

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

***2025***

***148<sup>th</sup> Annual Sessions  
Held at Scattergood Friends School  
and Farm near West Branch, Iowa  
Seventh Month 23-27, 2025***



# Iowa Yearly Meeting of Friends (Conservative)

Hickory Grove Meetinghouse  
Scattergood Friends School and Farm



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of Friends (Conservative)

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# Iowa Yearly Meeting of Friends (Conservative)

148<sup>th</sup> Annual Sessions

Seventh Month 23 - 27, 2025

\* \* \* \* \*

## FIFTH DAY – THURSDAY MORNING –7/24/2025

We now begin the 148th Annual Sessions of Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) (IYMC) held both at Scattergood Friends School near West Branch, Iowa and online using video technology from Seventh Month 24th to Seventh Month 26, 2025.

*Wait reverently for the coming and opening of the Word of Life and attend upon it in your ministry and service . . . And be it little, or be it much, it is well, for much is not too much and the least is enough, if from the motion of God’s Spirit...*

George Fox

*Be still and know that I am God.*

Psalms 46:10

\* \* \* \* \*

**Minute:** We happily welcome these visitors. The clerk will endorse these minutes of introduction so they can be returned to their meetings.

**Gretchen Castle**, Dean Earlham School of Religion (ESR), member of Clear Creek Monthly Meeting in Richmond, Indiana, which is affiliated with the New Association of Friends.

**Susan Lee Barton** from Friends General Conference (FGC) , worships with Clear Creek, Ohio Valley YM

**Susan Lees**, Fayetteville Friends Monthly Meeting, North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) (NCYMC)

**Sarah Miller**, member of Friendship Friends Meeting in NCYMC

**Nathaniel Corwin.**

\* \* \* \* \*

Caretakers appointed by monthly meetings are:

Am es - none

Bear Creek - Stan Sanders

Decorah - Martha Davis

Des Moines - Petra Lange, Cheryl Sutton, Carol Spaulding (weekend)

Iowa City - Carole Winkleblack

Lincoln- Lorene Ludy, Nancy Jordan, Roy Helm  
Paulina: Doyle Wilson  
Penn Valley: Jon Shafer, Angelika Shafer  
West Branch- Kate Van de Walle, Judy Cottingham, Meg McCormick  
Whittier - Deborah Dakin, Holly Neuendorf (weekend)

The caretakers have appointed Angelika Shafer and Deborah Dakin to carry microphones this morning

Readers for this morning's business sessions are Stan Sanders and Carole Winkleblack.

Jean Eden has agreed to close Meeting for Worship on First Day.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Minute:** We approve the appointments suggested by the Representatives Committee and we are grateful for the work these people are doing.

The Representatives Committee has suggested the names of Friends to serve during these sessions.

Exercise Committee: Deborah Fisch, Dan Treadway, and Billie Wade.

Epistle and Special Replies Committee: Stan Sanders and George Bergus

Audit Committee: Carole Winkleblack, Bob Winkleblack

\* \* \* \* \*

## **How We Conduct Business, in Person and Online**

Everyone (members, attenders, visitors, children) is invited to IYMC Meetings for Worship with Attention to Business. *“Friends conduct meeting for worship with attention to business by a process in which the group prayerfully seeks to be guided by the Holy Spirit to a decision or resolution. We approach issues with a commitment to allow the power of Divine Love to work within ourselves, and faith that, held in that power, we will be led together to Truth.”* -From our *Faith and Practice*

Our process is deliberately slow, to allow time for careful listening to one another and to the Spirit. The clerk introduces a topic, and the assistant clerk or a “reader” reads the relevant document aloud as it is shown on the screen. After the document is read, there is time for prayerful consideration. If you wish to speak in response, you stand or

raise your hand to ask to be recognized by the clerk. Online attendees can use the “raise hand” feature or raise their hand if their video is showing. Dial-in participants can unmute, say “clerk please” and say your name, then wait to be recognized.

- The clerk “recognizes” you (invites you to speak) by saying your name. After you are recognized, you wait for a microphone to be brought to you (online & phone attendees unmute themselves). When someone is speaking, others listen attentively. As in worship, we wait expectantly to be taught and changed by the Spirit working within us and others. At times, the clerk may *not* recognize someone who wishes to speak. This may happen because more listening is needed, others need to be heard, or because the sense of the meeting is already clear.
- In our meetings, we generally do not repeat points others or we ourselves have made, trusting that everyone has listened deeply. To express agreement, you nod, speak a word of agreement, or use the “thumbs up” feature online. If you find you no longer need to speak, you can sit or lower your hand.
- When the clerk feels that she has gathered the sense of the meeting, she will call the body into worshipful silence while she writes the minute. The clerk then reads the minute and asks for the body’s approval. If you feel that the minute captures what is important, you can say “I approve” or use the “thumbs up” feature online. If not, and you feel the body needs to hear your concern, you can ask to be recognized. Sometimes a Spirit-led dissenting message can help the body find a new direction. Other times, the meeting may hear the message, but continue in the same direction because, just as with personal decision-making, we may feel led to act despite concerns.
- If online attendees have difficulty being recognized, heard, or understood, they may send a “chat” message to the Virtual Access Committee monitor, who will notify the clerk. Technical help for online attendees is here <https://bit.ly/RaiseHandGuide>.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Minute:** We are grateful for the Entertainment Committee 2024 and the rich activities they provided us last year.

## ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) Annual Sessions were planned and hosted by Ames, Des Moines Valley and Penn Valley Monthly Meetings. This was again a hybrid meeting, combining people in person at Scattergood and people online through video conferencing. The approximate attendance in-person at Scattergood Friends School was 79, both adults and children. The number who registered to attend online was 32.

Our theme was "Keeping the Faith – Across the Generations" Evening Collections included:

- A Panel of seasoned and new Friends sharing around the theme of this year's Sessions, moderated by Peter Clay
- Open Book Storytelling project, moderated by J.J. Kapur with contributions from Scattergood videographers and IYMC storytellers
- Transforming the World through Radical Obedience and Communal Song with Peter Blood and IYMC Friends
- On Saturday evening John Zimmerman entertained us with storytelling and songs.

The First Day Pre-meeting Program reflected on the poem "Quaker Beatitudes" with Angelika Shafer.

Surrounding the business sessions were daily Bible Study with Deborah Dakin's leadership, worship, singing, interest groups and committee work. We enjoyed *delicious* food. The weather was hot, but we did our best to provide many cool spaces.

The Entertainment Committee is grateful for the additional help from Catherine Dorenbach and Roy Helm and the tremendous coordination and on-site assistance provided by Jessica Ireland at Scattergood, as well as many other Scattergood students and staff members.

The devotion, time commitment and skills provided by the Virtual Access, Website and Special Needs Committees are greatly appreciated and essential to the success of Annual Sessions.

Our committee is extending a warm helping hand to the group of monthly meeting hosts that follow us in 2025. We hope sharing our experience will eliminate some of the initial overwhelming nature of the Entertainment Committee's responsibilities.

For the committee,  
Angelika Shafer, co-clerk

## Entertainment Committee Financial Report

### RECEIPTS

Forwarded from 2023 Committee	
For Future Music Ministry	1,965.00
General Funds	2,000.00
2023 Contributions	11,705.35
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,670.35</b>

### EXPENSES

Scattergood Friends School	11,150.98
Program Expenses	
Music Ministry*	1,765.00
Other	88.48
To Yearly Meeting Trustees	465.89
Forwarded to 2025 Committee:	
For Future Music Ministry*	200.00
General Funds	2,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$15,670.35</b>

\*In 2020 a number of Friends made special contributions totaling \$4,465 to support the planned concert by John McCutcheon. The concert was postponed until 2021, when it became a virtual concert, which was less expensive. The donors requested that the extra funds be carried over to future Entertainment Committees for future music ministry.

Jim Cottingham  
Entertainment Committee treasurer

\* \* \* \* \*

**Minute:** We are grateful for the work of the Publications Committee on creating our minute book.

### **PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Publications Committee is charged with preparing, publishing and distributing the *Minute Book* of our Annual Sessions. The costs of printing and distributing the *2025 Minute Book* to each monthly meeting and a few institutions who request our annual publication are listed below. Minute books from 2003 to the present are available on the IYMC website for viewing or download. Once again assistance and printing came from Bob Goodfellow Printing in Iowa City.

**Printing and Shipping Costs for the 2025 Minute Book**

147 Perfect Bound Minutes and 54 Spiral Bound Minutes

Books - 201 @ \$12.19	\$2,451.00
Shipping and Freight	110.00
Sales Tax	<u>147.06</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,708.06</b>

Submitted on behalf of the committee,  
Katie Jacoby, clerk

\* \* \* \* \*

**Minute:** We thank the Midyear Planning and Junior Yearly Meeting Committees for their work in planning and carrying out our challenging and inspiring gathering in April. We appreciate very much the hospitality of Bear Creek Meeting and recognize their hard work in preparing for us and welcoming us.

**MIDYEAR MEETING COMMITTEE REPORT**

Midyear Meeting was held at Bear Creek Meeting near Earlham, Iowa on Fourth Month 12-13, 2025 as a spiritual gathering of Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative). With the hybrid format, approximately 55 attended in person and 45 were able to participate virtually.

Our resource leader was Steve Chase, a member of Friends Meeting of Washington. Ann Jerome from Philadelphia PA, accompanied Steve as traveling ministry elder. The topic explored a theme of “The Deep Urgency of Now: Quaker Discernment and Action for a Just Peace in Israel /Palestine”.

Appreciation was expressed for Steve, who is knowledgeable about Middle East conditions, as he shared with us in his gentle and caring way. He encouraged us to be continually learning, keeping an open mind, and to be willing to consider change as our understanding increases. This reinforced awareness of the delicacy of the issues. Topics lifted up: Listening to each other on Israel/Palestine; A discernment journey of Quakers, Zionism and Palestinian Rights; and Apartheid free communities.

A thoughtful addition to the weekend was a Tent of Solidarity for Gaza set up in the yard of the meetinghouse by a member who shared deep concerns about the devastating Gaza/Israel war. The Junior Yearly Meeting also set up a Tent of Nations nearby.

Careful attention to the technology welcomed participants and enriched the communication.

It was especially helpful that two technology hosts provided support and information about the schedule and questions each day. The IYMC Peace & Social Concerns Committee and Interim Meeting were able to meet in person and online with the assistance of technology.

Meals provided a variety of dietary choices that included tastes of Middle East food. We're thankful for the dedication of our long time Quaker chef. Proceeds of \$189 from the Midyear Meeting rummage sale were donated to Scattergood Friends School and American Friends Service Committee.

The gathering for music and song in the evening was a special time of fellowship.

There was much appreciation for the Guidance of the Spirit, and the generosity and support by all who participated.

Respectfully submitted,  
Midyear Planning Committee  
Jackie Leckband, clerk

#### **JUNIOR YEARLY MEETING REPORT**

Junior Yearly Meeting at Midyear Meeting had up to four youth participating, creating our own "Tent of Nations" banner, and raising funds for support of the Nassar family through the sale of olive wood carvings from West Bank craftspeople. Guest presenters included Jeff Kisling and Virginia Wadsley, joined by several volunteers.

Bill Deutsch  
JYM clerk

**Midyear Meeting 2025 Financial Report**

Donations: \$3405.00

<u>Expenses:</u>	
Food	696.03
Travel/lodging–resource person	1030.38
Honorarium	200.00
Traveling elder travel/ lodging	863.38
Cook	500.00
Food	547.59
Junior Yearly Meeting	75.00
Postage	28.76
<u>Hosting fee – Bear Creek</u>	<u>159.89</u>

**Total Expenses \$3,405.00**

Osa Bricker, Midyear Meeting treasurer

\* \* \* \* \*

**Minute:** We accept the Interim Meeting minutes.

**INTERIM MEETING REPORT**

Interim Meeting was held at Bear Creek Meetinghouse outside of Earlham, Iowa on 7<sup>th</sup> Day, 4<sup>th</sup> Month 19, 2025. Members present were:

1. Ames, Steve Cannon online
2. Bear Creek, Stan Sanders in the room
3. Decorah, no one (Bill Deutsch was leading Junior Yearly Meeting)
4. Des Moines, Dorothy Lifka online and Bob Henderson in the room
5. Iowa City, Bob Winkleblack in the room
6. Lincoln, Roy Helm online
7. Paulina, no one
8. Penn Valley, Angelika Shafer in the room
9. West Branch, George Bergus in the room (for Meg McCormick)
10. Whittier, no-one

We discussed who might be willing to represent us at the Conservative yearly meetings:

- Ohio 8/5/2025 in Stillwater
- North Carolina 7/10/2025 in Greensboro

No names of attenders for the three Conservative Friends’ gatherings were brought forward at this time, but the committee trusts the clerk to

approve travelers should they come forward in the future. All have online options.

We approved sending a letter of support to Friends at Westminster Meeting, London, UK, as proposed by Des Moines Valley Friends.

To: Friends at Westminster Meeting  
Westminster Quaker Meeting House  
52 St. Martins Lane  
London, WC2N 4EA  
United Kingdom  
clerk@westminsterquakers.org.uk

Friends of Iowa Yearly Meeting of Friends (Conservative) wish to express our support for you, Friends at Westminster Meeting house following the violation of your place of worship and the forceful removal of young people holding a protest group meeting. We share a concern for the whereabouts and well-being of the young people who were detained and hope to read an update on your website in coming days or weeks about where they are now and how we might support them. Here in Iowa, we were shocked to learn that freedom of speech and assembly is under attack in the UK just as in the United States. We write in spiritual solidarity and mutual concern for Friends' safety and discernment of the way forward in these difficult times.

Holding you in the Light,  
Carol Gilbert, clerk,  
Iowa Yearly Meeting of Friends (Conservative)

Catherine Dorenbach read the progress report from the Structure and Governance Exploratory (SAGE) Committee, an ad hoc subcommittee of the Scattergood School Committee. She noted that of all the Quaker schools they had studied, none were part of the same corporation as their yearly meetings, but many had close relationships with their yearly or monthly meetings. We appreciate the work of this committee.

### **School Committee's Ad Hoc S.A.G.E. Subcommittee Spring 2025 Progress Report**

The Structure and Governance Exploratory (SAGE) is an ad hoc subcommittee of the School Committee that is looking into the possibility

of Scattergood incorporating as a non-profit Quaker school, and ways to retain and strengthen the connections to Yearly Meeting. Serving on the SAGE subcommittee are Karen Greenler, Katie Jacoby, Ruth Hampton and Catherine Dorenbach. We have met monthly since the close of Annual Sessions in 2024. Here are some things we have done and are continuing to work on:

- Researched the origins and histories of nine Quaker schools (Arthur Morgan, George, Oakwood, Olney, Westtown, Sidwell, Woolman, Friends School of Minnesota, Friends Seminary) looking at how they were originally established and their current corporate structure. Some were never part of a yearly meeting, and all others have corporately separated their schools from their yearly meetings.
- Had conversations with the following people to gain insight from their knowledge and experience:
  - Drew Smith: Executive Director of Friends Council on Education, of which Scattergood is a member.
  - Peter Baily: Quaker and board member of Friends Seminary and former Head of Oakwood Friends School who has extensive experience with Quaker schools.
  - Pete Commons: attends Quaker meeting in Philadelphia and is an attorney who has helped Quaker schools and Meetings through this process.
  - Craig Sellers, Quaker and former Head of Friends Central, is now interim Head of Princeton Friends School, and has been through this process.
- Waiting for documents from other schools that we can review:
  - A “Joint Committee of Care” description and a “Guidelines and Principles” document that are used at some of the Quaker schools, and
  - Bylaws of a few schools.
- Examined bylaws of Friends School of Minnesota.
- Looking at Quaker practices and education that Scattergood is currently doing:
  - Will review the report from FCE’s visit, the evaluation and recommendations
  - Working with the School Committee’s Spiritual and Community Life subcommittee to see how sections of IYMC’s *Faith and Practice* could be helpful to the school.

- Considering writing a letter about all of this to monthly meetings to relay the Quaker practices and education at the school.
- Looking at ways to strengthen ties between the school and Yearly Meeting.
- Ordered the book "Care Relationship" from FCE which *articulates guiding principles and positive practices for School-Meeting "care relationships."*
- Contacted the Yearly Meeting's Entertainment Committee, asking for a Special Interest time during our Annual Sessions in Seventh Month. To contact the committee, email us at: [sage.iymc.org@gmail.com](mailto:sage.iymc.org@gmail.com)

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**Minute:** We listened attentively to epistles from Ohio and North Carolina Conservative yearly meetings, and appreciate our ongoing and evolving relationships with them.

Deborah Fisch attended the last two days of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) and felt continued strong kinship with those Friends. She noted that each meeting reads its own response to their queries, though their responses tend to be much briefer than ours. She reported that their meetings have been experiencing an influx of new attenders who are young adults, as have some of our monthly meetings.

Jon Shafer attended Ohio Yearly Meeting in person and wrote a letter about his experiences there:

Report on Attending 2024 Ohio Yearly Meeting (OYM)

Ohio Yearly Meeting Sessions were held in Stillwater Monthly Meetinghouse, located in Barnesville in SW Ohio. Built in 1878, it holds 1,500, though only 53 were registered to attend in person. Those of us attending from a distance stayed in the newer girls dorm, the Mary Davis House or another house on campus. We ate in the Olney School cafeteria in the basement of the main building. Olney currently has an enrollment of about 35, similar to that of our Scattergood Friends School. Many members of Stillwater Monthly Meeting live at a considerable distance, with 25 states represented and four or five other countries.

I had a substantial talk with Martha from Ecuador, with Tom from Indiana who used to be on the AFSC Midwest Group, and with Sarah Dawson, a musical composer who recently had an oratorio she composed earn its premier in New York City.

OYMC has Bible Reading Sessions, with members rising to read a verse or two out of the silence they feel led to share with all.

I attended a meeting of OYM's Peace and Human Relations Committee with 30 in the Friends Center, a house near Stillwater Meetinghouse which is owned by the yearly meeting. David Johnson from Australia, Queensland Regional Meeting spoke, as did I, upon invitation. Many others also shared what their meeting was doing locally.

Later I also had talks with retired physician Madeleine Vache of New London, CT, & with Ken Jacobsen from Wisconsin who was one of the assistant clerks of OYM. Ken had a copy of the *First Nations Version: An Indigenous Translation of the New Testament* (FNV from Rain Ministries). We shared our preferences about the many versions of the Bible.

In the business sessions one of the hottest topics was whether to lease out the fracking rights so a fossil fuel company could get the natural gas out from under their 350-acre USDA Certified Organic farm surrounding the campus and meetinghouse. There was no unity on that issue. The school has legally separated from Ohio Yearly Meeting, so now Olney's catalogue uses the phrase: "steeped in Quaker values and traditions."

There were several reports from FCNL & FWCC, but none from AFSC. I asked why and was told because OYM didn't send reps to AFSC's Corporation meetings. One report was from the Walton Home, a 37-bed assisted living campus they own nearby, with independent apartments and houses, and another from the Wider Fellowship of Conservative Friends.

Jon Shafer

Penn Valley Monthly Meeting, Kansas City

11<sup>th</sup> of 7<sup>th</sup> Month, 2025

**North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) (NCYMC)**

**PO Box 4591, Greensboro, NC 27404**

**ncymc.clerks@gmail.com**

*Two people, three people, ten people may be in living touch with one another through Him who underlies their separate lives. This is an astounding experience, which I can only describe, but cannot explain in the language of science. But in vivid experience of divine fellowship it is there. We know that these souls are with us, lifting their lives and ours continuously to God and opening themselves with us, in steady and humble obedience to Him. It is as if the boundaries of our self were enlarged, as if we were within them and as if they were within us. Their strength, given to them by God becomes our strength, and our joy, given to us by God, becomes their joy. In confidence and love we live together in Him...Holy is the Fellowship...*

*A Testament of Devotion, pp. 79-80*

Thomas R. Kelly

*And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another - and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

Hebrews 10:24-25

Beloved Friends of Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative, Greetings.

In a time of summer storms as tempestuous as the times we are living in, we met on the Guilford College Campus in Greensboro, NC. After the rains we were welcomed by lush green grass and trees and accompanied by a chorus of cicadas. The names on the buildings speak of our Quaker history here and the brick paths are familiar under our feet. We feel at home.

As our sessions got underway, we were greeted by Jean Parvin Bordewich, acting president of Guilford College, who gave us an update on the financial challenges that the college, along with many other institutions of civil society, has faced in recent years. Based on the results of restructuring and the generous response of friends of the College, she was able to offer cautious optimism about the college's recovery, for which we are very grateful.

As is our custom, the Body of Worship and Nurture met for worship and business the day before the start of Yearly Meeting business. This year

Worship and Nurture has been holding monthly conversations over videoconferences to offer Friends spiritual support in facing uncertain times. These have been well received.

The theme of our annual sessions was "Members One of Another." This theme was woven throughout the gathering yielding deep reflections on our sense of kinship with each other. In response to queries about what membership means to us, Friends shared thoughts such as:

"[Membership means that] when it gets hard I'm willing to stay in the room," and "[Membership means that] we are each other's to love."

We continue our practice of hearing the State of the Meeting reports and query responses from all 8 of our monthly meetings. The overall tone was encouraging with meetings reporting deep worship, care of each other, and service to their communities along with the usual challenges of maintaining or expanding facilities. All of this, however, is colored by threads of concern regarding how to respond with love and courage to the social and political upheaval we are experiencing in our country and our world.

We were blessed with many visitors, domestic and international, some representing Quaker organizations, some traveling in the ministry and some here for spiritual respite. Visitors always enrich our time together and we were blessed not only by their presence but also by their rich and informative offerings of vocal ministry, song, teaching, and helpful observant reflections on who we are. The concern for peace and stability was underlined by reports and presentations from Quaker organizations: Friends Committee on National Legislation, Friends Committee on North Carolina Legislation, American Friends Service Committee, Quaker Earthcare Witness, Earth Quaker Action Team, Friends World Committee on Consultation, and Right Sharing of World Resources. Rashid Darden of Friends General Conference was gracious in stressing that the resources of FGC are available to all.

Bible Study was the centerpiece of each day, occurring right after lunch. Under the guidance of Emma Condori Mamani, with us from Holiness Friends Yearly Meeting in Bolivia, we engaged with verses from the book of Acts highlighting how believers share resources, pray powerfully for each other and organize the work of ministry. We were lovingly challenged with queries Emma had formulated such as "When did the experience of feeling that Quakers are your

family in Christ start for you?", and "What inward and outward aspects make you feel you are part of your Friend's meeting?" Her enthusiasm for

scripture and her weaving some of her personal stories in with her Biblical exposition were very pleasant and effective.

On Friday evening Traci Hjelt Sullivan led us through probing queries exploring Love, Community and Interdependence in the meeting community and in the wider world. Her first "rule" for love in the meeting community is "Step toward difficult people." From this came her first queries, "Who are you avoiding in your meeting?" and "How could you take a step toward them?" Subsequent queries were equally perceptive concerning the challenges and rewards of our call to love each other. Many of us will be bringing the queries back to our meetings to invite others into this fruitful inquiry.

The work of our yearly meeting includes the ongoing project of revising our Book of Discipline. We strive to retain the essentials of content and tone while making the language accessible to the modern ear. Not a task for the faint of heart! We heard an example of this work in the reading of our Advices which are being updated into contemporary language. It is clear that a lot of time, prayer and waiting upon the Spirit has been invested in this work.

We are also excited to announce that Issue #8 of the Journal of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) is now available. The theme is Speaking the Truth and the Journal is easily found on our website [ncymc.org](http://ncymc.org).

This year we again enjoyed the company of Friends of all ages in worship, learning and fun. There were 112 adults (including 21 "Zoomers") and 22 kids. We were pleased to hear your epistle and to see the dear face of Deborah Fisch appear on our video screen. It is our hope that Susan Lees will be with you at your sessions this month and we would love to count some of you among us again at next year's sessions, 7th Month 9-12, 2026 in person at Guilford or via videoconference.

On behalf of North Carolina Yearly Meeting Conservative,  
Michelle Dounce  
Michelle Downey, clerk

## Ohio Yearly Meeting of Friends

Epistle to Iowa Yearly Meeting from Ohio Yearly Meeting of Friends 2024

*For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. Jer 29:11-13*

Who would have imagined, not so long ago, that there would be a screen on the wall behind the facing benches of this old meetinghouse, projecting the names and faces of Friends in many places, some older members unable to be with us in person, some new seekers drawn to worship with us from all over the world, blessings known until recently only in the mind of God. As we engage in the delightful struggle to come into unity across our seemingly vast distances and differences, we are discovering that Jesus' promise to be in the midst of us whenever two or three are gathered in His Name is not conditioned on any barrier other than the openness of our minds and hearts toward one another and our yearning for His Love and Truth.

We grapple with the technology, which slows us down and makes many of us uncomfortable at times. Videoconference may be useful with outreach, there is a work going on, but there is also vulnerability. Inviting our Lord's 'Kingdom of Heaven' in and among us is our deepest need. All these things are given by the Holy Spirit. It takes courage for us to worship and believe the way we do, soaking in the direct experience with the Holy Spirit. Acknowledging that there is one God, above all, through all & in us all, we are not ashamed of the Gospel (Rom 1:16) We have a responsibility to those who sit in silence but do not know how to wait or listen to the God of the universe. Some may feel a leading from the living Word but not know what to do with a felt motion from the Lord. As we sit quietly together, we may reach beyond our human wisdom to hear the One True Voice of God speaking to us and we feel the cleansing heavenly water of Spiritual Life. We experience a more powerful inward quickening Life when gathering as one body in Christ Jesus. We even find our natural, earthly desires and individual opinions melted into a unity in Spirit in the Heavenly realm. An intelligence beyond imagining. Water and Bread that feeds the soul. Strength and Wisdom provided as our individual selves are woven into the Living Body of Christ.

In our worship we give ourselves to the inward work, feeling for the Presence among us while seeking to lay all our busy concerns in the restfulness of God's care for us. We wait until that blessing of melting love is given and we feel the oneness of the Creator drawing us into healed oneness with each other. This treasure of unity is a gift we can forget in a moment, when issues are difficult, minds are unsettled, and we can become attached to our own perceptions. We have a humble part to play in preserving our body; as we wrestle daily with the temptation to feel distanced, offended or angry. In true fellowship with one another, we find Christ is at hand and able to restore the sensed love among us. Forgiveness, and daily return to unity seems to be our work, which the Weaver enables for the unseen creation of wholeness.

A constant spontaneous joy this year is the encounters we see "around the edges" of worship time and business, with close conversations, sharing and counsel engaging friends old and new, visitors from other meetings, and guests in person and online. We were blessed to receive your epistle and hear about your rich time together in your sessions at Scattergood School this year. It was delightful to hear about storytelling with Scattergood students, music as community, your peace work and Scattergood's earth friendly farm program. We thank you for your warm welcome and loving care of our Friend John Jeremiah Edminster, who brought back a glowing report of the spirit of love that binds Iowa Friends together, which was palpable and embracing to him. We are especially grateful for Jon Shafer's presence here with us. His love, wisdom, willingness to share his experience and ask good questions are a gift. May the link between us be held tenderly in the Light of Christ, and continue with more such friendly visits.

The worldly pleasures that are so fleeting, pale in comparison to the Heavenly Joys that are everlasting and grow stronger as we share them freely through our love for one another.

*"In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths."* Proverbs 3:6

For Ohio Yearly Meeting,  
Charles Thomas, Jr, clerk

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## **DOCUMENT COMMITTEE REPORT**

The clerk wants to remind the body that, although we laid down the Documents Committee last year, epistles from around the world are

available on the Friends World Committee for Consultation website ([https://fwcc.world/resources\\_cpt/epistles/](https://fwcc.world/resources_cpt/epistles/)) and encourage people to read some of them.

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*We now adjourn to meet again this afternoon at 2:00 pm.*

\* \* \* \* \*

## **FIFTH DAY – THURSDAY AFTERNOON –7/24/2025**

*The great and small tragedies in your life and world sometimes just ask you to stand before them with silence and humility. You do not always have an answer, but you can learn to be present – listening deeply, with a heart that trembles in response to pain.*

Christina Feldman, teacher and cofounder of Gaia House, United Kingdom

*No moment of silence is a waste of time.* Rachel Needham, 20<sup>th</sup> Century British Quaker

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Readers for this afternoon’s business session are Bob Yeats and Nancy Jordan. Roy Helm and Kate Van De Walle are carrying microphones.

\* \* \* \* \*

No visitors were introduced at this time.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Minute:** We heard with interest the report of our Ministry and Counsel Committee and the State of the Meeting Reports from each of our meetings. We appreciate the work of Ministry and Counsel on many issues and their role in supporting the monthly meetings. Many of our monthly meetings are struggling with our governments, especially the federal government, which is engaging in activities that are contradictory to our leadings and long-standing testimonies. Despite the challenges, we are heartened by the joy and strength we hear in these reports. Many of our meetings have welcomed visitors and new attenders, and we were reminded that we need to welcome them with Love, though we are not always able to provide comfort and safety. The leadings of the Spirit

sometimes ask us to take risks. Oread, a small meeting in Lawrence, Kansas, is considering joining a yearly meeting, and the clerk would welcome co-travelers in visiting them.

## **MINISTRY AND COUNSEL REPORT**

The Ministry and Counsel Committee gathered most months through the last year via videoconference, meeting more frequently as we prepared for Annual Sessions. Our purpose continues to be tending to the spiritual wellbeing of IYMC and its meetings, members and attenders. In light of this, we have engaged in the following areas.

**Advices and Queries** We followed up on the minute received from 2024 Annual Sessions which asked Ministry and Counsel to explore how meetings are using the Advices and Queries. We were asked to invite meetings to send any specific revision suggestions to M&C, including the names of those willing to serve on a query revision committee, should one be formed.

Several meetings have responded. Ministry and Counsel affirms the varied ways that meetings use Advices and Queries. We recommend that the consideration of whether to engage in query revision be carried forward as responses continue to come in through the coming year.

**Intervisitation** Last fall we focused on intervisitation and how to foster more communication between meetings. We're glad to report that some intervisitation has been occurring, though more would be welcomed as Way opens for Friends. We encourage Friends to stay open to leadings in fostering intervisitation among Friends, and also with the wider community of faith.

We note that IYMC is less cohesive than in years past. Several meetings have attenders new to Quakerism who don't have a sense of the resource the Yearly Meeting represents. We wonder whether it would be helpful to be more intentional about conveying what the Yearly Meeting's purpose is, and how it operates. Could this help increase attendance at Annual Sessions? Might a map or graphic with geographical locations and some basics about the meetings within IYMC be useful? We were not able to follow through on this idea but feel this could be helpful.

Time and presence seem to be two things that we do well. Being together for bi-annual gatherings (Midyear Meeting and IYMC Annual Sessions) is especially rich, as are meeting visits either in person or digitally.

**Spiritual Sharing Small Groups (SSSG)** are in their fifth year. Participant numbers were down this year, so the SSSG Subcommittee generated a

survey to help us understand this. Thirty-nine surveys were sent out; sixteen people responded. Over 90% of respondents were glad they had participated. Some groups struggled while others thrived. The groups that were able to meet consistently became important sources of support for each other. A willingness to listen and share in this context has enriched many relationships between Friends within IYMC). We appreciate the faithful work of the subcommittee that shepherds this program.

**Retreat** A subcommittee had worked toward holding a Ministry and Counsel retreat in October of 2025, though we ultimately needed to let this go. Way may open for a gathering in the future. In the meantime, we're grateful for the opportunities we have to connect and for the work of this subcommittee.

**Minnesota Marriage Law** We received a proposed minute regarding a recent change in Minnesota law that repealed marriage protections for Quakers and four other groups. We struggled over whether to refer an edited version of the minute to Yearly Meeting and couldn't come to clarity about doing so at this time.

**Religious Education (RE) Reports** The RE Reports from monthly meeting that were received by M&C reflect wide ranging adult education opportunities including Advice and Query considerations; use of Pendle Hill pamphlets; consideration of concerns the world is facing; the Open Book Storytelling project; book discussions; supporting FCNL legislative priorities; hearing lectures and talks; participating in online or in-person informational meetings; Bible study; exploration of the *Naylor Sonnets* written by Kenneth Boulding and many other activities. A summary of these reports will appear in the Minute Book.

**State of the Meeting Reports** We read State of the Meeting reports together. Some meetings that have been shrinking in recent years are now welcoming new members and attenders, while others have fewer numbers than in years past and struggle to care for their meetinghouses and grounds. The theme of refuge emerged — refuge that invites and includes and also provides support within the meeting community. We listened to the ways that meetings are carrying the weight of the world, sensing often a gentle, focused, thoughtful response to deep challenges. We heard affirmation for the longstanding Friends tradition of holding the many facets of a difficulty in Love and discernment. Shared service was apparent, as well as generous measures of loving care within meetings. The reports reflect a sense of celebration, concern,

tenderness, vibrant life and faithfulness to the Spirit. We recommend that Annual Sessions listen to these reports together.

Throughout the year we shared often about how we were doing as individuals, and kept in touch with how our meetings were faring. We abide in the faith that the ‘long arc’ of Love and Light will continue to be revealed — day by precious day, and also in the fullness of time as we seek Spirit’s guidance together as Friends within IYMC, with the larger body of Friends, and with people of faith worldwide. Let us continue as a yearly meeting body to pray and work for healing and wholeness in the kinship of the Creative Divine.

For the Committee,

Billie Wade and Jane Cadwallader Howe, co-clerks

### **Summary of Religious Education Reports and Library Reports**

#### **Bear Creek Meeting Religious Education 2024-2025**

The Bear Creek Religious Education Committee recommended a theme of “We’re in This Together” as we took more time to ground ourselves as a meeting following the results of the presidential election. Our focus has been on mutual care: supporting each other in concrete and prayerful ways and taking time to learn what specific needs each of us has at this time. We seek to share the spiritual disciplines and other practices that have helped us in the past.

Identity – reflecting on our Individual and corporate identity.

Hope and Healing

Resilience and Resistance –*Deep Hospitality* Pendle Hill pamphlet

Some of us participated remotely/individually from our homes in *The Waters We Swim In* presentation by Barry Crossno

**(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HAArPGJSgHo>)**

We reflected on some of the Open Book Storytelling Projects/ IYMC Annual Sessions:

1. Pivotal moments in our lives.
2. People who influenced us spiritually.
3. What is a disturbance that caused us to change?
4. What does “being religious” mean?
5. What is a religious life?

Advices & Queries -Review purpose of queries and how we draw on them personally and corporately. Possible new approach to each

monthly query, to review each query, take a few minutes to consider any gaps or possible new wording, and record the suggestions.

Hierarchy in Quakerism

Discussions on Gaza/ Palestine and Israel

Outreach and Visibility within the Community

We find comfort in gathering for worship and seeking hope and guidance of the Spirit together.

Respectfully submitted, on behalf of the Meeting,  
Liz Oppenheimer and Jackie Leckband

**Decorah Friends Meeting Religious Education Report 2025**

Decorah Friends Meeting regularly holds a First Day education program for adults; we do not have children or young adults attending at this time.

Our First Day programs have included support for FCNL efforts, including quarterly times to write letters or postcards to FCNL, led by one of our Advocacy Teams members. Decorah Friends Spiritual Nurture Group leads us in a practice based upon their weekly format. We did a group study of Steve Chase's PH pamphlet in preparation for Midyear Meeting (MYM). We heard a first-hand account of an attender who returned from Tent of Nations. We explored the extinction of languages, and continue to explore what we are able to do to decolonialize and make reparations to indigenous peoples. We wrote a State of the Meeting report as a group. We have not made use of Advices and Queries in the past year.

**Des Moines Valley Religious Education Report.**

Des Moines Valley Friends continue to do all we can to be a child-friendly meeting. Over the past year we have had several young children attend Meeting once or twice with their parents or grandparents but have not had any children in First Day School. One Young Friend has met sporadically with two adult Friends, but her busy schedule as a high school student has interfered with her attending regularly.

This fall DMVF plans to host a high school class that will be offered through Scattergood Friends School. We hope that this will provide an opportunity for local high school students to be introduced to our meeting (and perhaps Scattergood as well).

## **Des Moines Valley Library Committee Report**

Special thanks to Virginia Smith who let it be known that she wanted to give her many Quaker books to the Meeting upon her passing, and to her daughter and son that helped make that possible. Virginia was clerk of the Library Committee for many years, and we are grateful for her faithful ministry and miss her physical presence among us.

Twenty-seven titles were added to the Des Moines Valley Meeting library and seven titles added to the Des Moines Valley Children's and Youth Library through purchase or donation and we continue our subscriptions to *Pendle Hill Pamphlets* and *Friends Journal*.

## **Lincoln Friends Meeting Religious Education Report 2025**

In addition to rich query considerations and personal sharing, our educational activity this year has been: reading *Deep Hospitality: Reflections on Welcome to the Quaker Community* by Rhiannon Grant Chris (PHP 487); and reading *IYMC Faith and Practice*.

Thanks to videoconferencing we listened to a lecture on Palestine by Steve Tamari and were "visited" by the Head of Scattergood School.

We participated in a listening session and informational meeting from Justice in Action, a local interfaith advocacy group.

In addition, a mid-week reading group read *The Wild Edge of Sorrow* by Francis Weller and *The Service Berry* by Robin Wall Kimmerer. We added three books to our meeting library.

## **Penn Valley Religious Education Report**

Our meeting does not have an active First Day School at the moment. We have a curriculum ready should the need arise. Our Bible Study meets each First Day at 8:30 a.m. both in-person and via videoconference. We follow the Common Lectionary to guide our Bible reading. A group of us read Phil Gulley's Living the Quaker Way, meeting mid-week via videoconference. After meeting for worship we have programs that include Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business and our regular use of the Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative Advices and Queries. We find that Friends always have topics that they want to share with the Meeting in a program format. Here is the list of programs offered this past year. [A list of weekly programs was included, dated 8/4/24 - 7/27/25.]

### **West Branch Adult Education Report**

Our group met before meeting for worship the third Sunday of each month throughout the year. This year we spent most of our time considering Kenneth Boulding's reflections on a statement made by James Naylor, an early Quaker leader in England. Boulding's meditations are offered in the form of 26 sonnets, and are themselves very spiritual. Each sonnet is based on a sentence or phrase from Naylor's words, recorded shortly before Naylor's death.

### **West Branch Library Committee Report**

We completed a thorough assessment of books on the shelves, removing second copies and culling others. Pendle Hill pamphlets get good circulation, and we ordered a few missing copies for our otherwise almost complete collection. For easy access there is a binder listing the complete holdings.

We have established two shelves dedicated to items focused on our meeting and community. Included are local authors, history, photo albums, news articles, event scrapbooks, and more. This is intended to be an accessible opportunity to learn more about our meeting and members.

Again this year we will share some of our books on the Yearly Meeting Book Table.

We have added as gifts from Wetherill Winder three books all edited by her brother Os Cresson. The titles are: *We Felt Their Kindliness: An American Family's Afghan Odyssey 1949-1951*; *It made My Heart Thump: Rebecca's Letters from Iran 1951-1953*, and *We Stood in Awe: Rebecca's Travel Diaries 1949 and 1953*. We are grateful to have these records of their family travels in the library.

Our book group continues to thrive and includes faithful online participants. In the past year we have read and discussed nine books on a wide range of topics during monthly book talks. We were able to have one of the authors videoconference into our discussion of his book. The Meeting Book Group provides an enriching opportunity for sharing and learning.

Submitted on behalf of the Meeting,

Judy Cottingham, Jane Cadwallader Howe, Kate Van de Walle

## **STATE OF THE MEETING REPORTS**

### **Ames Friends Meeting**

The strength of Ames Meeting is our shared experience of searching, persistence and support. The diversity of our callings is both a strength and a challenge.

The growing bellicosity of our country and its fascism presses in on us in many ways. Unsure of what each tomorrow will bring, we strive to lean into possibilities before us, to breathe from our center, and to be kind and forbearing with each other. We have been unable to unite with AFSC's Anti-Apartheid campaign or to declare our meetinghouse a sanctuary site. Still, we encourage and support the individuals in our meeting who are committed to the Ames Sanctuary Interfaith Partners (ASIP) and Ames Interfaith Refugee Alliance (AIRA). We all condemn apartheid in any form.

Beyond ameliorating the suffering experienced by so many through state and national policies, some of us are actively seeking to change the policies and practices that cause the suffering. Some participate in FCNL's Western Iowa Advocacy Team, holding meetings in person and remotely with our senators and representatives. Although the ship of state turns slowly at times, we do not give up.

More than anything else, our meetings for worship bind us together in a spirit of intense waiting and expectancy. Spoken ministries reach into our hearts. There is reading of Quaker and other spiritual writings, recently works of Howard Thurman and Walter Brueggeman, in the hour before meeting for worship. Each year we hold an Easter morning walk and brunch. That, and our monthly potlucks, feeds our bodies richly.

Some of us dedicate many hours to the physical maintenance of our lovely meetinghouse and grounds. Installation of a heat pump heating and cooling system called for careful research, many telephone calls and emails, and oversight. We are still waiting for rebates from the city.

We get help in cleaning and window washing from Zen and yoga groups who also use our meetinghouse, leaving their calm aura in the space.

We hold a monthly meeting for healing of people within and beyond our meeting. Personal growth and openings occur as we lean into the trying processes of illness and diminishment.

Participation in Yearly Meeting stretches us thin, although Ames Meeting individuals serve on Yearly Meeting committees, including Peace and Social Concerns, Ministry and Counsel, Midyear Planning,

Nominating and Scattergood. We are striving to be more conscientious with respect to addressing the Advices and Queries.

A small meeting, we cherish visits, counsel and support from others in the Yearly Meeting. We hope to be active and engaged in supporting other monthly meetings.

### **Bear Creek Friends Meeting**

*Speak, only if it improves upon the Silence.* Gandhi

Much of last year's State of the Meeting Report speaks to our condition with little adjustment.

We have experienced an ebb and flow of attendance with some of our dearest longtime members moving on, but we welcome the addition of new seekers in our midst.

Our vocal ministry arises from Silence fairly infrequently, but when offered is richly cherished. One message queried how the Spirit nudged a reflection on how to discern the balance between what is required of "me" and the importance of honoring and embracing the "we". A newer attender shared the wonder of openness and patience involved with Quaker discernment and decision making and how we ground ourselves in the loving presence of the Spirit. We wonder if the practice of the IYMC Exercise Committee for our weekly meeting for worship may help us understand how the Spirit calls us to faithfulness, service and moving in the world.

The number of distant members who are active in our meeting for worship, query discussions, meeting for business, etc. remains a vital presence of Bear Creek Meeting. On any given First Day we have virtual attenders from Des Moines, Guthrie Center, Panora in Iowa and Minnesota, Wisconsin, Kansas City, New York, or Florida. This wealth of fellowship greatly enhances our corporate spiritual journey and encourages those few in physical attendance that we are indeed "in this together."

We continue to reflect on the structure and relevance of the monthly Queries, often making note of language that may be outdated and omissions of topics that seem more timely. We feel these adjustments may be useful for IYMC and Ministry and Council to discern and usually incorporate these ideas into our Query responses.

Bear Creek has actively participated in events to engage and invite the wider local community to learn more about Friends in the neighborhood.

Much has changed in the past months, given the troubling shifts in the political landscape.

We are struck by how much uncertainty abounds. Who is safe from being deported? Who is safe from violence carried out by militarized police forces? Who is being targeted as being the “other”. We wonder if we feel the need to withdraw our outreach efforts, or do we have an opening to carry out even more engagement in order to bear witness and inspire others to be more visible in their own witness. How do we protect the powerful, living witness of our faith and the Spirit of Love?

### **Decorah Friends Meeting**

Decorah Friends Meeting is a warm and welcoming spiritual home for those who choose to attend. As we arrive, we gather in a circle, sharing bits of our weekday lives, then settle into expectant waiting. At the rise of Meeting we go around the circle, each saying our names and sharing anything we wish. Often the sharing includes lingering thoughts from a Meeting for Learning or percolating messages from the worship hour.

Most often meeting for worship is silent. Many feel filled by this gathered silence, welcoming any spoken message as a bonus, but not feeling unfulfilled in its absence. However, we are aware of some who no longer attend regularly because spoken messages are important to them. Their spiritual needs are not met without spoken words.

When we pause to ponder these things, we arrive at questions for which we have no answers. Do we come to Meeting adequately prepared to listen for the still, small voice of God/Spirit? Are we willing to speak words aloud if we feel called to do so? When we share after-thoughts, a rich and rewarding experience, where do those afterthoughts intersect with messages during worship? Were they not quite messages? Do we somehow stifle our own voices during worship, or are we being faithful to an inner voice saying the message in that moment is just for the individual to hold? We continue to hold these questions in the Light.

The other challenge that is mentioned when we pause to assess the state of meeting is a lack of youth. Only one of our regular attenders is less than 60 years old. How does an “old” group attract young people? Should we be concerned with that? It’s a question that comes up whenever we take a self-assessment, but it’s a question we have never gotten any closer to resolving.

Our day-to-day and week-to-week realities are less about what we lack and more about what we celebrate. A Spiritual Nurture group meets

weekly. We check in about the previous week, write using a prompt which sometimes comes from spiritual writings and sometimes from lived experiences, we share those writings, and we close by requesting how we might hold each other in the coming week.

Political and social justice activities are documented in the separate report. Other areas of focus as we individually interface with the world include agricultural and ecological activities. Meeting's support of members and attenders following their leadings comes both in the form of questions asked during sharing after worship and in encouragement to lead activities during regular Meeting for Learning time. We appreciate the many ways our members and attenders live out their faith.

Decorah Friends Meeting is a place where people feel accepted for who they are which makes it a place where people can be honest and vulnerable. In coming to Meeting, we bring ourselves as we are, open to what Spirit provides, and in sharing worship we feel anew the truth in the phrase "where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them." For many, Spirit feels more accessible in our shared worship than in ordinary life.

### **Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting**

As we look back over the past 12 months, we are struck by intertwining themes of loss and community. We lost the presence of several significant members of our meeting community and many individuals in Meeting experienced losses of family and close friends. Some have struggled with our own health or with caring for that of others. In addition, we have been dismayed by the losses of rights of whole groups of people, disenfranchised through governmental actions, both here in Iowa and across our country.

Through it all, we have found solace, support and common cause, both within our meeting community and through the wider fellowship of Friends. We have grieved together while celebrating wonderful lives. We have also provided transportation to Meeting, appointments, shopping and myriad other destinations. We have provided casseroles and hugs, sent cards and emails, held each other in the Light and found many other ways to be present for those going through hard times. We have been especially active over the past year in publicly witnessing our faith, through: calls, emails, letters and personal visits with our elected state and federal representatives; writing letters to-the-editor; speaking at

gatherings of advocates; participating in protests and celebrating the work of effective advocates for peace, justice and kindness.

In the winter we held a well-attended workshop, “Roots of Injustice, Seeds of Change,” facilitated by Paula Palmer, with Boulder Friends Meeting and Friends Peace Teams. Proceeds from a goodwill offering at the workshop have been given to the Meskwaki Nation. We also had a recent presentation about the AFSC Apartheid Initiative and our meeting continues discernment regarding the possibility of joining the initiative.

The remarkable generosity of one of our members inspired the creation of a “Committee for Migrant & Refugee Concerns,” which has: researched community efforts to help, sustain and advocate for the strangers who have come to us (Iowans) seeking assistance; allocated funds accordingly; and advised our meeting on opportunities to also provide individual support through donations and volunteering.

During our June Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, we decided to reach out to schools in proximity to our meetinghouse to offer free use of our space for groups that are no longer able to use school facilities because of recent prohibitions against DEI activities and certain issue-centered groups. We hope that this will prove beneficial to beleaguered educators, school administrators and students.

Our relationship with Friends House (the building that housed the AFSC regional office) is the strongest it has been in recent years. We gratefully acknowledge the work of our three representatives to Friends House Board for this.

We are encouraged that new and younger people continue to find us and to join us in worship.

We have been steadily resuming group activities that were on hiatus during COVID, including our Thanksgiving meal and soup lunches. These gatherings are important ways to build community and to nurture our collective spiritual growth.

### **Iowa City Friends Meeting**

Iowa City Friends Meeting has been a spiritual resource for our community for 75 years. We provide a welcoming and inclusive place for those seeking aid in beginning or extending their spiritual journey. We often have people who are attending a Quaker meeting for the first time. Newcomers want a place of worship that is non-judgmental and accepting of their idea of Spirit. They seek encouragement to explore and share their insights. Some of these newcomers attend Meeting for a short time, and even though they may appreciate Quaker openness and

practice, their spiritual journey leads them elsewhere. Others commit to regular attendance and become active in meeting for worship and meeting for worship with attention to business. Some become members of our meeting. But Iowa City is largely a college community, and many faithful attenders relocate after their schooling ends. Ten years ago, a young couple began worshipping with us and were married under the care of the Meeting. They were then blessed with two children who we came to love as well. They began contemplating a move that would simplify their work lives and draw them closer to family. A clearness committee was organized to help with their decision. After their relocation to another state, they found another Quaker meeting. Though we miss them, we are happy that they are members, as we are, of a larger Quaker community.

Meeting has always had an aspect of spiritual refuge and renewal. Lately the direction our country is taking runs counter to Quaker beliefs of peace and social justice and our conviction that there is “that of God in everyone.” In meeting, the anxiety created by the mismatch of our country’s policies and Quaker beliefs is palpable. Attenders share their feelings openly and are supported by others to practice self-care while continuing to work for a better world. As always, political and social action as well as a supportive and loving Quaker community will see us through difficult times.

Bob Winkleblack, Iowa City Friends Meeting clerk

### **Lincoln Friends Meeting**

When it is time to write this report, it seems as though it was only yesterday that the last one was written, while conversely, when we reflect, it seems that so much time has passed and so much has occurred not just within our meeting, but in the world at large.

We continue to meet in a hybrid format, which despite its pitfalls, suits us well. In some respects, the division between those attending in-person and virtually is akin to times long past when our meetinghouses separated the men and women with a partition. Both sides meeting together but still, a barrier. But that small divide is worth the challenges it brings: the ability to share in silence with those who are many miles away, are unable to physically attend, or who may have spent too much time giving attention to dogs, is truly a gift that we are very appreciative of. Although our numbers are rather small and we tend to be aging, we

do have some younger folks in attendance and are blessed with occasional visitors.

As for meeting for worship with attention to business, we generally have good participation and are always appreciative of the reports from the respective committees and the work that those committees undertake, with our Peace and Social Concerns Committee serving as our barometer for events and concerns outside of the confines of our community.

The same can be said for our Query considerations. At times these exercises can seem rote, while at others, our participation is very robust and insightful, which may have to do with the given mood of the participants or the way that outside influences have affected our mood and spirit.

It is evident that we have a great deal of care and concern for each other, which makes it even more difficult when a rift does arise amongst us. Personalities do clash at times, feelings have been hurt, some of us struggle to speak up or reach out, we don't always hear the need in a voice. We want to find our way in being more supportive of each other and provide a space that is both safe and nurturing, where we can all find refuge.

Our meeting has also been introspective in asking ourselves "what does it mean to be a Lincoln Friend" and "where is it we would like to see our meeting go?" These queries resonate in the face of more recent national actions regarding immigration, the erosion of certain civil liberties, disregard and even disdain for our climate and natural world, the inhumanity demonstrated against the Palestinian people, among others, and how much energy and ability we have amongst us to address these major concerns that have other ramifications far outside the realm of our small meeting. These are monumental issues and challenge our core beliefs in their considerations and the potential remedies test our faith. These concerns are carried alongside our recognition of past transgressions against other groups over time, and although burdensome, we share this together with the intention of finding peaceful and meaningful reconciliation.

The joy of life in this world is sometimes hard to see, but then there is the call of a songbird, a spring flower in bloom, the soft caress of a cooling breeze or the touch of a loved one that brings back to focus how amazing life is when shared in the spirit of the Lord.

### **Paullina Friends Meeting**

Paullina Monthly Meeting is located in rural Northwest Iowa. The Meeting was started 140 years ago by families who migrated from Western Europe, eastern parts of Iowa and states east of the Mississippi. Those individuals and families moved for economic, religious, and social reasons. We are disappointed that government systems have not been formed for simple, legal ways for people with the same needs to find refuge where our forbearers did.

The spirit of our meeting is visible as we meet on Sundays for worship, care for our facilities and socialize with each other. Meetings for business are held and participated in with welcomed discussion. Most of our business and Meeting work is done by a committee as a whole. Work projects and committee work are instigated by those who see the need and are supported by all. Meetings for worship are many times silent. As a Friend has said “silent worship is a method not an idol.” It is good to remember that words spoken need not be perfect and that the job of the listener is to find the spirit of the message. If the words aren’t spoken, then we may have received the message and not shared it with the Meeting.

We are planning for the future, and as we are unsure what that future is, different directions need to be weighed before plans are made. Scattergood Friends School, Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative, as well as other meetings and religious groups can influence and give us continued revelation on our planning.

Doyle Wilson, clerk.

### **Penn Valley Friends Meeting**

Our meeting continues to find Divine guidance in our expectant waiting. There is both vocal ministry and the collective strength that sometimes comes from an hour of silence. We continue to hold hybrid meetings for worship using videoconference. We take time after meeting to introduce ourselves and to ask people to share joys, sorrows and concerns as well as announcements. There are times when this sharing deeply touches our hearts.

On a typical First Day there are 3-5 attenders via videoconference and 7-12 attenders in person at meeting. As an urban meeting, we often get a visitor or two. Only a few come back again, and we wish more would. Our Outreach Committee encourages newcomers to sign the guest book, and we have reached out to folks who have signed-in. We do not

presently have a working First Day School for youth, although we have some preparations for it if the need should arise. As part of our outreach efforts, we now produce a monthly email bulletin that notes the Bible readings for First Day Bible Study, the list of after-meeting programs to be offered in the next four to eight weeks, and the minutes from the last business meeting. Our meeting uses the Queries once a month for the after-meeting program and we find them challenging. We never lack for program ideas and know each other to be able to share on almost any topic.

The weekly Bible Study remains an important part of the Meeting. For those of us who go, we find that it centers us for meeting for worship soon after. Using the Common Lectionary allows us to be on the same liturgical calendar with other Christian bodies. We learn from each other as we bring our different frames of reference to the same text. A group of us also read "Living the Quaker Way" by Phil Gulley this past year. We are excited about our upcoming retreat with Windy Cooler to be held Ninth Month, 25-27<sup>th</sup>.

Business meetings are more lightly attended than meetings for worship. We spent a good amount of time this year considering the minute from Fayetteville Friends Meeting and found a wide-variety of responses. While we never fully endorsed the minute as a meeting, we did unite around the following sentences: *"At the core of our belief as Friends, we are called to love our neighbors. This testimony extends to all, for we all have access to the Christ Within. Immigrants are our neighbors and individuals and families should not have to live in fear of separation and deportation. Friends in our meeting are encouraged to provide love, prayer and material aid as led reflecting our testimonies to folks impacted by current immigration policies."* Many F/friends in the meeting are very active in peace and social concerns.

We are learning to be more tender with each other. We spent time reflecting on the long article describing the Friends approach to conflict resolution that was sent to us by Yearly Meeting Ministry and Counsel. When disputes arise, we know we must trust more deeply in the Spirit. Faithfulness to the Light Within will release these burdens.

Approved at Seventh Month Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. 6/7/2025

## **West Branch Friends Meeting**

On First Day we gather to worship. Some join with us in person, others digitally. Typically, the motivation to worship remotely is not fear of a pandemic. Rather, it is an issue of distance or accessibility. Our hybrid format enhances our ability to worship together. Worship is often quiet but at times it is rich with insight and reflection. We are grateful to have the technology that supports our efforts to stay connected.

This has been a year of change for our meeting. After serving the Meeting as clerk for 29 years, Jim Cottingham has stepped down from this position. He has guided our meeting with skill, insight, patience and understanding. Callie Marsh, who has faithfully recorded our query responses each month, has stepped away from this important undertaking. Month after month, Callie has woven our remarks into tapestries of understanding. We thank both for their years of lovingly tending to these responsibilities.

We continue our efforts to enhance the connectedness of our members. We encourage our committees to gather on a regular basis for work and fellowship. We have restarted a newsletter to keep our members informed about what the meeting has recently done and what we are planning to do. Our goal is to have this distributed quarterly.

Once a month our meeting volunteers at an organization where we help feed and clothe those who have recently come to our community from Mexico and Central America. After an evening of work, we share a meal at a nearby restaurant. Often there is the opportunity to reflect on how grateful we are that we do not have to worry about where our next meal is coming from or whether we can clothe our children.

We continue to look for opportunities to deepen our faith and our understanding of Quakerism. Our Adult Education Committee provides us with opportunities to reflect on our convictions and to grow in our understanding. We are grateful for the committee's dependability in finding meaningful readings for us each month. Our Library Committee continues to strengthen our meeting as it actively searches for pamphlets and books that speak to our condition and our faith. We are grateful for their ongoing curation of our collection. Last July our meeting was invited to join private family Arapaho rituals to assist the spirit's journey to the afterlife for Grace Yellowhair and Theodore Rogers. The children were students during their time at the Indian Industrial School which operated in West Branch the first nine months in 1883. An act of connecting a

family with the gravesite of a past generation was meaningful for those in attendance.

We often discuss our concerns about the direction of our state and country. We worry about protecting the weak and the vulnerable. Our meeting is concerned about how we can maintain the rule of law and justice. Many of our members have taken up advocacy. In this time of challenge, we are grateful that the health of our meeting is sound, and that we continue to find ways to build on this strength.

### **Whittier Friends Meeting**

Whittier is reaping fruits from the seeds planted by Friends no longer living. They taught us both the faith and practice of Friends, and prepared the ground so that worship in the manner of Friends could continue in the Whittier Meetinghouse after they were gone.

This year's harvest has been plentiful

As in recent years, it is common to find anywhere from 3-10 people coming together at our meetinghouse for First Day worship. However, the pool from which our worshipers are drawn has widened greatly. It is always a joy to welcome curious first time seekers. What is *new* is there is now a core of visitors who return with regularity and choose to become attenders.

It is especially notable how the people currently finding nourishment in Friends' worship at Whittier cover a very large area in both geography and life experiences:

Some of us come from rural, and some from urban roots. Some are native lowans, and others are not. Some of our attenders travel quite a long distance each week to join us for worship. There is a new attender who lives in Whittier. Our worship family now includes young people ranging in ages from toddler up through young adult.

There are a wide variety of jobs, political opinions, family and health circumstances to be found among us. This range of diversity is something new and we treasure it. We learn from each other. It deepens our worship and helps us grow in many different ways.

We share the same desire of early Friends: to seek Truth and seek the Light offered to us from the Divine; and to live a life that is meaningful, empathetic and helpful to others. We try to support each other through difficult times. We are grateful that our various paths have crossed and our lives interact because of our shared love of Friends' worship.

We report with sadness that a member was led to discontinue his Whittier membership this past year. He was a vital part of Whittier and

brought many gifts of the spirit to our meeting. We miss him. We continue to hold him in our hearts.

This past year we joyfully welcomed one longtime attender into membership. Another long-time attender has recently requested a clearness committee for membership.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Minute:** We were moved by the depth of the struggles and the learnings evident in these query responses. Clearly, meetings are using the queries well. It is interesting to hear new insights arise from the same queries each year. The assistant clerk noted that not as many meetings submitted query responses this year. And the clerks remind monthly meetings that their responses can be helpful to us all. We also appreciate it when meetings point out flaws in the Advices and Queries and note that these are being recorded and will likely be used by a future committee to revise them.

## QUERY RESPONSES

### 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:** We wondered about ascribing gender and how this has changed how we relate to God and the Holy Spirit. For some, the imagination is liberated by the notion of the Holy Spirit being feminine, and feminine qualities feel like a needed rebalancing of what has come before. The use of the pronoun *them* for the Divine has led to a deeper place for others. It is a way to enter into the beauty of the unknowable.

A Friend notes that this query doesn't emphasize our access to the Spirit or a way of living outside meeting or when we are not together. Meditation, study and prayer outside of meeting strengthens

our worship when we are together. Living our day-to-day life with a sensitivity to the Spirit which resides in the “ordinary world” means one can encounter the Spirit both anywhere and more often. The stereotype is that a Quaker will be struck by the Spirit spontaneously while in meeting for worship, but many times it does not happen this way. For this Friend, a spiritual message received in their day-to-day life is thought about several times before the Friend is ready to share it in meeting.

### **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:** We note that our silent worship can be both open and welcoming and prevent us from becoming close to each other. Are we more comfortable staying small than becoming more truly diverse? We know we need to speak from our own experience. Do we have courage to have honest communication and relationships when there are differences? We recognize that we can love people with whom we don’t agree. We want to stay civil, cordial and encourage goodwill. Can we say “I don’t believe that” with love?

When we show up in the larger community, how do we stay true when we may feel alone with our values? We realize that sometimes one-on-one conversations are a real way to connect through differences.

A Friend shares that they have recently written a blog post about their experience of Quaker Earthcare Witness. At QEW’s core are the beliefs that there is “that of God” in every person and the power of listening cannot be overstated. We need to cultivate deep listening just now and

look beyond the surface of those with whom we don't agree and honor the person underneath.

Another Friend emphasizes our interaction with our community. People get hung up on how to react to the world. The only way to make the world fairer is to treat each person equally and to model that behavior on a local level to achieve the world we want.

We are perhaps a little more skilled in "in search" than in outreach. At times we may consider outreach to be rather forward. We do not want people to find us pushy. Social courtesy may inhibit us from speaking openly about our own faith. When people have questioned us about our faith, do we in turn ask about their beliefs?

For instance, we believe there is that of God in all persons. God is present in our *I/thou* relationships with people, as well as with all living beings. God can be found in all lives and in our understanding of our world.

### **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:** Our meeting began our query wondering about our practice of silence. For many of us, silence is an essential part of our faith and practice and helps hold space for all that is said and considered. We have heard that, for some friends who have been historically marginalized, the practice of going to silence when there is dissent seems controlling and dominating.

We also wondered how things change within a tradition to embrace more diversity and be more inclusive. Friends thought that at times silence may not be effective if it is used to build a defense. Are we exerting too much power? Are we really listening to Spirit? How do we know? Those are harder questions.

We are aware that many of the early Quaker customs have changed over the years. For instance, we do not use thee and thou in our speaking. We sometimes choose to volunteer for appointments. In earlier times, members were invited to suggest names for the appointment. It might still be wise to listen to the suggestions that arise from the stillness of our worship. This allows the Spirit to lift up the name of a person that might not have occurred to the meeting. If we rely on volunteers, we may well find that members do not take the time to listen for a name to rise up, and that we will not consider the meaning of the change.

#### **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:** Silence is a wonderful and important practice that Quakers bring to the world. We come from and return to different places and need to learn ways of taking that silence from Meeting back into the world. Silence can speak what is beyond words. A clerking workshop helped one of us understand that what appears to be a conflict between two is actually a conflict belonging to the whole body. There are doubts and concerns among us that may reveal themselves as personal conflicts. It is important to speak only for oneself, to not make a ‘we’ statement if it is really an ‘I’ statement.

Love is a central understanding of the Divine. Human emotion is another matter; it can lead a person into believing they are right. But being human, we are not always right. This belief may be connected to our ego. For example, the issues surrounding gender, power, privilege, and history tend to lead one to believe that one is “right” To achieve an environment for working together is difficult. We may find that people in conflict cease to attend meetings.

Vulnerability walks hand in hand with power. Often vulnerability is being protected right behind our strength. Part of harmony is knowing how to balance strength with inner vulnerability. When we do this, we can sense

the Presence working among us. We recognize that our vulnerabilities are deeply tied to care.

Differences can lead us into harmony. In music, some notes provide a separation of frequencies or notes. When these dissonances persist in music, they are honored as part of the harmony. Dissonance and resolution both deepen our appreciation of the music. Harmony becomes a reality when we know the love of the Divine and then share that love and care for those with whom we disagree.

We may disagree with what someone is saying or doing without being in conflict with them.

We are not all the same. One says they avoid conflict with people they disagree with. Another says that they are a reconciler, by nature or by learning, trying to bring different points of view together.

#### **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:** We asked about mutual care for our spiritual needs as well as our practical needs. We are challenged by remaining in contact with inactive and distant members, and we wonder how we support newcomers and seekers. What is our structure for this? Without a clear request, how do we discern needs?

Friends who grew up in this tradition reflected on their experiences as children, and we wondered how to meet the needs of different children in different ways. What is the path and our responsibility for those who have told us we don't meet their spiritual needs? What do we really know about each other? How might we grow as a spiritual community and as people if we were to move toward a deeper understanding of how we may have fallen short?

The question of how we respond to each other's needs and difficulties is a huge question. We need to be more aware of the struggles others may be having. For instance, the attacks on trans people; we're sympathetic, but we don't know how to respond in a useful way. Health concerns people experience may limit their participation and present many challenges. Perhaps we can share more of ourselves to help others know how to respond in a useful way.

Knowing how dangerous and difficult these times are, having a sense of spiritual place that pulls that of God into your heart is grounding.

Physical and spiritual care of our local, national and global community is needed and, as we watch this unfolding, we can't wait very long to react. While we cannot speak for others, we can speak of how treatment of others affects us. We need to speak truth to power from our own perspective, standing behind others as they speak their truth. And we must not forget to follow the kindness in the world; don't overlook the joys and get mired in darkness.

"Let us see what love can do" is a call for us as a meeting to be empowered. Inclusivity is a Gospel imperative. Jesus demonstrated this empowerment with the loaves and fishes. There was enough for everyone with some to spare. This was a demonstration of a response to practical needs of caring for creation and leaning into what love means to us. Generosity has been demonstrated in countless ways through the human story.

### **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:** The second query regarding the teachings of our Judeo-Christian heritage makes it seem like we only learn from the past. Present inflow of religions and philosophies seems more accurate as we look at active participation of who Friends are now.

Attending a local high school play recently shows the very high energy level of young people. They'll need to be brave and have lots of energy to face what this world offers. They have what it takes. We should let them know we're here if they need us. The world is changing at an overwhelming pace. It's important to play a role with an open heart. This takes courage.

A woman in Texas, who is no longer alive, had a sign behind her desk that said, "It is not those that disagree with us, only those that attempt to divide and control us that are our enemies." It is important to know the difference. We are divided by those in power. Inconsequential ideas keep us from coming together. The order of the day is to come together with those that disagree with us but who are not attempting to control us. We should acknowledge what we can agree on and work together.

Love and challenge are present in the process of education. This process is seen in spring and with new life. We see how much work and energy there is to begin the process in the blooming of flowers and the birth of new babies, both humans and other animals. There is an impetus for new life that is embedded with challenges. The pushing up of seeds from the ground, the push of a newborn through the birth canal, the fledgling of birds, the bursts of butterflies from their chrysalises and the challenges of finding food for these new lives. There are enormous challenges for new life and an impetus for learning.

A younger attender, three years post high school, expressed some doubt about the hope that the younger generation had knowledge about activism. He was aware that activities such as meeting with a governor about climate change and translating language for deaf children were examples of activism, but people of his generation also feel powerless. They mean well but really feel that they do not know how to bring about big changes. He knows those that have given up or feel that activism is covered by posting on Instagram. Those raising children stress the need

to be part of a community that can support them. Most people that he knows do have a community.

One Friend suggests it is difficult to share their beliefs when the Religious Society of Friends advises against proselytizing. Being a trans person is made difficult with our society's gender expectations. Often non-binary and trans persons are forgotten – there is no existing template for them. This Friend appreciates the clerk's assertion that Quakers believe in continuing revelation; it protects the person reading Faith and Practice and makes it less rigid. We are asked to be seekers and to support one another in our beliefs – very important.

As Friends, we should draw an important lesson from Quaker boarding schools and the great harm that was done to indigenous children and families. We have made and will make mistakes. We need to practice both humility and kindness. It is important to remember that the person we are attempting to educate is not an empty vessel.

Another Friend has been reading essays written by mathematicians, philosophers and psychiatrists. What is the most important in education and in learning how the world works? Many scholars believe the answer is "I don't know" and not "I don't care." A learner's primary tenet should be "I may be wrong" and only that will make us open-minded seekers.

A Friend reminds us that the notion that one "may be wrong" is written into our Queries.

Another Friend says simply "seeking the truth is a spiritual journey."

### **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:** It was noted that clear communication, patience and a sense of humor are vital to good family relationships; particular emphasis was given to the importance of laughter. One noted that continued work on personal spiritual growth is vital to being able to be part of the lives of her grandchildren. We know that sharing our deepest experiences with our children and others is important; our everyday lives may not prepare us well for such sharing, but Query considerations can help us get there. While we know that “lightening up” can be important in relationships, we may not have noticed that that phrase can also refer to relying on Divine guidance.

One Friend struggles with their grandchildren’s use of social media, realizing that they shouldn’t chide the children’s parents. After all, cell phones and other devices were not invented when many of us were raising children. Shouldn’t this Advice/Query address the problems with technology and readily available inappropriate content in our homes and families?

Teaching by example is a way to avoid the trap of sanctimoniousness. To live the life that nurtures the many physical, social, spiritual, and emotional needs of each other, we need to be a model that is not overly self-conscious.

Anger can be a way of removing something distressing. We do not have to stay angry. Perhaps anger can help create a new way of thinking.

**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:** The culture around us is beginning to fragment; keeping our serenity is the true challenge.

We all are connected. We are one and what concerns one of us, concerns all of us. We need to be sensitive in our use of language so as not to hurt others. And it is important not to assume that the way we see the world is the same as the way others do.

We remembered Brother Lawrence who found peace in serving others in his community. Life is full, but it is important not to lose touch with the quiet and the Divine Center, given what life brings to us. The Divine Center is in each person and is everywhere all around us, and we are called to live in service to that Center. The Divine Center seems at times like a quantum trinity, within us, between us, and among us.

The words of Thomas Kelly at the start of the advice — “a life of unhurried peace and power” — help us realize that we need to be open to how time holds us. We recognize the importance of honesty and simplicity, and how these are essential to living in the Divine Center. It is our responsibility to attend to this in our everyday lives.

As we have reflected before, another Friend references that the advice and query regarding addiction makes addiction sound like a moral failure rather than a result of past trauma, life experience, or a medical condition. This attitude toward addiction lands people in jail rather than in treatment.

Another sees issues like addiction as complicated by polarities. Certainly, a person with addiction needs help and should be given that help but the individual also should assume a certain amount of responsibility for their own healing.

A Friend points out that IYMC Advices and Queries were probably initially started to provide a framework of Quaker beliefs. I understand now, as an adult, that the important thing to tune in to is the spiritual energy we feel when we are worshipping together, not a set of rules.

Another finds the definition of addiction to be too limited. Addiction involves not only drug and alcohol use but things like computer gaming, shopping, and the like.

A Friend objected to the term “alcoholic” because calling an individual an alcoholic denies their complete personhood. Another Friend stressed the importance of language when describing anyone. For example, a “person with disabilities” embraces the whole person whereas “disabled person” is a limiting label. Contrary to current scoffing about “wokeness,” language makes a difference in how we conceptualize.

### **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:** FCNL Advocacy Team people are always positive even when it seems impossible. They stick with what they’ve decided to work on rather than moving from issue to issue based on what is in the news. Is there danger to ourselves because of speaking out? I feel consternation about that now that everyone can have assault weapons. Does this make it harder to do what we’re called to do? Is it hard to be brave?

As an individual I struggle to focus. I feel scattered. I try to follow Jesus’ advice about rendering unto Caesar what Caesar’s is but it is hard to figure out what is Caesar’s. The sense of feeling scattered and the magnitude of the problems make me feel paralyzed.

I’m thinking about opinions, convictions, and Truth. It is important to share convictions with others using a listening ear and with respect. Despite my neighbor’s commitment to Trump, I respect his commitment

to his neighbors and to God. We have conversations where we don't try to change each other's minds. When is our Truth just an opinion? We do have a discernment structure that helps us think into what our convictions are, what God is telling us to do. We do it together, in community.

It is important for us to speak the Truth as we know it, but also to have a sense that we don't necessarily know the whole Truth. So, we need to both speak and listen.

One Friend remarks that the Query Civic Responsibility comes at a fortuitous time, a few weeks before the November election. We never know what the future will bring, and we often tend not to want to get involved but we should be involved. The Query asks us how we "assume responsibility for the government of our community, state, nation and world."

We need to think about what we can do.

Another Friend notes they were drawn to Quakerism by the active participation of Quakers in our communities. The oldest religious lobby in Washington D.C., Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), was established by Quakers with lobbying groups throughout the United States. This Friend's feeling is that most religions try to make one a better person; Quakers take being a better person one step further by working for a better world.

One Friend expresses concern about the upcoming election and perceives the government is largely controlled by the rich. Ending war is a major Quaker issue and our government keeps getting deeper into war. Half of government spending supports war. War causes vast amounts of world-wide suffering, and this Friend wishes Query #9 would address our government's cover-up and complicity in this suffering.

Some who have been Quakers their entire lives have been actively protesting war. Being a Quaker, we believe we are on a path of peace, and that we are called to action, protesting the wars our country gets into. We focus on peace, and we protest war and the use of our taxes to promote and engage in war.

Every person carries the Divine within them, and this is such a baseline and a challenge when we engage in civic responsibility. As we confront today's challenges, we need to stay rooted in love and faith and carry this and let this guide us in our actions in our communities, big and small. Everyone has a story, a narrative and a human experience. The question is: How can we bring care and nurturing of the Divine into our civic life while being respectful of the different experiences and understandings in our world?

### **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:** Friends spoke of systems of Interdependency, of "The Other Way of Knowing." Our European ancestors did not seem to comprehend our connection with each other and our right relationship with the natural world. First Nations People seem to have this knowing, ways of sitting with a plant and learning from it, an awareness and recognition of nature. We wondered how the world would be different if our ancestors simply listened instead of trying to teach what we thought was a superior world view? We spoke of learning from this and to begin to listen now with people who are so willing to share this wisdom with us. That our lives may depend on our ability to listen with humility.

One Friend lifts up the call to have "reverence and respect for life" referenced in the Query #10 Advice. It is important that we revere and respect all life, not just human life.

Another Friend reminds us that reverence for life is linked to reverence for God. An all-encompassing consciousness is the source of spirit and a purpose for one's life. There is mystery and complexity and unity in attending to that consciousness.

## 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:** Use of the phrase, “most of us” in the advice reminds us that Iowa Quakers, at the time this was written, described a middle-class white experience of the world. We now know that this experience is limited. We are troubled by the use of this phrase because it is not inclusive.

While we know that the system in which we live has been set up to benefit some of us more than others, through education and generational wealth for example, *we want to* hold awareness of this inequity. We long to “Sit together in the Light” rather than “hold *others* in the Light.”

“Immigrant” is a legal term to distinguish a class of people. One Friend questions, at its foundation, the way we draw distinctions between people though we are all the same. All are equal.

A Friend reflects on their years of tutoring newly arrived immigrants – both documented and undocumented – to our community. One thing was clear: the constant fear which permeates their lives. We must hold newcomers to our country in the Light. While canvassing in rural Iowa during the recent election, some middle and upper-class Iowans indicated their concern about immigration and saw it as a threat to their safety. There is irony in the attitudes of these two groups – immigrants and citizens with political power – both live in fear.

A Friend suggests that so many of the things we do to try to address inequity don’t have impact. One consideration that does have an impact is where we put our money. This Friend recently moved their investments into socially responsible funds; it is a powerful thing we can do.

Another friend comments that Matthew 25:35-36 is clear. If we consider ourselves Christians, there is no way around it: *For when I was hungry you gave me food, when thirsty you gave me drink, when I was a stranger you took me into your home, when naked you clothed me, when in prison you visited me.*

Another notes that our whole economic structure is competitive by nature. Americans have opposing views which can lead to polarization. It is important to use one's "head" to understand the source of our fear. But this query sends a strong message for the "heart" and that message is "all people are equal."

## **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:** In America, capitalist and colonialist visions played out in the schools that white people, including Quakers, set up and ran to teach Native American children. Quakers participated in robbing indigenous peoples of their languages and discounting their senses of beauty and of the divine. Quakers of the time seem to have bought into the colonialist way of thinking, sincerely believing that they were helping the children. John Woolman was an exception. In his journal he wrote about being led to visit the Indians, but instead of wishing to change, inform, or straighten them out, he sought to learn from them. Are we exceptions? Are we taking the time to listen and see which way we're led? We feel that our corporate discernment of the Spirit is an important thing we offer in the world. Some of us remember Quaker stories designed to teach us and our children that our spiritual ancestors were abolitionists, non-violent, and

open-minded, but skipped the big truth that Quakers joined with the wider colonialist society in many ways, at many times in history.

A Friend, in searching for ancestors who lived peacefully, discovered that war and violence has been with us from the beginning of humankind. The temptation to be violent is innate and we need to start early and continually educate ourselves and others that war is never the answer. The highest honor should be commitment to peace and not service in war.

Another Friend suggests the use of the concept “overpopulation” as a cause of violence is problematic and should be replaced by the term “overconsumption.” “Overpopulation” is a coded word meaning the world is put at risk by cultures and countries with a higher birth rate than the “Western” world. But in reality, European/American cultures use much more of the earth’s resources than people living in the global south and it is American and European overconsumption that is the real driver of inequity and war.

A Friend asks, “Where do people get off track?” Some individuals want to have peaceful lives but then find themselves feeling the need to protect our country from “foreign” powers. The earth and nature should remind us of a different order of things. We are so easily triggered – so much pressure, alienation and deception. We can reject this and center in on the truth that lies within us . . . that of God that resides in us all.

\* \* \* \* \*

*We now adjourn to meet again tomorrow morning at 9:30 a.m.*

**SIXTH DAY – FRIDAY MORNING – 07/25/2025**

*We return to the business of the Yearly Meeting.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*For when I came into the silent assemblies of God’s people, I felt a secret power among them which touched my heart; and as I gave way unto it, I found the evil weakening in me and the good raise up . . .” Robert Barclay*

*Do not speak unless you can improve upon the silence.* A Quaker saying repeated by Parker J. Palmer in A Hidden Wholeness

\* \* \* \* \*

We welcomed Brian Treadway, who lives in Nova Scotia.

\* \* \* \* \*

Readers for this morning's business session are Martha Davis and Ed Taylor. Nancy Jordan and Stan Sanders are serving as microphone carriers.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Minute:** We appreciate the work of Yearly Meeting Trustees in making the meetinghouse more accessible by planning to remodel an entrance. We are grateful for the dedicated effort of the Scattergood Friends School Foundation Trustees this year in managing and growing the foundation and helping the school committee understand and cope with financial challenges.

We are grateful for the farm's work in the world, and for their teaching and modeling the wonders, value and holiness of the process of raising food. The farm contributes less income than in past years, but contributes more in quality food for the school, learning and hope for our students and the Iowa sustainable farming community, and to the health of the farmland itself. We are particularly grateful to Mark Quee for his long and deep commitment to this work, which is a labor of love.

We recognize that leading the school in these times has required competence and courage, and are grateful to John Zimmerman, head of school, for providing both of these. We profoundly appreciate the work that all of the staff do, and their flexibility in coping with budget challenges at the school. Their longevity itself is a strength of the school. Another strength is the school's lack of distinction between faculty who teach and staff who work in the background. At Scattergood, everyone is a teacher, and everyone also works behind the scenes. We are deeply grateful to the students as well: for the joy they bring to the campus, and for what they take with them when they move on.

We appreciate the careful work of the school staff and Scattergood Friends School Committee in managing the complex school finances, and for their careful explanations to us of the current situation and efforts to improve.

Members of the Yearly Meeting are encouraged to host students for breaks, and to contact Sam Taylor if they are interested in doing this.

### **YEARLY MEETING TRUSTEES REPORT**

We have re-appointed Cheryl Sutton and Bob Yeats to serve as Scattergood Friends School Foundation Trustees, with terms to end in 2029. The activities of the Foundation Trustees are described in their annual report, attached to this report.

In 2021, Yearly Meeting Trustees agreed to a request to accept responsibility for managing a gift from Omaha Friends Meeting designated as a fund to support monthly meetings in meetinghouse building projects, meetinghouse purchase, or technology upgrade to allow for better access. We have not yet received any requests for these funds. This is the fund referred to as “Meeting House Fund” in the Trustees Financial Report.

Much of the Trustees’ focus this past year has been to improve accessibility to the Hickory Grove Meetinghouse. We have been exploring possibilities for adding an automatic door opener to the west Meetinghouse door, near the top of the wheelchair ramp.

Contact with a local company that specializes in such remodels indicated that the two doors are too narrow to be opened with an automatic opener. The committee explored the possibility of building a single wide door (to have the appearance of the two existing doors), and this cost was over \$10,000, not including the cost of the opener, wiring and hardware. Though not on the registry of historic places, the trustees seek to balance accessibility, historical integrity as possible, and cost.

Besides re-modeling this entrance, we do not foresee major repair work at the Meetinghouse in the next year. We are presently pursuing the option of replacing the two narrower doors with a single 36 inch wide 4 panel door (though not a replica) in keeping with the above-mentioned values. We expect the cost to be much reduced, and we hope for this work to be done in this new fiscal year.

**Trustees Financial Report 2025**

Initial balance 7/1/24	\$12,509.49
From Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative	1,000.00
From Entertainment Committee	465.89
Interest	<u>6.20</u>
Total Funds Available	\$13,981.58
Paint Meeting House	(600.00)
Total disbursements	<u>(600.00)</u>
Funds available 6/30/2025	\$13,381.58

**Meetinghouse Fund**

Initial Balance	\$3,930.34
Interest	<u>1.89</u>
Meetinghouse Fund Balance 6/30/2024	\$3,932.23
<b>Bank Balance 6/30/2025</b>	<b>\$17,313.81</b>

\* \* \* \* \*

**SCATTERGOOD FRIENDS SCHOOL FOUNDATION TRUSTEES REPORT**

The Scattergood Foundation is charged with the stewardship of the School's growing endowment, currently valued at approximately \$6.3 million. Through a diversified portfolio of socially responsible investments, primarily stocks, bonds, cash, and farmland, the Foundation makes annual distributions to support the school's mission. At present, approximately one quarter of the distributions supports capital improvements to the campus, one quarter supports the operations of the school, with the remaining half supporting scholarships to students. Funds are invested with a balanced approach to capital preservation and moderate growth.

In calculating the annual disbursements to the school, the Foundation follows the instructions of donors as well as the Foundation's own standard payout policy. During the 2024-25 school year, the Foundation distributed \$113,181 to support tuition scholarships, as well as \$94,727 plus \$28,901 for a total of \$123,628 toward capital improvements and the operation of the school. The Foundation has committed to new distributions for the 2025-26 academic year totaling \$111,296 for

scholarships, as well as \$93,583 plus \$29,086 for a total of \$122,669 toward capital improvements and operations.

The SFSF Trustees approved \$544,344 from the sale of the South Dakota farms to be used for the cost of installing the sprinkler system as a part of the Scattergood Roots and Wings campaign. A draw of \$300,000 was paid to Scattergood in August 2024.

**Assets Held by the Scattergood Friends School Foundation  
as of 6/30/2025**

Westwood Trust #1 (Scholarships)	
2,027,660	
Westwood Trust #2 (CapEx/OpEx)	2,867,423
Westwood Capital A/C (CapEx/OpEx)	681,140
Pemberton Farm (estimated value)	200,000
Hills Bank checking	50,694
Hills Bank Certificates of Deposits	504,287
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$6,331,204</b>

\* \* \* \* \*

**FARM REPORT**

**July 2025**

Dear Friends,

The history of farm labor in the United States is fraught with exploitation, interrupted only occasionally by brief acknowledgement of the humanity of those who labor in the fields, handle the livestock and work in the fruit, vegetable and meat processing plants. Of course, our situation on the Scattergood Farm is unlike most of the approximately 2.5 million crop workers in the US, two thirds of whom are foreign born, and 42% of those without federal authorization.<sup>1</sup> We get to fully experience the benefits embedded in the demands—work that is physically tiresome while also strengthening, emotionally wrenching yet rewarding, spiritually challenging and also uplifting—while receiving salaries with health insurance and other benefits, which can provide for a family and a simple lifestyle, while experiencing community, belonging and the satisfaction of raising food for those we love. Of course, our model is not replicable across the country, but hopefully the dignity and fairness of our work can be experienced by all.

There was much work to celebrate the past year.

The middle school continued to anchor the student experiences at the farm, beginning each day with livestock chores and fellowship, while

studying seed saving in their science curriculum. High school students again started their academic year in Farm Term, choosing from four classes: Tree Power, Garden of Delights, Ethical Eating and Farm Frights. Our tradition of concluding orientation week on the farm continued this year, with plenty of work, eating and worshipful silence. Separate Farm and Livestock crews, as well as Farm Team PE classes in the fall and spring, and a Food Preservation class in the fall, offered students a wide variety of opportunities to experience the Farm. Biology classes continued to be involved as well, including helping with cow pregnancy checks last fall. Other students did livestock chores on evenings and weekends, earning a little cash or accumulating community service hours. One student chose to pursue a Sustainable Agriculture Focus and directed their energies towards scaling up our edible mushroom production, working with Ben to inoculate more logs than ever and to put in writing standard operating procedures, so we can continue this project in the future.

Outreach was again a pillar of the Farm mission. We gave tours to parents and friends on commencement weekend and Scattergood Day; welcomed students from the Friends School of Minnesota, Taproot Nature Experience and the Good Earth School; attended conferences hosted by Practical Farmers of Iowa, The Savanna Institute and Iowa Farmers Union; and presented at conferences, field days and meetings hosted by PFI, Marbleseed, and the Rodale Institute. The Farm continues to be part of a shared working group of similar sized vegetable farms and Mark again served the Rodale Midwest steering committee and on a grant review committee for SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education). Four students and two staff members ventured to Zumwalt Acres in east central Illinois for a trips week service trip in which they volunteered on this regenerative farm as well as several others in the area.

Our farm remains productive: the freezers are currently full of pork, beef, lamb and turkey harvested over the past year. Organic vegetable production was abundant, with a myriad of fresh offerings during the fall and an abundance of storage options through the winter. The high tunnel remained productive through January and then started up again with spinach, lettuce and various mustard greens available in March. We ate lots of pears again, plus a few apples and the first chestnuts were harvested last fall. Already this summer, excess produce has been shared

with the Iowa City Free Medical Clinic, Field to Family and the Iowa City Food Bank.

Because of a large anonymous gift to the farm, we were able to add to our orchards, planting 10 additional apple trees, 10 pears, 8 peaches and 4 apricots. We have already ordered 20 more apples and 8 pears to plant next spring. We also planted some trees for forage, experimenting with 100 each of poplars and willows which will be coppiced in a few years to allow sheep and cows to graze them as bushes. This gift also allowed us to replace 1400 feet of dilapidated fencing along the interstate and purchase some much needed tools for maintaining the gardens, grounds and orchards around the farm.

Ben Heller has been instrumental in all endeavors on the Farm, but in particular has managed the livestock program and provided students with lots of different opportunities to be involved. Dana Foster continued to lead the Middle School farm experiences. Elias Birchett ('24) returned for a second summer of field work and Irving Treadway continued to lead the cooks in using Farm meat and produce. Kent Tjossem has been helpful with good advice, oil changes and replacing a starter on one of our tractors.

It is no great stretch to reread the words of Martin Luther King Jr., delivered in Memphis to sanitation workers not long before he was murdered, and apply them to field workers today: *But let me say to you tonight, that whenever you are engaged in work that serves humanity and is for the building of humanity, it has dignity, and it has worth. One day our society must come to see this. One day our society will come to respect the sanitation worker if it is to survive, for the person who picks up our garbage, in the final analysis, is as significant as the physician, for if he doesn't do his job, diseases are rampant. All labor has dignity.*<sup>2</sup>

Mark Quee,

Scattergood Farm Manager

Foot notes:

1. (<https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/chart-gallery/chart-detail?chartId=63466#:~:text=In%202020%E2%80%9322%2C%2032%20percent,percent%20held%20no%20work%20authorization.>)

2. <https://www.beaconbroadside.com/broadside/2018/03/the-50th-anniversary-of-martin-luther-king-jrs-all-labor-has-dignity.html>

## HEAD OF SCHOOL REPORT

July 2025

*They say times are hard for dreamers...* When I first heard this phrase sung by our students in the spring production of *Amelie*, I was struck by how truly timely this message feels. Decisions being made at the federal and state level are impacting non-profit organizations across the nation, forcing some to close. There is a profound sense of frustration and division within our nation and across the globe. We cannot ignore the impact this has had on our community, both individually and collectively. However, we must also hold up the good work being done and the joy present in our community as we reflect on the 2024/2025 school year.

Scattergood welcomed 40 students to our campus this year, with 12 middle school students and 28 in high school. Of our high school students, 10 were day students and 3 were international students representing France, Germany, and Afghanistan. On May 31st, we celebrated the graduation of 5 seniors: Aaron Berg, Gus Ihrig, Louis Brown, Manon Wittek, and Oriole Keber. Included in this class are our first two middle school graduates (Gus and Ori), who were both a part of the inaugural 2020 middle school class.

The 2024/2025 school year presented some challenges for the staff at Scattergood Friends School as two of our new hires, Sneha Bhansali, and Alisa Meggitt, were unable to complete the year, leading to staff taking on additional responsibilities to cover for their absence. Thankfully, our staff was bolstered by Kirsten Brooks who taught Spanish, choreographed our musical, and co-lead our May trip to Colombia, in addition to her other teaching and student life support duties.

The end of the 2024/2025 school year carried an additional challenge for our staff as we look to face the realities presented by our ongoing enrollment levels. In order to create a budget that falls within a reasonable deficit level, as determined by the school committee, it was necessary to make significant adjustments in our spending, including staffing. This has resulted in the decision to reorganize our structure and reduce our total staff size and cost. As a result, Jon David Stroud will be moving on from Scattergood, following six years of engaging and creative teaching, to pursue a graduate degree and a career in higher education. We have also made shifts in our administrative structure and the elimination of the Middle School Director role. Jamie Newton will be carrying much of that work with him as he becomes Academic Dean, and Sam Taylor will bring his engaging energy and deep institutional

knowledge with him as he takes on the newly created role of Director of Advancement, overseeing both development and admissions efforts. Our goal is to have a staff that reflects the current enrollment and student needs, without sacrificing the student experience or staff well-being. We believe these staffing changes will accomplish this as best we are able, giving our current realities.

The 2024/2025 school year was also filled with amazing events, partnerships, and opportunities for our students. While I could fill several pages talking about individual triumphs, innovative lessons, and memorable moments, here are but a few of the highlights.

In September we welcomed the Bread and Puppet theater who performed to an audience of over 200 people and transformed the center of campus into an interactive artistic experience that both delighted and challenged those in attendance with pieces that spoke to the current struggles of people around the world.

We continued to deepen our connection with other Quaker schools and organizations as our middle school program visited Chicago Friends and stayed in Evanston Friends Meeting House, while we hosted Friends School of Minnesota here on campus. We also held our 2nd annual Quaker Youth Retreat and participated in four events for young Quakers, including Northern Yearly Meetings Annual Sessions, and the Young Adult and Youth Gathering held by Friends General Conference.

Our drama program continued to thrive as Lumi Costa stepped into the role of director. The middle school conceived and performed an original play entitled, *Murder Most Vegital*, a silly spoof on the mystery genre. This spring, the high school presented the musical, *Amelie*, based on the movie of the same name. Both productions showcased the talent and efforts of our students and staff while delighting audiences.

This winter we welcomed Heather Bouwman, author of the New York Times bestselling novel, *Scattergood*, to campus to speak with our students. The novel, set in West Branch during the summer of 1941, includes several scenes that take place on our campus as it served as a hostel for Jewish refugees.

The Focus Program completed its pilot year and will continue with some minor tweaks based on the feedback received from students. Our first capstone project was presented by senior Ori Keber, who hosted an art installation at Public Space 1 in Iowa City. The centerpiece of the installation, a large work that represents the Scattergood Community of

Ori's senior year, is the artist's gift to our community, and is currently on display in the main lobby.

Our facilities team continued to lead efforts to improve our campus and guide our major capital projects. In addition to many minor, and some not so minor, projects we saw the completion of two of our Roots and Wings Campaign goals. The new well was completed during the school year and as of this writing, the sprinkler system installation is on track to be completed this summer and in accordance with the timeline mandated by the state of Iowa. With these projects completed, or nearly so, we are not looking ahead towards next summer and the installation of a geothermal heating/cooling system and renovations to the dorm bathrooms.

The fundraising efforts of the Roots and Wings campaign continued this year as well, with visits to alumni and other Friends of Scattergood bringing us to five different time zones. Ethan Huelskamp and I attended reunions, visited Meetings, and had many cups of tea as we learned about Scattergood's past, while building support for its future.

Every day, the news presents us with one more reason to consider giving up the dream of a brighter future and giving in to the cynicism that seems so prevalent. And yet, our work continues. We pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and move forward, not in spite of the harsh realities of the day, but because of them. Because we know that change begins with opening minds, planting seeds of hope, and helping our students, and perhaps ourselves, grow into the people we are meant to be. And so, I choose to remain optimistic, a dreamer, even as we face the challenges of today, for our work is preparing the dreamers of tomorrow and preparing them to leave this Friendly place and scatter good, wherever they go.

In peace,

John Zimmerman

## **SCHOOL FINANCE REPORT**

### **Scattergood Financial Report for the 2024/2025 School Year**

To the members of Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative),

Scattergood Friends School, like many organizations, finds itself in a challenging financial situation brought about by internal and external factors that must be addressed. While these current issues are similar to previous challenges, there are some factors that are unique to this moment in our history. In this report we outline the factors that have

contributed to our current position and the steps we are taking and intend to take moving forward, while also recognizing that there will be a need for both short and long-term initiatives.

The most striking figure from the financial report on fiscal year 2024/2025 is the year-end deficit of approximately \$500,000. This figure is, indeed, alarming, and requires explanation. The two factors that contributed most to our deficit are tuition revenue being significantly lower than anticipated, and a decrease in our ability to draw down the full Measey Foundation disbursement due to restrictions on those funds. The limit on our ability to utilize Measey Foundation funds has been exacerbated by our decision to freeze tuition for three years during the rollout of the state ESA program. These two factors together come to a total of \$513,614.

While the deficit of the past year was larger than anticipated, the Consultation and Finance Committee recognized the need for increased focus on this area of our operations and support for our business office. This committee and business office focused much of their energy on three specific areas: a particularly challenging transition between accounting software, the management of our cash flow, and ensuring a budget for the 2025/2026 fiscal year that meets a more sustainable spending level.

In May, the school committee approved and minuted the decision for a deficit level no greater than \$75,000 for the coming year. The school committee also instructed the school to take steps necessary to meet that deficit level, including re-evaluating vendor contracts, reducing spending in ways that do not negatively impact the student experience, and staffing reductions and restructuring to reflect the current level of enrollment. The budget for the 2025/2026 school year reflects that deficit level and was achieved by utilizing the aforementioned methods, and the authorization of tuition increases, matched by increased tuition assistance, allowing us to utilize restricted funds without raising out of pocket expenses for families.

In the coming years, we will need to reconcile our twin objectives of 1) retaining our current level of financial support to families and 2) the increasingly complex challenge of fairly compensating employees during a period of heavy inflation and financial uncertainty. To do so, we will need to utilize all resources at our disposal combined with creative marketing strategies that allow us to raise our tuition rates for those who can afford it, while also making clear our continued commitment to

providing access to students from all socio-economic backgrounds. Finally, we must also ensure that we are admitting students who are a good fit for our program, regardless of their financial capacity.

Respectfully submitted,  
John Zimmerman

*(School Financial Report on following page)*

*(2025-2026 FY Budget is on page 107)*

# SCHOOL FINANCIAL REPORT

Operation Statement Short		YE Actual 2024-2025	Budget 2024-2025	YE Actual 2023-2024	Budget 2023-2024
<b>INCOME</b>		\$ 1,961,345.33	\$ 2,122,632.73	\$ 2,237,373.41	\$1,837,843.83
Contributions		\$ 1,637,648.58	\$ 1,426,032.73	\$ 1,571,273.41	\$1,025,888.83
	Annual Giving	\$ 267,496.82	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 290,846.99	\$250,000.00
	4000 Annual Giving		\$ 250,000.00	\$ 262,856.13	\$250,000.00
	Fees			\$ (302.51)	
	Estate			\$ 28,293.37	
	4020 Designated Donation	\$ 11,656.12		\$ 112,320.57	
	Campaign Donator	\$ 235,504.91		\$ 28,909.42	
	4025 STO/Financial	\$ 35,223.73	\$ 33,223.73	\$ 35,688.82	\$35,688.83
	Other			\$ 11,622.33	
	CC			\$ 36,100.00	
	4305 Summer	\$ 1,750.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 26,399.00	\$30,000.00
	Reimbursable Income			\$ 8,289.85	
	4100 Designated Capital	\$ 61,814.00	\$ 76,265.00	\$ 60,700.00	\$74,975.00
	4030 Iowa Yearly Meeting	\$ 52,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 52,000.00	\$54,000.00
**4210	Measey Foundation	\$ 497,209.00	\$ 830,000.00	\$ 850,217.00	\$425,000.00
**4205	SFS Foundation	\$ 474,994.00	\$ 156,544.00	\$ 170,500.00	\$156,225.00
Tuition Revenue 4310		\$ 499,177.11	\$ 680,000.00	\$ 622,800.28	\$780,000.00
	Gross Tuition				
	Less Financial Aid given				\$31,955.00
	OTHER REV	\$ 60,024.55	\$ 16,600.00	\$ 43,299.72	\$31,955.00
Fee&Charges 4312 Enrollment Fees		\$ 1,012.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	
	4313 Application Fees	\$ 380.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,170.00	1,255.00
	Fees & Charges		\$ 1,000.00	\$ 65.00	\$1,000.00
	Interest Earnings		\$ 1,000.00	\$ 26,270.17	\$1,000.00
	4316-4600 Other Operating	\$ 46,610.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ (886.85)	\$2,500.00
	4314 Rental Use	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,700.00	\$ 4,243.00	\$2,000.00
	4315 Farm	\$ 9,522.55	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 10,438.40	\$2,000.00
	Meat/Produce/other				\$1,000.00
	Grants		\$ 2,200.00		\$1,200.00
					\$20,000.00
Capital Expense				\$ 62,592.57	
DD					
Payroll 5000		\$ 1,112,271.25	\$ 1,125,830.00	\$ 978,314.38	\$1,018,500.00
EXPENSES		\$ 2,467,987.05	\$ 2,071,077.00	\$ 2,036,086.71	\$1,760,844.25
Payroll Expenses 5005		\$ 80,939.23	\$ 83,873.00	\$ 72,221.51	\$75,878.25
	220 Company FICA		\$ 67,549.00	\$ 43,085.46	\$61,100.00
	224 Company MED		\$ 16,324.00	\$ 18,677.48	\$14,768.25
Personnel Costs		\$ 333,012.51	\$ 289,787.00	\$ 264,597.54	\$218,711.25
Residential Life		\$ 13,920.89	\$ 24,700.00	\$ 17,979.91	\$23,902.00
Health		\$ 2,467.52	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 8,408.99	\$3,000.00
Communications		\$ 26,845.27	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 11,192.88	\$14,800.00
Contracted Services		\$ 68,432.27	\$ 46,000.00	\$ 52,520.20	\$32,300.00
High School		\$ 67,790.93	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 20,628.44	\$16,800.00
Curriculum		\$ 5,906.79	\$ 7,250.00	\$ 5,378.31	\$7,800.00
PROGRAMS		\$ 6,491.06	\$ 48,000.00		\$9,000.00
FARM		\$ 24,552.68	\$ 23,960.00	\$ 26,957.40	\$20,250.00
Food Services		\$ 66,414.04	\$ 59,200.00	\$ 66,322.51	\$60,200.00
Insurance		\$ 104,442.00	\$ 85,500.00	\$ 74,280.00	\$75,367.00
Administrative		\$ 221,214.43	\$ 32,300.00	\$ 88,650.21	\$38,327.00
Summer Camp			\$ 25,000.00	\$ 24,741.39	\$27,000.00
Professional Services		\$ 97,075.50	\$ 73,100.00	\$ 46,143.75	\$44,440.00
Admissions		\$ 83,699.59	\$ 29,000.00	\$ 45,870.38	\$30,000.00
Development			\$ 11,800.00	\$ 44,141.35	\$12,272.00
Technology		\$ 81,846.87	\$ 39,000.00	\$ 41,361.05	\$38,400.00
Vehicles/Equipment		\$ 20,792.64	\$ 13,450.00	\$ 18,275.56	\$10,475.00
Operational Costs		\$ 172,083.36	\$ 97,200.00	\$ 90,249.77	\$95,300.00
<b>NET INCOME/ (LOSS)</b>		\$ (506,641.72)	\$ 51,555.73	\$ 201,286.70	\$76,999.58

## SCATTERGOOD SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORT

*Hope is the thing with feathers  
That perches in the soul  
And sings the tune without the words  
And never stops at all.*

— Emily Dickinson

In these arduous times, the School Committee is heartened by the good things happening at Scattergood. Last fall the school hosted Bread and Puppet Theater from Maine, the performers shared their colorful political performance art and brought in many attendees who were on campus for the first time. In March, we welcomed over 30 middle school students from the Friends School of Minnesota, where they joined crew, and community singing with song leader and artist Lyndsey Scott. In April, the school hosted a Quaker Youth Retreat with the workshop titled: *Staying Whole: Resistance through Resilience, Resilience through Resistance*. The facilitators invited students to explore questions around being whole, healthy and connected in dark and scary times. These kinds of community-building activities strengthen ourselves and our networks, and give us much needed hope.

The Comprehensive campaign and its capital projects are proceeding successfully: a new well was installed last fall, and the sprinkler system is nearly finished. One of the great, but less tangible, successes of the campaign has been the increased contact with our Scattergood community, reconnecting with many constituents and sometimes finding people who have had no contact with the school since leaving. The ongoing work will be to keep people “at the table” even when the campaign has ended and without the extra funds dedicated to the campaign outreach.

The troubles within our country and state are too long to list, and the effects are felt everywhere. Though our school can be a sanctuary for young people, Iowa’s unwelcoming politics have made it more challenging to attract students from other states. We must consider how the uncertainty and turbulence of these times might affect families, our enrollment, and other aspects of running the school. Amidst all of this, Scattergood continues to work on outreach, building relationships with organizations, and connecting with families and students who seek a community like Scattergood.

The business office has devoted significant time to the full financial audit, and dealing with the complicated issues from the system updates of QuickBooks online. Cash flow has been challenging at times, especially as we more fully understand the restrictions with how the Measey Foundation money can be spent, and how that impacts the budget. The Consultation and Finance subcommittee has met often throughout the year to better understand the cash flow and to update reporting. As always, we are deeply grateful for the many forms of support, including financial, of Yearly Meeting and the Scattergood Foundation, to help us keep this extraordinary boat afloat.

The School Committee is settling into its new subcommittee structure and the ongoing work of governance training. We hope to begin the process of creating a Campus Master Plan soon, which will

give guidance with decisions involving the grounds and buildings. The SAGE (Structure and Governance Exploratory) ad hoc focused on research this year, consulting with members of other Quaker meetings and schools around their experience with legal structure changes. The ad hoc looked at how these Quaker schools were originally established and their current legal structure and gathered information to help us better understand some possibilities. It was interesting to learn the different origin stories, that some Quaker schools were privately owned and never incorporated as part of a meeting, and other schools eventually incorporated separately from their meetings but have found ways to stay connected to their meetings. Sometimes change can happen whether we choose it or not, so regardless of what Scattergood's legal status will be, nurturing this relationship between the school and IYMC (and Quakerism in general) is essential, and will become a renewed focus of our Spiritual and Community Life subcommittee.

Friends of Scattergood, the newly formed version of an alumni association, is making gradual headway with its organization. For a second year they raised money to send gifts to the recently graduated seniors, welcoming them into the wider Scattergood community and encouraging them to stay connected as they venture out into the world. The school has started connecting recent grads with alumni in their area, and Friends of Scattergood could become a part of this. Alum and School Committee member Aaron Woolfson has been working on a private community engagement platform for alumni, a virtual space where old school photos and media can be scanned and shared with the Friends of

Scattergood community. Aaron generously donated scanners and Macs and provided a crew to set it up.

*Hope is a verb with its sleeves rolled up* is a quote attributed to Dave Orr, an environmental studies professor at Oberlin College. In a recent interview, Cory Booker said *Hope is rugged, hope is wounded, and hope has had to be resurrected time and time again*. It implies that hope is not passive— but rather, hope needs action, attention, nurturing, endurance, and a willingness to dig in. The School Committee is deeply grateful for the hands-on and day-to-day dedication to the visionary work that is happening at Scattergood, on all levels, as this community is the live-action (and much needed) Practice of Hope.

For the School Committee,  
Ruth Hampton, clerk

\* \* \* \* \*

*We adjourn to meet again this afternoon at 2 p.m.*

\* \* \* \* \*

**SIXTH DAY – FRIDAY AFTERNOON – 07/25/2025**

*We return to the business of the Yearly Meeting.*

*The moment we begin to fear the opinions of others and hesitate to tell the truth that is in us, and from motives of policy are silent when we should speak, the divine floods of light and life no longer flow into our souls.* Elizabeth Cady Stanton

*In the noisy rush of modern life, we need periods of quiet when the soul may feed in peace on that which shall nourish it for action . . .* John Woolman

The Representatives Committee has appointed Roy Helm and Doyle Wilson as readers for thisafternoon. Lorene Ludy and Petra Lange are carrying the microphones.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Minute:** Iowa Yearly Meeting of Friends (Conservative) holds a steadfast commitment to non-violence and strives to witness for the equitable

treatment of all people regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, or country of origin. In light of the continuing escalation of the horrific conflict in Gaza, we are strongly led to support the following actions.

1. The immediate call for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza and Israel.
2. A continued effort to resolve the humanitarian crisis in Gaza by lifting restrictions on aid enabling the immediate entry and distribution of food, medical care and supplies, shelter, and water sanitation services by the various organizations tasked with this mission.
3. The immediate release of Palestinian and Israeli hostages.
4. The end of US provision of arms and other military aid to Israel and of US complicity with Israeli human rights violations against the people of Gaza.
5. The provision of sanctuary of those who may choose to seek refuge from this conflict.
6. The establishment of equal protection and rights for all people living under Israeli control.
7. The encouragement of a just and lasting peace including the support of those in Israel and Palestine committed to this end.

Yearly Meeting will distribute this minute widely, beginning by posting it on our own website, and emailing it to our monthly meetings which are encouraged to further disseminate it via local news publications and organizations in our region, sending it to our political representatives and act on it as they are led.

We affirm the points in the AFSC's Apartheid Free Communities pledge and direct the clerk to sign it on our behalf. Friends who needed to stand aside had doubts about signing on to the words of other organizations, or signing a website that seems amorphous and changeable. Friends who support signing the pledge do so in trust of the AFSC and our Peace and Social Concerns Committee. We include the words of the pledge here. We commit to taking further action as way opens.

- We affirm our commitment to freedom, justice, and equality for the Palestinian people and all people;
- We oppose all forms of racism, bigotry, discrimination, and oppression; and
- We declare ourselves an Apartheid-Free Community and to that end,

- We pledge to join others in working to end all support to Israel's apartheid regime, settler colonialism, and military occupation.

### **PEACE AND SOCIAL CONCERNS (P&SC) COMMITTEE REPORT**

The IYMC P&SC Committee continues to discern the increasing multitude of issues that seem to be of an intentionally cruel and dangerous nature, perpetuated by those forces who exert power and control on a local, state, national, and international level.

We continue to gather monthly to check in as a small community that represents most of the monthly meetings in IYMC. We lift up our history and Quaker testimonies to guide our endeavors and seek clarity in response to the concerns before us. We have been touched by the conflicts in Gaza, Iran, Ukraine and others. We committed to the Apartheid Free Pledge as a committee in response to the Gaza tragedy, perhaps a bit beyond our Guide.

The domestic policies since Jan. 20, 2025, have darkened the landscape with illegal deportations, domestic political terrorism and assassination and the pervasive onslaught of white supremacy cloaked in so-called “Christian” nationalism. Our meager response has been to seek ways to encourage and empower certain allies in their efforts. These include donations from our \$1100 IYMC budget. We continue to encourage monthly meetings to seek out worthy groups and allies to support. The groups we have assisted include:

1. \$200 Iowa Movement for Migrant Justice (IMMJ) A legal aid and advocacy led by immigrant and refugee voices and allies.
2. \$100 U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) A local settlement organization whose State Dept. funding was paused in Jan. 2025. Partnered with Bear Creek MM and Des Moines Valley MM.
3. \$200 Dallas County Conservation Foundation. Help with funding a Native American flute presentation at the annual Prairie Awakening/Awoke celebration. An opportunity to expand Right Relationship with our Native communities. Partnered with Bear Creek MM
4. \$200 PeaceWorks Kansas City. A community advocacy group working to focus on nuclear weapon production in the Kansas City area. Partnered with Penn Valley MM

5. \$200 Friends House Moscow. Assisting the continued Quaker presence in Moscow through advocacy and awareness. Partnered with Ames MM and the Hansen's.

6. \$200 People2People Partnered with matching funds from Penn Valley.

As we reflect on the higher levels of intentional evil that pervade our world, we can focus on what it means for us as Quakers, where our hearts and minds are centered and where Love does lead.

The reports from our IYMC monthly meetings or their P&SC committees reflect a variety of responses to our troubled world. These actions, personally and corporately, speak to our conditions and provide a window into the workings of the Spirit among us. (Included in separate document.)

Humbly submitted,  
Russ Leckband co-clerk  
Jean Hansen co-clerk

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**PENDLE HILL SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE**

There was no report from the Pendle Hill Scholarship Committee this year, and the committee received no requests.

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**Minute:** We accept the report of our representatives to the Friends World Committee for Consultation and are grateful that they were able to participate online.

**IYMC REPRESENTATIVE TO FRIENDS WORLD COMMITTEE FOR CONSULTATION**

Traveling expenses and difficulties challenge the ability for Friends from around the world to gather in person, which makes video conferencing a blessing as we seek to bridge and share Quaker perspectives.

Events now in-person and online enable more people to easily participate in FWCC.

Liz Voss attended the introductory session for the World Plenary Conference where she learned several important African concepts. While she was unable to attend the full conference this time, due to technical barriers, she sees a way forward for other events.

Videoconferencing also enabled Angelika Schafer to attend parts of the Section of the Americas meeting. While in-person exchanges with Friends are precious, she enjoyed the large numbers of Friends online, noting that more Latin American Friends attended online than in-person.

We remind Friends that the world can come to them, through the Traveling Ministries Program, a resource that allows monthly meetings to request a seasoned visitor who brings news and insights from diverse Quaker sects and regions.

Angelika Shafer, Liz Voss, Marion Love

\* \* \* \* \*

**Minute:** We thank our representatives to FCNL for their frank and informative report. We approve the report. We thank the FCNL. Participating Friends have felt encouraged and supported by the advocacy teams in particular.

### **IYMC REPRESENTATIVE TO FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATION (FCNL) REPORT**

Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative has demonstrated its commitment to FCNL (Friends Committee on National Legislation) for many years. FCNL offers guidance to make our country a more peaceful and equitable place, helps us understand the content and effects of proposed legislation and gives us strategies to make our voices heard in Washington DC. In turn, Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) supports, both financially and by appointing representatives to its governing body, the FCNL General Committee. Last year two representatives attended FCNL's November 13-17, 2024, Annual Meeting in person and others were able to attend via video conferencing. FCNL's General Committee made the decision, beginning in 2025, to alternate in-person Annual Meetings and virtual meetings. The 2025 FCNL Annual Meeting will be by video conference only.

FCNL's 2024 Annual Meeting's theme was "Advocacy Never Gives Up." Our lobby mission was a continuation of trying to stop the tragedy that is still unfolding in Gaza and the West Bank. Our "in person" lobby visits to Iowa Senators Grassley and Ernst were a disappointment. Our request was to stop the sale of offensive weapons to Israel and to allow UNRWA (the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees) to distribute much needed humanitarian relief in Gaza. Our requests were

flatly denied; instead of engaging in a discussion, we were lectured about the inefficiency of UNRWA and told that the war would be over as soon the new president took office.

FCNL’s Advocacy Team initiative is now in its 10<sup>th</sup> year. Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative Friends participate in FCNL Advocacy Teams in Iowa, Wisconsin, Nebraska, and Kansas City as well as a newly organized team in South Dakota. The focus this year has been on an “Aid, Not Arms” campaign in the Middle East. A “flex” issue was added in 2025 to provide lobby teams with an opportunity to lobby on a domestic issue. The issue chosen was to retain the clean energy tax credits under the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

Friends Committee on National Legislation offers a safe place where both Friends and others yearning for peace and equity can gather, both virtually and in person. The FCNL website (fcnl.org) provides information on a wide variety of issues and ways to engage with our country’s legislators (as well as your next-door neighbor). You can choose the level of engagement right for you: write a letter-to-the-editor on an issue you care about, join or start an Advocacy Team, donate money to the cause, educate yourself about pending legislation or worship (virtually) among Friends on Witness Wednesday Silent Reflection.

FCNL seeks a world free of war and the threat of war, a society with equity and justice for all, a community where every person’s potential may be fulfilled and an earth restored.

Carole Winkleblack for Representatives to FCNL

\* \* \* \* \*

**Minute:** We are grateful for the work of Friends Peace Teams and for the informative report by our representative to their North American region.

**IYMC REPRESENTATIVES TO FRIENDS PEACE TEAMS**

The new North America Region of Friends Peace Teams continued over the past year to grow and discern the best way forward as a new region. With passionate and gifted leadership from our two co-clerks, Melanie Siaw and Fenna Mandolang, Friends Peace Teams North America has identified a number of opportunities for peace and justice advocacy and capacity building. The other FPT regions that Friends may be familiar with are the African Great Lakes Region, Asia West Pacific, Peacebuilding en las Américas and Europe and Middle East.

Within the North America Region many Friends are already familiar with the Towards Right Relationship with Native Peoples Program (TRR) overseen by Paula Palmer and Jerilyn DeCoteau (Turtle Mountain Chippewa). This past January, your representative worked with Scattergood School staff to help bring Paula Palmer and the TRR workshop “Roots of Injustice, Seeds of Change” to Scattergood for an experience shared by the entire Scattergood community. Participants were moved and changed by what they experienced. Following the workshop at Scattergood, a second TRR workshop for the Des Moines community was implemented at the Des Moines Valley Friends Meetinghouse.

Cultures of Justice and Peace (CJP) workshops are an Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) Special Topic Series for justice and peace workers in the United States. CJP workshops have begun in a number of places. Learn more here-

<https://friendspeaceteams.org/cultures-justice-peace/>

The Buffalo Justice and Peace Library is a mobile library of children’s story books in Buffalo, New York that creates safe spaces for children to develop reading and comprehension skills. When I was in Rwanda last year one of the young people at the Children’s Peace Library in Gicumbi (Gi-chum-bee) asked me “Do you have peace libraries in your country?” I was astonished at the question. Now I can share that yes, we do have at least one Children’s Peace Library in the U.S. You can learn more on the Friends Peace Teams website.

Conscientious Objection to War – Spiritual integrity calls us to cooperation and non-cooperation, both essential for a just, peaceful society. FPT North America is encouraging Friends to stop, listen inwardly and write a statement of what rises up within you — 1) what you believe; 2) what influenced your beliefs; and 3) how you live out your beliefs — and share this statement of conscience with your family, friends, meeting or church, local news, and federal Representatives and Senators. Learn more at FPT Conscientious Objection to War page:

<https://friendspeaceteams.org/conscientious-objection-to-war/>

Economic Justice- Since 1993, Friends Peace Teams has collected resources to support Friends’ justice and peace ministries worldwide. We are challenging identities rooted in white dominance and racism, and working to become equal members in a global, collaborative network. To do this, we seek to develop equitable access to resources and support peace and justice workers abilities to raise the volunteers, knowledge,

and funds needed for their work. This often requires patience, mentoring and support in sharing a range of skills. We seek to invest in ways that build self-reliance, balance local and global fundraising and share strengths through mutual aid. We consider the need for reparations and wealth redistribution to rectify past economic injustices. Read more about this work on the FPT Economic and Climate Justice page.

<https://friendspeacetams.org/ecological-and-social-justice/>

Our 148th Annual Session is a good time to consider how your gifts may be used to support and enhance the work that FP Teams coordinates or supports here in North America or around the world. Populating the global teams from the various regions, now including North America, is one particular challenge. Your representative encourages all Friends to reach out to learn more and consider volunteering for Friends Peace Teams North American Region. As a volunteer network, Friends Peace Teams depend upon your prayers, abiding concern, ministries, word of mouth, support skills, and donations. If you feel a calling to learn more and perhaps consider stepping forward to volunteer, please contact me or send a letter of interest or inquiry to [office@friendspeacetams.org](mailto:office@friendspeacetams.org). The greatest strength of Friends Peace Teams continues to be that everything is grounded in relationships and people to people connections.

Peter Clay, IYMC Representative to the North American Region, Friends Peace Teams

**Minute:** We thank our representative to the Iowa Peace Network's Joint Oversight Committee for keeping us aware of their activities, and for representing our views on schools and military service to them.

### **IYMC REPRESENTATIVE TO IOWA PEACE NETWORK (IPN) REPORT**

The Joint Oversight Committee (JOC) of the Iowa Peace Network (IPN) continues to meet every three months.

Through comprehensive weekly email updates, IPN connects people and organizations across Iowa that are working for peace and justice. The Dovetail newsletter is shared in print three times each year, with content regularly added to IPN's website at [iowapeacenetwork.org](http://iowapeacenetwork.org).

Each year, Christine Sheller, IPN's longtime coordinator, visits both Iowa Yearly Meetings (Conservative and FUM) as well as Mennonite and Brethren conferences, thus linking the traditional peace churches.

IPN co-sponsors several peace and justice events throughout the year. Events in 2025 included a screening of the film “Light” by CPT Palestine and the annual Palm Sunday Procession for Peace. In December 2024, IPN co-sponsored the annual Feast of the Holy Innocents Prayer Service and hosted its annual Holiday Open House and Alternative Gift Fair. AFSC Iowa alum and current DMACC political science instructor Jeffrey Weiss keynoted. Russ Leckband of Bear Creek Friends Meeting donated pottery in advance.

Coming up is the annual commemoration of the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. That will be August 7 at the Japanese Bell on the State Capitol Grounds in Des Moines.

During my first year on the JOC, I lifted up a concern about schools, including Des Moines Public Schools, emphasizing military recruitment. I’ve encouraged IPN to develop and disseminate information about alternatives to military service.

Jon Krieg, IYMC representative to IPN

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*We now adjourn to resume business tomorrow morning at 9:30.*

**SEVENTH DAY – SATURDAY MORNING – 7/26/2025**

*We return to the business of the Yearly Meeting.*

*We need to find God, and he cannot be found in noise and restlessness. God is the friend of silence. See how nature – trees, flowers, grass – grows in silence; see the stars, the moon and the sun, how they move in silence . . . We need silence to be able to touch souls. Mother Teresa*

*True silence is the rest of the mind; it is to the spirit what sleep is to the body – nourishment and refreshment. William Penn*

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Readers for this morning’s business sessions are Deborah Dakin and Jon Shafer. Carole Winkleblack and Judy Cottingham are carrying the microphones.

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**Minute:** We are pleased to have these young people with us this week and appreciate the simple truth of their epistle to Friends everywhere. We're very grateful to have the continued ministry of Evelyn Bergus, a recent Scattergood graduate, and David Rhodes and Sonja Sponheim, who are leading this group.

## **JUNIOR YEARLY MEETING REPORT**

Dear Friends Everywhere,

Hello from Junior Yearly Meeting at Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative)! We gathered this week at Scattergood Friends School in West Branch, Iowa, to hold our annual sessions. The JYM group was able to reconnect as we had all shared time together before.

This week, we tried to balance traditions and new activities. The weather has been rainy and hot; it has often been unpredictable, but we have recovered and redirected quickly. We made sure to keep with our tradition of playing capture the flag with some of the high school Friends and will be going to the pool this afternoon, weather permitting. We went to the pond where we played with sand, swam, threw a frisbee, and even saw some frogs and a tadpole. Though the weather has sometimes been difficult, we were grateful that the pond was a perfect temperature. Something new we did this year was trivia. We played quizzes and did trivia about Disney characters, space and even about stuff from before we were born. Also, we had the pleasure of being visited by John Zimmerman who came and talked to us about the SPICES and we've been looking for examples of each one in practice this week. During this talk, we also discussed how we can employ these Quaker testimonies in our own lives and thought of examples when we'd done or seen someone act with one of the SPICES.

We were grateful to all be a part of JYM and that we got to deepen our existing friendships with one another. We thank all of the adult Friends who fostered and encouraged our growth and learning during this year's Annual Sessions. We look forward to getting to see each other next year!

In Peace,

Miranda, Evan, Asher, and Liam

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**Minute:** We are excited to hear of this movement among young adult Friends and are eager to support it. We thank them for this early report.

### **YOUNG ADULT FRIENDS REPORT**

The Young Adult Friends Committee (YAF) was created to help with logistical considerations for a new program aimed at an age between JYM and other attenders. We hope to begin a YAF program to appeal to ages 20-35 for the 2026 Annual Sessions and have begun figuring out what that could look like. With a younger age group in mind, we are looking to balance a program that incorporates and connects them with Yearly Meeting while also giving time for YAF attenders to create connections, conversation and goals amongst themselves. Their schedule would include attendance at some of Annual Sessions, discussions within the group and sharing an Epistle or action statement at the conclusion of Annual Sessions.

One of the biggest barriers we've found with getting attenders of this age is the cost. We are hoping to look for funding to subsidize the cost of travel, meals, and boarding, assuming this puts minimal financial strain on the Meeting. The program cost itself will be minimal to none, with much of the programming being included in what already exists at Annual Sessions and focusing on discussion based and "DIY" type projects. Another barrier has been the timeline; this is why we have decided to begin planning next year's program now and are holding off from hosting one this year. (f)Friends of this age may often be working service industry jobs which have less paid time off and stricter schedules. We are going to let prospective attenders know far in advance of next year so they are able to plan ahead for time off, transportation and availability.

We are hoping that this program can offer a few things. Firstly, we hope to increase our number of interested (f)Friends in this age range. Additionally, we hope to use this as an opportunity to deepen IYMC's relationship with Scattergood Friends School. It is likely that many of the interested individuals will be recent Scattergood alumni and will be able to better recognize the deep connection between our Meeting and this wonderful school. There will be plenty of time for YAF to meet, socialize, and talk with members of IYMC. We also want to make the YAF group feel like a community and will be having some activities for that group. These will not be for the purpose of exclusion of other members but will be an opportunity for Young Adult Friends to deepen their friendships with one another and create lasting bonds.

Our committee recognizes that this will be a heavy lift to get off the ground, but have been met with lots of excitement from (f)Friends hoping to attend in 2026. We believe this is a great way to engage younger members and prospective Friends and are grateful to the ways open.

Evelyn Bergus (convener), Emma Galusha, Dominic Marconi, and Jack Niemuth

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**Minute:** We appreciate the care our treasurer takes in writing this report and patiently explaining its meaning. We also appreciate this yearly meeting's way of managing our finances. We thank the auditors for checking that everything is in order and approve these reports.

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**AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT**

July 23, 2025

The Audit Committee has examined the financial documents prepared for us by Iowa Yearly Meeting treasurer, Rebecca Bergus. All is in right order. We thanked the treasurer for her many years of service to Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative and for providing clear and easy to understand documents.

Carole and Bob Winkleblack, Audit Committee

*(Treasurer's Report on following page)*

# TREASURER REPORT FY 2024-2025

## Treasurer's Report 2024-2025

	Budget	Actual
<b>Contributions</b>		
American Friends Service Committee	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Friends Committee on National Legislation	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Friends General Conference	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Friends Peace Teams	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Friends World Committee for Consultation	\$ 700.00	\$ 700.00
Iowa Peace Network	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
Peace & Social Concerns Comm.	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 1,100.00
Pendle Hill	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Quaker Earthcare Witness	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Quaker United Nations Office	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Quaker Voluntary Service	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Right Sharing of World Resources	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Scattergood Facilities	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
Scattergood Friends School	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 59,400.00</b>	<b>\$ 59,400.00</b>
<b>Delegate Expenses</b>		
AFSC	\$ 1,440.00	\$ 400.00
Conservative Yearly Meeting Visitation	\$ 720.00	\$ 682.59
FCNL	\$ 2,160.00	\$ -
Friends Peace Teams	\$ 360.00	\$ -
FWCC - General	\$ 360.00	\$ -
Quaker Earthcare Witness	\$ 360.00	\$ -
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 5,400.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,082.59</b>
<b>Yearly Meeting Expenses</b>		
Archives Committee	\$ 200.00	\$ -
Clerk's and Other Adm. Expenses	\$ 400.00	\$ 40.00
Clerk's Contingency Fund	\$ 2,000.00	\$ -
Committee Expenses (Other)	\$ 500.00	\$ 350.00
Conscientious Objector PSC sub.	\$ 100.00	\$ -
Friends Travel & Conference	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 407.00
Iowa Yearly Meeting Trustees	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Joint Scattergood & IYM Project	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
Junior Yearly Meeting	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,419.49
Pendle Hill Scholarship Match	\$ 400.00	\$ -

*Report continues next page.*

Publication Committee	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,708.06
Quaker Youth Camp Scholarship	\$ 500.00	\$ -
Special Needs Committee	\$ 500.00	\$ -
Virtual Access Committee	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 881.26
Website Committee	\$ 450.00	\$ 294.10
Young Adult Friends	\$ 300.00	\$ -
Young Friends	\$ 1,500.00	\$ -
Total	\$ 21,350.00	\$ 10,099.91
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 86,150.00</b>	<b>\$ 70,582.50</b>

Statement of Cash

Checkbook Balance 6/30/2024	\$ 39,569.88
Total Receipts*	\$ 75,845.74
Expenses**	\$ (70,711.85)
Checkbook Balance 7/1/2025	\$ 44,703.77

Outstanding Checks	
PeaceWorks Kansas City	\$200.00
Dallas County Conservation	\$200.00
Goodfellow Printing	\$2,708.06
Friends House Moscow	\$200.00
Fifi Mandra	\$500.00
People2People, Inc	\$200.00
	\$ (4,008.06)
Carryover for 2025-2026	\$ 40,695.71

Apportionments for 2025/2026	\$ 71,350.00
Proposed Budget 2025/2026	\$ 86,450.00
Amount needed to balance budget for 2025/2026	\$ 15,100.00

Reserve funds	\$ 25,595.71
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Includes ammounts from 2023-2024

\* \$4,458.33 late deposits

\*\* \$4,100 late expenses

\* \* \* \* \*

**Minute:** We appreciate the Representatives Committee and their work, including preparing the budget and researching alternative places to meet for our 2026 Annual Sessions. We thank our treasurer, Rebecca Bergus, for her many years of service and are grateful that she will provide continuity by becoming assistant treasurer. We approve this report.

We value in-person meetings for the social interaction, including mixing of generations, which is important to all of us. We always value our dear F/friends who attend online and are grateful that Grinnell can accommodate their attendance. We note that the representatives are not proposing that individuals cover their own expenses, but that we continue to support the costs as a body, with those who can contributing extra so that everyone can attend, potentially relying on reserves from the Entertainment Committee and a loan from Yearly Meeting if needed. We trust the 2026 Entertainment Committee (Lincoln, Paullina and Penn Valley meetings), to plan a hybrid gathering of Yearly Meeting based at Grinnell.

We authorize Yearly Meeting treasurer to loan the Entertainment Committee money if necessary to cover costs incurred before donations are received.

The discussion of a hybrid meeting led to deep sharing about our ability to fully include online attendees, with gratitude expressed for masking in the meetinghouse this year.

## **REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Representatives Committee met eight times in the past year by video conference. We submit for Yearly Meeting consideration a budget and officers for the coming year.

The apportionments for monthly meetings remained the same for 2025-2026 for a total \$71,350.

There are a few changes proposed for the 2025-26 budget: increases to Publication Committee, Junior Yearly Meeting and Young Adult Friends, and decreases to Young Friends, Pendle Hill Scholarship Match and Quaker Youth Camp Scholarship.

We have continued the \$5,000 set aside in the budget for a joint IYMC and Scattergood Project to foster closer ties between the school and the yearly meeting.

Yearly Meeting provides funds for delegates to attend national Quaker organization meetings. The proposed budget shows delegate

expenses divided evenly between the total number of delegates. These funds support delegate attendance, but they don't cover total expenses. Delegates who wish to be reimbursed above the budgeted amount are invited to submit receipts to the Yearly Meeting clerk, with a request for reimbursement. The overall budget includes funds which can be used as needed to cover additional delegate expenses.

We are so grateful for the service that our current officers provide to the Yearly Meeting. We would like our current officers to continue to serve the Yearly Meeting for 2025-2026 with one small change to the positions of treasurer and assistant treasurer.

We recommend as clerk, Carol Gilbert; assistant clerk, Bob Winkleblack; treasurer, Catherine Dorenbach; assistant treasurer, Rebecca Bergus; statistical recorder, Tim Shipe and assistant statistical recorder, Carole Winkleblack.

A large part of our discussions this past year revolved around the question of where and how to hold our 2026 Annual Sessions. We will not be able to meet at Scattergood due to construction. An ad hoc committee of Ann Robinson, Stan Sanders and Catherine Dorenbach explored various options over the past several months. As a result, Representatives offer two options for the Yearly Meeting body to consider.

#### 1. Holding our 2026 Yearly Meeting completely online.

The main advantage of meeting online is the difference in cost to the Yearly Meeting. There is a relatively small cost to cover the expense of having our clerk, assistant clerk and tech person in a central location to facilitate our business. We roughly estimate this to cost the Yearly Meeting about \$3,000 or about \$10-15 per person per day.

#### 2. Continue as now, (Hybrid Meeting) at Grinnell College.

One advantage of meeting in person is we can continue to worship, do business, nurture our relationships and introduce our newest attenders and Friends into our larger Quaker family. Grinnell is also a shorter distance for many IYMC Friends who have traveled to Scattergood for many years for Yearly Meeting. Grinnell has:

A large meeting room, several smaller meeting rooms and lounge areas.

Air conditioning.

Is handicap accessible.

The meals include a wide variety of food options.

The main disadvantage of meeting at Grinnell College is the increase in cost to the Yearly Meeting.

For 2024 Annual Sessions IYMC (Entertainment Committee) paid Scattergood \$11,150. Based on 80 attendees, this would be about \$140 per person. Per day approximately \$35.

Meeting at Grinnell in 2026 the estimated cost would be \$18,390 (based on 45 residence hall beds and meals) to \$23,850 (based on 60 residence hall beds and meals).

If we again assume 80 attendees, the range of cost per person would be: On the low end about \$230 per person. Per day approximately \$60. On the high end about \$300 per person. Per day approximately \$75.

It is difficult to predict what attendance might be in a different location. We have made our best effort at an estimated cost. Our tradition has been not to have an established fee to attend annual sessions, but each person is asked to contribute what they are able. Historically, our contributions have covered our costs. If contributions fall short in 2026, we could rely on surplus in the IYMC budget.

### Two Options

Option 1: Have Annual Sessions with everybody online except the clerk, asst. clerk and tech facilitator at a single location.

Option 2: Hold Annual Sessions as we do now, (in person/hybrid) at Grinnell College.

Which option does the body prefer?

For the committee,  
Bob Yeats, clerk

*(Proposed budget on following page)*

## PROPOSED IYMC BUDGET 2025-2026

### Apportionments

Ames	\$4,400.00
Bear Creek	\$5,500.00
Decorah	\$2,500.00
Des Moines Valley (\$7,500 approved for 6 months)	\$15,000.00
Iowa City	\$6,000.00
Lincoln	\$10,200.00
Paullina	\$8,500.00
Penn Valley	\$4,500.00
West Branch	\$11,250.00
Whittier	\$3,500.00
<b>Total Apportionments</b>	<b>\$71,350.00</b>

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### Contributions to Other Organizations

Scattergood Friends School	\$50,000.00
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 World Committee for Consultation	\$700.00
Friends General Conference	\$500.00
Friends Peace Teams	\$500.00
Pendle Hill	\$500.00
Quaker Earthcare Witness	\$500.00
Quaker United Nations Office	\$500.00
Quaker Voluntary Service	\$500.00
Right Sharing of World Resources	\$500.00
Iowa Peace Network	\$100.00
<b>Total Contributions</b>	<b>\$59,400.00</b>

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### Delegate Expenses

AFSC	\$1,440.00
Conservative Yearly Meeting Visitation	\$720.00
FCNL	\$2,160.00
Friends Peace Teams	\$360.00
FWCC - General	\$360.00
Quaker Earthcare Witness	\$360.00
<b>Total Delegate Expenses</b>	<b>\$5,400.00</b>

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**Yearly Meeting Expenses**

Archives Committee	\$200.00
Clerk's and Other Adm. Expenses	\$400.00
Clerk's Contingency Fund	\$2,000.00
Committee Expenses (Other)	\$500.00
Conscientious Objector PSC subcommittee	\$100.00
Friends Travel & Conference	\$3,500.00
Iowa Yearly Meeting Trustees	\$1,000.00
Joint Scattergood & IYMC Project	\$5,000.00
Junior Yearly Meeting	\$1,800.00
Pendle Hill Scholarship Match	\$300.00
Publication Committee	\$3,000.00
Quaker Youth Camp Scholarship	\$100.00
Special Needs Committee	\$500.00
Virtual Access Committee	\$1,000.00
Website Committee	\$450.00
Young Adult Friends	\$600.00
Young Friends	\$1,200.00
<b>Total Yearly Meeting Expenses</b>	<b>\$21,650.00</b>

**TOTAL EXPENSES \$86,450.00**

**SOURCES OF FUNDS**

2025-2026 Budget	(\$86,450.00)
Monthly Meeting Apportionments	\$71,350.00
Carryover Funds	\$15,100.00
Reserve Funds	\$25,595.71

\*\*\*\*\*

*We now adjoin our morning session to meet for our final session at 3:00 pm today.*

\*\*\*\*\*

**SEVENTH DAY – SATURDAY AFTERNOON – 7/26/2025**

*We return to the business of the Yearly Meeting.*

*Let silence take you to the core of life.* Rumi

*In the attitude of silence, the soul finds the path in a clearer light, and what is elusive and deceptive resolves itself into crystal clearness. Our life is a long and arduous quest after Truth.* Mahatma Gandhi

*Silence is more musical than any song.* Christina Rossetti

Lorene Ludy and Catherine Dorenbach are readers this afternoon.  
Judy Cottingham and Jon Shafer are carrying the microphones.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Minute:** We appreciated the recorder’s report and the work our recorder does in patiently pulling the information together and making sure our numbers reflect reality. Remembering Friends who have died in the past year brought us joy. It is good for us to remember that the people around us are blessings, and that our memories of them can continue to bless us.

*Report on following page.*

## RECORDER'S REPORT

### Deaths

Bear Creek	Jennifer Treadway Peters	September 16, 2024
Des Moines Valley	Mikel Johnson	October 7, 2024
	Charles Harold Day	November 28, 2024
	Virginia Smith*	May 2025
Paullina	Galen Robert Tjossem	July 13, 2024
Penn Valley	Thomas Babysteps	April 2, 2015**
	Alan Marshall	July 27, 2023**
	Sheila Shinn	May 13, 2024**
	Keith Snyder	March 1, 2025
West Branch	Joan Tucker	September 7, 2024

### Births

West Branch	Harsin River Howe* (to Jacob Howe and Allison Nunnikhoven)	March 18, 2025
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### Marriages under the Care of the Meetings

None

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

Iowa City	Dan Treadway	February 9, 2025 (by certificate from Ames Meeting)
	Anthony Robinson	May 11, 2025 (by request)
	Kristian Marchand	May 18, 2025 (by request)
Des Moines Valley	Cheryl Sutton	February 22, 2025 (by certificate from Bear Creek Meeting)
	Katie Jacoby	May 18, 2025 (by certificate from Bear Creek Meeting)
Whittier	Lisa Blomme	2024 or 2025 (by request)

*Report continues next page.*

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Births</b>	<b>Deaths</b>	<b>Certificate of Membership</b>	<b>Memberships Transferred out</b>	<b>New Memberships</b>	<b>Memberships Discontinued</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Ames	0	0	0	2	0	0	23
Bear Creek	0	1	0	2	0	0	67
Decorah	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
Des Moines Valley	0	2	2	0	0	0	61
Iowa City	0	0	1	3	2	0	69
Lincoln	0	0	0	0	0	0	20
Paullina	0	1	0	0	0	0	62
Penn Valley	0	4	0	0	0	0	69***
West Branch	0	1	0	0	0	0	88
Whittier	0	0	0	0	1	1	32
<b>Totals</b>							
<b>Net Loss</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>503***</b>

\*Not a member, not included in statistical chart.

\*\*Deaths not previously reported

\*\*\*Penn Valley has been reviewing its membership records.

69 is the corrected membership number, reflected also in the total Yearly Meeting membership.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Minute:** We approve the report of the Nominating Committee and are grateful for their work. We are also grateful for the work of all our members and attenders who serve on these committees.

**2025 NOMINATING REPORT 071625**

**Archives Committee**

2026 Tim Shipe	2027 Shel Stromquist, clerk	2028 Jeff Kisling Ed Clopton
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**Book Table Committee**

2026 Meg McCormick	2027 Deborah Dakin
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**Entertainment Committee**

2026 Paullina Penn Valley Lincoln	2027 Ames Des Moines Valley Whittier	2028 Decorah West Branch Iowa City
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**Interim Meeting**

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

2026 Meg McCormick (WB) Dorothy Lifka (DMV) Stan Sanders (BC) Bob Henderson (DMV) Andy Juhl (P) Steve Cannon (A) Catherine Dorenbach (L)	2027 Bob Winkleblack (IC) Shirley Scritchfield (PV) George Bergus (WB)	2028 Bill Deutsch (D) Roy Helm (L) Angelika Shafer (PV)
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**Junior Yearly Meeting (at Yearly Meeting)**

2026 Sonja Sponheim, clerk Evelyn Bergus	2027 Karen Greenler	2028 Kate Van de Walle
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**Midyear Planning Committee**

2026 Bill Deutsch Osa Bricker *co-clerk still to be named	2027 Tom Hinshaw Carol Spaulding Kruse	2028 Deborah Fink Russ Leckband Jackie Leckband, co-clerk
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**Junior Yearly Meeting (at Midyear Meeting)**

2026 Bill Deutsch, clerk	2027 Ann Robinson	2028 Carol Gilbert
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**Ministry and Counsel**

*Each monthly meeting can name up to 2 members to represent them on Ministry and Council.*

2026

Kathy Van De Walle (WB)  
 Amanda Emerson (PV)  
 Billie Wade (DMV)  
 Marion Love (BC)  
 Sarah Andrews (IC)  
 Ginny Winsor (L)

2027

Jane Cadwallader Howe (WB)  
 Liz Voss (IC)  
 Lorene Ludy (L)  
 Daniel Willems (W)  
 Deborah Fisch (P)

2028

Sharon Eiker (PV)  
 Nat Case (BC)  
 Decorah – no appt  
 David Wilcox (A)

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

A.M. Fink (A)

Dorothy Lifka (DMV)

Doyle Wilson (P)

Bob Yeats (W)

Russ Leckband (BC) -

Carole Winkleblack (IC)

Jon Shafer (PV)

Bill Deutsch, clerk (D)

Ray Helm (L)

Judy Cottingham (WB)

**Peace and Social Concerns Committee**

2026

Peter Clay

Jon Shafer

Russ Leckband, co-clerk

David Hansen

2027

Jean Hansen, co-clerk

Jon Krieg

Bob Yeats

2028

Bob Jones

Claire Cumbie-Drake

Anthony Robinson

Peggy Frantz

**Publications Committee**

2026

Katie Jacoby

Nat Case

Cheryl Sutton, co-clerk

2027

Martha Davis

2028

Carole Winkleblack, co-clerk

**Representatives Committee**

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

2026

Ann Robinson (DMV)

Penny Majors (WB)

Stan Sanders (BC)

Ray Helm (L)

2027

Jon Shafer (PV)

Bill Deutsch (D)

Doyle Wilson (P)

Lisa Blomme (W)

Peggy Frantz (PV)

Sanja Sponheim (BC)

Sarah Andrews (IC)

2028

Catherine Dorenbach (L)

Rebecca Bergus (WB)

Bob Yeats (W)

Kristian Marchand (IC)

**Scattergood Friends School Committee**

2026	2027	2028
George Bergus	Ruth Hampton, Clerk	Kent Tjossem
David Wilcox		Roy Helm, assistant clerk
Nancy Jordan		Katie Jakoby

We give thanks to the School Committee members who serve but are not appointed by IYMC:

- Alex Lippitt (representative from Illinois Yearly Meeting)
- Linda Corbin-Pardee (representative from Northern Yearly Meeting)
- Aaron Woolfson (at-large member)
- Eric Stakland (at-large member)
- Kris Hilgendorf (at-large member)
- Monica Beals (at-large member)

**Scattergood Friends School Foundation Trustees – appointed by YM Trustees**

2026	2027	2028	2029
Barb Garlinghouse	Lee Tesdell	Lowell Wilson	Bob Yeats
Carole Winkleblack	Bob Jones	Shirley Scritchfield	Cheryl Sutton

**Special Needs Committee**

2026	2027	2028
Bob Yeats	John Andrews George Bergus	Deborah Dakin Deborah Fisch

**Virtual Access Committee**

2026	2027	2028
Tom Hinshaw, convener	Kathy Dice Carol Spaulding Kruse	

**Website/Technology Committee**

2026	2027
Cheryl Sutton	Katie Jacoby, clerk

**Yearly Meeting Trustees**

2026	2027	2028	2029
Jonathan Fisch Deborah Dakin	Bill Deutsch, co-clerk	Carol Spaulding Kruse	Bob Winkleblack, co-clerk

**Young Adult Friends**

Evelyn Bergus (WB), clerk Dominic Marconi (PV)	Noelle Pinneo (L)	Emma Galusha (L)	Jack Niemuth (PV)
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**Young Friends for Yearly Meeting Committee – no appointments identified**

**IYMC REPRESENTATIVES TO FRIENDS AGENCIES**

**AFSC Corporation**

2026

Peter Clay

2027

Ann Stromquist

Andrea Jilovec

2028

**FCNL General Committee**

2026

Carole Winkleblack

Rebecca Bergus

2027

Penny Majors

David Hansen

2028

Deborah Fink

Noelle Pinneo

**Friends Peace Teams - Peter Clay**

**FWCC**

2026

Angelika Shafer

2027

Marion Love

2028

**Quaker Earthcare Witness Steering Committee - Nan Fawcett**

**Iowa Peace Network Joint Oversight Committee - Jon Krieg**

\* \* \* \* \*

**Minute:** We thank the Archives Committee for this informative and thorough report and for keeping track of our records and alerting us to the problem of the proposed move of our archived materials. We approve the recommendation section of the report and the additional public statement, printed below, opposing the move and ask the Archives Committee and Yearly Meeting clerk to work to disseminate it in ways that are helpful, including to the Iowa monthly meetings. We encourage the Archives Committee to explore other storage options should the materials not have a safe place in Iowa.

**ARCHIVES REPORT**

**Background**

In 2023, IYMC at Annual Sessions approved signing a provisional renewal of the deposit agreement with the State Historical Society of Iowa (SHSI) with the understanding that Yearly Meeting would move ahead to prepare a Deed of Gift for donating the records to the SHSI. At the 2024 IYMC Annual Sessions, Yearly Meeting approved the terms of a draft deed of gift prepared by the Archives Committee in consultation with some other yearly meetings and the Iowa State Archivist, Tony Jahn. The trustees of Iowa Yearly Meeting of Friends (Conservative) and officials of SHSI subsequently signed the deed of gift in November 2024 and the records became the property of SHSI, which undertook

responsibility for organizing, describing, preserving, and providing public access to the records at its Iowa City facility.

### **Recent Developments—SHSI, Iowa City**

On June 17, 2025, the Iowa Department of Administrative Services (DAS), which now oversees the State Historical Society of Iowa, issued a press release announcing that the State Historical Society facility in Iowa City would be closing. The reasons given were “ongoing financial considerations” and “duplication in function.” Access by the public would only be available by appointment after July 9; all staff in Iowa City (3) would be terminated as of December 31; and the building would be vacated by June 30, 2026. While the DAS said the archival collections (reported to be 34,700 cubic feet) would be moved to the Des Moines, many questions remain as to the capacity of the Des Moines facility to house and manage these collections and no transparency has been offered as to the fate of the substantial library collection—very large holdings of books, journals, microfilm of census and newspapers, genealogical materials, maps, and other materials.

This action is so recent that the situation is still quite fluid, and the eventual outcome is difficult to predict. Not surprisingly, a very large and diverse group is coalescing to oppose this move. (The closure of the Iowa City facility has been proposed at least three times in the past and each time the plan for closure has been withdrawn because of public opposition). The Iowa City Historical Library and Archives holds very rich and valuable collections, which, for decades, have been heavily used by community and family researchers, university students and faculty, genealogists, historians from around the country and the world and members of the public. The overlapping nature of the library and archival materials, the access to census records, city directories, maps, immigration and naturalization records, local newspapers from communities across eastern Iowa and the state, alongside the archival records of churches, labor unions, fraternal lodges, and other institutions, as well as the personal papers of individuals and a massive photograph collection, carefully catalogued and cross-referenced, has a value that cannot be overstated.

### **Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative), Concerns**

When the IYMC Archives Committee in 2023 discussed with the State Archivist, Tony Jahn, the possible deeding of IYMC records (including monthly meeting records), he assured us that 1) the collections would be “well preserved”; 2) that the State Historical Society had no plan to move the collection from Iowa City; 3) that the State had invested substantially in new improvements to the Iowa City facility (new steam tunnels, heating and air conditioning); 4) that SHSI would be hiring a new archivist (to replace longtime archivist Mary Bennett); and 5) that the open hours for the reading rooms (library and archives) would be expanded.

By 2024, and until very recently, all of these promises seemed to have been fulfilled.

During the intervening months, the IYMC records have been reprocessed by the new archivist in Iowa City, Allison Johnson. All boxes have been opened and the contents verified. A more detailed inventory and description at the box and folder level has been produced (previously only a very brief general label was available for each box). The IYMC collection includes records of many monthly meetings, for example West Branch (1925-68), Iowa City (1956-2000). It comprises 19.5 linear feet and 32 boxes, covering the period 1862-2022. The collection is well preserved and carefully managed. The new levels of description make possible easier access by the public and interested researchers.

It should be noted that SHSI-Iowa City also holds the Scattergood School Records, 1890-1981) (30 linear ft., 41 archive boxes, 14 photo boxes), Scattergood Hostel Records, 1939-43, and a variety of other Quaker-related records.

### **Questions—Implications of Closing Iowa City Archives and Library**

What would be the consequences of closing IC branch?

- Centralizing all library and archival materials in Des Moines would reduce access points for patrons.
- Connections between library and archival materials in IC would be broken. It is uncertain where the library materials would go.
- “Local knowledge” of the staff in IC about the collections of library and archival materials would be lost; ongoing processing of collections, continuing acquisition of new materials, ability to provide knowledgeable assistance to users would be ended.
- Cutbacks in archival staff in Des Moines (2 full-time positions—Special Collections and State records) and loss of three staff positions in Iowa City would mean reduced capacity to manage and service the IC materials.

- Many of current collections in Iowa City are not digitally catalogued and access requires use of an existing card catalogue specific to that facility.

- It is neither clear that the planned compact shelving in Des Moines would provide sufficient space for the IC collections, nor that, with a diminished archives staff, a collection of the size and scope of the IC archives will be adequately organized and made accessible. If not, then the compact storage will simply function as a warehouse for the collection.

- No space exists in Des Moines for new collections or accretions to existing collections. A pause in all new collecting for 1-2 years is under consideration.

- University of Iowa students and faculty have made extensive use of the collections in Iowa City to produce original history of the state of Iowa. That opportunity for use of the collections would be dramatically reduced.

### **What Would Be the Impact of Closing the IC Branch on IYMC Collections?**

- Closing IC and moving collections to Des Moines would eliminate the staff who have processed and organized the collections and are most knowledgeable about their content, and most able to provide informed access.

- Moving the Quaker archival collections—IYMC, Scattergood School, Scattergood Hostel, many monthly meetings—would physically separate them from proximity to Scattergood and from monthly meetings in Eastern Iowa. [Western and Central Iowa Friends might have greater physical proximity to the records.]

- Closing and disbursing the library collections would break their connection to the Quaker archival holdings—published IYMC minute books, “Scattergood News”, and other print materials are part of the library holdings.

- Reduced staffing in Des Moines would make it very unlikely that IYMC digital records would be processed, described and managed “in a digital environment” as originally promised by the State Archivist.

- Even if the Quaker collections were “preserved” in the Des Moines facility, it seems certain that access would be significantly reduced or all-but-eliminated for the foreseeable future.

- It is unlikely in the foreseeable future that additional accretions to the Quaker collections would be welcomed because of space limitations and loss of staff.

### **Alternative Actions**

Because the announcement of closure of the IC facility is so recent, responses to the closure are still very much in flux. Possible actions are the following:

- Concerned parties are considering a lawsuit and injunction to stop any further action to close the IC facility until a comprehensive review is undertaken. Possible parties to the lawsuit may include the Historical Society of Iowa, Inc., which has a legal claim to Iowa City collections acquired before 1974 and to the building, under an agreement with the state in 1983. Other potential plaintiffs may include the Iowa Federation of Labor, University of Iowa—History Department, Iowa Genealogical Society, other major donors of archival materials and Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative).
- Continuing publicity—letters to the editor, opinion pieces, press releases, petitions—to highlight the impact the closing would have on preservation and access to Iowa history.

#### **Under the Terms of the Deed of Gift Between IYMC and SHSI:**

“In the event that SHSI shall elect to dispose of the collection or any of its constituent parts, after consultation with the donors, such materials shall be returned at SHSI’s expense to the donors or any third party IYMC shall designate.”

While SHSI would not technically be “disposing of” the IYMC collections by moving them to Des Moines, a good faith reading of the agreement and the understandings expressed beforehand by the State Archivist, might allow IYMC to take back the collections and seek another repository, if it so chose.

#### **Recommendations**

For the reasons listed above, we recommend that IYMC (Archives Committee, Clerk, Trustees) participate in the campaign to keep the Iowa City Branch of the SHSI open by issuing a statement of support, drafting letters or opinion pieces, and other initiatives, perhaps including participation in a lawsuit to halt or slow up the process of closing the facility and laying off staff pending further review.

#### **Other Proposals from the Archives Committee**

At a meeting of the IYMC Archives Committee in June (before news of the SHSI-IC closing broke), the committee agreed to do a couple of things in the near future. First, we will review the new, revised finding aids for the IYMC collection and make any suggestions for revision to Allison Johnson, the archivist at the Iowa City branch. Second, we agreed that it would be a good idea to survey all monthly meetings to request information about the status of their records and whether they would

consider moving them to be part of the existing IYMC collection in Iowa City. Jeff Kisling has produced an excellent draft survey that we will discuss at our next meeting, as well as any recommendation we would make for how to move forward in the current climate. Third, we considered but did not discuss in detail any plan for moving ahead with collecting and cataloging oral histories of IYMC members. That is also a matter for future discussion.

IYMC Archives Committee  
Shel Stromquist (clerk), Tim Shipe, Jeff Kisling

\* \* \* \* \*

**Minute:** We approve this epistle and thank its writers. The clerk was asked to also mail our general epistle to Iowa Yearly Meeting FUM, and the General Gathering of Conservative Friends that meets at Olney Friends School.

### **2025 EPISTLES FROM IOWA YEARLY MEETING (CONSERVATIVE)**

#### **To Friends Everywhere**

To Friends Everywhere,

*Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth. -Psalm 46:10*

Warm Greetings from Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) as we meet in person and online for the 148th Annual Sessions at Scattergood Friends School and Farm, near West Branch, Iowa, Seventh Month 23-27, 2025. Our theme this year is *Silent Worship in a Noisy World*, which we explore through evening collections; lead thru exercises; and sharing of personal experience: when did you first experience Quaker Silence? And what has the Silence brought to your life and faith?

Several Friends enjoyed lively Bible study sessions each morning. Evening Collections were rich and gave us much to think about. On Fourth Day Geery Howe told us about the dangers of flooding, which is feeling psychologically and physically overwhelmed, making productive problem-solving impossible. Instead of solving problems, people become cynical, hopeless, and bitter. There are ways to escape these non-productive behaviors. We were asked to journey inward while seeking

stillness and quiet. Drawing from a Japanese saying, “The wind howls, but the mountain remains still,” Geery urged us to steward our inner silence.

Fifth Day evening, we shared stories of how we came to silent worship and what works best in our experience. Lead by IYMC members Evelyn Bergus, Ken Fawcett, Callie Marsh, and Craig Moser, rising from the floor and joining online to initiate our sharing in small groups of what Silence has come to mean in our lives. It takes time to experience Stillness; that this is not a checklist that can be completed rapidly. Another Friend told us how she learned to use Silence by spending time in silent activities such as gardening. Another suggested that he strives to be the mountain in its stillness; suggesting that he tries to experience the Spirit Within. Another Friend talked about the importance of being mentored, learning by watching and listening to others who are more experienced.

We listened to the State of the Meeting Reports and heard a number of themes. Many monthly meetings reported that they had permanently adopted hybrid worship formats, post COVID, and that this has increased the numbers of worshipers on First Day. Some monthly meetings are strengthening worship through encouraging intervisitation between monthly meetings. Some meetings reported they were saddened by the loss of a number of longtime Friends this past year, while some noted increase in younger people attending, seeking a spiritual home. Nurturing these visitors was an important goal.

Small-group-spiritual-sharing is now in its fifth year. This organized, online, regular meeting allows small groups of participants to share from their experience and get to know one another more deeply while examining personal spirituality, using outside resources and/or learning from one another.

Members of our yearly meeting have grown increasingly distressed by new laws being enacted at State and Federal levels, abridging personal freedoms, and redefining citizenship and voting rights. More Friends are participating in advocacy activities to protect the weak and vulnerable.

We gathered to hear the Scattergood Friends School reports on Sixth Day. The school continues to provide students with innovative and meaningful education, while the farm is recognized as a center of sustainable agriculture. Despite the wonderful learning environment, Scattergood continues to struggle with enrollment. The impact on financial health of the school was a surprise. Measey Foundation provides

the school with significant but restricted funding; to be applied only for scholarships and ironically is based on enrollment. All concerned are working to find solutions.

There was further discussion this year about how the school should relate to Yearly Meeting. Scattergood is fully owned by IYMC, making it unique among Quaker boarding schools in the United States. This relationship raises possible issues that need further study such as insurance, liability, contractual and financial complications; issues currently facing other private boarding schools. The Scattergood School Committee is in the process of collecting information. We were told the ad hoc committee is being deliberate and purposeful in its data collection.

During worship with attention to business on Sixth Day, Peace and Social Concerns Committee asked Yearly Meeting for support on two issues. The first was a minute on the resolution of the Israel-Palestine conflict. After considerable consideration Yearly Meeting endorsed the minute. The second request was support for the pledge to join others in working to end all support to Israel's apartheid regime, settler colonialism, and military occupation. This coalition is convened by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and has a steering committee. IYMC agreed to support this pledge.

Gretchen Castle provided our Sixth Day evening Collection and introduced us to *This Present Moment of the Eternal Now*. "God is always, eternal, is NOW," she said, and suggested that there were many ways to worship, and if George Fox were to come to one of our meetinghouses today, he would not recognize many of these forms of worship.

Gretchen also told us from her international travel and observation, that Friends in the United States tended to be less tolerant of the different ways Quakers worship, compared to other parts of the world. This lack of tolerance has contributed to yearly meetings breaking up and going their own way while maintaining other common and stable values.

On Seventh Day, Rex Nyquist, dressed as John Woolman, came to the Annual Sessions of Yearly Meeting. Rex is a high school history teacher in Chicago. Much of his performance is based on *The Journal of John Woolman*. Rex's performance was realistic and charmed those of us who watched him.

*(Note: The wording of the epistles to North Carolina Yearly Meeting, Conservative and Ohio Yearly Meeting is identical except for the following first paragraphs.)*

**To Friends of Ohio Yearly Meeting**

Dear Friends of Ohio Yearly Meeting,

*Wait reverently for the coming and opening of the Word of Life and attend upon it in your ministry and service . . . . And be it little, or be it much, it is well, for much is not too much and the least is enough, if from the motion of God's spirit . . . .* George Fox

We missed having a Friend from your Yearly Meeting with us this year. We know that John Edminster was strongly led to attend, but was not able. Jon Shafer, who attended your sessions last year, plans to be with you again this year, and we are glad of that. Messages from our guest speaker, Gretchen Castle, reminded us that Love unites us despite our distance from you.

**To Friends of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)**

Dear Friends of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative),

*Wait reverently for the coming and opening of the Word of Life and attend upon it in your ministry and service... And be it little, or be it much, it is well, for much is not too much and the least is enough, if from the motion of God's spirit.* George Fox

We are grateful for your commending to our care your member, Susan Lees, as an appointed visitor. We appreciated her presence and engagement with Friends in quiet and animated conversations, worship, and business sessions. It was a happy change from her virtual attendance last year. We also appreciated the online presence of Sarah Miller and Nathaniel Corwin, and are hopeful that they might attend in person as well, some day.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Minute:** We appreciate the work of the Special Needs Committee –their prodding and pushing us over the years to continue to help our yearly meeting become more inclusive. We acknowledge that the work of the Virtual Access Committee also addresses special needs by helping

beloved Friends to attend online. We thank the other volunteers that help with getting documents prepared and available.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS COMMITTEE REPORT**

The purpose of the Special Needs Committee is to ensure that our meetings are as accessible as possible to all who desire to come, regardless of disabilities. Past projects have included an upgraded sound system, use of the golf cart, a ramp to the stage area, and the addition of fragrance-free hygiene products to campus facilities.

While we were not super active this year, we feel that some of our long-term advocacy has begun to bear fruit. We are grateful that the Trustees are working hard to upgrade access to the meetinghouse. For the first time in years, there is talk about improving accessibility on the Scattergood campus. We are hopeful that as Scattergood embarks on major renovations, it will take into account the needs of those of us who are differently abled. Often small thoughtful design features, applied at the time of renovation or construction, will make a huge difference. If we are fortunate, we all will be able to take advantage of these features as we age. After all, we are all only temporarily able-bodied.

\* \* \* \* \*

Reports that are not heard today but will be in the Minute Book include the Scattergood 2025-2026 FY Budget, Book Table Committee, Virtual Access, Website Committee, and the reports from our representatives to the AFSC Corporation and Quaker Earthcare Witness. We very much appreciate the service of these Friends and are glad that their reports will be posted on our website, as well as included in the 2025 Minute Book.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **CLOSING MINUTE**

We gathered again at Scattergood Friends School and online this year.

Our sessions were rich in Holy lessons. In considering how to be still in the Spirit, as the world storms wildly around us, we were reminded that stillness brings us close to the Seed and the Source. Stillness does not take us away from the world but helps us bring God into the world. We learned, or re-learned, that we do not worship alone, but in community, in communities and as a body. We worship and discern together. In one session we learned from several West Branch Friends how they were brought into the body, how they worship in meeting and how they bring their Quakerism to their daily lives. We learned, and re-learned that love is so powerful that it can't be coming only from ourselves, it must be

Divine; it is powerful enough to bind us to one another in all our differences, imperfections, and woundedness. We were reminded that Love must be our guide.

Being people, we are sometimes slow to bring these lessons to our real life decision-making, even during our business sessions, but we do find ways forward.

We labored long about statements to the world in opposition to war and genocide, though we clearly oppose war and genocide. Our choice was about how to express our love.

Because Scattergood Friends School is getting new bathrooms and air conditioning, it will not be available to us for next year's Annual Sessions, and we labored long about what to do. Though a big cost difference is involved, our choice was about our love of one another and how to best include everyone.

Scattergood is always a bright spot in our agenda and it did not fail us this year. We are so blessed to play a part in the lives of the young people who attend school here. We are also excited that we have a movement among young adult Friends who are organizing to support one another as Friends and fellow worshipers in the Yearly Meeting.

We adjourn to meet again as Love allows, Seventh Month 22-26, both at Grinnell College in Grinnell, Iowa and online.

Carol Gilbert, clerk

\* \* \* \* \*

## **REPORTS RECEIVED BUT NOT READ DURING SESSIONS**

### **EXERCISE COMMITTEE REPORT**

(The Exercise Committee reports on the exercise of the Spirit that arises in meeting for worship and other times during Annual Sessions.)

What brought me back to the Bible? Well, the answer is, God brought me back. Isn't that always the case? And how cool is that? Way cool!

There are verses in the Christian testament that say something like, "Seek and you will find. Knock and the door will be opened unto you. Ask and it will be given unto you." I learned that a more accurate translation would be "Keep seeking.... keep knocking... keep asking..." Perhaps if written today it would be, "Keep trying and the Internet will be restored to you!" I am grateful the clerk has invited us to waiting worship while we wait for

F/friends to work on getting the Internet reception restored so our on-line F/friends can join us in the business of Yearly Meeting.

After waiting *many* minutes in worship hoping on-line F/friends would be able to continue with us in the business of Yearly Meeting the following arose as ministry. *Spirit is not limited by the Internet. Perhaps we can trust that the Spirit is able to be with all of us as we return to business.*

I went to the prairie this morning in search of bobwhites because a F/friend who visited it last year came across a nest of their fledglings. I rode my bike on almost all the trails, and I didn't find any. However, the prairie is a beautiful place, and I saw so many different plants and heard so many different kinds of birds. If you look you will hear and see!

The drought of recent years has now passed, so some things I didn't see last year are growing tall, and now others are absent. This has not been a good year for monarchs and other butterflies, but the Big Bluestem (grass) is almost seven feet tall! The roots of the plants were deep in the ground lying dormant until a season of rain came so they could grow and sow seeds again. If something doesn't come up this year, maybe conditions will be right next year.

It came to me that the prairie is like a reservoir. The prairie holds all kinds of plants and animals. Things manifest and different plants prosper in different conditions. In our meetings and in the world, there are so many things that rise up and then for whatever reason eventually recede for months, years or more. Maybe our meetings are like a reservoir. Our roots are deep. Maybe we and our meetings are like that, a reservoir of life, waiting for conditions that favor what we can bring to the world. If it doesn't show up this year, maybe it will be next year.

Whenever you do a job, whatever that job is, it has dignity and worth. I hope that someday people will realize that those who pick up the trash have just as much worth to society, if not more so, than the surgeons and others who are currently treated with more respect.

Hope is a verb with sleeves rolled up. Hope needs to be nurtured. Scattergood is a much-needed place for young people (and staff) to practice hope.

I spend a lot of time attending Scattergood School Committee (SSC) meetings as well as committees serving the SSC. One day my wife asked

me, “Why do you spend so much time on the school?” In the dining room I was watching students working together with joy. The true value of Scattergood is the children!

During Bible study we considered the Body of Christ and all the various parts that are needed. We recognized that we are all part of the same spiritual body and that all the various parts are needed for it to function. However, sometimes what is needed for the good of the body as a whole may not be good for every individual part. For example, physical therapy may be needed for the good of one part of the body, but it can be painful for many parts of the body for a while. We need to have trust in an overarching unity of the body. It is like the story of the elephant and the blind men. [The elephant was before them, but each could only describe the part of the elephant right before them, the part they could feel. If they had gotten together and described for each other what each felt, perhaps they could have figured out it was an elephant. When they didn't, they left with each one convinced they knew what they had “seen” and the others were wrong.] As parts of the spiritual body, we understand the need for us all to work together to discern and then carry forward whatever action is being asked of us. When this happens, it is a wonderful thing.

During hard times such as these I find comfort in Romans 8:38,39. *For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.* There is a wideness in God's mercy..... I try to remember to listen well and ask for help when I need it. I expect to be made new daily. I want to be ready to say, “Yes!” if called, even if it is difficult.

As a little girl I was connected to Spirit through nature and loved feeling hearts beating together. The first part of life I tried to figure out, “How does a human being live with the Spirit?” Then one day I realized that *I am a Spirit having a human experience!* And realizing that I am a part of the Whole brought me profound peace and purpose. There is that of God in all creation, not just humans. And I realized there is never a separation from Spirit, though we may not always feel it. We are always a part of creation and being held.

When feeling uncentered I ask myself, “Is God at my center?” And if I find the answer to be, “No,” then that is an indication of the need to bring myself back, so God is at my center again.

I am feeling an overflowing sense of gratitude for the opportunity of being with this group and all who are helping making manifest in the world God’s loving presence. I can feel that Presence here.

It has been resting on my heart all week about how we are reshaped by whatever we practice. ... We are told to love God with all your heart and soul and strength and mind and also pray without ceasing. How? If my heart yields to God and I yield over time it becomes a flow. Over time there has been transformation. I only need to seek to be loving and helpful when I see a need. When I pay attention to “seasoned Friends” I see their lives like the Light of God flowing from them and it gives me hope that as I pay attention and find myself slowly intentionally changing, it becomes enough. As I am changed, I am able to see others whom I can help in some way and am then able to act on it. It is a slow, life-long process. I can’t yet pray without ceasing, but I can always return to it when I realize I am off the path.

In Bible study this week we have been looking at quotes from Paul about all being parts of the same Body. But Paul also said in other places that women should submit to their husbands and slaves to their masters. Jesus said something different, and he told people they could sing, pray, and be faithful.... I’m sorry, Paul. You did some good things, but you also brought back some class hierarchies that Jesus came to do away with!

At one time in my life, I worked for Iowa Peace Network. Every year there was a demonstration outside the School of the Americas [at Ft. Benning, GA where soldiers from Central and South American countries were trained in American police tactics, including interrogation.] Part of my job was to help organize those going to the demonstration. Each year participants let it be known if they intended to cross the line onto the base, knowing they would be immediately arrested. There was a Methodist minister from Des Moines whom I had come to know that participated each year and intended to be one of those who crossed the line. The night before they were heading out, we had the Opportunity to talk for a bit, and I told him I felt guilty helping to prepare for others to attend and not be willing to do so myself. I explained about where my

fear of being arrested had come. He looked at me with Love in his eyes and told me I should feel released from that guilt because 1) God would never ask me to do something I couldn't do and 2) We are all given different jobs by the Divine, and none is more important than another. He said that without the support of people like me, he and others would not be able to go at all. He said each of us needs to be faithful to what we are given to do. I feel profound gratitude for being led to Quakers and for being here at Annual Sessions... "This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it!" and "Love God with all your being." And how cool is that! Way cool!

Exercise Committee

Deborah Fisch, Dan Treadway, Billie Wade

<b>Scattergood Friends School</b>			
July 2025 - June 2026			
Proposed Budget			
<b>REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ 1,927,182.19</b>		
4000 Annual Giving	\$ 250,000.00		<i>Expenditures continued</i>
4025 STO/Financial	\$ 26,016.39		5395 Electives \$ 500.00
4030 Iowa Yearly Meeting	\$ 50,000.00		5400 Advisee Outings \$ 2,000.00
4035 Grants	\$ -		5402 Intersession \$ 12,500.00
4100 Designated Capital	\$ 70,000.00		5405 Orientation \$ 400.00
4205 SFS Foundation	\$ 158,196.00		5410 Camping Weekend \$ 300.00
4210 Measey Foundation	\$ 750,000.00		5415 Meetings- Student \$ 3,000.00
4305 Summer	\$ -		5420 Admission/Recruiting \$ 2,500.00
4310 Tuition	\$ 491,849.80		5450 Summer Camp \$ -
4312 Enrollment Fees	\$ -		5455 Event Cost \$ 200.00
4313 App. Fees	\$ 1,100.00		5500 Insurance \$ 83,311.00
4314 Rental Use	\$ -		5505 Liability \$ -
Fee For Services	\$ 20,000.00		5510 Umbrella \$ -
4315 Farm	\$ 10,000.00		5520 Cyber/Other \$ -
4316 Other Fees	\$ -		5525 Teacher/Prof. \$ 21,231.00
			5600 Occupancy /Operating/shared Cost \$ 113,000.00
4400 Other Revenue	\$ 100,000.00		5635 Grocery \$ 55,000.00
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$ 1,921,587.68</b>		5640 Governance \$ 6,000.00
5000 Salaries & wages exp	\$ 917,964.43		
			5645 Director's Discretionary Fund \$ 4,000.00
5005 Payroll taxes	\$ 75,768.08		5705 All Supplies \$ 17,000.00
5105 Retirement	\$ 33,027.44		
5115 Health Insurance and other benefits	\$ 252,909.72		5710 Postage \$ 3,300.00
5130 Staff travel	\$ 3,600.00		5715 Landline/Cell Phone \$ 7,600.00
5135 Training/Development/Certifica	\$ 600.00		5720 Printing/Copier \$ 9,700.00
5140 Background Checks	\$ 800.00		5725 Other/Internet \$ 2,000.00
5205 Management Fees(PEO)	\$ 30,000.00		5730 Bank & credit card charge exp \$ 400.00
5210 Legal	\$ 5,000.00		5740 Dues/Membership \$ 4,900.00
5215 Accounting, Auditing, 990	\$ 35,000.00		5745 Interest/Penalties \$ 25,000.00
5230 Contract Labor	\$ 33,260.00		5750 Fuel \$ 5,000.00
5233 Guidance (ISACS)	\$ 3,000.00		5751 Vehicle Expense \$ 13,450.00
5235 Other Prof. Fees	\$ 4,000.00		<b>SUB-TOTAL</b> \$ 393,692.00
5300 Instruction /Student Life/Admission	\$ 4,000.00		5800 Advertising/Promotion/Marketing \$ -
5305 Arts/Project	\$ 3,350.00		5905 Software/Web/Subscription \$ 10,500.00
5310 Humanities	\$ 1,700.00		5910 Tech Support \$ 37,716.00
5315 Library	\$ 1,000.00		5915 IT Equipment \$ -
5320 Math	\$ 1,500.00		6000 Travel exp \$ -
5324 May Term	\$ 3,200.00		6205 Farm/Garden \$ 11,200.00
5330 Science	\$ 1,400.00		6210 Livestock \$ 500.00
5335 Second Language	\$ 500.00		6215 Hay/Pasture \$ 1,500.00
5340 FLL	\$ 150.00		Purchases \$ 3,000.00
5345 Social Studies	\$ 500.00		Uncategorized Expense \$ 23,850.00
5350 Physical Ed	\$ 2,100.00		<b>SUB-TOTAL</b> \$ 88,266.00
5355 English	\$ 500.00		<b>NET REVENUE</b> \$ 5,574.51
5360 Professional Development	\$ 10,000.00		
5365 Seminar	\$ 1,500.00		
5370 Contracted labor	\$ -		
5385 Field Trips	\$ 2,000.00		
5386 Trips Week	\$ 11,300.00		
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 1,439,629.68</b>		

## **BOOK TABLE REPORT**

Throughout the 2024 IYMC Annual Sessions, the book table committee provided a browse-only selection of books for Yearly Meeting participants to peruse. These books came from the West Branch Meeting Library as well as the personal libraries of committee members. In addition, we provided book lists from Billie Wade's Anti-Racism Group, and the West Branch Meeting book group.

We were able to offer direct sales of two titles by yearly meeting author Carol Roh Spaulding: *Waiting for Mr. Kim* (short stories), and *Sacrifice State*. *Sacrifice State* involved a collaboration between Drake students, the Iowa Environmental Council, and Drake University Press. Proceeds of this book went to support the Iowa Environmental Council.

All books were returned, and we considered this format a successful alternative to a traditional book table.

Book Table Committee  
Jane Cadwallader Howe  
Deborah Dakin

## **VIRTUAL ACCESS REPORT**

The Virtual Access Committee is responsible for enabling the participation in Annual Sessions of people attending virtually with Internet technology. Our goal is to bring those online as fully as possible into the community and spirit of the sessions.

The committee maintains the IYMC Zoom subscription. The subscription is used for Annual Sessions, IYMC committees, and small Spiritual Sharing Groups.

The committee obtains (either by borrowing, renting or buying) equipment which it sets up and operates to create a hybrid meeting environment in the meetinghouse for the sessions. The committee coordinates with the Special Needs Committee in the joint use of IYMC sound equipment that Special Needs maintains.

The Session Zoom host is a member of the committee and is present in the meetinghouse throughout the Sessions, operating the equipment to create the hybrid environment. The Zoom host also assists the clerk and speakers with making audio/video presentations on the meetinghouse screen.

Committee members and volunteers act as co-hosts with the Zoom host to create a welcoming presence online during the sessions, monitoring for and correcting problems in the broadcast, and assisting

attendees with technological access issues. The Zoom host and co-hosts also assist the clerk and speakers in monitoring the screen for questions by online attendees.

Our expenses over the past year have been:

Rental of Projection Screen & Projector for Annual Sessions	171.49
Annual Zoom Software Subscription	<u>361.46</u>
<b>TOTAL COST:</b>	<b>\$532.95</b>

For future budgeting, the committee is considering purchasing a large projection screen, in lieu of renting one every year. After three years of experience with creating a hybrid environment for Annual Sessions, we are satisfied that the large screen is a useful long-term investment. We have been renting a screen each year for \$175. The same brand screen as the one we have rented in a suitable size would cost \$430 new, but similar screens of other brands range in price from \$200 to \$300.

We expect to continue to rent a projector (also \$175 per year) for now. Projector technology continues to rapidly advance and get cheaper, and we are not confident that we have found the best projector for our needs at this point.

We will be learning this year whether the blackout curtains we purchased last year for \$106 can be reused indefinitely. The blackout curtains have proven very useful in improving the visibility of the projection on the screen in the meeting room.

The committee welcomes feedback and suggestions from our community for improvements we can make to the hybrid experience and equipment.

Tom Hinshaw, convenor/Sessions Zoom host

## **WEBSITE COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Website Committee continues to maintain and update the website with each year's reports and minutes in accordance with the Yearly Meeting's direction. The website provides access to our *Minutes, Faith and Practice*, epistles, helpful links including FWCC's World Epistles Archives and the "find a meeting" app. We hope that it is a useful resource for our yearly meeting, as well as seekers or others who are curious about who we are as a faith community.

We continue to provide a private working site for the IYMC clerk to organize reports and other documents in preparation for Annual Sessions. This site is also much appreciated by the Publications

Committee as it provides a seamless transition of the minutes and reports to the committee for the Minute Book.

The cost of the website, which includes hosting, domain registrations and backup services was \$341.98 for the 2024-25 fiscal year.

We would like to remind our monthly meetings that if they would like to set up or update an existing website we are happy to assist. Monthly meetings are responsible for the content on their site and, once up and running, its maintenance.

On behalf of the committee,  
Katie Jacoby, clerk

### **QUAKER EARTHCARE WITNESS REPORT**

As the IYMC representative to Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW), the meetings I have with this North American organization have become a much greater part of my schedule than previously. I continue to attend the meetings via videoconference, often several times a week. I have been made the clerk of the QEW Publications Committee, and as such, I now also attend the Continuing Council meetings, as well as the Steering Committee meetings. As clerk of Publications, I organize and facilitate monthly meetings of that committee as we review and revise new publications submitted to us, as well as update previously published pamphlets. We also supervise the QEW website and the publication of QEW's magazine, *BeFriending Creation*. Just recently we've added a lovely piece about water to the growing list of pamphlets and one-pagers that are available on the QEW website, and we are working on a pamphlet about immigration. This is a big role for me, and I'm striving to do it justice!

Quaker Earthcare Witness's mission is to speak out and connect Friends in earthcare work, share resources, and empower individuals. QEW gives workshops, distributes videos, offers mini-grants, and has a wide variety of pamphlets, books and curriculums. One of the offerings open to all that I've appreciated is the *Fellowship Hour* each Friday evening. It has had a wide diversity of topics and is a great chance for Quakers from all over to discuss world themes. There is also a *Worship Sharing* opportunity on Tuesday evenings. These meetings are all via videoconferencing and are open to anyone interested. It is wonderful to have the chance to meet with individuals from all over the world while sitting in your own home. I highly recommend it!

I have much appreciated how being the IYMC representative to this organization has expanded my own world, and I am hopeful that our IYMC members will begin participating in the opportunities QEW shares with Quakers from around the globe. I would suggest getting on QEW's mailing list so you can be alerted to programs coming up that you might be interested in.

Respectfully submitted

Nan Fawcett

## **REPRESENTATIVES TO THE AFSC CORPORATION REPORT**

### **The AFSC Corporation Board Mtg 2025**

#### *Healing through Justice: Our Collective Journey*

Friends gathered with urgency and solidarity at the 2025 Annual Meeting of the Corporation of American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), held April 24-26 in Philadelphia, PA. This was a hybrid meeting allowing online (remote) access for members not traveling to the city. AFSC staff members were on hand at registration to welcome members and guests. A tech center was established for attendees, the Archive area could be toured, and people could be updated on the latest green technologies in use. Our meal was shared and noisy as Friends happily re-connected with old acquaintances, while introductions were made between new ones. Our evening plenary speaker was Susan Abulhawa, an award-winning novelist, poet, essayist, scientist, mother and activist. Her novel, *Mornings in Jenin*, richly details four-generations of Palestinian families, whose lives amidst the tumultuous events of the 20th century meant upheaval, displacement, loss and hope. The author grew up a child of refugees of the Six-Day War of 1967. She is outspoken against apartheid and genocidal practices by Israel. Abulhawa is a human rights activist and animal rights advocate and founded the children's organization *Playgrounds for Palestine*.

#### **Friday, April 25, 2025**

Morning was convened early with breakfast meetings for new corporation members such as myself where staff present provided more information on the ways AFSC can support yearly and monthly meetings. All national and international programs are acting to realize positive outcomes to AFSC's three strategic program goals.

#### **Just & Sustainable Peace**

Economies should work for all people and our planet. They should also promote thriving communities. AFSC challenges growing inequality and the corporate abuse of human rights.

## **Just Economies**

Today, communities have inadequate access to food, housing, health care and education. Governments spend billions on war, incarceration, and systems of repression. AFSC supports community initiatives for food justice, housing rights and sustainable income. It also provides tools to help people and institutions make socially responsible investments.

## **Just Responses to Forced Displacement & Migration**

AFSC works for a world where all people have the power to determine where they live and the opportunity to thrive. We affirm the divine worth of every person and refuse to accept these unjust policies.

### **Friday, April 25, 2025, 9:00am**

MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS began with unprogrammed waiting worship.

At rise of worship, we were welcomed by AFSC presiding clerk, Alvaro Alvarado, who introduced Joyce Ajlouny, General Secretary.

- Presiding clerk referenced and asked for CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES OF 2024 CORPORATION MEETINGS as discussed in November 2024.
- Via remote, Jana Schroeder patiently presented the Standing Nominating Committee Report and outlined the action being considered, including: Nominations and appointments for Corporation service; Nominations to the Board of Directors; Nominations to the Friends Relations Committee. Questions arose around terms and rotations, on process and responsibilities. Presiding clerk Alvarado explained the process for the Naming Committee.
- The final hour of the first session, General Secretary Ajlouny provided her report on the status of the organization. She provided context and information regarding internal changes and shared sobering news of outreach staff operating under severe, increasingly dangerous conditions.

Meeting For Worship with Attention to Business with Centering Silence continued after lunch.

We were introduced to a panel discussion on AFSC's responses to new federal policy on detention and deportation. Panelists were Amy Gottlieb, US Migration Direction; Araceli Argueta, AFSC Organizing and Advocacy Director, Northeast US Region; Laura Boyce, Associate General Secretary for US Programs. AFSC remains vigilant to news of change to adjust as needed for maximum effectiveness.

Presiding clerk Alvaro Alvarado's report covered the first reading of proposed bylaws changes, concluding the afternoon business session. Proposed changes in the language would "make the bylaws more useful and enable AFSC to act more expeditiously."

Proposal changes were brought forward by the Governance Policy and Practice Committee, Bylaw Review Subcommittee and Board Executive Committee.

1) Section 1 Name, and Section 2 Location: Legal clarification of the name identifying American Friends Service Committee as AFSC consistently throughout the language of the document,

2) Section 3 Purpose and Object: no substantive change, a run-on sentence was amended,

3) Section 4 Procedures: *Decisions by the Corporation, Board of Directors, Standing Nominating Committee and committees and sub-groupings of any of those named committees shall be reached and appointments made in accordance with the customary procedures of a Friends Meeting for Business.*

AFSC staff made a proposal and case for making Corporation meetings available online versus in-person or hybrid. Logistical issues for meeting planning in Philadelphia in 2026 are already more complex and venues are limited due to the USA rolling into its 250<sup>th</sup> year.

Workshops with AFSC staff were varied and enlightening. Unfortunately, time limited my activity options to Peace Games Simulation, a two-day session that demonstrated the difficulty (and some finesse) of diplomacy. According to verbal reviews, much was learned through all the workshops: NY/NJ Healing Justice: From the Inside Out; St. Louis Peacebuilding: Me + We = Stalwart Solidarity; Ending Life & Long Sentences in Michigan; Sowing the Seeds of Justice In New Orleans.

**Friday Evening Visit/Tour to Eastern State Penitentiary with dinner.**

Buses took participants to the first penitentiary – originating with Quakers – to inspire penitence among the inmates! I learned so much about the premises behind approaches to rehabilitation of the time, the human and financial costs of imprisonment and how bias impacts the judicial systems inherently. How much we (as Friends) got wrong, but how much we learned from those mistakes and about repairing the lasting consequences.

**Saturday, April 26, 9am: Meeting with Attention to Business began with Centering Silence.**

Staff members presented extensive reports of the committees of Friends Relations and Quaker Engagement in FY '25.

AFSC Treasurer, David Wells; Giovanni Cozzarelli, Chief Financial Officer; and Jason Drucker, Associate General Secretary for Advancement gave the Financial Report noting the organization was financially steady and solvent, having corrected some practices through careful monitoring.

Presiding clerk re-opened discussion regarding bylaws changes.

Afterward, there were options for lunch with staff for Quaker Liaisons/Quaker Engagement and the Earth Quaker Action Team..

Workshops with AFSC staff continued as the day before.

Afternoon concluded with action taken on the Bylaws changes and proposals. Sense of the Body was reached, and the decision for proposed changes was affirmed by the Body.

Staff presented a proposal for holding Corporation meetings online in 2026. Discussion was not entirely in support. It seems the Body favored the hybrid approach as happened this year. Staff will continue to work under that premise, with allowances for possible change as logistical circumstances present.

Breakout groups led by Friends Relations Committee allowed reflection of what “That of God in AFSC” means to us.

Closing Worship of the Corporation Board was held at 5 p.m.

A general reception for members, staff alumni, and friends followed worship.

The evening provided fascinating accounts by Friends Claudia Krich and her husband Keith Brinton, co-directors of the AFSC Quang Ngai program from March 1973 – July 1975. Claudia’s recently published book, *Those Who Stayed*, offers a personal first-hand account of the collapse of the South Vietnamese Government and the beginning of the new Provisional Revolutionary Government. Many members of the audience online and in-person shared their personal experiences of the Vietnam Era.

I thank the Yearly Meeting for nominating me as an AFSC Corporation Board member. I appreciate the opportunity to help maintain ties between Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) and the efforts of AFSC.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Jilovec

All supporting and reference materials can be found through [afsc.org](http://afsc.org), or through one of the AFSC representatives and Star Café.

*The following guidelines did not arise from the Yearly Meeting sessions but are printed here for reference.*

### **Guidelines for Request for Reimbursement from Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative)**

The IYMC treasurer makes all reimbursements for budgeted funds.

Clerks of Yearly Meeting committees that have approved budgets should submit bills for payment and/or requests for reimbursement directly to the Yearly Meeting treasurer. Receipts should be included when requesting reimbursements. Clerks are also responsible for giving names, addresses, and clear instructions regarding to whom the check is to be written and where it is to be sent. For example, the clerk of the Publication Committee can send the bill for printing of the Yearly Meeting Minute Book directly to the Yearly Meeting treasurer.

Members of committees with expenses that are reimbursable by the Yearly Meeting are asked to submit their receipts to the clerk of their committee who will then forward them to the Yearly Meeting treasurer. For example, someone from the Junior Yearly Meeting Committee may purchase supplies for the Junior Yearly Meeting. They should submit the receipt for those supplies to the Junior Yearly Meeting Committee clerk who will then forward them as approved to the Yearly Meeting treasurer.

Members of the Yearly Meeting who are official representatives to a wider Quaker organization on behalf of the Yearly Meeting, such as AFSC, FWCC, or FCNL, can submit travel expenses with receipts and/or documentation directly to the Yearly Meeting treasurer. Funds are disbursed on a first-come basis. Representatives are asked to visit with their co-representatives to get an idea of who expects to be traveling and what kind of assistance they might need from the travel funds. Traditionally, these funds are underused, and we urge Friends to seek reimbursement if needed. Friends seeking to use unassigned budgeted funds, such as the scholarship money available for Quaker Youth Camp, are asked to submit requests to the Yearly Meeting clerk for approval before April 1. After April 1, those seeking assistance will be informed of the amount available. Those seeking assistance for the first time will be given priority so that as many young people as possible can attend a Quaker camp. If no requests are received by April 1, the clerk will approve requests on a first-ask basis.

Unbudgeted requests: All requests for financial assistance not in the fiscal year budget should be submitted to the Yearly Meeting clerk, who will consult with the Interim Committee clerk if action must be taken before the next Annual Sessions. If there is an urgent request, the Interim Committee, which conducts the business of the Yearly Meeting between sessions, may be called to meet.