



# Clerk’s Message from Susan Loucks The “Nones”

Let’s consider the “Nones.” They may be showing up at your meeting-houses. Perhaps they’re not making you warble “How do we solve a problem like Maria?” but they’re worth thinking about as you consider the future of your Meetings.

I’m using the nomenclature for Americans who indicate they don’t have any religious affiliation – a number which is growing fast (8% in 1998–2000, up to 21% in 2021). They’re already as numerous as Evangelicals and Roman Catholics, and according to Eastern Illinois professor Ryan Burge’s book, also called *The Nones*, they will be the largest religious categorization in the next decade.

That doesn’t mean, however, that they are atheist. Some have an interest or even a hunger to connect with systems of deeper meaning (has anyone else noted a marked rise in interest in astrology?) and community. If these people find their way to Quaker Meetings, however, they may have very different needs. While we want to be cautious in making assumptions about any newcomer, this research names differences that may spur thinking:

- ◆ Quakers have long been a home for people who have found other traditions unsatisfying, but the “Nones” are different – they more likely have no tradition at all, and aren’t familiar with religious metaphors and practices.



- ◆ Younger people who identify as “Nones” are likely not as accustomed to joining in group efforts (home entertainment has been much more rich in the last decades), and may indeed be skeptical of organizations in general.
- ◆ “Nones” with higher education and wealth are more likely to be atheists or agnostics, and lean left in their politics. “Nones” who indicate they believe in something but aren’t affiliated are more likely to be the opposite.

What does that mean for communities that want to welcome this demographic? Professor Burge has some ideas here as well. Some “Nones” feel already in line with typical Quaker practice (for

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## Clerk's Message, *continued*

example, little emphasis on dogma or rules about right and wrong). He emphasized that these people want purpose and connection, and that is going to be met more by activities that provide real service (a school supply give-away) and those that foster relationship (tag on a picnic for both meeting and community) than by exploration of your history or tradition. In a similar vein, a New York City minister shared her church's experience with the "Nones" – noting that she saw a need for acceptance of people on the margins and possibilities in lifting up their leadership and supporting their innovations.

As always, there are techniques and ideas, and then there is the ground they spring from. If we are motivated by scarcity – dwindling attendance, gappy committee slates, our results have a different quality than if they arise from a sense of abundance. In so many cases, abundance is found in authentic life of the Spirit matched with loving and deep relationship. I was fascinated to hear about a Meeting in Jacksonville, Florida, which in 2019 transitioned from a monthly meeting to a worship group, laying down much of the organizational structure it had built from the 1950s onwards – and since then, has experienced deep community in a smaller group, which in turn has attracted new seekers. I am motivated by these markers of upswellings of genuine Spirit. I wonder what would be understood by all – including "Nones" – as having the kind of authenticity that attracts commitment.

**New Time! New Place!**  
**Next Summer's Annual Meeting**  
**will take place June 15–18**  
**at Ashland University,**  
**Ashland, Ohio**  
*See pp. 7–8 for details.*

## LEYM Annual Queries

Each year LEYM's Ministry & Nurture Committee prepares a set of queries for the consideration of Meetings. This year's queries read:

*"In what ways has our Meeting been affected by the turmoil of the world around us?"*

*"How might I use my own gifts from Spirit in responding to these new realities?"*

The M&N Committee invites each Meeting to consider the queries and to develop a written response that describes the insights arrived at during its consideration. Meetings are asked to send responses to Flo Friender at *quakerflo@comcast.net* by January 15, 2023. These queries, along with supplemental readings, have been sent to LEYM clerks of Monthly Meetings and conveners of Worship Groups.

Submitted by M&N co-clerks,  
Shelley Kotz and Flo Friender

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# Lake Erie Yearly Meeting

## Annual Sessions Epistle

### July 27-31, 2022, Held Virtually

To Friends Everywhere:

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting gathered virtually for our Annual Sessions, July 27 through July 31, considering our theme, “Many Roots, One Tree.” More than 130 Friends met for Bible study, expectant worship and worship sharing, business sessions, workshops, panels on various Quaker organizations, a plenary on our theme led by Christian Acemah, Head of Olney Friends School in Ohio, lunchtime chat groups, and a family-friendly evening of entertainment.

We launched right into our theme on Wednesday evening. The clerk of our Program Committee, Susan Hartman, inspired us to consider the multilayered dimensions of the metaphor, “Many Roots, One Tree,” citing the pervasive, timeless symbolism of the tree across many cultures and through countless generations.

Our opening session featured an interactive roll call where our Monthly Meetings shared their “story trees”: short histories of how their Meetings took root in local communities throughout Ohio, Michigan, and Pennsylvania. We learned about Friends who helped each Meeting grow and how their roots of social justice and spiritual development have supported the new growth that hybrid worship and today’s equity movements demand.

As our gathering moved through times of worship and learning, panel discussions, and meetings for worship with attention to business, we found the images of a tree and roots to be both expansive and foundational, expertly woven through all we did together.

Roots, of course, are often thought of as our past – our individual childhood experiences, the places we come from, the culture we are a part of, our deep grounding values, the anchor that holds us in place. Yet roots of a tree are also alive and growing; they are the sources through which nourishment of water and minerals are absorbed from the soil, stored, and distributed to the rest of

the tree. We know that roots can even serve as a means of communication or information between trees.

Our metaphor throughout the gathering often focused on the roots, but we also were reminded that they are not the only sources of the tree’s nutrition. The whole tree, including the roots themselves, is also nourished by the sugar that is produced in the leaves through photosynthesis, using the sun’s energy and carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. This sugar – the tree’s food – is stored in all parts of the tree and feeds the roots so they can do their work. In this complex system, each part of the tree relies on the others to maintain its health and growth.

As we considered ourselves and our organization, the metaphor seemed to expand before us, and grew to include not only the roots, trunk, branches, and leaves but also the sun – the source of light – that allows the tree to grow and produce food. Only with this light can the tree live and bear fruit.

The theme of new growth and our deep, intertwined roots unfolded in various ways during the week. In the keynote talk on Friday evening, Christian Acemah asked us to think together about “What Lies within this Tree with Many Roots?” He encouraged us to explore with him the questions: “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?” Our two worship sharing times on Friday and Saturday considered the queries: “How do I experience the roots of my spiritual growth? How do we nurture our collective spiritual growth?” Our Bible study, led by April Vanlonden, considered first the Bible as a whole, and then our complex relationship to it as Quakers, our roots in it, both beautiful and “messy,” and why, in American

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## LEYM Epistle, *continued*

culture today, we are wise to know something about the Bible and not to simply “ditch it.” We also explored the Exodus story, which is deeply rooted in many cultures and understood from radically different perspectives, several of which we looked at together.

The ten workshops on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday offered opportunities to stretch and expand our exploration of the theme, from the physical roots of gardening to exploring Quaker family trees; re-creating our “grounding roots” of public safety, conflict resolution, and peacemaking; exploring the roots of our personal spiritual journeys; considering the health and integrity of the whole “tree” – individual or organizational.

In a slightly new format this year, many of us attended three different panel sessions. Each panel introduced several Quaker organizations, with a representative of each organization briefly presenting a summary of the “roots and fruits” of the organization, with time for more in-depth information in separate breakout rooms.

We’ve explored creative ways to bring together our younger and older Friends during the pandemic. In addition to our annual evening of intergenerational entertainment, we again provided space within Minecraft for our middle and high school-aged Friends and young adult Friends to meet, build, and explore together.

Some of the most significant decisions we discerned during our time together are seeds for our future. Our ad hoc Site Committee has worked faithfully this year to identify a new location for our Annual Sessions, and we’re excited to share our plans to hold the 2023 Annual Meeting at

Ashland University in Ohio, June 15–18. Just as planting a seed requires sun, rain, and protection, we see this decision as an opportunity to discern how we can better support Friends in affordability, whether we might spread business sessions across multiple times throughout the year, starting with the 2023 Annual Meeting, and how we can create more intergenerational programming at our Annual Meetings. We approach planning our 2023 sessions with the excitement of a gardener sorting fresh packets of seeds, overlooking a tilled bed, ready to support this season’s sprouts.

Throughout our many deep explorations of the tree and root metaphor, we were inspired to consider the solid, nourishing roots under and around us as a Yearly Meeting. Epistles from other Yearly Meetings, interwoven through our time together, helped us both center our souls and remind us of Friends beyond us, of our roots and branches reaching across miles and time, belovedly entwined. Explorations of the images of gardening, of seeds and new growth, provided firm foundation for our deep dives into life after the realities of COVID and offered hope throughout our considerations of the many present, urgent challenges before us as part of the global faith community.

We send on to other Yearly Meetings our assurances of Light and all that nourishes the roots and branches that connect us. We take with us the sense of having been deeply nourished by our time together and of carrying renewed visions of hope for vitality and growth in our future.

Susan Loucks, Presiding Clerk  
Lake Erie Yearly Meeting

### **Couldn’t attend Annual Meeting this year? Want to see something you missed? Or to revisit sessions?**

Friends can see Christian Acemah’s plenary talk, the Bible study sessions, some workshops, and the sessions on Friends organizations at <https://tinyurl.com/LEYM22videos>; at this writing, this link appears at the top of our website’s home page.

# Highlights of the 2022 Annual Sessions

## *Focusing on the business sessions at Annual Meeting*

At Wednesday evening's opening sessions, Bill Warters, our talented digital communications facilitator, provided demographic statistics on the 138 registrants at Annual Meeting, among them: 44 of us were first-time attenders; collectively we represented 16 Monthly Meetings and 1 Worship Group within LEYM, and, counting Friends who participated on behalf of many Friends organizations, we hailed from 15 states and 1 Canadian province; 93 of us admitted to being older than 60, but only 5 of us counted as "children" – all in the teen/high school group. Later in that session, in the first of many activities on the Annual Meeting theme of "Many Roots, One Tree," a half dozen Monthly Meetings presented a "Story Tree," metaphorically depicting their history through roots, trunk, branches, and buds or leaves. The Story Tree gallery can be browsed at <https://leym.org/story-tree-gallery/>.

Elsewhere in this *Bulletin* are a report on the Meeting's decision to hold the 2023 Annual Meeting in person at Ashland University (pp. 7–8), the approved budget for 2022–23 (p. 6), and the announcement of this year's queries (p. 2).

An additional major item was Nominating Committee's concern over "a lack of good fit between stated policies and procedures and our actual working practices." They noted that in recent years:

- ◆ Three committees have become dormant, two now functioning as interest groups.
- ◆ Some Friends are not interested in "all the formalities" associated with standing committees: having a clerk, preparing agendas, writing reports, committing to serve a three-year term, etc. Some committees already function more like a coordinated group of volunteers.
- ◆ An increasing number of positions remain unfilled at rise of Annual Sessions. This year, these included, for the second time in recent memory, the position of assistant clerk. Moreover, Advancement & Outreach Committee currently has only one member.

The Committee recommended that the presiding clerk appoint an ad hoc committee to consider "a reimagining of our governance." Later within Annual Sessions, Susan Loucks responded with a plan to establish an ad hoc committee that "will be charged with considering the current and potential value of our functions for the Yearly Meeting and coming up with recommendations for an organizational structure that allows us to accomplish simply what we need to do."

Last year in this column, we commented on spending far less time in business meeting and more in various other F/friendly activities. This pattern continued this year, thanks in part to an imaginative new way to hear reports from Friends organizations. Formerly, these were delivered during business sessions, either by representatives visiting *from* organizations or by LEYM's representatives *to* organizations, with little time for questions or discussion. This year, three Zoom sessions were arranged in which panels of organizational representatives from afar each gave ten-minute summaries of current activities, after which listeners were divided into groups of their choice for discussion with a single representative. This allowed Friends to hear about more than a dozen organizations, with deeper exploration of one in each panel.

For a broader perspective on this year's Annual Meeting, please read the LEYM Epistle, on the preceding two pages. ~ Eds.

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

## News from Finance Committee

Below are the financial report for the 2022 Annual Meeting and the approved budget for 2022–23. For Annual Meeting, income exceeded expenses by \$640, increasing the balance in the Annual Meeting Fund to \$1059. Finance Committee thanks those Friends who contributed to the Annual Meeting, more than covering expenses.

For 2022–23, budgeted expenses and transfers rise by \$10,350, with most of the increase due to a new commitment of \$10,000 to the Annual Meeting Fund, in anticipation of higher costs for 2023 Annual Meeting and a desire to keep it accessible financially to all who wish to attend. Upward adjustments also increased expenses for our database manager (up \$1400) and digital communications facilitator (up \$1100), our insurance (up \$150), and publications (up \$300). We set aside \$400 less for travel to conferences, and, without last year’s special contribution to Detroit’s Meetinghouse fund, reduced our contributions to organizations by \$1000. With an increase in the suggested contribution per member from \$25 to \$35, the budgeted income from contributions increases by \$8130, resulting in a deficit budget of \$12,395; this can be covered by the ample balance in the General Fund.

~ Joann Neuroth, clerk of Finance Committee

### Financial Report for Annual Meeting July 27–31, 2022

<b>Income</b>		
Donations		<u>\$1,840.00</u>
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>\$1,840.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Honoraria for presenters		<u>\$1,200.00</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>\$1,200.00</b>
<b>Net Income from Activities</b>		<b>\$640.00</b>
<b>Annual Meeting Fund</b>		
Balance on July 1, 2022		\$419.01
Plus: Net Income		<u>\$640.00</u>
Balance on Aug. 31, 2022		\$1,059.01

### Historic Totals, Donations to Fund

Year	Dollars	# Donations
2022	\$1,840	22
2021	\$1,090	17
2020	\$1,730	18

### LEYM Budget for 2022–23

#### General Fund Expenses

<b>General</b>	
Contractor: Database Manager	3,900
Contractor: Digital Communications Facldr	6,200
Insurance	650
Administration	1,500
<b>Committees</b>	
Advancement & Outreach	500
Ministry & Nurture	100
Publications	3,500
<b>Members</b>	
Attend conferences with Quaker values	600
<b>Organizations</b>	
FGC	6,500
Olney Friends School	3,500
Swarthmore Records project	150
<b>Funds (transfers)</b>	
Quaker College/Service scholarship	1,000
Annual Meeting Fund	10,000
FWCC Travel & Donation	1,800
<b>Total Expenses &amp; Transfers</b>	<b>\$39,900</b>
<b>General Fund Income</b>	
Contributions	\$26,005
FFC Dividend (base account only)	1,500
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$27,505</b>
<b>Income minus expenses/transfers</b>	<b>(\$12,395)</b>
<b>Suggested contribution per member:</b>	<b>\$35</b>
Travel mileage reimbursement rate, per mile	22¢

## LEYM Ad Hoc Site Committee Report, Annual Sessions, July 2022

*The following is most of the report presented at Annual Sessions by the ad hoc Site Committee, which was asked to bring “a proposal for the 2023 Annual Sessions and beyond.” Omitted in the interest of space and avoiding repetition are highlights from the ad hoc Visioning Committee’s report, a list of the Site Committee’s goals, and recognition of challenges and obstacles to meeting those goals.*

Building on the report from the Visioning Committee, we concluded that it is time to rethink the format of our Annual Meeting. We believe that changing the balance during our Annual Meeting between conducting business and building community will contribute to the social and spiritual health of the Yearly Meeting. This would likely result in more time spent building community and a redesign of the ways business meetings and workshops have been a focus of Annual Meeting.

### Recommendations

In consideration of [the above], we bring the following recommendations to the 2022 Annual Sessions for Yearly Meeting to consider:

1. Hold the 2023 Annual Meeting at Ashland University June 15–18. [This was **approved**.]
2. Request Finance Committee to explore forms of financial subsidies to ensure that our first year back in face-to-face meeting feels affordable. [This was addressed.]
3. Hold business sessions at multiple times throughout the year, starting with the 2023 Annual Meeting. Request the Executive Committee to set what agenda items are addressed at which meetings for business.
4. Create themes for our Annual Meetings on which we can work together throughout the weekend.
5. Create more intergenerational programming at our Annual Meetings.
6. Continue and perhaps expand programming throughout the year.
7. Include hybrid elements in our Annual Meetings.

### Rationale for Recommendations

**Site for 2023 Annual Meeting:** Bluffton University still has not made a decision about hosting outside groups in 2023, which meant the committee needed to explore an alternate site

for the future. Committee members carefully considered what we need and want in a site for LEYM Annual Meetings. We investigated three schools that we anticipated might meet our criteria: Oberlin College, Baldwin Wallace University, and Ashland University. We eliminated the first two as options because the prices were prohibitive. Ashland’s prices, while higher than Bluffton’s, were much closer to what we considered doable. Two committee members made a preliminary visit to Ashland University on March 28. They brought back a positive report to the committee, resulting in a visit by the whole committee on June 6. At the end of this visit, the committee made the decision to recommend Ashland as the site for the 2023 Annual Meeting.

Ashland is centrally located (a bit farther for Michigan folks and western Ohio folks, closer for north central and eastern Ohio folks, closer for Pennsylvania folks, about the same for central and southern Ohio folks, compared to Bluffton). The ambiance of Ashland’s campus is not as pleasing as that of Bluffton’s campus, and we will not have access to the wide range of rooms and other facilities without extra charge as we had at Bluffton. We saw a number of spaces on campus and several places off campus including parks, a swimming pool, and a bowling alley that could be used for the Youth & Children’s program. The dining service appears to be able to meet our needs more easily than Bluffton’s dining service could. The non-air-conditioned dorms are reasonably priced and right next to the building where most of our sessions will be held. The air-conditioned dorm is a bit farther away and quite a bit more expensive. There are a number of reasonably priced motels in Ashland where attenders could stay. Ashland’s conference director assured us that the campus is LGBTQ+ friendly. In addition, the Ashland Center for

*Continued on next page*

## LEYM Ad Hoc Site Committee Report, Annual Sessions, July 2022, *continued*

Nonviolence, founded by John Stratton, is eager to work with us.

The committee also started a list of retreat centers located in Ohio. We suggest that this list be considered for subsequent years.

**Fees for attendance:** The budget for Annual Meeting will be larger in 2023 than it has been in the past. Room and board charges will be higher than we are used to, plus we will now need to pay rental fees for all the meeting rooms we use. We want to ensure that cost of attendance does not deter people from coming to the 2023 Annual Meeting. Thus, we recommend that we consider larger discounts for attendance than we have had in the past. This will mean that the Annual Meeting will need to be subsidized by the General Fund.

**Yearly Meeting business sessions:** To make room during our Annual Meeting for more time to nurture the LEYM community, the committee recommends holding business sessions on Zoom at various times throughout the year in addition to the business sessions held during Annual Meeting. A schedule would need to be determined as to what business is conducted at what date. Doing this would open up space during the Annual Meeting, allowing for deepening relationships among Monthly Meetings and individuals and nurturing us spiritually. It would also give us time for more fun activities to do together.

**Themes for Annual Meetings:** We believe our Yearly Meeting could be strengthened by working more closely together during our Annual Meetings. Thus, we envision creating themes for our Annual Meetings that are conducive to ongoing work throughout the weekend. These could be

themes related to the creation of an LEYM *Faith and Practice*, should we decide to move forward with this idea.

**Cross-generational interaction:** The parallel structure of our adult vs. youth and children programs inhibits interaction among generations. We believe that Yearly Meeting is weakened by this lack of interaction, which will likely result in further decline of Yearly Meeting membership in the future. Therefore, we envision planning more activities during our Annual Meetings in which Yearly Meeting attenders of all ages participate.

**Programming throughout the year:** We believe that encouraging interaction among members of different monthly meetings throughout the year will help us create a stronger Yearly Meeting community. We would like to see the programming that we have conducted the last couple of years continue and perhaps expand.

**Hybrid elements of Annual Sessions:** We know that there are people who cannot make the trip to an in-person Annual Meeting for a variety of reasons. We now have the technology to include these people in at least some of the activities during Annual Meeting. The plenary and some of the workshops are examples.

For more information, please contact Sally Weaver Sommer at [sallyweaversommer@gmail.com](mailto:sallyweaversommer@gmail.com).

Members of the Site Committee were Sam Milford (Pittsburgh), Brianna Charlot (Red Cedar), Bill Warters (Birmingham, LEYM digital communications facilitator), Diane Mott (Broadmead, Youth & Children's Program), Jon Sommer (Broadmead, clerk of Arrangements & Site), and Sally Weaver Sommer (Broadmead, registrar).

### Calendar Changes

Please note that, because **Annual Meeting** has been moved forward to June 15–18 next year, various other deadlines have moved forward as well; see the calendar on p. 12. In particular, the Ministry & Nurture Committee asks Meetings to plan their own calendars to enable completion of State of the Meeting Reports by April 30.



## Two October Retreats

### Broadmead Monthly Meeting Friends Fall Retreat on “The Power of Enough” Presented by Jackie Stillwell Oct. 28–30, 2022

Friends are invited to join this in-person weekend retreat, to be held at the **St. Francis Spirituality Center, 200 St. Francis Ave, Tiffin, Ohio**. The retreat is open to adults only. For details and registration information, see this link: <https://tinyurl.com/Broadmeadretreat22>.

Registration starts at 6:30 pm on Friday, and the program begins promptly at 7:00. Broadmead Friends want everyone who wishes to attend the retreat to do so, regardless of ability to pay; please pay what you are able – less or more than the price on the registration form (which is what the retreat center is charging the Meeting). The cost for the weekend, including all meals and lodging, is \$118 per individual in a double room, \$128 per individual in a single. Prices for commuters, one-day lodging, and individual meals are shown on the registration form. All meals are vegetarian.

The retreat leader, **Jackie Stillwell**, is the General Secretary of Right Sharing of World Resources, and a member of Monadnock Meeting, New Hampshire (New England Yearly Meeting). Jackie is called to spiritual accompaniment, grounded in an awareness of the abundance of God’s Love and a strong sense of connection and kinship with all life.

Jackie has lived abroad in England and Norway and spent nearly a decade in Guatemala, three years of which were serving in the Peace Corps. For 22 years, Jackie served as Head of The Meeting School, an experiment in education and simple living in Quaker community. From 2011 to 2015, Jackie served as clerk of New England Yearly Meeting. She has traveled widely among Friends, with FWCC, FGC, and FUM, serving as an elder and workshop facilitator at monthly, quarterly, and yearly meetings and Friends schools.

### Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting “Weathering the Storm,” a One-day Retreat, Saturday, Oct. 29, 2022

10:00 to 4:00 at Michigan Friends Center,  
7748 Clark’s Lake Rd, Chelsea

Join us at the Michigan Friends Center (near Chelsea) for **Weathering the Storm**, a one-day, in-person retreat offered by Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting for Friends from throughout Michigan (and beyond).

For more than two years, we have had very few opportunities to worship, learn, and connect in person with Friends beyond our local Meetings and Worship Groups. **Weathering the Storm** celebrates GPQM’s return to the Friends Center and provides us an opportunity to reflect upon this storm that we have weathered together. Who have we become? What has been lost? Gained? In what ways have we been faithful in the storm?

Maryann Concannon and April Allison (both of Red Cedar Meeting) will serve as retreat leaders. Maryann will offer a reflection on Jonah as he faced into the storm. In addition to time for worship, there will be an opportunity for solitude – walking meditation, journaling, and artwork – followed by a time of sharing.

Friends should bring their own lunch; coffee and tea will be provided. Masks are strongly recommended indoors, and we will follow up-to-date CDC recommendations regarding whether they will be required. We will not be able to provide childcare during the retreat.

This retreat is **free** to participants, but registration at [gpgmcommunications@gmail.com](mailto:gpgmcommunications@gmail.com) by October 25 is requested: just drop a note with participant names and email addresses.



## News from Monthly Meetings

After the murder of 19 children and 2 teachers at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas, the Ohio legislature passed and the Governor signed into law H.B. 99, which allows school districts to arm selected school personnel. Not only does the law allow guns to be an ever-present norm on school campuses, it requires only 24 hours of firearms instruction. The legislation was opposed by teachers' unions and the Fraternal Order of Police.

In response, **Granville Friends Meeting** approved a minute regarding Ohio H.B. 99:

*Granville Friends Meeting feels deep concern over the enactment of Ohio House Bill 99, referred to as the "Armed School Security Staff" Law, that allows local school districts, if they so choose, to designate armed staff after completing a 24-hour training program. Such a law is contrary to our testimony of peace. The regular presence of guns in school buildings teaches children that the only answer to the threat of violence is more violence. Consistent with our belief that there is that of God in everyone, we assert that the school environment should foster trust and mutual respect among students, teachers, and staff. The presence of some armed teachers and staff would disrupt this circle of trust and respect, and elevate the risk of any conflict or perceived threat coming to a deliberately or accidentally violent conclusion. We urge school districts across Ohio to remain gun-free zones and continue to teach children non-violent means of resolving conflicts.*

John Cardina, recently of **Wooster Meeting** and now living near Philadelphia, has published *Lives of Weeds* (Cornell University Press, which provided the following description). "*Lives of Weeds* explores the tangled history of weeds and their relationship to humans. Through eight interwoven stories, Cardina offers a fresh perspective on how these tenacious plants came about, why they are both inevitable and essential, and how their ecological success is ensured by efforts to eradicate them. Linking botany, history, ecology, and evolutionary biology to the social dimensions of humanity's ancient struggle with feral flora,

Cardina shows how weeds have shaped – and are shaped by – the way we live in the natural world. "Weeds and attempts to control them drove nomads toward settled communities, encouraged social stratification, caused environmental disruptions, and have motivated the development of GMO crops. They have snared us in social inequality and economic instability, infested social norms of suburbia, caused rage in the American heartland, and played a part in perpetuating pesticide use worldwide. *Lives of Weeds* reveals how the technologies directed against weeds underlie ethical questions about agriculture and the environment, and leaves readers with a deeper understanding of how the weeds around us are entangled in our daily choices."



**Claire Cohen (Pittsburgh),**  
*speaking at the July rally and march for  
Medicare for All in Washington, DC*

## News from Monthly Meetings, *continued*

### Though...

Though I can no longer walk to the sunrise,  
I enjoy my brother's sunrise-over-the-prairie photos,  
And my artist friend's sunrise-over-the-lake photos.

Though I can no longer kayak through the water  
lotuses,  
I enjoy photos and paintings of water lotuses in my  
home;  
And imagine-remember their delicate scent,  
and playing with dragon flies  
and chasing beads of water on leathery leaves.

Though I can no longer walk my dog,  
My angel-neighbor takes her along on morning walks;  
And my compassionate, multi-skilled friend  
walks her and checks on me each night before bed.

Though I can no longer get up from a yoga mat,  
My young, fit yogini friend assists every beach yoga  
day;  
And chair yoga classes keep me and fellow elders  
moving.

When health care and home care  
burden me financially and physically,  
My sister gives me work and financial assistance,  
lovingly and blamelessly;  
And my gifted brother and my talented friend  
keep my home maintained and safe,  
Allowing me the luxury of aging in place.

When I am discouraged by physical and emotional  
pain,  
Beloved friends,  
And Friends,  
And Facebook friends,  
And cherished nieces  
Lighten my heart  
And brighten my days.

I am truly blessed.

D.M. Lueke  
August 21, 2022  
Toledo Worship Group (Broadmead)

Check out the series of videos on YouTube created by the Membership & Outreach Committee of **Red Cedar Meeting**. Topics include "What Happens in Worship?", "What Could a Newcomer Expect?", and "What's the Best Part of Being a Quaker?" A list of the series is available at: <https://www.tinyurl.com/RedCedarVideos>.

**Mohamed Soumah**, a sanctuary guest at **Ann Arbor Meeting**, recently received a new kidney, and it is working beautifully!

Mohamed came to live in Quaker House nearly four years ago, under threat of deportation, which would have been a virtual death sentence, as he could not have obtained regular kidney dialysis in his home country of Guinea Bissau. In May 2021, he was granted a stay of removal, which enabled him to be placed on a list of those needing kidney replacement. Since the surgery, he has been recuperating in the home of a Friend, and he expects to move back into Quaker House soon. For Mohamed, this was a life-changing miracle, and the Meeting feels great joy.

### FGC Parenting Group

Quaker parent mutual support groups are opening for the third year. The registration deadline is November 1. The Quaker parent mutual support groups provide a supportive forum in which Quaker parents can talk about their parenting and their faith. Parents celebrate one another's successes and provide fellowship for one another through difficult times.

These groups are open to any Friend currently raising children under the age of 19 and are **free**. The groups will meet for one hour every other week for a total of 12 gatherings between November 2022 and April 2023. They will be conducted in English and on the Zoom platform. Sign up at the FGC website: <https://tinyurl.com/FGCquakerparents2022>.

## LEYM Calendar for 2022–23

October 8: Executive Committee Meeting, online

October 28–30: Broadmead Meeting Fall Retreat,  
Tiffin, OH (*see p. 9*)

October 29: Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting  
Retreat, Michigan Friends Center (*see p. 9*)

November 16–20: FCNL Annual Meeting (*see*  
*www.fcnl.org/events/annual-meeting-and-*  
*quaker-public-policy-institute*)

January 15: Due date for:  
Submissions for *Winter Bulletin*  
Responses to LEYM Queries (*see p. 2*)

A Saturday in late March or early April (tbd):  
LEYM Representative Meeting, online

April 12–15: White Privilege Conference, Mesa,  
Arizona (*see www.theprivilegeinstitute.com*)

April 15: Submissions for *Spring Bulletin*

April 30: Due date for State of the Meeting Reports  
Send to Flo Friender (*quakerflo@comcast.net*)

A Saturday in Early May:  
LEYM Spiritual Formation Retreat

June 15–18: LEYM Annual Meeting; Ashland  
University, Ashland, Ohio

July 2–8: FGC Gathering, Western Oregon  
University, Monmouth, Oregon (*see*  
*www.fgcquaker.org/connect/gathering*)

## LEYM Committee Clerks, 2022–23

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

### *Adult & Family Program*

Clémence Ravaçon Mershon  
andre14@earthlink.net

### *Advancement & Outreach*

Joe Mills,  
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### *Arrangements & Site*

Jon Sommer (Broadmead)  
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### *Finance*

Joann Neuroth (Red Cedar)  
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### *Ministry & Nurture*

Shelley Kotz (Broadmead)  
sh.s3ktz@gmail.com  
& Flo Friender  
quakerflo@comcast.net

### *Nominating*

Mike Holaday (Grand Rapids)  
mikeholaday@att.net

### *Publications & Archives*

Peggy Daub (Ann Arbor)  
peggydaub@hotmail.com  
& George Hebben (Kalamazoo)  
hebbeng@yahoo.com

### *Youth & Children's Program*

Erika Smith (Detroit)  
trass@usa.net

## Does Your Meeting Have an AFSC Liaison?

The American Friends Service Committee invites every Quaker Meeting and Church to put forward an AFSC-Meeting Liaison. Ideally a person committed to social justice, the liaison becomes the conduit for information from Friends to AFSC, as well as from AFSC to the local congregation. Currently, over 189 Quaker meetings and churches have identified a liaison. If your Meeting has not yet done so, please consider contacting Sofia at [SDiPietro@afsc.org](mailto:SDiPietro@afsc.org) to identify your liaison.

The American Friends Service Committee works in 25 U.S. cities and 15 foreign countries promoting a world free of violence, inequality, and oppression. It partners with local activists and leaders to catalyze and support positive change. It is grounded in the spiritual life of American Quakers and needs regular input from Meetings and Churches around the country. Please consider how you might get involved. ~ *Submitted by John Deikis (Ann Arbor)*