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54th Annual Sessions
July 27 - July 30, 2017
Bluffton University, Bluffton, Ohio

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Epistle

Minutes of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting

54th Annual Sessions

July 27 - July 30, 2017

Bluffton University, Bluffton, Ohio

First Session: 7:30 – 9:00 pm, Thursday, July 27, 2017

YM2017-01 Opening Worship and Epistle

The Meeting opened with a period of open worship near the appointed hour.

Clerk Mike Holaday (Grand Rapids) read the epistle from the second Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting, held March 10–12, 2017. Piedmont Friends shared, with delight, the addition of two Monthly Meetings to their young Yearly Meeting. They also celebrated their early experiences of Quaker process, as they responded to concerns for peace, social justice, care for the earth, and the many who currently feel unsafe in this country. Piedmont Friends were inspired by the actions of their member Meetings in effectively serving the needs of many in their local communities, and of Quaker House in giving love and support to our military returning home from war zones. They seek ways to connect across the Yearly Meeting for effective action, and to sincerely hold the U.S. administration in the Light in loving kindness.

Linked to the concerns, they found at Annual Sessions the joy of gathering, the comfort of shared concerns, the excitement of growing in numbers and energy, and the ever-present love of Spirit among them.

YM2017-02 Opening Comments

Clerk Mike Holaday shared a recent experience of waking up on the wrong side of the bed, taking a walk with a cartoon storm cloud over his head, then unexpectedly encountering a family that included a small girl. As she cruised past him on her bike, she looked up, smiled, and said, “Hello,” and the storm cloud magically vanished.

We come together, some of us with our own storm clouds for whatever reasons – personal, related to the state of the world, and so on. Each of us also has the power the little girl had to dissipate storm clouds. The clerk invited us to practice using this power.

YM2017-03 Introduction of the Clerks’ Table

Clerk Mike Holaday introduced himself and Nancy Reeves (Cleveland), recording clerk. He noted that we have not had an assistant clerk for the past year. In the absence of an assistant clerk, Rosemary Coffey has agreed to clerk the epistle committee.

YM2017-04 Appreciations

We are grateful for the work of the Arrangements & Site Committee, the registrars, the bookstore manager, and the Bluffton staff in preparing this space for us.

YM2017-05 Welcome and Introduction

We welcomed first-time attenders and guests: Blair Ellis, attender at Ann Arbor Monthly Meeting; Lisa Klopfer, Ann Arbor Monthly Meeting; Stephanie Crumley-Effinger, Earlham Friends School and West Richmond Monthly Meeting; Ginger Swank, Granville Monthly Meeting; and Susan Loucks, Pittsburgh Monthly Meeting.

Rachel Ernst Stahlhut, FGC Program Coordinator for the Spiritual Deepening Program; Greg Woods, Columbia, Missouri, attending First Friends Meeting of Greensboro, North Carolina, FUM; and Riley Robinson of FCNL are also joining us.

Clerk Mike Holaday requested that Friends with travel minutes bring them to him for endorsement.

YM2017-06 Roll Call

Akron	1	Fremont W.G.	0
Ann Arbor	20	Grand Rapids	4
Athens	13	Granville	1
Birmingham	7	Holland	0
Broadmead	17	Indiana W.G.	0
Chelsea A.M.	1	Kalamazoo	5
Circleville W.G.	0	Kent	0
Cleveland	9	Manitou W.G.	0
Delaware	0	Mid-Ohio Valley	0
Detroit	7	North Columbus	5
Erie W.G.	1	Oberlin	2
Pine River	0	Tustin W.G.	0
Pittsburgh	7	Waysmeet W. G	0
Red Cedar	10	Wooster	9
Somerset W.G.	0		
		Total	119

YM2017-07 Acknowledgement of Regular Attenders Absent this Year

We noted the absence of regular attenders: Mike and Vanessa Fuson, Granville Monthly Meeting; Paula Deming, Waysmeet Worship Group; Jo Posti, Pittsburgh Monthly Meeting; Lucia Kalinosky, Cleveland Monthly Meeting; Marvin Barnes, Birmingham Monthly Meeting; and Don and Nancy Nagler, Pine River Worship Group. Friends are invited to sign cards for those who are absent at the table opposite the registration table.

YM2017-08 Naming Committee

Ellen Barnes reported for the Naming Committee. The Naming Committee brings forward the names of Jo Steigerwald, Cleveland Monthly Meeting, to serve a three-year term on the Nominating Committee, and Clémence Ravaçon Mershon, Erie Worship Group, to serve a second three-year term on the committee and to continue serving as clerk.

Friends approved.

YM2017-09 Memorial Minutes

Jim Crowfoot (Ann Arbor) read the memorial minute for Max Heirich.

Max Heirich, 85, a spiritual seeker and member of Ann Arbor Friends Meeting, died April 27, 2017, after a long illness. His life was filled with teaching, spiritually informed social activism, and alternative medicine.

A lifelong pacifist, Max was the first conscientious objector in the city of Muskogee. Following a debilitating illness, Max developed a deep commitment to a new synergy of Western and non-Western medicine.

Max will be remembered for his abiding work to make the world a better place, his lifelong passion in defense of social justice, a deep personal identification with the African-American community, his unfailing ability to make close friends, and his love of terrible puns. Max lived from the heart, seeking and expressing his clear sense of divine guidance.

Mike Hinshaw (Wooster) noted the passing of John David Stratton, of Wooster Monthly Meeting.

John was a fun-loving guy who spent his life trying to make the world a better and more enjoyable place. He shared his life for 50 years with his wife, Dottie. John was instrumental in beginning the Ashland Center for Nonviolence and Ashland County Oral Health Services. Friends and community members

celebrated his life in a memorial service with food fit for partying and dancing in the aisles.

Linda Mills (Kalamazoo) noted the passing of Ruth Pino, a founding member of Kalamazoo Monthly Meeting.

Carla Pratt-Harrington (Athens), noted the passing this past year of members David Horn and William Hummon, and William Beale, attender.

Second Session: 11:00 am – 12:00 noon, Friday, July 28, 2017

YM2017-10 Opening Worship and Epistle

Into the silence of our opening worship, Becky Morehouse (Ann Arbor) read the 2017 epistle from Ireland Yearly Meeting.

Reflecting on its theme of “Live simply so that others may simply live,” Ireland Friends realized that it can sometimes take longer than we wish to introduce all the changes necessary to “live simply,” even though some of these changes may be simple. Reminded that the challenge is as much a spiritual call as a material one, they began a new practice of opening each day with worship and ending with a spiritual reflection on the day’s proceedings. Their vision that sustainability must extend beyond their Meetings to their own lives, their families, and their communities was reflected in many sessions and special interest groups and in the simple request to include simpler and more local options in their meals. Under the care of Ministry and Oversight, they heard stories of Friends’ loneliness at particular times, and of how they came to an acceptance of being alone and encouraged deep listening of each other’s stories. “Vision without action is merely a dream; action without vision just passes the time, but vision with action can change the world.” (Joel A. Barker)

YM2017-11 Welcome and Introduction

Clerk Mike Holaday welcomed Friends to the second session of our Annual Sessions and reviewed the agenda. We welcomed first-time attenders Nancy and David Finke, attenders at Oberlin Friends Meeting. David’s member-ship is in 57th Street (Chicago) Monthly Meeting.

YM2017-12 Memorial Minutes

Mathilda Navias (Broadmead) read the memorial minute for James Satterwhite.

Jim Satterwhite, a beloved member of Broadmead Monthly Meeting, died in August 2016, after a 13-year struggle with Parkinson’s disease. As a life-long pacifist, Jim reflected his belief that one’s commitment to peace should put oneself on the line in his early experience as a conscientious objector being subjected to biological warfare experiments, as a member of Christian Peacemaker teams in Chechnya, Serbia, and Hebron, and later as a war tax resister whose wages were distrained and against whose home a lien was placed. He urged Friends to join the “bag of rice” campaign to send the message to George Bush that we should feed the people of Iraq, rather than attack them: “If your enemies are hungry, feed them” (Romans 12:20). Jim’s interest in the broader world is reflected in his mastery of seven languages, and in the invitation he, and his wife, Olwen Pritchard, extended to students from Poland and Bosnia to attend Bluffton College/University and, at times, to live in their home.

Jim served as a model and a challenge to students, colleagues, Quakers, and others to improve our world.

YM2017-13 Correspondence

We received a letter of thanks from FGC for our gift of \$1500 to support the Institutional Assessment focused on identifying and dismantling structural racism within FGC. If total gifts for this purpose exceed the cost of the assessment, unspent gifts will be used to implement the Assessment’s recommendations.

We received a letter from Cleveland Monthly Meeting witnessing to its understanding that we are called upon to love each other, no exceptions. Hatred and division never lead to a just society. Cleveland Meeting announced its leading to open its doors and to provide a welcoming space for all in their

community, including those who are oppressed and persecuted.

Cleveland Friends encouraged public officials at all levels of government and of all political persuasions to speak truth at all times, and to pursue and model actions that are motivated by love and integrity.

The letter from Cleveland Friends Meeting follows.

Cleveland Meeting
To Mike Holaday, Clerk
2nd Month 26, 2017

Dear Friends

As a Christian community, the Cleveland Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) is led by our witness of God to love all of our neighbors. We know through the practice of our faith that we are required by God to love everyone. All persons are equally worthy of love, respect, and justice, and this includes those with whom we do not agree.

Political rhetoric has sown divisiveness, fear, and distrust, some of this directed at those of the Muslim faith, the Black community, immigrants and refugees, women, the LGBTQ community, and many others among us. We also know that many have been left behind, including the unemployed, the under-employed, and abandoned veterans. We are all equally loved by our Creator. Hatred and division never lead to a just society and must be rejected. We are all neighbors united by our common humanity. We are called upon to love each other. No exceptions.

While we continue to pray that our public officials, at all levels of government and of all political persuasions, will reject racist, divisive, and hateful language and policy, the President's initial actions have been to introduce policy that puts marginalized people in danger. We believe that God requires the President and all elected leaders to speak truth at all times. We pray that the administration will change course and will recognize the value of all people within and outside our borders, and will pursue and model actions which are motivated by love and integrity.

Cleveland Friends Meeting is led by the Divine Spirit to open our doors and provide a welcoming space for all in our community, including those who are oppressed and persecuted.

On Behalf of Cleveland Meeting,
Tom Nowel, Clerk

YM2017-14 Epistle Committee

Rosemary Coffey has agreed to convene the Epistle Committee. Clerk Mike Holaday requested additional individuals to join the committee. Friends approved adding Sheila Johnson and Ginger Swank to the committee.

YM2017-15 Database Manager's & Meeting Worker's Reports

Mathilda Navias reported on her work as database manager, a volunteer appointed position. She noted that she and her husband will be leaving Lake Erie Yearly Meeting in two to five years, and encouraged Friends to listen carefully to discern whether they might have the skills and interest to serve LEYM in this capacity in the future.

The work of the database manager is gathering and curating the information we need to carry out our work together, and in the wider Quaker community. The database was recently revised and contact information for Meetings and members completely updated. The database includes information on individual members, Monthly Meetings and worship groups, and LEYM. The ongoing work for the database manager includes systematically gathering current data from our Monthly Meetings, adding data individuals submit periodically, and responding to requests to use the data for Quaker work.

The full report follows.

LEYM Database Manager's Report

July 2017

Mathilda Navias, Database Manager, reported.

I wear a number of hats within Lake Erie Yearly Meeting. Many of you know me as the Yearly Meeting Worker, which is a paid position. I am also the Yearly Meeting's database manager, which goes through the nominating process. I would like to make you aware of what that involves.

First, a little history. Since LEYM's newsletter, the *Bulletin*, was first published in 1961, someone has maintained a mailing list. Originally, it was on paper, but in the 1990s it was put on computer. By 2003, instead of being primarily a mailing list for the *Bulletin*, the database had become primarily a tool for producing a Yearly Meeting directory of members and attenders every two years. The editor of the *Bulletin* maintained a separate, smaller mailing list.

In 2005, Leslie Walden set out to redesign the database from scratch in Microsoft Access 2003. In 2006, I took over that effort and finished designing the new database. Rather than importing the often-outdated information from the old database, however, I decided to start with current data, obtained from each Meeting and worship group. Getting the information from all the groups took perseverance.

In 2007, the directory at the back of the *Annual Records* was expanded from attenders at Annual Sessions to include everyone on the Yearly Meeting nominating slate, Monthly Meeting officers and committee clerks, and worship group conveners. It was hoped that this would meet Friends' need for published contact information. The last separate directory with contact information for everyone in the database was published in 2009. Yearly Meeting officers and committee clerks can get up-to-date contact information, mailing lists, and e-mail lists from the Yearly Meeting worker as needed throughout the year.

Every few years, with the approval of the Yearly Meeting, I have asked Meetings and worship groups for contact information for their members and active attenders in order to keep that information current. Other information is requested of Meetings and worship groups via an "Annual Statistical Report" form. Originally, LEYM's recording clerk was responsible for sending out the blank form, first by mail, then by e-mail; but this didn't always happen, as some recording clerks weren't aware of the responsibility. By 2012, the task had been re-assigned to the database manager. Since then, a report customized for each Meeting or worship group has been e-mailed to them with much of the information already filled out, so that only changes need to be marked. Almost all groups e-mail their reports back; one or two print them out and mail them in each year. The report form has also been revised to make it easier to fill out and to capture new information, such as Meeting websites.

Meetings and individuals send in updated information during the year as occasion arises.

So, what's in the database? The database now contains the following information:

- The current Yearly Meeting slate of appointments
- The list of Monthly Meetings, Preparative Meetings, and worship groups in the Yearly Meeting, as well as the information they report in the annual Statistical Reports. This includes place and time of worship, contact information, officers, and committee clerks or conveners.
- For members and active attenders in the Yearly Meeting, the most recent available contact information, membership status, and Meeting attended, as well as names and years of birth of children. A note about children: the database does not include e-mail addresses for those under 18. Birth years are used to mark them as youth in the Directory at the back of the *Annual Records* until they turn 18. Parents may choose to have their children's names omitted from the Directory. Birth years are also used to generate e-mail addresses to receive information on LEYM's annual K-8 retreat.

As of July 21st, there were 2167 people in 1226 different households in the database, or approximately 2200 people in 1200 households. Friends' information is gathered through requests to Meetings and

worship groups, from the annual Statistical Reports, and from registration forms for Annual Meeting and Spiritual Formation retreats.

LEYM has a policy that only Friends General Conference may use this information for mailings. Any other use of the information by a group outside LEYM must be approved by the Yearly Meeting. Individuals may choose to opt out of mailings.

Meetings' annual Statistical Reports are due shortly before Annual Sessions each year, and the information is entered in the database. Following Annual Sessions, information from registrations for those who attended is used to add or update information. This fresh data is then used to generate the following updated contact information:

LEYM's website has a section on Meetings and worship groups to help seekers as well as LEYM Friends find or contact a Meeting.

The Yearly Meeting worker updates a number of e-mail lists to help Friends in the Yearly Meeting communicate with one another, including sending messages and supporting discussion among Monthly Meeting clerks as well as within Green Pastures Quarter.

Sections of LEYM's *Annual Records* book, including information on Meetings, membership, and the Directory.

If you have a need for information in the database, please inquire. Also, please send any changes you are aware of to me.

Mathilda Navias also reported on the 123 hours she spent as our LEYM Worker. About half of her time is spent on the website. She encouraged Friends to use the LEYM website and to subscribe to it to receive regular news updates. She noted that the Links page in our new Resources section is particularly robust.

The rest of her time was spent managing our various listservs, performing other administrative tasks, and updating the *Policies and Procedures* manual and the Annual Meeting online registration form. A new task was vetting individuals who work with our children during Annual Meeting.

The full report follows.

LEYM Worker's Report

July 2016 – June 2017

Report from Mathilda Navias, LEYM Worker

It's been a busy year for me as LEYM Worker. A little under half of my time was spent on the usual tasks for LEYM's website, including posting news items I took from Quaker publications and e-mails as well as Yearly Meeting news. Would Friends who are currently subscribed to the Yearly Meeting website please raise your hands? Ninety-three Friends are currently subscribed, which means that all news posts are e-mailed to you. There are few enough of these that they don't get annoying, and it's easy to subscribe. Just follow the directions in the upper left corner of the Home page. I also invite you to send me news items to post.

Another quarter of my time was used developing a new Resources section of the website. Please check out the new resource pages. The Links page is especially robust. The LEYM Minutes page has the Yearly Meeting minutes from 2001 through 2016, including a composite file to facilitate searching in the minutes.

I continue to add earlier minutes.

There have been about 8000 views of Yearly Meeting web pages in the past year. Here is a brief run-down of the ten web pages that were accessed the most often (not counting the Home page).

Page	Times Viewed
Meetings & Worship Groups (2 pages)	over 700
Annual Sessions	over 600

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ANNUAL MEETING 7/27/17 – 7/30/17

<i>LEYM Bulletins</i>	over 300
About LEYM	about 250
About Quakers	almost 200
<i>Policies & Procedures</i> manual	over 200
Contact Information	about 150
GPQM Minutes, Reports, & Other Files	about 150
LEYM Queries & Advices	about 100
Spiritual Formation Retreats	about 100

In addition to the website, I spent my time maintaining and forwarding messages to several e-mail listservs, responding to e-mails, and other administrative tasks.

I brought Policies & Procedures up to date with the latest changes approved by the Yearly Meeting. You can find the updated version on the website.

I updated the on-line registration form for this year's Annual Meeting. We had a bit of a scare when the registrar discovered that not all registrations were reaching her e-mail inbox, but I found the missing forms in the Spam folder of the gmail account for registrations.

The only thing added to my regular tasks this year was vetting the Friends who work with the children at Annual Sessions, which has happened this month, so is not included in the summary.

My total time for the year was about 123 hours, down a little bit from last year. Both years, 100 hours were budgeted, but I was assured by our clerk, Mike Holaday, and Jeff Cooper, clerk of the Finance Committee, that going over budget was not a problem. Without the work on the new Resources section of the website, I would have been within the budgeted hours.

The tasks I have performed during the 2016-2017 year are detailed below.

LEYM Website	52 hours (42%)
Do annual updates following Yearly Meeting	
Post <i>Bulletins</i>	
Post news of interest to LEYM Friends	
Format & upload minutes (10:36 hours)	
Prepare & post Epistles (1:17 hours)	
Maintenance	
Special project: New Resources section of website	33 hours (27%)
Listservs (Exec. Cmt., MM Clerks, MM Reps, GPQM) & gmail	15 hours (12%)
Annual updates of lists following Yearly Meeting	
Forward messages to lists	
Maintain & update	
Maintain gmail accounts for officers	
Administration (e-mails, prepare reports, misc.)	13 hours (11%)
Update on-line registration for 2017 Annual Sessions	6 hours (5%)
Gather e-mail addresses from registration & send out e-mails with preliminary documents for 2016 Sessions	2 1/4 hours (2%)
Update Policies & Procedures	1 1/2 hours (1%)
Total	123 hours
Total: 122.95 hours @\$20/hr = \$2459.00 Total (detailed hours above are rounded)	
Total budgeted for year: \$2000 for 100 hours of work	

YM2017-16 Service Project Report

Olwen Pritchard (Broadmead) reported on this year's service project. Tuesday through Thursday this week, seven members of LEYM worked with Habitat for Humanity Restore in Lima, Ohio, sorting and repricing items that had not yet sold, and meeting with each other, volunteers, staff, and customers in the store. A good time was had by all.

The full report follows.

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting Service Project

During Tuesday, 25 July, to Thursday, 27 July, seven of us spent time together at the Habitat for Humanity Restore in Lima. We worked on sorting out and repricing items that had not sold in the past three months. Plus, we sorted out and priced Christmas items in the back of the store. We had meeting together, plus lunch, and talked with volunteers, staff, and customers in the store. A good time was had by all.

Olwen S. Pritchard, Broadmead Monthly Meeting
Paul Helbling, Broadmead Monthly Meeting
Peggy Daub, Ann Arbor Monthly Meeting
Jeff Cooper, Ann Arbor Monthly Meeting
Ellerie Brownfain, Birmingham Monthly Meeting
Jonah Brownfain, Birmingham Monthly Meeting
Mary Igoe Meyers, Broadmead Monthly Meeting

YM2017-17 Friends Committee on National Legislation Report

Riley Robinson, FCNL Major Gifts Officer, reported to us on FCNL's work.

FCNL embarked on a capital campaign in 2012, envisioning what FCNL needed to be going forward – including a larger nationwide network and a strong young adult program. Simultaneously, “We are the organization that we need to be, and we are proving it.”

FCNL has often been in the leadership in Washington, as one of the oldest, largest, religious- and peace-lobbying groups. In that role it has been able to make a difference.

Riley noted that the “skinny repeal” of the ACA¹ was voted down last night by one vote, thanks to the votes of John McCain, Lisa Murkowski, and Susan Collins – the latter of whom have been facing strong pressure for their stance on healthcare, and attacks as “those lady senators.” David Bantz, an Alaskan Friend and a member of FCNL's General Committee, flew to DC on Tuesday morning this week and was able to speak with Lisa Murkowski. FCNL's bipartisan approach gives it the opportunity to meet with people from both parties and to make a difference.

Earlier, the FCNL's Spring Lobby Weekend gave 400 young adults an opportunity to meet with their senators and representatives. This lobby weekend occurred just before the first attempt in this Congress to repeal the ACA. Prior to these visits, FCNL was aware that some members of Congress were wavering. Ultimately, a vote that had been overwhelmingly in favor of repeal in prior Congresses passed by only a narrow margin. We do make a difference.

This win on healthcare gives us a chance to dispel the myth that government doesn't work for us. But we need more, because as significant as this win is, it is not an inclusive win. An inclusive win would be one we would each be comfortable talking about with our neighbors and friends. We are not there yet. What we need is more like consensus – or better than consensus. We need a win that takes into account, and addresses, the real needs of everyone.

FCNL expects a similar process to be used to pass the defense budget, and that it will face steep opposition from corporate lobbyists. Especially in this era of drafting bills in secret and voting on them before anyone has had a chance to read them, bipartisan one-on-one advocacy is critical. Such advocacy gives us a chance to educate our representatives in advance of a vote on a bill that few may have had the opportunity to read. FCNL is ready, having expanded its advocacy teams from 34 to 60 since the beginning of the year.

FCNL continues its work on environmental care, justice reform, and advocacy for Native American

¹ The Senate's amendment 667 (McConnell) to H.R. 1628

concerns. FCNL believes that civil discourse is important in moving forward, and our work with Congress has to involve real discussion and has to address real issues facing us.

Third Session: 1:45 – 3:15 pm, Friday, July 28, 2017

YM2017-18 Friends General Conference Report

We heard from Rachel Ernst Stahlhut, FGC Staff Visitor and coordinator of the Spiritual Deepening Program.

Friends General Conference is a collaboration of Quakers. Rachel shared that she is here in many capacities: to learn about what really good stuff is happening within LEYM and its Monthly Meetings; to pay attention to concerns we may have; and to learn what Friends are longing for, so that FGC can be a better hub to connect Quakers within the U.S. and Canada.

Rachel reminded us that the FGC Gathering will be held in Toledo, Ohio, in 2018.

She shared that the institutional assessment on structural racism within FGC is moving forward.

Friends General Conference programs include a Quaker bookstore – both online and at Pendle Hill, a substantial ministry on racism to support Monthly Meetings working on addressing structural racism and racial healing, supporting Friends of Color within our predominantly white Society of Friends, the Quaker Cloud (an FGC-powered web toolkit), four new Faith and Play stories for use in First Day School, and the year-old Spiritual Deepening program – providing opportunities to deepen our spiritual lives individually and as a community.

YM2017-19 Ad hoc Task Force on Child and Sexual Abuse Prevention Report

Joann Neuroth (Red Cedar) reported for the ad hoc task force on child and sexual abuse prevention. The task force included Claire Cohen (Pittsburgh), Flo Friender (Kalamazoo), Susan Hartman (Ann Arbor), Joann Neuroth, and Robb Yurisko (North Columbus). The task force has been able to implement all four elements of the policy that was adopted at our last Annual Sessions, at least in part:

- **Education**: The educational effort belongs to all of us, so we are each invited to read the single-page information sheet and to watch the educational PowerPoint created by the task force.
- **Vetting of volunteers**: A Quaker Meeting, or similar Quaker body, vets each volunteer who works in our children's program during our annual sessions, other than special volunteers for such things as driving to swimming.
- **Two-person presence**: Two volunteers who have been educated and vetted will be present at all times with our children.
- **In Sight**: Everyone involved with children, including special volunteers, is to stay in sight of the group at all times when interacting with children.

We are deeply grateful for the significant work done by this task force in developing and helping us to implement this plan to make our time together a safer space for all of us.

We approved laying down this task force.

YM2017-20 Policies and Procedures Manual Report

Peggy Daub (Ann Arbor), acting at the request of Executive Committee, drafted changes to the *Policies and Procedures* manual to incorporate the new child and sexual abuse prevention policy, and to reconcile it with the reporting policy that was adopted in 1995.

Friends approved the draft, with two minor changes.

A copy of all changes to the *Policies and Procedures* manual, as modified, follows.

Proposed Changes to LEYM Policies and Procedures to Integrate the Policy on Preventing Child and Sexual Abuse

7/27/2017

RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO P&P (with changes in *italics*):

1. Combine the new policy on prevention of abuse with the existing policy on reports of child abuse (Appendix F), making them two parts of the same appendix:

F. Policies on Child and Sexual Abuse

F.1. Policy on Child and Sexual Abuse Prevention

F.2. Policy for Reports of Child Abuse Made at Yearly Meeting

2. When the earlier policy on reports of abuse was adopted, responsibility for several actions in it were given to the clerk of LEYM. Add a statement to the list of the clerk's duties at III.A. to reflect this:

III.A.1.m. Carry out the specific responsibilities assigned to the clerk in Appendix F.2., Policy for Reports of Child Abuse Made at Yearly Meeting.

3. In the second paragraph of Appendix F.1. change "Children's Program Coordinator" to "Clerk of the Youth & Children's Program Committee." This was a misnaming of the person meant to be responsible for the task:

This policy applies to any time that children are in the organized youth program. Parents or guardians are responsible for their own children during all other hours. The *Clerk of the Youth and Children's Program Committee* or other program staff shall clearly advise parents, guardians, and young Friends of the times covered by the organized program.

4. In the third paragraph of Appendix F.1. change the word "and" (the next-to-last word of the paragraph) to "when." This better reflects the policy's intent, which instructs the Yearly Meeting on what to do when there are reports of abuse:

This policy supplements LEYM's current policy (*LEYM Policies and Procedures, Appendix F.2. Policy for Reports of Child Abuse Made at Yearly [Annual] Meeting, Adopted June 17, 1995*), which addresses how an incident of suspected abuse should be handled ~~and~~ when reported.

5. In Appendix F.1.a. remove "in their orientation materials" as this information may be conveyed in a number of ways:

Volunteers who work with young Friends shall participate before beginning each year's program in an educational session that matter-of-factly outlines the risk of various kinds of abuse (intentional or otherwise), why these strategies have been designed to mitigate those risks, and the importance of being able to talk frankly about situations that don't feel right.

Attendees to Yearly Meeting sessions all get a brief explanation of our practices and an invitation to attend this session ~~in their orientation materials~~. Anyone who is considering answering a call for one-time or last-minute volunteers ("special helper" – see section c) is strongly encouraged to attend this session.

6. Insert Appendix F.1.b.iii. to reflect a change adopted from the floor last year. It states that another Quaker reference may be used if a volunteer is not associated with a Monthly Meeting.

iii. If a volunteer is not connected to a Monthly Meeting, another Quaker reference may be used.

7. Change F.1.b.iv. to remove the words "and considered" and replace with "so that each volunteer has at least one person from their Meeting to vouch for them." The intent is to ensure that a Friendly reference is able to answer yes or no to the questions comfortably, not that the Committee will further test those answers:

iv. Those organizing the youth program shall allow sufficient time in planning and recruiting volunteers to assure that *positive* references are received, ~~and considered~~ *so that each volunteer has*

at least one person from their Meeting to vouch for them before the program begins.

8. Remove the first paragraph from Appendix F.2. Guidelines and Procedures that recommends two adults be assigned to each group. This is superseded by the new policy in F.1. Renumber the remaining paragraphs.
9. Change index to reflect the changes made in the text:

INDEX

Child Abuse, policy for prevention: Appendix F.1

Child Abuse, policy for reports: Appendix F.2

Presiding Clerk: III.A.1; III.A.3.a; III.A.3.d; Appendix F.2

Youth & Children Committee: III.C.2.3; Appendix F.1

YM2017-21 FGC Working Group on an FGC Institutional Assessment Report

Carolyn Lejuste (Red Cedar) reported for the working group on an institutional assessment focused on identifying and dismantling structural racism within FGC.

Sparked by experiences of racism at Friends General Conference Gathering of Friends held in St. Joseph, Minnesota, in 2016, a number of Friends petitioned FGC to examine the structural and institutional racism within it. The experiences of Friends of Color at the Gathering in Minnesota were not

isolated. At least since 1998 Friends of Color have reported feeling uncomfortable with the geographic sites chosen for the Gathering, outreach that is often ineffective for their community, Quaker traditions and practices that can make sharing a spiritual journey more challenging, and more.

Because FGC has been unable to meet its program budget, it would have been unable to fund this additional work without further cutting programs or finding an additional source of money. Lake Erie Yearly Meeting and other Yearly Meetings, Monthly Meetings, and individuals made additional restricted contributions to FGC specifically to cover the estimated \$60,000 cost of undertaking this assessment. The full amount has been raised.

FGC has engaged Crossroads Consulting to undertake this assessment. Crossroads Consulting employs a participatory model, develops a shared understanding of institutional culture, teaches us the tools of assessment, and serves as an ongoing resource. This model will allow the benefits of this assessment to continue beyond the period of assessment, and to be shared broadly within FGC constituent groups.

A working group was formed in February 2017. The working group includes Marvin Barnes, Sharon Lane-Getaz, Justin Connor, and Carolyn Lejuste. Additional ex-officio participants include Vanessa Julye, Barry Crossno, Frank Barch, and Amirah Fadhline (Quaker Voluntary Service).

A task force of 12 people, ideally half white and half People of Color, will soon begin the process of gathering information on structural racism within Friends General Conference.

In November, after the information is gathered, 45 individuals, including the task force, FGC staff, and selected members of Central Committee, will participate in a two-and-a-half-day training. The goal of this training is to help us understand the nature of this predominantly white river in which we exist, and how the identified structural racism prevents Friends of Color from fully participating in the life of our community, so that we can begin to change it. Once the assessment is completed, a full report will be presented to FGC Central Committee.

On a related note, Carolyn Lejuste encourages all Friends to begin or continue their thinking about race by attending, or volunteering to help, the White Privilege Conference that will be held in Grand Rapids, Michigan on April 4–7, 2018.

Fourth Session: 9:45 – 11:45 am, Saturday, July 29, 2017

YM2017-22 Introduction of Co-Clerks of the 2018 FGC Gathering

Claire and Paul Tinkerhess (Ann Arbor) were introduced as the co-clerks of the 2018 FGC Gathering of Friends, which will be held in Toledo, Ohio, July 1–7.

The theme of the gathering is “The Power of Truth.” This theme stimulates a variety of productive reflections, including the personal sharing of our truths, creating spaces where others feel safe sharing their truths, scientific truth, the challenges of finding the truth in our national leadership these days, and pondering whether we might yet see the powerful emergence of truth in the face of the troubling absence of truth we face recently.

Many LEYM Friends are already working to plan the gathering: Ellen and Marvin Barnes, Friends in residence; Carolyn Lejuste, evening program; Joann Neuroth, workshop committee; Sally Weaver Sommer, local arrangements; Lisa Klopfer, worship; Mathilda Navias, recorder; and Flo Friender, communications.

Friends are invited to join the planning committee. The fall meeting of the planning committee will be held September 22–23 in Toledo, Ohio.

YM2017-23 Treasurer’s Report

Mike Hinshaw (Wooster) gave the treasurer’s report. He noted that LEYM has received, and is grateful for, contributions from almost all of our Monthly Meetings. The contributions total \$21,477. Our primary investments increased in value by \$2990, with generated dividend income of \$1094.

We spent \$3588 on travel, slightly over our budget of \$3000. The excess was taken from the travel contingency fund, a fund set up to permit us to go over-budget on travel in any year. We spent approximately \$23,636, a bit more than our budget of \$21,550, with \$2200 coming from the general fund to make up the difference. Our balance going into the 2017–18 fiscal year is \$71,829.

The report follows.

LAKE ERIE YEARLY MEETING MINUTES
ANNUAL MEETING 7/27/17 – 7/30/17

GENERAL FUND INCOME - 2016/2017 Fiscal Year

Meeting (Giver)	Amount	Date
Akron Friends Meeting	220.00	1-Jul
Ann Arbor Friends Meeting	3,528.00	12-Sep
Athens Friends Meeting	2,000.00	4-Oct
Birmingham Friends Meeting	476.00	12-Dec
Broadmead Friends Meeting	980.00	25-Feb
Cleveland Friends Meeting	1,232.00	4-Oct
Delaware Friends Meeting	336.00	18-May
Detroit Friends Meeting	616.00	5-Dec
Grand Rapids Friends Meeting	504.00	8-Jan
Granville Friends Meeting	675.00	26-Sep
Holland Friends Meeting	200.00	14-Feb
Kalamazoo Friends Meeting	980.00	16-Mar
Kent Friends Meeting	640.00	23-Jan
Mid-Ohio Valley Friends Meeting		
North Columbus Friends Meeting	900.00	21-Nov
Oberlin Friends Meeting	840.00	4-Oct
Pine River Friends Meeting		
Pittsburgh Friends Meeting	3,976.00	5-May
Red Cedar Friends Meeting	2,800.00	14-Nov
Wooster Friends Meeting	420.00	12-Dec
Individuals	154.40	12-Dec
Total Contributions	21,477.40	
FFC Dividends, Base Account	1,093.93	
FFC change port value, + or -, Base Acc.	2,990.11	
TOTAL INCOME	25,561.44	

LAKE ERIE YEARLY MEETING MINUTES
ANNUAL MEETING 7/27/17 – 7/30/17

Individual Budget lines, 2016-2017 Budget Year				Year-End Adjustments	
ACCOUNT	BUDGET	ACTUAL EXPENSE	EXPENSE % OF BUDGET	Year-End Transfers to/from funds	Total After Adjusted Expense
Travel ¹	3,000.00	3,588.36	120%	(588.36)	3,000.00
Office	100.00	557.65	558%		557.65
Contract worker	2,000.00	2,936.58	147%		2,936.58
Finance ²	550.00	500.00	91%		500.00
Publications	2,200.00	2,353.00	107%		2,353.00
Advancement	100.00		0%		0.00
Ministry & Nurture	100.00		0%		0.00
Clerk	300.00		0%		0.00
FGC	6,000.00	6,000.00	100%		6,000.00
Michigan Friends Center	0.00				0.00
Records project	100.00	100.00	100%		100.00
FWCC Travel Fund ³	1,200.00	1,200.00	100%		1,200.00
Youth Activities Fund ³	1,000.00	1,000.00	100%		1,000.00
H. S. Teen Retreat Fund ³	0.00				0.00
Spiritual Formation Fund ³	300.00		0%		0.00
Olney Friends School	2,000.00	2,000.00			2,000.00
Consultation Fund ³	0.00		0%		0.00
Scholarship Fnd for Ministry ³	100.00				0.00
Summer Work Project	600.00		0%		0.00
Insurance	500.00	500.00	100%		500.00
Misc. FGC, two times cont.; FG(1,400.00	2,900.00	207%		2,900.00
Sub-total	21,550.00	23,635.59	110%	(588.36)	23,047.23
Misc.					
Totals	21,550.00	23,635.59	110%	(588.36)	23,047.23

¹ Actual expense adjusted from the Travel Contingency Fund

² Includes banking costs

³ Subsidy from General Fund to other funds

Summary of Funds 2016-2017 Fiscal Year

Fund Name	Starting Balance	Income or Change	Subsidy from General Fund	Cash Expenses	End Balance	Fund Floors and ceilings (000's)
General Fund ¹	25,885.05	25,561.44		23,047.23	28,399.26	na / 30
Granville Youth Fund ²	6,689.28	912.80		244.46	7,357.62	na / na
Annual Meeting Fund ³	3,320.89	17,774.32		18,189.39	2,905.82	1 / 3
Youth Activities Fund ^{4,5}	6,066.09	1,334.46	1,000.00	2,244.16	6,156.39	4 / 8
H S Teen retreat Fund ⁴	8,074.39				8,074.39	3 / 6
Spiritual Form. Fund ⁴	3,027.62	3,165.00		3,372.48	2,820.14	.5 / 1.5
FWCC Travel Fund ⁴	539.83		900.00		1,439.83	na / 9
FWCC Travel Donation ⁴			300.00		300.00	na / 9
Consultation Fund ⁴	3,143.68				3,143.68	.5 / 2
Ministry Sch'ship Fund ⁴	2,000.00				2,000.00	na / 2
Summer Work Proj Fund ⁴	2,381.89	95.00		156.80	2,320.09	na / 2
Travelling Ministries Fund	3,500.00				3,500.00	na / na
Travel Cont'cy Fund ^{4,6}	4,000.00			588.36	3,411.64	2 / 4
TOTAL	68,628.72	48,843.02	2,200.00	47,842.88	71,828.86	

¹ Includes line item accounting from Budget plus contributions; also reflects dividends and changes in net portfolio value, FFC base account

² Granville Youth Fund is separate FFC account; 'Income or Change' reflects both dividend and change in portfolio value; 'Cash Expense' reflects dividends that have been paid and are then are transferred to Youth Activities Fund

³ Income includes 861.69 in individual donations

⁴ Other funds are managed through accounting and may be subsidized by the corresponding budget lines of the General Fund.

⁵ Income includes dividends from FFC Granville YF account

⁶ Subsidy = Transfer from Travel Budget

BALANCE SHEET

Location of Assets	CASH ASSETS		Change in Value 7/1/2016 - 6/30/2017
	07/01/16	07/17/17	
	Beginning	End	
Citizens Nat. Bank, Bluffton, Ohio	32,238.64	30,686.40	-1,552.24
Friends Fiduciary, Base Account	29,700.80	33,784.84	4,084.04
> Dividends, Re-Invested		1,093.93	
> Change in Portfolio Value is + or -		2,990.11	
Friends Fiduciary, Granville YF Account	6,689.28	7,357.62	668.34
> Change in Portfolio Value + or -		668.34	
Subtotal of both FFC accounts	36,390.08	41,142.46	4,752.38
Total Cash Assets	68,628.72	71,828.86	3,200.14
Allocation of Assets			
General Fund	25,885.05	28,399.26	2,514.21
Granville Youth Fund	6,689.28	7,357.62	668.34
Annual Meeting Fund	3,320.89	2,905.82	-415.07
Youth Activities Fund	6,066.09	6,156.39	90.30
High School Teen Retreat Fund	8,074.39	8,074.39	0.00
Spiritual Formation Fund	3,027.62	2,820.14	-207.48
FWCC Travel Fund (incl. Travel & Donation)	539.83	1,739.83	1,200.00
Consultation Fund	3,143.68	3,143.68	0.00
Ministry Scholarship Fund	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00
Summer Work Proj Fund	2,381.89	2,320.09	-61.80
Travelling Ministries Fund	3,500.00	3,500.00	0.00
Travel Contingency Fund	4,000.00	3,411.64	-588.36
Total All Funds	68,628.72	71,828.86	3,200.14

YM2017-24 Finance Committee Report

Jeff Cooper (Ann Arbor), clerk, reported for the Finance Committee.

Expenditures in July

Jeff noted that our fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30, which occasion-ally creates challenges because our Annual Sessions are now held in July, rather than June. The Finance Committee agreed that the treasurer is authorized to spend up to 10% or \$100 per line item of the proposed draft budget in July.

Per-mile reimbursement

The per-mile reimbursement rate for driving was increased to 45¢ per mile last year, and the Finance Committee decided it should remain there.

Assistance to attend the 2018 FGC Gathering of Friends

The Finance Committee considered how to encourage attendance at the FGC Gathering of Friends in Toledo in 2018. It proposes three ways to do so:

Scholarships for children: Finance Committee proposes setting aside \$2000 from the Youth Activities Fund to help children attend the FGC Gathering, one of the designated purposes of the fund. In accordance with the fund guidelines, scholarships would be limited to \$300 for any one child.

Scholarships for teens: The High School Teen Retreat Program has a balance of \$8074 and no current activity. The Finance Committee proposes taking \$3000 from this fund, to be made available to support the attendance of teens at the FGC Gathering of Friends. Because this is not an authorized purpose for this fund, it would require approval from this body.

Scholarships for adults: The value of our Friends Fiduciary accounts increased by \$2990 in the past year. The Finance Committee suggests that this unbudgeted increase in assets could be added as an expense in our budget and made available as scholarships to adults to attend the FGC Gathering of Friends, and seeks Friends' guidance. Providing scholarships to individuals who have not been appointed as our representatives to attend Quaker events would be a departure from our usual practices.

Friends suggested that the Finance Committee also consider setting aside a similar scholarship for Friends who wish to attend the White Privilege Conference, and perhaps appointing an attender or representative.

Concerns were raised about treating an increase of value of our assets as real income, and suggested that it would be more appropriate to consider what we want to do independent of the increase in value of our assets, and that we might also consider the ethical implications of investing such significant assets in the capitalist system, as opposed to using and circulating our assets for good.

Enthusiasm was expressed for supporting teen attendance at the FGC Gathering, and it was suggested that, if we are enthusiastic about supporting children and teens, we may need to support their parents attending as well.

Budget

The proposed budget for fiscal year 2017–18 was presented.

The suggested per-member contribution to LEYM for fiscal year 2017–18 will be \$29, a \$1 increase from last year. [*Note: this amount was adjusted to \$30 in YM2017-29*]

Loan

Friends School in Detroit has closed, and the property been put up for sale. The Board of Friends School is seeking loans to carry the School forward until it is sold. The Finance Committee recommends loaning it \$5000, with the expectation that it would be repaid by the end of the calendar year. The expected sale price would permit repayment of the loans with 2% interest.

It was noted that Friends School in Detroit has a history of unexpected things happening, and that if this happens we might not be repaid in full, or at all. Although nothing is guaranteed, the Board of Friends School in Detroit previously received, and rejected, an offer of \$1 million for the property. It expects to receive higher offers within the next month.

We will revisit matters requiring action this afternoon.

Finance Committee Report

I. Mileage reimbursement

The **per-mile reimbursement** rate for driving was increased to 45¢ per mile last year and we decided that it should remain there.

II. Expenditures in July

Our fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30. When LEYM changed its schedule to hold Annual Meeting in late July, we created the possibility of needing to pay expenditures in July *before* our budget for the fiscal year was approved. Fortunately, there are not many expenditures in July other than those for Annual Meeting, which don't depend on the budget. We at last decided the time had come to address this issue, and agreed on a policy whereby the treasurer is authorized, for any budget line, to spend up to 10% of the amount presented in the draft budget at Representative Meeting or up to \$100, whichever is greater; for any expenditure exceeding 10% of a budget line or \$100, the treasurer must seek approval of the Finance Committee.

III. Review of our Investment in the Friends Fiduciary Green Fund

Last summer we were somewhat concerned that our investment in the Green Fund was not a good investment from a fiscal perspective. The semi-annual payouts were reliable, but our accounts had lost nearly \$2000 (dropping from \$38,348 to \$36,390) in the previous fiscal year. This year the fund has done much better, increasing by over \$4750 (to \$41,142), and we are no longer concerned. We continue to think that the Green Fund better reflects the values of the Yearly Meeting.

IV. Helping Friends Attend the 2018 FGC Gathering in Toledo

The idea was suggested to us that, with the FGC Gathering in our region next year, we should try to encourage attendance by offering financial assistance to Friends in the Yearly Meeting. We are presenting three ways to do so, divided by age group.

- A. *Scholarships for Children.* One of the intended purposes of the Youth Activities Fund is to support children attending the FGC Gathering. With that in mind, we propose setting aside \$2000 from that fund for scholarships for children up through grade 8 to attend the Gathering next year. By definition, the maximum for any one child is \$300. We envision setting an application deadline of perhaps March 25, at which point all applications would be considered and distribution of money approved. This would follow the usual process of applicants completing the Youth Activities Fund "application for assistance" form, which would then be considered by the presiding clerk, the treasurer, and the clerk of the Youth & Children Committee. The current balance in the Youth Activities Fund is \$6156.
- B. *Scholarships for Teens.* The High School Teen Retreat Program has been inactive for the past two years, and the fund for High School Teen Retreats has a balance of \$8074, including a donation of \$3500 earmarked for that fund shortly before the program became inactive. We propose that \$3000 from this fund be made available to high-school-age youth wishing to attend the 2018 Gathering. The process for distributing scholarships would be the same as for the children, but without the \$300 limit per individual. Using this fund for scholarships to attend the FGC Gathering **would require approval** from Yearly Meeting, as this does not match the fund's original purpose.
- C. *Scholarships for Adults.* As the treasurer's report showed, in 2016–17, the value of our Friends Fiduciary accounts increased by \$2990. We do not budget for portfolio changes, but this increase helped our cash assets grow by \$3200. If the Meeting wishes to support adults attending the 2018 Gathering, this \$2990 could be made available for scholarships by adding it as an expense in this year's budget. This would likely result in income falling short of expenses, but we can afford to lose the \$2990 that we gained this year.

Note that funding such scholarships would be a departure from the way LEYM has traditionally spent its money. Most budget lines and funds support the functions of the Yearly Meeting or our representatives to other organizations. The Finance Committee presents this method of supporting adults within the Yearly Meeting as a *possibility* – not a proposal or recommendation – if Friends are led to pursue this path.

V. Budget for 2017–18

At Representative Meeting we presented a budget with total expenses of \$21,200. Since then, we have made adjustments based on end-of-year figures in the treasurer's report and other new information. The most significant changes are Travel (up \$1000 because of many new travel expenses since Representative Meeting) and Publications (because we estimated low last year and printing costs will likely be higher in the new year). These and other small changes result in a new total of \$22,275 *without* scholarship money

for helping adults attend next year's FGC Gathering, and \$25,265 *with* this scholarship funding. We have re-budgeted contributions income at \$21,680 by adding \$1 to the suggested per-member contribution, bringing this figure up to \$29/member. This number is again based on 710 contributing members.

This is a deficit budget, as we have had for the past several years, during most of which we have come out ahead. The deficit is \$595 *without* the scholarship funding, and \$3585 *with* scholarship funding.

VI. Loan to Friends School in Detroit

As you may have heard, Friends School has closed and the property has been put up for sale. Certain expenses either continue (e.g., insurance, utilities, maintenance of building and grounds) or are associated with the sale (e.g., legal fees), and the School's bank account is nearly depleted. The Board of Friends School has asked Monthly Meetings within Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting for small loans to carry the School forward until it is sold; the expected sale price would easily allow repayment of loans with a 2% per annum interest rate, though nothing is guaranteed.

The Finance Committee proposes that LEYM loan Friends School \$5000, with the expectation that it would be repaid by the end of the calendar year. (Note that in the recent past we contributed \$4500 a year to Friends School.) Full disclosure: all three members of the LEYM Finance Committee are also members of the Board of Friends School in Detroit.

YM2017-25 Advancement & Outreach Committee Report

Mathilda Navias, clerk, reported for the Advancement & Outreach Committee.

One of the roles of Advancement & Outreach Committee is to engage in outreach to our smaller Monthly Meetings and worship groups. After a period of exploring whether Pine River Monthly Meeting wanted to remain a Monthly Meeting, Pine River has decided that being a worship group meets the needs of the eight to ten attenders, many of whom do not have a Quaker background. The worship group does not currently plan to be under the care of a Monthly Meeting. This means that individual members who wish to remain members of the Religious Society of Friends will need to transfer their membership to a Monthly Meeting. Carolyn Lejuste, Red Cedar Monthly Meeting, volunteered to reach out to Pine River Friends.

Fremont Worship Group will consider this fall whether they will disband. Friends from Grand Rapids Monthly Meeting, which has care of the worship group, plan to meet with them.

Advancement & Outreach Committee will continue to be in touch with the worship groups and smaller Meetings in the Yearly Meeting to see if they can be of assistance.

The full report follows.

Advancement & Outreach Committee Report

Pine River Friends have been going back and forth in the last two years whether to remain a Monthly Meeting or revert to a worship group. On their Statistical Report, Don and Nancy Nagler reported that they have decided to become a worship group. I have spoken with them on the phone, and they report that the current group of eight to ten is made up mostly of people with no Quaker background, for whom a worship group works well.

Herbert Lindsay, who is the convener of the Fremont Worship Group, reported on their Statistical Report that they are not meeting over the summer, and will decide in the fall whether to disband. Several Friends from Grand Rapids Meeting, which has care of the worship group, plan to meet with them then.

Members of the Advancement & Outreach Committee continue to be in touch with the worship groups and smaller Meetings in the Yearly Meeting to ask how they are doing and if we can be of help.

The A&O Committee has a display upstairs that we invite Friends to visit. There are a bunch of things you can take home with you, including sample Quaker business-sized cards, maps of the Yearly Meeting, and a number of FGC bookmark-sized cards to welcome and inform newcomers. A poster of suggestions

for what things to avoid saying and good things to say to welcome newcomers is on display. The bookmarks and poster can be downloaded from FGC's website. Please take some for your Meeting.

In May, Baltimore Yearly Meeting sent LEYM an invitation to visit their annual sessions, which are from July 31 to August 6, and begin right after our sessions end. Through their Intervisitation Program, they offered to cover registration, room, and board for two Friends who felt led to visit. It appears that they sent this invitation to all Yearly Meetings in North America. Mike Holaday, our clerk, asked the Advancement & Outreach Committee to find LEYM Friends led to visit.

E-mails with this news were sent to all LEYM Meetings and worship groups and a news item was posted on the Yearly Meeting website. Sam Milford of Pittsburgh Meeting is scheduled to attend with her husband. Sam is a member of Pittsburgh's Outreach Committee and serves LEYM as a representative to FWCC. Pittsburgh is close to the area Baltimore Yearly Meeting covers, and she thinks of them as a neighbor. Sam plans to write a brief report to be printed in the *Bulletin*.

Becky Morehouse and other committee members wrote an article for the *Bulletin* describing how to organize Friendly Eights groups.

The committee has scheduled a Saturday meeting in September.

Fifth Session: 1:15 – 3:15 pm, Saturday, July 29, 2017

YM2017-26 Earthcare Committee Report

Russ Adams (North Columbus), co-clerk, reported for the Earthcare Committee.

The Earthcare challenge, as voiced by Ken Lawrence, is that planetary catastrophe is now inevitable. Working to avoid catastrophe is no longer useful; instead we need to create resilient communities that will face the difficulties ahead with grace and love.

The Earthcare Committee is considering creating its own sustainability platform, premised in part on concepts embodied in the 1754 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Epistle:

Now dear friends, if we continually bear in Mind that highest law, of doing to others, as we would be done by, we shall never think of bereaving tomorrow's people of that valuable Blessing, freedom . . . that where we live at the expense of those yet to come, such lives tend to harden the Heart, and render the Soul less susceptible of that holy Spirit of Love, Meekness, and Charity which is the peculiar Character of a true Christian and of other golden-ruled friends of many global faiths.

Is it possible that, by addressing root causes as well as symptoms, we might help tomorrow's people open pathways to prosperity, freedom, and peace for all time? Is it possible that some of us might do for the fullest-possible sustainability, today, what our ancestors did for abolition?

The full Earthcare Committee report follows.

LEYM Earthcare Report 2017

- 1.01 Greetings, Friends, from your Earthcare Committee, where worry should be part of our name.
- 1.02 As we sat down this week, Ken Lawrence shared his views of earthcare challenges.
 - a. **"Planetary catastrophe is now inevitable**, and for many people it is happening already. It will get much worse. Climate change, resource shortages, overpopulation, and economic dysfunction are some of the contributing factors. We have passed the time when it might have been possible to turn things around. Humanity may never have had the cultural capacity to make the changes that were needed.
 - b. "I don't view this statement as pessimistic or despairing, but as facing reality with eyes wide open. If we don't recognize hard truths honestly, how can we make good decisions about our actions?"
- 1.03 So, as Prince sang, "Are we just gonna party like it's 1999?" Here's what Ken suggested:

“Working to avoid catastrophe is no longer useful. Instead we need to work to create resilient communities that will face the difficulties ahead with grace and love, trying to preserve what is good about humanity, and to appreciate the beauty and pleasure of each new day.”

- 1.04 Most of those present at Earthcare Committee did not dissent from Ken’s dire assessment. At some point, Shannon Pratt-Harrington, a young adult Friend, very politely reminded all of us older “silver hairs” that this is her generation’s future we’re talking about!
- 1.05 So, many in Quaker Earthcare Witness, QUNO, FWCC, and elsewhere fear that, as unsustainable societies degrade, a cascade of symptoms will be thrown off like sparks from an emery wheel. Our “love tomorrow’s neighbors as we love ourselves” must be big enough to deal with all symptoms. And our “love for tomorrow’s neighbors” must be big enough so that we can also recognize and deal with **root causes**, like overpopulation and overconsumption, that explain our persistent human lack of sustainability!
- 1.06 Is it possible, as we discussed at some length in Earthcare Committee, that an accurate model of civilization might better explain human history, especially genocide, re-enslavement, and war? Is it possible that the population-cycle civilization model predicts more exacting steps needed to improve our resilience in both peace care and earthcare? A **Handout** is circulating for all Friends who wish to follow or contribute to this earthcare discussion.
- 1.07 Is it possible, also as we discussed in Earthcare Committee, that something really beautiful was lost in the decades after 1972? Then, population-aggressive industrial businesses and religion businesses killed Public Law 91-513, the Commission on Population and America’s Future. Again, if you want to follow along or contribute to this discussion, a separate **Handout** is circulating.

LEYM/QEW EARTHCARE PLATFORM

- 1.08 Very exciting to some of us is a new QEW effort to draft a platform. QEW expects to work from great resources like Black Lives Matter and the LEAP Manifesto (Canadian Indigenous/Migrant peoples).
- 1.09 Some of us discussed a possible LEYM Earthcare platform of our own, perhaps built on the 1754 Epistle of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting that became a basis for the Abolition movement.
- 1.10 Might we capture historic continuity between the *abolition movement* and the *sustainability movement* that Shannon’s generation deserves?
- 1.11 Might this help us open doors to sister faiths – Mennonites, UU – about our call to resilience that Shannon’s generation deserves?
- 1.12 Some Friends will find some older language antiquated. So we may add a short, modern explanation using language like that of the Pisac Plenary Minute on “Sustaining Life on Earth.”
- 1.13 I’ll share with you this short, slightly-modified paragraph from the 1754 PYM Epistle.
“Now dear Friends, if we continually bear in Mind that highest law, of doing to others, as we would be done by, we shall never think of bereaving tomorrow’s people of that valuable Blessing, freedom; nor to endure growing comfortable by tomorrow’s people’s loss. To live in Ease and Plenty, by resources that our recency of birth has put in our Power, is neither consistent with Christianity, nor common Justice; and we have good Reason to believe, draws down the Displeasure of Heaven, it being a melancholy but true Reflection, that where we live at the expense of those yet to come, such lives tend to harden the Heart, and render the Soul less susceptible of that holy Spirit of Love, Meekness, and Charity, which is the peculiar Character of a true Christian and of other golden-ruled friends of many global faiths.”
- 1.14 Friends, is it possible that by addressing *root causes* in addition to *symptoms* we might help tomorrow’s people open pathways to prosperity, freedom, and peace for **all** time? Is it possible that some of us might do for the fullest-possible sustainability, today, what our ancestors did for abolition?

1.15 Dear Friends, this is your Earthcare Report for 2017. If there are questions, you know who we are!

YM2017-27 Nominating Committee Preliminary Report

Clémence Ravaçon Mershon (Erie), clerk, made a preliminary report for the Nominating Committee.

The Nominating Committee has made nominations for all of the officers, communications people, the database manager, most committees, and representatives to most Quaker organizations. Friends are being appointed to positions that, generally, have three-year terms. A few Friends have accepted such nominations with the understanding that they will be able to reconsider their ability to continue serving in those positions on an annual basis.

The Nominating Committee is still seeking individuals to serve on Advancement & Outreach (2 persons), Finance (1), Publications & Archives (1), Adult & Family Program (1), and Youth & Children's Program (1), and someone to serve on FGC Central Committee beginning later this year.

YM2017-28 Peace & Justice Committee Report

Shelley Kotz (Broadmead) and Helen Fox (Ann Arbor) reported for the Peace & Justice Committee. Lucia Kalinosky, who has been clerking the committee, has moved to Minneapolis to study interreligious chaplaincy. The committee asks that we join them in holding her in the Light as she begins this new venture.

LEYM has significant investments in Friends Fiduciary Corporation. Friends Fiduciary is the investment company that manages the assets of about 360 U.S. Quaker institutions, including Yearly, Quarterly, and Monthly Meetings, trusts, retirement communities, schools, and other non-profits. Friends Fiduciary actively selects investments that are consistent with human rights and social responsibility, and has zero tolerance for investments in companies that enable or directly participate in weapons productions. Currently, however, it does not exclude companies that contribute in other ways to Israel's Occupation.

At the request of the Ann Arbor Monthly Meeting, three specific companies that support or enable Israel's occupation of Palestinian lands have been excluded under Friends Fiduciary's existing screening policies. Ann Arbor Friends Meeting has now requested that Friends Fiduciary expand its Quaker Values Screening Criteria to exclude any company that provides products or services that contribute to:

Violent acts that target either Israeli or Palestinian civilians;

The maintenance of the Israeli military occupation of Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem;

The maintenance and expansion of Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories;

The maintenance and construction of the Separation Wall

Currently, Ann Arbor Friends are seeking minutes in support of expanded screening criteria, in response to the suggestion from Friends Fiduciary that statements from additional investors would carry more weight. It is hoped that these minutes will urge a change in investment strategy by Friends Fiduciary, with the ultimate goal of changing Israeli behavior in the occupied Palestinian territories.

The Peace & Justice Committee recommends that LEYM adopt the following minute:

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting requests that Friends Fiduciary Corporation expand its Quaker Values Screening Criteria to exclude investments in companies that support or are complicit with Israel's occupation of Palestinian lands, its economic exploitation and control of the Palestinian population, and/or its violations of international human rights law.

Friends approved the minute.

The full report follows.

Peace & Justice Committee Report

Request

LEYM's Peace & Justice Committee requests that Lake Erie Yearly Meeting adopt a minute urging Friends Fiduciary Corporation to exclude companies from its investments that support or are complicit with Israel's occupation of Palestinian lands, its economic exploitation and control of the Palestinian population, and/or violations of international human rights law.

Background

Friends Fiduciary Corporation is the investment company that manages the assets of about 360 U.S. Quaker institutions including Yearly, Quarterly, and Monthly Meetings, trusts, retirement communities, schools, and other non-profits. According to its mission, FFC is guided by Quaker principles, values, and testimonies, and aims to "align its investments with mission through proactive Quaker-Values Screening." It evaluates companies across multiple dimensions, including human rights and other socially responsible measures. It has zero tolerance for investments in companies that produce weapons or parts of weapons or that enable weapons. Currently, however, it does not exclude companies that contribute in other ways to Israel's Occupation.

In 2012, responding to a request of Ann Arbor Friends Meeting, Friends Fiduciary removed three companies that support or enable Israel's Occupation from its socially responsible investment screen: Caterpillar, Hewlett Packard, and Veolia Environment, on the grounds that they violate existing Quaker values criteria, including military and environmental concerns.

Ann Arbor Friends Meeting now requests that Friends Fiduciary take the next step. Our new minute asks Friends Fiduciary to expand its Quaker Values Screening criteria to exclude any company that provides products or services that contribute to:

- violent acts that target either Israeli or Palestinian civilians
- the maintenance of the Israeli military occupation of Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem
- the maintenance and expansion of Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories
- the maintenance and construction of the Separation Wall

Currently, Ann Arbor Friends Meeting is seeking minutes on this issue from Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly Meetings and other Quaker institutions in order to demonstrate to Friends Fiduciary a broad base of constituent support. Since LEYM was one of the first regional Quaker Meetings to recommend divestment from companies that support the Occupation (Minute on Israel-Palestine, 2013), we hope it will join AAFM in this effort.

Proposed wording of LEYM's Minute:

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting requests that Friends Fiduciary Corporation expand its Quaker Values Screening Criteria to exclude investments in companies that support or are complicit with Israel's occupation of Palestinian lands, its economic exploitation and control of the Palestinian population, and/or violations of international human rights law.

YM2017-29 Finance Committee Report

Jeff Cooper, clerk, reported. He noted that making a profit is not a goal of the Finance Committee, and that, when we do, we seek ways to use it.

In response to five specific proposals from the Finance Committee, Friends took the following actions:

Friends approved spending up to \$3000 from the High School Teen Retreat fund for scholarships to help LEYM high school-age students attend the 2018 FGC Gathering of Friends.

Friends approved spending up to \$3000 from the General Fund to provide financial assistance to LEYM adults to attend the 2018 FGC Gathering of Friends. \$3000 would be withdrawn from our Friends Fiduciary account for this purpose.

LAKE ERIE YEARLY MEETING MINUTES
ANNUAL MEETING 7/27/17 – 7/30/17

LEYM Budget 2017 - 2018 Approved July 29, 2017

General Fund Expenses	FY 13-14		FY 2014-2015		FY 2015-2016		FY 2016-2017		FY 2017-2018	
	Act	Budget	Act	Budget	Act	Budget	Budget	Actual	Approved Budget	Change from 16-17
(* = transfers)										
Travel	1547	3,000	3,000	4,000	2,762	3,000	3,000	3,000	3500	500
Office	18	50	48	50	88	88	100	558	300	200
Contract worker	938	2,040	1638	2000	2,249	2,000	2,000	2936	2400	400
Finance	40	50	11	50	67	50	550	500	75	-475
Publications	2031	3,000	3083	3200	1,986	2,200	2,353	2353	2800	600
Advancement	-176	600	300	100	0	100	100	0	50	-50
Ministry & Nurture	150	300	-325	100	0	100	100	0	50	-50
Clerk's Fund	0	300	300	300	0	300	300	0	200	-100
FGC	4500	4,500	4500	4500	4,500	6,000	6,000	6000	6000	0
MFC one-time donation				1000	1,000	0	0	1,000	1000	1,000
Records project	200	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	0
FWCC Travel*	1200	2,400	2400	1500	1,500	1,500	900	900	900	0
FWCC Travel Donation							300	300	900	600
Youth Activity Fund*	1000	1,000	1000	1000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1000	1000	0
High School Retreat Fund*	6000	6,300	6300	1600	0	0	0	0	0	0
Spiritual Formation*	100	800	800	800	800	300	300	0	300	0
Friends School in Detroit	4500	4,500	4500	0	0	0	0	0	2000	0
Olney Friends School	600	600	600	2000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2000	0	0
Consultation Fund*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scholarship Fund for ministry*	1000	500	500	500	500	100	100	0	0	-100
Summer work project		1,200	1200	1200	1,200	600	600	0	200	-400
Insurance	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	0
Misc. (FGC scholarships) ¹	-2358	0	0	0	0	1,400	2900	1,400	4000	2,600
Total Expense =	21790	31,740	29855	24500	20,252	21,550	23047		26275	4,725
Contributions Income	29,001	29,725	29,502	23,040	22,821	19,880	21477		21300	1,420
FFC Dividends Income	739	600	956	1050	1,065	1,050	1094		1090	40
Other Income	4011	250	250	0	0	0	0		0	0
Total Income =	33,751	30,575	30,458	24,090	23,886	20,930	22571		22390	1,460
Income - Expenses =	11,961	-1,165	603	-410	3,634	-620	-476		-3885	-3,265
BUDGET UNDERFUNDING. Balance, if needed, comes from General Fund.										
Total Contribution / Members =	\$40	\$41		\$32		\$28			\$30	\$2
Members =	725	725		720		710			710	0
Suggested contribution / member	40	\$41		\$32		\$28			\$30	\$2

¹ 2017-18 budget: one-time for scholarships to attend FGC Gathering (\$3K) & White Privilege Conference (\$1K)

YM2017-30 Ministry & Nurture Committee Report

Carla Pratt-Harrington (Athens), co-clerk, reported for the Ministry & Nurture Committee.

The Ministry & Nurture Committee has several charges. The committee administers the Ministry Scholarship Fund, holds the Spiritual Formation Program under its care, collects and reviews the annual State of the Meeting Reports, and drafts a query for Monthly Meetings to respond to.

Ministry Scholarship Fund

Again this year, the committee received no requests for scholarship funds, either for ministry or for travel by ministers approved by the Yearly Meeting. It encourages Friends who are following a leading that may be aided by scholarship funds to bring it to their Monthly Meeting; after seasoning, the Monthly Meeting may then bring a request for a scholarship to this committee.

State of the Meeting Reports

Ministry & Nurture Committee received State of the Meeting reports from 17 Monthly Meetings. Some themes were common to several of the reports – for example, how Meetings are addressing racism, white privilege, and implicit bias. Many Meetings included their concerns and efforts about welcoming, inclusion, and building community.

Some of our Meetings are going through significant transitions and others have experienced losses this year. Several noted their awareness of an aging membership. A few Meetings have introduced sharing of “joys and concerns” at the end of meeting and have found this an enriching experience. Deep concern about the new political administration and the rise in the tolerance of hate in our country was expressed. Friends are striving to maintain balance and persist in finding ways forward that are grounded in Spirit.

Once again the committee encourages Friends to read the full reports when they are published in the *Annual Records*.

Query

The Ministry & Nurture Committee has prepared the following Query for this next year:

How might we support each other as we find peaceful and persistent responses to actions that exclude and judge?

In what ways do we, as Quakers, hold ourselves and the Other in the Light when our disagreements seem insurmountable?

How do we find common ground as we listen to those with whom we disagree?

Spiritual Formation Program

Mathilda Navias, clerk of the Spiritual Formation Planning Committee, reported.

Two Spiritual Formation retreats are sponsored each year. In addition, some Monthly Meetings have smaller groups that meet regularly through retreats each year; several Monthly Meetings also have groups that meet regularly throughout the year.

The theme for the 2016–2017 Spiritual Formation retreats was “Spiritual Companions from the Past: John Woolman, Caroline Stephen, and Howard Thurman,” with Della Stanley-Green as leader. The theme for the coming year is “Forgiveness as a Spiritual Discipline,” led by Sue Regen. The fall retreat will be held September 15–17, 2017, at the Weber Retreat Center in Adrian, Michigan. The spring retreat will be on May 5, 2018.

This year everyone in LEYM is invited to come, whether or not they have been involved in a Spiritual Formation group in their Meeting, so this is a good opportunity to explore whether your Meeting might like to start one.

The full reports follow.

Report of the Ministry & Nurture Committee

The Ministry & Nurture Committee has several charges. First, we collect and summarize the annual State of the Meeting Reports. Second, we hold the Spiritual Formation Program under our care. Third, we administer two scholarships for ministry. In addition, it has been our tradition to develop a query that Meetings are encouraged to respond to in an effort to deepen spirituality.

Scholarships Funds

The Ministry scholarship fund has not been used for several years. We encourage Friends who are following a leading that may be aided by this scholarship fund to bring it to their Monthly Meeting; after seasoning, the Monthly Meeting may then bring a request for a scholarship to this committee. This could help Friends to attend classes, workshops, or other appropriate educational programs that would help

them follow their leading.

In addition there is a traveling scholarship. If you have a message you would like to share outside your local Meeting, a scholarship is available to assist with travel expenses. To apply, contact the Ministry & Nurture clerk (currently Flo Friender) with your seasoned message and we will help work through a proposal for this scholarship.

State of the Meeting Reports

Ministry & Nurture Committee received State of the Meeting reports from 17 Monthly Meetings. Some themes were common to several of the reports – for example, how Meetings are addressing racism, white privilege, and implicit bias. Ann Arbor's efforts have evolved into a focus on police-community relations, while Birmingham has had monthly discussions on race and three of its members led the mid-winter Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting gathering with the theme, "Why Can't We Be F/friends? Who is missing from our Meetings and why?" Other Meetings have made these issues a focus of adult education.

Many Meetings included their concerns and efforts about welcoming, inclusion, and building community. One creative program undertaken by the Oberlin Meeting collaborated with Oberlin students to organize a series of 12 bi-weekly evening Meet-ups for Quaker and Quaker-interested students. These gatherings included worship, food, and conversation. Oberlin Meeting also offers its welcoming message to newcomers, a statement originally written in response to the LEYM Query. This states, "We are a diverse Meeting, not racially, but spiritually, representing many branches of American Quakerism. As a consequence, it is important for us to warmly affirm our commitment to welcome all into our worship. There is also a real concern to look behind the particular language of a ministry to the intention and the wisdom that prompted it. There is a warm, unified commitment to welcoming all and to respecting the diversity of our religious experience and expression." This statement also serves as a reminder that we have many areas of diversity in our Meetings, although we continue to ask ourselves, "Who is missing?"

Some of our Meetings are going through significant transitions and others have experienced losses this year. Several noted their awareness of an aging membership. A few Meetings have introduced sharing of "joys and concerns" at the end of meeting and have found this an enriching experience. One mentioned the inclusion of thoughts that were not shared during worship. Meetings continue to participate in and support individual members' participation in a range of social justice activities. Detroit Meeting has been active in support of families at risk of deportation, and approved a minute that concludes, "We strive to stand together with other faith communities to ensure that every member of our community is respected and welcomed. As Quakers, we affirm that of God in every person and that of living our testimonies of community, equality, and supporting the integrity of families. We ask individuals to explore unmet needs or roles that we can offer to deepen our commitment to help. We see deep spiritual significance in this movement."

Deep concern about the new political administration and the rise in the tolerance of hate in our country was expressed. Friends are striving to maintain balance and persist in finding ways forward that are grounded in Spirit.

Once again we encourage Friends to read these reports when they are published in the *Annual Records*. Our committee experienced coming to know the Meetings in a different way and felt a greater sense of community among us as a result. Insights and helpful ideas offered in these reports may be useful to other Monthly Meetings.

Query

How might we support each other as we find peaceful and persistent responses to actions that exclude and judge?

In what ways do we, as Quakers, hold ourselves and the Other in the Light when our disagreements seem insurmountable?

How do we find common ground as we listen to those with whom we disagree?

LEYM Spiritual Formation Program Report to LEYM Ministry & Nurture Committee

The Past Year (2016–17)

LEYM's Spiritual Formation retreats this past year were much appreciated. The theme for the year was "Spiritual Companions from the Past: John Woolman, Caroline Stephen, and Howard Thurman." The leader was Della Stanley-Green, from Indiana, a member of Western Yearly Meeting. The year started with a weekend retreat in September at the Weber Center, a Catholic retreat center in Adrian, Michigan, where we've been going for a number of years now. One participant wrote, "I got much more than I expected. I'm surprised in manifold ways!" During the year, those who participated in the retreat and many more met regularly in their home Meetings for spiritual sharing and discussion. As part of the program, each individual is to commit to a spiritual practice during the year. The year ended with a Saturday retreat in May, hosted by Kalamazoo Friends.

The Upcoming Year (2017–18)

I am really excited about our upcoming year. Sue Regen has been leading work-shops and retreats on "Forgiveness as a Spiritual Discipline" for Friends since 2002 at the FGC Gathering, Pendle Hill, and other retreat centers, as well as for numerous Monthly Meetings across the country. Helen Hebben of Kalamazoo Meeting told me, "I took Sue's workshop, and it changed my life."

I ask you to help get the word out to people at your Meeting about this year's weekend retreat, on September 15–17 at the Weber Retreat Center. Because of the timely topic and the known abilities of our leader, we are inviting everyone to attend whether or not you are involved in a Spiritual Formation group in your Meeting. Given the political situation as well as personal lives, many Friends find themselves dealing with feelings of anger, fear, or pain.

At the retreat, we will let everyone know about LEYM's Spiritual Formation Program and how they can become a part of it if they want to. So this is also an opportunity for Friends from Meetings that have not recently had a Spiritual Formation group to find out how to start one. There will be a follow-up retreat on May 5. We need a Meeting to volunteer to host it.

Please publicize the September retreat widely in your Meeting. There are flyers and registration forms here for you to take, and they will be available upstairs in the display area for the rest of the weekend. Additional forms and information on the Spiritual Formation Program are available on the Yearly Meeting's website.

Planning Committee

The committee that plans the program and the retreats currently consists of Mathilda Navias, clerk (Broadmead), Aran Reinhart (Broadmead), Rebecca Hatton (Ann Arbor), Ellerie Brownfain (Birmingham), and Olwen Pritchard (Broadmead). Mathilda plans to step down as clerk in the next two years. We ask Ministry & Nurture to once again find one of its members to serve on the planning committee as liaison between our committee and M&N. We also encourage members of the Ministry & Nurture Committee to participate in the program.

YM2017-31 Friends World Committee for Consultation Report

Clémence Ravaçon Mershon summarized the reports she has received from two of our three representatives. The third report, from Sam Milford (Pittsburgh), has been published in the *Bulletin*.

Jana Norlin, Grand Rapids Monthly Meeting, attended LEYM as our representative and also served as convener of pastoral care for the 2017 FWCC Section of the Americas gathering in Stony Point, New York. This is a role in which she has served before, and she reported a great increase in the use of the pastoral care team and center at the gathering. Each person shared that, while they began not knowing what to expect, they left feeling privileged to have grown, after being led by Spirit in service to others.

Mey Hasbrook, Kalamazoo Monthly Meeting, noted the dedication of an FWCC Traveling Ministry Corps, including three Bolivians and four North Americans. These Spanish- and English-speaking

Friends are being sent as traveling ministers throughout the Section. Local Friends Churches and Monthly and Yearly Meetings in the Americas can request a visitor. Mey also reminded Friends to take part in the second annual World Quaker Day, on October 1st.

The full reports follow.

2017 FWCC Section of the Americas Report

Representative Jana Norlin

It was my honor to serve as Convener of Pastoral Care for the 2017 FWCC Section of the Americas gathering in Stony Point, New York. I sent out Spanish and English communications to attenders before the conference. Arriving at the conference, I organized the Pastoral Care Center to create a welcoming space for reflection and consultation, which was open throughout the conference. I provided bilingual printed resources, coffee/tea/food, tissues, cough drops, and medical supplies, among other things that would help attenders feel supported in times of need. Before the conference began I held a bilingual orientation for 15 diverse volunteers of a wide age range from various countries. I created a schedule for when Pastoral Care givers would serve at the Pastoral Care Center, and I provided volunteers with green sashes so that they would be identifiable as approachable care givers at any time during the conference. It seemed to be very successful, as

a first-time strategy, that the Pastoral Care Center was located just before the plenary room, so all attenders were invited to stop in before and after each session. It was especially helpful that the Pastoral Care team positioned them-selves in the hallway to remind attenders to enter the plenary room with an attitude of worship. Besides the Center rotation, I created a schedule for Pastoral Care givers to sit on the facing bench and throughout the room during each session to hold individuals, the body of attenders, and the work of FWCC in the Light. Having served on Pastoral Care the previous two years in Mexico and Peru,

I observed a great increase in use of the Pastoral Care team and center at this gathering. The needs were varied and volunteers either responded themselves or made connections with others to respond to those who sought support. The team sought Divine guidance to meet the challenges of crossing cultural, language, and spiritual-practice differences. During the conference, members of Pastoral Care team also supported and ministered to each other. At the end of the conference the team reassembled for a bilingual debriefing to reflect on the experience. Each person shared that, while they began not knowing what to expect, they were leaving feeling privileged to have grown, after being led by Spirit in service to others. I co-created a bilingual survey about the Pastoral Care experience so that team members could submit comments and suggestions to the Planning Committee for implementation for ministry at future gatherings.

I humbly thank Lake Erie Yearly Meeting for support to do this work for the FWCC Section of the Americas.

Report on Friends World Committee for Consultation

Representative Mey Hasbrook

Greetings, Friends. I am unable to join you in person due to health challenges, and am grateful to Clémence Ravaçon Mershon for sharing this report on my behalf.

FWCC's **Section of the Americas Meeting** took place from March 23 to 26, 2017, in Stony Point, New York. Around 120 Friends attended, with at least 18 from the Caribbean and Latin America. LEYM representatives were Sam Milford (Pitts-burgh), Jana Norlin (Grand Rapids), and Mey Hasbrook (Kalamazoo). Both Sam and I were in attendance for the first time as representatives, while Jana dually served as Convener of Pastoral Care. Additional LEYM Friends Mike Hinshaw and Clémence Ravaçon Mershon attended in service of FWCC committees.

The meeting's theme, “**Vivir La Paz - Living Peace,**” took inspiration from the Bible verse John 16:33:

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world” (New International Version). From bilingual worship to fellowship – with advance-prepared devotionals to our morning small groups – we explored this theme among one another, beyond our comfort zones, and with reflection upon the wider world.

Stirring **plenary messages** were given by Carl Magruder (Pacific YM), "Invocation: Apocalypse"; Kirenia Criado (Cuba YM), "Faith, Works, and Other Alternatives for Peace"; and Jonathan Vogel-Borne (New England YM). Written messages and more Meeting resources are online at http://fwccamericas.org/_wp/event/2017-section-meeting-of-theamericas/

The first **Traveling Ministry Corps**, with three Bolivians and four North Americans, was dedicated and commissioned by the entire Meeting. These Spanish- and English-speaking Friends are being sent as traveling ministers throughout the Section. Local Friends Churches and Monthly and Yearly Meetings in the Americas can request a visitor; FWCC pays for traveling expenses. Directions for invitation as well as applications are available online at <http://fwccamericas.org/visitation/traveling-ministry.shtml>. September 30, 2017, is the deadline to apply as an FWCC traveling minister for the second group, with an emphasis being put on Young Adult Friends for this cycle.

A **report on sustainability** was presented as a result of a workshop attended by 17 Friends in response to the Pisac Minute on Sustainability from the 2016 World Plenary. Both Clémence and I participated in this workshop; I also contributed to the report's composition. This report was presented during LEYM's Representative Meeting in April 2017 through the Earthcare Committee. Friends are encouraged to consider the report alongside the Minute on Sustainability as LEYM discerns a response.

Friends were reminded to take part in the 2nd annual **World Quaker Day** on October 1. The theme is "Gathering in Worship Around the Globe." More details are given online at http://fwccamericas.org/_wp/event/2017-world-quaker-day/.

Additional points to note:

- FWCC Section Meetings are now being held biannually, with the Americas gathering again in 2019.
- The world plenary will take place every seven years, with the next expected in 2023.
- Minutes are not yet available from this meeting, which will be provided later to LEYM.

It is my hope that Friends engage FWCC with consideration of its powerful impact, reaching from our local Meetings to the United Nations. For an example, I would share how I came to submit this report. I had been an attender for nine years among three unprogrammed Meetings between the US and Belgium. It was during my first FWCC event – the 2016 world plenary – that a leading arose to record membership. And while my membership was still in process last summer, I received a nomination to become a Yearly Meeting representative.

In conclusion, here is a paraphrased message given by Kristen Olson, Clerk of the Traveling Ministry Corps, at the recent Section of the Americas meeting: “This body is not about the bubble that we exist in. It is about building bridges. It is our responsibility to build those bridges. We are here for daily work.”

Sixth Session: 8:45 – 9:30 am, Sunday, July 30, 2017

YM2017-32 Publications & Archives Committee Report

Peggy Daub (Ann Arbor), clerk, reported for the Publications & Archives Committee.

The committee notes that Berch and Susan Carpenter are stepping down as *Bulletin* editors. During their tenure, LEYM has moved toward more electronic distribution, and the *Bulletin* can now be delivered in a number of ways. The committee has also obtained permission from all but one of the Annual Sessions plenary speakers since 2010 to post their talks on our website. It is in the early stages of discerning whether Memorial Minutes should also be put online, to preserve, and share with a wider audience, a record of the spiritual lives of our deceased members.

Submissions for the 2017 *Annual Records* are due by Sunday, August 27, and should be sent to Jeff

Cooper. The deadline for submissions for the fall *LEYM Bulletin* is Sunday, October 1, and may be sent to Peggy Daub or Jeff Cooper, the new co-editors of the *Bulletin*.

The full report follows.

Publications & Archives Committee Report

The members of the Publications & Archives Committee this year have been Peggy Daub, Bill Lefler, Seth Reichenbach, and Leslie Walden, with ex officio members *Bulletin* editors Berch and Susan Carpenter and webweaver Mathilda Navias.

The *Bulletin* editors will change this year, as Berch and Susan are stepping down after serving three years. During that time, we have moved toward more electronic distribution, and can now offer you the content in a number of ways, namely, multiple paper copies sent to a Monthly Meeting, a single paper copy to your mailbox, an email copy to your mailbox, or downloading from LEYM.org. Let us know which is most convenient for you. The *Bulletin* exists to serve the Yearly Meeting, so it carries a lot of nuts-and-bolts information about the Yearly Meeting itself. But, like the Yearly Meeting, its underlying purpose is to build community among Friends, which might mean sharing the journeys of individuals and Monthly Meetings. Let the editors know if you have ideas for articles or artwork for future issues.

During the past year, the committee reviewed the contents of *Annual Records* to see if there are any additional parts of this paper-only publication that could go online. We decided that plenary talks from our annual sessions could be of value outside the Yearly Meeting and should be on the web, if possible. Bill Lefler has contacted speakers from the last seven years (2010–2016), and obtained permission for all but one year so far. Watch for those to be added to the website soon. We are just beginning the process of discerning whether Memorial Minutes should also be put online. We are checking on the practices of other Yearly Meetings, and then will ask for input from Monthly Meetings and individuals as we consider this question. We like the idea of preserving a record of the spiritual life of our de-ceased members for a wider audience, but are mindful that there may be privacy concerns.

Submissions for the 2017 *Annual Records* are due by Sunday, August 27. Jeff Cooper will serve as editor, with help from others on the committee. The deadline for submissions for the fall *LEYM Bulletin* is Sunday, October 1, and may be sent to me [Peggy Daub] or to Jeff.

YM2017-33 Arrangements & Site Committee Report

Sally Weaver Sommer (Broadmead), member and registrar, reported for the Arrangements & Site Committee.

We had 127 attenders at the Annual Meeting of LEYM this year, 11 of whom were first-time attenders (7 adults and 4 children). 27 younger Friends participated in our Youth & Children's Program, and there were 9 young adult Friends.

Online registration worked well, and Friends are encouraged to register online.

We will meet in Bluffton again next year, July 26–29, 2018, and in 2019, July 25–28.

YM2017-34 Nominating Committee Report

Clémence Ravaçon Mershon, clerk, reported for the Nominating Committee.

A few additional nominations are included in the report. Friends are encouraged to test whether they are led to fill any of the remaining open positions, on Advancement & Outreach (1), Peace & Justice (1), Publications & Archives (1), Adult & Family Program (1), and Youth & Children's Program. The Nominating Committee will continue to seek individuals for the open positions, and to discern with those already considering accepting nominations. Nominations made between Annual Sessions and Representative Meeting are considered by the Executive Committee.

As a reminder, Monthly Meetings are encouraged to appoint individuals to participate in the work of the Ministry & Nurture, Earthcare, and Peace & Justice Committees.

Friends are encouraged to visit neighboring Yearly Meetings, but first to identify themselves to the Nominating Committee so that they can be formally nominated, and then to report back to us on their visits.

Friends approved the nominations.

Nominating Slate

LEYM Officers, Committee Members, & Representatives

Terms begin and end at rise of Annual Sessions.

(^ = serves on LEYM Executive Committee.)

Officers

<u>Role</u>	<u>Name & Meeting</u>	<u>Year of Service</u>	<u>End Year</u>
Presiding Clerk ^	Nancy Reeves, Cleveland	1	2020
Assistant Clerk ^	Mike Holaday, Grand Rapids	4	2018
Recording Clerk ^	Peter Wood, Red Cedar	1	2020
Treasurer ^	Mike Hinshaw, Wooster	6	2018

Communications

<i>Bulletin</i> Editors	Peggy Daub & Jeff Cooper, Ann Arbor	1	2020
Database Manager	Mathilda Navias, Broadmead	13	2018

Committees

Advancement & Outreach

of Members: 6 Years of Term: 3

Sheila Johnson, Ann Arbor	1	2020
Blair Ellis, Ann Arbor	1	2020
Erika Smith, Ann Arbor	5	2019
Becky Morehouse, Ann Arbor	5	2019
Mathilda Navias, Broadmead, Clerk ^	3	2018
Ellen Barnes, Birmingham	3	2018

Earthcare

of Members: 6 Years of Term: 3

Mey Hasbrook, Kalamazoo	1	2020
Richard Hogan, Athens	1	2020
Ken Lawrence, Broadmead	2	2019
Phil Balderston, Wooster	5	2019
Shannon Pratt-Harrington, Athens	6	2018
Russ Adams, North Columbus, Clerk ^	3	2018
Alternate: Phil Clampitt, Birmingham		

Finance

of Members: 3 Years of Term: 3

Joe Mills	1	2020
Joan Sampieri, Ann Arbor	2	2019
Bob Orr, Detroit	6	2018

Notes: Treasurer serves ex officio

High School Teen Retreat

3 adults with 3-year terms + 2 high schoolers with 2-year terms

Jenn Seif, Grand Rapids	2	2019
Stephanie Charlot, Red Cedar	3	2018
Jonah Brownfain, Birmingham	2	2018

Notes: High schoolers to be appointed by teens

Ministry & Nurture

of Members: 6 + 1 Rep. from each Monthly Meeting encouraged

Years of Term: 3

Ruth Carey, Ann Arbor	5	2020
Carla Pratt-Harrington, Athens, Co-Clerk ^	5	2020
Flo Friender, Kalamazoo, Co-Clerk ^	5	2019
Wink Covintree, Birmingham	2	2019
Margaret Walden, Cleveland	6	2018
Ann Sprague, Detroit	2	2018

Nominating

of Members: 6 (Appointed by YM through Naming Committee)

Years of Term: 3

Clémence Ravaçon Mershon, Erie WG, Clerk ^	4	2020
Jo Steigerwald, Cleveland	1	2020
Ellerie Brownfain, Birmingham	2	2019
Bill Warters, Birmingham	2	2019
Janet Dando, Akron	3	2018
Linda Mills, Kalamazoo	6	2018

Peace and Justice

of Members: 6 + 1 Rep. from each Monthly Meeting encouraged

Years of Term: 3

Joel Ottenbreit, Detroit	1	2020
Linda Beaty, Akron	2	2019
Shelley Kotz, Broadmead	3	2018
Joyce Balderston, Wooster	6	2018
Kathleen Helbling, Broadmead	6	2018
MM Rep. for Pittsburgh, Scilla Wahrhaftig		

Publications and Archives

of Members: 4 Years of Term: 3

Bob Roehm, North Columbus	1	2020
	1	2019
Bill Lefler, Pittsburgh, Clerk ^	3	2018
Seth Reichenbach	3	2018

Yearly Meeting Planning:

Arrangements & Site

of Members: 6 Years of Term: 3

Jon Sommer, Broadmead, Clerk ^	14	2020
	1	2020
Mary Igoe Meyers, Broadmead	2	2019
Sally Weaver Sommer, Broadmead Registrar	2	2019

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Olwen Pritchard, Broadmead	3	2018
John Templin, Broadmead	8	2018

Adult and Family Program

of Members: 6 Years of Term: 3

Thomas Taylor, Ann Arbor	1	2020
Susan Hartman, Ann Arbor	1	2020
Claire Cohen, Pittsburgh, Clerk ^	5	2019
Aran Reinhart, Broadmead	1	2019
Josephine Posti, Pittsburgh	3	2018

Youth & Children's Program

of Members: 12 Years of Term: 2

Greg Mott, Broadmead	Clerk ^	2018
	Assistant Clerk	2019
Employed student or YM vols.	Infants & Toddlers	
Ellerie Brownfain, Birmingham		
Jenn Seif, Grand Rapids		
Conleth Crotser, Cleveland		
Marc Smith, Ann Arbor		
Peter Crowley, Cleveland		
Kate Spry, Cleveland		
Alfred Clapp, Athens		
Diane Mott, Broadmead		
Stephanie Charlot, Red Cedar		
Diane Mott, Broadmead	Fall retreat clerk	
Conleth Crotser, Cleveland	Fall retreat assistant	

LEYM Bookstore

Valerie Groszmann, Kalamazoo	16	
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Representatives to Other Quaker Organizations

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Name & Meeting</u>	<u>Year of Service</u>	<u>End Year</u>
(* indicates clerk of that group of representatives)			

AFSC Corp	Shannon Pratt-Harrington, Athens	1	2020
AFSC Corp	John Deikis, Ann Arbor	6	2019
FCNL Gen Com	Al Connor, Ann Arbor	2	2020
FCNL Gen Com	Jim Crowfoot, Ann Arbor	2	2019
FCNL Gen Com	John Howell, Athens	2	2019
FCNL Gen Com	Michael Fuson, Granville *	3	2018
FCNL Gen Com	David Snyder, Oberlin	3	2018
FCNL Gen Com	Richard Shaw, Pittsburgh	3	2018
FGC Cntl Cmte	Robb Yurisko, N. Columbus	4	2020
FGC Cntl Cmte	Helen Hebben, Kalamazoo	4	2019
FGC Cntl Cmte	Carolyn Lejuste, Red Cedar	2	2018

(LEYM Reps appoint Rep to FGC Executive Committee)

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FWCC	Mey Hasbrook, Kalamazoo	2	2020
FWCC	Sam Milford, Pittsburgh	2	2019
FWCC	Jana Norlin, Grand Rapids	3	2018
Q Earthcare Witness	Russ Adams, N. Columbus	3	2018
FLGBTQC	Nancy Reeves, Cleveland	3	2018
Wm. Penn House	Ellerie Brownfain, Birmingham	10	2018
Olney Friends School	Greg Mott, Broadmead	10	2018

Visitors to Neighboring Yearly Meetings

<u>Yearly Meeting</u>	<u>Name & Meeting</u>	<u>Year of Service</u>	<u>End Year</u>
Baltimore YM	Sam Milford, Pittsburgh		2017
Canadian YM	_____		
EFI Eastern Region	_____		
Ohio YM	_____		
Ohio Valley YM	_____		
Wilmington YM	Al Connor, Ann Arbor	8	

YM2017-35 American Friends Service Committee Corporation Report

John Deikis (Ann Arbor), representative to AFSC Corporation, reported on his participation in its Annual Meeting, as well as that of Claire Cohen and Lucia Kalinosky.

AFSC grounds itself in the worship life of American Quakers through the participation of approximately 120 appointed and at-large members in its Annual Meeting.

John reports that AFSC continues to struggle with financial uncertainty, and an inability to move quickly and decisively in the face of the changing financial landscape after the 2008 financial crisis.

There is a tension between the slow and patient working toward unity, which lies at the heart of our discernment process, the long time between meetings of the decision-making body that locks in spending decisions 18 months before they occur, and the reality that financial decisions that are not made quickly have longer-term consequences than they otherwise might.

AFSC has taken exceptional steps to build a more stable future by engaging in a successful capital campaign and making deep budget cuts. A new General Secretary and new Chief Financial Officer will join AFSC this coming year. AFSC's presiding clerk noted that "I am hopeful that we can acknowledge our failures, have faith in the value of our work and the goodness of each other's intentions, and move forward together to rebuild a better AFSC. I believe that this is what the Spirit asks of us and what the world needs to do."

The full report follows.

AFSC 2017 Corporation Meeting

The American Friends Service Committee Corporation meets annually to provide oversight of the organization's governance. It functions as a proxy for American Quakers to bring Friends' concerns to AFSC and to communicate back to our Yearly Meetings the work and challenges of an organization active in 37 U.S. cities and 16 countries engaging with others in the work of social justice and peace.

Yearly Meetings are invited to appoint representatives to the Corporation proportionate to their registered membership. LEYM sends three to join approximately 60 representatives and another 60 members-at-large from around the country. Gathered in worship, this group provides the expression of a collective spiritual experience. Out of this "meeting for business" the Corporation appoints committees addressing issues like engaging Quaker communities in its work, selecting members-at-large, and appointing people

to the Board of Directors. This is the Corporation's formal role. But out of this worship together, the Corporation is the way AFSC grounds itself in the worship life of American Quakers.

The format of the annual meeting involves worship, business, and smaller sessions that increase understanding of local AFSC programs. This year, the Corporation meeting paralleled the Centennial Summit. This allowed the three LEYM reps to be inspired by the symposia and speakers who were a part of that celebration and energized to approach the difficulties presented in the meeting for business.

AFSC continues to struggle with financial uncertainty, in part because of internal inefficiencies but also because it was difficult to anticipate the 2008 financial crisis. The Board was unable to move quickly and decisively in the face of a changing financial landscape. The Quaker need to come to unity on decisions that require decisive action does not lend itself well to timely response. The budget, which has been viewed as an "intention to spend," as opposed to a balance between income and expenses that must be continually monitored, is prepared many months before the beginning of the fiscal year. In effect, decisions on spending are locked in some 18 months before they occur. The General Secretary and her staff had not had the ability to rapidly deploy actions believed essential to immediately place the brakes on spending in response to changing circumstances. An AFSC report summarized the following: "Our Quaker process is outstanding for spiritual discernment. But, the slow and patient working toward unity which lies at the heart of it does not always lend itself as well to the required pace of timely and responsive financial management decisions which organizational reality and the dynamics of our surrounding society require."

Internally, AFSC has been highly focused on finding ways to fund popular programs and to grow following the major organizational contraction in 2008–2010. As a donor-supported effort, its primary income has been bequests and donations, which understandably fluctuate from year to year. Aging demographics of the donor base and excessive dependence on a few large donors have exacerbated this challenge. As the organization needed to dip into financial reserves to cover periodic income/spending problems, it eroded its reserves-to-expense ratio. In a nutshell, the external problems have to do with our Quaker process and the volatility of the financial environment, and the internal issues of AFSC's decisions about spending limited reserves to support "the many needs of a troubled and suffering world."

The good news is that AFSC has taken exceptional steps to build a more stable future. The Centennial Capital Campaign has been far more successful than anticipated. Like many nonprofits, AFSC took a big hit in the 2009 recession. To correct for this, the organization increased fundraising efforts and made some difficult budget cuts to keep expenses in line with income. Subsequent growth may have been too rapid. Last year, it became apparent even the current budget was not sustainable. An *Ad Hoc Core Program Working Group*, together with the international and Regional Executive Committees, worked to reduce spending and establish programming priorities. The Sunday meeting of the Board of Directors included staff and volunteers to confront difficult issues of financial oversight, business practices, and necessary program devolution. The Board expressed commitment to monitoring the results of this process and holding itself account-able for improving financial sustainability. It is also taking concrete steps to improve communication with staff and local communities.

The coming year will welcome a new General Secretary as well as a new Chief Financial Officer. For Friends, it remains even more important today to bear witness corporately, to stand against militarism, and to protect human rights.

AFSC Presiding Clerk Phil Lord ended his comments to staff by writing, "I am hopeful that we can acknowledge our failures, have faith in the value of our work and the goodness of each other's intentions, and move forward together to rebuild a better AFSC. I believe that this is what the Spirit asks of us and what the world needs us to do."

We are grateful for the opportunity to represent LEYM to AFSC and to bear Quaker witness in this increasingly unpredictable world.

LEYM Appointed Representatives: Claire Cohen (Pittsburgh), John Deikis (Ann Arbor), Lucia Kalinosky (Cleveland)

YM2017-36 Friends General Conference Central Committee Report

Robb Yurisko (North Columbus), representative, reported on FGC Central Committee.

Robb received correspondence this week noting that FGC Central Committee will spend most of its time at its next meeting in discernment, rather than committee work, listening deeply for the needs and concerns of its constituent Yearly and Monthly Meetings. Friends are invited to contact Robb, or our other representatives, Carolyn Lejuste and Helen Hebben, to inform their participation in this process.

YM2017-37 Youth & Children's Program Committee Report

Joseph Mills (Kalamazoo), clerk, reported for the Youth & Children's Program Committee.

The program introduced *Collection* as a new practice this year. Each morning the 27 youth and their group leaders gathered and walked together to Ramseyer lounge, settled into a circle together, explored a point of Friends practice and discipline, and entered into a five-minute period of silent worship, followed by a short exercise in community building.

Our treasured younger Friends are wonderful to be with and provide us the best example of learning by instructing and sharing. This year the two Elementary groups were combined, and the High School and Middle School groups were also combined, because there were not enough leaders to support separate groups. Although this worked well this year, more Friends are needed to share their time with our younger Friends during Annual Meeting.

We deeply appreciate the work of this dedicated team.

The full report follows.

Youth & Children's Program Committee Report

Twenty-seven young people registered for the 2017 Annual Meeting. We had six full-time group leaders and three who assisted or volunteered to assist part time. We had one paid position shared by three individuals for infant and toddler care.

A new practice that was introduced was *Collection*. Each morning we gathered as a group after breakfast at Marbeck and walked over to the Ramseyer lounge. There we settled into a circle together and explored a point of Friends practice and discipline. One day we brought up the topic of group silence and its benefit and another the Light and holding someone in the Light. We then settled into about five minutes of silent worship, after which we conducted a short exercise in community building.

Partly because we were a little short staffed, the high and middle schoolers combined many of their morning activities. This was something they were willing to try as a group and it worked out pretty well. This left us with an elementary group and one for infants and toddlers.

The program needs more group leaders for our children. Also, we struggled to find volunteer drivers for swimming, but certainly are most appreciative to those who did volunteer. Our treasured younger Friends are wonderful to be with and provide us the best example of learning by instructing and sharing.

YM2017-38 Adult & Family Program Committee Report

Claire Cohen (Pittsburgh), clerk, reported for the Adult & Family Program Committee.

Claire reported that the work was challenging this year because the committee was shorthanded. Despite the small committee, they were able to create a successful program, and the plenary speaker was well received.

The committee has not identified a theme for next year, and would welcome suggestions!

Also, please fill out the evaluations!

YM2017-39 Youth and Children Epistles

Baby, Toddler, and Preschool Program

Things we loved:

- Playing outside, especially with balls and cones and rocks (Declan)
- The Fisher-Price Little People
- Eating in the cafeteria
- Books (GiGi)
- Ring around the Rosie
- Swimming off a stranger's raft (Starr)
- Going down the big slide (GiGi)

Things we learned:

- That we pay attention to other children's body language and words to see if they are enjoying our play.
- That we can use words to ask our friends (or complete strangers!) for help or cooperation.
- That sometimes accidents are more scary than painful (like tumbling on the slide). That's when you get hugs and reassurance that everything is OK.
- But sometimes they are both scary and very painful! That's when you get Mommy and Daddy to take you to the doctor and get stitches

Things our grown-ups will remember:

- Declan's "Master Plan"
- Also his voice narrating every move and his laugh
- GiGi climbing into our laps & snuggling in
- Her cute comments
- Starr's back, curls bouncing as she runs off toward adventure
- Zeke's beaming smile and sweet surrender to sleep

Elementary School Program

Dear Young Friends Everywhere –

These are the words of the elementary school group of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting:

Even though the meetings seem like they would be boring, the activities were a lot of fun.

We went outside a lot. We played games and had a lot of fun.

I like free time and drawing and I get to make new friends.

I liked going to the farmers market.

I liked to go swimming. I liked the cats.

I liked going to the lake.

I liked eating lunch and making a fort with my brother.

I liked staying in the dorms and going to the Bluffton pool.

We also talked about SPICES, especially simplicity, peace, and community. We looked for God in nature.

We talked about how simplicity should be simple but is really hard. We went to the farmers market and thrift store for community. And we made lots of paper airplanes.

Sincerely,

Conleth, Diane, Ethan, Douglas, Elizabeth, Matthew, Adrianna, Bradley, Amanda, and Andrew

Following the reading of their epistle, they also read us the story, "Good Night iPad."

Middle and High School Program

On Thursday we all arrived
And upon arrival we were revived
And then we realized
Jonah was the same size
Jabiri placed a pizza order
And Sophie helped us interact with our aura
The pizza was good and the soda was great
But going to bed was the part we all hate
Friday we took a walk to the bridge
And met a chill wasp and it was big
The water pump was locked again (improv)
And discovering a new road made us do a jig
We climbed the tree which Alex pruned
While others saw it as very rude
After lunch we swam at the pool
And got down the slide without too many stops
Then we all left early 'cause the air was too cool
Some of us went to pre-dinner workshops
We met the Clapps and had some laughs
Then went outside and played on the grass
While some people went to the plenary speech
Others split up and got snacks for each
The very next day
We went downtown
And Sophie acted like a clown
Alex found rollerblades in his exact size
And thankfully he's still alive
We came back from the market and climbed in a tree
And Samantha lost her room key
We went to lunch
Munch munch
We went to the lake, it was too blue
And off the raft all of us flew
While the raft was at a tilt
Sandcastles were built
When we got back
We went to Marbeck
Vinaigrette and milk were mixed
And Alex found himself in a fix
We went to the talent show and were amazed
Now writing this we're all in a daze
We've come to the conclusion
Through ice cream and Jaywalking:
Quakers are not average;
We're simple but savage.

A request from the teachers: Please help! Middle School and High School was the most wonderful experience.

YM2017-40 Epistle Committee Report

Rosemary Coffey (Pittsburgh), on behalf of the Epistle Committee, presented the draft epistle for our consideration.

Friends asked the committee to add more of a sense of the spirit of the sessions, the successful efforts to increase young adult attendance, and the success of the children's program.

After revision in accordance with these suggestions, the Executive Committee will consider the final version for approval.

Friends expressed gratitude for the service of the Epistle Committee.

YM2017-41 Close

The Annual Sessions closed for the year.

Other Report Received

Report from Friends School in Detroit to Annual Meeting, 7th Month, 2017

In early February, 2017, after the significant indebtedness of Friends School in Detroit remained unpaid, Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting reconstituted the Board of Trustees of the School such that it would consist of Friends committed to formally laying down the School and selling its property. A proposal from a private lender to loan enough money on a secured basis to pay off all of the School's current debts fell through. The current Board has now listed the property for sale; as of yet, no offer has been considered by the Board of Trustees.

The current trustees are engaged in considerable efforts to lay down the School in a responsible manner. A committee has been formed to address issues of record retention and disposal. Also, a group has arranged an inventory of the building contents and is exploring its liquidation. Records and documents of a historical nature are being donated to the Bentley Historical Library at the University of Michigan.

To cover operation and holding costs until a sale of the real estate closes, the Board of Trustees has sought loans from individual Friends and Monthly Meetings in the area. These are now starting to come to fruition.

The Board of Trustees hopes to consummate the sale and pay off all of the indebtedness before the end of the year.

Respectfully submitted,
Joseph Mills
Clerk of the Board of Trustees of Friends School in Detroit

Submitted by Mike Holaday, presiding clerk
Nancy Reeves, recording clerk

Epistle

The Epistle was approved by LEYM Executive Committee in October 2017.

**Epistle from Lake Erie Yearly Meeting
in Annual Sessions at Bluffton University
in Bluffton, Ohio, July 27-30, 2017**

To Friends Everywhere:

The one hundred-plus adult Friends gathered for our 54th Annual Sessions addressed the topic “Quakers in the New Millennium.” Our plenary speaker, Greg Woods, member of Columbia, Missouri, Friends Meeting in Illinois Yearly Meeting, spoke specifically to “*Reviving* Quakerism in the New Millennium.” He challenged us with the question, How can we build the Beloved Kingdom on Earth with only people who look and act like us? We were asked not to rest on the past laurels of abolition and women’s suffrage, but instead to see how the spirit is moving among us now.

In powerful language, Greg gave us a vision of Quakers in the new millennium by offering three suggestions. The first was to deepen our worship by preparing to be present ahead of meeting for worship. Did we expect the divine to be in our midst? Were we ready to be transformed?

The second suggestion was to reach out to others so that they know that we exist and what we believe. We fail each other when we are quiet about our faith. We fail our youth when we do not teach them about our Christian roots and about the profound devotion of early Friends.

The third suggestion was to welcome newcomers and to reach out to young adults. We need to ask ourselves how we feel welcomed when coming into a new space. If we are more public and more proactive, people will be more drawn to what we have to offer.

We shared a tender moment when a 12-year-old boy rose to speak to how hard it is to “be community” when we live so far apart and see each other so seldom. Friend Greg spoke for us all when he said, “You are wise beyond your years.” May we learn from this young man’s wisdom.

We need to share our radical message with the world, that we are all ministers who are able to be called by God to serve. Let us stop hiding it.

In worship-sharing sessions, we considered two related queries arising from the central theme of these sessions:

1. How do we continue to make Quakerism relevant in today’s world in order to inspire young adults? and
2. In what ways can we, as Quakers, incorporate people of different generations and backgrounds, especially young adults, into our spiritual community?

Meanwhile, our workshops covered a wide range of topics: Campus Outreach/Ministry to Non-Quaker Campuses; There Is No New Normal; Beyond Reform: Quakers and Prison Abolition; Lucretia Mott Visits LEYM; Friends, Gnostics, and the Still-Speaking Spirit; Trending Immigration Topics under President Trump; and Are You Now, or Have You Ever Been, a Young Adult?

These workshops not only invited us to consider the depths of our roots, perhaps extending back to Gnostic thought and sensibility, but challenged us to consider in what ways our Quaker identity calls us to engage with the modern world. How does the Spirit call us to address mass incarceration and threats to immigrants and refugees? How do we call young people into our precious vision?

Several important matters came before our sessions, on which we reached unity. We approved a minute to be sent to Friends Fiduciary, which holds the Yearly Meeting’s funds, asking them to expand its Quaker Values Screening Criteria to exclude investments in companies that support or are complicit with Israel’s occupation of Palestinian lands, its economic exploitation and control of the Palestinian population, and/or its violations of international human rights law. We approved scholarships to support adult Friends from the Yearly Meeting who want to attend the White Privilege Conference in Grand Rapids next spring.

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And we introduced a video designed to familiar-ize our child care givers and others with the sexual abuse prevention policy adopted by Lake Erie Yearly Meeting after much work over the last three years.

In sum, we left the 2017 Annual Sessions of Lake Erie Yearly Meet-ing with new knowledge, new friends, and a new commitment to welcome interested visitors into our Meetings and share our faith with others as Way opens.

Nancy Reeves
Clerk, Lake Erie Yearly Meeting