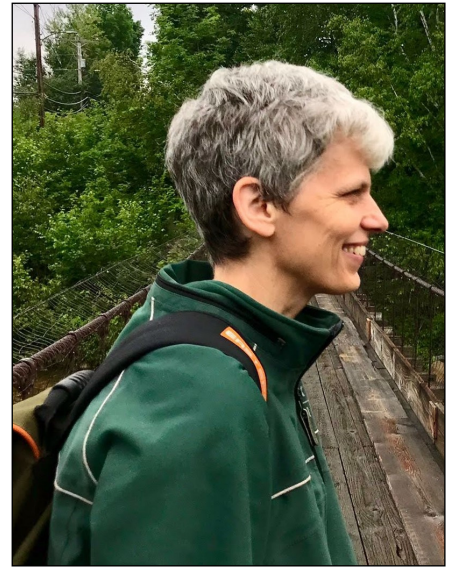




## Clerk's Message from Susan Loucks ... But What Canst Thou Say?

LEYM has never produced its own *Faith and Practice*. There are reasons: the Yearly Meeting incubated its culture as an association, as opposed to a full-blown yearly meeting (YM), with a lighter organizational infrastructure. We're widely spread geographically and don't have frequent points of contact beyond Annual Meeting. Developing a *Faith and Practice*, as we've seen in other YM's, is an intensive and time-consuming task, and there are lots of other areas where we could be investing our energy.

On the flip side, however, we have not taken the opportunity to deeply discern who we are together. There are benefits to doing that: this kind of agenda item can be relevant to everyone in our region, no matter how involved or knowledgeable they are about the YM as an organization. When we undertake this type of business as a yearly meeting, as opposed to the people we worship with regularly, we're exposed to those who have much in common with us, but who also can expand our sense of "we." Anchoring ourselves in that wider understanding allows us, ideally compels us, to line up the rest of our lives accordingly – perhaps with action, or in letting go of what no longer fits, sending ripple effects out into the wider world.



When the ad hoc visioning committee was doing its work in 2020–21, we heard from other yearly meetings who spoke of the prolonged intensity of their *Faith and Practice* revisioning processes, and also of the spiritual fruits. Some of us wondered if there was a right-sized path for our YM. Could we commit to taking on this type of business without committing to a full *Faith and Practice* at the end of it? If so, what would that look like – what would be a good starting point, and what kind of preparation would we need to do the work well? This question was brought to the body in a fashion during Representative Meeting this April, but due to compressed time and your clerk's poor

*Continued on next page*

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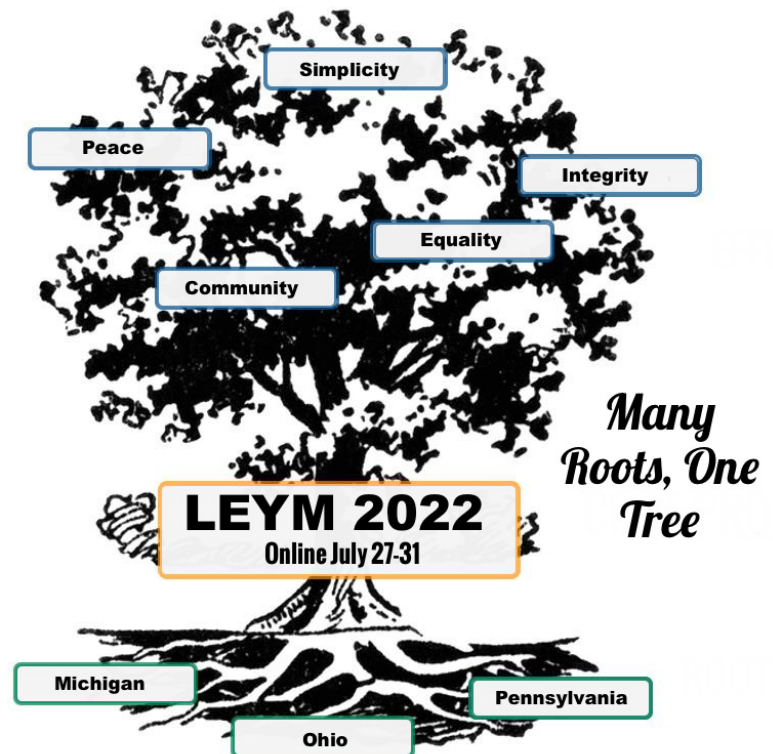
## Clerk's Message, *continued*

question formation, people were left feeling mostly confused and even slightly alarmed: Were we talking about creating some kind of creed? Rest assured, we're not!

During a small meeting of former clerks and the current clerk, we were recalled to the fact that many meetings had independently come up with minutes around racial equity in the last couple of years. We agreed that that could be a potentially rich starting ground. We can see if there are elements that stand out as held in common, or questions that could lead us there. We will be making some time this July during Annual Sessions for that discernment. We intend to convene an ad hoc group to review these minutes and give us a potential starting place.

As we are new to this, we need to correctly calibrate our expectations. We may end up with a written statement, and we may not. We may be surprised to find differences we weren't anticipating – or be similarly surprised by unity! We may realize we need different and/or more extensive preparation. In any and all of those events, I'm hoping we are energized by listening to each other, trying to understand each other at a deeper level, and then listening to what God might want for (and from) this group at this time.

I welcome thoughts about all of this – from taking on pieces of *Faith and Practice* to preparing to do the work. I also want to gather information. If your meeting has created a minute related to racial justice and it hasn't already been printed in the *Bulletin*, please send it to [leymclerk@gmail.com](mailto:leymclerk@gmail.com). I welcome volunteers to help us prepare by looking at the minutes. Finally, I welcome you sharing the word in your meeting – no matter what their prior involvement has been, they're welcome to join in this summer. See you there!



*Information about the Annual Meeting appears on the next eight pages.*

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# Lake Erie Yearly Meeting Annual Meeting (Virtual)

Wednesday July 27 – Sunday July 31, 2022

## *Many Roots, One Tree*

We look forward to our third virtual Annual Meeting with a variety of feelings: joy that we have the technology available to meet with Friends from around the region and the world without fear of spreading further disease and without using fossil fuels to travel – along with missing the special opportunities of sitting down with individual Friends for unprogrammed, spontaneous connections, or sharing meals and special times together in person.

This year's meeting, focusing on the theme of *Many Roots, One Tree*, gives us many opportunities to explore and grow together. Our roots are deep and varied: we come from many spiritual traditions – some of us were born into Quaker families; others were raised in other faith traditions; while some of us came from a background with no formal religious connections. Some of us have lived in the same community for most of our lives, while others have traveled and resettled. Our families' culture, social position, educational expectations and availability shaped each of us who now ends up at LEYM. How do we grow together from these widespread beginnings? And in the larger world, how do we nurture the diverse roots of community to grow into a thriving, growing tree?

Friends will find familiar aspects in our time together: time for our Annual Sessions, the business meetings at which the work of LEYM is carried out; a wide array of workshops, which are described more fully on pages 8–10; a plenary speech titled *What Lies Within this Tree with Many Roots?* from Olney Friends School Head Christian Acemah (see the article about him on pages 4–5); worship sharing; and Bible study. There will be opportunities to hear from several

organizations from the wider Friends community. Each day will begin and end with a time of unprogrammed worship.

The recent visioning process and evaluations from last year's Annual Meeting raised a need for more time and space for connecting with each other even in a virtual environment. We will attempt to provide more opportunities for individual fellowship by having open Zoom times with a Friendly host during the lunchtime on Thursday and Friday. In addition, we will offer a half-hour session Wednesday evening to welcome first-time attenders and introduce them to LEYM and some individual Friends. We are excited that the plenary session on Wednesday evening will include a lively variation on the traditional Roll Call. We will be asking each monthly meeting to share with us a short presentation on its roots or fruits. We hope this will be an opportunity for creative community building within both the monthly and yearly meetings. More details are being sent to each monthly meeting. We encourage you to look for the notice and have fun in your meeting as you develop your contribution.

Saturday morning will provide a time to share with each other anti-racism minutes and actions from our local meetings and to discern whether there is something we want to say together. Our Saturday evening family-friendly entertainment promises some new activities this year. As of publication, plans are still being worked on. Stay tuned for more details, but expect that our teenagers and young adults will have a hand in planning and sharing an exciting evening with all of us.

A full schedule of the Annual Meeting appears on pages 6–7.



## 2022 Annual Meeting, *continued*

### Introducing our Plenary Speaker, Christian Acemah

Plenary Talk on Friday, July 29, 7:00 – 8:30 pm

We are excited to welcome Christian Acemah, Head of Olney Friends School in Barnesville, Ohio, as our keynote speaker for Annual Meeting. In considering our theme of Many Roots, One Tree, Christian will explore the question: *What lies within this tree with many roots?* This question opens a conversation for all of us about the externalities of a tree with many roots. A tree could seem alive on the outside and dead on the inside. It could also seem dead on the outside, yet be alive on the inside. No matter the tree's external characteristics, what lies on its inside determines its health, vibrancy and longevity.

Christian asks each of us to ponder, *What makes a nourishing, vibrant inside? What do we need to cultivate Spirit-led approaches to address apparent, latent, and emergent threats to the tree's internal health?* In his talk, he will combine prayer, storytelling, philosophy, and an aspirational view of our shared future to explore seemingly disparate teachings on love, inclusivity, and equity. He will help make sense of a polyphony of voices (and roots) from different cultures to discern how we can affirm our humanity and tend to our tree.

In a recent interview, Christian discussed some of his own roots and the growth of the tree of his life, which readers will find fascinating and varied! Even his name has a story: why "Christian"? Both of his grandfathers were ministers in the Church of Uganda, an Anglican church. His parents knew from the beginning: "This child is Christian." He was born in the midst of a civil war in Uganda, but felt happy, sheltered, and unaware of it in the village home of his grandparents as a young child. Only as a 4- or 5-year-old did he become aware of



*Christian Acemah, Plenary Speaker*

the military presence as they traveled across the countryside to live with his mother in Kenya, where she had taken a job. After attending kindergarten in Kenya, he returned to post-war Uganda, where he was placed in second grade, and found himself teased and treated as "the weird kid from Kenya." The other children all spoke English, while his Kenyan schooling had been entirely in Swahili. He tells the story of the kind, shy little girl assigned to sit next to him, who took him under her wing and helped with his English.

"Her name was Vivienne," he says, "and now she is my wife!"

His Ugandan farming roots provided a love of the land and its cycles of planting, harvest, rainy seasons, and time for storytelling. Living near the equator meant that the days were about 12 hours long all year long, and he learned to tell time by the constant year-round movement of the sun. He was in his third year in high school in Uganda, doing well and studying science with the goal of being either an engineer or a doctor, when a visitor to his 900-student school made an offer that eventually changed the direction of his life. A board member from Olney Friends School asked the principal to select a student to attend Olney for a year, and Christian started a new adventure. His year at Olney opened him up to fully be himself, to study what he wanted, to recognize his love of literature and philosophy, to connect with teachers as people. He appreciated that the school gave an invitation to Quakerism and people lived their faith; no one tried to convert anyone else.

At the end of his senior year at Olney, he surprised his family by deciding to study Western

## Plenary Speaker, Christian Acemah, *continued*

civilization rather than science; he also surprised his new Olney “family” by choosing St. John’s College over Earlham. At St. John’s, with its Great Books curriculum, his studies led to engaging

conversations with both of his grandfathers about the intersection of theology, mathematics, Ancient Greek, and philosophy. These talks, along with the lessons learned at Olney of listening and taking time for quiet processing before taking action, led to integration of his academic and spiritual lives.

As he finished college, he expected to enter a PhD program in Russian literature. Once again, he changed directions, this time after talking with a professor he respected, who advised him, “This degree will only help you teach in a university in North America or Europe. How will it help your country or your continent?” As Christian pondered this question, he decided on a different path. Instead of studying Russian literature, he received his graduate degree in international affairs and economics at Georgetown.

His work has taken him around the globe. He worked with the Sudan-Uganda program of the Lutheran World Federation/Department for World Service, where his Olney experience reinforced the focus of his work as listening and supporting, not imposing his own solutions on a community. The attributes of listening and supporting, rather than imposing and directing, have served him well – when he worked at UNICEF, when he was at the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, DC, and when he did in fact teach at a North American university. The professor who had originally pointed him away from Russian literature invited him to teach African Studies as a visiting professor at Quest University in Canada. Christian introduced courses covering economic development, feminism, politics, and arts, along with a foundation course on culture and society in which he could include teaching Russian literature! His most recent work before returning to Olney brought him full circle to his original interest in science, when he became Executive Secretary of the Uganda National Academy of Sciences (UNAS). He helped that organization revive itself and

become a strong and steady supporter of the sciences in Uganda.

When the Olney Board invited him to become its Head in 2018, he and Vivienne felt that it was a calling to come back and support the school that had changed his life. He recognized that everything he had done since leaving Olney – working with so many different people and organizations in many different places – drew him back to the place where it all started. He has developed a skill of getting along with people from many different cultures, walking in others’ shoes with a sense of lightness. He has seen highly technical jobs in which results depended not just on formal qualifications, but on human connections.

Whether working with refugees, professors, scientists, bureaucrats, or students, he meets them as fellow human beings who have something to offer the world and who still have time to smile, play, laugh, and connect.

He recalls his mother’s visit to Olney for graduation. It took her a week to realize that everyone there really was a genuinely kind person, and that they weren’t “faking being nice.” Christian values the almost 200-year tradition of Olney and wants the school to continue to “lead with our values first” and to assure that its actions stem from those values. He cherishes both the spiritual work and the focus on academics that the school provides. He notes that most students change their direction during the time they are at Olney, as he did as a student, and he encourages them to continue to keep a broad focus during college. He revels in the transformation and growth he sees in Olney students as they move through their school years, and he is glad to give back to and help move forward the school that meant so much to him.

Olney School was one of the important roots of the tree of his life; he is now part of the continuing roots of the school and of the people studying and working there. We look forward to welcoming him warmly at our Annual Meeting.

*In addition to giving the plenary talk, Christian will lead a workshop on “Interrogating Inclusion” on Saturday afternoon. See the workshop descriptions on page 10 for further information.*

# MANY ROOTS, ONE TREE

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting  
Annual Sessions - Online  
July 27 - 31, 2022



**LEYM 2022**

LEYM.org/annual

## Schedule of Events

### Monday, July 25

3:00–4:00 pm Orientation for volunteer Zoom hosts – Bill Warters

### Wednesday, July 27

3:00–5:00 pm LEYM Executive Committee  
6:30–7:00 pm Welcome and Orientation for First-time Attenders (*see page 10*)  
7:00–8:30 pm Opening Plenary – Welcome and Interactive Roll Call  
8:35 pm Worship

### Thursday, July 28

8:15–8:45 am Worship  
9:00–10:00 am Bible Study – April Vanlonden (ESR)  
10:30 am–noon Business Session #1  
12:30–1:30 pm Lunch Groups  
2:00–3:30 pm Workshops:  
    *Using Online Resources to Conduct Quaker Research*, Mary Crauderueff  
        (Haverford College)  
    *Gardening as a Spiritual Practice*, Peter Crowley (Cleveland)  
4:00–5:30 pm Panel on Quaker Organizations #1  
    Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL): Presenter, Allen Hester  
    Friends Publishing: Presenter, Gabriel Ehri  
    Olney Friends School: Presenter, Christian Acemah  
    Quaker Voluntary Service: Presenter, Hilary Burgin  
    School of the Spirit: Presenter, Mary Linda McKinney  
7:00–8:30 pm Workshops:  
    *Community Safety Beyond Policing*, Mary Zerkel (AFSC Chicago Peacebuilding)  
        and Sarah Nash (AFSC St. Louis Peace Education)  
    *Exploring our Roots & Sharing our Spiritual Journeys*, Aran Reinhart  
        (Broadmead)  
8:35 pm Worship

# 2022 Annual Meeting

## Schedule of Events, *continued*

### Friday, July 29

8:15–8:45 am	Worship
9:00–10:00 am	Bible Study – April Vanlonden (ESR) Worship Sharing
10:30 am–noon	Business Session #2
12:30–1:30 pm	Lunch Groups
2:00–3:30 pm	Workshops: <i>Skills for Peaceful Communication</i> , Matthew Legge (Canadian Friends Service Committee) <i>Confronting the Nuclear Threat: How Faith Communities Can Push Back Against the World's Most Immoral Weapons and Protect Humanity</i> , Alan Hester (FCNL)
4:00–5:30 pm	Panel on Quaker Organizations #2 American Friends Service Committee (AFSC): Presenter, Melissa Stoner Friends General Conference (FGC): Presenter, Rachel Ernst Stahlhut Friends Peace Teams: Presenters, Nadine Hoover and Jonathan Vogel-Borne Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas (FWCC): Presenter, Diane Zappas Right Sharing of World Resources (RSWR): Presenter, Jackie Stillwell
7:00–8:30 pm	Plenary Speaker: <i>What Lies Within this Tree with Many Roots?</i> Christian Acemah (Olney Friends School), <i>see</i> pages 4–5 Followed by Worship at 8:50 pm (or sooner, if comment and question period ends before 8:45)

### Saturday, July 30

8:15–8:45 am	Worship
9:00–10:00 am	Bible Study – April Vanlonden (ESR) Worship Sharing
10:30 am–noon	“What Can We Say Together – Anti-Racism”
Noon–1:00 pm	Panel on Quaker Organizations #3 Organizations to be announced
1:30–3:00 pm	Workshops <i>An Introduction to Spiritual Companionship: What is it? How does it work?</i> Cassie Cammann (Ann Arbor) and Barbara LeSage (North Columbus) <i>Cultivating a Career in Peace: Going Where the Roots Lead You</i> , David Smith (Forage Center for Peacebuilding and Humanitarian Education)
3:30–5:00 pm	Workshops <i>Interrogating Inclusion</i> , Christian Acemah (Olney Friends School) <i>In-person? Hybrid? Zoom-only? Going Back to Normal? Going Forward to Something Else? How Are We Being Led as a Monthly Meeting Community?</i> Pam Kuhn (Lake Forest Friends Meeting, Illinois Yearly Meeting)
7:00–8:30 pm	Family Entertainment – Stay tuned for details! Followed by Worship

### Sunday, July 31

Morning	Worship in Local Meetings
1:00–3:00 pm	Business Session #3
3:30–4:30 pm	Closing Meeting for Worship

# 2022 Annual Meeting

## *Many Roots, One Tree*

### Workshops

**Thursday, July 28, 2:00 – 3:30 pm**

#### ***Using Online Resources to Conduct Quaker Research***

Presented by **Mary Crauderueff** (Curator of Quaker Collections, Haverford College)

Are you interested in Quaker roots? There are more resources than ever available to conduct Quaker research and genealogy from the comfort of our homes, without needing to travel to various archives. This session will focus on how to search and browse the over 8 million Quaker records on Ancestry, and how to find materials at Quaker archives and request copies from them.

#### ***Gardening as a Spiritual Practice***

**Peter Crowley** (Cleveland)

Every spring we witness the regenerative powers of Nature. Gardening brings us even closer to this creative process, as we become midwives in the creation of food for all forms of life. This relationship becomes a spiritual practice when we recognize how the living plants in our homes and gardens share our spaces and our very breath. The spiritual practice embraces this mystery while exploring how this relationship informs our search for wholeness in our spiritual journey. How do you deepen your awareness of this connection with all creation through gardening? I hope to share my journey with you and hear your stories about what we have learned through observation and experimentation with the plants we care for in our gardens and homes. There will be time to break into smaller interest groups if there are enough participants and differences in gardening approaches.

**Thursday, July 28, 7:00 – 8:30 pm**

#### ***Community Safety Beyond Policing***

**Mary Zerkel** (AFSC Chicago Peacebuilding)  
and **Sarah Nash** (AFSC St. Louis  
Peace Education)

In the United States, we spend over \$100 billion per year on policing, while crucial social and human needs, including health care and housing, go unfunded. Lethally armed police respond to social and health issues such as mental illness, domestic violence, drug use, school discipline, fear of Black people and unhoused people – and, often, that response is violent. Communities of color and poor communities are policed as if under occupation, facing militarized tactics and equipment paid for by the federal government and local budgets.

How can we shift this paradigm and divest from policing that harms communities while investing in healthcare, schools, mental health services, restorative justice, and other things that we need? How can we work toward a world where all people are safe because we have the resources we need to thrive and the tools we need to protect each other?

This interactive workshop will explore how we can talk about creating safe and healthy communities without law enforcement, through stories, information sharing, small group activities, and skill-building exercises.

#### ***Exploring our Roots & Sharing our Spiritual Journeys***

**Aran Reinhart** (Broadmead)

We have all traveled different spiritual journeys that brought us to LEYM. Those spiritual journeys are a part of who we are. They are part of our own roots, and thus they are part of LEYM's roots. Though LEYM has many roots, we are all part of the same tree.

Let us come together and share those stories with each other. Let us learn and grow together.



# 2022 Annual Meeting

## Workshops, *continued*

**Friday, July 29, 2:00 – 3:30 pm**

### ***Skills for Peaceful Communication***

**Matthew Legge** (Canadian Friends Service Committee Communications Coordinator)

Matthew Legge is author of the book *Are We Done Fighting? Building Understanding in a World of Hate and Division*, issued by the Canadian Friends Service Committee in 2019. Using the metaphor of “Many Roots, One Tree,” this workshop will present some findings from research in the social sciences about conflicts, how people become polarized from each other, and ways to build understanding. The workshop will include interactive exercises for participants to practice communicating clearly and will provide time for group discussion about how to engage in difficult conversations.

### ***Confronting the Nuclear Threat: How Faith Communities Can Push Back Against the World’s Most Immoral Weapons and Protect Humanity***

**Alan Hester** (FCNL Legislative Representative for Nuclear Disarmament & Pentagon Spending)

Allen Hester will lead off by explaining recent developments that have increased the risk of nuclear war. He will also explain how nuclear weapons, even before nuclear war, are already causing devastating environmental and humanitarian harms. Finally, he’ll highlight actions that faith communities can take to tackle this existential threat.

By exploring the different ways these weapons cause immense harm, we hope this workshop will paint a clearer picture of the nuclear threat and empower participants to become passionate defenders of human civilization.

**Saturday, July 30, 1:30 – 3:00 pm**

### ***An Introduction to Spiritual Companioning: What is it? How does it work?***

**Cassie Cammann** (Ann Arbor) and  
**Barbara LeSage** (North Columbus)

Spiritual Companion groups are self selected groups, usually made up of 2–4 people.

We meet regularly (every 1–3 weeks) for enough time to give each person 20–30 minutes of time to share and receive reflection. This workshop will present suggested procedures that have helped many of us to develop deeply meaningful groups over many years.

The workshop will also offer time to try out the practices, reflect on the experiences, and ask questions. It is directed to anyone who would like to find out more about Spiritual Companioning, experience some practice sessions, and perhaps, if they wish at a later time, to get some support in starting their own companion groups.

### ***Cultivating a Career in Peace: Going Where the Roots Lead You***

**David Smith** (Forage Center for Peacebuilding and Humanitarian Education)

Eleanor Roosevelt said that “It isn’t enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. And it isn’t enough to believe in it. One must work at it.” We often look at work in a more generalized way. But what if we meant it in a career way? How can we take our values for peace, non-violence, and conflict resolution and make it our “day job”? In this session, author and academic David J. Smith will explore where people’s “roots” might lead them in their professional lives. He is the author of *Peace Jobs: A Student’s Guide to Starting a Career Working for Peace* (Information Age Publishing, 2016).

## 2022 Annual Meeting

### Workshops, *continued*

**Saturday, July 30, 3:30 – 5:00 pm**

#### ***Interrogating Inclusion***

**Christian Acemah** (Olney Friends School)

As a word and concept, inclusion gets “thrown” around with little to no attention to what it means. What do I mean when I say that we have an inclusive community? Do I mean that those in my community are inclusive and everyone else is not? If so, doesn't such a conclusion seem exclusive and the opposite of an inclusive community? WHAT DO YOU MEAN when you refer to inclusion? Based on a section of the plenary talk, this workshop will expound on inclusion as an integral part of understanding what it means to be part of a tree with diverse origins/foundations as its roots.

Opening remarks from the workshop leader will set the stage for an interactive session for open sharing, collective questioning, and shared visioning. The workshop has one prerequisite: all participants should come with welcoming, inquisitive hearts, spirits, and minds.

#### ***In-person? Hybrid? Zoom-only? Going Back to Normal? Going Forward to Something Else? How Are We Being Led as a Monthly Meeting Community?***

**Pam Kuhn** (Lake Forest Friends Meeting, Illinois Yearly Meeting)

The pandemic forced changes on our monthly meetings that we could not have predicted just a few years ago. Now is a good time to take a look at who we have become and how we are being led for the future. This workshop will provide an opportunity to share with each other what our monthly meeting is facing right now. Together, we may make resources known and hold each other in Light as we strengthen our meetings for the future. I plan to provide some queries that I hope will help with the discernment process. Our meeting formats may seem different now, but perhaps we can see how the roots and new growth are from the same tree.

## Annual Meeting Registration

Registration for this year's meeting is open July 1–24. Check the website ([leym.org/annual](http://leym.org/annual)) for instructions, starting on July 1. Please note that **Friends wishing to participate in Annual Meeting events should register by Sunday, July 24**, to receive timely access information. **Young people of high school age** are encouraged to register by July 15 to enable advance planning. **Friends willing to volunteer to help** as Zoom co-hosts for various sessions should also register early, indicate their willingness to volunteer, and be available to attend the orientation session on Monday, July 25, at 3:00 pm.

There is **no fee for participating in our gathering**, but there are costs. Contributions to LEYM to cover session expenses are welcome via check; send to Tom Kangas, 3641 Weston Pl, Columbus, OH 43214.

## Annual Meeting Business Sessions Agenda Deadlines

**Business session agendas and committee reports** will be shared with attendees prior to Annual Meeting. Committee clerks are encouraged to send all potential action items and committee reports to the clerks by July 8, in order to develop the schedule for each session. This deadline is needed to appropriately season and prepare for individual agenda items and the overall flow of our business. Please let the clerk know if your committee processes require additional time to prepare. Agenda items submitted for consideration without prior notice will likely not be included in the business agenda.

Information about the Annual Meeting on this and the preceding pages was provided by the **LEYM Program Committee**: Susan Hartman (Ann Arbor), clerk, Aran Reinhart (Broadmead), Greg Mott (Broadmead), Barbara LeSage (North Columbus), Bill Wartens (Birmingham), Sally Weaver Sommer (Broadmead), and Ellerie Brown-fain (Birmingham). Thanks to all of them for planning a stimulating program.

# Highlights of Representative Meeting

April 2, 2022, Via Zoom – Attended by 46 Friends

*Condensed from the minutes for the Meeting*

Members of **Ministry & Nurture Committee** have been nurturing monthly meetings, helping them discern their roles in LEYM and supporting those in which conflicts have emerged. Clerks' Chats have proven useful; resources for managing conflict and information about traveling ministry are available on the LEYM website.

The **Ad Hoc Technology Committee** and Bill Warters, digital communications facilitator, are striving to make helpful technology available for Friends in LEYM. Monthly meetings have been connecting through Clerks' Chats, spiritual retreats, and interest groups, and they are exploring ways that technology can help with outreach. A slide show created by Bill can be accessed at: <https://leym.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/LEYMRepMeetingTechUpdateSlides-web.pdf>

Last year, Friends tried a pilot program to experiment with interest groups **on earthcare and peace and justice** in place of standing committees. Friends engaged with these groups sessions, which often had speakers who increased our understanding and mobilized actions. At present, volunteers are organizing these interest groups, but this may not be a permanent solution.

The **Ad Hoc Venue Committee** was charged with exploring options for our 2023 Annual Meeting. In addition, they have been incorporating the work of the visioning committee and collaborating with other committees on ways to make our Annual Meeting faithful to Quaker practice, open to Friends from other traditions, community-building, intergenerational, and fun. Among potential sites, the most promising is Ashland University. The Committee is also looking at changing the date to the third weekend in June. Business sessions may be distributed throughout the year, rather than concentrated at Annual Meeting.

Presiding clerk Susan Loucks updated us on ideas that came from the **Visioning Committee**. Discussion includes possible additions to YM staff, as well as enabling Friends to work on specific tasks rather than serve on a committee for a defined term.

The **Adult & Family Program Committee** announced the plenary speaker and theme for Annual Meeting (*see pp. 3–5*). Suggestions for intergenerational get-acquainted activities are welcome.

Plans for the **teens and children program for Annual Meeting** include access to moderated times on a Minecraft server. Friends wishing to help with any activities should contact Christa White ([christawhite1016@gmail.com](mailto:christawhite1016@gmail.com)) or Ellerie Brownfain ([ellerieb@gmail.com](mailto:ellerieb@gmail.com)).

During a break from business, Friends each chose to attend two **informational sessions** – about FCNL, Olney Friends School, AFSC, or FWCC.

**Finance Committee** presented a **treasurer's report** and plans for next year's budget, which is designed to decrease surplus funds. They recommend that we financially support the Detroit Monthly Meeting as they build a new meeting-house in Detroit. The scholarship for young Friends who wish to attend a Quaker school has a potential candidate.

The Clerk announced Executive Committee's decision that **Publications & Archives Committee** will take on the annual review of *Policies and Procedures* for any inconsistencies with current practice. She also presented a refresher regarding our current procedures for how minutes of concern come to Annual Sessions. (See *LEYM Policies and Procedures*, II. D, "Bringing Leadings and Concerns to the Yearly Meeting.")

The Clerk initiated small-group discussion of beginning a **process that could lead to creating a Faith and Practice**, considering the questions, "What statement of shared belief or practice would best serve us and our witness in our region? What would be a right-sized piece for this year? What other preparation or engagement would we need from our meetings before July to take this on together?" Friends expressed some confusion and concern about the term "statement of shared belief," and a desire for more time to consider this process.

## 2021 LEYM Query Responses

**In what ways do I experience  
a sense of spirit in my life?**

**What is the role of the meeting in  
nourishing depth of spirit among us?**

*From the Ministry & Nurture Committee*

Despite the constraints of the ongoing pandemic and difficulty with gathering in person for discussions about the queries, meetings responded strongly to this year's queries. All but one monthly meeting and a few of the worship groups sent responses.

The first query, "In what ways do I experience a sense of spirit in my life?" seemed, in particular, to resonate with Friends, drawing almost as many and varied responses as there are Friends. One meeting said that, "It was difficult to find dominant themes this year because each person's reflections were heartfelt and unique."

However, there are some general statements that can be made. Many reported members finding spirit in nature, in beauty in all its ways of being expressed, and in connection and love. The sense of Spirit is interestingly, but often, found in troubled times when our needs and awareness are heightened. Many found Spirit in social justice work, helping others, or being part of a unified task, especially when working with other Meeting members. Other sources given were: creativity, early-morning hours, and gratitude practice. Friends acknowledged, although expressed in different ways, that personal or daily practice enhances the likelihood of experiencing the Spirit and is needed for preparation for meeting for worship.

The role of meeting nourishing depth of Spirit is especially valued for creating a sacred place and time that provides blessed quiet in a noisy world. One meeting described meeting for worship as holy. The shared experience of being with others in a gathered meeting is very important to Friends and enhances the experience of Spirit. Many meetings long for the intimacy felt by in-person worship. Quakers are grateful to have had Zoom during this troubled time but long to be together with Friends.

## News from Monthly Meetings

### Red Cedar Friends Meeting

*Information on Red Cedar Meeting activities  
provided by Joann Neuroth (jneuroth@gmail.com)*

### Advice on Sexual and Reproductive Rights, Including Abortion

#### Why punish those who seek or provide abortion services?

*When we sent to FCNL our recommendations for this year's legislative priorities, we included this "Advice," suggesting that they should be doing their discernment on how to speak to reproductive rights if Roe v Wade gets overturned.*

The time has come for the Religious Society of Friends and the Friends Committee on National Legislation to take a fresh look at the so-called "abortion issue."

Legal experts are predicting that the U.S. Supreme Court's prior decision in Roe v Wade will be abandoned soon. In many states, if that happens, abortion will become a crime. Young women, their families, and health care providers may be prosecuted and face imprisonment or other forms of legal repression. If Roe v Wade is abandoned, the abortion issue will become more urgent.

Quakers have maintained a policy of silence on the abortion issue while Roe v Wade has been the law. Some Quakers have stood against abortion on religious grounds; we could not reach unity on the theology of abortion, and we chose a policy of silence. It was a convenient policy. While Roe v Wade was the law, we could afford to stand by silently while the U.S. Supreme Court provided the protection and took the heat.

But when the Court abandons its opinion in Roe v Wade, the landscape will change. The theological question will be less relevant. The new question will be: Why punish those who seek or provide abortion services? Silence is hardly a complete response to that question.

Traditionally, Quakers have not only supported the equality and dignity of women, but we have also supported fair and enlightened systems of



# News from Monthly Meetings

## Red Cedar Friends Meeting, *continued*

criminal justice. Maintaining a policy of silence while our neighbors are punished for perceived immoral behavior has not been our tradition.

As we enter the new landscape, we need to develop a new response. Should we maintain our policy of silence while those who seek or provide abortion services are punished? Wrestling with that question must begin at the level of conscience, move through monthly meetings, and ultimately inform larger Quaker institutions, like FCNL. Our Meeting is participating in that discernment, and we trust that other Friends are doing the same.

### Outdoor Worship with the Grand River

Red Cedar Monthly Meeting has committed to hold an outdoor worship with the Grand River monthly on the fourth First Day at 9:00 am at Burchard Park (220 East Maple St, Lansing).

We chose this location for worship and named it “Worship WITH the Grand River” rather than “AT the Grand River” because we hope to become better acquainted with the Grand River as we worship with it. Indigenous cultures recognized all of creation – plants, animals, trees, rivers, the earth, humans – to be in relationship, with rights and responsibilities to each other. In contrast to today’s common assumption that non-human nature is something to be possessed, exploited, and used, today’s indigenous people call for a return to listening to, learning from, and reciprocal relationship with the Beings around us. We propose this as a modest first step in that direction: let us worship together with the river this summer and see what we learn together. We invite Friends from all over LEYM to join us. We look forward to continuing this discussion about how best to seek right relationship with Michigan’s indigenous people.

PDF copies of  
*The LEYM Bulletin*  
are available at  
[leym.org/leym-bulletins/](http://leym.org/leym-bulletins/)

## Writing about Grand River Bands of Ottawa Indians Seeking Federal Recognition

*Part of our anti-racism commitment is turning us toward building relationships with our indigenous neighbors, in particular, the Grand River Band of Ottawa. They have been talking with us about supporting their 30+ -year-old application for federal recognition, but haven't wanted to interfere while the powers-that-be were reportedly considering it. They now seem to have decided to make some noise – a billboard outside Lansing urges people to “support” the application, as does a Detroit Free Press editorial. And the chairman of the Grand River Band, Ron Yob, recently sent us an affidavit that makes a compelling case for action (see <https://tinyurl.com/tribal-recognition>). We have decided to write Senators Stabenow and Peters to ask them to determine the status of the application – and may-be follow up with Zoom-visits.*

### Red Cedar’s Pray for Peace Banner





## News from Monthly Meetings, *continued*

### Ann Arbor Meeting Sends Letter to Buffalo Friends

*At a called meeting on May 22, Ann Arbor Friends approved sending the following letter in their name.*

To Buffalo Friends Meeting  
Michael Tritto and Fenna Mandolang, Clerks

Dear Friends,

We are sending much love, light, and caring thoughts to your meeting and your entire community in the aftermath of the tragic shootings at Tops Supermarket. The impact of this violence goes far beyond Buffalo and many, many people grieve with you. May you go forward knowing that you are being upheld and in the loving care of Quakers here in our community. May you and your community find ways to heal.

We are also holding in Light everyone involved, including those who died, those injured, their families and all who love them, first responders, bystanders, and neighbors, and the family and friends of the young man who murdered your neighbors. So many lives were shattered.

This tragic event has led us to continue to ask what we can do to pull up the roots from which this racial violence arose. Some of us have heard of the work of VOICE Buffalo and donated money to them. We invite you to tell us of any other ways we could give support to your Meeting or these grieving families.

There are so many seeds of violence and racism in our society, and we acknowledge the work ahead for all of us. We want to stand near your hearts. Thank you for being there for your community.

In Love and Light,  
Kevin Miller, Clerk, on behalf of  
Ann Arbor Friends Meeting

### Manitou Worship Group Invites Friends to Outdoor Worship

Manitou Worship Group has reduced numbers because of deaths, and COVID has prevented them from meeting at a nursing home, as they formerly did. As the weather warms up, Manitou hopes to meet outside on Robert Foulkes's farm, near Suttons Bay, Michigan. He expects that average attendance will be between four and six. Friends visiting the area are welcome to attend.

The farm is at 3400 Maple Valley Rd, at the intersection with Otto Rd. The ZIP code is 49682. (GPS does not always find it.) Robert suggests that Friends visiting the area who wish to attend worship meeting with the Manitou Group should call him (231-256-9351) or Penny Herd (231-383-1822) before visiting.

### Memorial Statement for Joyce Ann Higgy Miller (1931–2022) Granville Monthly Meeting

Joyce Ann Higgy Miller died peacefully on February 7, 2022. Joyce obtained a degree in Mathematics from Ohio State University. In 1950, she married Edward Miller. They raised six children. In addition, 18 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren felt her loving care and understanding.

From 1987 to 2014, Joyce independently restored a historic farm near Athens, Ohio, where she lived the example of one who cared for the earth and respected Quaker values. She enjoyed creating paper and paper books, weaving and textiles, painting, and birding. Joyce also enjoyed volunteering in the local schools to share her hobbies with students. While a member of the Athens Meeting, she was very active teaching First Day School classes.

In 2014, Joyce moved to Kendal at Granville (now Otterbein Granville), where she was near the family of her youngest son, Tom Miller. She brought her hobbies with her to Kendal. Joyce was a member of Granville Monthly Meeting. The Meeting enjoyed her warmth and loving expressions of spiritual feeling and her honesty about changes in life during her last years.

## GPQM Summer Gathering, Sunday, August 7

Friends are invited to the Summer Gathering of Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting, on Sunday, August 7, at Quaker Park in Battle Creek, Michigan. 11:00 meeting for worship under the trees, followed by a picnic and fellowship.

Every year GPQM remembers the anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and celebrates peace in this historic Quaker meeting place.

All are welcome. Please bring your own chair or blanket, food, beverage, and mask.

## Save the Date! Fall Youth Retreat

The COVID situation permitting, this year's Fall Youth Retreat will happen September 23–25 at Temple Hill UCC Camp at Bellville (in central Ohio). K–12 youth and their families from throughout the LEYM region are invited.

Questions? Contact Diane Mott  
(mottfam45@gmail.com) or  
Ellerie Brownfain (ellerieb@gmail.com).

## FCNL News

The Friends Committee on National Legislation has issued an informative two-page “**2022 Report to Yearly Meetings**”; you can see it at [2022.YearlyMeetingReport.4.pdf \(fcnl.org\)](https://apply.workable.com/friendscommittee/2022.YearlyMeetingReport.4.pdf).

Friends interested in **opportunities to work for FCNL** can see a list of openings at various levels at <https://apply.workable.com/friendscommittee/>. Try it!

## Water of Life Retreat: A Refreshing Dip Into Practices for Spiritual Renewal

### Led by Barbara Shulamith Clearbridge

This in-person retreat includes Quaker and other time-tested ways to deepen our spiritual lives. There will be times of prayer, of learning, of healing, and of silence. The daily rhythm also includes times of solitude for individual reflection, work (if each participant welcomes it), and rest. In creating a retreat environment, Barbara builds an atmosphere of stillness, spaciousness, acceptance, prayer, healing, and love.

Barbara Shulamith Clearbridge has taught workshops all her life. She has done so for monthly and quarterly Meetings in Vermont, Seattle, and the Philadelphia and Chicago areas, for New England Yearly Meeting, FGC, and Quaker retreat and conference centers. Shulamith is an interfaith spiritual director.

Friday, June 17, 6:00 pm – Sunday, June 19, 2:00 pm  
Powell House, 524 Pitt Hall Road  
Old Chatham, NY 12136

Information on registration, fees, and financial assistance at [https://poho.org/index.php?option=com\\_civicrm&task=civicrm/event/info&Itemid=745&reset=1&id=3637](https://poho.org/index.php?option=com_civicrm&task=civicrm/event/info&Itemid=745&reset=1&id=3637)



## LEYM Calendar for 2022

July 3–9: FGC Gathering, Virtual (see [www.fgcquaker.org/connect/gathering](http://www.fgcquaker.org/connect/gathering))

July 6–10: FGC YAY Gathering for young adults, youth, children, and families, Radford University, Radford, Virginia (see [www.fgcquaker.org/fgcprograms/the-gathering/yay/](http://www.fgcquaker.org/fgcprograms/the-gathering/yay/))

July 8: Deadline for submitting to clerks action items and related reports for Annual Sessions

July 15: Due date for Statistical Reports

July 27–31: LEYM Annual Meeting; via Zoom (see pp. 2–10)

August 7: Summer Gathering of Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting, Quaker Park, Battle Creek, MI (see p. 15)

September 1: Due date, submissions for *LEYM Annual Records 2022*

September 15: Due date, submissions for Fall *LEYM Bulletin*

September 17: Fall Gathering of Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting (details tba)

September 23–25: Fall Retreat for Youth and Children (see p.15)

## LEYM Committee Clerks, 2021–22

(Further contact information available in *Annual Records* and on LEYM website)

### *Adult & Family Program*

Susan Hartman (Ann Arbor)  
[susandhartman@gmail.com](mailto:susandhartman@gmail.com)

### *Advancement & Outreach*

Clerk tbd

### *Arrangements & Site*

Jon Sommer (Broadmead)  
[sommerjs@bluffton.edu](mailto:sommerjs@bluffton.edu)

### *Finance*

Joann Neuroth (Red Cedar)  
[jneuroth@gmail.com](mailto:jneuroth@gmail.com)

### *Ministry & Nurture*

Becky Morehouse (Ann Arbor)  
[more2becky@aol.com](mailto:more2becky@aol.com) &  
Shelley Kotz (Broadmead)  
[sh.s3ktz@gmail.com](mailto:sh.s3ktz@gmail.com)

### *Nominating*

Mike Holaday (Grand Rapids)  
[mikeholaday@att.net](mailto:mikeholaday@att.net)

### *Publications & Archives*

Peggy Daub (Ann Arbor)  
[peggydaub@hotmail.com](mailto:peggydaub@hotmail.com)

### *Youth & Children's Program*

Christa White (Athens)  
740 274-2308 (text or call)

The **LEYM Spiritual Formation Program** held its spring retreat on May 7. Twenty-three Friends gathered to worship and share with each other our experiences as monthly meeting spiritual formation groups and the ways as individuals we used evoking questions and grew spiritually over the past year. It was rewarding to come together as a Yearly Meeting group after being separated in our monthly meeting groups throughout the year. The Spiritual Formation Committee is planning to hold next fall's retreat in September, launching the 2022–23 LEYM Spiritual Formation Program. Stay tuned for details!

LEYM Spiritual Formation Committee

Valerie Groszmann ([valerie.groszmann@gmail.com](mailto:valerie.groszmann@gmail.com))

Ellerie Brownfain ([ellerieb@gmail.com](mailto:ellerieb@gmail.com))

Sally Weaver Sommer ([sallyweaversommer@gmail.com](mailto:sallyweaversommer@gmail.com))