

*\* Clerk's note: We grappled with the Ministry & Counsel Committee Report and its request over two sessions. The following minute was passed at the end of morning session Seventh Day. This minute was the result of the Body considering the report together, reading the referred to Child Safety Document overnight and returning to wrestle with it again the next day after listening to the State of the Meeting Reports.*

We appreciated hearing the Ministry & Counsel Report. It is good to know of their care in tending for our spiritual life, and also are looking forward to the beginning of Spiritual Sharing Small Groups.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the request in the report asking us to post the Child Safety Guidelines on our website. This led to a searching discussion over two days.

Friends were moved by the depth of the queries in the first section of the Child Safety Document offered and thanked the committee for bringing them forward for us. We did not come to unity on posting this document as there is a much more nuanced conversation needed regarding some of the specific expectations in the second part of the document and how to implement them.

That we don't have unity reveals how deeply we care about this issue, and we ask not only the Ministry & Counsel Committee, but the members who are here today, to bring this document into their monthly meetings and continue to wrestle with these issues as we have in our sessions here.

We are comfortable with the queries and ask that M & C Committee continues to help us wrestle with these issues so that we can create guidelines that fit the circumstances of OUR yearly meeting.

## **Ministry and Counsel Committee Report**

In the past year the Ministry and Counsel Committee has met once in person and several times via video conference calls. Members of this committee are concerned about racism in this country, in Quakerism, in our meetings and in ourselves. Some of us feel deeply saddened by our inability to participate now, because of COVID-19. We encourage Friends to consider the way racism impacts our relationship with Spirit, and to pray for guidance and clearness in how we can act on this concern. We acknowledge that by being alive at this time in history we are invited to create a more antiracist and socially just space.

At our retreat at the Des Moines Valley Friends Meetinghouse in October 2019 we talked about how our meetings consider the Advices and Queries. We heard stories about the importance of this communal spiritual practice, noting that it is where we really get to know each other. There was some discussion about whether it is time to revise the queries. Our sense is that it may be okay to have some outdated/irrelevant queries; as we push up against them we learn to articulate what is really important. We hope that any "struggle" with queries will be recorded in the responses which are sent to Yearly Meeting. We recognize that individual queries could be tweaked without revising all of them. We are interested in knowing which queries are offensive or hurtful so we can bring them

to the attention of Yearly Meeting.

Cheryl Sutton and Deborah Fink shared a leading to provide an opportunity for spiritual deepening in Iowa Yearly Meeting (C) using Zoom technology. They described a program, based on Cheryl's experience in the *Deeper Roots* program of Broken Vessels Quaker Ministries. After careful consideration, M&C agreed to support this leading by offering this Opportunity under our care. Spiritual Sharing Small Groups will begin in August. An informational session will be held at Annual Sessions. We envision offering new groups every six months, as long as there is interest.

We recommend that the document *Guidelines for the Protection of Children at Yearly Meeting Sessions and Functions* be posted on the IYM(C) website. The document (see M&C's 2018 report for a description) has been circulated for several years and we would like it to be widely available.

We have appointed a clearness committee to meet with Omaha Meeting to consider their future.

We have compiled a list of the online meetings for worship throughout our yearly meeting and encourage Friends to "visit" each other. Members of M&C have this list and can share it.

As we considered the State of the Meeting reports we noticed that meetings are responding creatively to this time of physical distancing, using technology to keep connected, with several remarking on the depth and intimacy of online worship. Virtual meetings have allowed greater participation. Meetings report the loss of beloved members, as well as the joy of new members. We on M&C feel sad hearing about difficulties in meetings.

We struggle with what we want from the State of the Meeting Reports. We remember the Quaker story of a newcomer asking, "When does the service begin?" being told "When the worship ends." We long to know the "fruits" of our meetings' Spirit: How do we respond in faith - speak out and act - in this troubled time?

We recommend that the reports be read during Annual Sessions.

Liz Oppenheimer will serve as clerk of the Committee in the coming years.

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We now adjourn to meet again tomorrow, Seventh Day at 9:30 am

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## **Seventh Day – Saturday morning– 7/26/2020 meeting for Worship with attention to Business**

We return to the business of the Yearly Meeting.

*I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. John 5:30 KJV*

Nancy Jordan and Bob Yeats have been appointed readers this morning.

*\* note: We continued from the previous day, our consideration of the Ministry and Counsel Committee Report. We began by listening to our State of the Meeting Reports and then returned to discussing the request of the committee to post the recommended Child Safety guidelines.*

The morning session ended with approving the Minute regarding the Ministry and Counsel Committee Report found at the head of this report, in the 6th Day (Fri) pm session minutes.

### **State of the Meeting Reports Ames Friends Meeting**

The past year for the Ames Meeting has been active, eventful, challenging, and rewarding. We are acutely aware of turmoil and hardship nationally and across the globe, including the plight of migrants and climate-change refugees, environmental strains, disruptions of the global viral pandemic, threats to democratic institutions in countries including ours, and the recent global marches for racial justice.

Despite the Meeting's moderate size (with around two dozen members and about a dozen attending during a typical worship service), members and attenders have been very active in work related to issues of concern to Friends, including: helping to draft a new national FCNL document of priorities; sponsoring a DACA student's attendance at the Spring Lobby Weekend (virtually, due to COVID-19); participation in a new Ames organization; Ames Sanctuary Interfaith Partnership (ASIP) that focuses on meeting the

needs of undocumented immigrants; work on the Ames Climate Action Team; participation in the Good Neighbor program in Ames that helps families in need during particular crisis periods; and several other local social justice programs. Members and attenders serve on AFSC, FCNL, and Scattergood Committees. We were able to do some nice outreach through an open house in the fall, and two members presented a one-day course on Quakerism and Quakers in Iowa, through the Iowa State University Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) program. This was taught online in the spring of 2020.

During the COVID quarantine period in 2020 (ongoing), we have experimented with several approaches for meeting for worship. For about two months, we avoided gathering physically and relied instead on Zoom meetings. This didn't serve all members equally well, however, as some members are without computer connection. In May and June of 2020, we have used hybrid meetings, with some people joining remotely using Zoom, and about half a dozen people gathering in the meetinghouse, with face masks and ample physical distance. We have also met outside several times, when the weather allows, under the shade of a large mulberry tree behind the meetinghouse. This has worked well for in-person discussions.

We have also explored ways to find additional ways to connect and to engage in contemplative practice. We have added a monthly meeting for healing, during which we hold particular individuals in the Light. Some have met prior to meeting for worship to read Quaker literature and discuss. We have continued monthly *Experiment with Light* meetings. This is a meditation practice developed in the Britain Yearly Meeting and based on early Quaker experiences. Some of us have been joining the daily morning worship service offered by Pendle Hill. Some have also been participating in local Zen sitting sessions.

The meetinghouse continues to be a worshipful space we highly value. We are gratified to have the building well used. We share it with other creative and spiritual organizations, including an Ames Mennonite group, a writer's group, and it is used for other occasional community events and meetings. We will also, this year,



begin sharing it with a group of mid-Iowa Soto Zen practitioners. A new concern this year was a break-in by a group of homeless people, who did some minor damage inside over a several-day period. The homeless population in Ames seems to be larger and more distressed this year, which is likely related to strains in the economy due to COVID-19 shutdowns. The Meeting has been discussing additional ways that we might help this population, through donations and participation in local relief efforts and food pantries.

The membership has been generally stable, albeit with loss of several dear members, offset with attendance by new members. Ames Friends remain grateful for the support we find in the Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) and other elements of the larger Quaker community.

### **Bear Creek Friends Meeting**

In the wake of the viral pandemic that has swept through our world in 2020 - and likely will continue well into the future - our rural Bear Creek Friends Meetinghouse, and those who have gathered there, have become even more important to us as a spiritual refuge point in our lives. Although the call to maintain “social distancing” among members to curb the spread of the virus has been heeded, yet a very few have been able to actually be present at Meeting. It is really only a “physical distancing” that has taken place. Guided by a few caring Meeting members, communication via electronic means such as phone, email, postal mail, and Zoom opportunities has been maintained and encouraged to bond the members together. This has been not only within the Meeting, but, between meetings within the Iowa Yearly Meeting “family.” Several members have opted to observe the time set aside for weekly meeting individually in their own homes. We are comforted in the knowledge that others are doing the same, whether or not we are physically together.

We’re grateful that Midyear Meeting was still held electronically this year through a member who facilitated the presentations, together with support of a tech team. The topic centered on: *Engaging Community, Conflict and Connection*, with

time for worship during the weekend. Many commented that it was a meaningful spiritual gathering.

Several families have experienced losses of loved ones during the year, and we mourn with them during these tender times. The sweet voices of children on the playground and joining in potluck are a warmly welcomed addition in the Meeting.

Knowing how important it is to maintain the Meeting as a physical presence and gathering point for all IYM(C) members and attenders, as well as a spiritual focus, the Building & Grounds Committee has been vigilant in the installation of a new water system for continued health and safety. Environmentally friendly lawn maintenance equipment was purchased within recent times, and one family is volunteering to keep the Meetinghouse yard mowed. In the past spring, young trees were dedicated and planted near the Meeting in memory of two beloved elders who had passed away. A small circular garden has been planted and is being lovingly maintained within the meetinghouse yard. It is our desire that Bear Creek continues well into the future to be a welcoming presence to all who come.

### **Decorah Friends Meeting**

Previous to March of 2020, Decorah Friends Meeting had been meeting in an old Victorian house on the east side of Decorah for 26 years. Since March of this year, we have not been gathering at the Meetinghouse itself, but have gathered in Spirit, on “ZOOM” and outdoors during times of mild weather, physically distanced. Maybe the ongoing story of Decorah Friends Meeting for this year is that of coming and going, and since March of 2020, this has meant not going to the Meetinghouse on First Days.

The number of people gathering for worship on First Day mornings is usually from 4-12 people, almost all of them above the age of 60. We celebrate the “coming” of Nan, whose membership was transferred here from Des Moines Valley. We look forward to celebrating with her in person when conditions allow. One of the “goings” of the year was of a couple who had participated in the life of Friends Meeting for more than 20 years. As a result of health issues, they moved to Wisconsin during the year to be closer to one

of their children. We sent them off with a fine potluck and more than an hour of hymn singing that followed worship. Since that time, Don died, and we await a time when virus concerns allow for travel, so that his surviving spouse and children can have a memorial service in Decorah. These were big goings.

Our members and attenders have traveled a lot previous to mid-March, mostly for visiting siblings, distant children and grandchildren, but also for trips to enjoy nature, beauty and to appreciate creation. We are also keen on staying connected with Friends in the Driftless Bioregion, getting together for fellowship with other small meetings and worship groups at multiple times throughout the year, staying connected with each other in our common challenges and leadings. These travels nurture us individually and corporately.

At many times, our meetings for worship are quiet, and our meetings with attention to business are friendly and heartfelt. Our members are active with other faith communities in Decorah for addressing some of the social needs in our area, but meeting for worship remains our center, and we are grateful for the opportunity to worship in the manner of Friends.

### **Des Moines Valley Friends**

Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting has taken on even deeper meaning as our spiritual home this year as we face a pandemic, racial injustice, deaths, and declining health among some of our members and attenders. At the same time, we enjoy the blessing of families with young children joining us as we strive for greater understanding of our grounding as Friends.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been having worship and other activities on Zoom. Overall, we are pleased with the experience. While virtual meetings lack the intimacy of person-to-person exchanges, it has been a pleasant surprise how rich our sharing of Joys and Concerns after worship has been. Being on Zoom has allowed Friends from a distance to join us. First Day school is also being offered virtually.

Our spiritual grounding has moved the Meeting to minister to those whose health is declining and/or who may be confined to

their homes. Members of Ministry and Counsel and others in the Meeting have offered help with errands and frequent contact through phone calls, emails, and cards and letters.

This year we mourned deaths of seasoned Friends and the children of Friends. We have offered spiritual and practical support including food and companionship to those who are ill and to the families and friends of those who died. The Meeting felt blessed to be able to provide support and comfort by coordinating memorial services for Friends and members of Meeting families, including the family of a beloved co-clerk.

Members and attenders of DMVF Meeting felt enriched by Midyear Meeting. Although different because of the virtual format, the presentations and discussions were thoughtful and enriched our spirits.

Our Peace and Social Concerns Committee and other Friends have been active in community and national affairs. Members and attenders have taken part in demonstrations, written newspaper opinion pieces, and worked in other ways to move us toward a society more reflective of our basic Quaker principles.

### **Iowa City Friends Meeting**

It has been a difficult year for Iowa City Friends Meeting. We were deeply saddened by the sudden death of one of our beloved members, Jeff Cox, in February 2020. In March we were forced to suspend our in-person meetings for worship because of the enlarging COVID 19 pandemic. We miss members who have had to take a pause from attending meetings for worship due to the closure of our Linn Street Meetinghouse.

Iowa City Friends Meeting remains strong and cohesive in the face of these challenges. The Meeting came quickly together to comfort the Cox family and to organize a memorial service. The support we were able to provide was greatly appreciated by Jeff's family. "It was just as Jeff would have wanted" was voiced by family members.

We quickly realized meetings in person would be impossible for weeks or months, and we organized virtual First Day meetings for worship via Zoom with the help of young Friends with tech

expertise. A midweek Zoom worship sharing meeting was also established and has been a source of comfort and spiritual enrichment for those attending. We were able to conduct business meetings, respond to Advice and Queries, and even hold a meeting for clearness to consider membership in the Religious Society of Friends in our new reality.

Worship has changed, but it is also essentially the same. We are heartened to see the faces of Friends gathering at 10 am on First Day. We listen eagerly to vocal ministry, afterthoughts, and news about our community. We rejoice in seeing our youngest member sitting on Mom's lap or adding his own voice to Meeting. Virtual meetings have widened our circle: members of distant Friends' meetings often join us; Friends who are not able to attend meetings at our Linn Street Meetinghouse can attend virtually; and attenders new to Friends have begun to participate in Meeting.

It has been a difficult year, but it has been a year in which we affirmed our commitment to each other and to seeking "that Still Small Voice" that is our guide and our comfort.

Approved by Iowa City Friends Meeting Sixth Month, 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020

### **Laughing Waters Friends Preparative Meeting**

This past year, Laughing Waters Friends Preparative Meeting has experienced opportunities, loss, challenge, and transitions.

Our regular worshipers are separated by about an hour's drive across east-central Minnesota between Northfield and north Minneapolis. We shared both sadness and joy around one of our family's move to Scattergood in the late summer of 2019; and it was bittersweet to learn about another Friend's leading to join a different faith community this past spring in order to pursue Christ's call, preach the Good News, and provide pastoral care as a pastor.

The few of us worshiping regularly with Laughing Waters have found our relatively contented lives upended by the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has provided us, unexpectedly, the opportunity to gather weekly via Zoom for worship. Previously we

were meeting for three First Days a month, including once-a-month for addressing a query. We have been grateful for the now-weekly meetings for worship without the added burning of gas.

Unfortunately, Way hasn't been open to resume answering the Queries, given our hunger to be with one another in worship and adapting to worship via video. And then our lives were upended again by the murder of George Floyd and the destruction of parts of our metro area. A couple of our households are one or two blocks from the fires that targeted Black-owned businesses and wreaked general havoc in Minneapolis.

We are wrestling with how we as a Meeting engage with and respond to injustice in the world, and specific injustices in our community. We seek a way forward to act corporately, while supporting the varying needs of individuals in the Meeting and deeply holding our care for each other. Also heavy on our hearts is the condition in which we find ourselves as we prepare this report.

With thanks,

Nat Case, clerk

### **Lincoln Friends Meeting**

Lincoln Friends Meeting has been flexible responding to the times.

The effort involved in providing a community meal every week at times seemed overwhelming, raising concern about detracting from worship. Focusing on keeping the meals simpler helped to bring more serenity to the experience.

Worship via Zoom conferencing has enabled us to nurture each other while isolated because of quarantine. Zoom has made it possible to include many in our worship who otherwise could not attend, but we have lost some who are uncomfortable or unable to attend online (including all attenders from the local correctional center). This worship has also brought with it a new intimacy, as we let each other into our homes for First Day worship and a new Midweek Worship. However, we miss meeting and breaking bread together at our meetinghouse.

We are saddened that we are again without children in the Meeting. We are gladdened by a young person, joining the Meeting as a member this spring. We lost two people to death this year, both of whom were dear to us.

This has not been so peaceful a year within our meeting as last year. There have been conflicts and hurt feelings, which we have not known how to deal with.

Some of us have suffered from stress and illness as we age and undergo life-changes that have left us less able to participate in worship or the business of the Meeting. The more frequent absence of valued members is a loss felt by us all.

We continue as individuals to be passionate about the issues that concern us. As a meeting we strive to support people in pursuing such passions. Despite our small size, we feel our meeting has a vibrant energy that has enabled us to face challenges with love.

### **Omaha Monthly Meeting**

The Omaha Monthly Meeting is in a time of transition. The four active members of the Meeting have continued meeting regularly in spite of the Coronavirus. With three residents in Omaha and one in Billings, Montana, we have met for our query discussions monthly via Zoom. With the inability of the church, we have been meeting in for several years to host us because of being locked down due to the virus, we have chosen to meet via Zoom with the Lincoln Monthly Meeting each First Day, sometimes continuing to meet with them for Second Hour, and sometimes joining our own Zoom meeting to discuss the Queries. We also have added two monthly Zoom meetings on Thursday evenings to discuss how the Lord has treated us since last we met and other items needing discussion.

All of this begs the question are we still a monthly meeting. It seems we are acting more like a worship group and have been talking about whether that is the road we should take. We are not in complete consensus about that action, mostly from a lack of understanding about the implications of being a worship group and the future implications for our members if we take this step.

IYM(C)'s Ministry and Council Committee has set up a clearness committee to help us try to discern God's direction for us. No matter what the decision we make, we are comfortable in the knowledge that we are all supportive of one another and clear that Yearly Meeting will continue to support our continued existence and each other.

### **Paullina Friends Meeting**

We are continually enriched by our weekly meetings for worship with our small community of members and attenders. We are grateful for our F/friends and families who have visited us throughout the year.

Our monthly adult discussions led by our members or guests give us the opportunity to reflect how we navigate this world as Friends. The monthly Queries enable us to discuss how we as individuals and as a meeting can further our quest for a peaceful and compassionate community and world.

Our children particularly enjoy the Sunday School program every fourth Sunday. Not only do they learn about the Religious Society of Friends, but they also learn how to be kind and compassionate global citizens.

Being a small rural meeting, it can be a struggle to make our presence known and connect to the wider community. We hosted several special events this past year which were not only informative and interesting, but also helped to invite people into our Friendly community. These included Lee Tesdell's talk on conservation, Michael Luick-Thrams "Cow Wars" presentation, and Liz Garst's presentation on "Corn and Kruschev." Several members of our meeting spent a fun weekend camping at the Garst Family Conservancy prior to Liz Garst's talk.

Although we had to cancel meeting for worship due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are thankful for the opportunity to join the Iowa City Meeting for worship via Zoom. This has helped us to feel more connected while staying at home.

Our meetings for worship are often silent, with each person searching for Light and guidance as we worship together. In these uncertain times, we are very thankful to have the comfort and



support of our meeting for worship which provides time for reflection, centering on the Spirit, and searching for guidance and clarity. Although we are small in numbers, this healing power of collective worship is strong and rejuvenating. Love is created in these moments, and we share this Love with all.

### **Penn Valley Monthly Meeting**

Greetings from Penn Valley Monthly Meeting in Kansas City. Our prayers go out to all of you in these challenging times. We hope this report finds you all well and at peace. The past year has been full of joys, surprises and growth opportunities. We thank the Spirit of God for sustaining us in our struggles and for giving strength to us on our journey.

With the advent of the pandemic, we were challenged to learn the methods of Zoom to allow us to continue meeting. Doing so allowed us to reach members we had not seen for a while as well as to meet new attenders. Our attendance actually increased as the pandemic wore on. The depth and interconnectedness of our online worship has been a true blessing. Additionally, we revived our letter writing skills to express our love and concern to those not able to join us. When we felt more need to connect, a Thursday night Zoom meeting was established to worship and check in with each other. Only our Bible study group, which brought some of us together in ways not imagined, did not feel comfortable meeting online and only recently began to meet again face-to-face with social distancing.

We opened our meetinghouse to a homeless woman and her two children. Our hospitality to her became a gift to us as deferred maintenance was brought to our attention. She alerted us more than once to serious problems in the building, and she has contributed much to the life of the Meeting. Thank you, Kai!

As we struggled to make decisions in times of major disagreement, we tried to remember to hold each of us in Love while at the same time setting boundaries if necessary. We are a stronger community for our struggles with each other. In this divided and sometimes hostile world we live in, learning to Love “that of God in everyone” is at times a challenge. Even though our

hearts sometimes don't seem large enough, God's heart has no limitations.

Yearning to “bloom where we are planted,” before the pandemic, we began “two by two” going into our neighborhood and visiting businesses and social projects. This was rewarding to us, and let our neighbors learn who we Quakers are. The family who is staying at the Meetinghouse has reached out to neighbors on either side.

Before the pandemic, we opened our meetinghouse to other groups such as a longstanding poets group needing a new home, and a discussion group on Eckhart Tolle. We continue to offer space to CAIR(Council on American Islamic Relations) of Kansas. And we are looking for other compatible groups who might need a meeting space to enrich our community.

If you drive to Kansas City, you may encounter a homeless person at an exit seeking assistance. We have connected with the Poor Peoples Campaign which defends this presence as a First Amendment right. Our Homeless Project started last year and continues offering \$5 food gift cards, sometimes augmented with dry socks for rainy days or hats and gloves for cold ones.

We are a small meeting of members and attenders (12–15 on a typical First Day). Yet, though we hope to grow, we are able to do much good work as Friends' various gifts and talents are shared and bear fruit—both within the Meeting and outside of it. We look forward to the future and endeavor to grow spiritually in love and peace.

### **West Branch Friends Meeting**

*For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them. Matthew 18:20*

As spring has unfolded at West Branch Friends Meeting, it's clear that the writer above never encountered COVID-19. Earlier this year, our meeting worked on our annual letter to distant members. We wrote about the familiar journey of gathering, centering and worship, ending with the shaking of hands. We shared with our distant members how we were attending to our

spiritual growth by considering the queries and engaging in our monthly pre-meeting Adult Education series. We also wrote that we had started a monthly book group that encouraged us to share personal insights and hot muffins.

In mid-March we approved this letter and arranged for copies to be mailed. This First Day in March also proved to be the last time we gathered in person at our meetinghouse for worship. COVID-19 rapidly evolved from an oddity to a terrifying pandemic and it finally became obvious that it was no longer safe for 'two or three' to gather. While humans were able to rapidly decode the genome of this virus there was little anyone could do to stay healthy except to avoid other people.

In this time of distress and danger we have been using technology to keep connected while staying as safe as possible. We meet weekly online to keep the community up to date about each other's news. We have shared excitement as we learned about members who are now grandparents. Other Friends shared their progress of returning to good health after surgery. We have shared how we're adapting to social distancing and have enjoyed the ways in which online gatherings have allowed some distant Friends to join us. On one First Day, multiple spottings of Baltimore orioles became a topic to share.

Following this success with technology we ventured into online meeting for worship. The Light is shared using computers and cameras. This technology has allowed us to successfully carry out meeting for business. While these devices help keep us connected, they do not let us shake hands after worship, enjoy face-to-face conversation or share potluck.

For much of the past year, the state of our meeting continued strong with familiar patterns of worship, fellowship, and service in our communities. We now look forward to the time when it is again safe to gather together to worship while sitting on our meetinghouse benches. Until then we are grateful that we can still gather and connect with each other.

### **Whittier Monthly Meeting**

This year, Whittier Monthly Meeting kept the faith by gathering each First Day for silent worship at the old

meetinghouse. We have welcomed new visiting Friends, new attenders, and a new member.

Spring has been beautiful. The pollinator garden seemed to attract more bees and butterflies every day. The trees planted in 2017 are thriving with accent colors provided by a flowering crab and a beautiful redbud tree covered with blossoms. The morning silence, customarily broken by the roars of Harleys and inadequately muffled vehicles, featured serenades from the robins. We hope robins will nest on the grounds for many years.

Linn County had another visitor this March when COVID 19 came to town. Notwithstanding a membership of almost 40, most First Days one to seven worshipers were in attendance at the 10:30 a. m. service. Our in-person services were able to continue legally because our attendance qualified for exemption under the Governor’s cancellation order. We have been maintaining social distancing and wearing masks.

Since the beginning of April, Whittier Meeting has offered the option of attending via Zoom. The invitation goes out to members on our email list. Zoom has enabled Friends of Whittier who live in Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Washington State to join the worship. A brother and sister joined worship in honor of a parent who attended Whittier Meeting and retained a heartfelt connection to the Meeting. Zoom allows us to “cast our net” more broadly and to joyfully appreciate the contents of the “net.”

Some First Days, it is daunting to realize how many more Quakers are in the graveyard than in the old meetinghouse. Perhaps, it is appropriately symbolic that Whittier Meetinghouse is located at a crossroads.

~~~~~

We close our morning session to meet again this afternoon at 1pm.

## **Seventh Day – Saturday afternoon– 7/26/2020 meeting for Worship with attention to Business**

We return to the business of the Yearly Meeting.

Andrea Holveck and Deborah Fisch have been appointed readers this afternoon.

We thank our Yearly Meeting Recorder for his care in preparing our report for us. This report is more than statistics and more than record keeping. It tells the story of real people. Our Meeting for Remembrance helped us share our love for the Friends who have passed this past year and how deeply they touched our lives.

### **Recorder's Report**

#### **Deaths**

|                   |                |                  |
|-------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Bear Creek        | Leland Moffitt | Aug. 27, 2018**  |
| Des Moines Valley | Jean Sandstrom | Dec. 26, 2019    |
|                   | Kaydee Bobbit  | April 3, 2020    |
| Iowa City         | Jeff Cox       | February 9, 2020 |
| Lincoln           | Sylvia Fen     | March 24, 2020   |
| Whitter           | Curtis Cope    | November 5, 2019 |

#### **Births**

|               |                                                                                           |                       |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Bear<br>Creek | Shazette Knight<br>(to Nicholas Scott Knight and Dawn<br>Mercer Knight)                   | January 25,<br>1985** |
|               | Prairie Standing Knight-Boland<br>(to Shazette Knight-Boland and<br>Jacob Clinton Boland) | February 2,<br>2013   |
|               | Fox Leopold Knight-Boland<br>(to Shazette Knight and Jacob<br>Clinton Boland)             | July 22, 2015         |
| Paullina      | Henry Rasmus Van Dijkman<br>(to Kate Juhl and Sven Van<br>Dijkman)                        | June 26, 2019         |

|                |                                                          |               |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| West<br>Branch | Wesley Bates Patton*<br>(to Luke Patton and Kelly Bales) | March 5, 2020 |
|                | Luke Orion Howe*<br>(to Ryan Howe and Luci Zai)          | May 8, 2020   |

**Marriages under the Care of the Meetings**

None

**New Members by Request or by Certificate of Transfer**

|                   |                      |                                                                            |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Decorah           | Nan St. Clair        | June 14, 2929 (by certificate from Des Moines Valley Monthly Meeting)      |
| Des Moines Valley | Tom Goodhue          | April 19, 2020 (by certificate from Friends Meeting of Washington)         |
| Iowa City         | Liz Voss             | Oct 13, 2019 (by request)                                                  |
|                   | Betsy Baertlein      | May 10, 2020 (by request)                                                  |
|                   | Alan Joseph Manalein | June 14, 2020 (by request of parents)                                      |
| Lincoln           | Noelle Pinneo        | May 17, 2020 (by request)                                                  |
| Whitter           | William Wines        | January 5, 2020 (by certificate from Boise Valley Monthly Friends Meeting) |

\*Not recorded as a birthright member; not included in the statistical section.

\*\*Births and deaths not reported previously.

| <b>Meeting</b>    | Births   | Deaths   | Certificates of Membership Received (Transfers In) | Memberships Transferred | New Memberships Granted | Memberships Discontinued | Total Membership |
|-------------------|----------|----------|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Ames              | 0        | 1        | 0                                                  | 0                       | 0                       | 0                        | 25               |
| Bear Creek        | 3        | 1        | 0                                                  | 0                       | 0                       | 2                        | 77               |
| Decorah           | 0        | 0        | 1                                                  | 0                       | 0                       | 0                        | 11               |
| Des Moines Valley | 0        | 2        | 1                                                  | 1                       | 0                       | 0                        | 60               |
| Iowa City         | 0        | 1        | 0                                                  | 0                       | 3                       | 0                        | 68               |
| Lincoln           | 0        | 1        | 0                                                  | 0                       | 1                       | 0                        | 14               |
| Omaha             | 0        | 0        | 0                                                  | 0                       | 0                       | 0                        | 11               |
| Paullina          | 1        | 0        | 0                                                  | 0                       | 0                       | 0                        | 69               |
| Penn Valley       | 0        | 0        | 0                                                  | 0                       | 0                       | 0                        | 74               |
| West Branch       | 0        | 0        | 0                                                  | 0                       | 0                       | 0                        | 90               |
| Whittier          | 0        | 1        | 1                                                  | 0                       | 0                       | 0                        | 35               |
| <b>TOTALS</b>     | <b>4</b> | <b>6</b> | <b>3</b>                                           | <b>1</b>                | <b>4</b>                | <b>2</b>                 | <b>534</b>       |
| <b>NET GAIN</b>   |          |          |                                                    |                         |                         |                          | <b>2</b>         |

The Nominating Committee does important work for us. We notice the challenge of having a smaller pool of people to draw from, and it adds to our appreciation for their work.

We approved the Nominating Committee Report with corrections. We recognize the importance of the work they do for us, and thank them for continuing this work throughout the year.

### **Nominating Committee Report**

Nominating Committee is proposing some changes to Committee structure, as a result of changing needs and demographics. These changes are:

1. Combining Junior Yearly Meeting and Young Friends Committees, from Midyear Meeting and Yearly Meeting into one committee to serve at both gatherings. There are a smaller number of children and youth to serve, and committee members will feel free to call on additional volunteers if needed.

2. Laying down of the Religious Education Committee. We propose that Religious Education Reports be submitted to Ministry and Counsel, and M&C can act on reports as needed.

3. No appointments to Iowa Peace Network. There is no longer a functioning Joint Oversight Committee, that we are aware, and no reporting back to Yearly Meeting. Yearly Meeting support remains at \$100.

### **IYM(C) Committee Appointments for FY21**

#### **Archives Committee**

##### **2021**

Daniel Treadway\*  
Shel Stromquist

##### **2022**

Jeff Kisling

##### **2023**

Tim Shipe

#### **Book Table Committee**

##### **2021**

Megan McCormick\*

##### **2022**

Jay Robinson

##### **2023**

Jane Cadwallader  
Howe

#### **Document Committee**

**2021** - Bear Creek

#### **Entertainment Committee**

##### **2021**

Ames  
Des Moines Valley  
Penn Valley

##### **2022**

Decorah  
Iowa City  
West Branch  
Whittier

##### **2023**

Paullina  
Omaha  
Lincoln  
Laughing Waters



### **Interim Meeting (appointed by monthly meetings)**

*Each monthly meeting can name up to 2 members to represent them on Interim Committee*

#### **2021**

AM Fink (A)  
Richard Johnson (B)  
Alice Hampton (W)  
Bob Winkleblack (I)  
George Bergus (WB)

#### **2022**

Bill Deutsch (D)  
Rachel Macnair (PV)  
Catherine Dorenback (L)  
Shirley Scritchfield (PV)  
Deborah Fisch (P)  
Bob Ramaley (O)

#### **2023**

Tom Hinshaw (O)  
Andy Julhl (P)  
Steve Cannon (A)  
Dorothy Lifka (DMVF)  
Ginny Winsor (O)

### **Junior Yearly Meeting/Young Friends**

#### **2021**

Deborah Fink  
Tommy Greenler

#### **2022**

Karen Greenler  
Cindy Winchell\*\*  
David Rhoads  
Chris Gauder

#### **2023**

Sonja Sponheim\*\*  
Sharon Eiker

### **Midyear Planning Committee**

#### **2021**

Ruth Dawson  
Liz Oppenheimer

#### **2022**

Russ Leckband  
Jackie Leckband \*\*

#### **2023**

Bill Deutsch  
Osa Brikcer

### **Ministry and Counsel Committee (appointed by monthly meetings)**

#### **2021**

Catherine Dorenback (L)  
Liz Oppenheimer\* (LW)  
Marshall Massey (O)  
Peter Clay (DMV)  
Deborah Fisch (P)  
Liz Voss  
Angelika Shafer

#### **2022**

Sharon Eiker (A)  
Martha Davis (D)  
Sarah Andrews (IC)  
David Hansen  
Ebby Luvaga (A)  
Alice Hampton (W)

#### **2023**

Ginny Winsor (O)  
Andrea Holveck (DMV)  
Nancy Jordan (O)  
Cheryl Sutton (BC)

### **Nominating Committee (appointed by monthly meetings)**

#### **2021**

A.M. Fink (A)  
Bill Deutsch (D) \*  
Bob Yeats (W)  
Carol Gilbert

#### **2022**

Jackie Leckband (BC)  
Cindy Winchell (DMV)  
Jean Eden (L)  
Shirley Scritchfield (PV)

#### **2023**

Doyle Wilson (PL)  
Judy Cottingham (WB)  
Carole Winkleblack (IC)

### **Peace and Social Concerns Committee**

#### **2021**

Jim Bruener  
Quinn Dilkes  
Patty Wengert  
Bridget Durst

#### **2022**

Jon Shafer  
Jeff Kisling\*  
Anthony Robinson  
Jane Cadwallader Howe  
Kathy Hall

#### **2023**

Bob Ramaley  
Ann Stromquist  
Rachel McNair  
Peter Clay

### **Pendle Hill Scholarship Committee**

#### **2021**

Shirley Scritchfield

#### **2022**

Callie Marsh\*

#### **2023**

Ruth Dawson

### **Publications Committee**

#### **2021**

Martha Davis\*  
Carole Winkleblack

#### **2022**

Ann Stromquist

#### **2023**

Katie Jacoby  
Nat Case

### **Representatives Committee**

#### **2021**

Shirley Scritchfield  
(PV)  
Cindy Winchell  
(DMVF)  
Ruth Hampton (W)  
Bill Deutsch (D)  
Doyle Wilson (P)  
Jean Eden (L)  
Sonja Sponheim (BC)  
Carol Gilbert (O)

#### **2022**

Carole Winkleblack  
(IC)  
Andrea Holveck  
(DMVF)  
Ginny Winsor (O)  
Jan Powell (PV)  
open position, Ames  
open position,  
Decorah  
Bob Yeats (W)  
Rebecca Bergus (WB)

#### **2023**

Deborah Fisch P  
Penny Majors\* (WB)  
Deb Fink (A)  
Roy Helm (L)  
Stan Saunders (BC)  
Sarah Andrews (IC)  
Bob Ramaley (O)

### **Scattergood Friends School Committee**

Iowa (FUM), Illinois YM and Northern YM are also invited to name a representative to the committee.

| <b>2021</b>     | <b>2022</b>     | <b>2023</b>   |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Bob Winkleblack | Kent Tjossem    | Nancy Jordan  |
| Ruth Hampton*   | Robert Winchell | Tom Wahl      |
| Charlie Johnson | Roy Helm        | David Wilcox  |
| Karen Greenler  |                 | George Bergus |

Northern: Lael Gatewood

Illinois: Alex Lippitt

Coopted: Debbie Galusha

### **Scattergood Friends School Foundation Trustees**

| <b>2021</b>  | <b>2022</b>        | <b>2023</b>     | <b>2024</b>   |
|--------------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Robert Yeats | Barb Garlinghouse  | Lee Tesdell*    | Lowell Wilson |
| Larry Marsh  | Carole Winkleblack | Richard Johnson | Dan Treadway  |

### **Special Needs Committee**

| <b>2021</b>    | <b>2022</b>   | <b>2023</b> |
|----------------|---------------|-------------|
| John Andrews*  | Deborah Fisch | Bob Yeats   |
| Sarah Rutledge |               |             |

### **Website/Computer Committee**

| <b>2021</b>     | <b>2022</b>  | <b>2023</b>   |
|-----------------|--------------|---------------|
| Katie Jacoby*   | John Andrews | Cheryl Sutton |
| Marshall Massey | Nat Case     |               |

### **Yearly Meeting Trustees**

| <b>2021</b>     | <b>2022</b> | <b>2023</b>  | <b>2024</b> |
|-----------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| Kathy Dice      | Jonathan    | Bill Deutsch | Jim         |
| Bob Winkleblack | Fisch       |              | Cottingham* |

### **IYM(C) Representatives to Friends Agencies**

#### **AFSC Corporation**

| <b>2021</b>    | <b>2022</b>       | <b>2023</b> |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Ann Stromquist | Victoria Albright | Bob Ramaley |
| Bob Yeats      |                   |             |

#### **FCNL General Committee**

| <b>2021</b>  | <b>2022</b> | <b>2023</b>       |
|--------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Penny Majors | Deb Fink    | Carol Winkelblack |
| David Hansen | Ebby Luvaga | Rebecca Bergus    |

**Friends Peace Teams Council**

Peter Clay

**FWCC**

**2021**

Nancy Jordan

**2022**

Tommy Greenler

**2023**

Angelika Shafer

**Quaker Earthcare Witness Steering Committee**

Nan Fawcett



We listened to the detailed Peace & Social Concerns Report that gave good coverage to many of the concerns we hold in the Yearly Meeting. We thank them for doing this work for us.

**Peace & Social Concerns Committee Report**

This has been a year of great upheaval locally, nationally, and globally. Much of this relates to the increasing failures of political and economic systems and the systemic racism they are built on.

The COVID-19 pandemic has upended everyone’s lives. The virus has exposed the discrepancies in access to healthcare; forced so many to stay at home, re-evaluating how fulfilling their work is, and at the same time revealing who the essential workers are; re-thinking our public education systems; and seeing how it is to live without a steady income. Increasing environmental chaos compounds these problems.

As our systems collapse, we are forced to look for alternative solutions. Many are looking to Indigenous Peoples who have lived with environmental integrity, caring and spiritual community for thousands of years.

Early in 2020 we became increasingly aware of the cases of police brutality in the United States. After the death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police, West Branch Meeting approved a statement expressing support for racial justice. (See statement below.)

A number of meetings were involved in various ways with workshops and presentations last summer, related to “Toward Right Relationship with Indigenous Peoples,” a ministry of Friend Paula Palmer.

White people, including white Friends, are recognizing the need to decolonize ourselves. If we are to transition to sustainable, beloved communities, we need to do the work necessary for understanding and dismantling our complicity with white supremacy. This involves education and healing. We need to come to terms with the history of the various ways Friends have been involved with enslaved people of African descent. And with what happened at the Quaker Indian boarding/residential schools. We need to more fully address the racism that is inherent in our country's widespread, worldwide wars, most of which are waged against People of Color. This is difficult but necessary work. We need to support each other, as the Spirit supports us.

Several Friends from Laughing Waters and Bear Creek are looking into ways to support each other's antiracism work. They are planning to look at Quaker writings in light of what we are learning about white supremacy today. This as an opportunity to look more closely into the issues of the wider community at the time of some of these writings. This is similar to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's work to bring Indigenous Peoples and white settlers together to hear the voices of those who suffered from the Indian residential schools, or to the work of addressing omissions in the Quaker historical record, having contributed to a skewed understanding of our work toward racial equality.

Several meetings continue to be involved in agriculture and protection of Mother Earth, including working to protect the water. Part of this is related to ongoing engagement with Indigenous Peoples.

One event was The Healing of the Mounds ceremony at Kuehn Conservation Park, near Bear Creek Meeting, Earlham, Iowa. This ceremony was organized by Dallas County Conservation in conjunction with the University of Iowa Office of the State Archaeologist. At the Kuehn Conservation Area, there are a number of burial mounds. In the 1800s, one particular mound was desecrated by European settlers. Through this sacred and shared ceremony, the wound of the past was healed through community awareness and action. A sense of Love and Healing was shared by all. These mounds are an integral part of the Prairie Awakening Ceremony that takes place every year in September at Kuehn Conservation. Iowa Friends have been involved with the Prairie Awakening ceremony for many years. The rebuilding, the *re-story-*

ation as Chris Adkins puts it, of the sacred landscape of the prairie and the community is vital to building peace and social cohesion. This community not only includes the different human cultures who live here, but also our plant and nonhuman animal kin. Ecological healing brings peace to our hearts and spirits.

A member of Paullina Meeting raises food for a local Farmers Market and has a website to serve the needs of the community. Other members volunteer at a local nature center, libraries, historical preservation and cemetery preservation.

West Branch Friends Meeting's annual Simple Supper was held on November 14. Connie Mutel, University of Iowa Hydroscience and Engineering Department, addressed the group on "*Climate Change: Where We Are, How We Got Here, and Where We Are Going.*" She traced the evolution of climate change and its effects, connecting our understanding of climate science, Iowa's landscape transformation, and current environmental problems.

In February, a member of Des Moines Valley Friends who is the co-leader of Des Moines Chapter Citizens Climate Lobby helped organize a Climate Crisis Parade in downtown Des Moines. The parade was sponsored by 70 organizations including Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting. It is estimated that 1,300 Iowans marched in the parade.

Several members of Lincoln Meeting met with State Senator Lathrop to express our support for his work on our correctional system and to share our concerns about nutrition and dietary needs of incarcerated people. The Meeting had been distressed when one of its most faithful attenders from CCCL had been sent back to prison at York because of problems in getting her dietary needs met.

Our meetings and members work in many ways to continue to support our Quaker organizations, include the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) and Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC), Quaker Voluntary Service, and Friends Peace Teams.

We appreciate members who continue their years of involvement in the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP). A new program has been set up at the Newton, Iowa prison facility.

At least two meetings support those who make quilts, which are given to charitable organizations.

These efforts create opportunities where we come together with other circles of our larger community and are great ways to get

young people engaged. Education is one way to get young people involved in issues that matter, specifically related to peace and social concerns. It does not necessarily look like Quaker process when young people get engaged in these social concern issues, but the heart of the matter is something Quakers can support.

Working on systematic changes related to racial, economic, and environmental justice, universal education and healthcare for all are vital for peace building. During times such as these the needs of our world can appear overwhelming. But we continue to build that world where we reach that of God in all we meet, where we can truly Love our neighbor as ourselves, and live together as people of God.

### **Statement on Racial Injustice**

#### **West Branch Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quaker) Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) - June 14, 2020**

As Quakers we are mindful of the long history of racial exploitation and injustice globally and in the United States. We are also aware of the complicity of some Quakers in the slave trade and in the ownership of slaves, even as we honor others who gave support to campaigns to abolish slavery, especially in Britain and the US. That long history of slavery and the struggle to abolish it is very much with us today. We recognize that the legacy of white supremacy remains a systemic element of our institutions and our culture as a nation. We also acknowledge the mistreatment of people of color at the hands of the police, in the courts, and in our prison system. The horrific murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor are only the latest examples in a long history of lynching and murder of African American people.

Black lives do matter.

As members of West Branch Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative), we affirm our belief in that of God in everyone. We applaud and celebrate the activists of all races and all ages who have courageously stepped forward to demand a fundamental break with the systems of racial exploitation that infect society. We share their goals of reimagining a society governed by an unwavering commitment to racial justice and equity and to the restructuring of our institutions of public safety, including the police, the court system and the prisons. As individuals and as a meeting we commit ourselves to working toward the realization of those goals.

**Peace and Social Concerns Budget 2020**

|                                                                                                    |                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Alternatives to Violence Project<br><i>(split evenly between Iowa, Nebraska, and South Dakota)</i> | \$150.00              |
| AFSC Midwest Region (for immigration)                                                              | \$100.00              |
| Frontera de Cristo (for Migrant Resource Center)                                                   | \$50.00               |
| Friends Peace Teams<br>(for Right Relationship with Native Peoples)                                | \$50.00               |
| Friends Peace Teams<br>(for Peacemaking en las Americas)                                           | \$50.00               |
| Nebraskans for Alternatives to the Death Penalty                                                   | \$50.00               |
| Missourians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty                                                  | \$50.00               |
| Iowans Against the Death Penalty                                                                   | \$50.00               |
| Friends for a Nonviolent World                                                                     | \$100.00              |
| Monteverde Friends School                                                                          | \$100.00              |
| Seeding Sovereignty                                                                                | \$50.00               |
| Iowa Peace Network                                                                                 | \$50.00               |
| Women's International League for<br>Peace and Freedom                                              | \$50.00               |
| Poor Peoples Campaign                                                                              | \$50.00               |
| Bold Iowa                                                                                          | \$50.00               |
| Lakota People's Law Project                                                                        | \$50.00               |
| Quaker Voluntary Service                                                                           | \$50.00               |
| <br><b>TOTAL</b>                                                                                   | <br><b>\$1,100.00</b> |

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We listened to and approved the Representatives Report. We are deeply grateful for the work of ALL the officers of the Yearly Meeting: noting at this time the many years of service by recorder Tim Shipe, the work of outgoing clerk Deborah Dakin, and gratitude to Carol Gilbert for agreeing to serve as our next clerk. The outgoing clerk will send a short note of thanks to Tim Shipe on behalf of the Yearly Meeting.



## **Representatives Report**

Nominating committee is proposing some changes to committee structure, as a result of changing needs and demographics. These changes are:

1. Combining Junior Yearly Meeting and Young Friends committees, from Midyear Meeting and Yearly Meeting into one committee to serve at both gatherings. There are a smaller number of children and youth to serve, and committee members will feel free to call on additional volunteers if needed.

2. Laying down of the Religious Education committee. We propose that Religious Education Reports be submitted to Ministry and Counsel, and M&C can act on reports as needed.

3. No appointments to Iowa Peace Network. There is no longer a functioning Joint Oversight Committee, that we are aware, and no reporting back to Yearly Meeting. Yearly Meeting support remains at \$100.

Representatives Committee functions as a standing committee of the Yearly Meeting. The committee met 15 times over the course of the year by phone or video conference. We submit for Yearly Meeting consideration a proposal for our 2021 Yearly Meeting schedule, a budget, and suggested officers for the coming year.

### Proposal to shorten annual sessions:

Over a year ago, Representatives Committee recommended that we shorten Annual Sessions by one day for 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic struck in March and Representatives made the decision to hold Annual Sessions by remote means for 2020. If we can meet in person in 2021, we recommend that we reduce the traditional schedule by one day.

### Apportionments & Budget:

Representatives Committee suggests a budget for the following year based on a \$300.00 decrease in total apportionments while maintaining most contributions at the current levels. These are uncertain times for the organizations to which we give money. We recommend budgeting for Fiscal Year 2021 a \$500 contribution to One Struggle, KC in Kansas City, MO and \$500 to Urban Dreams in Des Moines, IA, both in support of the Black Lives

Matter movement. We recommend that we “roll over” the line items of the budget from last year to this year “as if” we are operating normally though we understand that we are not, but with an increase in the clerk’s discretionary fund of \$1,000. It is important for us to remain open to the movement of the Spirit to respond to needs and concerns that are brought forward. Additional contributions from individuals and meetings are always welcome.

Yearly Meeting Officers:

Representatives Committee is so thankful for the faithful service of our clerk for the past 10 years, Deborah Dakin. We appreciate her strong spiritual grounding and her great concern for all the members and friends of the Yearly Meeting. Deb’s thoughtful minutes were like live poetry in their ability to convey the feeling of the Spirit. We enjoyed her dry humor, even if it took halfway into something to realize she was joking. In difficult times she listened carefully, sometimes for hours, and held concerns in her heart with love while encouraging others to proceed with love. Deb loves everyone in the Yearly Meeting and she makes us feel altogether close, more like a family. We have been so well taken care of by her, which allowed us to hear the Spirit amongst us. Representatives Committee submits the following names to serve the Yearly Meeting beginning after our 2020 Annual Sessions: clerk, Carol Gilbert; assistant clerk, Bob Winkleblack; treasurer, Rebecca Bergus; assistant treasurer, Shirley Scritchfield; recorder, Tim Shipe.

The committee suggests that our next Yearly Meeting annual session be held from Seventh Month 21 to Seventh Month 25, 2021 at Scattergood Friends School & Farm, near West Branch, Iowa.

On behalf of the committee,

Penny Majors, clerk

*(Budget follows)*

**INCOME - Apportionments**

Ames	\$ 4,400.00
Bear Creek	\$ 5,500.00
Decorah	\$ 2,500.00
Des Moines Valley	\$14,500.00
Iowa City	\$ 6,000.00
Lincoln	\$ 7,200.00
Omaha	\$ 3,250.00
Paullina	\$ 8,500.00
Penn Valley	\$ 5,500.00
West Branch	\$ 11,250.00
Whittier	\$ 3,500.00
<b>Total Apportionments</b>	<b>\$72,100.00</b>

**EXPENSES - Contributions**

Scattergood Friends School	\$ 54,000.00
Scattergood Facilities	\$ 2,000.00
Peace and Social Concerns Committee	\$ 1,100.00
American Friends Service Committee	\$ 1,000.00
Friends Committee on National Legislation	\$ 1,000.00
Friends General Conference	\$ 200.00
Friends Peace Teams	\$ 500.00
Friends World Committee for Consultation	\$ 700.00
Iowa Peace Network	\$ 100.00

National Religious Campaign Against Torture	\$ 100.00
Nebraskans for Peace	\$ 400.00
Pendle Hill	\$ 500.00
Quaker Earthcare Witness	\$ 300.00
Quaker United Nations Office	\$ 200.00
Quaker Voluntary Service	\$ 300.00
One Struggle KC	\$ 500.00
Urban Dreams	\$ 500.00
Right Sharing of World Resources	\$ 400.00
<b>Total Contributions</b>	<b>\$63,800.00</b>
<b>Delegate Expenses</b>	
FCNL	\$ 1,200.00
Friends Peace Teams	\$ 600.00
FWCC - General	\$ 1,200.00
Quaker Earthcare Witness	\$ 1,200.00
Conservative Yearly Meeting Visitation	\$ 1,200.00
<b>Total Delegate Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 5,400.00</b>
<b>Yearly Meeting Expenses</b>	
Archives Committee	\$ 200.00
Clerk's and Other Adm. Expenses	\$ 400.00
Committee Expenses (Other)	\$ 300.00
Conscientious Objector PSC Subcommittee	\$ 100.00

Friends Travel & Conference	\$3,000.00
Iowa Yearly Meeting Trustees	\$ 1,000.00
Junior Yearly Meeting	\$1,500.00
Pendle Hill Scholarship Match	\$ 400.00
Publication Committee	\$3,500.00
Website Committee	\$ 450.00
Quaker Youth Camp Scholarship	\$ 500.00
Special Needs Committee	\$ 750.00
Young Adult Friends	\$ 300.00
Young Friends	\$1,500.00
Midyear Planning Committee if receipts inadequate	\$ 500.00
Clerk's Contingency Fund	\$2,000.00
<b>Total Yearly Meeting Expenses</b>	<b>\$16,400.00</b>

**BUDGET SUMMARY**

Carried Forward	13,641.98
Apportionments	72,100.00
Contributions	(63,800.00)
Delegate Expenses	(5,400.00)
Yearly Meeting Expenses	(16,400.00)
<b>Budget Surplus</b>	<b>\$ 141.98</b>



*Clerk's note: The Body requested the Closing Minute be sent to Friends unable to attend our sessions this year as our Special Replies epistle, and serve as our Epistle to Friends Everywhere with a personalized greeting to both Ohio and North Carolina Conservative Yearly Meetings to be added.*

## **Closing Minute**

*I don't preach a social gospel; I preach the gospel, period. The gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is concerned with the whole person. When people were hungry, Jesus didn't say, 'Now is that political or social?' He said, 'I feed you.' Because the good news to a hungry person is bread. - Desmond Tutu*

In recent years past, we have held our annual gathering on the campus of Scattergood School and Farm. This year, because of the pandemic Covid 19, we met for a much shorter session of only two and a half days. For the very first time, we also met not in person, but completely online.

The theme of our gathering was *Finding Hope in Troubled Times*. Our program schedule recreated online many of our favorite activities and practices. The very first opening worship was deeply settled and rich in its vocal ministry. There was early morning Bible Study to feed our spiritual lives. The two evening presentations were designed to challenge and encourage us. In the first one we learned how to do worship sharing and discovered a joy that occurs when we listen to each other without the need to respond. There is community to be found inside the silences between us.

The second evening was set aside to introduce us to our new Head of Scattergood School and Farm, John Zimmerman. We join with school faculty, staff and students to enter a new stage of many exciting changes including a newly added middle school, headed by Jamie Newton.

We had times to visit and catch up with old Friends and meet new ones, only now it was all scheduled and done online instead of sitting on the benches in front of the Main. We washed our own dishes at home instead of together after sharing a meal of food harvested from the Scattergood Farm.

Our committees met online and finished most of their reports before sessions began, instead of sitting together and sweltering in small hot rooms while they hashed out details. There was no late-night singing in the meetinghouse, and also missed, perhaps most of all, were the voices of children playing outside our windows while we labored to find the words that spoke for all of us. We found that in all the monthly meetings across the large geographic area that is IYM(C), Friends grapple with how best to join the work of healing the pain of violence, racism, greed and the economic exploitation so prevalent in our country.

These are uncertain times, and yet the discovery of many gifts this turbulence also offers came up over and over during our time together: the pleasure of welcoming so many new Friends to our monthly meetings and this gathering and the opportunity to stretch ourselves and adapt to new ways of doing that we never knew existed.

*\*the opportunity to reflect on what we miss, what is good, what we can let go and what we need to hold onto.*

In this year 2020, Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) held its 143rd annual sessions, which means we have been gathering (at least) since the year 1877, or even earlier.

It doesn't take a historian to realize that some of those annual sessions were held in times of rejoicing and gratitude for prosperity, good harvests and good health. In other years, Friends met during times of war, drought, civil unrest, and pandemics. And many of those years, like this one, were times of uncertainty.

Our theme was *Finding Hope in Troubled Times*, and we spent these days together exploring how to do this. Being together reminded us that in both good times and bad, what we are called to never changes: "to Love God with all our hearts, with all our souls, with all our minds and all our strength; and to Love our neighbors as ourselves."

This Love gives us seeds to sow in the world... and so doing we join others in good work that started long before we were born, and will continue long after we are gone as we accompany each other along the way.

We will continue to work in our uncertain times, our troubled times, finding comfort in the words of poet Czeslaw Milosz:

*Early we receive a call, yet it remains incomprehensible.  
and only late do we discover how obedient we were.*

We now conclude our 2020 annual session, planning to meet again, God willing, at Scattergood Friends School and Farm, near West Branch, Iowa, from Seventh Month 21st to 25, 2021.

Deborah Dakin, clerk,  
Carol Gilbert, assistant clerk

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## **Reports Received but not read during Session**

### **Archives Committee - 7/22/2020**

Archives Committee met via email this month.

A year ago, the yearly meeting asked us to inquire of the State Historical Society of Iowa (SHSI) whether our collection of official documents of the yearly meeting and subordinate meetings might be expanded to include oral histories, diaries, and the like. Our current arrangement is that items within our collection are at the SHSI Library in Iowa City on a deposit basis, and remain our property. This is unusual at SHSI, but Quaker institutions commonly do it for yearly meetings.

We did ask and were told that SHSI is not willing to expand the definition of our current agreement.  
For the committee, Dan Treadway, clerk

### **Book Table Committee**

A brief Report from the Book Table Committee

The Book table committee drafted a plan for a virtual Book Table for IYMC2020 Yearly Meeting. But then two out of three of the committee members fell ill to lengthy illnesses, and book table plans came to a halt in early June 2020.



The convener is now moving the virtual book table plan up to September 2020. We hope to be able to use the website and possibly emails to spread the word of the virtual book table this fall.

Submitted by

Anne McCormick, July 22, 2020

## **Document Committee -Selected Epistles**

### 2019 Epistle of Alaska Friends Conference

to Friends Everywhere

Alaska Friends met in our rustic Dickerson Friends Center in Wasilla, Alaska, located on land long occupied and cared for by Dena'ina. We celebrated the strength of new Meetinghouse foundations that withstood a 7.1 earthquake the past winter with epicenter just 10 miles away. We were joined by Friends Robert Rader from Sierra Cascades Yearly Meeting and Diane Randall, Executive Secretary of Friends Committee on National Legislation.

“Love, Joy, and Empowerment” was our theme, formulated with and in response to concerns of young Friends for more meaningful and effective integration of youth and young adult Friends into the life of our Meeting. We rejoiced in greater attendance of youth than in previous years. Diane Randall described many aspects of deliberate and successful integration of young Friends into the work of FCNL including Spring Lobby Weekend, Young Fellows program, and, crucially, establishing an endowment for ongoing financial support for young Friends’ work with FCNL.

We were challenged to focus our work as a Yearly Meeting on inclusion, integration, and financial support of young Friends. We committed to this direction with a new intergenerational committee charged solely with engaging youth and making their concerns a focus of Yearly Meeting work; and we revised our budget to reflect this priority. Alaska Friends are keenly aware of and concerned about visible and destructive consequences of climate disruption: delayed formation of sea ice resulting in dramatic winter storm damage to our coasts; salmon perishing in unprecedented warm river waters before they reach spawning ground; more and larger

wildfires triggered by more frequent lightning and fanned by unseasonable winds. We noted ongoing constructive work of

Alaska Friends to raise awareness of and counter climate disruption, including work within broader coalitions, lobbying members of Congress, creating local climate action plans, programs to address climate justice, a carbon offset program, and one young adult Friend's role as a plaintiff in the Juliana vs US Government Federal lawsuit for a sustainable future. We urge Friends everywhere to join this vital spirit-led work to defend creation.

We renewed our commitment to act in accord with the sacred admonition to "love thy neighbor" with no exceptions. This admonition seems all too pertinent. Alaska Friends name the danger of increasingly violent abusive rhetoric in the public sphere including from the highest office in our nation – rhetoric of hatred that seeks to divide, pit neighbor against neighbor, and dehumanize entire groups of people. Alaska Friends ask all people of good will to join with us in countering racist and divisive words and actions. We have asked ourselves how our own Quaker history has contributed to divisions, intolerance, and white supremacy. We discern a need for healing work that confronts past actions including those of Friends that devalued and damaged indigenous cultures.

### 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

To All Friends Everywhere:

Greetings from a gathering of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Young Adult Friends, together on Lenni-Lenape land at Haverford Friends Meeting for our spring retreat, April 26–28, 2019.

Issues surrounding our structures of membership have long weighed on the hearts of young adults—among others—in the PYM community. Among YAFs, it has never been a requirement to hold a formal membership affiliation in order to serve in clerking roles. While we were together, we made time to think through these concerns: to share our stories about membership and belonging, and to be in dialogue with our recently appointed presiding clerk, Chris Lucca. We know this exploration to be one of many, as Britain Yearly Meeting and New York Yearly Meeting have been grappling with similar questions on membership. Just across the road, our recording clerk was part of an intergenerational group at the Haverford Corporation, holding a simultaneous discussion.

Chris and Karen joined Eric Peterson, Jeff Rosenthal, Paul Sutherland, Young Adult Engagement Coordinator Meg Rose, Maeve Sutherland, Nora Griffin-Snipes, Catherine Campbell, Maura Wise, Eleanor Barba, Sophy Jarka-Sellers, Carl Stanton, and Rachel Griffin-Snipes for the conversation. We began with our individual relationships with membership, all of which have been shaped by our experiences as white Friends. While we seek here to highlight the way we see membership functioning to uphold exclusion in our Yearly Meeting, we know that we have all benefited from privilege, and cannot begin to speak to the experiences of Friends of Color. Amongst those in the room, we heard examples of the ways membership has both functioned and failed to function in lives of Young Adults. Some present shared an easy step into a meeting as adults, while some had never felt led to pursue membership, or had done so only to serve on a Yearly Meeting committee. One YAF told a story of offering three different affiliations (the YAF community; their childhood meeting, where their membership is formally recorded; and the meeting they most often attend) in a PYM business meeting, and being pressed by a recording clerk who wanted to place them in one single category of belonging. Above all, we demonstrated that a simple model of monthly meeting

membership, in which one belongs to a singular community for life, is no longer useful, if it has been considered so in the past.

We collectively articulated a few key needs: in the life of our individual congregations, in Young Adult Friends, and in the Yearly Meeting. First, we are doing substantial work in all these contexts, to support all these bodies, and we need a structure to acknowledge and appreciate that work. Second, we need the governance of yearly meeting councils and committees to allow for our participation, despite the complexities of many Friends' histories with recorded membership. Third, we need affirmation of the validity of our Quaker faith, not merely in spite of our transience and (relative) youth, but because we are a vital part of the PYM body, and we are struggling to be heard.

We asked the question: what is membership, actually? We appreciate its real value as a milestone, and as a shared, public commitment to Quaker life. In some cases, however, such as the requirement for committee service, membership can be devalued, turned into a mere check-box, without rooting in our spiritual journeys. In one past situation, a YAF nominated to be an elder valued their membership in their home yearly meeting too highly to be willing to give it up and check the box in Philadelphia. We place this hurdle to the detriment both of those wishing to serve amongst us, and to the body deprived of their service. Compared to many other religious communities, Quakers attain membership by a fairly arduous process, one that might look fundamentally different for Friends without privileges tied to race, class background, education, and underlying knowledge of Quaker ways. We invite Friends to distinguish between a bureaucratic form of membership, and spiritual membership, representing a faithful commitment. For some, the former is simply burdensome, and for others, especially those already marginalized, that burden makes our communities less accessible. When barriers of membership intersect with other ways voices are marginalized, they contribute doubly to maintaining a status quo that we know is failing.

We cannot create the diverse, inclusive, welcoming, beloved community that we all long for, while holding up structures that exist as checkboxes, simply because that is the way things have always been. This call to rethink bureaucratic membership may sound frightening in the abstract, and those present for our conversation heard and acknowledged that. But what rose among the group was

the recognition that if we are being asked to serve on a committee or a council, it is because we have been seen and known, and because that of God within us has been at work. We understand Quaker process, in its most authentic form, to be a remarkable, radical concept. We trust that there is a Spirit guiding us, to which everyone in the room has access, and which, if heard, can guide us to Truth. When we can trust that our process reflects the Spirit, we will also be able to trust our nominations process, to bring the right people into the service of our community. We have a vision that belonging to the body can have its basis in contributions and relationships, not only in process for process' sake. We wonder if membership could look more like asking, "How fares the truth with thee?" Friends can then hear, from all their multiple communities, "we know you, and the Spirit is within you, and we acknowledge you."

In Spirit,

Young Adult Friends, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

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In Spirit,

Young Adult Friends, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

## To Friends of Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative)

We, Clerks of Meeting of Friends in Wales (UK) send you our loving greetings and, on behalf of all Quakers in Wales, are sending you the following message of support:

Quaker in Wales reach out to all the peoples of the USA in their distress following the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, a specific incident but part of systemic oppression and historic brutality. We acknowledge our shared brokenness and stand by you in the Light.

As a Religious Society we seek to be inclusive and welcoming. At the centre of our experience is the repeatedly and consistently expressed belief in the fundamental equality of all the human race. Wales has a proud heritage of offering sanctuary to those who are oppressed or in danger. Both our devolved Government and our religious movement strive to eradicate poverty and discrimination and to create a community where each person of whatever ethnicity or background living here can rejoice in their identity.

However we are all too aware that the issue of systemic racism is pressing in Britain too. This tragic case has reminded us of the vital need to raise our voices here to challenge instances of intolerance and abuse, and to do what we can to support racial, social, political and economic justice in our own country. The road to such justice is a long and rocky one. We recognise the extent to which we need to change. Our first task is to stop, to listen and to hear the pain of the oppressed.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created danger and misery for many, and has left us with clear choices. It could entrench existing structures of oppression and inequality; it can also be seen as an opportunity as people everywhere make clear that they are determined to build back better. We commit ourselves to question, to listen, to learn and to rebuild.

Quakers in Wales stand with you during this time of difficulty and opportunity and we send you our support and loving greetings.'

In Friendship,

Tricia Bridgewater, Jane Harries and Ruth Moore Williams (Clerks of Meeting of Friends in Wales, UK

The Outgoing Epistle of the 2020 Virtual Pre-Gathering of Friends of Color and their Families FGC

*We are a harvest of survivors. But then, that's what we've always been.* - Octavia E. Butler, Parable of the Sower

To Friends Everywhere:

We begin by remembering our ancestors who were strong enough to make a way for us. Friends of Color and their families met for Pre-Gathering Retreat on 26 Day through 28 Day Sixth Month 2020. This is the eighth year Friends of Color have met for our Pre-Gathering Retreat. First-timers felt welcomed and validated. This year, we met virtually with our largest attendance yet. There were 47 attendees, ranging in age from 11 months through 77 years from Canada, Mexico, Switzerland and the United States of America.

The importance of this Gathering for Friends of Color worshipping in community together cannot be overstated. To our Friends in the wider Quaker world, we the Friends of Color, can't breathe. During this weekend, we enjoyed the rare opportunity of not being othered In Quaker space. We experienced the joy of being seen as we are and the affirmation of a supportive spirit among ourselves in the "Amen corner". The term "Amen corner" comes from the Black church and is a communal space that validates, affirms and uplifts the spirit. In isolation, due to COVID19, we are being kept apart and away from those we love, trust and need. The pre-gathering retreat brought back the source of community and family that has been missing. We were able to exhale, relax, and breathe together. Many of us did not realize how exhausted we were until we were able to relax with one another. The gifts of the spirit were abundant. We shared in worship, gentle yoga and meditation, meaningful discussions, journaling and self-discovery. We also listened and shared in each other's joys, triumphs, pains and sorrows. We experienced spiritual renewal that was awakened by moving through pain to hope for the future for ourselves and our children. Attention and space was given for people to play games, dance, talk, grieve, play music, watch videos, and write.

We have much gratitude to the Program Coordinator for the Ministry on Racism; the pioneer who laid the groundwork to make the Pre-Gathering Retreat available to us within FGC Gathering and who faithfully makes it happen each year. We are grateful for being



able to acknowledge all that makes us human, for finding home and connection. Our inner Light is magnified and our capacity to breathe deeply is nurtured when that of God is acknowledged in each of us. It is our hope that other Friends of Color will know that such a space exists and know that they are desired, needed and will be warmly embraced.

The Pre-Gathering Friends of Color Retreat provides a reprieve. Friends of Color need respite from the systemic racism too often found in our American Quaker community that often goes unseen by many white Friends. Friends of Color need respite from the insidious lie of white supremacy manifested in daily oppressive traumatic stressors (microaggressions) which have the effect of blaming the oppressed for our own oppression. Friends of Color need respite and support which our home meetings have not provided. Friends of Color are fatigued from being asked to teach white folks.

We ask all Quakers to heed a Call to Action. Please sit with these queries:

1. What is the Spirit leading me to do about the historic and ongoing racial pandemic across my meeting, my community, my work environment and my country?
2. How can we honor the memory of people who have lost their lives to the struggle for a better world?
3. How can we construct ways for people to engage and remain engaged beyond good intentions in the struggle for true equality in health, education, wealth and against state sanctioned violence?
4. How can we encourage the support of Friends of Color in Quaker worship and meetings around the world?
5. How can Friends de-center themselves in order to listen to and hear Friends of Color?
6. How can I support respite for Friends of Color?

In this time of COVID19, People of Color discovered that a deadly pandemic is secondary to the long-time pandemic of racism in our lives. People of Color are more likely to die from COVID19 due to the effects of racism and oppression. Think about how this pandemic has turned your world upside down, economically, emotionally, psychologically. Now imagine there is no one working

on a vaccine, and that if you get sick or die, no one notices or cares. For People of Color, the human-made pandemic of racism is deadlier than COVID19, and we need you to do work so that we can BREATHE.

In Peace, Love and....

2020 FGC Virtual Pre-Gathering Retreat for Friends of Color and their Families



### **Exercise Committee Report**

Our theme, Finding Hope in Troubled Times, provided a frame for our worship.

- *When we “hear the falconer” we know that things are not falling apart.*
- *Like a caterpillar, we are in a time of transformation. Let injustice die.*
- *“Tis the gift to be simple ...to turn will be our delight ... until by turning we come round right.”*
- *God called Creation good, how can we return to a loving and respectful relationship with this Earth?*
- *“There is a balm in Gilead”*
- *In Afghanistan I struggled to live, in the US I enjoy living.*
- *We need to know what we are saying “yes” to.*
- *“Cause me to come to thy river, oh Lord ...Cause me to come, cause me to drink, cause me to live.”*
- *All flourishing is mutual.*
- *We have to believe things can be different.*
- *I seek to be with all of you remaking the world.*
- *Christ is with us if we will but listen.*
- *Love calls us to action. What action are we being called to as a Yearly Meeting?*
- *Worry comes from fear and the need to fix things. Prayer is about trusting, loving, and being loved.*



## Growth of the Scattergood Endowment

### Scholarship Fund(Westwood Trust Account # xx-xx-01-2)

| Fiscal year           | Additional donations during fiscal year (from IRS 990) | Total contributed value as of end of fiscal year |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| 7/1/2008 to 6/30/2009 | 42,734                                                 | 1,431,381                                        |
| 7/1/2009 to 6/30/2010 | 1,890                                                  | 1,433,271                                        |
| 7/1/2010 to 6/30/2011 | 1,900                                                  | 1,435,171                                        |
| 7/1/2011 to 6/30/2012 | 1,429                                                  | 1,436,600                                        |
| 7/1/2012 to 6/30/2013 | 502,302                                                | 1,938,902                                        |
| 7/1/2013 to 6/30/2014 | 7,557                                                  | 1,946,459                                        |
| 7/1/2014 to 6/30/2015 | 11,950                                                 | 1,958,409                                        |
| 7/1/2015 to 6/30/2016 | 1,500                                                  | 1,959,909                                        |
| 7/1/2016 to 6/30/2017 | 4,240                                                  | 1,964,149                                        |
| 7/1/2017 to 6/30/2018 | 1,300                                                  | 1,965,449                                        |
| 7/1/2018 to 6/30/2019 | 2,350                                                  | 1,967,799                                        |

**Capital Improvements and Operations**(Westwood Trust account # xx-xxxx-01-0)

Original December 2005 donation of \$1,500,000. No additional donations have ever been made to this account.

**Capital Improvements and Operations**(Westwood Trust account # xx-xxxx-xx-8)

Original August 2012 donation of \$500,000. No additional donations have ever been made to this account.

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## **Selected Responses to Queries**

### **Query 1 - Meeting for Worship**

*Are our meetings for worship held in a spirit of expectant waiting and communion with the Holy Spirit? How do we prepare our hearts and minds for worship? How do we refer to that which is divine? How does ascribing gender to the holy spirit affect our worship? How do we integrate our daily lives with meeting for worship? Do we see opportunities for worship outside of meeting? How does the vocal ministry of the meeting contribute to its spiritual life? In what ways do we recognize and nurture vocal ministry and other spiritual gifts?*

#### **Response:**

As we considered this query, we were in unity that we need moments of quiet centering, calming and gratitude on a daily basis. We need to pause when things are going too fast; to be grateful for moments of goodness and beauty as they come to us. We need to recognize that we can experience God in a flower, a cool breeze, an act of loving kindness. So, yes, we do experience worship outside of Sunday morning and know it helps prepare us for Sunday's worship.

...

The question of gender in "that which is divine" troubles some of us. For some God is experienced as male and this seems to be confirmed in the Bible. For others, a sense of a male God is experienced as oppressive. Language has limitations in reference to God, who many see as beyond gender. We may

experience the Divine as an energy rather than a noun, so a gender label is not needed.

We know God to be Love. We know we are asked to be kind, merciful, compassionate, loving. Kindness may involve saying “no” or speaking a difficult truth. Some of Jesus’ actions did not seem kind, but came, perhaps, from a sense of a larger good. We hope to live in this God of Love.

...

The majority of our monthly meetings are totally silent. When messages from the Spirit come they are all the more precious. We remember when we were small children, some adults would give the same message each week. The personality of a meeting changes over the years. We also remember learning how others really enjoy messages that we have been perplexed by. We are blessed to still have communications with some of the elders of our past, and we note how they continue to have serious and well thought out comments and observations about life.

## **Query 2 – Outreach**

*Do we encourage intervisitation within yearly meeting and with other Friends? What are we doing to share our faith with others outside our Friends’ community? How do we speak truth as we know it and yet remain open to truth as understood by others? In what ways do we cooperate with persons and groups with whom we share concerns? How do we reach out to those with whom we disagree? How do we make the presence of our meeting known to the larger community? Do we invite others to share in our meetings for worship and other meeting activities? Do we welcome everyone and appreciate the gifts that differences such as race, creed, economic status, disability, age, gender or sexual orientation may bring to us?*

### **Response:**

The members of our Meeting tend to do outreach in small nonintrusive ways. One member takes advantage of opportunities to bring up our Friends Meetings in the community during casual conversations. For example, she says things like “As the Quakers say, I am holding you in the

Light.” Then people ask her if she is a Quaker, what that means and then start asking questions that she is happy to answer. Another has often invited individuals to our meeting if he thinks they might benefit by attending. Another starts conversations by giving spiritual reasons why he can’t support a particular politician or policy. Another writes letters to the newspaper and political leaders, trying to speak to That of God in them, trying to bring them to the Light, but not to Meeting.

...

One member cautions that even these routine interactions should be done with divine guidance, and shouldn’t become empty traditions.

...

To share our enthusiasm about Quakerism with others, it would help us to be clear about how to talk with those who are different; if we feel that they could hurt us, ask ourselves how and why? Then, if they want to know more about us, we may try to move beyond the comfort of telling about our history and practices to sharing our spirituality, which can seem more difficult. We also, of course, need to find practical ways to let people know that we are here.

...

Decorah Friends Meeting is very active in our small community. Friends are involved as individuals in many community and inter-faith groups that provide services and other assistance to those in our area. These can range from writing a religion column in our local newspaper, growing food for our local food pantry, and service with others in our area free clinic. Our town is small and many people know us as members of a Quaker Meeting. This involvement gives us a chance to exhibit Friends beliefs in action. Friends also find reading Quaker publications – *Friends Journal*, AFSC publications, FCNL Newsletter – give us a chance to become aware of global needs and participate financially and in correspondence with groups and leaders.

...

We feel that we do not share a lot of the same political beliefs with those outside of Meeting. We continue to express our opinions, even in very conservative circles. It is a blessing to remain friends with those who hold other beliefs, and to communicate with them

in a civil manner. We have been able to get some of our local Quaker history books into the libraries. We continue to get a lot of comments on Facebook. We run ads in *Friends Journal*, the Paullina paper and the Northwest Iowa Review. We know these are ways that others have found us and learned about our Meeting.

...

We do wonder how to attract others to our faith practice. The wider Ames community doesn't seem to be aware that there is a Quaker meeting here. More diversity among our members would be healthy for our meeting. Quakers tend to be educated, privileged whites. We also question how to make new attenders feel welcome without overwhelming them. Our members are very active in community organizations. We do demonstrate our faith by the causes we support on the community, state, and national level. We have an open house in the fall. We discussed the possibility of presenting a class and discussion on Quakerism. (Two of our members did give a class through Iowa State University adult education.)

### **Query 3 - Meeting for Business**

*How can we hold our meetings for business in the spirit of love, understanding and patient search for unity without becoming frustrated by differences of opinion or the pressure of time? How do we respond when no one else in the meeting seems to hold the views that we do on an issue? How do we respond to a dissenting minority? How do we share responsibilities among Friends in our meeting? How do we serve our meetings?*

#### **Response:**

We find that some period of silence during meeting for business can help ground us as we wait for guidance on a question. When a question comes up there is a difference between thinking of an answer or waiting for an answer. Sometimes it is hard to have faith in the meeting's decision when you do not agree with it. We have had members step aside when the meeting could not come to consensus on their concern. They stayed with us and continued working on this issue outside the meeting. ...

We agree that respect for each other and trust in the process is essential. It is not a matter of fighting for one's position in a Friends meeting for business, but rather of offering one's best

understanding on a given issue and letting it go as one's contribution to the process. Then, trust the process to arrive at the best outcome.

...

There are some ways we can do better in keeping us all in the Spirit. We can be sure to use respectful language that still gets the point across. For example, using phrases like "when you do X, I feel Y," or "Please help me understand how you reached this conclusion," or "what I feel led to do is Z." We can also use periods of silent worship to help re-center ourselves. We can look at the other person's feet and remember that they also struggle.

...

In our discussion we spoke about: When we don't share a concern in the same way as another Friend, we can encourage them in their efforts and ask "how can we support you in your endeavors and Spirit led concerns?" While each member may not feel led to make a particular issue his or her #1 issue, we can still support each other in our individual leadings. If there are differences, it may be helpful to share stories of how conflict was resolved in the past.

...

We do have some differences of political opinions in our meeting, but these do not interfere with getting business done. We notice that members do well and restrain themselves so the atmosphere doesn't get too acrimonious. No one wants strife. We are aware of some Christian denominations that are splitting because of marriage and gender issues, and are relieved that isn't happening in our meeting.

#### **Query 4 - Harmony within the Meeting**

*What can we do to deepen our relationships with one another? How does gender affect the way we relate to each other? How does our meeting balance the needs for honesty and kindness? What topics do we avoid for the sake of "unity"? When in conflict with others, do we cultivate a forgiving spirit? Do we look to that of God in ourselves and seek to address that of God in those with whom we disagree?*



**Response:**

In considering the balance of kindness and honesty, the use of “I messages” we have found very helpful, and, often difficult to do. We have also learned that avoiding certain topics for the sake of keeping peace does not work; it can be less than honest.

...

Some of us have experienced Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) as a nurturing community that responds lovingly to imperfect people. Some of us feel that our own local gatherings are repressed. Conversation even after Meeting is stilted, with no free laughter or tears. We seem walled off from one another, but don't know what to do about it.

...

There are a lot of cultural barriers to effective honesty. One Friend says that her traditionally German upbringing means that she tends to bluntness; another, raised in a family where feelings were rarely expressed, has a hard time being honest where criticism is involved. Words and gestures can be used to mislead. “God is not dead but is entombed in dead language.”

...

We tend to be cautious about political discussions, unless we feel we know the listener intimately. We monitor our feelings closely, so as not to experience anger as we discuss these possibly divisive issues. At the same time we wonder if we are not sacrificing something important when we do not go deeper.

**Query 5 - Mutual Care**

*How do we respond to each other's personal needs and difficulties in sensitive and useful ways? Do we encourage both men and women to share in caregiving? What are we doing to welcome and draw members and attenders of all ages into the fellowship of the meeting? How do we help our children feel the loving care of the meeting? How do we keep in touch with inactive and distant members and attenders?*

**Response:**

A number of us shared tenderly that the meeting has, in a sense, become family for us. In part because of our sense of closeness to

each other, it is hard for newcomers to feel part of the group. We need to be aware of this. We know we need to grow in ministering to each other with sensitivity as we bring our own limitations with us into this meeting family.

...

We perhaps respond more often to needs for care outside the meeting rather than within. Yet, within the meeting, we don't have a minister or person that has caregiving as part of a job, so that when occasions arise, we must not lose sight of needs that may arise. We must be aware of these needs and take responsibility for responding. Although our numbers are small, the care among members is part of the richness of our meeting. Occasions for support may be relatively rare, but the feeling of support is always present.

### **Query 6 — Education**

*How can we most effectively foster a spirit of inquiry and a loving and understanding attitude toward life? What effort are we making to become better acquainted with the Bible, the teachings of Jesus, our Judeo-Christian heritage, the history and principles of Friends, and the contributions of other religions and philosophies to our spiritual heritage? In what ways can we encourage an educational process that is consistent with the values Friends cherish? How do gender based expectations affect the goals we set and the way we learn? Do we take an active and supportive interest in schools, libraries and other educational resources in our communities and elsewhere? How do we prepare ourselves and our children to play active roles in a changing world?*

#### **Response:**

One of our oldest members responded by emphasizing the importance of modeling, education by example. She felt this was the best way to teach others the importance of life-long learning. Modeling is also the best way to teach others how the Divine Spirit can teach us, if we are open to it.

### **Query 7 - Home and Family**

*How can we make our homes places of love and hospitality? What different expectations do we hold for women and men, boys and girls? How can we bring more equality into our relationships? How*

*do we develop and maintain lines of communication? In what ways do we share our deepest experiences, struggles, concerns and beliefs with our children and others, yet encourage them to develop their potential as the Spirit leads them? What place do we make in our daily lives for meditation, spiritual renewal and reading of inspiring literature, such as the Bible? How does our meeting support families of all kinds?*

**Response:**

Managing anger is hard when you've been raised in an abusive family. Quakers don't demonstrate or teach good ways to deal with anger. Meetings shouldn't always support families. Some families are not good and children or abused spouses may need to be rescued from them. Or an intermediate step where outsiders can listen to family members and try to help meet their needs and to understand each other's concerns.

...

Ask your children to pray with you.

**Query 8 - Personal Responsibility:**

*How do we center our lives in the awareness of God, the Spirit, so that all things may take their rightful places? How do we structure our individual lives in order to keep them uncluttered with things and activities? How does Meeting help us examine our personal lives for simplicity? Do we choose recreational activities which foster mental, physical and spiritual health? How are our lives affected by tobacco, alcohol and drug use? What can we do to recognize and deal with unhealthy ways we treat ourselves? How do we ensure that we act with fairness and integrity? Are we sensitive to our own use of language which may be offensive or oppressive?*

**Response:**

In this time of protecting ourselves from Covid 19, this Query seems to have grown in its meaningfulness to us. As we spend most of our time at home, what is important becomes more clear. Our lives are more simple so we are more able to listen to Spirit and to each other. We recognize that good listening helps us to serve each other better as our own ego is less in the way. Having some structure to our days, provides freedom. We are grateful for this time which gives us more opportunity to just be, and just being brings us to

increased awareness so that we allow others' beingness to express itself. Things do begin to take their rightful places as we begin turn our lives over to God, recognizing that we are not in control and that God is walking beside us.

...

Our world is such that we constantly must appeal to our ingenuity to avoid distraction and busy-ness. Perhaps it is more important to be aware of how we choose to give ourselves to distractions. They will be there and we cannot avoid them. How do we deal with distractions as we attempt to do God's will?

What is the relationship between responsibility and integrity? The root of the word responsibility relates to how we answer. The root of integrity is oneness. How do we respond with integrity to find our way to God.

...

If we are called to respond, we must consider the danger in responding to everything in the world. How do we choose our responsibilities? Our responses need to come from the Divine Center, not from the clamoring of all the little things in our lives.

...

We benefit from inequality and exploitation because we live easy, comfortable lives while others don't. Colonialism and Capitalism are systems that exploit other people and the Earth for our benefit. In Northeast Iowa we are privileged: we face climate change and can still grow food. We work "hard" and prosper: many work harder and languish in poverty.

...

Engaging in addictive behaviors, whether it involves substances or activities, leads us further from our Divine Wholeness. When these issues touch us personally, we often struggle and question how to navigate an appropriate response. Prayerful compassion and being being wholly present to sit with those who suffer offers us the opportunity to carry our Love beyond ourselves.

...

Many in our meeting have difficulty with the wording in this query, starting with the name personal responsibility. People struggling with illnesses of addiction need compassion and often help from others. As Quakers, we should lovingly support "that of God in everyone." As a society, we may shun or label people who need

our support. The query is meant to be a warning to us, that we need to consciously think about how we spend our time. Are we spending enough time on spiritual matters? ...

Substance abuse has affected us in our families and made it hard to keep centered. Our lives have been deeply affected by drugs and alcohol. It is a secretive ailment that is not comfortable to talk about, which is why organizations such as Alanon are so helpful. Talking about cancer today seems more comfortable than it did years ago. We hope someday the stigma on discussing substance abuse will ease as well. We acknowledge that we don't have to be happy all the time; we can feel this sorrow and still become centered.

### **Query 9 - Civic Responsibility:**

*What conflicts do we perceive between the laws of the State and our religious convictions? How do we resolve those conflicts in our lives? In what ways do we assume responsibility for the government of our community, state, nation and world? How do we share our convictions with others? Do we express our opinions with courage, yet with love, mindful of the Divine Spirit in everyone? How do we maintain our integrity when we find ourselves in a position of power? How do we respond when we feel powerless? Do we really respect and help those we seek to serve? Are we careful to reach our decisions through prayer and strengthen our actions through worship? Are we open to Divine leadings?*

### **Response:**

Friends find it easy sometimes to focus on national and international conflict and forget the violence against folks here; hunger, inadequate housing, lack of regional health care, unrecognized poverty affecting children. I believe our economic system in the US and the market/state are among the biggest causes of violence in the world today.

...

Several Friends stressed the importance of listening closely to what others are saying. Others will respect and begin to listen to us if they realize we value what they are saying. Testimonies help us think about our actions and feelings before we actually take action. Testimonies help us in difficult situations, where we have to interact with people who do not share our values. Seeing that of God in

everyone is important, and sometimes all we can do for people is to pray. In our current political environment, we may have difficulty seeing humanity in those whose opinions differ from ours. Listening to others is hard when our values conflict. As Quakers, we need to reach out and listen to those who are vulnerable, and help others fight for their rights whenever possible.

...

Members agreed that given the deep polarization of belief in our society, discussions with those of opposing opinions are challenging. We struggle to have loving attitudes towards those with whom we disagree. We find that more productive discussions can be held if we ask questions of the other party, rather than simply to confront opinions which differ from our own. A book by Harold Heie was mentioned as a good resource for methods of respectful conflict resolution between groups with differing opinions.

### **Query 10 - Environment**

*What are we doing about our disproportionate use of the world's resources? Do we see unreasonable exploitation in our relationship with the rest of creation? How can we nurture reverence and respect for life? How can we become more fully aware of our interdependent relationship with the rest of creation? To what extent are we aware of all life and the role we play? What can we do in our own lives and communities to address environmental concerns?*

#### **Response:**

The book, *Nature's Best Hope*, encourages the growing and nurture of native vegetation to regain the balance of ecology; these plants will invite native insects and birds. So, as we replace plants in the Meetinghouse yard, we can bring in native plants. Evidence of the effect of native plants can already be seen.

...

We talked about the Biblical meaning of the words "stewardship" and "dominion." In Genesis 1, it is said that God gives humanity dominion over creation, but the word really meant having a starring role, or a visible role. (The sun and the moon also have dominion.) The word stewardship meant using one's spiritual gifts, from Jesus' parable of the talents, where the servants returned the master's

talents multiplied. In Hosea, the wild are treated as God's property and God makes an agreement between humans and the other species. This is far from the common human interpretation which is that humans own nature.

### **Query 11 - Social and Economic Justice**

*How are we beneficiaries of inequity and exploitation? How are we victims of inequity and exploitation? In what ways can we address these problems? What can we do to improve the conditions in our correctional institutions and to address the mental and social problems of those confined there? How can we improve our understanding of those who are driven to violence by subjection to racial, economic or political injustice?*

#### **Response:**

We need to expand our awareness to include the life experiences of probably most people of color who on a daily basis face situations that may well bring up anger. Anger happens because of the way people are treated; people who are just trying to live their lives. Many of us struggle, as we are growing in awareness, to understand what our role might be in the journey toward healing. We can keep open to growing in awareness. We can reach out to and communicate with those who have different life experiences from ourselves. We can support organizations working to address this societal dysfunction. We can nurture positive energy needed for the healing.

...

Eugene Debs in 1918 spoke the following words at his sentencing hearing: "Years ago I recognized my kinship with all living things, and I made up my mind that I was not one bit better than the meanest on the earth. I said then and I say now, that while there is a lower class, I am in it; while there is a criminal element, I am of it; while there is a soul in prison, I am not free." These are words we need to hear, consider, open ourselves to. We attempt to listen, to hear with an open heart to the experiences of others that may differ widely from our own experiences. Listen to the Spirit. Let the Spirit show us the way. We are aware of stories told in West Branch about Laurie Tatum, who worked as a Quaker in the Indian schools. He was understood

to be a hero, to be doing good. Today we understand that the Indian schools were a tool used to assimilate Indians into white society. Social and economic justice can lead us into confusion as times change. What was once just, is not always understood to be that today. We do not know how Laurie Tatum understood what he was doing. He was a good man. We are dealing with the edges of action and inaction. We struggle with the ideas of action. We need to consider the possible violence of silence and inaction in the face of racism, social and economic injustice. What can we do?

...

We all touched and appalled by the degree to which we benefit from inequality. Penn Valley Meeting has always included those of less wealth as well as more, and we especially appreciate input from those who have been victims of inequality as well as beneficiaries. In spite of our efforts to educate ourselves, we can't even fathom the extent of our dependence on others' exploitation, from the making of our cell phones to the availability of a mind-boggling array of goods. The United States does, after all, consume some 60% of the world goods.

...

Righteousness and pacifism are not passive. Righteousness means fulfilling every relationship in the best possible way. Conservative Friends believe the voice of Christ in our hearts and in the Bible come from the same source. If we are in a place of faithfulness – which John Woolman called “low” - that is the moment when we act, do something. We don't hold ourselves apart from society. Usually being changed by God requires us to act.

## **12 - Peace and Non-Violence**

*What are we doing to educate ourselves and others about the causes of conflict in our own lives, our families and our meetings? Do we provide refuge and assistance, including advocacy, for spouses, children, or elderly persons who are victims of violence or neglect? Do we recognize that we can be perpetrators as well as victims of violence? How do we deal with this? How can we support one another so that healing may take place? What are we doing to understand the causes of war and violence and to work toward peaceful settlements of differences locally, nationally, and internationally? How do we support institutions and organizations*



*that promote peace? Do we faithfully maintain our testimony against preparation for and participation in war?*

**Response:**

Even when people have conflicting beliefs, they usually believe they are doing the right thing in making decisions. Unfortunately, many of our current power structures allow people in power to make decisions without consulting people whose decisions will impact.

...

We are now more aware of the cumulative effects of trauma, and remain hopeful for change as more information and attention are directed to studying trauma's cumulative effects. ... We have more power than we realize and we can focus on our commonalities and invite a calming spirit. We will be more at peace when we are content with our lives, not always feeling that we need more. Our voices asking for an end to war need to be heard.

Solutions are not easy; Jung notes that we need to recognize that there is both good and evil in each of us.

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### **Website Committee Report**

Members of the Website committee worked on the Midyear Tech Sub-Committee to handle the first YM event using video conferencing technology. Following this event, the IYMC Zoom account came under our care. Working with the 2020 Entertainment Committee, we have helped with training Co-Host for our Annual Sessions. We will be working to provide the presentations from the Yearly Meeting's Online session on the Internet.

Going forward, we are looking at possibly adding the ability to provide websites for smaller meetings, as well as putting the Yearly Meeting's annual book sale online.

For the Committee,  
John Andrews

## **FCNL Representatives Report - July 2020**

Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) is one of 31 yearly meetings and Quaker organizations that appoint representatives to FCNL's General Committee, the governing body of Friends Committee on National Legislation. For us, one of the highlights of the year is attending FCNL Quaker Public Policy Institute and Annual Meeting in Washington D.C. This year Deborah and AM Fink, George and Rebecca Bergus, David and Jean Hansen, Ebby Luvaga, Anthony Robinson and Carole Winkleblack attended the November event. As part of the public policy institute, we met with Senator Grassley and with Senator Ernst's National Defense strategist to ask that the 2002 Iraq AUMF (Authorization for the Use of Military Force) be repealed. We visited our representatives (Representatives Loeb sack and King) with the same "ask." We felt exhilarated to be among the 400 Quakers who lobbied against endless war; the sight of so many "Love Your Neighbor" lapel buttons on Capitol Hill gave us assurance that Light and Love will, indeed, mend our broken country. Those of us who are members of the Eastern Iowa Advocacy Team also participated in the "Advocacy Team Summit" to learn how to be more effective lobbyists and to share techniques and successes with other teams around the county. As we turned from lobbying to governing our organization, we began the process of revising and approving the "The World We Seek, FCNL's Statement of Legislative Policy." This document is a blueprint for legislation that brings Quaker values of equity, peace, integrity, and environmental justice to bear on public policy. FCNL Quaker Public Policy Institute and Annual Meeting is exhausting and amazing. We thank Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) for supporting FCNL and us, your representatives.

## **FWCC Report for Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) 2020**

FWCC recognizes that there are many different kinds of Friends living and worshipping all around the world. Our Quaker community spans a rich diversity of regional cultures, beliefs and styles of worship. FWCC further fosters fellowship among all of the branches of the Religious Society of Friends and works together with Friends on issues of global concern such as ecojustice and sustainability.

The FWCC Mission is as follows: “Answering God’s call to universal love, FWCC brings Friends of varying traditions and cultural experiences together in worship, communications, and consultation, to express our common heritage and our Quaker message to the world.”

One purpose of FWCC is to provide intervisitation to other branches of the Religious Society of Friends but this has not been possible in the age of the COVID- 19 crisis. Therefore, FWCC is exploring new ways to strengthen the bonds between the different types of Quakers. FWCC is especially thinking of new and creative ways to celebrate World Quaker Day, the first Sunday in October, in a safe way. Ideas on how this might be accomplished among individual Meetings are welcomed.

FWCC would like everyone to know that there are many new opportunities for Meetings to join in on the Traveling Ministries online program as well as the online sessions on various topics including Business Meetings and QUNO. There are also grants available to help Meetings to set up online meetings and World Quaker Day observations. More information and resources can be found on [fwccamericas.org](http://fwccamericas.org).

Respectfully Submitted,  
Nancy Jordan  
Lincoln Friends Meeting

