

Annual Records 2024

Lake Erie
Yearly Meeting
of the Religious Society of Friends



Copyright 2024
Lake Erie Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends
All Rights Reserved

Table of Contents

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting 2024–2025

Officers	iii
Communications and Others	iii
Address for LEYM	iii
Committee Clerks	iv
LEYM Calendar for 2025	iv

2024 Representative Meeting

Minutes and Reports	1
Reports from Around the Yearly Meeting	2
Advancement & Outreach	4
Arrangements & Site	5
Programs – Adult, Youth.....	8
Publications & Archives	10
Draft Budget	15, 21
Proposal for Travel Reimbursements	22

2024 Annual Meeting

Minutes and Reports	29
Program Committee, Welcome	30, 79
Treasurer’s Report	33, 40-43
Finance, Proposed Budget	37, 44-45, 52
Finance, Changes to Travel Policy	38, 66
Nominating Committee	38, 59, 83, 227
Worshipful Discernment: God’s Purpose for LEYM...	46
LEYM Representatives to Other Organizations	48, 87
Finance, Revising How Some Funds Are Used	50
Publications & Archives	52
Executive Committee, Amendments to P&P	54, 58
Naming Committee	57
LEYM Annual Epistle	61

Continued

Appendices to Minutes	63
Notes from What LEYM Is Called to Do	64
Finance, Proposed Revisions to Little-Used Funds	70
Advancement & Outreach Report.....	80
Ministry & Nurture Report	81
Digital Communications Facilitator Report.....	84
Plenary Program – Transcription	102
Workshop Summaries	121
 History and Description of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting	
History and Description	137
Chronology	140
 Meetings and Worship Groups	
State of the Meeting Reports.....	146
Memorial Minutes and Obituaries	185
Monthly Meeting Statistics	195
Members Gained and Lost	196
 Contacts and Communications	
Meetings and Worship Groups: Schedules, Contact Information, Officers, and Committee Clerks	198
LEYM Officers, Committee Members, and Representatives (Nominating Committee Slate, 2024)	227

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting 2024–2025

Officers

Presiding Clerk:	Joe Mills LEYMclerk@gmail.com
Assistant Clerk:	Jack Smith LEYMAssistantClerk@gmail.com
Recording Clerk:	Peggy Daub LEYMRecordingClerk@gmail.com
Treasurer:	Tom Kangas LEYMtreasurer@gmail.com

Communications

<i>LEYM Bulletin</i> Editor:	Christopher Farrand BulletinLEYM@gmail.com
Digital Communications Facilitator:	Bill Warters LEYMworker@gmail.com
Database Manager:	Susan Loucks susan@sloucks.net
<i>Annual Records 2024</i> Editor:	Elise Yoder eliseyoder@yahoo.com

Others

Registrar:	Sally Weaver Sommer LEYMregistrar@gmail.com
------------	--

Address for LEYM

c/o Office Manager
Ann Arbor Friends Meeting
1420 Hill Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Website: leym.org

LEYM Committee Clerks

Advancement & Outreach: Susan Hartman,
susandhartman@gmail.com, and Barbara LeSage,
barbaralesage@hotmail.com

Annual Meeting Planning Committees

Adult & Family Program: Clémence Ravaçon-Mershon,
andre14@earthlink.net

Arrangements & Site: Carolyn Lejuste, clejuste@gmail.com

Youth & Children Program: Diane Mott, mottfam45@gmail.com
and Erika Smith, trass@usa.net

Finance: Joann Neuroth, jneuroth@gmail.com

Ministry & Nurture: Flo Friender, flo@dougandflo.com

Nominating: Stephanie Charlot, charlot.sf@outlook.com
and Clémence Ravaçon-Mershon, andre14@earthlink.net

Peace & Justice: Claire Cohen, cmcmd80@gmail.com

Publications & Archives: Jeff Cooper, cooperdaub@hotmail.com

LEYM Calendar for 2025

Due date for submissions for *Winter Bulletin* January 15

Responses to LEYM Query January 15

Send to Flo Friender (flo@dougandflo.com)

Representative Meeting: Pittsburgh Mtg. and online March 8

Due date for submissions for *Spring Bulletin* March 15

Due date for State of the Meeting Reports May 15

Send to Flo Friender (flo@dougandflo.com)

Due date for Statistical Reports June 1

Send to Susan Loucks (susan@sloucks.net)

Annual Meeting: Ashland University June 12-15

Due date for submissions for *Annual Records 2025* July 30

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting
Minutes of Representative Meeting
March 9, 2024

Clerks Table: Susan Loucks (Pittsburgh), Clerk; Peggy Daub (Ann Arbor), Recording Clerk

Clerk Susan Loucks welcomed the group of Friends gathered via Zoom for the 2024 Representative Meeting of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting.

RM 2024-01 Opening and Reading of Epistle

Friends settled into waiting worship at 10 am.

The Clerk reviewed the day's agenda with Friends. Ellerie Brownfain (Broadmead) and Don Buckingham (North Columbus) volunteered to hold our gathering in Light.

Thomas Taylor (Ann Arbor) read the Epistle from the All-African Leaders' Retreat convened by FWCC in Rwanda in December 2023. The meeting was held so that leaders of Yearly Meetings in Africa could receive updates and share their views on decisions facing FWCC. Friends in attendance were of various ages and came from different Quaker traditions. They learned from each other as well as from the speakers as they considered the future of FWCC and the thematic streams of the 2024 World Plenary gathering. (Full text of the Epistle at: [https://fwcc.world/resources_cpt/epistles/.](https://fwcc.world/resources_cpt/epistles/))

REPRESENTATIVE MEETING

RM 2024-02 Roll Call

Roll Call (information from registration and attendance)

Ann Arbor:	4	North Columbus:	5
Athens:	1	Oberlin:	2
Birmingham:	2	Pittsburgh:	2
Broadmead:	6	Red Cedar:	5
Cleveland:	2	Wooster:	1
Detroit:	1	<u>Erie WG:</u>	<u>1</u>
Grand Rapids:	1	TOTAL:	37
Kalamazoo:	4		

No representation present from the following monthly meetings:
Akron, Delaware, Granville, Holland, Kent, and Mid-Ohio Valley.

RM 2024-03 Reports from Around the Yearly Meeting

Meetings who were not represented in last year’s State of Meeting report were invited to report:

John Howell reported for **Athens Meeting**, summarizing a report that was not submitted for the *Annual Records*. The Meeting is returning to pre-pandemic levels. Hybrid meetings continue, with attendance up to about 30 and the youth program reviving. They have reached out to members of the community where their Meetinghouse is located (Chauncey), particularly using skills of their members to help those facing utility shutoffs. They hosted FCNL’s Riley Robinson and are laboring with making statements of conscience on the conflicts in Palestine and Ukraine.

Our clerk reminded all that if statements of conscience are to be presented to Yearly Meeting for consideration, that process is initiated by monthly meetings. Contact the clerk if this is of interest.

Shelley Kotz (Broadmead), from the Ministry & Nurture Committee, said she welcomes this way of sharing reports that would otherwise not be public. The state of the meeting reports should be submitted to the M&N Committee, as well as being shared with the Publications & Archives Committee for *Annual Records*. Friends may need a reminder about this. Flo Friender (Kalamazoo), to whom reports are sent, corrected her email to flo@dougandflo.com.

Other Brief Reports:

- Peggy Daub (Ann Arbor) reported that Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting held its Midwinter Gathering Saturday, March 2, and was pleased to welcome about 25 people to the online event. Dwight Wilson (Ann Arbor) presented a program reading passages from his books of historical fiction that are based on his extensive research into the Black and Quaker roots of his family's history.
- Jeff Cooper reported that Ann Arbor Meeting is appreciating an influx of younger Friends attending worship and participating in Meeting activities. Monthly dinners for Young Adult Friends are supported by older Friends who offer their homes and plentiful food. The children's program has grown and is beginning to use an additional room.
- Bill Warters reported that Birmingham Meeting has responded to an offer from Quaker Meeting Network in Britain to help with hosting their website. They are happy with the service and invite inquiries.
- Tom Kangas reported that North Columbus Meeting has temporarily relocated to the basement of a Methodist church as they follow their intentions to make the Meeting more accessible. They recently added a "meeting for fidgeting" to welcome people who may not feel comfortable in a traditional setting. This practice is represented in a recent *Friends Journal* article.

REPRESENTATIVE MEETING

- Jana Norlin joyfully reported that Grand Rapids Meeting has restarted a First Day School program because of an increase in children and young families attending; people stay in touch through a group chat/text. Jana has been accepted as an attendee at the upcoming FWCC meeting in South Africa and intends to be in touch with European Friends on that trip.
- Jack Smith reported that Red Cedar Meeting completed its engagement with the Faithful Meetings program from School of the Spirit ministry. Friends found it useful and are seeking ways to continue the deep engagement they found in this program as they go forward.

RM 2024-04 Advancement & Outreach Committee Joe Mills (Kalamazoo) reported.

The Committee has organized a series of online events this year called Quakerism 101. Four have occurred so far, with three more scheduled, each one focused on a basic topic and designed for both those experienced in Quakerism and those new to Friends.

The Committee reviewed State of the Meeting reports submitted last year and reached out to Meetings that had not submitted them. The Committee is currently contacting worship groups to encourage them to send to the Committee their worship schedule and contact information for distribution.

Grand Rapids Meeting reported in January that Manitou Worship Group, which has been under their care, has been laid down.

The full Committee report:

Advancement & Outreach Committee Report

The Advancement & Outreach Committee has organized a series of monthly topics and discussions referred to as Quakerism 101 designed to enrich monthly meetings and to share information with those new to Friends. They are modeled after a series held by North Columbus

Monthly Meeting last year and consist of live Zoom sessions with a variety of formats.

The North Columbus Meeting held two of these sessions for the wider Yearly Meeting: one on “What is Quakerism?” and a second on “Vocal Ministry and Meeting for Worship.” Shelley Kotz of Broadmead Meeting presented a session on “Sharing the Life of Lucretia Mott.” Ann Arbor Meeting has presented one on “Faith & Practice.” The Kalamazoo Meeting is scheduled to do a session in March on “What do Quakers believe?” In April the Pittsburgh Meeting will do one on “Business Meeting,” and in May, Red Cedar Meeting will give a presentation on “Quaker Organizations.”

When the Annual Records came out, the Committee noticed the Meetings that had not submitted State of the Meeting reports and proceeded to contact them to see how they were doing and what may have led them to not submit a report. Several of these Meetings had prepared reports but they were not received by the Yearly Meeting. The Committee also reviewed the submitted State of the Meeting Reports focusing on provisions relating to the growing of Meetings and outreach to new Friends.

The Committee currently is in the process of contacting smaller worship groups in the Yearly Meeting to publicize their worship schedules and contact information in the Bulletin. We hope this information might encourage Friends to visit worship groups if they are in their area during spring and summer travel plans.

Respectfully submitted: Susan Hartman, Stephanie Charlot, Barbara LeSage, Mary Igoe Meyers, and Joseph Mills, clerk

RM 2024-05 Arrangements & Site Committee Sally Weaver Sommer (Broadmead) & Bill Warters (Birmingham) reported.

The Committee has gone through evaluations received after the Annual Meeting and is working on changes to improve our collective experience at the Annual Meeting at Ashland University in 2024. Registration will be completely online this year, with ample support available for anyone wishing it. Aids

REPRESENTATIVE MEETING

for the very high beds are being worked on, and ways to make people staying in hotels feel they are in community are being pursued. There will be greeters to help with questions about the dining area and tray carriers available. Different room arrangements for business meetings are being investigated to make them more accessible and comfortable for both those in person and those wishing to attend by zoom. The Committee is working on better signage. Details are included in the full report attached below.

Bill Warters mentioned a few highlights of this year's Annual Meeting, including the theme "Friends Together: Outpourings of the Spirit" and a 400th birthday party for George Fox on Saturday night. He demonstrated the new online registration system.

The full Committee report:

Arrangements & Site Committee Report

1. Registration process: Summary from evaluations

Registration process (4.67) - Is there a way for folks to be able to save or access their registration form after submission to look up what they registered for? Is there a way to make the registration online only? And is there way to emphasize more explicitly the offer of assistance to anyone who is having challenges navigating the form? Most people had no problems.

- We are going to use only online registration this year. Anyone who has any trouble whatsoever can call the registrar and get help. She will fill out the registration form for you if needed. There will be a registration process fee included. There will also be a credit card fee for those paying by credit card. Friends will also be able to send a check to the registrar.
- We will include volunteer opportunities on the form. (See Bill's demonstration).

- All registrants will receive an email with their registration information.
- Registration deadline (Last year the deadline was May 10)

2. Accommodations: Summary from evaluations

Dorm Facilities (3.83) – Two consistent issues mentioned: 1) beds were difficult (undoable for some) and some needed debunking & 2) very cold in air-conditioned dorm. Suggestions for next year: advise folks to bring trash bag for dorm rooms if desired; explain to folks in air-conditioned dorms to bring blankets & to close bathroom doors due to auto-light issues. Research other options with Ashland University?

Bed arrangements on campus

- We need volunteers to rearrange bedroom furniture before and after people arrive.
- We will give recommendations for what people who stay in the dorm might find useful.

Hotels

- Arrangements are a work in progress. We are soliciting input from people who used hotels last year and will continue to seek input from those who choose this option.
- We are considering making a recommendation for a hotel for people to stay in. This will provide a chance for more interaction.
- We are working to see if we can get a group rate.

3. Meals: Summary from evaluations

Meal Service (4.61) – Extremely high praise for the staff and the food except for vegetarian choices. Issues mentioned – some need help carrying trays, and coffee cups are too small. Suggestions: advise folks to bring their own mugs; more vegetarian options (less meat, oatmeal at every breakfast).

- We will provide greeters to help people find seating and to point out where different food options are located.

REPRESENTATIVE MEETING

- We will provide tray carriers.

4. Meeting spaces: Friends expressed concerns about the room and the room arrangement we used for meetings for business.

- We are exploring options to respond to these concerns. If we want to continue using Zoom, the Heritage Room is the easiest room to use. Thus, we are discussing how to arrange the chairs and how to provide better microphones. We are also exploring the use of the Trustees Room, thinking about how to set up Zoom and use hand held portable mics.

5. Signage: Some folks had difficulty finding their way around

- We will make signs for the elevator.
- We will make signs for the dining room.

RM 2024-06 Adult Program Committee Clémence Ravaçon-Mershon (Erie Worship Group) reported.

The Committee is reviewing the schedule for the 2024 Annual Meeting, based on comments received after our 2023 Annual Meeting. There will be a session with the Ashland Center for Non-Violence staff on Friday morning. Multiple workshops will be offered at three different times. The plenary will feature Paulette Meier and Joann Neuroth (Red Cedar). Time for in-person committee meetings will be included in the schedule, as well as “birds of a feather” opportunities after dinner. Full details will be provided in the Spring *LEYM Bulletin*.

RM 2024-07 Youth & Children’s Program Committee

Diane Mott (Broadmead) reported.

The May 10 deadline for registration is firm for the children’s program. A tee-shirt design has been drafted and they plan to offer similar shirts for sale to anyone in attendance. Different colors will distinguish those in the program from those not to support the safety of the children.

The fall youth retreat will be held September 27–29, 2024. This is the last time it will be held at Templed Hills, as the property is being sold. Future fall youth retreats are being planned, with new options being considered.

The full Committee report:

Youth & Children's Program Committee Report

To prepare for 2024 Annual Meeting, the committee has started the orientation for the Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Policy, which is required for all adults who work with children and youth at LEYM Annual Meeting. The Youth & Children Program shirt design has been drafted and colors have been selected. For the first time, shirts in a different color will be offered for sale (at cost) to adults who are not part of the youth program. Those shirts (tan with black ink) will be available as part of the registration process, and only the shirts that are ordered will be printed. Traditionally, the plenary speaker is given a shirt, and this year that shirt will be tan. The youth program shirts will be safety orange with black ink.

The LEYM Fall Youth Retreat for children and youth grades K–12 will be held on September 27–29 at Templed Hills Church Camp in Bellville, Ohio. The Heartland Conference of the United Church of Christ is selling the camp in November 2024, so this will be the last year for LEYM Fall Youth Retreat to be held at Templed Hills. This summer, the Youth & Children Program committee clerk and assistant clerk will look for a new location for the Fall Youth Retreat, beginning in 2025. One possibility is inviting other Quaker Yearly Meetings in Ohio to join LEYM for the retreat. There is a chance that Templed Hills will be sold before September 29, and the clerk and assistant clerk will make alternate plans for the retreat at that time.

RM 2024-08 Ministry & Nurture Committee Flo Friender (Kalamazoo) reported.

The Committee has organized several upcoming events. There will be an all-Meeting worship this Tuesday, March 12, 7–9 pm,

REPRESENTATIVE MEETING

with opportunity to socialize. There will be a Clerks' chat for Monthly Meeting clerks on March 18 at 7 pm.

The full Committee report:

Ministry & Nurture Committee Report

Ministry & Nurture has met regularly by zoom monthly. During the past year they came up with a query for monthly meetings, which was sent out. As of 3/6/24, we have received 14 responses to the query.

Responses were on the whole positive for the query. Friends like the idea of getting an annual query; many appreciated this particular query and have reviewed their use of queries in their Meetings. Many felt that queries brought their Meetings closer together.

We have organized Zoom chats for both Monthly Meeting Clerks and Committee Clerks of Ministry and Worship committees from Monthly Meetings, with increasing attendance and enthusiasm. We have also arranged All-Yearly Meeting worship sessions.

We are down to five members, Mark Hoover having dropped out mid-year.

RM 2024-09 Publications & Archives Committee Jeff Cooper (Ann Arbor) reported.

Elise Yoder (Pittsburgh) will once again edit LEYM's *Annual Records* for 2024. The Committee is considering producing a separate version of *Annual Records* this year that can be shared on the LEYM website. Comments are invited.

The full Committee report:

Publications & Archives Committee Report

1. We are pleased to announce that Elise Yoder has agreed to edit the 2024 *Annual Records*. I told her we would try to get items to her in a more timely way this year, and hope we can make good on this request.

2. Following up on a suggestion, we recommend producing a separate pdf version of the *Annual Records*, with the Directory removed, for posting on the website. In addition to removing the Directory, there are two sections that would need slight editing:

- 1) Children's epistles are sometimes "signed" by all the children in an age group. Current policy precludes providing names of children on the website without prior approval of their parent or guardian. Given that often several children are named on each epistle, the best solution is probably to remove those names – perhaps stating "signed by (X number of) children" – rather than seeking permission for each.

- 2) Posting transcriptions or summaries of plenary talks would require obtaining permission from the speaker(s).

These changes would require only a little more work and no additional cost. Sharing thoughts, suggestions, and concerns regarding this recommendation is welcome. We also considered a suggestion that all or parts of *Annual Records* appear only online but ultimately decided that it should continue as a print publication.

3. Finally, we're not sure what to expect from the discussion of committee/clerking structure at Representative Meeting. *If* we move forward with our committee structure intact, then we would like to invite standing committees to look at the description of their committee in *Policies and Procedures*, and suggest changes to reflect current practice. Depending on the degree of recommended change, this may ultimately need to go before the Meeting for approval at Annual Sessions.

RM 2024-10 Annual Meeting Quaker Book Table Valerie Groszmann (Kalamazoo) reported.

Quaker Books is no longer taking credit cards and she didn't know that at the time of our 2023 Annual Meeting. She will be contacting people who thought they paid by credit card at last year's annual meeting to ask them to send a check instead.

REPRESENTATIVE MEETING

RM 2024-11 Treasurer's Report Tom Kangas (North Columbus) reported.

The Treasurer, Tom Kangas, first reported on the finances of the 2023 Annual Meeting. The final numbers showed a deficit of \$4,750. The deficit was expected and we provided a subsidy of \$6,100 to cover it.

Tom gave a brief update on final figures for the 2022–23 fiscal year. Expenses in 2022–23 were less than projected, due to fewer hours worked by our employees under contract, and income increased through a dividend in June from FFC.

For the current year (2023–24), most of the contributions from Monthly Meetings have been received. All payments to other organizations have been made. Not all contract employees have billed us for work done to date. There are unpredictable changes in the value of our funds in the Friends Fiduciary Corporation due to market value, but they have been favorable by \$2000 this year. The general fund is in good shape. A transfer of \$5,000 was made to support the Annual Meeting Fund. Wooster Friends made an additional donation of \$1,500 to the Yearly Meeting. The series of payments to Ashland University for Annual Meeting 2024 have begun.

Financial statements appear on pp. 16-21.

Treasurer's Report

Final results for FY2022-2023 as compared to the projections presented at Annual Sessions last June

The final financial statements for the year ended June 20, 2023 (that have now been audited) were published in the *Annual Records* in Fall of 2023.

A. Annual Meeting Fund

- Net deficit for the Annual Meeting was \$4,750, prior to subsidy, was worse by \$800 than had been projected in June

- Subsidy from the General Fund was increased by \$800 to \$6,100, but still less than originally contemplated (\$10,000)
- Annual Meeting Fund ended the year with a \$2,500 ending balance, as planned
- Reasons for change
 - Revenue overall decreased \$294 (down: registration \$; up: book store, t-shirt sales, lost keycard reimbursement)
 - Expenses increased by \$527 (Ashland Univ charges, Y&C program, office supplies, online payment fees not covered by registrants)

B. General Fund

- Net deficit was \$1,267, an improvement by \$3,211 from projection
- Reasons for the change
 - Cash Expense decreased by \$2,276
 - The actual invoices for contract workers for 2nd half of the year were for significantly less than budget
 - The projection in June had been set at 100% of budget
 - FFC increased by \$2000
 - Income increased by June FFC dividend of \$968
 - The market value of the FFC portfolio at year-end was \$1006 higher
 - An additional \$800 was transferred out of the GF to subsidize the Annual Meeting

Interim results for FY2023-2024

- **Income**
 - Have received payments from most MMs, still waiting on three.
 - We are grateful for these contributions from MMs and also for contributions to the GF received from individuals!

REPRESENTATIVE MEETING

- **Expenses**
 - Completed items:
 - Payments to other organizations
 - Transfers to other funds (from the general fund)
 - DBM: Lynda Rose final bill paid. Donna Lueke has billed for 4 of 12 months in this FY
 - DCF: Bill Warters has billed for 8 of 12 in this FY
 - Other expenses appear to be on-track or under budget
- **Statement of Financial Position**
 - 2/3 of our treasury held by FFC and this account has two types of activity
 - Dividends happen in December and June, and are predictable
 - Changes in the investments' market value, are unpredictable
 - Look for this \$2,954 benefit to the GF on the summary of LEYM funds
 - Arising from a December dividend of \$1000 and
 - A \$1,949 favorable market value change YTD
- **LEYM Funds**
 - **General Fund:** In good shape
 - **Annual Meeting Fund**
 - \$5,000 subsidy from the GF shown in "Transfers" column
 - \$1,500 contribution from Wooster MM shown in the Cash Income column—thank you very much, Wooster Friends!!
 - \$1,500 expense is the deposit paid for use of Ashland Univ facilities June, 2024
 - We begin a series of payments to Ashland Univ with a \$10,000 installment that will be paid next week

- **Travel Fund**
 - Got a \$500 refund from AFSC for an amount paid by LEYM's representative to AFSC to attend a meeting last fiscal year
- **Youth Activities Fund**
 - Activity related to retreat last September
- **Spiritual Formation Fund**
 - Activity related to retreat last September

RM 2024-12 Draft Budget for 2024–25 Joann Neuroth (Red Cedar) reported for the Finance Committee.

The current draft budget for 2024–25 was shared with the group. There are only slight changes from the current year's budget. As proposed, there will be a shortfall of nearly \$4,000. A raise in expected contribution per member from \$42 to \$44 will allow Yearly Meeting to continue the level of subsidy of Annual Meeting. The hourly rate paid to our contract workers will be raised by \$.50 per hour. The full draft budget appears on p. 21.

In response to a question about our travel reimbursement of \$.22/mile rather than the IRS charitable rate of \$.14/mile, Tom Kangas explained that the Committee has sought a level that reflects a more accurate cost due to gasoline prices. A Friend asked if expected dividends from FFF are included in the budget and the Treasurer confirmed that they are.

REPRESENTATIVE MEETING

LEYM Summary of Funds for the Fiscal Year 2022-2023								Floor/Ceiling
Fund Name	Beginning Balance as of 7/1/2022	Friends Fiduciary account activity ¹	Transfers between funds	Cash Income	Cash Expense	Subtotal: activity for current fiscal year	Ending Balance as of 6/30/2023	Suggested floor/ceiling amounts for each fund
Funds held in (i) Base account with Friends Fiduciary Corp and (ii) Citizens National Bank								
General Fund ²	27,827.60	4,731.48	(8,900.00)	25,390.00	(22,488.62)	(1,267.16)	26,560.44	na
Annual Meeting Fund ³	419.01		6,100.00	24,819.72	(28,969.55)	2,090.17	2,509.18	1,000 3,000
Travel Fund	3,945.00		-	-	(909.30)	(909.30)	3,035.70	2,000 4,000
Youth Activities Fund ⁴	5,536.78		1,157.79	840.00	(1,069.87)	927.92	6,464.70	4,000 8,000
Quaker Coll/Svc Schol Fund	3,000.00		1,000.00	-	-	1,000.00	4,000.00	2,000 4,000
HS Teen Retreat Fund	6,892.64				-	-	6,892.64	3,000 6,000
Ministry Scholarship Fund	1,649.00				-	-	1,649.00	na 2,000
Spiritual Formation Fund	4,043.59		-	-	-	-	4,043.59	500 2,000
Consultation Fund	3,143.68				-	-	3,143.68	500 2,000
Travelling Ministries Fund	3,500.00				-	-	3,500.00	na na
Work Projects Fund	2,182.39				-	-	2,182.39	na 2,000
PWCC Travel Fund	6,238.83		900.00			900.00	7,139.83	na 9,000
PWCC Travel Donation	2,700.00		900.00			900.00	3,600.00	na 9,000
Funds held in separate account with Friends Fiduciary Corp								
Granville Youth Fund ⁵	8,106.78	857.02	(350.54)			506.48	8,713.26	na na
Funds held by others - see Statement of Financial Position								
Prepaid Expense	1,145.00	-	(807.25)			(807.25)	337.75	na na
TOTAL	80,431.30	5,588.48	-	\$1,089.72	(58,337.34)	3,340.86	83,772.16	

NOTES: Funds other than the General Fund are managed through accounting and may be subsidized from the General Fund.

² Annual Meeting Fund for FY2022-2023 contains activity for two Annual Meetings: one held July, 2022 and another held June, 2023.

¹ Friends Fiduciary Corp (FFC) activity includes dividends and net change portfolio value due to market conditions. See Balance Sheet for details.

² FFC General (Base) Account activity is included here in LEYM's General Fund.

³ Granville Friends Youth Fund is a separate FFC account. FFC activity shown on this line reflects only that fund's change in portfolio value.

⁴ FFC dollars transferred to this line represent dividends paid to the Granville Friends Youth Fund during current fiscal year and credited to YAF.

⁵ Established in FY13-14 by a donation toward LEYM's Traveling Ministry Program, this fund has had no activity from inception to date.

REPRESENTATIVE MEETING

LEYM General Fund Expenses - with comparison to Budget

For the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year (12 months ending June 30, 2024)

Account	Actual Expense through 3/8/2024	Budget (annual)	Actual expense as a % of Budget	Variance, budget-to- actual, favorable (unfavorable)
Operations				
Contract Worker: Database Manager	1,593.00	4,320	37%	2,727
Contract Worker: Digital Comm Facil'r	1,397.40	6,500	21%	5,103
Insurance	597.00	650	92%	53
Office/administration	303.44	1,200	25%	897
Committees				
Advancement & Outreach	-	100	0%	100
Ministry & Nurture	-	100	0%	100
Publications	2,188.35	3,500	63%	1,312
Members				
Attend conference w/ Quaker values	-	600	0%	600
Organizations				
Friends General Conference	6,000.00	6,000	100%	-
Olney Friends School	3,000.00	3,000	100%	-
Swarthmore records project	150.00	150	100%	-
Subtotal cash expenditures	15,229	26,120	58%	10,891
Transfers from General Fund to other Funds				
Annual Meeting Fund	5,000.00	5,000	100%	-
Travel Fund	1,000.00	1,000	100%	-
FWCC Travel Fund & Donation	1,800.00	1,800	100%	-
Subtotal Transfers	7,800.00	7,800		-
Totals - General Fund Expenses	23,029.19	33,920	68%	10,891

REPRESENTATIVE MEETING

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting – Financial Position

For the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year (12 months ending June 30, 2024)

Location of monetary assets	Beginning Balance as of 7/1/2023	Change in balance during the fiscal year	Ending Balance as of 3/8/2024
The Citizens National Bank of Bluffton, OH			
Checking Account	7,373.51	2,975.90	10,349.41
Savings Account	18,525.00	160.20	18,685.20
Subtotal of both CNB accounts	25,898.51	3,136.14	29,034.65
Friends Fiduciary Corporation, Philadelphia, PA *			
General (Base) Account	49,160.39	2,954.09	52,114.48
Activity			
Includes: • Dividends Paid (and reinvested)		1,004.72	
• Change in Portfolio Value, + or -		3,049.37	
Granville Youth Fund Account	8,713.26	343.39	9,056.65
Activity			
Includes: • Dividends Paid		178.27	
• Change in Portfolio Value + or -		343.39	
• Dividends disbursed by FFC to LELYM, recorded to Youth Active Fund		(178.27)	
Subtotal of both FFC accounts	57,873.65	3,297.48	61,171.13
Total monetary assets	83,772.16	6,433.62	90,205.78
Notation: Prepaid Expenses			
Ashland Univ credit to be carried over to Jun 2024 Anni Mtg	45.00	-	45.00
UCCB deposit for Youth Activities retreat, Sept 2024	358.75	-	358.75
Weber Ctr deposit for Spiritual Formation retreat, Sep 2024	150.00	-	150.00
	553.75	-	553.75

	Total	% of Eq Bal
Div Pd	1,183	2%
Δ Value	2,293	4%
	3,476	6%

* Note> All of the funds with Friends Fiduciary Corporation are invested in FFC's Quaker Growth & Income Fund (QGIF).

The Quaker Growth & Income Fund is a diversified, co-mingled fund with allocations to equities, fixed income and real estate investment trusts (REITs). Its primary objective is to provide stable current income and long-term growth consistent with protecting principal investments against inflation over time. The fund adheres to Friends Fiduciary's Quaker-values investment guidelines and participates in our shareholder advocacy work. It is intended for investors with an investment horizon of five years or longer. The Fund has a standard income distribution policy based on the fund's total return.

Source> Friendsfiduciary.org, 12/31/2022

HOLDINGS BY ASSET CLASS	Equity	Fixed Income	REITS
Global and International Equity	25.1%		
Small and Mid Cap Equity	17.7%		
Large Cap Equity	28.6%		
Fixed Income (Domestic, Global, Short-Term, plus Cash)		23.0%	5.6%
	71.4%	23.0%	5.6%

REPRESENTATIVE MEETING

LEYM Summary of Funds for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024							Floor/Ceiling
Fund Name	Beginning Balance as of 7/1/2023	Friends Fiduciary account activity ¹	Transfers between funds	Cash Income	Cash Expense	Subtotal: activity for current fiscal year	Suggested floor/ceiling amounts for each fund
Funds held in (i) Base account with Friends Fiduciary Corp and (ii) Citizens National Bank							
General Fund ²	26,560.44	2,954.09	(7,800.00)	24,876.24	(15,229.19)	4,801.14	na 30,000
Annual Meeting Fund	2,509.18		5,000.00	1,500.00	(1,500.00)	5,000.00	1,000 3,000
Travel Fund	3,035.70		1,000.00	500.00	(299.00)	1,201.00	2,000 4,000
Youth Activities Fund ⁴	6,464.70		57.27	970.00	(1,031.30)	(4.03)	4,000 8,000
Quaker Coll/Soc Schol Fund	4,000.00		-	-	-	-	2,000 4,000
HS Teen Retreat Fund	6,892.64				-	-	3,000 8,000
Ministry Scholarship Fund	1,649.00				-	-	na 2,000
Spiritual Formation Fund	4,045.39		(30.00)	3,305.76	(6,307.64)	(1,053.88)	2,000 2,000
Consultation Fund	3,143.68				-	-	500 2,000
Travelling Ministries Fund	3,500.00				-	-	na na
Work Projects Fund	2,182.39				-	-	na 2,000
FWCC Travel Fund	7,139.83		900.00	-	(1,325.00)	(425.00)	na 9,000
FWCC Travel Donation	3,600.00		900.00		(4,500.00)	(3,600.00)	na 9,000
Funds held in separate account with Friends Fiduciary Corp							
Granville Youth Fund ³	8,713.26	521.66	(176.27)			343.39	na na
Funds held by others - see Statement of Financial Position							
Prepaid Expense	337.75	-	171.00	-		171.00	na na
TOTAL	83,772.16	3,475.75	-	33,350.00	(30,392.13)	6,433.62	90,205.78

NOTES:- Funds other than the General Fund are managed through accounting and may be subsidized from the General Fund.

¹ Friends Fiduciary Corp (FFC) activity includes dividends and net change portfolio value due to market conditions. See Balance Sheet for detail.

² FFC General (Base) Account activity is included here in LEYM's General Fund.

³ Granville Friends Youth Fund is a separate FFC account. FFC activity shown on this line reflects only that fund's change in portfolio value.

⁴ FFC dollars transferred to this line represent dividends paid to the Granville Friends Youth Fund during current fiscal year and credited to YAF.

⁵ Established in FY13-14 by a donation toward LEYM's Traveling Ministry Program, this fund has had no activity from inception to date.

REPRESENTATIVE MEETING

LEYM General Fund Income			As of 3/8/2024		
For the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year (12 months ending June 30, 2024)					
Contribution From	Amount	Deposit Date			
Akron Monthly Meeting	250	12/17/2023			
Ann Arbor Monthly Meeting	5,124	2/6/2024			
Athens Monthly Meeting	2,000	10/22/2023			
Birmingham Monthly Meeting	588	10/24/2023			
Broadmead Monthly Meeting	1,500	12/18/2023			
Cleveland Monthly Meeting	1,680	1/15/2024			
Delaware Monthly Meeting					
Detroit Monthly Meeting	924	1/15/2024			
Grand Rapids Monthly Meeting	504	1/15/2024			
Granville Monthly Meeting					
Holland Monthly Meeting	200	12/17/2023			
Kalamazoo Monthly Meeting					
Kent Monthly Meeting	714	9/9 & 11/18/23			
Mid-Ohio Valley Monthly Meeting	180	2/3/2024			
North Columbus Monthly Meeting	1,260	11/12/2023			
Oberlin Monthly Meeting	1,050	2/21/2024			
Pittsburgh Monthly Meeting	4,914	2/24/2024			
Red Cedar Monthly Meeting	2,856	1/17/2024			
Wooster Monthly Meeting	546	1/19/2024			
			Expected, per budget	Actual as a % of Budget	Variance, favorable (unfavorable)
Subtotal - contributing MM or WG	24,290		27,510	88%	(3,220)
Individuals - via check	100				
Individuals - via FFC online	450				
Interest income from Savings Acct	36				
Total Cash Contribution Income	24,876		+	-	24,876
FFC Dividend Income (Base Acct only)	1,005				
Total Income	25,881		(cash income, excluding in-kind)		

REPRESENTATIVE MEETING

LEYM Budgets		**Actual as of 3/8/2024		(prelim budget, not approved)	
*Budget approved 06/16/2023		FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25	
General Fund Expenses		Budget*	Actual**	Budget	Change
General	Contractor: Database Manager	4,320	1,593	4,400	80
	Contractor: Digital Comm Facil'r	6,500	1,397	6,600	100
	Insurance	650	597	650	-
	Administration	1,200	303	1,100	(100)
Committees	Advancement & Outreach	100	-	100	-
	Ministry & Nurture	100	-	100	-
	Publications	3,500	2,188	3,500	-
Members	Attend conf w/ Quaker values	600	-	500	(100)
Organizations	FGC	6,000	6,000	6,200	200
	Olney Friends School	3,000	3,000	3,100	100
	Swarthmore Records Project	150	150	150	-
	<== Detroit mtg hse contrib'n				-
Tranfers from	Travel Fund	1,000	1,000	1,500	500
General Fund to...	Youth Activity Fund	-	-	-	-
	Quaker Coll/Svc Sch'ship Fund	-	-	-	-
	Annual Meeting subsidy	5,000	5,000	5,000	-
	FWCC Travel Fund (& Donation)	1,800	1,800	1,800	-
Total Expenses and Transfers =		33,920	23,029	34,700	780
General Fund Income					
	Contributions Income	27,510	24,876	28,820	1,310
	FFC Div Inc (Base Acct only)	1,500	1,005	2,000	500
Total Income =		29,010	25,881	30,820	1,810
Income - (Expenses and Transfers) =		(4,910)	2,852	(3,880)	1,030
FFC chg in portfolio value (Base)			1,949		
Subtotal Other Changes in General Fund =			1,949		
Total Change in General Fund =			4,801		
# members used to produce above estimate =		655		655	

REPRESENTATIVE MEETING

Joann Neuroth shared that the Committee is examining funds for specialized purposes that are not being used. If it is possible to move some of those funds to more general use, it could take some pressure off our efforts to continue to support Annual Meeting through a subsidy. The funds being considered are the Consultation Fund, the Traveling Ministry Fund, and the High School Teen Retreat Program Fund.

A Friend asked if the Meeting as a whole should also consider whether the activities represented by these funds might be encouraged. There was a question about whether the Teen Retreat might be reinstated. The Fall Youth Retreat extended its range to include teens a few years ago, which partially meets the need.

Continuation of the Business Meeting

After a lunch break, there was some remaining business to address. The Clerk reminded us that our purpose in pursuing business is, by searching together, to find the way we are led outside of our immediate experience.

RM 2024-13 Proposal for Travel Reimbursements Tom Kangas reported.

The Finance Committee brought a proposal for a change in wording of *Policies and Procedures* to clarify that our policy is different for covering travel to FWCC international/plenary gatherings by our designated representatives than for other travel on behalf of the Yearly Meeting. There are two different funds, the Travel Fund and the FWCC Travel Fund. (Note: Travel to the FWCC Section of the Americas is covered by our general Travel Fund.) We try to cover expenses required for the international “plenary” gatherings of FWCC more fully than for other travel; that FWCC Travel Fund can cover travel, food, lodging, and registration.

There is also a need to clarify the types of expenses covered by the general Travel Fund. The Committee suggests a change to wording in *Policies & Procedures* saying we do not generally cover food or lodging expenses on the Travel Fund. The changes also explicitly state that registration can be covered. In addition, Friends may request reimbursement for additional travel-related expenses beyond those usually covered, as needed, so that no one is excluded from serving the Yearly Meeting in this way.

In answer to a question, Tom clarified that LEYM uses a continuing Travel Fund to support travel expenses rather than using a line in the annual budget. This fund helps negotiate variances from year to year and is replenished by transfers from the General Fund periodically.

Friends at Representative Meeting expressed support for the proposal brought by the Finance Committee. It will be presented to the Annual Meeting for a decision. The proposal follows:

Proposed edits to LEYM Policies and Procedures from LEYM Finance Committee (10/27/2023)

LEYM Policies and Procedures excerpts related to FWCC travel funds and the general Travel Fund, pulled from *Policies and Procedures* dated 10-2022

[Italicized notes represent comments by Finance Committee]

III. ORGANIZATION

D. Representatives to Quaker Organizations

2. Organizations and Related Information

d. Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas

- 1) Appointees must be members of the Religious Society of Friends.
- 2) Representatives to FWCC have three-year overlapping terms.
- 3) The number of representative positions available is determined by FWCC. FWCC may also co-opt LEYM Friends who are not representatives directly onto its committees.

REPRESENTATIVE MEETING

- 4) In the past, LEYM has sent two representatives to the FWCC Triennials. Naming to future comparable meetings, at whatever interval, will be made according to the allotment assigned to LEYM by FWCC.
- 5) Representatives to FWCC international gatherings are named by the Nominating Committee in consultation with the clerk of LEYM and the clerk of the FWCC Representatives.
- 6) Representatives to FWCC are expected to assist with arrangements for regional meetings or the equivalent whenever they are scheduled. *[re-numbered from #7 to #6]*
- 7) LEYM provides reimbursement funds for representatives' attendance at the annual meeting of the Section of the Americas and international gatherings. **~~In the event that funds are not sufficient to cover costs, funds will be apportioned according to the stated financial needs of the named representatives.~~** *[re-numbered from #6 to #7]*
 - a. **Reimbursement for travel of LEYM's FWCC Representatives to regional FWCC gatherings and the annual meeting of the Section of the Americas comes from the Travel Fund (subject to the guidelines described in section IV. A. 3. b., below).** *[This is a clarification requested by Finance Committee that brings into LEYM Policies & Procedures existing guidance from the LEYM Financial Manual]*
 - b. **Reimbursement for travel of LEYM's FWCC Representatives to World Plenary Meetings of the Friends World Committee for Consultation comes from the FWCC Travel Fund.** *[this is a clarification requested by Finance Committee]*
 - i. **Reimbursable expenses include registration, travel, food, and lodging.** *[This is a clarification requested by Finance Committee]*
 - ii. **In the event that funds are not sufficient to cover costs, funds will be apportioned**

according to the stated needs of the named representatives.

IV. OPERATIONS

A. Financial Support and Fiscal Policy

2. Budget

- a. The Lake Erie Yearly Meeting budget covers costs necessary for the functioning of the Yearly Meeting, such as publications, travel expenses for officers and representatives to Friends' organizations, office administration, and the Yearly Meeting's contribution to Friends General Conference.
- b. The annual budget should include a proportional amount of the estimated travel expenses for two delegates to attend World Plenary Meetings of the Friends World Committee for Consultation. This money is transferred into the FWCC Travel Fund, where it builds until requested by LEYM representatives attending these meetings. Currently an equal amount is budgeted to support enabling Friends from less affluent parts of the world to attend these World Plenary Meetings; this latter amount is transferred into the FWCC Travel Donation Fund.
- c. Yearly Meeting limits contributions to Friends' extra-regional organizations to Friends General Conference. Monthly meetings and individuals are encouraged to contribute directly to other Friends' organizations. On occasion, Friends' groups within the geographical area of the Yearly Meeting may receive financial support upon approval of the Yearly Meeting. All requests for Yearly Meeting funds must be brought to the Finance Committee, which will decide whether to bring them to Annual Sessions.

REPRESENTATIVE MEETING

3. Expense Reporting and Reimbursement

- a. Yearly Meeting officers, representatives, and committee members are asked to submit to the treasurer reports of out-of-pocket and in-kind expenses such as travel, long distance telephone charges, and postage, so that the cost of conducting Yearly Meeting business may be accurately known.
- b. **Travel Fund**
 - i. Yearly Meeting officers and representatives to Friends' organizations may receive reimbursement for travel expenses for business on behalf of the Yearly Meeting and for attendance at meetings of Friends' organizations. A committee member may be reimbursed for unusual expenses incurred on behalf of the Yearly Meeting if the presiding clerk provides written approval in advance. A copy of the Travel Expense Reporting Form appears in Appendix E.
 - ii. The principal travel cost to be reimbursed is the transportation itself; **however, this fund may also be used for event registration.** *[This is a change/clarification requested by Finance Committee**]*
 - iii. If a Friend drives and requests reimbursement, the amount is calculated on a per-mile basis. The current reimbursement rate, approved in 2022, is 22¢ per mile. Any change to this rate is part of the budgeting process, proposed by Finance Committee and requiring approval by the Yearly Meeting.
 - iv. Friends are expected to cover their own food costs **and lodging costs (or-and**, whenever possible, to arrange lodging with Friends in the area of travel). *[This is a clarification requested by Finance Committee]*
 - v. However, the intent of the Yearly Meeting is that no one be excluded from representing Lake Erie Yearly Meeting because of limited financial resources; thus, individuals may request reimbursement for additional travel-related expenses or take them as a tax-deductible contribution to the Yearly Meeting.

- vi. **For special travel needs of Friends within the Yearly Meeting relating to Quaker work, the presiding clerk, the treasurer, and the clerk of the Finance Committee will consult with one another, and the presiding clerk will respond. Other officers, other committee clerks, and other members of the Finance committee may be consulted as needed.** *[This language was approved by Yearly Meeting as YM13-34, but was not previously represented in LEYM Policies & Procedures]*
- c. Monthly meetings are responsible for travel expenses of their representatives to Yearly Meeting who attend Representative Meeting or Annual Meeting.

Finance Committee notes the following actual reimbursements from LEYM travel funds **for event registration costs in recent years:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>\$ amount</u>	<u>Event</u>
2023-2024	\$299.00	FGC Central Committee (shared cost with attendees)
2022-2023	\$70.00	FGC Central Committee (shared cost with attendee)
2021-2022	\$62.00	FGC Central Committee (shared cost with attendee)
2018-2019	\$325.00	FCNL Annual Meeting
2018-2019	\$250.00	FWCC Section of the Americas Meeting
2016-2017	\$500.00	FWCC Section of the Americas Meeting

Finance Committee suggests that making event registration cost an explicitly named acceptable use of travel funds would be a simplification (i.e., would eliminate the need to use the “special travel” request approval process described in section IV. A. 3. b. vi. above), with the understanding that the change could result in increased reimbursements from the fund.

REPRESENTATIVE MEETING

The business session of Representative Meeting closed at 1:35 pm with worship.

Susan Loucks, Clerk
Peggy Daub, Recording Clerk

Documents appended (see above):
Financial Statements
Draft Budget for 2023-24

LEYM Annual Meeting Minutes and Reports June 13-16, 2024

Sessions were held in a blended (hybrid) format with many participants in person at Ashland University, Ashland, Ohio, and a few online.

Clerks' table: Susan Loucks (Pittsburgh), clerk; Peggy Daub (Ann Arbor), recording clerk

Session 1: Thursday, June 13, 2024, 7:30pm – 9:00pm

YM 2024-01 Opening and reading of Epistle

Friends settled into waiting worship at 7:30 pm. Clerk Susan Loucks welcomed Friends and expressed her joy at gathering together, mindful of both our history and our future. She acknowledged the many gatherings that have been held on this land before we met here, including those of the Kaskaskia people.

Thomas Taylor (Ann Arbor) read an epistle from the newly formed Central European Yearly Meeting. Fifty Friends from 11 countries met in Budapest, Hungary. They arose from previous groups known as Border Meeting, Quaker Spring Regional Gathering, and Central European Gathering, and now define themselves as a yearly meeting. They heard about key threads of Quakerism from Ben Pink Dandelion, learned about the archiving of their own history, accepted greetings from other Friends groups, and acknowledged the story they are writing as they continue gathering and growing. [The full text of this and other epistles read at these sessions may be found at https://fwcc.world/resources_cpt/epistles/.]

ANNUAL MEETING

Susan thanked three Friends who volunteered to hold this session in Light. Other Friends will continue this practice as our sessions proceed.

YM 2024-02 Program Committee: Bill Warters reported

Bill Warters (Birmingham) welcomed Friends back to Ashland and reminded us of the tornado warning that occurred at our first session here in 2023. With our theme this year, “Friends Together: Outpouring of Spirit,” Paulette Meier will appropriately share her experiences of Spirit by pouring out song with us. Bill briefly described many of the activities to come this weekend. He invited Friends to explore the campus and town as well as all that Friends will share through workshops, display tables, “birds of a feather” groups, the children and youth program, and more. Friends were invited to have breakfast in “anchor groups” each day. A new convenience this year is a mobile app. Bill also shared some statistics from the registration information: There are a total of 116 registrants for Annual Meeting, including 17 first-time participants. Twelve youth (up to age 18) are registered. Registrants come from 14 Monthly Meetings and one Worship Group within our Yearly Meeting, and from nine states.

YM 2024-03 Roll Call (numbers determined from registration figures)

Akron	1	Kalamazoo	8
Ann Arbor	11	Kent	0
Athens	9	Mid-Ohio Valley	0
Birmingham	7	North Columbus	9
Broadmead	14	Oberlin	4
Cleveland	9	Pittsburgh	11
Delaware	0	Red Cedar	5
Detroit	4	Wooster	3
Grand Rapids	1	Erie Worship Group	1
Granville	0	LEYM (no Meeting)	6
Holland	0	Other	11

First-time attenders were asked to introduce themselves. We welcomed: Paulette Meier, Community Friends Meeting, Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting; Zoe Jannuzi, AFSC; Eli Koehn, Athens; Alexa Lake, Pittsburgh; Dennis Gregg, Ann Arbor; Rick Thomas, Ann Arbor; Karla Kauffman, Kalamazoo; Jerry and Ann Becker, friends of Paulette Meier; Liz Olson, North Columbus; Don Badgley, Poughkeepsie Friends Meeting, New York Yearly Meeting; Vickey and Steve Finger, Cleveland; Nathan Kleban, Right Sharing of World Resources, Iowa City Friends Meeting, Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative).

Friends were asked to remember and hold in prayer the following absent or deceased Friends: Terry Grant and Sue Emert, Red Cedar; Joyce Balderston, Wooster; Retta and Asghar Aghbar, Pittsburgh; Ellen and Marvin Barnes, Detroit; Margaret Walden and the late Leslie Walden, Cleveland.

YM 2024-04 Epistle Committee

The clerk invited Friends to consider whether they are led to serve on a committee to write an epistle documenting this 2024 gathering of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting. Friends **approved** the following people to serve: Alexa Lake (Pittsburgh), Wink Covintree (Birmingham), and Flo Friender (Kalamazoo).

YM 2024-05 Thomas Taylor (Ann Arbor) reported on what he has learned about moving one's body.

Thomas invited us to welcome three virtual guests: 1) His grandmother, Margaret Fox Bentley Nicholson, whom he last saw in 1951, when she was 83 and mostly sitting. Thomas invited Friends to be mindful of the health dangers of sitting, and then to stand on toes and heels, one leg and then the other. 2) Henry Cadbury, the renowned Quaker scholar who led hiking and nature study in the Adirondacks during Thomas's youth, but died in a fall in his own home, reminding us of how we lose our balancing ability as we age. 3) Our inner physical selves (as he wore clothing showing skeletal structure), the underpinning of

ANNUAL MEETING

our whole being. He found it important to worship without sitting during the time of COVID. He invited Friends to join him at lunch to consider the following queries: 1) What have we learned during the time of COVID, political division, and the persistence of misinformation? and 2) What did I do for physical education as I grew up? What would I rather have done to learn about my body?

YM 2024-06 Memorial Minute

Janet Dando (Akron) read a memorial minute for Adele Looney (Akron). The full text will be available in the *Annual Records* and on the LEYM website.

YM 2024-07 Naming Committee: Ellerie Brownfain reported

Members of the Naming Committee are Ellerie Brownfain (Birmingham), Nancy Taylor (Ann Arbor), and David Finke (Oberlin). They have been meeting for some months seeking Friends to serve on the Nominating Committee but have so far identified just one person to bring forward. Ellerie invited Friends to consider whether they feel led to serve in this way.

YM 2024-08 Announcements from the Clerk

Susan invited Friends to read advance documents before upcoming sessions. She also noted that the position of LEYM Database Manager is available as a paid position, and applicants are invited.

Session 2: Friday, June 14, 2024, 10:30am – 12:00pm

Before the business session, the clerk invited committee clerks or a representative from committees to give a brief overview of their activities. Friends then had 15 minutes in which they could choose a few committees they wanted to know more about and visit the designated sites in the room.

YM 2024-09 Worship and reading of Epistle

From centering worship, Thomas Taylor read an epistle from South Central Yearly Meeting, which met in Bruceville, Texas, in March 2024. Friends met online for part of the week, noting how this useful practice has continued after the COVID epidemic, followed by sessions in person later in the week. They found a sense of unity and togetherness by reading excerpts from State of the Meeting reports, and from the epistles of other groups of Friends. Their keynote speaker, Pamela Haines, challenged them to “show up in service to the sacred,” recognizing that all moments, places, and people are sacred, but can be desecrated.

YM 2024-10 Treasurer’s Report: Tom Kangas reported

LEYM treasurer Tom Kangas (North Columbus) led us on a tour of the Meeting’s current financial situation. He thanked Detroit Monthly Meeting and their treasurer, Peter Dale, for acting as recipient of registration fees for our Annual Meeting. The bank used by the company whose software we used for registration would not send the funds directly to LEYM because we lack an official letter from the IRS stating that we are a 501(c)(3) organization. Detroit Meeting’s 501(c)(3) status has been certified by the IRS. The Finance Committee will consider whether obtaining such a letter should be pursued. Friends echoed gratitude to Detroit Meeting.

The financial balance of the Annual Meeting Fund is sound, as projected through the end of the fiscal year (June 30). With a small increase in fees and a slightly higher number of Friends attending, plus generous donations from Wooster Monthly Meeting and individual Friends, it is projected that just \$2,000 will be needed to subsidize the fund, substantially less than the amount we allotted.

The overall condition of Yearly Meeting finances is healthy. We have a reliable revenue stream from our monthly meetings and

ANNUAL MEETING

we budget conservatively. All meetings have contributed and we are grateful for their support. Expenses were about \$10,000 lower than projected in the budget.

The full report and financial statement follow.

Treasurer's report to LEYM Annual Sessions June 14, 2024

Figures presented are actual through Wednesday, June 11th, plus projected activity through year end.

Online Registration for Annual Meeting

- Gratitude to the Arrangements & Site committee in general and to Bill Wartens in particular, who got us set up with the RegFox online registration system
- Gratitude to Detroit Monthly Meeting in general and to their treasurer, Peter Dale, in particular, who came to Lake Erie Yearly Meeting's aid when we got into a situation with the payment processor for the RegFox system
- The situation was:
 - The very large bank that is currently processing payments for RegFox was perfectly happy to collect funds from the Yearly Meeting registrants who chose to pay online (about 2/3 of attenders)
 - The bank, however, would not release any of the collected funds to the Yearly Meeting because we had no letter certifying our 501(c)(3) status
 - The only place to obtain such a letter is from the IRS — a process that takes effort, time, and money—and which in the IRS' view is not actually required because...
 - The IRS views LEYM as an "association of churches," which categorically and automatically is a 501(c)(3)—no documentation required
- Gratitude again to Bill Wartens for connecting LEYM with Detroit Friends Meeting which has a Letter of Determination from the IRS.
- Detroit was able to step into the gap between the very large bank and LEYM and be the official recipient of LEYM's registration funds.

- Detroit's process is then to send a check to LEYM for the funds they have received on our behalf.

Annual Meeting Fund

- Income
 - Registration: At \$22K, this amount is greater than last year by \$2500
 - Donations: At \$2K, this amount is greater than last year by \$1000 — due to receipt of a one-time donation from Wooster MM for \$1500
- Expenses
 - Facilities and meals at Ashland Univ: This is of course the big expense; it's projected to be \$23K, just slightly higher than last year
 - Other: Projecting these other costs including honoraria etc. to be down just slightly overall compared to last year
- Break-even
 - A few more people than last year and rates were raised a bit
 - So we came closer to breaking even than we did last year— within about \$1000
 - To compare: last year's deficit prior to the subsidy was \$4700
- Subsidy
 - A year ago we approved a subsidy for this weekend's Annual Meeting of as much as \$5000
 - Finance Committee's goal is to leave the Annual Meeting Fund with a balance of \$3000
 - The actual subsidy can be a little less; it needs to be only \$2000 this year to get us there

Overall assessment

- Lake Erie Yearly Meeting is financially healthy
- The revenue stream from our member Monthly Meetings is reliable
- We budgeted conservatively
- Our actual results were well under budget

General Fund

ANNUAL MEETING

Income

- Have received payments from all MMs—hooray!
- We are grateful for these contributions from MMs and also for contributions to the GF received from individuals!
- Dividend income from investments held by Friends Fiduciary Corp are also shown here

Expenses

- All of the variances of actual expenses compared to the budget are favorable—and some are large
- Database Manager expense is only 43% of budget
- Digital Communications Facilitator expense is projected to be only 64% of budget
- Committees are under budget—Publications & Archives is at 78% of budget
- Annual Meeting subsidy—as previously mentioned—was only 40% of original budget
- All told, we spent less than originally budgeted by \$10K

LEYM Funds

- General Fund
 - Already discussed but this page shows that the fund is likely to end the year at the high end of its desired range due, in part, to the contribution of \$6K of Friends Fiduciary Fund activity so far this year (which is part dividends and part change in investment market value)
- Annual Meeting Fund
 - Already discussed; leaving this fund with a balance at its desired ceiling
- Youth Activities and Spiritual Formation Funds
 - Activity in these funds reflects retreats held this year
- FWCC Travel Fund
 - This activity is related to LEYM's FWCC representative's travel to Johannesburg this coming August for a World Plenary session
 - Not absolutely certain these expenditures will all happen in this fiscal year but, if not, they will happen soon

- FWCC Travel Donation
 - This fund was fully expended with a transfer to FWCC for their use in helping others to travel to the World Plenary

LEYM Balance Sheet

- LEYM has its funds with two institutions
 - Citizen National Bank of Bluffton
 - Friends Fiduciary Corporation
- FFC holds 2/3 of LEYM's treasury, and activity includes:
 - Dividends which are steady and happen in December and June
 - Change in investment market value which is unpredictable
 - I didn't try to project change in market value for quarter ending June 30, 2024
 - The 9% change in market value seen here comes from activity through March 2024

See financial statement on pp. 40 – 43.

YM 2024-11 Finance Committee, 2024–25 Budget: Joann Neuroth reported

The Finance Committee consists of Joann Neuroth (Red Cedar), Aran Reinhart (Broadmead), and Ellen Barnes (Detroit). Joann noted that, as usual, a “friendly audit” was done of LEYM financial records. Terry Grant (Red Cedar) did the audit this year and noted that the records kept by our treasurer are in good order and a pleasure to review.

The Committee presented a draft budget:

- Expected expenses for next year were slightly lowered, based on this year's experiences.
- Contributions to Olney Friends School and Friends General Conference were slightly raised.
- There is still a subsidy for the Annual Meeting, to help us keep registration fees low.
- The per-member expected contribution is proposed to be the same as it was this year, \$42.00.

A question was raised about whether the Arrangements & Site Committee's discussion of where we will meet in the future was taken into consideration. Caroline Lejuste (Red Cedar) reported that we plan to return to Ashland University again next year.

A Friend asked the Finance Committee to consider using a Black-owned bank, noting Red Cedar Meeting recently moved to this practice.

YM 2024-12 Finance Committee, Proposed Changes to Travel Policy: Joann Neuroth (Red Cedar) reported

The Committee brought a proposal to change our policy for travel reimbursement. For International Travel for FWCC, we use the FWCC Travel Fund to cover all associated costs of travel. Other people who travel on behalf of LEYM are reimbursed from the Travel Fund, with only actual travel costs covered in current practice. The Committee proposed that reimbursement from the Travel Fund change to include registration and lodging as well as travel costs when Friends travel on behalf of the Yearly Meeting. A clarification was added that this proposal would not affect how the fund to assist Friends in attending conferences with Quaker Values is used. Friends **approved** the proposal from Finance Committee to add reimbursement of registration and lodging costs, as well as travel costs, for Friends who travel on behalf of the Yearly Meeting.

(The necessary changes to *Policies & Procedures* to reflect this change of policy are in a document on pp. 66 – 78.)

YM 2024-13 Nominating Committee: Rick Adams (North Columbus) reported

The Nominating Committee reported that they are bringing Joe Mills's (Kalamazoo) name forward to serve as clerk of the Yearly Meeting for one year (2024–25). They will continue to strive to return to our regular cycle of a clerk and assistant clerk, who will each serve four years in a staggered sequence. In the

absence of an assistant clerk, Executive Committee has agreed to cover the basic duties of that position. Other vacancies in the slate were noted. Rick asked whether the absence of someone ready and able to serve as clerk of our Yearly Meeting might be seen as an opportunity for us to consider where our energies as a Yearly Meeting are leading us.

YM 2024-14 Memorial Minutes

Dotty Stratton and Mike Hinshaw (both Wooster) read memorial minutes for Phil Balderston, John Holliger, and Evelyn Kirkhart, all of Wooster Monthly Meeting. The full texts will be available in the *Annual Records* and on the LEYM website.

ANNUAL MEETING

LEYM General Fund Expenses - with comparison to Budget

For the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year (12 months ending June 30, 2024) as forecasted 6/12/2024

Account	Actual Expense through 6/30/2024	Budget (annual)	Actual expense as a % of Budget	Variance, budget-to- actual, favorable (unfavorable)
Operations				
Contract Worker: Database Manager	1,838.16	4,320	43%	2,482
Contract Worker: Digital Comm Facil'r	4,157.82	6,500	64%	2,342
Insurance	597.00	650	92%	53
Office/administration	478.44	1,200	40%	722
Committees				
Advancement & Outreach	-	100	0%	100
Ministry & Nurture	-	100	0%	100
Publications	2,722.28	3,500	78%	778
Members				
Attend conference w/ Quaker values	-	600	0%	600
Organizations				
Friends General Conference	6,000.00	6,000	100%	-
Olney Friends School	3,000.00	3,000	100%	-
Swarthmore records project	150.00	150	100%	-
Subtotal cash expenditures	18,944	26,120	73%	7,176
Transfers from General Fund to other Funds				
Annual Meeting Fund	5,000.00	5,000	100%	-
Travel Fund	1,000.00	1,000	100%	-
Quaker College/Service Scholarship Fund	-	-	-	-
FWCC Travel Fund & Donation	1,800.00	1,800	100%	-
Subtotal Transfers	7,800.00	7,800		-
Totals - General Fund Expenses	26,743.70	33,920	79%	7,176

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting – Financial Position

For the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year (12 months ending June 30, 2024)

Location of monetary assets	Beginning Balance as of 7/1/2023	Change in balance during the fiscal year	Ending Balance as of 6/30/2024 as forecasted 8/12/2024
The Citizens National Bank of Bluffton, OH			
Checking Account	7,373.51	(3,459.56)	3,913.95
Savings Account	18,525.00	(821.45)	17,703.55
Subtotal of both CNB accounts	25,898.51	(4,281.01)	21,617.50
Friends Fiduciary Corporation, Philadelphia, PA *			
General (Base) Account	49,160.39	5,199.10	54,359.49
Activity • Dividends Paid (and reinvested)		1,004.72	
includes: • Change in Portfolio Value, + or -		4,194.38	
Granville Youth Fund Account	8,713.26	733.53	9,446.79
Activity • Dividends Paid		178.27	
includes: • Change in Portfolio Value + or -		733.53	
• Dividends disbursed by FFC to LEYM, recorded to Youth Activity Fund		(178.27)	
Subtotal of both FFC accounts	57,873.65	5,932.63	63,806.28
Total monetary assets	83,772.16	1,651.62	85,423.78

Notation: Prepaid Expenses

Ashland Univ credit to be carried over to Jun 2024 Anni Mtg	45.00	-	45.00
UCCIR deposit for Youth Activities retreat, Sept 2024	775.00	-	775.00
Weber Ctr deposit for Spiritual Formation retreat, Sep 2024	150.00	-	150.00
	970.00	-	970.00

* Note: All of the funds with Friends Fiduciary Corporation are invested in FFC's Quaker Growth & Income Fund (QGIF).

The Quaker Growth & Income Fund is a diversified, co-mingled fund with allocations to equities, fixed income and real estate investment trusts (REITs). Its primary objective is to provide stable current income and long-term growth consistent with protecting principal investments against inflation over time. The fund adheres to Friends Fiduciary's Quaker-values investment guidelines and participates in our shareholder advocacy work. It is intended for investors with an investment horizon of five years or longer. The fund has a standard income distribution policy based on the fund's total return.

Source: friendsfiduciary.org, 06/30/2024

HOLDINGS BY ASSET CLASS	Equity	Fixed Income	REITS
Global and International Equity	24.3%		
Small and Mid Cap Equity	17.9%		
Large Cap Equity	30.4%		
Fixed Income (Domestic, Global, Short-Term, plus Cash)		22.7%	4.7%
	72.6%	22.7%	4.7%

ANNUAL MEETING

LEYM Summary of Funds for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024							Floor	Ceiling
Fund Name	Beginning Balance as of 7/1/2023	Friends Fiduciary account activity ¹	Transfers between funds	Cash Income	Cash Expense	Subtotal: activity for current fiscal year	Ending Balance as of 6/30/2024 as forecasted 6/12/2024	Suggested floor/ceiling amounts for each fund
Funds held in (I) Base account with Friends Fiduciary Corp and (II) Citizens National Bank								
General Fund ²	26,560.44	5,199.10	(7,800.00)	26,845.55	(18,943.70)	5,300.95	31,861.39	na 35,000
Annual Meeting Fund	2,509.18		5,000.00	24,345.03	(25,074.33)	4,270.70	6,779.88	1,000 5,000
Travel Fund	3,025.70		1,000.00	500.00	(1,790.45)	(290.45)	2,745.25	2,000 4,000
Youth Activities Fund ⁴	6,464.70		(358.98)	970.00	(1,447.55)	(836.53)	5,628.17	4,000 8,000
Quaker Coll/Svc Schol Fund	4,000.00		-	-	-	-	4,000.00	2,000 4,000
HS Teen Retreat Fund	6,892.64				-	-	6,892.64	2,000 6,000
Ministry Scholarship Fund	1,649.00				-	-	1,649.00	na 2,000
Spiritual Formation Fund	4,043.59		(50.00)	5,503.76	(7,113.59)	(1,659.83)	2,383.76	500 2,000
Consultation Fund	3,143.68					-	3,143.68	500 2,000
Traveling Ministries Fund	3,500.00					-	3,500.00	na na
Work Projects Fund	2,182.39					-	2,182.39	na 2,000
FWCC Travel Fund	7,129.83		900.00	-	(3,754.00)	(2,854.00)	4,285.83	na 9,000
FWCC Travel Donation	3,600.00		900.00		(4,500.00)	(3,600.00)	-	na 9,000
Funds held in separate account with Friends Fiduciary Corp								
Granville Youth Fund ³	8,713.26	911.80	(178.27)			733.53	9,446.79	na na
Funds held by others - see Statement of Financial Position								
Prepaid Expense	337.75	-	587.25	-		587.25	925.00	na na
TOTAL	83,772.16	6,110.90	-	58,164.34	(62,623.62)	1,651.62	85,423.78	

NOTES> Funds other than the General Fund are managed through accounting and may be subsidized from the General Fund.
¹ Friends Fiduciary Corp (FFC) activity includes dividends and net change portfolio value due to market conditions. See Balance Sheet for detail.
² FFC General (Base) Account activity is included here in LEYM's General Fund.
³ Granville Friends Youth Fund is a separate FFC account. FFC activity shown on this line reflects only that fund's change in portfolio value.
⁴ FFC dollars transferred to this line represent dividends paid to the Granville Friends Youth Fund during current fiscal year and credited to YAF.
⁵ Established in FY13-14 by a donation toward LEYM's Traveling Ministry Program, this fund has had no activity from inception to date.

LEYM General Fund Income

As of 6/30/2024 forecasted 6/12/2024

For the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year (12 months ending June 30, 2024)

Contribution From	Amount	Deposit Date			
Akron Monthly Meeting	250	12/17/2023			
Ann Arbor Monthly Meeting	5,124	2/6/2024			
Athens Monthly Meeting	2,000	10/22/2023			
Birmingham Monthly Meeting	588	10/24/2023			
Broadmead Monthly Meeting	1,500	12/18/2023			
Cleveland Monthly Meeting	1,680	1/15/2024			
Delaware Monthly Meeting	75	4/18/2024			
Detroit Monthly Meeting	924	1/15/2024			
Grand Rapids Monthly Meeting	504	1/15/2024			
Granville Monthly Meeting	966	5/3/2024			
Holland Monthly Meeting	200	12/17/2023			
Kalamazoo Monthly Meeting	910	3/30/2024			
Kent Monthly Meeting	714	9/9 & 11/18/23			
Mid-Ohio Valley Monthly Meeting	180	2/3/2024			
North Columbus Monthly Meeting	1,260	11/12/2023			
Oberlin Monthly Meeting	1,050	2/21/2024			
Pittsburgh Monthly Meeting	4,914	2/24/2024			
Red Cedar Monthly Meeting	2,856	1/17/2024			
Wooster Monthly Meeting	546	1/19/2024			
Subtotal - contributing MM or WG	26,241		Expected, per budget	Actual as a % of Budget	Variance, favorable (unfavorable)
			27,510	95%	(1,269)
Individuals - via check	100				
Individuals - via FFC online	450				
Interest income from Savings Acct	55				
Total Cash Contribution Income	26,846		In-kind	Total contribution income	
			+	-	26,846
FFC Dividend Income (Base Acct only)	1,005				
Total Income	27,850				(cash income, excluding in-kind)

ANNUAL MEETING

LEYM Budgets		History					
		FY 2020-21		FY 2021-22		FY 2022-23	
General Fund Expenses		Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
General	Contractor: Database Manager	1,400	2,905	2,500	2,898	3,900	2,828
	Contractor: Digital Comm Facil'r	3,100	4,237	5,100	5,570	6,200	4,996
	Insurance	500	500	500	597	650	597
	Administration	3,500	2,077	1,500	677	1,500	1,035
Committees	Advancement & Outreach	500	-	500	-	500	-
	Ministry & Nurture	50	-	100	-	100	-
	Publications	3,200	2,476	3,200	3,393	3,500	2,876
Members	Attend conf w/ Quaker values	1,000	400	1,000	-	600	-
Organizations	FGC	6,000	6,000	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500
	Olney Friends School	3,000	3,000	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500
	Swarthmore Records Project	100	100	150	150	150	150
	Detroit mtg hse contribution			1,000	1,000	-	-
Transfers from	Travel Fund	2,957	2,957	1,200	1,200	-	-
General Fund	Quaker Coll/Svc Sch'ship Fund	2,000	2,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
to...	Annual Meeting subsidy	-	-	-	-	10,000	6,100
	FWCC Travel Fund (& Donation)	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800
Total Expenses and Transfers =		29,107	28,453	29,550	28,285	39,900	31,382
General Fund Income							
	Contributions Income	21,750	21,460	17,875	18,780	26,005	25,390
	FFC Div Inc (Base Acct only)	1,000	1,474	1,000	1,728	1,500	1,916
Total Income =		22,750	22,934	18,875	20,508	27,505	27,306
Income - (Expenses and Transfers) =		(6,357)	(5,520)	(10,675)	(7,777)	(12,395)	(4,076)
FFC chg in portfolio value (Base)			11,272		(8,859)		2,815
Subtotal Other Changes in General Fund =			11,272		(8,859)		2,815
Total Change in General Fund =			5,753		(16,636)		(1,261)
# members used to produce above estimate =		725		715		743	
Suggested contribution per member =		\$30		\$25		\$35	
Travel reimbursement, with limits, rate per mile =		\$ 0.17		\$ 0.16		\$ 0.22	

ANNUAL MEETING

LEYM Budgets

*Budget approved 06/16/2023

**Forecasted year-end actual as of 6/12/2024

***Budget approved 06/15/2024

		FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25	
General Fund Expenses		*Budget	**Actual	***Budget	Change
General	Contractor: Database Manager	4,320	1,838	3,575	(745)
	Contractor: Digital Comm Facil'r	6,500	4,158	5,775	(725)
	Insurance	650	597	650	-
	Administration	1,200	478	1,100	(100)
Committees	Advancement & Outreach	100	-	100	-
	Ministry & Nurture	100	-	100	-
	Publications	3,500	2,722	3,500	-
Members	Attend conf w/ Quaker values	600	-	500	(100)
Organizations	FGC	6,000	6,000	6,200	200
	Olney Friends School	3,000	3,000	3,100	100
	Swarthmore Records Project	150	150	150	-
Tranfers from General Fund to...	Travel Fund	1,000	1,000	1,500	500
	Quaker Coll/Svc Sch'ship Fund	-	-	-	-
	Annual Meeting subsidy	5,000	5,000	5,000	-
	FWCC Travel Fund (& Donation)	1,800	1,800	1,800	-
Total Expenses and Transfers =		33,920	26,744	33,050	(870)
General Fund Income					
	Contributions Income	27,510	26,846	27,510	-
	FFC Div Inc (Base Acct only)	1,500	1,005	2,000	500
Total Income =		29,010	27,850	29,510	500
Income - (Expenses and Transfers) =		(4,910)	1,107	(3,540)	1,370
FFC chg in portfolio value (Base)			4,194		
Subtotal Other Changes in General Fund =			4,194		
Total Change in General Fund =			5,301		
# members used to produce above estimate =		655		655	
Suggested contribution per member =		\$42		\$42	
Travel reimbursement, with limits, rate per mile =		\$ 0.22		\$ 0.21	

Session 3: Friday, June 14, 2024, 1:15pm – 3:15pm

YM 2024-15 Worship and reading of Epistle

From settling worship, Thomas Taylor read the epistle from Young Adult Friends of New York Yearly Meeting, who met at the Quaker United Nations Office in February 2024. After learning about the work of QUNO staff and discussing their project, “Youth, Peace, and Inclusion,” the group created two calls to action. The first is to organize an online meeting for YAFs globally who are interested in the work of QUNO. The second is a call to Friends everywhere to actively seek out young voices and listen deeply to their concerns. They identified a hunger among YAFs to be engaged in Quaker life, institutions, and process, and asked Friends to nurture this enthusiasm.

YM 2024-16 Clerk Susan Loucks invited further newcomers or representatives of organizations who have not yet done so to introduce themselves. Zoe Januzzi of AFSC spoke of her work with the Palestine Activism Program and invited Friends to join weekly online meetings for worship. Joann Neuroth said she represented the School of the Spirit’s ministry program at our sessions, and will be leading a new program entitled “God’s Promise Fulfilled,” which begins in 2025. Nathan Kleban of Right Sharing of World Resources invited Friends to attend a workshop he is giving today and join him at lunch tomorrow. Cassie Cammann (Ann Arbor) spoke of her work with Friends Peace Teams.

YM 2024-17 Worshipful Discernment: God’s purpose for LEYM this year

Susan Loucks, clerk, introduced our remaining work in this business session as being to consider how God is leading us as a Yearly Meeting. She recognized that it is difficult to discern this issue if we are not all aware of the current work and activities of the Yearly Meeting. We need to go forward with constant

attention to this question and she expects we will gain proficiency and comfort with it as we go along. Susan also shared the idea of “holy indifference,” in which we might move from the ideas and beliefs we hold as individuals to an attitude of not caring about things for oneself but what is good for all of us or the organization.

Friends were invited to share one- or two-word phrases to characterize their monthly meeting, and then to name the themes and trends among what was just heard. Those two questions were to help us understand what is going on in the rest of Yearly Meeting.

From worship sharing, Friends were invited to name one good thing our LEYM committees can do to respond to the current realities of our meetings. Susan read a list of items from yesterday’s LEYM Executive Committee, noting what they observed about our Yearly Meeting. Finally, in answer to the query “What is God calling LEYM to do in the next year?” the following items were named:

- It may not matter so much what we do but what is God calling us to be
- To create a place where Monthly Meetings and their people can feel welcome and explore, see people they don’t see every day, go deeper, rest with each other, and support each other
- To reach out to the world from a spiritually grounded space
- To be a connector, a conduit; to continue this discernment and discussion using our fabulous technology to bring meetings together
- To explain Yearly Meeting functions to our membership
- To share the news that Quakers exist

(Friends’ responses to the queries of briefly characterizing our Monthly Meetings, seeing themes from those answers, and identifying what LEYM committees might do to address the

needs of local Meetings are shared in enclosed reports, pp. 64–66.)

Session 4: Saturday, June 15, 2024, 1:15pm – 3:15pm

Before this business session, people who serve LEYM as representatives to other organizations shared information in an interactive panel format. Representatives and their reports were:

- Don Buckingham (North Columbus), Friends Peace Teams are intended to go into places where trauma has happened, especially from war, and help them heal. FPT welcomes feedback from Yearly Meetings to a query they recently formulated: What sustains our faith in justice and peace in the face of war and violence?
- Bill Warters (Birmingham), AFSC has now settled into its plan for 2020–2030; they will focus on peace and justice work. There is a strong program working in prisons in Michigan in which Bill participates. AFSC works internationally (Gaza) and on national issues (military area in Georgia). There is a policy allowing staff to participate in civil disobedience. Recently, AFSC changed their structure to focus on thematic areas, rather than regional work; they overcame the difficulties of change by hard laboring and careful listening. The terrible situation in Gaza and their care for and involvement there is a great challenge.
- John Howell (Athens), FCNL is a presence for Friends in Washington, DC, where they advocate for peace and sustainability. Last year, FCNL struggled to address abortion and reproductive rights, but they achieved a unified statement. There are advocacy teams in various parts of our Yearly Meeting that actively do lobbying. The Spring Lobby Day and paid internship programs offer opportunities for young Friends. It is extraordinary to watch a group of 100 people laboring together over a difficult issue of deep concern to all. The challenge for FCNL is to find a way a group that

aspires to visionary change can work with politicians, who serve at the will of the people and are very aware of the whims of public opinion.

- Clémence Ravaçon-Mershon (Erie), FWCC is now beginning a capital campaign for FWCC. Later this summer, a World Plenary will be held in South Africa. A new Executive Secretary of the Section of the Americas will be named later this year.

[N.B: See full reports from these representatives below or speak to the representatives for more information.]

The clerk invited anyone else to speak briefly about other organizations they wanted to bring to our attention.

- Jim Morgan (Pittsburgh) spoke of the Bolivian Quaker Education Fund and invited Friends to learn more about Quakers in Bolivia.
- Dennis Gregg (Ann Arbor) spoke about “339 Manumissions and Beyond Project,” which has a mission to restore genealogical lines of early Friends who were enslaved and then freed.
- Jana Norlin (Grand Rapids) spoke of the Quaker Religious Education Collaboration.
- Claire Cohen (Pittsburgh) spoke of an informal group of Quakers in Pittsburgh working for peace in Gaza/Israel that will sponsor an event September 5 featuring Joyce Ajlouny and [REDACTED] of AFSC.
- Sally Weaver Sommer (Broadmead) spoke of Right Sharing of World Resources and invited monthly meetings to consider sponsoring a group of women through RSWR, as Broadmead Meeting has now done.
- John Howell (Athens) spoke of the Quaker Institute for the Future, which has focused mainly on sustainability.

YM 2024-18 Worship and reading of Epistle

From the settling silence, Thomas Taylor read an epistle from the 46th General Meeting of Friends in Mexico, who met in May 2024. Together they considered “Living the Spirit of Ubuntu” and concluded that Jesus is perfect, but we are not, but imperfectly we must do the best we can to look for that of God and find strength and wisdom to act and empathize in community. They accepted the challenge of taking care of our biosphere and being the gardeners of our Earth.

YM 2024-19 Announcements

Jonah Brownfain (Birmingham) hopes to meet with other Young Adult Friends. Those in the right age group are invited to contact him. Joe Mills (Kalamazoo) announced that Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting will hold its annual worship and picnic in Quaker Park, Battle Creek, Michigan, on Sunday, August 4. Kalamazoo Meeting will celebrate its 70th anniversary on September 22. All are invited.

YM 2024-20 Finance Committee: Proposal to revise how some funds are used: Joann Neuroth (Red Cedar) reported

The Committee believes that being good stewards of the Yearly Meeting’s resources means they should examine funds that are not being used. They have gathered information and are bringing recommendations regarding three funds that have been unused for many years. They are the Consultation Fund, the High School Teen Retreat Program Fund, and the Traveling Ministries Fund.

The **Consultation Fund** was created by transfers from our General Fund and was last used 13 years ago. It was meant to support gatherings of people from Monthly Meetings working in similar areas (e.g., clerks, members of Ministry and Nurture Committees). The Finance Committee recommends dissolving the fund and returning the balance in it (ca. \$3,100) to the General Fund. In discussion, Friends urged us to continue

thinking about how we can best stay in communication with each other, using all available avenues. We were assured that there are mechanisms for asking for funds outside of the regular budget as need arises. We also recognize that we now have other options beyond meeting in person to consult among ourselves, and that we can approve money to support in-person gatherings as there are leadings for them. A request was made to advertise the availability of the fund more widely.

Friends **approved** keeping the Consultation Fund for 2024–25 and, if it is not needed during that time, laying it down in the next budget. If the fund is laid down, the balance will be returned to the General Fund.

The current balance of nearly \$6,900 in the **High School Teen Retreat Program** was created by transfers from the General Fund. The fund has not been used in ten years. The Finance Committee proposes lowering the ceiling of the fund to \$4,000 and returning the overage to the General Fund. They hope that way will be found to use this fund to support teen activities in the Yearly Meeting. In discussion, it was clarified that youth activities are currently being supported by other funds that are not affected by this proposal.

Friends **approved** lowering the ceiling of the High School Teen Retreat Program Fund to \$4,000 and encouraging teens, parents, and others to identify ways in which the fund could support our teens being Quakers together. The overage currently in the fund (about \$2,900) will be returned to the General Fund.

The **Travelling Ministry Fund** was created by a restricted donation of \$3,500 in 2013–14, with the stated intention that it should be used for “travelling ministry.” The fund has never been used. The Ministry & Nurture Committee has had oversight of the fund since 2015. The Finance Committee recommends that the Advancement & Outreach and the Ministry & Nurture committees consider how to use these funds appropriately. In discussion, Mike Hinshaw (Wooster), who was

treasurer at the time the gift was first made, felt that the original donors would be comfortable with the Yearly Meeting changing how the money is used. We believe the intent was to support Friends from within LEYM who wish to engage in travelling ministry.

Friends **approved** asking our Advancement & Outreach and Ministry & Nurture committees to consider appropriate uses for this fund.

[The Finance Committee's documentation of their research on this topic, with their proposals, is among the reports following these minutes; see pp. 66–78.]

YM 2024-21 Finance Committee, Budget for 2024–25: Joann Neuroth reported

The budget was brought back for further consideration unchanged from how it was presented at our previous session on Friday.

Friends **approved** the LEYM Budget for 2024–25 as presented by the Finance Committee; see pp. 44–45.

YM 2024-22 Publications and Archives Committee: Jeff Cooper (Ann Arbor) reported

Elise Yoder (Pittsburgh) will compile and edit the *Annual Records* for 2024 for the fourth consecutive year. Christopher Farrand (Cleveland) became editor of the *LEYM Bulletin* mid-year and produced Winter and Spring issues.

The Committee brought forward a proposal to put a version of our 2024 *Annual Records* on the LEYM website. To follow our privacy policy, the Directory and names of children would be removed, and permission would be sought to publish summaries of presentations by the Plenary speaker and others. The changes would require only a little more work and no additional cost beyond the printed version. Friends **approved** the proposal to

put a revised version of the 2024 *LEYM Annual Records* on the LEYM website.

The full report follows.

Publications and Archives Committee Report

All members of the Committee (Rosemary Coffey, Bob Roehm, Peggy Daub, and Jeff Cooper) contributed to preparing and proofreading the *Annual Records*, but it was ably compiled and edited by Elise Yoder, for which we are most grateful. We are pleased to announce that she has agreed to edit the *Annual Records* again this year, for the fourth consecutive edition. As usual, Committee members will be writing summaries of the workshops at this Meeting for the next issue of *Annual Records*.

We started the year without a *Bulletin* editor and had no Fall issue, but then Christopher Farrand offered his services and, after being approved, hit the ground running with a beautiful Winter issue, continuing his high standard in the Spring issue.

Jeff, in particular, strives to keep the *Policies and Procedures* manual up to date as new policies are approved by the Meeting or minor changes in practice are announced by committees. The latest version is posted on the website. Suggestions and comments on all publications are welcome.

Today, the Committee proposes producing, in addition to the printed version of the *Annual Records*, a separate pdf version for posting on the LEYM website. To comply with the Yearly Meeting's privacy policy, we would remove the Directory section, along with names of children (in, for example, the children's epistles). In addition, posting transcriptions or summaries of plenary talks would require obtaining permission from the speaker(s). These changes would require only a little more work and no additional cost, and would, we believe, improve access to the *Annual Records*.

When this proposal was brought to Executive Committee in March, a Friend asked whether Monthly Meetings might have reservations about their State of the Meeting reports appearing on the website.

ANNUAL MEETING

Ministry & Nurture Committee asked this question of Monthly Meetings and heard no concerns.

We are asking the Meeting to make a decision on this recommendation.

Jeff Cooper, clerk of Publications & Archives

LEYM Publications & Archives Committee

Rosemary Coffey, Jeff Cooper (clerk), Peggy Daub, Bob Roehm, Christopher Farrand (ex officio)

YM 2024-23 Executive Committee, Proposed amendments to *Policies and Procedures* on structure: Rick Adams reported

A working group from Executive Committee consisting of Susan Loucks (Pittsburgh), Rick Adams (North Columbus), and Peggy Daub (Ann Arbor) met a few times after Representative Meeting to consider the structure of committees in LEYM and ways in which the description of committees in our *Policies & Procedures* might be changed to allow more flexibility and to acknowledge the reality of how many people are currently able to serve LEYM through committee work. They propose the following:

1. Eliminate requirements for the number of people required on most committees by changing the language to say **suggested** numbers. Thus, language for most committees would change to “Composition: six members suggested, with two named each year.” Affected committees are Advancement & Outreach, Arrangements & Site, Adult Program, Ministry & Nurture, and Nominating. For Publications & Archives, wording would change to “Composition: four members suggested.” This proposal would not affect the Finance Committee or the Youth & Children Program Committee. In discussion, it was clarified that there is already a procedure for adding people to committees between Annual Meetings by seeking the approval of Executive Committee. There is no minimum, but language could be added to say that if there are no more than three members named, the

committee's viability would be examined by Executive Committee.

Friends **approved** having a suggested number of six people serving on most committees rather than a requirement to do so. (Publications & Archives will have a suggested number of four members). When the number of committee members falls to three or fewer, Executive Committee will discern how or whether to cover the work of the Committee.

2. Remove language requiring meetings at certain times from all committee descriptions except Youth & Children. Language already in *Policies and Procedures* is sufficient to cover the expectation that committees meet or communicate as needed to do their work. Friends **approved** this proposal.

3. The working group recommended that we spend time each year at Annual Meeting discerning where the energy of the Yearly Meeting is led, and suggest that committees use that discernment to guide their priorities and activities. This proposal will be brought back for consideration at the next business session.

The full report follows.

Proposed Structural Changes from Subgroup of Executive Committee

We considered information from Representative Meeting, and spent time considering possible new combinations of committees, changing P&P to create more flexibility around existing committees, or redrafting consistent guidance for P&P. We settled on creating more flexibility.

Note: Flexible participation in committees by people who are not officially members is already allowed for in P&P – we encourage continuing and growing use of informal participation, e.g., outsourcing a particular task to an individual. Committees may bring helpers on at their discretion.

The proposals are intended to:

ANNUAL MEETING

- Improve alignment between the slate and the number of available people to fill slots
- Maintain a sense of the “committed core,” with some sense of advance notice if insufficient people are available to support a named function

Proposal 1: Eliminate requirements for number of people required on most committees, changing the language to be suggestions, rather than requirements, including

- Advancement & Outreach (currently 6)
- Earthcare and Peace & Justice (currently 6)
- Two planning subcommittees – Arrangements & Site, Adult Program (both currently 6)
- Ministry & Nurture (currently 6)
- Nominating (currently 6)
- Publications & Archives (currently 4)

Note: we are not recommending a change for Finance, which requires 3 people, or the Youth & Children Program Subcommittee. The latter operates very differently from the description in P&P, and we ask for a volunteer to write new language describing the current practice, but no change is recommended at present.

Suggested replacement wording for the other committees is:

Composition: Six members suggested, with two named each year. If any committee falls to membership of three committed members, it is a signal for the Yearly Meeting to determine how or whether to cover the functions of that committee.

Proposal 2: Update meeting requirements with current practice. We recommend that requirements for meetings be struck from all committee descriptions except Youth & Children. The language on page 12 describing committees is sufficient: “Committees meet or communicate as needed, especially to prepare for Representative Meeting and Annual Meeting.” [p. 12, P&P]

Proposal 3: Recommendation that we spend time at Annual Meeting discerning where our energy is directed, and using that discernment as a charge to our committees, allowing them to set precedence among

their duties, modify them as needed, work across committees, etc. to work towards those goals.

YM 2024-24 Memorial Minute

Jim Brinza (Cleveland) read a memorial minute for Linda Brandenburg (Cleveland). The full text will be available in the *Annual Records* and on the LEYM website.

Session 5: Sunday, June 16, 2024, 8:45am – 10:15am

YM 2024-25 Worship and reading of Epistle

From centering worship, Thomas Taylor read the epistle from the 362nd sessions of New England Yearly Meeting. More than 500 Friends gathered in Castleton, Vermont, and online in August 2023. They described those who presented to their gathering as speaking plain and true, with direct story and song. They heard from a working group that has been researching the involvement of New England Friends in the Indigenous Boarding School movement. The report illustrated one of the ways Friends participated in the genocide of indigenous people and provided lessons on how our discernment may be shaped and warped by our culture.

YM 2024-26 Naming Committee: Ellerie Brownfain (Birmingham) reported

The Committee brought forward two names to serve on Nominating Committee: Mary Igoe Meyers (Broadmead) and Clémence Ravaçon-Mershon (Erie Worship Group). Friends **approved** these names to serve on Nominating Committee.

YM 2024-27 Announcements

Sally Weaver Sommer (Broadmead) reported that cards to send to people who were not able to attend the Annual Meeting are on a table in the lobby, and Friends are invited to add personal

greetings. Sally also gave instructions on check-out procedures from the dorms.

Barbara LeSage (Columbus) announced that Don McCormick will be leading the fall retreat of the Spiritual Formation Program. Flyers are now available and all Friends are invited to participate. She also reminded Friends that evaluation forms for Quakerism 101 and these sessions are available.

YM 2024-28 Executive Committee, Proposed Amendments to P&P on Structure: Susan Loucks reported.

The third recommendation from the working group on structure was brought back for further consideration. The working group recommended that we spend time at Annual Meeting discerning where our energy is directed, and using that discernment as a charge to our committees, allowing them to set precedence among their duties, modify them as needed, work across committees, etc. to work towards those goals. Friends **approved** this recommendation.

The group looking at structure also considered what might be done if the positions of clerk or assistant clerk of the Yearly Meeting are unfilled. They brought to Executive Committee a proposal that, in the absence of an assistant clerk, Executive Committee would do the necessary work. Executive Committee approved this proposal. It reads:

Proposal: While the assistant clerk position remains vacant, we propose that Executive Committee take responsibility for the following functions:

- a. When the presiding clerk is absent or unable to perform their duties or if that office becomes vacant, Executive Committee will determine who will perform the functions of the presiding clerk until the Nominating Committee can bring forward a name to be considered for clerk.

- b. Executive Committee will assist the presiding clerk with consultation, duties, and special assignments at the request of the presiding clerk.
- c. A member of Executive Committee will convene the Epistle Committee and work with it during Annual Meeting.

YM 2024-29 Nominating Committee: Stephanie Charlot (Red Cedar) reported

Serving on Nominating Committee this year were Rick Adams (North Columbus) and Stephanie Charlot (Red Cedar) (co-clerks), Wink Covintree (Birmingham), and Mike Hinshaw (Wooster). The Nominating Committee presented a proposed slate of officers, representatives, and committee members for 2024–25. Joe Mills (Kalamazoo) has agreed to be nominated to serve as clerk for one year. Jack Smith (Red Cedar) has agreed to be named assistant clerk with the intention of following the usual rotation of serving as presiding clerk after a year.

Friends **approved** the Nominating slate as presented, with gratitude for the faithfulness of the committee. See the Nominating Slate on pp. 227–230.

YM 2024-30 Friends enthusiastically sent our love and greetings to be carried to Friends by Ellerie and Jonah Brownfain and Jana and Wayne Norlin as they attend meetings including Britain Yearly Meeting and the FWCC World Plenary in Johannesburg in July and August.

YM 2024-31 The clerk invited Friends to share “one breath” reports about where Spirit is moving in their monthly meetings. A summary follows:

- Mary Igoe Meyers (Broadmead): they have begun to support a group of women in Guatemala through Right Sharing of World Resources
- Claire Cohen (Pittsburgh): many Friends have been inspired to strengthen their peace testimonies

ANNUAL MEETING

- Joann Neuroth (Red Cedar): they have been actively learning how to become an anti-racist community and have made a financial commitment through a community group working on reparations
- Bob Roehm (North Columbus): after 70 years in their Meetinghouse, they are now renting space that is more accessible and plan to sell their property
- Susan Hartman (Ann Arbor): they are striving to ensure that their budget is aligned with their values and, after setting aside money for reparations this year, they learned of the project to return what had been the John Woolman School property to the Nisenan Tribe and donated to that effort
- Jana Norlin (Grand Rapids): they now record people who share their personal spiritual journeys so that others can view them later
- David Finke (Oberlin): they held a very satisfying spirit-led session looking at FCNL priorities and considering a statement on reproductive rights
- Nancy Taylor (Ann Arbor): they have encouraged Young Adult Friends by hosting and preparing dinners for them
- Cassie Cammann (Ann Arbor): they agreed to pay for travel for a young person in Asia to attend a gathering of Friends Peace Teams in Java this month
- John Howell (Athens): their deep sharing of personal spiritual journeys has led to them helping people in their community but outside the Meeting; helping others has brought them closer together
- Janet Dando (Akron): they have written minutes on the police shooting of Jayland Walker and on the death penalty in Ohio, then distributed them widely; they are supporting erection of a statue honoring Sojourner Truth in Akron and in worship they try to dig deeper
- Carla Pratt Harrington (Athens): the number of children in First Day School has grown from 2 to 12!

- Jack Smith (Red Cedar): they have participated in the School of the Spirit's Faithful Meetings Project and found it both demanding and enriching
- Nancy Finke (Oberlin): activity in the Meeting has increased outside of worship, building community
- Barbara LeSage (North Columbus): it is exciting to see significant growth in their Meeting over the last seven years

YM 2024-32 Memorial Minute

Jeff Cooper (Ann Arbor) read a memorial minute for Lois (Loie) Gilbert (Ann Arbor). The full text will be available in the *Annual Records* and on the LEYM website.

YM 2024-33 Report from the Youth Program

Although not all the children were still on campus, the children and adults who worked with them introduced themselves and described how they enjoyed meeting new people and spending time together during our Annual Meeting.

YM 2024-34 LEYM Epistle for this Annual Meeting

On behalf of the Epistle Committee, Alexa Lake (Pittsburgh) presented an epistle for the 2024 Annual Meeting of LEYM. The epistle was **approved** by Friends with gratitude. The full text follows:

To Friends everywhere, who have received a faith and a relationship with Spirit as precious as ours:

Greetings from Lake Erie Yearly Meeting (LEYM).

On 6th Mo. 13, 2024, 116 Friends of Michigan, Ohio, and Western Pennsylvania, along with visitors from other states, gathered in Ashland, Ohio, for our Annual Meeting. First, we acknowledged our present: new and returning Friends broke bread together and, in conversation, caught each other up on our own monthly meetings, personal lives, and news of absent Friends. From the beginning, the

intentional planning of the Program Committee encouraged us to go beyond our familiar social circles.

Second, we acknowledged our past: we once again found ourselves on the campus of Ashland University, whose facilities provided a comfortable setting for Friends to learn together, commune with one another, and listen for Spirit's will. We also appreciated that we were by no means the first to benefit from this place, recognizing the Kaskaskia people, this region's first inhabitants.

We learned from our Plenary presenter, Friend and singer Paulette Meier, how to practice an outpouring of Spirit—this year's theme—through plainsong and chants. Her practice of setting Spirit-imbued quotes from early Friends to a cappella chants had practical origins: when set to melodies, she found the task of remembering these words much easier. But, her practice soon grew into a meditative process itself. We experienced that, gathered in song, Friends' minds are in touch with their bodies; our spirits are bound to one another; and we feel connected to the wisdom of earlier Friends.

One of the many chants we were invited to sing in her plenary and subsequent workshop was excerpted from George Fox's Epistle #19:

Keep within. And when they say, "Look here or look there is Christ," go not forth, for Christ is within you. And those who try to draw your minds away from the teaching inside you are opposed to Christ. For the measure's and the light of God is within, and the pearl is within you, though hidden. (1652)

Friends, we began each session of our worship with attention to business with an Epistle from Yearly Meetings the world over. Your words of news and of well-wishes inspired us as we looked within ourselves, asking how we can be a host to an outpouring of spirit.

We established a tradition of setting aside time to ask Spirit for LEYM's purpose in the next year. Admittedly, that's a big ask. But, through some structured sharing, we could discern the weightiest issues on our collective hearts. Our concerns were diverse: for example, growing meetings expressed difficulty integrating new seekers into our practices of worship. Other meetings haven't seen much growth but were heartened that their community felt truly gathered.

Our session was graced by an abundance of volunteers, whose work caring for children, moving furniture, assisting in the dining hall, and countless other functions made this experience available to all Friends, across the spectra of age, ability, and experience.

Eleven young Friends attended. The older group visited the Ohio Reformatory Museum, and our youngest Friends asked how we yield an outpouring of spirit from nature (and played together at every available moment). The compassion of our youth programming and childcare volunteers was palpable.

Friends, Lake Erie is energized. Our format and sense of purpose has been transformed by the Friends who do the Yearly Meeting's work, especially our outgoing clerk. After our final night, celebrating the 400th birthday of George Fox, we hunger for more. We are filled with Spirit. And, we want you to feel its outpouring from our hearts.

Written for the sake of that Spirit who has moved through the Epistle Committee:

Flo Friender, Wink Covintree, & Alexa Lake

Submitted, Susan Loucks, Presiding Clerk

YM 2024-35 Gratitude

A Friend rose to thank our outgoing clerk, Susan Loucks, for her service. The clerk noted that our work is distributive and shared by many.

The 2024 sessions of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting closed in waiting worship.

Appendices to Minutes 2024-17, 2024-12, and 2024-20

- Notes from Consideration of What LEYM is called to do in the next year (2024-17)
- Finance Committee Supplementary Reports:
 - Proposed Changes to *Policy and Procedures* on Travel Reimbursement (2024-12)

- Background Information on Proposals Regarding Little-Used Funds (2024-20)

Additional Notes from Consideration of What LEYM is called to do in the next year

One- or two-word phrases to characterize your meeting

- Aging but vital
- Concern about inadvertent racism
- Curious newcomers with spiritual hunger
- Welcoming and very close knit
- Querying, seeking, and growing
- Increasingly diverse
- Open to change
- Group of individuals, versus a group in community
- Composting with new life (or light?)
- Still not unified over use of technology
- Property rich, cash poor
- Delightfully resilient
- Love to listen deeply to each other
- Hungry for social justice
- Searching to use our abundant financial resources in ways that are appropriate with our values
- Growing and burgeoning with seekers
- Trying to figure out our path
- Wishing we had children
- Growing in diversity
- Branching out with peace and social justice
- A deepening silence in worship
- High on numbers of new seekers and children, Low on numbers of experienced Friends
- Less energy for caring for building (aging), but getting new people and hopeful

Themes and trends from the phrases shared above

- Many meetings are not where they want to be
- Increased numbers of newcomers and attenders

- Questions of sustainability (too many seekers and new attenders?)
- Fighting the good fight
- Fearing change
- Exploring ways into peace and justice work
- Deepening of silence and listening to each other
- Diversity awareness/aware of lack of diversity and wanting to do something

(Additional trends observed by Executive Committee)

- Baby steps in making LEYM-wide activities available online (Quakerism 101, clerks chats)
- Growth in energy toward AVP, Spiritual Formation, away from interest groups à la Earthcare and P&J
- Many meetings are seeing growth and many have challenges in integration of technology
- Continuing exploration of what it means to be hybrid
- Continuing questions of property/space, a place of physical movement

What LEYM committees could do to respond to the current reality:

- Support avenues of discernment for monthly meetings
- How do the questions raised relate to our committee structure
- Committees can look at their original description/why they were created, and broaden to change
- Setting up mechanisms for intervisitation or communication about things we are wrestling with
- Quakerism 101 was helpful and maybe additional education in clerk or how committees work could be useful
- Using ways to bring together newcomers, seekers online in Q 101 or other
- Could be support for program in which Friends would do inner seeking—e.g., how to be more welcoming to newcomers, etc.
- YM might help with developing skills in group spiritual discernment, online easy
- Include a YAF whenever possible, to hear them and allow them to become leaders
- ADDED: noted large number of people who met together to talk

about P&J and Earthcare this morning – these committees are dormant, but they can be started up with little ado if there is energy to do so

Finance Committee: Proposed Revisions to Policies and Procedures, Travel Funds

LEYM Policies & Procedures excerpts related to FWCC travel funds and the general Travel Fund, pulled from Policies & Procedures dated January, 2024

[Italicized notes represent comments by Finance Committee]

III. ORGANIZATION

D. Representatives to Quaker Organizations

2. Organizations and Related Information

d. Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas

- 1) Appointees must be members of the Religious Society of Friends.
- 2) Representatives to FWCC have three-year overlapping terms.
- 3) The number of representative positions available is determined by FWCC. FWCC may also co-opt LEYM Friends who are not representatives directly onto its committees.
- 4) In the past, LEYM has sent two representatives to the FWCC Triennials. Naming to future comparable meetings, at whatever interval, will be made according to the allotment assigned to LEYM by FWCC.
- 5) Representatives to FWCC international gatherings are named by the Nominating Committee in consultation with the clerk of LEYM and the clerk of the FWCC Representatives.
- 6) Representatives to FWCC are expected to assist with arrangements for regional meetings or the equivalent whenever they are scheduled. *[re-numbered from #7 to #6]*
- 7) LEYM provides reimbursement funds for representatives' attendance at the annual meeting of the Section of the Americas and international gatherings. ~~In the event that funds are not sufficient to cover costs, funds will be apportioned~~

~~according to the stated financial needs of the named representatives. [re-numbered from #6 to #7]~~

a. Reimbursement for travel of LEYM's FWCC

Representatives to regional FWCC gatherings and the annual meeting of the Section of the Americas comes from the Travel Fund (subject to the guidelines described in section IV. A. 3. b., below). *[This is a clarification requested by Finance Committee that brings into LEYM Policies & Procedures existing guidance from the LEYM Financial Manual]*

b. Reimbursement for travel of LEYM's FWCC

Representatives to World Plenary Meetings of the Friends World Committee for Consultation comes from the FWCC Travel Fund. *[This is a clarification requested by Finance Committee]*

i. Reimbursable expenses include registration, travel, food, and lodging. *[This is a clarification requested by Finance Committee]*

ii. In the event that funds are not sufficient to cover costs, funds will be apportioned according to the stated needs of the named representatives.

IV. OPERATIONS

A. Financial Support and Fiscal Policy

2. Budget

- a. The Lake Erie Yearly Meeting budget covers costs necessary for the functioning of the Yearly Meeting, such as publications, travel expenses for officers and representatives to Friends' organizations, office administration, and the Yearly Meeting's contribution to Friends General Conference. *[Emphasis added by Finance Comm, temporarily, just for sake of this proposal]*
- b. The annual budget should include a proportional amount of the estimated travel expenses for two delegates to attend World Plenary Meetings of the Friends World Committee for Consultation. This money is transferred into the FWCC Travel Fund, where it builds until requested by LEYM representa-

tives attending these meetings. Currently an equal amount is budgeted to support enabling Friends from less affluent parts of the world to attend these World Plenary Meetings; this latter amount is transferred into the FWCC Travel Donation Fund. *[This item included because of its relevancy to policies under consideration]*

c. *[Not included, not relevant]*

3. **Expense Reporting and Reimbursement**

a. Yearly Meeting officers, representatives, and committee members are asked to submit to the treasurer reports of out-of-pocket and in-kind expenses such as travel, long distance telephone charges, and postage, so that the cost of conducting Yearly Meeting business may be accurately known.

b. Travel Fund

i. Yearly Meeting officers and representatives to Friends' organizations may receive reimbursement for travel expenses for business on behalf of the Yearly Meeting and for attendance at meetings of Friends' organizations. A committee member may be reimbursed for unusual expenses incurred on behalf of the Yearly Meeting if the presiding clerk provides written approval in advance. A copy of the Travel Expense Reporting Form appears in Appendix E.

ii. ~~The principal travel cost to be reimbursed~~
Reimbursable costs include registration, transportation, and lodging is the transportation itself.
[This is a change requested by Finance Committee]

iii. If a Friend drives and requests reimbursement, the amount is calculated on a per-mile basis.

i. The current reimbursement rate, approved in 2022, ~~is 22¢~~ **June, 2024, is 21¢** per mile. Any change to this rate is part of the budgeting process, proposed by Finance Committee and requiring approval by the Yearly Meeting. *[to conform to standard rate as updated by IRS in December, 2023]*

- ii. **The incremental portion of mileage reimbursement above the 14 cents per mile standard charitable mileage expense rate is includable in the taxable income of the volunteer.** *[This note has been in the Travel Expense Form for several years; adding here because it's germane]*
 - iv. Friends are expected to cover their own food costs. ~~and, whenever possible, to arrange lodging with Friends in the area of travel.~~
 - v. **With regard to lodging:**
 - i. **When possible, Friends are asked to arrange lodging with Friends in the area of travel.**
 - ii. **If conference-offered lodging is available and the traveler chooses to stay at a higher-cost location, LEYM will reimburse up to the conference-offered lodging cost.** *[This is an addition by Finance Committee]*
 - vi. However, the intent of the Yearly Meeting is that no one be excluded from representing Lake Erie Yearly Meeting because of limited financial resources; thus, individuals may request reimbursement for additional travel-related expenses or take them as a tax-deductible contribution to the Yearly Meeting.
 - vii. **For special travel needs of Friends within the Yearly Meeting relating to Quaker work, the presiding clerk, the treasurer, and the clerk of the Finance Committee will consult with one another, and the presiding clerk will respond. Other officers, other committee clerks, and other members of the Finance committee may be consulted as needed.** *[This language was approved by Yearly Meeting as YM13-34, but was not previously represented in LEYM Policies & Procedures]*
 - c. Monthly meetings are responsible for travel expenses of their representatives to Yearly Meeting who attend Representative Meeting or Annual Meeting.
-

ANNUAL MEETING

Finance Committee Proposed Revisions to Little-Used Funds

This document contains:

- Descriptions of three funds unused by Lake Erie Yearly Meeting for many years
- Recommendations from Finance Committee for the disposition of these funds

The three funds are:

- Consultation
- High School Teen Retreat Program
- Traveling Ministries

Consultation Fund								
	Fiscal Year	Beginning Balance (July 1)	Known restricted donations	Subsidy from General Fund	Income	Expense	Subtotal: activity for this fiscal year	Ending Balance (June 30)
1	2023-2024	3,143.68	-	-	-	-	-	3,143.68
2	2022-2023	3,143.68	-	-	-	-	-	3,143.68
3	2021-2022	3,143.68	-	-	-	-	-	3,143.68
4	2020-2021	3,143.68	-	-	-	-	-	3,143.68
5	2019-2020	3,143.68	-	-	-	-	-	3,143.68
6	2018-2019	3,143.68	-	-	-	-	-	3,143.68
7	2017-2018	3,143.68	-	-	-	-	-	3,143.68
8	2016-2017	3,143.68	-	-	-	-	-	3,143.68
9	2015-2016	3,143.68	-	-	-	-	-	3,143.68
10	2014-2015	3,143.68	-	-	-	-	-	3,143.68
11	2013-2014	3,143.68	-	-	-	-	-	3,143.68
12	2012-2013	3,143.68	-	-	-	-	-	3,143.68
13	2011-2012	3,556.65	-	-	300.00	(712.97)	(412.97)	3,143.68
14	2010-2011	3,556.65	-	-	-	-	-	3,556.65
15	2009-2010	2,268.55	-	2,700.00	1,190.00	(2,601.90)	1,288.10	3,556.65
16	2008-2009	18.55	-	2,400.00	-	(150.00)	2,250.00	2,268.55
17	2007-2008	-	-	-	3,100.00	(3,081.45)	18.55	18.55

History of the Consultation Fund

This 2007 minute describes the sort of consultation work that led to the proposal in 2008 to create the fund.

Yearly Meeting minute YM07 - 31 Ministry & Nurture

November Consultation: The Committee has become aware of a need on the part of our local meetings' Ministry and Nurture (or otherwise named) Committees to gather and learn from each other, especially regarding the deepening of the spiritual life of the meeting. To this

end, the Committee is working with [FGC's] Traveling Ministries Program to identify a leader for a weekend consultation, to be held November 16–18, 2007 at the Weber Center in Adrian, MI. Local meeting clerks and worship groups will receive a letter asking them to name the clerk of their Ministry and Nurture Committee, or a designate, to attend the consultation. Each meeting will be asked to contribute \$100 toward food and housing expenses. LEYM will otherwise cover the cost of the facilitation. The seeds sown by this gathering will be further nurtured by the activities of [FGC's] traveling ministry project in spring 2008. See the report of the Advancement & Outreach Committee for more information about [FGC's] traveling ministry project.

This 2008 minute is the approved proposal to create the fund:

Yearly Meeting minute YM08 – 25.3 Ministry & Nurture Spiritual Consultation: The great success of the November 2007 Spiritual Consultation for representatives of the monthly meeting Ministry and Nurture committees has encouraged Friends to continue the practice. Out of this gathering a need was expressed for such a consultation for LEYM monthly meeting clerks. Thus M&N is proposing funds be set aside to enable such a consultation under the oversight of the LEYM Executive Committee for the fall of 2009.

LEYM's *Policies and Procedures* today (i.e., 2024) contains no description of the Consultation Fund, but LEYM's Financial Manual has this:

II. Budget Categories and Funds

B. Budget Lines Supporting Funds / Funds Supported by Budget Lines

2. **Consultation Fund:** This fund was established to support the cost of consultations among monthly meeting clerks or representatives of monthly meeting Ministry and Nurture committees.
[Recommended range: \$500 – \$2000]

The Consultation Fund has not been used for Consultation in 15 years. The last use of that fund, 13 years ago, was not for the original

ANNUAL MEETING

purpose of the fund, but “to cover unbudgeted expenses for the FGC Quaker Quest workshop last fall” (YM12-18).

What latitude does the Yearly Meeting have with regards to the Consultation Fund?

As the current balance of the Consultation Fund was created by transfers from the General Fund, the Yearly Meeting has full latitude with regard to the disposition of this fund.

Finance Committee’s proposal

We believe this fund could be dissolved and its balance returned to the General Fund and recommend doing so.

History of the High School Teen Retreat Program Fund

HS Teen Retreat Program Fund -- aka High School Program							
	Fiscal Year	Beginning Balance (July 1)	Known restricted donations	Subsidy from General Fund	Income	Expense	Subtotal: activity for this fiscal year
1	2023-2024	6,892.64	-	-	-	-	-
2	2022-2023	6,892.64	-	-	-	-	-
3	2021-2022	6,892.64	-	-	-	-	-
4	2020-2021	6,892.64	-	-	-	-	-
5	2019-2020	6,892.64	-	-	-	-	-
6	2018-2019	6,892.64	-	-	-	-	-
7	2017-2018	8,074.39	-	-	-	(1,181.75)	(1,181.75)
8	2016-2017	8,074.39	-	-	-	-	-
9	2015-2016	8,074.39	-	-	-	-	-
10	2014-2015	5,773.30	-	6,300.00	215.00	(4,213.91)	2,301.09
11	2013-2014	2,982.50	3,500.00	6,000.00	375.00	(7,084.20)	2,790.80
12	2012-2013	2,102.98	-	4,900.00	????	(4,020.48)	879.52
13	2011-2012	3,422.72	-	3,300.00	710.00	(5,329.74)	(1,319.74)
14	2010-2011	6,348.95	-	1,100.00	2,720.00	(6,746.23)	(2,926.23)
15	2009-2010	7,211.50	-	1,100.00	590.39	(2,552.94)	(862.55)
16	2008-2009	5,796.61	-	1,100.00	1,092.00	(777.11)	1,414.89
17	2007-2008	1,496.61	-	5,400.00	-	(1,100.00)	4,300.00
18	2006-2007	0.00	-	5,400.00	1,798.00	(5,701.39)	1,496.61
19	2005-2006	1,001.21	-	4,900.00	2,705.13	(8,606.34)	(1,001.21)
20	2004-2005	1,447.20	525.00	4,000.00	2,170.00	(7,140.99)	(445.99)
21	2003-2004	752.00	1,505.69	4,000.00	1,282.00	(6,092.49)	695.20
22	2002-2003	-	752.00	-	-	-	752.00

A description of the purpose of the High School Teen Retreat Program Fund:

“We established a High School Youth Program so that high school Friends, who experienced a paucity of Quaker teens in their

*meetings, could build community with other Quaker youth.”
(Clerk’s Report, YM10 - 6).*

Note: Activities supported by this fund took place outside of LEYM’s Annual Meeting.

Fund name changed:

Early in this fund’s history, it was referred to as the High School Program. Friends agreed to rename the program the “High School Teen Retreat Program” (YM10 – 10).

LEYM’s *Policies and Procedures* today (i.e., 2024) contain descriptions of the currently dormant roles of High School Teen Retreat Coordinator and High School Teen Retreat Program Committee.

LEYM’s Financial Manual describes the High School Teen Retreat Program Fund:

II. Budget Categories and Funds

B. Budget Lines Supporting Funds / Funds Supported by Budget Lines

4. **High School Youth Fund:** This fund supports the High School Teen Retreat Program – principally a stipend for the High School Teen Retreat Program Coordinator, along with direct expenses of the program. (YM2003-26 & 43, and Report: Proposal for an LEYM High School Program and Coordinator, pp. 61-63.) It can also support the costs of drivers (including the Coordinator) transporting teens to the retreats, but does not support individual teens’ participation in the program. [Recommended range: \$3000 – \$6000]

Policies and Procedures today (i.e., 2024) includes only a partial description of the High School Teen Retreat Program Fund that points all LEYM youth, including High Schoolers, to the Youth Activities Fund for assistance in attending various Quaker events:

Appendix D “Scholarships and Financial Assistance”

2. For Children and Teens

- b. *Youth Activities and Conferences.* **LEYM’s Youth Activities Fund can be used to help underwrite or provide scholarships for activities and conferences for the youth**

of the Yearly Meeting. This fund was established to help support events such as LEYM-sponsored youth trips to the FGC Gathering, but the use of the fund is not limited to that. It could, for instance, be used to help a youth attend Friends Music Camp. This fund cannot be used for scholarships to attend academic institutions. Friends wanting assistance from the fund should fill out the Youth Activities Fund Application (see next page, also available in the LEYM Financial Manual) and provide a letter of support from their monthly meeting.

- c. **LEYM High School Retreats.** *Funds to help teens attend LEYM High School retreats are available from LEYM's **Youth Activity Fund**. Teens can apply for a scholarship when they register for the retreat. Drivers (including the Coordinator) who transport teens to LEYM High School retreats can apply for reimbursement of their costs from the High School Retreat Fund. Apply to the Coordinator.*

The High School Teen Retreat Program Fund has seen no related activity in ten years. Seven years ago, a one-time, alternate use was approved and \$1,182 in scholarships were paid for the FGC Gathering.

YM2017-29 Finance Committee Report

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.

A one-time, alternate use of the High School Program funds was also approved in 2007:

RM07 - 17 Finance Committee - We approve contributing \$1,000 from our High School Youth Fund to the FWCC Triennial Travel & Accommodation Fund to enable Friends from economically deprived nations to attend the FWCC Triennial Meeting, to be held in Dublin, Ireland, 11-19 August, 2007.

What latitude does the Yearly Meeting have with regards to the High School Teen Retreat Program Fund?

As the current balance of the High School Teen Retreat Program Fund was created by transfers from the General Fund, the Yearly Meeting has full latitude with regard to the disposition of this fund.

Finance Committee's proposal

We don't believe the Yearly Meeting is ready to give up its intention to support Quaker teens to find and interact with each other. We also recognize that the YM hasn't used these funds in ten years. We propose to lower the ceiling for this fund from \$6,000 to \$4,000 and transfer the amount above the ceiling to the General Fund (i.e., \$2,892.64). Our hope will be to activate interest and use of these funds.

History of the Traveling Ministries Fund

Traveling Ministries Fund								
	Fiscal Year	Beginning Balance (July 1)	Known restricted donations	Subsidy from General Fund	Income	Expense	Subtotal: activity for this fiscal year	Ending Balance (June 30)
1	2023-2024	3,500.00	-	-	-	-	-	3,500.00
2	2022-2023	3,500.00	-	-	-	-	-	3,500.00
3	2021-2022	3,500.00	-	-	-	-	-	3,500.00
4	2020-2021	3,500.00	-	-	-	-	-	3,500.00
5	2019-2020	3,500.00	-	-	-	-	-	3,500.00
6	2018-2019	3,500.00	-	-	-	-	-	3,500.00
7	2017-2018	3,500.00	-	-	-	-	-	3,500.00
8	2016-2017	3,500.00	-	-	-	-	-	3,500.00
9	2015-2016	3,500.00	-	-	-	-	-	3,500.00
10	2014-2015	3,500.00	-	-	-	-	-	3,500.00
11	2013-2014	-	3,500.00	-	-	-	3,500.00	3,500.00

The donation that created the fund:

YM14 – 21 Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Mike Hinshaw (Wooster) reported [...that...] the Yearly Meeting has received a \$10,000 anonymous donation to be divided between the Traveling Ministry Program (\$3,500), the High School Teen Retreat Program (\$3,500), and the General Fund (\$3,000).

[The related Finance Committee Report represented the donor's intention slightly differently...]

Finance Committee Report, Annual Meeting, 2014

ANNUAL MEETING

*A. Anonymous Donation. As you have heard from our treasurer, LEYM recently received an anonymous **donation** of \$10,000, **with the request that its use be** divided almost equally among the General Fund (\$3000), the High School Teen Retreat Program fund (\$3500), and “**Traveling ministries**” (also \$3500). The Finance Committee is immensely grateful to the donor and is striving to see that the money is spent as requested.*

The approved proposal at 2014 Annual Meeting to create a Traveling Ministries Fund:

Finance Committee Report, Annual Meeting, 2014

B. Establishment of Funds and Budget Line.

- 1. To spend the portion of the anonymous gift for traveling ministries, we propose establishing a new fund for that purpose. Last year, we approved supporting Merry Stanford as a traveling minister with funding from the Advancement & Outreach Committee’s budget line; for the coming year, the proposed Traveling Ministries Fund would be used in precisely the same way as that budget line, supporting Merry’s work.*

Context: What was Merry Stanford’s traveling ministry work?

YM13 – 43 Traveling Minute for Merry Stanford

Assistant clerk Sally Weaver Sommer read a proposed Traveling Minute for Merry Stanford (Red Cedar). This was approved. The minute follows:

Dear Friends,

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting sends its love and greetings to you with this travel minute for Merry Stanford of Red Cedar Monthly Meeting (Lansing).

Red Cedar Friends Meeting has discerned that Merry has a Spirit-led call to visit monthly meetings for the purpose of worship, listening, and sharing the spiritual practice of Quaker dialogue, and has provided her with a traveling minute for that purpose. During our annual sessions in July 2013, Lake Erie Yearly Meeting united with Red Cedar Monthly Meeting in recognizing Merry

Stanford's gifts of ministry and nurturing service through listening. This letter indicates our support for her leading to visit Friends in Lake Erie Yearly Meeting. [...]

YM14 - 29 Advancement and Outreach Committee Report

Dolores Avner (Pittsburgh) reported for the committee. The full report follows.

The A&O Committee's policies and procedures call for the committee to engage in visitation with monthly meetings and worship groups. The committee is pleased to report that it has been aided in this work very materially during the last year by Merry Stanford (Red Cedar), whose calling to travel in ministry the committee endorsed at annual sessions in 2013. Merry visited four meetings between Sept. 2013 and March 2014: Athens MM, Kent MM, North Columbus MM, and Pine River MM. [...]

Oversight of the Traveling Ministries Fund is assigned to M&N in 2015:

YM15-22 Roles of the Advancement and Outreach and Ministry and Nurture Committees.

Clerk Sally Weaver Sommer reported for the Executive Committee on a concern that arose about overlap between, and lack of clarity about, the roles of the Advancement and Outreach and the Ministry and Nurture Committees [....]

The Executive Committee recommends the following be added to the responsibilities of the Ministry & Nurture Committee (6.b (6)):

Encourage and support Monthly Meetings as they recognize, publicly affirm, and practically support those individuals who exercise their gifts in faithful ministry. This includes but is not limited to:

a. preparing minutes for traveling ministers to be approved by the Yearly Meeting.

b. overseeing the traveling ministries fund.

Friends approved.

Current (i.e., 2024) *LEYM Policies and Procedures* describes the Fund: *Appendix D. Scholarships and Financial Assistance*

1. For Adults

- g. **Traveling Ministries Fund:** This fund supports the travel costs of LEYM Friends whose travel in the ministry has been recognized by their monthly meeting and LEYM through a travel minute. It is administered by the Ministry & Nurture Committee.*

The Traveling Ministries Fund has been unused in the 11 years since its inception.

What latitude does the Yearly Meeting have with regards to the Traveling Ministries Fund?

LEYM is limited to expending these funds according to the donor's original intent to support "traveling ministries."

Finance Committee's proposal

We don't know what to do with this fund. We think that these funds were intended by their donor to be used by LEYM Friends who are traveling in the ministry, but nobody has used these funds in the decade since. We recommend that Advancement & Outreach and Ministry & Nurture figure out a way to spend these funds appropriately.

Additional Reports Submitted

Several reports were included in the advance documents but not presented in Annual Sessions. These reports appear below:

- Adult & Family Program Committee Report
- Advancement & Outreach Committee Report
- Ministry & Nurture Committee Report
- Spiritual Formation Program Report
- Nominating Committee Report
- Digital Communications Facilitator Report

Reports of Representatives

- AFSC
- FCNL

- FGC
 - Friends Peace Teams
 - FWCC
 - Olney Friends School
-

Adult and Family Program Report

Several years ago, the Ad-Hoc Visioning Committee sought to both lighten and deepen our nearly four-day time together. The Adult and Family Program Committee works for nearly a year to create a welcoming four-day program to allow for Friendship, fellowship, Meeting for Business, Bible Study, worship, and workshops that engage Friends in topics of concern and interest. Potential new members, it's a great opportunity to envision LEYM's main activity (Annual Meeting), which brings our Yearly Meeting together. Throughout the year, Arrangements & Site Committee members work with us, as they are essential to addressing issues noted in the evaluations.

In Monthly Meetings, from August to December, we review the previous year's evaluations, try to find answers to questions, then discern a theme and speaker for the following year. Sometimes the theme and speaker emerge quickly, sometimes slowly. We appreciate your collaboration in this discernment process.

Mid-January's Winter *Bulletin* is our first vehicle for generating enthusiasm for the following year's Annual Meeting. Twice-monthly meetings from January through May help us refine program details such as which workshops address our theme well, which spaces work best for activities including the Youth & Children's Program, and how we might enhance our Saturday night fun time together.

Mid-March's Spring *Bulletin* presents many of the Annual Meeting details so Friends can register starting in early April. As "LEYM Worker" Bill Warters streamlines the Yearly Meeting's electronic procedures and communication methods, we become more comfortable with continuing to refine the schedule even into June.

ANNUAL MEETING

This second year at Ashland University has helped us smooth out the program and reduce our workload, while giving us joy to join together at Annual Meeting. We continue to seek to balance logistics, serving Lake Erie Yearly Meeting Friends, and listening to the Spirit.

Advancement & Outreach

The Advancement & Outreach Committee has organized a series of monthly topics and discussions referred to as Quakerism 101, designed to enrich monthly meetings and to share information with those new to Friends. They are modeled after a series held by North Columbus Monthly Meeting last year and consist of live Zoom sessions with a variety of formats, including breakout groups. Attendance from the wider Yearly Meeting community ranged between about 18 and 42. Following is a list of sessions presented by the respective monthly meetings:

North Columbus	Two sessions: "What is Quakerism?" and "Vocal Ministry in a Meeting for Worship"
Broadmead	"Sharing the Life of Lucretia Mott," portrayed by Shelley Kotz
Ann Arbor	"Guides to Faith & Practice"
Kalamazoo	"What Friends Believe?"
Pittsburgh	"Exploring Quaker Meeting for Business"
Red Cedar	"Introduction to Quaker Service Organizations" AFSC, FCNL, & QUNO (Quaker United Nations Office)

The Committee has developed an evaluation form for the sessions for Friends to complete. The form will be distributed online and available at Annual Meeting.

When the current *Annual Records* was published, the Committee noticed the Meetings that had not submitted State of the Meeting reports and proceeded to contact them to see how they were doing and what may have led them to not submit a report. Several of these Meetings had prepared reports but they were not received by the Yearly Meeting. The Committee also reviewed the submitted State of the Meeting Reports, focusing on provisions relating to the growing of Meetings and outreach to new Friends.

The Committee has contacted smaller worship groups in the Yearly Meeting to publicize their worship schedules and contact information in the *Bulletin*. We hope this information might encourage Friends to visit worship groups if they are in their area during spring and summer travel plans.

Friends are encouraged to bring any concerns about this report to the Committee.

Respectfully submitted: Stephanie Charlot, Barbara LeSage, Mary Igoe Meyers, Susan Hartman (recorder), and Joseph Mills (clerk)

Report from Ministry & Nurture to Annual Sessions 2024

The Ministry & Nurture Committee has met regularly this last year in all months except May. A summary of our activity through mid-March was included in the report submitted to the Representative Meeting in March and is available on the Lake Erie Yearly Meeting website.

The Spiritual Formation Committee, which is under the oversight of Ministry & Nurture, submits a separate report on their activity each year.

Ministry & Nurture has spent most of the last several months soliciting and accepting State of the Meeting reports from monthly meetings and worship groups. To date we have received 12 reports. In our announcements to meetings, we reminded them that should also submit a copy of their reports to the Publications & Archives Committee to insure inclusion in the *Annual Records*. We will, however, send copies of all State of the Meeting reports that we have received to Publications as well. This should insure that all reports are included in the *Annual Records*.

Since Representative Meeting, there was one more chat session with Monthly Meeting clerks. Although Ministry & Nurture has provided a leader for these sessions, the meetings are primarily self-led. They are truly “chat sessions,” with attenders sharing tips on clerking, working with committees, and so on. Ministry & Nurture plans to continue holding these sessions for Meeting clerks several times a year in the future.

ANNUAL MEETING

Ministry & Nurture held a couple of chat sessions of clerks of Ministry & Nurture Committees this year. The first was well attended, the second, less well attended. The committee has discussed having chat sessions in the future for those who fulfill other roles in monthly meetings, or on activities that most meetings have, such as adult education, children's education and nurture, budget planning, and so on.

At present, we are still receiving State of the Meeting Reports.

Co-clerks: Flo Friender and Shelley Kotz

Members: Ellerie Brownfain, Cathy Clifford, Valerie Groszmann

Spiritual Formation Committee Report

The LEYM Spiritual Formation Committee has had an active and fruitful year. In spring 2023, we invited Marty Grundy to be the resource person for our fall '23, winter '24, and spring '24 retreats with the theme "Let Our Lives Speak: Using Words When Necessary." Connie McPeak Green joined Marty as a co-leader of the fall and winter retreats.

Thirty-three people from nine monthly meetings attended the fall retreat, held at Weber Center in Adrian, Michigan. During the retreat, we addressed the theme by sharing different words and phrases we use to name the divine, examining the importance of community in letting our lives speak, and considering how we define Quakerism.

The fall retreat kicked off our nine-month spiritual formation program. Each participant received a booklet containing information on spiritual disciplines, group guidelines, spiritual friendships and companions, and suggested readings. Saturday evening, descriptions of three different Quaker programs for spiritual growth groups were presented, including this program. The local groups then met to plan for the coming year, using the book table provided to make choices. Twenty-one of the participants who came to the retreat were already members of the seven Spiritual Formation Groups throughout the Yearly Meeting.

On January 27, 27 of these Friends joined on Zoom for a three-hour retreat in which we briefly reviewed material from the fall retreat and

then shared with each other the impact of the retreat and meeting with our Spiritual Formation Groups on our spiritual lives.

We ended the year when 22 Friends joined together for the spring retreat, hosted by Broadmead Friends at the Victory Center in Toledo. The retreat's theme was "Reflecting and Looking Ahead: Where is Love Leading Us?" During the retreat, we reflected on the past year and explored not only in what ways our lives testify to how Love is guiding us, but also the gifts of our Meetings. All participants were invited to stay for Sunday morning worship with Broadmead Friends, followed by a potluck hosted by the Meeting. Sunday afternoon, we held a workshop on exploring what makes a gathered meeting, to which all retreat participants, Broadmead Friends, and others in LEYM were invited. Five Broadmead Friends joined the retreat participants for this workshop.

Planning for the next year always begins before the current year ends. We are delighted to report that our facilitator for the 2024–2025 year will be Don McCormick. The theme for this year's retreat will be "Mysticism and Quakerism." The fall retreat will be held September 6–8 at Weber Center. Brochures giving details of the retreat can be found at our table in the display area.

Members of the Spiritual Formation Committee are Ellerie Brownfain, Valerie Groszmann, Kathleen Helbling, Barbara LeSage, Olwen Pritchard, and Sally Weaver Sommer.

Report of the LEYM Nominating Committee, June 2024

The Nominating Committee reports that, owing to expiring terms and some resignations, the Yearly Meeting will go into Annual Sessions this year with some important positions remaining open.

On a positive note, we have nominated Joe Mills (Kalamazoo) as presiding clerk for one year (term ending 2025), provided an assistant clerk is also nominated who will serve the typical 4-year term outlined in *Policies and Procedures* (one year as assistant/rising clerk, two years as presiding clerk, one year as assistant/past clerk). If Nominating cannot nominate someone as assistant clerk by rise of Annual Sessions, then we recommend that Executive Committee (Exc) take

ANNUAL MEETING

the role of assistant clerk under its care, performing the assistant clerk duties in support of interim Presiding Clerk, Joe Mills, until such time as an assistant clerk can be identified and approved by ExC. To address this potential outcome, ExC has already formed a subgroup to study structure and to recommend a path forward, should the roles of presiding clerk and/or assistant clerk remain open after rise of Annual Sessions.

In addition, there are two (possibly three) open positions on Ministry & Nurture Committee and, due to a recent resignation for health reasons, we are without a database manager. A general call has gone from the Presiding Clerk to fill this paid position as we head into Annual Sessions. We would also like to point out that after rise of Annual Sessions 2023, two open positions existed on Nominating Committee and as we approach Annual Sessions 2024, there are now four open positions on Nominating. due to expiring terms.

As we highlighted last year, a gap has existed for years between the number of people *P* & *P* wants on different committees and the number of people that are active in the YM. We continue to urge YM to think about how we can restructure committees more substantively, so that whatever might be decided about structure can be implemented in 2025, when many terms are expiring.

Digital Communications Facilitator Report

The Digital Communications Facilitator (DCF) for LEYM serves to maintain our online presence and help Friends across LEYM connect with each other via email listservs, webinars, and Zoom meetings. The DCF also plays a central role in preparing for, coordinating, and helping to host our Annual Meeting.

My last report was prepared in April of 2023, written in advance of our return to a face-to-face meeting in Ashland. The 2023 Annual Meeting theme was Navigating Anew, and we made the most of our opportunity to be together again. The DCF coordinated technical support for our workshops series as well as hosting the hybrid Zoom offerings of the plenary and our business sessions and providing a daily morning email newsletter for participants. We also arranged for the skipper of the *Golden Rule* peace boat to join us by Zoom as part

of our Night Owl movie series, coordinated by the DCF. Evaluations of the Annual Meeting were quite positive and the decision was made to return again to the Ashland University campus for our June 13–16, 2024 Annual Meeting.

Some events that the DCF helped support during 2023–2024 include a couple of LEYM-wide online worship events, regular Monthly Meeting Clerks Chats, a couple new Clerks Chats specifically designed for Ministry and Nurture clerks, as well as several online sessions supporting Friends involved in Spiritual Companionship work. New this year was a monthly Quakerism 101 series organized by the revitalized Advancement & Outreach Committee, which involved presenters from Monthly Meetings across LEYM. We also supported via outreach a new series offered by the Quaker Religious Education Collaborative exploring the theme of walking in the world as a Friend. The DCF also played a supporting role in hosting the online LEYM Representative Meeting held in March.

With respect to our technical platform, we saw successful major updates to our email listserv system and our website server with minimal downtime. However, due to changes in how the service works, we have greatly reduced our use of Twitter (now known as X) as a tool to promote upcoming events and opportunities on our website.

Much of the DCF's time is devoted to preparing for and supporting Annual Meeting, and for the 2024 gathering we worked with the online service known as RegFox to move our registration process fully online. The system has been working well, enabling the registration of 115 participants as of this writing. We did experience some challenges getting approval from our payment processor, due to the unique nature of religious organizations' status as nonprofits, but thanks to some timely assistance from the Detroit Friends Meeting and a great deal of patience from our treasurer, we were able find a way through the technical difficulties.

In terms of hours worked, as Friends became more proficient in Zoom hosting abilities, the DCF has reduced the number of hours that he personally was running Zoom sessions, serving more often now in a set-up and advertising and coordination role. Tasks are tracked in ten-minute increments, with most committee meetings that the DCF

ANNUAL MEETING

attended in a dual capacity not being included in billing. Approximate time billed from May 2023 – May 2024 was 137 hours, distributed as follows (a more complete accounting will be available after the end of yearly meeting):

- Annual Sessions Prep: 65 hours
- Online Database: 4 hours
- Research and Reporting: 3 hours
- Website Updates: 37 hours
- Zoom-related: 16 hours
- Correspondence: 7 hours
- Email Account Management and Group Messages: 5 hours

Our website continues to provide valuable and accessible information for LEYM Friends and others from afar. Here are the visitor statistics for the recent past.

Website Visitors Data

Month	Unique visitors	No. of Visits
Jan 2023	5,628	7,300
Feb 2023	4,480	6,099
Mar 2023	4,461	7,137
Apr 2023	1,961	3,336
May 2023	2,927	5,773
Jun 2023	2,904	4,568
Jul 2023	6,341	8,891
Aug 2023	2,919	4,204
Sep 2023	2,126	4,047
Oct 2023	1,806	2,953
Nov 2023	1,924	2,863
Dec 2023	2,113	3,183
Jan 2024	3,407	4,934
Feb 2024	4,950	6,340
Mar 2024	2,252	3,479
Apr 2024	2,686	3,705
May 2024 (partial)	3,103	4,262

It has been an honor to be able to serve Lake Erie Yearly Meeting this past year. I look forward to staying in the role for the coming year as well.

Respectfully submitted by Bill Warters (Birmingham Friends Meeting)

Reports from Representatives

AFSC Representative Report

A Nobel Peace Prize co-recipient in 1947, the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) is a Quaker organization that has been around since 1917. The organization has accomplished much, often at the forefront of important movements working for a more just, peaceful world. A brief illustrated history of AFSC providing a view of the broad scope of this work is available online at <https://afsc.org/history>.

As a Yearly Meeting, LEYM may nominate up to three representatives to attend the AFSC Corporation meetings. This year's meeting theme was *Weaving the Threads of Democracy and Peace in a Time of Conflict*. A number of LEYM Friends were able to attend the Annual AFSC Corporation Meeting held April 11–13, 2024, at Friends Center in Philadelphia, including Bill Warters (author of this report and a formal LEYM Representative to the Corporation), Claire Cohen (renewing her connect to AFSC Corporation this year as an At-Large Member) and John Deikis (continuing At-Large Member). Other Friends from LEYM involved in AFSC governance as Members at Large include Jamie Archer (Red Cedar) and Ann Francis (Oberlin).

We would be happy to talk with people who want to know more about our perspectives and take-aways. This year, we heard from the Governance Committee that, in addition to application to ASFC staff hiring practices, Yearly Meetings should be continuing to take into account diversity, equity, and inclusion goals and Quaker representation when making their appointments.

The Annual Corporation Meeting is the key opportunity for Yearly Meetings to learn about the workings of AFSC and to share their perspectives on the organization's current practices. After a number of

ANNUAL MEETING

years where much energy and struggle was devoted to creating and approving the 2020–2030 Strategic Plan, this year’s meeting left the impression that the hard work and discernment that went into creating the Strategic Plan is beginning to pay dividends. I noticed renewed energy and increased examples of creative and impactful collaborative work centered around AFSC’s core thematic areas of Just and Sustainable Peace, Just Economies, and Just Responses to Forced Displacement and Migration.

Along these lines, AFSC celebrated the recent appointment of new thematic directors in Just Economies (Rick Wilson), Just Peace (Lewis Webb), and Just Migration (Amy Gottlieb, U.S., and Eunice Ndonga, International), as well as a new Associate General Secretary of Global Cohesion (Sonia Tuma), with a panel presentation by this group. These staff positions are guiding AFSC towards achieving greater impact in key theme areas across geographies. They are seen as instrumental in enhancing the organization’s abilities to exchange ideas, resources, and strategies for social change between program staff working in various global contexts, as well as further AFSC messaging and advocacy with external audiences worldwide.

At the Corporation Meeting, we made two significant changes to the bylaws. Friends were led to increase ex officio Board membership to include one member from each of our four international regions (Asia, Africa, Latin America, Middle East). This brings greater parity with the four U.S. regions currently represented (West, Northeast, Midwest, South). Previously, a single International Programs Group member represented all AFSC programs outside the United States.

Friends were also led to approve of a new online Corporation meeting in fall. The purpose of the fall meeting will be to accept/approve of Yearly Meeting appointees and some at-large members to the Corporation. This will better define when member service starts and ends and provide a better opportunity for orientation well before people attend their first in-person meeting.

This year, AFSC hosted Jose Antonio Vargas as the keynote speaker. Jose is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, Emmy-nominated filmmaker, Tony-nominated theatrical producer, and a leading voice for the human rights of immigrants. He is the founder of Define American, an

organization that promotes diverse and nuanced storytelling about immigrant experiences across a variety of media. He is author of *Dear America: Notes of an Undocumented Citizen*, and is perhaps best known for his courage coming out publicly in a 2011 essay in the *New York Times Magazine* as an undocumented immigrant and advocate for the DREAM Act. His talk was an inspiration in a time when immigration is one of our most politicized and misunderstood issues.

In addition to business sessions, the Annual Corporation Meeting is used as an opportunity for Yearly Meeting Representatives to connect with and learn more about AFSC's wide array of programming. I attended a Midwest Region Dinner (LEYM is in the Midwest Region), where we were able to informally connect with program staff and other YM Representatives. Friends interested in getting a monthly email digest of news from our Midwest program can use this [link to subscribe](#).

We also were able to attend two workshops from the following list of options: *Quaker Action for Ending Israeli Apartheid*; *Emerging Leaders: How AFSC is Engaging with Young Activists Shaping our Future*; *Working for Global Policy Change in Turbulent Times*; and *Stop Cop City: Organizing for Democracy, Environmental Justice, and Community Safety Beyond Policing*.

I (Bill) attended the Stop Cop City workshop as one of my choices and was very impressed with the way different parts of AFSC are working in coordination to support this local action. The [Stop Cop City campaign](#) aims to stop the construction of what would be one of the nation's largest police training facilities in Atlanta, GA, built by destroying a vital urban forest at a cost of around \$90 million. The cost of construction is being heavily subsidized by corporate donors that have aligned themselves with the project coordinator, the Atlanta Police Foundation.

Locally, AFSC's Atlanta Economic Justice program has been one of many local anchor organizations for the Cop City Vote project, an effort that has collected more than 116,000 signatures (more than twice the needed number) from Atlanta residents to put the issue up for a vote in an upcoming election. More broadly, several AFSC programs, such as the [Action Center for Corporate Accountability](#),

have supported the Stop Cop City movement with solidarity actions and are developing a coordinated Corporate Campaign that has already released a report on corporate involvement with the project. Many Friends are not aware, but AFSC has a formal Civil Disobedience Policy that makes it possible for staff and governance to participate in actions that may lead to arrest without fear of losing their jobs.

This year, the report from our AFSC General Secretary Joyce Ajlouny was particularly heartfelt, given that Joyce is a Palestinian American and she began her report talking about the devastating war in Gaza. Joyce has been at AFSC since 2017, but she started her career working in international development in Palestine, focusing on minority and refugee rights, gender equality, economic development, and humanitarian support. She served as the country director for Palestine and Israel with Oxfam-Great Britain, and chaired the Association of International Development Agencies there. Prior to joining AFSC, Joyce served as the director of the Ramallah Friends School, a leading K–12 Quaker school in Palestine, for 13 years.

AFSC has three staffers stationed in Gaza: Firas Ramlawi, Serena Awad, and Adham Yaghi. All three have lost their homes, relocating multiple times in search of safety. At one point, Firas found shelter for his family at a kindergarten in Rafah, which is supported by Norwegian Quakers. The team has focused on providing food, hygiene, and medical kits (serving 475,000+ displaced people as of the beginning of April) as well as organizing events for children such as story hours, entertainment, and a recent kite-flying festival. The U.S. staff organized a parallel event in support of Gaza at the Washington, DC, Cherry Blossom Kite Festival. The AFSC website has a [dedicated page on Gaza and Israel](#) that provides updates. AFSC continues to advocate for an immediate cease-fire and humanitarian access to Gaza.

Highlights of 2023 from the General Secretary's Report

The celebration of 75 years of the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in June.

The establishment of the Global Cohesion team and integration of five thematic directors into our programs team. These colleagues are

bringing staff together across geographies for shared program planning, learning, and collaboration.

The creation of the Action Center for Corporate Accountability, building on AFSC's West region's economic activism program. ACCA acknowledges the power of for-profit companies, many of which have greater financial resources than small countries, and seeks to identify when and how they use those resources – and hold them accountable with advocacy strategies, when it is clear that they are supporting oppressive systems.

Reinvigoration of AFSC Quaker engagement effort with the hiring of Brian Blackmore, who, in less than a year, has, among many other endeavors, visited over 60 Friends Meetings and Schools (with more to come), established regular staff meetings for worship, hosted meetings for worship with attention to peace in the Middle East, offered staff a series of Quakerism 101 trainings, and worked closely with Friends Relations Committee on planning our annual gathering.

Continued work with heads of Quaker agencies in Europe and North America. In 2023, the group developed and released a joint statement on Gaza with an update shared in mid-April, and invested renewed energy into strengthening relationships with the Quaker Council on European Affairs (QCEA).

The implementation of a Strategic Plan Investment Fund (SPIF), approved by the Board in October 2022. AFSC developed an online applications portal and funded 60 innovative short-term projects that support implementation of the Strategic Plan, including: a campaign to engage Quakers and AFSC allies to expand access to food assistance programs to low-income students when school is not in session; and a project to support civil-society organizations (CSOs) and border communities in Western Kenya and Nairobi in organizing to advocate for justice and peaceful co-existence in the wake of election violence.

Appointment of Nthabiseng Nkomo, Regional Director for Zimbabwe and South Africa, who will serve half-time as AFSC DEI manager in concert with a full-time DEI director in the U.S. (to be hired). On a practical level, staff have been engaged in several DEI projects, most notably the creation of the Reparative and Healing Justice Fund, the

ANNUAL MEETING

Black Thriving Initiative, security and support to LGBTQ+ partners in Indonesia, and the establishment of a formal anti-racism sub-group within the U.S. Regional Management Group.

Continued good financial stewardship. AFSC developed their fifth consecutive balanced budget for fiscal year 2024, achieved a significant surplus in fiscal 2023, welcomed a new Chief Financial Officer, Giovanni Cozzarelli, in November; and completed the important work of a Financial Sustainability Task Team, with a report that will guide important discussions and decisions in coming months.

While the FY23 audited financials were still underway, management reports for the fourth quarter show a considerable surplus, thanks mainly to extraordinary bequest income results.

With 129 U.S. Regional staff, 114 Central Office staff, and 90 international staff, AFSC is a large organization doing important work that deserves our continued support as a Yearly Meeting. The Friends Engage section of the AFSC website (<https://afsc.org/friends-engage>) provides information on how we can get involved in meaningful ways. These include the No Hunger Summer Campaign (working to get free meals into schools), the AFSC Action Hour for a Cease-Fire (Fridays at noon EST), the Apartheid-Free Communities project, the 2024 Black & African Diaspora Learning Series, and much more. AFSC staff are open to invitations to lead workshops at Monthly and Yearly Meetings, and you can reach out to set something up via this [host an event form](#). AFSC also is sponsoring season three of the “Quakers Today” podcast, another great source of inspiration.

Report respectfully submitted by Bill Warters (Birmingham Friends Meeting)

Friends Committee on National Legislation Report

Dear Friends,

I am one of four LEYM representatives to FCNL, now completing my first year in this role.

I was not able to attend the annual meeting in Washington in person, rather I participated on Zoom. The 2023 Annual Meeting celebrated eight decades of Friends working tirelessly to bring Quaker principles and experiences into the minds of legislators as they deliberate over national issues. For over 80 years, FCNL has worked on many issues, including peace and nuclear disarmament, reparative racial justice, witnessing in solidarity with Native and Indigenous peoples, poverty, and gun violence, by listening to the suggestions of Friends across the country to prioritize the work to reflect their concerns. You can watch a video commemorating FCNL's 80 years at <https://youtu.be/wYISzYSwKXI>.

The most memorable experience for me at the 2023 meeting was being part of body that approved a policy statement on reproductive health and abortion. FCNL had never taken a position on abortion. However, after the 2022 Dobbs decision, overturning the 1973 ruling that the Constitution allowed women to choose to end an unwanted pregnancy and allowing states to ban abortion, FCNL's Policy Committee received an outpouring of requests for a response.

The Policy Committee began the process with a listening session at the 2022 Annual Meeting. This grew into determining if FCNL should take a position on abortion. The Committee sought responses from Quaker Meetings and heard from over 300 Meetings, groups, and individuals. After considering every response and seeking Spirit's leading, holding more listening sessions, and revising drafts, even as consideration of the wording was being discussed at the annual meeting, a final statement of policy was approved by the general committee.* The depth of emotion and caring for one another in the Spirit made participating in this process at a great distance from the actual gathering deeply moving.

FCNL is a community created by enthusiastic young people and, as we say, more "seasoned" constituents, inspiring leadership, indefatigable

energy and wisdom, and generous financial supporters. It brings our Quaker values to life. It makes a difference. I'm very thankful for it.

Wink Covintree (Birmingham Monthly Meeting)

*The statement is contained in *The World We Seek*:

Statement of Legislative Priorities

III.2.7. Reproductive health and abortion. Quakers recognize that human life is sacred, and that Spirit can guide us individually and collectively. Based on these beliefs, members of the Religious Society of Friends have come to different conclusions regarding abortion. FCNL supports individual discernment in a spirit of love and truth in making reproductive healthcare decisions, as we do in other areas of conscientious moral choice. Government must ensure that people have the legal right to make these decisions. We oppose the criminalization of people seeking, undergoing, or involved in abortion services. We support equitable access to abortion services. FCNL also supports policies that reduce unwanted pregnancies by ensuring equitable access to contraception, sex education, family planning, fertility and adoption services, and support for all who decide to have children.

More information on FCNL priorities and activities is found at https://leym.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/2024_FCNL_Yearly_Meeting_Report.pdf, in a report authored by Michael Fuson of Granville Friends Meeting.

FGC Representative Report

Friends General Conference (FGC) is an association of 16 affiliated Yearly Meetings and 12 Monthly Meetings that have chosen to affiliate to FGC directly. Representatives from each Yearly and Monthly Meeting form the board of FGC, which is called "Central Committee." Lake Erie Yearly Meeting currently has four representatives serving on this committee

The vision statement of Friends General Conference is:

We envision a vital and growing Religious Society of Friends – a faith that deepens spiritually, welcomes newcomers, builds supportive and inclusive community, and provides loving service and witness in the world.

Through Friends General Conference, we see Quakers led by the Spirit joining together in ministry to offer services that help Friends, Meetings, and seekers explore, deepen, connect, serve, and witness within the context of our living faith.

Representatives serving on Central Committee provide service by populating the administrative and program committees, which continue the works of FGC.

With enormous gratitude to all, FGC reached its Gathering Together Campaign goal (\$2.46 million). These generous donations will support the endowment for participating in the Gathering, the Ministry on Racism, Connecting and Communicating, Young Adult and Youth Ministries, and Religious Education and Spiritual Deepening.

Friends took a tentative step beyond the pandemic to recover the Gathering as an in-person nurturing community. The Gathering at Western Oregon University in Monmouth, Oregon (July 2023) was the first on the West Coast since 2006. The next in-person Gathering will be at Haverford College in suburban Philadelphia (June 30 – July 6, 2024).

FGC also launched new virtual events suggested by the “Gathering Anew” report, such as the well-attended “Changing Times” workshop (January 2023), with a focus on strengthening Monthly and Yearly Meetings. A 2025 Virtual Gathering (February) is now being planned with an in-person 2025 YAY (Youth and Adult Young Friends) Gathering later in the year.

FGC decided last fall to phase out the Quaker Cloud by December 2023. More information about this decision can be found here: fgcquaker.org/2022/11/14/quaker-cloud-phase-out/. Many Meetings in New York Yearly Meeting (NYYM) have used the Quaker Cloud to advertise their Meeting’s address, time of worship, etc. Recently, a group of volunteer Friends and staff members has formed The Quaker

ANNUAL MEETING

Communications Community of Practice (QCCOP). This is a group that is committed to best practice in website design, social media excellence, and advancements in technology that benefit Friends meetings. QCCOP is the successor to Quaker Cloud. Learn more at: <https://www.fgcquaker.org/fgcprograms/qccop/>.

Many more things are going on at FGC. Have you seen the array of titles available at QuakerBooks? Did you know about the rich selection of resources in the online Spiritual Deepening Library? Have you heard that FGC hosts weekly online worship and worship sharing for Friends of Color and for white Friends confronting racism? The website has recently been redesigned, and details on all these and more are easy to find. Check it all out at www.fgcquaker.org.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellerie Brownfain (Birmingham), Brad Shaw (Red Cedar), Rick Adams (North Columbus)

Friends Peace Teams Report to LEYM 2024 Annual Meeting

At Friends Peace Teams, we learn how to care for one another with tender affection for the preciousness of each person, which frees us to speak our hearts and minds. Listening to each other's experiences of Spirit encourages each of us to yield and live into our own unique lives, cultures, and ecologies. Diversity is nature's way of surviving. We are stronger and more resilient as we learn from the diversity of nature and from each other's experiences, accomplishments, and mistakes.

When old traumas or pains are restimulated, we try to notice and meet disputes, tension, marginalization, and loneliness with trust, honesty, inclusion, and cooperation. This supports us as we reflect on our collusion in abusive societal patterns with compassion, humility, and conviction. In this way, love lays the foundation for sharing power and leadership across all regions of the world – African Great Lakes, Asia West Pacific, Europe and Middle East, North America, and Latin America through Peacebuilding *en las Américas*.

North America ministries are growing. Friends and others are sharing discernment and support for ministry and witness – from the long-

standing work for global economic justice to Alternatives to Violence Project workshop series for cultures of justice and peace, Power of Goodness for religious education or community events, Quaker college and high school internships, conscientious objection to war and paying for war, statements of conscience, and Toward Right Relationship with Native People. We recognize settler histories of genocide, colonization, and forced assimilation and seek to rebuild trust based on truth, respect, justice, and shared humanity.

We invite you to share your justice or peace ministry, attend events or workshops, join a Regional or Support Team to support others' callings, read our news online, sign up for e-news, share the news with your Meeting or Church, use Power of Goodness in youth or adult religious education, or invite one of us to visit or speak with your community. We depend on all our prayers, abiding concern, participation, outreach, and financial support. As a volunteer organization, we survive on Friends and others called to do this work together, and so we are able to distribute 100% of funds designated to a region or activity directly to that work. The needs are great, the Spirit is moving. Join us!

Read the full Friends Peace Teams Epistle here:

<https://friendspeaceteams.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/FPT-2024-Epistle-web.pdf>

Contact Shirley Way, Nadine Hoover, or Buffy Curtis

Submitted by Don Buckingham, Sr. (North Columbus), LEYM Representative

FWCC Representative Report

Friend World Committee for Consultation (FWCC), Section of the Americas, encompasses the Western Hemisphere. This rich, diverse, multi-lingual Society of Friends, which extends from the Arctic to the Andes, provides us with opportunities to experience different cultures, languages, styles of worship, and beliefs. Despite vast physical space, electronic connectivity issues, and many time zones, it is a true blessing that we are able to connect Friends who serve on Program Groups and Committees. Those periodic meetings are all conducted

ANNUAL MEETING

bi-lingually in Spanish and English, with equal numbers of members from COAL (Latin America) and North America.

Although the Section of the Americas began its committee meetings over Zoom several years before the pandemic, advancing technology has significantly improved worldwide Quaker connections within FWCC's four Sections. The August 2024 World Plenary, in South Africa, will be the first worldwide hybrid Quaker meeting.

The 2024 Section Meeting of the Americas was held virtually on March 16. Over 100 Friends gathered together by telephone or Zoom. Participants from Bolivia to Alaska joined in Spanish or English. Thanks to extra funds garnered during the Capital Campaign, the Section was able to hold pre-Section Meeting training for new and seasoned interpreters. Guided by preparatory Bible passages (Romans 12:4-5, Matthew 22:39), the Section Meeting included meeting for business and worship in the manner of programmed and unprogrammed Friends. We sang, prayed, and shared answers in small groups to queries that focused on the theme of Ubuntu, also the theme of the forthcoming World Plenary Meeting, "Living in the Spirit of Ubuntu: Responding with hope to God's call to cherish creation and one another."

The World Plenary Meeting, located near Johannesburg, South Africa, will have two components for representatives from all four FWCC Sections. Young Adult Friends will meet August 1–5, then will join the larger Plenary on August 5–12. The plenary will include FWCC business, surrounded by workshop threads, worship, and fellowship with Friends from more than 80 Yearly Meetings around the world. Due to the limited space, each Yearly Meeting was allowed one in-person representative. Lake Erie Yearly Meeting is sending Ellerie Brownfain as its representative.

Jana Norlin and Jonah Brownfain were able to obtain open spaces to attend in person. Jonah will also be attending the Young Adult Meeting. We hope that other LEYM Friends will form "listening Hubs," as Clémence Mershon intends to do, in order to attend the World Plenary via Zoom. [World Plenary Meeting Registration for online participation](https://fwcc.world/wpm/) is open for all Friends until June 30. More information is available at <https://fwcc.world/wpm/>

Following the World Plenary, Ellerie Brownfain will be available to give presentations to LEYM Friends about her experience with worldwide Friends.

Worldwide Friends give thanks to all who shared resources to produce a successful capital campaign (\$2,444,262), “Becoming the Quakers the World Needs.” Led by the Section of the Americas to faithfully serve the Community of Friends and benefit ALL four FWCC Sections, many exciting projects are coming to fruition. In addition to an enhanced interpreters' training and new Spanish-English Glossary, as well as an interactive map to find Quakers around the World, Friends World Committee for Consultation recently received \$1.125 Million from Lilly Endowment, Inc. and the Shoemaker Fund for Quaker Connect. This program is designed to reinvigorate the Quaker movement.

Robin Mohr, current Executive Secretary for the FWCC Section of the Americas, said, “Quaker connect is responding to the need of local friends to develop a spirit of experimentation in partnership with God to support the members of their Meetings and engage in issues important to their communities. Quaker Connect will equip Quaker churches to be more clearly who they are meant to be: profoundly Quaker, deeply rooted, and highly visible in their local community.” Quaker Connect will be a structured Network of Quaker Meetings across the branches of Friends in the Americas. By year's end, the Section of the Americas will be saying goodbye to Robin, as she moves on to apply her leadership skills to other experiences. She has served the Section faithfully as Executive Secretary for 13 years. Among her many accomplishments, Robin has brought innovation, financial stability, and completely bi-lingual operations to the Section.

Mark your calendars: FWCC's annual World Quaker Day is Sunday, October 6. In addition to opportunities to worship “around the world,” the Section of the Americas will organize an interactive hemispheric Zoom program. The theme will be announced in the coming months.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellerie Brownfain (Birmingham), Clémence Ravaçon-Mershon (Erie Worship Group),

Lake Erie YM Representatives to the Section of the Americas

Olney Friends School 2023–2024 Report

We have 30 students enrolled. We're always looking for more students to join us during the year.

The school year began, as usual, with orientation, but this year was unique, with more new students than returning ones. The junior class, for example, gained six new students from South Africa and Uganda. This made orientation even more important, and our returning faculty and students made sure to welcome the new students and families to Olney.

Electives included “Your Voice,” a class to build public speaking skills, and “Race, Power, and Privilege,” both taught by Christian Acemah ’01; “Ornithology,” Jessica Wiandt’s (Hon.) year-long elective to create a census and guidebook of Olney birds; “Art in Nature,” in which Amy Witt (Hon.) helped students find artistic inspiration from our beautiful campus; and “All School Sing Band” with Devin Clouse, another year-long elective that grows more popular as the year passes.

On the academic side, students have been hard at work with their required and elective classes. The ninth graders have all acclimated to Olney and have had an exciting adventure studying Humanities. They explored ancient Sumer and learned to write their names in hieroglyphics. They then taught the community to write their names in this ancient language.

From ancient Sumer, the ninth graders moved to a different continent, studying Native Americans in the Ohio Valley. This class concluded with a visit to the Moundsville Archaeological Complex. A highlight of the visit was holding a meeting for worship on top of the mound. The ninth and tenth graders also studied comparative philosophies of ancient China and the Middle Ages. All the students study blacksmithing (a transdisciplinary unit with chemistry). The sophomores used their knowledge of the Middle Ages and blacksmithing for a project to create a medieval shield. This is the second year of the transdisciplinary unit with blacksmithing, chemistry, and the humanities. The teachers focused on blacksmithing throughout antiquity (ninth graders) and the medieval period (tenth graders). The chemistry teacher, who is experienced in blacksmithing, conducted

learning at the forge and going deeper into the chemistry of it with the sophomores. This year, students each made an S hook, useful for hanging things as well as decoration.

Juniors had the busiest schedule, with two sciences (Physics and Agricultural Science), Health, and Quakerism.

This fall, the seniors received a visit from Ohio University, visited Marietta College and Washington & Jefferson College with the juniors, and attended the Wheeling Area Chamber of Commerce College Fair. Some seniors have already received letters of acceptance. In Humanities, the seniors read *Pride and Prejudice*, by Jane Austen. They hosted a speed-dating event where students played a character from the book. (I wonder if Mr. Darcy dated Elizabeth Bennett, as written in the book?) When not working on their college applications and essays, juniors and seniors spent time exploring career opportunities and visiting colleges. The Wheeling YWCA was awarded a grant to take students from the Ohio Valley, where Olney is located, to visit historically black colleges and universities in Atlanta, Georgia. Six juniors visited colleges in Atlanta. They stayed overnight in Charlotte, North Carolina and visited the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African American Arts and Culture. Mr. Gantt was an architect and politician from North Carolina. In 1983, he made history as the first elected black mayor of Charlotte.

Ohio had many perfect places to experience the April 8 total solar eclipse. Students traveled to Chardon, Ohio, east of Cleveland, for the annual spring outing, during which they viewed the eclipse. At alumni gatherings years from now, that will be a talked-about event.

From the financial side, we have recently been awarded grants of \$12,885 for air filtration and purification equipment and \$5,000 for environmental stewardship with the farm. Donations and student referrals are always welcome!

The 186th commencement exercises will take place on Saturday, May 25. The annual alumni meeting is held the night before commencement. Six students will graduate and hopefully be back next year to attend their first Friday evening meeting as alumni.

Respectfully submitted, Ellerie Brownfain (Birmingham)

Plenary Presentation

Opening To and Pouring Out the Spirit through Contemplative Communal Chant

Paulette Meier, with Joann Neuroth

June 14, 2024, 7:30 pm

The 2024 Lake Erie Yearly Meeting's Friday evening plenary session featured singer/songwriter Paulette Meier, known for setting early Quaker quotations to newly composed plainsong chants. She was joined in conversation by Joann Neuroth (Red Cedar). Following is a lightly edited transcription of that presentation.

Paulette, *chanting*:

Be still and cool in thy own mind and spirit,
From thy own thoughts.
And then thou wilt feel the principle of God,
To turn thy mind to the Lord God,
Whereby thou wilt receive God's strength and power
from whence life comes.
Whereby thou wilt receive God's strength
to allay all blustering storms and tempests.

George Fox

[Repeats]

Paulette: Good evening, Friends. So nice to be here.

That quotation from George Fox is my first attempt to put a quotation to melody so I could remember it. I was having a bit of a rough time and was feeling pretty down. And I saw that quote and thought, "I need to memorize this." I knew that putting things to music can help you seal it into your mind. It was later that I found out that Fox wrote the words in a letter to the daughter of Oliver Cromwell. Fox was known as a healer, and Cromwell asked him to visit his daughter, who was suffering

from some kind of depression or illness. Fox couldn't go to her, but he wrote this letter. Apparently, what he said helped. So, that's how this whole project started: putting early quotations to melodies so I could remember them.

Joann: And we're really glad you did. So, welcome to Lake Erie Yearly Meeting. It's good to have you here in my home territory.

P: Thank you.

J: We've known each other for a while and worked together several times.

P: I first met Joann at Pendle Hill at a Wisdom School that I was helping Cynthia Bourgeault lead. She's very much a supporter of these Quaker quotations in song and very much a proponent of Quaker practice. We've done a number of Wisdom Schools at Pendle Hill. Joann came to one of them, and during a private conversation, she really served as a minister to me. So, I knew that about her gifts and I found out she was with School of the Spirit, and then we bumped into each other again at a program of the School of Spirit that I did during the pandemic called Participating in God's Power. And then, both she and I were asked to be guest teachers for the second version of the same program, and so we've driven together to New York a couple of times. And when I found out she was at Lake Erie, that this was her yearly meeting, I asked her to do this with me. I was so glad that she said "yes," because it makes it so much more comfortable to have a conversation with someone.

J: So, what you just described is the first time we met in person, but I really knew you a long time before because you and your CD had been singing with me in the car for years. Do any of you know Paulette's recordings? Let's just see who's familiar with her recordings. Okay, it's actually going to be a new experience for quite a few of these folks.

Paulette's been singing in the peace and justice movements all of her adult life, really, and then she put together a children's

album, *Come Join the Circle: Lesson Songs for Peacemaking*. (It's going to be in the bookstore.) But this phase of her Quaker wisdom chants really took off in 2010, when she released a CD called *Timeless Quaker Wisdom in Plainsong*. And the first chant she just sang was an example of that plainsong.

At the time I found this, I was driving for work and on long trips I would just put it in the car player and I'd sing along. And I'd hit rewind and I'd sing along again and I'd hit rewind and, eventually, I could turn the volume down and see if I could keep up with her when I couldn't hear as much. So, the songs have really been a source of joy for me and a way to really embed some of this Quaker wisdom in some part of my brain that isn't my frontal cortex. I don't know where it resides, but it's capable of coming to me in worship as a message or when I need it. When the words rise now, I know them by heart – the wisdom has become part of me.

P: Yeah, for me the quotations and melodies started coming in Quaker worship and I almost felt like I was channeling Fox sometimes. You never know, all of a sudden, it's just there.

J: So, on one of these long rides to New York, we settled down with the theme for the rest of these sessions, "Friends Together: Outpourings of the Spirit." And what did that bring up for you when you started thinking that theme through?

P: I think the first thing it brought up was, well, to have an outpouring, you need an inpouring, and how does the inpouring come? So, that sort of framed what we decided to do – that we would start with chants with quotations that have to do with the getting ready. What helps the inpouring and then what's the manifestation or the testimony that shows from the outpouring.

J: Fox discovered this inpouring experientially. He encouraged early Friends to prepare for this outpouring by listening to that inpouring, and you have some words that you found over and over in his *Journal*.

P: Oh, yes. I read that the most common phrase in Fox's writings was "the power of the Lord came over me," and that's when he talks about the healings – the healings that happened for him, spontaneous healings. You all know probably that there was a *Book of Miracles* that got squelched because Quakers didn't need any more harassment coming down from the authorities. He had a lot of experiences of miracles, and from his practice, he figured out that by letting go of thoughts and going deep within, these kinds of openings come.

J: So, your next chant, "Stand Still," describes one way to open oneself to inpouring. Talk to us about how that grew out of your reading.

P: Yes, I was fortunate to spend nine months at Pendle Hill as the artist in residence. I was the first singer and songwriter artist in residence, and during that time, I got to take a weeklong class from Rex Ambler. I'd like to see a show of hands of who is familiar with Rex Ambler. Okay, good. So raise your hand if you have actually participated in the guided meditation called Experiment with Light. Okay, a number of people. Good. Well, I got to have a whole week with him there, learning how he came up with this guided meditation for contemporary Friends based on his readings of Fox.

He read Fox over and over again, trying to see what was it about those early Friends that gave them such amazing experiences within and leadings to do this and that specific thing – a lot of direct guidance. He was having certain problems with his life and was going to Quaker Meeting and felt like he wasn't getting any guidance, and so that's when he really started researching. And he decided that there were directives from Fox. So, this next quote that I want to sing is sort of a summing up of what he saw as the directives for how to seek guidance. It's still sort of difficult and challenging, but it's nice to have a really simple way to conceptualize it. If some of you already are familiar with this album, feel free to sing along. I'm going to be singing solo for a lot of these, since the plainsong is not melodic and is a bit

hard to learn, but feel free to sing along with me if you know it, and then at certain points we're all going to sing along, on some of the easier ones.

Stand still in that which is pure
After ye see yourselves,
And then mercy comes in.
After thou seest thy thoughts and temptations,
Do not think, but submit, and then power comes in ...

Stand still in that which shows and discovers.
And there doth strength immediately come.
And stand still in the light, and submit to it.
And the other will be hushed and gone,
And then contentment comes.

George Fox

Sing it one more time.

Audience: Stand still in that which is pure

J: And Paulette knows this, but I'll tell the rest of you that this is probably my favorite of the whole album, and tonight I begged her to put this one in the playlist because it has been for me a real teaching tool. Because it shows me that there's a sequence.

First you stand still in the Light and let it show you what is. And then, after you see your thoughts and temptations, what comes is mercy – mercy for yourself. You give yourself permission to be who you really are (instead of who you think you ought to be, or you're trying to be, or who you haven't pulled off yet). And then Fox knows me well enough to know, "Joann, do not think; don't try to figure out what to do about this." Instead, submit, turn it over, ask for guidance, and then power comes in. I find that to be true: When I ask for guidance, the guidance comes. I'm usually humbled to realize it is something I have the power to do. And then, the next step is, I have to decide to do it. So then, I have to give myself to the guidance and then strength comes in, he says. And finally, after I do all of that, contentment. So it's usually a

good kind of diagnostic for me: Where am I stuck? Am I not admitting what really is? Am I not asking for guidance? Have I got the guidance but I'm not doing what it said? It's really a wonderful tool, and I thank you for putting it in my heart.

P: Yeah, I'll just share real briefly. One of the times that it helped me was when I got assigned my first teacher's aide job. I was assigned to a new teacher who was about 22 years old and a sports jock, and really very authoritarian. He was teaching little third graders, and it didn't seem like he had any experience with children, and he was not about to listen to me. I had been doing a lot of training of teachers in conflict resolution and how to do peacemaking in the classroom, but I was kind of under his thumb and feeling really, really upset that I wasn't allowed to use what I knew. I did an Experiment with Light session around it, asking for guidance of how to deal with this situation. The image that I got was of a grandmother taking a little boy by the hand and showing him around about how things are done. And what it did for me was make me realize I could be this guy's grandmother. I'm way old enough, *way* old enough, to be his grandmother and I'm being intimidated and feeling really shut down. So I went in with a different attitude, thinking of him as my grandson. And I'm not saying that it changed everything and made everything perfect, but it made it so much more relaxing to me. And, I think because of that, he was able to relax somewhat with me as well. So, I like this because it can really show you practical things in your life.

J: Thanks for the story. One of the things I think is hard in our day, especially with the explosion of information technology, is that everywhere around us are opinions and facts and issues, and just knowledge that is coming at us from everywhere, and it's hard to tell which ideas are from my inner guidance. I get pulled by this idea or that idea and settling into what really is guidance can be a hard piece of work.

P: I think there's just so much coming to us, period: we have access to not just information but also so many choices. We're in

a state of society where we're just bombarded, and I think a lot of us are overwhelmed. We can hear what's going on in every part of the world at any time of day, so it's hard to make the time, I think, to really go deep and block it all out. I know I have a hard time with setting that time, that routine for meditation.

Sometimes it comes in dreams for me. Marcel Martin wrote a wonderful, wonderful article in *Friends Journal* not too long ago about the history of Quakers with dreams, and I really encourage you to read it. But one thing that happened to me: after I left Pendle Hill, I was practicing Experiment with Light in the morning and doing the practice by myself, using the CD with Rex Ambler on it. And one morning, I woke up and was lying there awake and I had my eyes closed and sort of in that dozy state, and suddenly I saw an image of a bird with a yellow beak. It opened its beak and had a pearl on its tongue, and it said, telepathically, to me, "I've been holding this pearl here for a long time and it's time for it to be revealed." Well, if that wasn't cryptic! I didn't know what this was about, and then I got up to do my usual Experiment with Light and I turned on the CD player. It was Ambler's voice but it wasn't the usual CD I'd been using. The first words that he said were, "Seek the pearl within." I decided the bird was a robin, and over the next six months I had so many encounters and synchronicities with robins. Finally I found Ted Andrews' book, *Animal Speak*. It tells from a Native American perspective what animals' messages can bring to you. I looked up what "robin" means, and it said that if a robin's coming to you, it can mean that you have a song to sing – out to the world – and it's time to do it. And by then, I was already putting these Quaker quotes to song and I was running across the word "pearl" constantly in Fox's writings. So eventually, I realized that this was true inner guidance, and that it can come even in dreams or dream-like states.

J: So, sing us Fox's song about keeping within where the guidance resides.

P: I'm going to sing the long version first and then I'm going to do a shorter one with you all singing along with me.

Paulette sings.

Keep within,
And when they say look here and look there is Christ,
Go not forth.
For Christ is within you.
And those who try to draw your mind away from the
teaching inside you
are opposed to Christ.
For the measure's within, and the light of God is within.
And the pearl is within you, though hidden.

George Fox

J: It's so precious to have the affirmation that the pearl, the truth, what we really want, is within you and that all those voices that try to tell you where to go, they're pulling you away from your access to the truth. It's very lovely.

P: So, let's sing the shorter version together. It goes like this. I'll sing it once through, and then then you can join me as you feel ready.

Paulette sings:

Keep within, for the Light of God is within.
And the pearl is within you, though hidden.

[Repeats several times, with group joining.]

P: When you feel ready, try to break your eyes away from the words.

Group singing continues.

J: Okay, thank you, you've got our feet wet with a few chants. Let's talk for a little bit about how you discovered this medium.

How did you come across the idea of chant and what draws you to it?

P: Well, I think initially it's because I grew up Catholic before Vatican 2. And I grew up singing Latin masses, the Requiem. I still have the whole Requiem mass in my head in Latin, and that's a plainsong chant kind of medium, and so I really think that is in my bones.

And then, when I was at Pendle Hill as the artist in residence, I didn't feel like I was doing much for the community. I decided to start a meeting for worship with attention to singing – a different way of singing that would be more coming from the depths of us and yet allow harmony. So I picked out rounds and started doing really simple songs and encouraging people to do harmonies. We were doing that after meeting for worship on Sundays. But that really was one of my first instincts – that there was a way to bring song to Quakers that was more embodied and more in line with meeting for worship. I wanted it to feel different from the singalongs where everyone calls out numbers in the book, and I felt like it worked.

Then I met Cynthia Bourgeault. She's a contemplative Christian, an ordained Episcopalian priest, and prolific writer, who also leads retreats and Wisdom Schools, not just in this country but in other countries. She's got a great following. Along with Richard Rohr and others, she is really opening up Christianity to non-traditional seekers. As I was reading her book, *Wisdom Way of Knowing*, I thought this is just what early Quakers thought; this is really so similar to what early Friends were saying. And so I sent her my first album, even before it was published, and she wrote back right away and said "I want to work with you."

J: She sometimes describes herself as an offline Quaker and she went to Quaker schools growing up.

P: I didn't know that at the time, but she eventually invited me to lead some of these Quaker chants at her Wisdom School. There were 200 people there, and it was so powerful to have all these

people chanting over and over before we did meditation. Often the chanting would lead right into the meditation, and that's what really got me thinking Quakers could do this too. We could chant before we go into meeting for worship. So, that was a big influence.

J: Talk to us about why we might want to do that. Why chant?

P: Okay, why chant? First of all, I learned just this past year, that the vagus nerve runs through behind your throat and singing vibrates it. The vibration of that vagus nerve helps with inflammation and also other things, too, so singing really is a healing practice. In the chanting groups I lead in Cincinnati, people who don't feel well tell me later that if they stay and chant, they get healed through the chanting.

So, it's a healing mechanism, but let's look and see what some other people have said about it.

“We chant to join our voices to the voices of countless seekers, worshippers, mystics, and lovers of life, in every time and every place, who have shared in sacred song.” -- Robert Gass.

That is so true. All these religions, all these different religions, in their beginnings had chanting. It's a really ancient practice.

“Chanting draws our focus to the present and calms the dualistic mind.” . . . “The very physical act of breathing and forming sounds brings body and mind together.”

(Those are quotes from Richard Rohr.)

Let me say something about the left and right brain. When you just listen to music, you're going mostly with the right brain, right? When you put words with music, you've got right and left brain working together. It occurs to me that this is how we teach the ABCs to children: we sing them. Anything that you can put to music will help you internalize it more and memorize it.

“Chant is vocal meditation. Chant is the breath made audible in tone. Chant is discovering Spirit in sound.”

-- Robert Gass

And this:

“As you give yourself to the words you are chanting, their spiritual power comes alive in you.” “To make music, you must engage those three core elements out of which the earth was fashioned and through which all spiritual transformation happens: breath, vibration, and intention. Those three things.” -- Cynthia Bourgeault

And this:

“We sing, and yet not we, but the Eternal, sings in us. The song is put into our mouths, for the singer of all songs is singing within us. It is not we that sing, it is the eternal song of the Other who sings in us, who sings unto us, and through us into the world.” That’s Thomas Kelly. And that’s an outpouring of Spirit.

And this from the Sufis:

“Chant is the bridge between sound and silence.”

J: Okay, but we’re Quakers. We don’t just listen to what other people tell us chants would do. We’re going to try it ourselves, right? And we’re going to find out what our experience with it is, so Paulette’s going to teach us another one here. This one is called “This Present Time,” and while you sing it, we want you to pay attention to what does happen for you. Is this all malarkey? Or does some part of you feel something happening?

P: All right, so, really pay attention to your body, if you can, while we’re doing this. Make sure your feet are on the floor. You’re getting that good energy up and, yeah, just kind of notice. Sometimes, when I do this repetitive singing I try to, like when I meditate, I try to get rid of thoughts and focus on my third eye and just try to really get into the flow of it. This is a George Fox quote:

Paulette sings:

Ye have no time but this present time.
Ye have no time but this present time.
Ye have no time but this present time,
Therefore prize your time for your soul's sake.

George Fox

[Others join in.]

And harmony is welcome. *[Chant repeated several more times.]*

J: Okay, so turn to somebody next to you, just pair up informally, and talk about what did or didn't seem true to you about that experience of chanting.

P: Anything in your body.

J: We're going to give you about two minutes each. I'll tell you when the two minutes is up to switch.

[Minutes pass.]

Okay, wrap up that thought. *[Pause]* So, we were really torn when we got at this part in our planning. We want, of course, to hear what you all said to each other, but we decided we'd be here much of the night and we want to do more chanting. So, find us at the lunch table tomorrow and tell us whatever you said last night, and in the meantime, we'll tell you our experience. So, Paulette, what happens in your body when you chant?

P: I noticed that there's kind of an echoing, a reverberation in my body, but I have to really specifically look for it. I don't just automatically feel it, but that's what happens right afterwards; I noticed that the words are reverberating almost like in a physical kind of way.

J: What I noticed is that it brings me right down to the present moment. I'm not planning or regretting or rewriting, if I'm chanting. I'm right here. Also, I don't know where the chants get

stored, but they're accessible to me. I really remember them; they're in my body somewhere.

P: Yeah, that's true for me too. The chanting, it's just amazing how, even in a situation has nothing to do with Quaker Meeting or religion or anything spiritual, suddenly a chant will come up in my life that just fits what I need right there. So it's a way that they do get embodied.

P: We're going to do one by Isaac Penington, and this is another long one. Penington was one of the more mystical early Quakers and he offered this beautiful text for how to how to go deep. It reflects his own experience of emptying and letting go of one's own will in order to, in that emptying, to be filled then. Cynthia Bourgeault has a saying that "kenosis fills" and she calls Quakerism "a kenotic spirituality" because it's an emptying practice that allows for filling.

So it goes . . . Sing it with me if you know it:

Paulette sings:

Give over thine own willing.
Give over thine own running.
And give over thine own desiring to know or be anything.
And sink down to the seed,
Which God sows in thy heart.

And let that be in thee and grow in thee
And breathe in thee and act in thee.
And thou shalt find by sweet experience
That the Lord knows that and loves and owns that,
And will lead it to the inheritance of life,
Which is God's portion.

Isaac Penington

I learned from Marcel Martin that "portion" in this text has to do with your part of the inheritance and God's portion is your portion.

J: Thanks. So far we've been exploring a lot of wisdom – Quaker wisdom – about how to empty ourselves, how to go deep, how to experience that inflowing of Spirit, so it's about time to turn to the theme of the gathering and ask, "How does outflowing work, then?" We found when we started trying to categorize these that a number of Paulette's chants have come from people whose stories are about living testimonies, about being in the outside world – what aligns their external lives with the inner knowing that has come to them in the inpouring. So, tell us about the first one.

P: William Robinson was one of the Quakers who was hanged in Boston Commons because he, along with Mary Dyer and two others whose names I'm forgetting in the moment, were deliberately going back into the colony of Massachusetts where they were told that Quakers were not allowed to come in. They were warned, and they did it again, and so William Robinson and two others were hanged, and Mary Dyer later. But William Robinson wrote a letter to his Quaker friends and his family, and this is a quote from that letter, as he was getting ready to be executed. He wanted to reassure them:

Chanting:

The streams of my father's love run daily through me.
 The streams of my mother's love run daily through me.
 From the holy fountain of life,
 To the seed throughout the whole creation.

William Robinson

I took the liberty of alternating "father" with "mother" just because of who I am, and because I realized that early Quakers also often mixed the genders for the Divine. Sarah Blackburrow refers to the womb and to "she," so, I'm not completely off here. This is one I'd like for you all to sing along, too. I think we can get it all at once. We'll just go through it a couple times. Join in when you feel ready. Harmony again is always welcome, if you feel like it.

[Previous quotation repeated as a chant.]

J: So, it's one thing to have sense of it flowing through you, but when you give us the context of knowing that he was on the verge of walking to his execution and he was still feeling that the streams of God's love were flowing through him, so that his life in the world was what he was supposed to do, I think that's pretty extraordinary.

P: I also love that notion of the seed spread through the whole creation, you know. That incarnation is not just with us humans here on this planet but also the animals and all the other planets out in the cosmos. I just love that.

J: Thank you. You have another example of outpouring for us?

P: Yes, I have a feeling more of you probably know who Mary Fisher was. Can you raise your hand if you've heard of Mary Fisher? Mary is the one who had a leading to go talk to the Sultan of Turkey. She had a horrendous journey, and I think she ended up actually walking a long distance at the end to get to where the Sultan was. Everybody had warned her that the Turkish people were violent and would cut your head off. There was a lot of discrimination among British folk back then about Turkish people, but she was determined to follow her leading to go. And she did. And when she came back, I don't think she ever really said what message she told the Sultan in Turkey. But what she brought back with her was how much she loved the Turkish people and how kind they had been to her. She said they were the kindest people she'd ever met. Her experience changed her and she changed a lot of people's minds about Turkish people.

So, we're going to sing one together – a quote from her that's really easy, real short, and you'll pick it up immediately. (This is what she said when she got back.) It goes like this.

Chanting: There is a love begot in me, which is endless!

[Repeated several times, as others joined in]

This one is really easy to harmonize to.

Lovely, thank you, thank you all.

J: I'm sure you want to share with them that while you were writing this and getting to know Mary Fisher's life, you became clear that however much we become a channel for divine wisdom, we're still complex whole, flawed people.

P: And Mary Fisher certainly had to have a blind spot because I learned from Lucy Duncan that Mary Fisher was part of the large settlement of Quakers in Barbados, and Barbados was the center for the slave trade, with all these Quakers there participating in it. And I gathered from what Lucy wrote that Mary Fisher was part of that. So, it's stunning to think that somebody who would overcome that prejudice with Turkish people would not get it . . . that she wouldn't see the evil of participating in such dehumanization as the slave trade.

So, I've been challenged about whether or not to sing these quotes from people like Mary Fisher or William Penn, who had 12 people enslaved in his home outside of Philadelphia. I choose to still share the words of these early Friends that, I think, came from that part of them that manifested the truth; I don't feel like I have to wipe them out of our history. Because, for all we know, all of us may yet be written out of history for something we've not yet realized – what we haven't done to stop climate change, for instance. So I just think that it's important to recognize the contradictions and also to sing that part of them that knew the truth.

J: As the earlier chant told us, after thou seest thyself, then mercy comes in. What would you like to sing next?

P: Okay, this is early Quaker testimony, the outpouring of Spirit, that George Fox said this:

And may not the Spirit of Christ speak in the female as well as in the male?

Who is it that dare limit the Holy One of Israel?

For the Light is the same in the male and in the female,
And it cometh from Christ.
And who is it that dare stop Christ's mouth?

J: Paulette confessed to me while we practiced this that she has to hold herself back from sounding too strident when she sings this one.

P: Yeah, I didn't hold myself back too much there tonight.

J: So, another thing that I know drew you to Quakers was realizing that their outpourings were not so much rule-oriented but driven by this internal inpouring that then manifested itself out in the outward way. And I love it that you have a song from Penington about that.

P: I think that you know the apocryphal story about William Penn where he says, "Is there a rule? Do I have to not wear my sword anymore?" and Fox said, "Wear it as long as thou canst." It may be apocryphal, but I think it's really significant and symptomatic of what early Quakers believed: they really thought that if you centered enough, the Light would come, and you could wait for the Light to show you how to live.

So, I love that idea, because I grew up hearing, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," and it was kind of like "You must love!" But to have it come organically, shown to us in connection with the Divine that's flowing through us. That's so much more authentic.

So, this is another Penington quote, it goes like this:

Our life is love. Our life is peace.
Our life is tenderness, and bearing with each other,
and forgiving one another.
And not laying accusations one against the other.
But praying for each other.
And helping each other up with a tender hand.

Isaac Penington

Chant then sung by group.

J: So, as our lives become an outpouring of the Spirit we've experienced inwardly, it encompasses every aspect of our lives. Penington tells us about some of the things we do, but there are also things that get called into question. You've got a Woolman quote for that.

P: Yes, when I read John Woolman's *Journal*, I was just blown away by how much conscience he had and how much consciousness he had of the harm being done to the whales, to the trees, to the horses, to people. He just was so aware, and I love this quotation from him.

Okay, so it goes like this. I'll sing it once all the way through.

May we look upon our treasure, our furniture, and our
garments,
May we look upon our treasure, our furniture, and our
garments,
And try to discover whether the seeds of war
Are nourished by these, our possessions.

John Woolman

Group chanting follows.

J: So, shall we end with "Hold Fast the Hope"?

P: Yeah, that's a good George Fox quotation and, actually, I mentioned it today at lunch, I think. We were talking about how easy it is to fall into despair these days. We all know that, but it was a despairing time for Quakers in Fox's time too, with the civil war going on, the burning of London, diseases, smallpox, all the fighting, all the brutality that they experienced. This was from an epistle, I think, that Fox wrote to friends.

Hold fast the hope,
That anchors the soul,
Which is sure and steadfast,

That you may float
above the world's sea.

George Fox

First Paulette alone, then mixed voices.

J: We thought that we would end with that because it is our hope that these words, among others, will sink deep in you through the medium of chants – that you can hold fast the hope that is steadfast and rise above the world's sea.

Paulette has some of her CDs along, and they're in the bookstore that Valerie's got organized across the hall. We encourage you to take a look and, if you haven't started to let them sink in, try it in your car.

P: And also, the "Timeless Quaker Wisdom in Plainsong" has a lot of information included. When you put your CD into a disc drive in your computer, you'll see not just the audio tracks but also a 35-page PDF booklet that I wrote that has information about the writers of these quotes. It has all the biblical sayings; Quakers used biblical words all the time, and I didn't know the Bible enough to even know that, but I got educated. That's on the disc, so you can print it out and it also has every song notated. So if you're somebody who reads music, you can get the music for it.

J: Thank you, thank you so much for bringing us your gift, Paulette.

P: Thank you for inviting me. Really.

LEYM Annual Meeting Workshop Summaries

Session 1, Friday, June 14, 3:30

Right Relationship

Led by Nathan Kleban (Right Sharing of World Resources)

Right Sharing of World Resources is known for providing grants to groups for the creation of micro enterprises. The goal is to provide educational programming working with conflict both on the individual and the social level.

The workshop was designed to explore power dynamics in personal relationships in order to get a sense of what constitutes right relationship and then explore how right relationship would look on the societal level.

Participants were first paired off in concentric circles to each consider a number of questions. The first three questions dealt with individual circumstances:

- Give an example of someone you respect and why.
- Give an example of a situation where you have lost respect for someone or felt betrayed by them.
- Give an example of a situation in which you felt forgiven.

Participants were asked to imagine what the other person felt and whether there was any behavior or action that might have helped you resolve or heal the situation. When considering restorative justice, participants were urged to replace the term “forgive” with “healed” or “reconciliation.”

The workshop then moved from individual conflict situations to community conflict. Participants were divided into groups of four to consider “What do I know about my own healing work that I can bring into community level relationships?”

Submitted by Christopher Farrand (Cleveland)

Being a Quaker and Being an Activist: Challenges and Opportunities

Led by Bill Warters (Birmingham) and Claire Cohen (Pittsburgh)

In this workshop, we explored “what it means to be not just an activist, but a Quaker activist.”

Some of us became activists after we had become Quakers; some of us were already activists when we became Quakers. For that and other reasons, some within Meetings are more “activist” in orientation and some are more “mystic”; some are equally “activist” and “mystic.”

We discussed the following highlights that appear on a “**Quaker Activism History**” page.

- Quakers Refuse to Fight in Britain’s Wars: Quakerism emerged in a time of conflict.
- Quakers Support the Rights of Women: From the start of Quakerism, women played key leadership roles.
- Quakers Oppose the Slave Trade: Friends were among the first to speak out against slavery.
- Quakers Seek Humane Treatment of Prisoners and the Mentally Ill: Many Friends were imprisoned; funds for the suffering were common.
- Quakers Seek to Have Fair Relations with Native Americans in their New Colony: For 70+ years, there was peace between Pennsylvania Quakers and Native Americans. Friends were often sought out by Native Americans as observers at various negotiations.
- Quakers Withdraw from Pennsylvania Politics Rather than Support Taking Up Arms Against French and Indians in War: Beginning in the mid-1770s, Quakers begin a “Quietest” phase, with more focus on inward spiritual life and purity of purpose.

- Quietism Introversion Leads to Big Changes among Friends: Disownments for infringements on the discipline of the respective Yearly Meetings rose considerably.

We named and briefly discussed four roles of Social Change:

- Advocates
- Helpers
- Organizers
- Rebels

We discussed at length how best to respond to this potential scenario (which may be familiar to some):

Our Meeting is part of a coalition of churches that provides social services to the poor and homeless. Those social services include a 100-bed homeless shelter that is hosted by one of the churches. Because of ongoing behavior patterns and because of several recent incidents involving homeless individuals, the city wants for that shelter to close at its current location and to move to an outlying part of town that is known to have poor public transit and limited access to the kinds of services that poor people would need.

We divided our workshop into small groups and were asked to discuss the following:

With at least one member of your group representing each of the four approaches to social change (interests, rights, power, and compassion/healing), discuss actions that your group might recommend to address this problem.

We closed with a quotation that appears on a “**Quakers as Activists**” page:

The focus on inner conditions, on listening expectantly, and being moved by the Light is central in the lives of Friends, whether “activists” or “mystics.” This is an

essential feature that sets Quaker activism apart from most secular approaches.

It's a bold claim that anything can consistently be said about Friends' activism. But it seems as close to a continual truth as possible to say that Friendly activism seeks to reach that of God in all people.

Before we adjourned, each of us was given a copy of *Being a Quaker, Being an Activist*, a booklet published by the Canadian Friends Service Committee (2023).

Submitted by Bob Roehm (North Columbus)

Free the Fire

Led by R. E. Hogan (Athens)

After showing a couple of videos raising such questions as “Can this planet become the paradise it was meant to be?” and “If not war and mass destruction, then what?,” R. E. Hogan shared his article titled “Living the New Story: My Experience of Birthing the Ecozoic Era.”

In this article, which R. E. characterized as an “auto-biocultural memoir action plan,” he declared that, “in order to share the message, we have to *be* the message.” If this planet is to become the paradise it was meant to be, we must establish a post-capitalistic society around a healing biotope. Since the entire universe is evolving and developing, we need to see what is before us. Life is a journey, an ongoing event.

The concept of “green fire,” which R. E. embraced, comes from *A Sand County Almanac* by Aldo Leopold. Green fire “is another way of saying ‘bioculturally diverse stability, resilience, and passion.’” Indeed, biocultural diversity “suggests that it’s possible for humans to do something really good by reintegrating themselves profoundly within the web of life.”

R. E. left us to ponder the following “primary earth care queries,” which he developed more than 25 years ago:

How shall we ...

Regenerate biocultural diversity through nurturing social, spiritual, and ecological integrity?

Re-inhabit Earth in right relationship?

Recover the Commons of Earth and Space?

Rebalance Earth Processes?

Submitted by Rosemary Coffey (Pittsburgh)

Outward Manifestations of the Outpouring of the Spirit: Distribution of Resources – Effects of Our Money System

Led by John Howell (Athens)

John began the workshop with a quotation from Quaker Pamela Haines in *Money and Soul*: “To what did I conscientiously object? . . . A culture of economic materialism It sets us on a path to total destruction.”

Our current economic system is a wealth-concentrating machine. 95% of the country’s total wealth is “account money” – numbers in computers, not backed by bills or coins. Our money supply is growing tremendously but is used mainly for private benefits, leaving physical and social infrastructure needs and steps to address climate change inadequately funded.

In principle, the national money supply can be created in two ways:

- 1) By banks making loans, as debt-credit, a public liability.
Money to pay off interest is dependent on new loans.
- 2) By government – as a public asset, which distributes wealth.

The goal of the current **monetary reform movement** is to shift control *from* private, corporate banks *to* public, non-profit, government entities to benefit the public good. The idea of monetary reform goes back to the Great Depression. It was reintroduced in 2010 as the National Emergency Employment Defense (NEED) Act, and recently updated by the Alliance for Just Money as the American Monetary Reform Act (AMRA). It would end the creation of legal tender by entities other than the government and would establish a Monetary Authority to prevent over-issuance of money.

Monetary Reform:

- 1) Supports democracy by reducing wealth concentration.
- 2) Supports economic justice by enabling government to support social and physical infrastructure.
- 3) Stabilizes the economy, eliminating or reducing suffering arising from recessions and making business planning easier.
- 4) Accommodates transition to a no-growth economy needed for sustainability.
- 5) Reduces global wealth inequalities among nations, reducing international conflict.

Other alternatives currently under consideration globally include central bank (the Federal Reserve in the U.S.) issuance of its own digital currency, intended to out-compete cryptocurrencies because it is more secure.

Question posed: Do we want to entrust our money to a dysfunctional central government?

Response: Political crime makes the news, but Wall Street fraud is so common that it doesn't. The current system has become unregulatable; individual bankers are untouched by the law.

John recommended three Quaker Institute for the Future publications: “It’s the Economy, Friends: Understanding the Growth Dilemma”; “Beyond the Growth Dilemma: Toward an Ecologically Integrated Economy”; and “Toward a Right Relationship with Finance.”

This lively workshop inspired many good questions.

Submitted by Jeff Cooper (Ann Arbor), with John Howell

Session 2, Saturday, June 16, 10:30

Bearing Witness to the Voice of Truth

Led by Keith Runyan, General Secretary of Quaker Earth Witness, and Tom Small (Kalamazoo)

The workshop began with a discussion by Tom Small of Gandhi’s life and work and the principles of Satyagraha (Soul Force). Gandhi’s activities, such as the Salt March in 1930 or Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Montgomery Bus Boycott, were complete actions; that is, they were symbolic (challenging British colonial rule and racial discrimination) and pointed to the desired goal.

Keith Runyan picked up with John Woolman’s sense of “coming under the weight” of a concern or “being exercised by the Spirit,” which is the persistent experiencing of God upon us. Gandhi sought unity of thought and action. When Fox returned to those who threatened him and accepted being beaten by them, he chose God’s rule.

Keith asked whether we as Friends are “exercised”? Do we live with integrity between our principles and our actions?

The participants were asked to consider whether they have engaged in an action that they felt murky about – one that they have been wrestling with. There are two facets to consider: (1) the prompting for an action, and (2) questioning that action. The

place where murkiness arises is where one should slow down and pray deeply for guidance.

He reviewed the principles for discernment:

- Listening to our own intuition
- Listening to others
- Murkiness is “waiting worship”
- Speak your piece of the Truth
- Continuing revelation
- Self-organizing
- Working to keep in step with life’s procession.

Those who make war are focused on what they are doing. Are Friends as exercised on doing what is necessary to prevent war?

Keith closed the workshop with a call for a new gathering of the Valiant Sixty and asked Friends to ask God what it is each of us should be doing.

Submitted by Christopher Farrand (Cleveland)

Chant Composing and Singing

Led by Paulette Meier, Plenary Presenter (Community Friends Meeting, Cincinnati, OVYFM)

We began the workshop with 20–22 people sitting in a large circle in the Trustee Room (the location where most of LEYM’s “plenary” events were held this year). Paulette shared that she is not a trained musician, assuring the group that no musical training is necessary for creating chants.

After we sang a few of the chants composed by Paulette, in which she had set to music notable quotations from Quakers, we compared the spoken words of an Isaac Penington text with the melody she had composed for it. She showed us how the melody reflects the inflections in the spoken words by going higher or lower, and how open vowels are held out longer or significant words stressed in the melody.

In the advance description of this workshop, we had been asked to come prepared with a brief, meaningful quotation or text that we would like to set to melody, so that we could “leave with a way to more fully embody its message.” Paulette provided a handout of possible quotes to set to melody for participants who had brought none, and the group decided to start by composing together a new chant from the list.

At least two attenders of this workshop were familiar with music theory; one of them asked several questions about traditional “tonic resolution” patterns in one of the proposed melodies and suggested a change that would involve “going up a third.” We agreed, as I recall, to that proposed change of melody.

We then split up into pairs or groups of three; Paulette had those who felt somewhat confident stand up, and those who felt less confident choose a partner from those standing. We spent the next 20 minutes or so composing our own chants; each small group then presented theirs to the entire group. Many beautiful and inspiring chants were created!

In a paper-saving (and higher tech) endeavor, Bill Warters provided participants with a QR code to access the resources collected by Paulette for further information and links related to chanting.

Submitted by Bob Roehm (North Columbus), with Paulette Meier

Visit paulettemeier.com to see her albums of Quaker wisdom set to plainsong, including song sheets.

Answering the Call to Be “Apartheid-Free”

Led by Zoe Jannuzi, Coordinator, AFSC U.S.-Palestine Activism Program

Zoe began by apologizing that two other scheduled speakers from AFSC were unavoidably absent. She then noted the recent growth in AFSC’s U.S.-Palestine Activism Program, which

“engages communities in social and political change efforts that work to end the Israeli occupation and the system of Apartheid that exists in Israel and Palestine, which prevents all people from living in equality, dignity, and respect.”

Next she showed a video on Israeli Apartheid, depicting Palestinians being forced off their land, separated from one another, and deliberately impoverished. She noted serious human rights violations and Israel’s constant assumption of superiority, and cited a familiar litany of conditions that systematically punish Palestinians, among them the denial of voting rights and right to political protest; lack of clean drinking water for 90% of those in the West Bank; separate roads with frequent obstacles; a complex ID system that denies families the right to live with one another. And all of this preceded the horrors that have taken place since October 7, 2023. The increasing attacks on the West Bank are not widely reported in the U.S. news media, though. Friends United Meeting has a weekly feed, including news of Friends School.

Apartheid takes form in laws, policies, and practices, and is manifested in four ways:

Legal Direct: Israeli law and citizenship dependent on being Jewish;

Legal Indirect: More citizenship rights, including locations for homes, accessible roads, legal protections, health care, and possibility of running for office;

Institutional: Allocation of money;

Public: Interpersonal relationships.

We were invited to read aloud the Apartheid-Free Pledge from a coalition of faith groups, which 342 “communities” (including some Meetings) had signed:

WE AFFIRM our commitment to freedom, justice, and equality for the Palestinian people and all people;

WE OPPOSE all forms of racism, bigotry, discrimination, and oppression; and

WE DECLARE ourselves an apartheid-free community and, to that end,

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

In the final moments of the workshop, Zoe suggested actions we can take: call Congress about Apartheid; donate to AFSC; consider our financial investments (BDS). She also noted resources: the anthology *Light in Gaza* and the Apartheid-Free Communities website: apartheid-free.org.

Submitted by Jeff Cooper (Ann Arbor)

Session 3, Saturday, June 16, 3:30

Trusting the Eternal Divine Source as the Living Root of Quakerism

Presented by Don Badgley (Poughkeepsie, NYYM). David Finke (Oberlin) accompanied him as an elder.

Don Badgley has been travelling with a minute from Poughkeepsie Monthly Meeting under a concern for renewal among Friends. He noted that there are half as many Friends in New York Yearly Meeting today as there were when he was a child. Friends need to attract younger people. How might we be more effective in publishing the Truth of the Divine Source that expresses our faith and our works?

He expressed his concern that Friends are being weakened as a body by our contemporary failure to publish the good news. Current Quakerism is reactive rather than proactive. We are becoming more worldly. We rely on past Quaker history as the basis for our current witness. Our traditions can become static

and creedal – for instance, the S.P.I.C.E.S. We have substituted tradition for the Living God.

While we are often called to focus on our worldly concerns, we should not focus on them to the exclusion of our fundamental ministries. We need to “discover that which is eternal.” He quoted Francis Howgill’s description of the meeting held at Firbank Fell and Friends’ sense of being gathered up as into a net and their “astonishment, amazement, and great admiration, insomuch that we often said one unto another with great joy of Heart, ‘What, is the Kingdom of God come to be with men?’”

Without direct testimony, our “Testimonies” crumble into dust. Quaker history does not give us authority. Early Friends spoke Truth against untruth. They challenged the falsehoods of the churches of their time, just as we need to challenge the falsehoods of contemporary churches that corrupt Jesus’s message of universal love.

Writing letters to the President or to politicians “provides only an illusion of relevance.”

Jesus challenged his faith community – not Rome. He spoke love. Contemporary churches should not claim Christ unless they are willing to clothe the poor, etc.

This is the message that he feels called to bring to Friends.

The session ended with silent worship.

Submitted by Christopher Farrand (Cleveland)

Quaker Spirituality and Compassionate Communication

Led by Don Buckingham (North Columbus)

Don Buckingham defined *nonviolent communication* as “spirit-filled love language.” It includes the following elements:

- Enjoying a more conscious awakening to the goodness of life

- Experiencing divine energy that moves beyond judgment
- Compassionately tending to our own needs and those of others
- Extending nonviolent relationships into peace cultures

He also shared other definitions such as:

- Spirit = life, breath, light: “God is alive within everyone”
- Vitality of spirit = life, breath, and light made manifest
- Quakerism = the life and practice of direct experience via the expression of Spirit
- Life = awareness of what is alive in us at any given moment
- Compassionate communication = spiritually connecting with concern for feelings and needs.

Regarding the practice of nonviolent communication, Don stressed the importance of first addressing one’s own needs, feelings, etc. The next step would be to ask, “What does [this person] need?” Then one might ask, “What do *I* need right now to feel safe?” All participants in the conversation require a sense of sustenance, safety, belonging, respect, achievement, and purpose. Moreover, a spiritually connected speaker must do the following: observe his/her own internal feelings, needs, and self-requests; prepare a brief descriptive sentence to share; and prepare for a possible replay of the above.

Finally, Don handed out a page titled “Nonviolent Communication (NVC) Learning Guide,” which included a list of ways to implement the desire “to connect from the heart,” a list of universal needs or values, and a section on “Words Commonly Used to Express Feelings,” including when needs are not met and when they are.

Submitted by Rosemary Coffey (Pittsburgh)

**Here Today: Developing a Curriculum and Camp
for Young Animal and Art Lovers Celebrating
Endangered Species**

Led by Karla Kauffman (Kalamazoo)

Here Today is a program intended for 4th to 6th graders, explaining how climate change is leading to extinction of plants and animals in this century. Inspired by a 2019 UN report stating that over one million species are at risk of extinction within decades, Karla developed a program on “Grieving Animal Extinction through Art,” sponsored by two churches. Focusing on a different continent for each of five months, it covers 26 species, ranging from the Southern Blue Whale and the Baobab tree to the Black-flanked Rock-Wallaby and the Violet Click Beetle. A “Curriculum” notebook provides pictures, descriptions, and causes of extinction for all these species, along with instructions on how to draw and color them.

Our small group focused on the Hawksbill Turtle, a “keystone species,” meaning that it broadly affects the species around it. We were provided with a template for drawing this turtle from the side and top, paper or scrap wood on which to create an artwork, and various drawing and/or coloring supplies. The results, of course, depended on our skill and imagination: one Friend created a beautiful painting, in part by adding water to the mix of colors, while I settled for a drawing that resembled the artwork of my three-year-old grandson.

Submitted by Jeff Cooper (Ann Arbor)

The Four Roles of Social Change

Led by Ruth Cutcher (Quaker Voluntary Service)

During the “The Four Roles of Social Change” workshop, we learned about four distinct roles that are needed in social change movements: helper, advocate, organizer, and rebel.

We opened that workshop by answering the question, “What would be our utopia?” Participants shared their responses with the rest of the group.

We spent much of our time discussing a potential scenario where a city’s response following a tornado had been inadequate and discerning which of these four roles we could potentially be playing following that tornado.

1. **Helper:** People could be dying underneath the rubble right now, so we need to rescue them.
2. **Advocate:** “Get on City Hall’s case” to urge a more effective response after the tornado.
3. **Organizer:** Get people to plan a coordinated action that would involve churches and other community organizations.
4. **Rebel:** Protest, by camping on the State Capitol grounds, that the government is abusing people by not helping them after the tornado.

During our discussion about potential responses to a tornado, we agreed that the “tornado” scenario may not have been the best example by which to discuss the four potential roles of social change movements. We spoke for a while about the various community and governmental responses to the contaminated drinking water in Flint, Michigan and Jackson, Mississippi.

ANNUAL MEETING

We closed with the following questions:

- When you are involved with one of the four roles, how do you relate to those who are playing other roles?
- Are there only those four roles or are there others that could potentially be played?

Submitted by Bob Roehm (North Columbus)

History and Description of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting

Established: Association of Friends Meetings, 1939; Association and Yearly Meeting, 1963; Yearly Meeting with Associate Members, 1969

Membership: 600 adult members (as of August 2024)

Meetings: 1 Quarterly Meeting, 19 Monthly Meetings, and 6 Worship Groups

Central Address: Lake Erie Yearly Meeting, c/o Ann Arbor Friends Meeting, 1420 Hill Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Publications: *LEYM Bulletin*, 3 times a year; *Annual Records*, annually; *Advices & Queries*; *Policies and Procedures*

Website: <http://leym.org>

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting began in 1939 as an association of Friends Meetings in Ohio, Michigan, western Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. It became a Yearly Meeting within the Association in 1963, and changed to a Yearly Meeting with associate meetings in 1969. All associated meetings are now part of the Yearly Meeting. The Annual Meeting is for inspiration and fellowship, with business meeting for consideration of basic policies; committee reports and responses to concerns brought by committees; and the naming of officers, representatives to Friends' organizations, and standing committees.

A Representative Meeting is held in the spring to handle business that has arisen since the previous Annual Sessions and to consider and season matters for the next Annual Sessions.

At present, the following standing committees are active: Advancement & Outreach, Arrangements & Site, Executive, Finance, Ministry & Nurture, Nominating, Peace & Justice, Program, Publications & Archives, and Youth & Children.

HISTORY AND CHRONOLOGY

These committees meet and consult throughout the year to carry on the work of the Yearly Meeting. Committees of concern are set up as the occasion arises, made up of those persons under the weight of that concern, and are laid down when their work is complete.

Committees and representatives to Friends' organizations report to Annual Meeting and through the *Bulletin* and *Annual Records*. Electronic distribution of the *Bulletin* is the main means of distribution, supplemented by mailing several hard copies to each Monthly Meeting. The Lake Erie Yearly Meeting *Policies and Procedures* manual is revised from time to time. Since 1985, all member Meetings have been invited to participate in an annual process of responding to a set of queries, usually developed by the Ministry & Nurture Committee, on concerns arising from the membership. Summaries of the responses are published in the *Bulletin* and/or the *Annual Records*.

The focus of the Yearly Meeting budget is on supporting member Meetings, youth and children of the Yearly Meeting, and individuals engaged in spiritual formation and other ministries. The Yearly Meeting supports Olney Friends School in Barnesville, Ohio. The Yearly Meeting does not donate directly to Friends' organizations outside our region other than Friends General Conference. All member Meetings and worship groups, and individual Friends, are encouraged to make contributions to these organizations.

LEYM values and interacts with the work of the local Meetings as well as national and worldwide Quaker organizations; accordingly, it has not developed an administrative structure requiring a paid staff except for a digital communications facilitator, a database manager, and, when needed, a coordinator for the Teen Retreat program.

The one Quarterly Meeting within LEYM, Green Pastures, consisting of seven Monthly Meetings and two Worship Groups in Lower Michigan, shares some program activity with Lake Erie Yearly Meeting. GPQM has financial and interactive relationships with the Michigan Area office of the American Friends Service Committee in Ypsilanti.

HISTORY AND CHRONOLOGY

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting Chronology

Year	Location	Clerks	Comments
1939	Cleveland		Great Lakes Regional Meeting organized
1940	Ann Arbor (Lane Hall)		
1941	Columbus		
1942	Pittsburgh		“Fourth Annual Great Lakes Regional Conference, New and United Meetings”
1943	No record found		
1944	Cleveland		
1945	No record found		
1946	No record found		
1947	Patterson Lake, MI (Ann Arbor- Detroit)		
1948	Camp Wise (Cleveland- Oberlin)		
1949	Delaware (Columbus)		
1950	Camp Lutherlyn (Pittsburgh)		
1951	Green Pastures (AA-Detroit)		
1952	Hiram House Camp (Cleveland)	Winthrop Leeds	FWCC—Oxford, England; Sheldon and Lucy Clark, Dick McCoy, Dorothy Kinsey, Ruth Hyde
1953	Columbus		
1954	Camp Lutherlyn (Pittsburgh)		
1955	Green Pastures (AA-Detroit)	Martin Cobin	FWCC Statement of “Ob- jectives and Organization of the Lake Erie Association” adopted
1956	Friends Boarding School (“Olney”)	Bill Bliss	Sunday dinner was 85¢.

HISTORY AND CHRONOLOGY

1957	Wilmington College	Isabel Bliss	
1958	Friends Boarding School ("Olney")	Bernard Gross	FWCC—Bad Pymont, Germ.; Florence Shute, Bill Preis. Budget 1958-59: \$475
1959	Wilmington College	Dick Stow	
1960	Camp Mary Orton (N. Columbus)	William Johnson	
1961	Friends Boarding School ("Olney")	Howard Harris	LEYM <i>Bulletin</i> started. Elise Boulding first editor. FWCC—Kenya; Margaret Utterbeck, Winifred Crossman
1962	Wilmington and Waynesville (with Indiana YM)	Bob Blood	
1963	Friends Boarding School ("Olney")	Bob Blood	Lake Erie Yearly Mtg formed within Lake Erie Association
1964	Wilmington College	Howard McKinney	FWCC-Ireland; Bill and Isabel Bliss. Pittsburgh joins LEYM. Delaware first new MM in LEYM.
1965	Malone College, Canton, OH	Howard McKinney	Kent becomes MM. Oberlin joins LEYM. Cleveland joins both LEYM and Ohio (Cons.) YM.
1966	Wilmington College	Esther Ewald	Adopted statement urging U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam.
1967	Friends Boarding School ("Olney")	Esther Ewald	LEYM affiliated with FGC. FWCC-Guilford; Rilma Buckman, Helen Healy
1968	Bluffton College	Flora McKinney	Approved minute opposing conscription.
1969	Bluffton College	Flora McKinney	"Association" dropped from name. Ground broken for Friends' School in Detroit's permanent building.
1969	Bluffton College	Flora McKinney	

HISTORY AND CHRONOLOGY

1970	Bluffton College	Flora McKinney	FWCC-Sweden; Flora and Howard McKinney; Bill Bliss
1971	Bluffton College	Flora McKinney	
1972	Ann Arbor	Rilma Buckman	
1973	Friends Boarding School ("Olney")	Rilma Buckman	FWCC—Sydney, AU. Paul Reagan, Dorothy Bower
1974	Hiram College	Rilma Buckman	Broadmead accepted as MM.
1975	Hiram College	Ralph Liske	<i>Procedures</i> of LEYM adopted
1976	Hiram College	Ralph Liske	FWCC—Hamilton, ONT.
1977	Hiram College	Ralph Liske	
1978	Hiram College	Ralph Liske	Membership passed 1000; budget reached \$4000.
1979	Hiram College	Sam Prellwitz	FWCC—Gwatt, Switzerland; Benton Meeks, Evelyn Culver
1980	Hiram College	Sam Prellwitz	
1981	Olney Friends School	Sam Prellwitz, Claire Davis	
1982	Defiance College	Claire Davis, Sam Prellwitz	
1983	Olney Friends School	Claire Davis, Isabel Bliss	
1984	Defiance College	Isabel Bliss, Claire Davis	
1985	Olney Friends School	Isabel Bliss, Dick Taylor	FWCC—Mexico; Thomas Taylor
1986	Defiance College	Dick Taylor, Isabel Bliss	
1987	Olney Friends School	Dick Taylor, Clémence Ravaçon-Mershon	
1988	Bluffton College	Clémence Ravaçon-Mershon, Dick Taylor	FWCC—Tokyo; Jean Stuntz, Terry Landoll
1989	Olney Friends School	Clémence Ravaçon-Mershon, Marty Grundy	

HISTORY AND CHRONOLOGY

1990	Bluffton College	Marty Grundy, Clémence Ravaçon- Mershon	
1991	Olney Friends School	Marty Grundy Pat Campbell	FWCC World Conference – Netherlands, Honduras, Kenya. Claire Davis, Patricia Thomas, John Musgrave, C. Ravaçon-Mershon, Dick Taylor
1992	Olney Friends School	Pat Campbell Marty Grundy	
1993	Bluffton College	Pat Campbell Damon Hickey	
1994	Bluffton College	Damon Hickey Pat Campbell	FWCC—Albuquerque, NM; Rosemary Coffey, Joyce Balderston
1995	Bluffton College	Damon Hickey John Howell	<i>Adopted LEYM Policies and Procedures</i>
1996	Bluffton College	Damon Hickey John Howell	
1997	Bluffton College	John Howell Damon Hickey	FWCC—Birmingham, Eng.; R. Coffey (repl. Rosemary Lore), Merry Stanford
1998	Bluffton College	John Howell Janet Smith	
1999	Bluffton College	Janet Smith, John Howell	
2000	Bluffton College	Janet Smith, Don Nagler	FWCC—Geneva Point, NH; Beth Joy Blackbird, Richard Lee. <i>First Annual Records</i> published in booklet form.
2001	Bluffton College	Don Nagler Janet Smith	Commemorated on the web in photos by Bill Hummon with Plenary Address by Marty Grundy: <i>Thoughts on the Relationship Between an Individual and the Meeting</i>
2002	Bluffton College	Don Nagler, Sally Weaver Sommer	
2003	Bluffton College	Sally Weaver Sommer, Don Nagler	

HISTORY AND CHRONOLOGY

2004	Bluffton College	Sally Weaver Sommer, Michael Fuson	FWCC—Auckland, NZ; Zig Dermer, Margaret Kanost
2005	Bluffton Univ.	Michael Fuson, Sally Weaver Sommer	
2006	Bluffton Univ.	Michael Fuson, Shirley Bechill	
2007	Bluffton Univ.	Shirley Bechill, Michael Fuson	First Adult Young Friends Group. FWCC—Dublin, Ireland. Raelyn Joyce, Mike Hinshaw
2008	Bluffton Univ.	Shirley Bechill Merry Stanford	Holland accepted as MM
2009	Bluffton Univ.	Merry Stanford Shirley Bechill	Scholarships assist first-time attenders.
2010	Bluffton Univ.	Merry Stanford Peggy Daub	Family attendance encouraged by meeting later in summer and free attendance for young Friends (through age 18).
2011	Bluffton Univ.	Peggy Daub Merry Stanford	Presentations and entertainment offered from within LEYM.
2012	Bluffton Univ.	Peggy Daub, Rebecca Morehouse	High School retreat held at and during Annual Sessions.
2013	Bluffton Univ.	Peggy Daub, Sally Weaver Sommer	50 th anniversary celebration. Work camp held before Annual Meeting.
2014	Bluffton Univ.	Sally Weaver Sommer, Peggy Daub	Three-day work camp in Detroit preceding Annual Meeting.
2015	Bluffton Univ.	Sally Weaver Sommer, Mike Holaday	Plenary Address: <i>Unconventional Joy: The Scandalous Ministry of Befriending</i> , by Merry Stanford.
2016	Bluffton Univ.	Mike Holaday, Sally Weaver Sommer	FWCC--World Plenary in Pisac, Peru; Jana Norlin, C. Ravaçon-Mershon

HISTORY AND CHRONOLOGY

2017	Bluffton Univ.	Mike Holaday, [none]	Plenary address and three workshops presented by young adult Friends.
2018	Bluffton Univ.	Nancy Reeves Mike Holaday	Plenary address by Yvette Shipman. Steps to “green” Annual Meeting meals.
2019	Bluffton Univ.	Nancy Reeves Jo Posti	Plenary address by Joyce Ajlouny. Harassment Policy approved.
2020	Virtual (Zoom)	Jo Posti Nancy Reeves	Covid-19 pandemic necessitated online meeting.
2021	Virtual (Zoom)	Jo Posti Susan Loucks	Plenary address by Paula Palmer: <i>From Truth to Healing with Native Peoples</i> .
2022	Virtual (Zoom)	Susan Loucks Jo Posti	Theme “Many Roots, One Tree” interwoven throughout sessions. Plenary address by Christian Acemah, Head of Olney Friends School.
2023	Ashland Univ., Ashland, OH and virtual (Zoom)	Susan Loucks [none]	Theme “Navigating Anew” apt for new location. Plenary address by Emily Provance. 60th anniversary.
2024	Ashland Univ., Ashland, OH and virtual (Zoom)	Susan Loucks [none]	Theme “Friends Together: Outpourings of the Spirit.” Plenary presentation by Paulette Meier on Contemplative Communal Chant. FWCC – Johannesburg, South Africa; Ellerie Brownfain

First compiled by Leonora Cayard (Pittsburgh) in 2001; updated by Annual Records editors since 2005.

Meetings and Worship Groups

State of the Meeting Reports

Ministry & Nurture Committee's Suggested Guidelines for State of the Meeting Reports

Having a meeting to discuss the state of a Monthly Meeting is a traditional and valuable activity for Meetings. There is an old Quaker greeting that is something like, "How is it with thy Spirit, Friend?" This is the question one might ask in a State of the Meeting discussion: "How is it with the Spirit of your Meeting, Friends?"

It's an occasion for members to gather and consider if the Meeting is a boon to their individual and communal lives. It's an opportunity to consider the structures and activities of your Meeting, and to ask if these are meeting the needs of your members.

In the past, Ministry & Nurture Committee has provided questions that Meetings might use to structure the discussion, but answering these questions may limit the range of discussion. The topics mentioned in the questions, such as vocal ministry, quality of the silence, work of committees, and support of members, may be instructive but may also limit the range of responses.

This last year, we invited Meetings to be more creative, and the challenge was met! It is helpful, though, to have at least some of the report in language that the computer can translate.

Primarily, we ask for your participation and response. The summary and the individual reports all become part of the *Annual Records*, published in the fall. Themes that emerge from the reports are used by Ministry & Nurture as guidelines for where we can be of use to Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups, and possibly to structure our queries for the coming year.

Due Date: The State of the Meeting Report is to be sent to the clerk of LEYM's Ministry & Nurture Committee and to the editor of the *LEYM Annual Records* by Fifth Month, 15th Day (May 15), of each year.

Akron Friends Meeting State of the Meeting Report, 2024

Akron Friends Meeting is small, and we've had our ups and downs over the last 50+ years, but we are still working to provide peace and support to our members, as well as discerned participation in our wider community.

In February, our Friend Adele Looney passed away. She was one of our founding members and had served the Meeting in many valuable ways (including hosting the Meeting in her home) throughout our history. We are grieving the loss of our weighty Friend, but we try to honor her memory by moving the Meeting forward.

We are currently working out how we can set up the Meeting to provide for varying needs of members and attenders, as well as be there for new attenders who may come to us. We have some members who much prefer an online meeting and others who wish only to meet in person in a physical setting. One member has offered her home, so that we can continue to have a physical presence in the community. We are also trying to work out how to provide a simultaneous online meeting for those who cannot attend in person. Our concerns are mostly about technical access, timing, and making it all work smoothly and comfortably.

Members have also expressed concerns that we are limited by not having an updated website. One member offered her son's expertise in setting one up, but at present we don't have anyone with the skills to maintain it, so we are considering that, too.

As a small Meeting, we continue to face challenges, but we all feel the importance of the Meeting and having each other in our lives. We are working to fill our needs as best we can.

Ann Arbor Friends Meeting State of the Meeting, June 15, 2024

The experience of the COVID epidemic has left its mark on our Meeting, combined as it was with a national debate over race and racism, and the initial set-back in our (now improving) economy. We continue to have challenges, opportunities, exposure to new ways of doing things, and regret for the losses we have experienced. The pain, isolation, and grief experienced by many during the recent pandemic have affected our Meeting in many ways. Much of the aftermath has combined challenges with opportunities, demanding that we discern together on difficult issues. Friends differ in their assessment of changes in our Meeting that occurred in response to the pandemic. However, we are uplifted and encouraged, even as we continue to struggle, by the ongoing depth of our worship. Our Meeting's work on itself and our efforts in the larger world have continued through the year 2023 and into 2024. Much of this work has occurred through the efforts of our committees, cooperation among committees, and other sustained efforts by the Meeting.

Members of our Meeting participate in activities to support our spiritual growth and development as individuals and as a worship community. These include Spiritual Companions and Spiritual Formation, which have continued to support members of our Meeting. Our Ministry and Counsel Committee, as well as other committees and groups in the Meeting, have considered the implications for our Meeting of the technology we depended on to continue our community worship throughout COVID. Some of us find the use of technology as a medium for worship troubling in multiple ways; at the same time, many of us also recognize the ways in which the same technology allows us to share worship with Friends far afield or unable to attend meeting in person.

While we remain an older Meeting, we have seen an increase in the number of children in our Meeting. Our Committee for Children and Families is developing expanded programming for

children and exploring ways to introduce children into worship. And we have seen an increase in the number of young adult friends (the 20–35-year-old age range), who bring a wealth of strengths, ideas, and effort and enjoy a monthly dinner together. Our Meeting life is enriched by the presence of younger Friends and our efforts to be welcoming to them.

Our Ministry and Counsel Committee is considering the degree to which our lack of a Faith and Practice statement makes our discernment process more difficult. Does our difficulty in finding unity on next steps, for instance, in adjusting the use of technology in our Meeting, arise because we have not in recent memory considered as a religious community the nature of our faith, what it means to be Quaker, what is our faith community, and what are its core responsibilities and activities? We hope that such efforts as our ongoing monthly Reading and Discussion and forums on the meaning of community in a Quaker Meeting will support our group discernment. Our Membership and Outreach Committee has hosted a series of forums on “Quakers, Who Are We?”

While our meetings for worship have grown in attendance and include an increasing number of families with children, we are encouraging our regular attenders to consider membership in the Meeting, with the commitments and responsibilities membership entails. However, as our Nominating Committee takes on its work of connecting with people in the Meeting community and enlisting them to serve on AAFM committees, we wonder if our committee structure is outdated for our times, and try to envision new ways to care for and nurture our faith community. We are considering, for example, orienting our organization around tasks to be accomplished, rather than a set of committees.

We are working to strengthen our social community. We have a weekly “Meeting for Walking” for Friends eager to enjoy a number of parks, trails, and neighborhoods in the area, as well as “Meeting for Canoeing” several times over the summer. Friends enjoy a regular women’s group meeting, music at the Meeting

MEETINGS AND WORSHIP GROUPS

House twice a week, monthly potluck dinners, and attention from the Care and Visitation committee as desired. We are enjoying and growing from the opportunities to be with each other.

As we build the strength and integrity of our religious community, we also want to expend our work and resources in ways that reach beyond our Meeting to other communities and larger-scale problems. In response to a call from some members of Meeting that our budget be considered as a moral document, our Finance Committee has drawn us together in discussion of how our budget reflects our values. This has led us to donate to efforts such as the California Heritage Indigenous Research Project (CHIRP) through our newly established fund for Reparative Justice, in addition to an earlier (2022) promised donation to another Meeting, to be provided when they start work on solar panels.

We take inspiration from our work beyond our Meeting. Five years ago, Mohamed entered Sanctuary at our Meeting. Today, the threat of deportation has receded, and he has a job with health benefits. Caring for Mohamed during his successful transplant surgery was a leap of faith for the Sanctuary Committee and for the Meeting. We have helped him, and we have gained even more ourselves. In addition to having Mohamed in our midst, and the privilege of protecting him and helping him along the way to health and happiness, we have been blessed by the experience of working with 13 other faith communities whose support has been unwavering.

Our Meeting has been deeply concerned with criminal justice in our home communities, including the impact of the cash bail system. After years of work by many groups, our county no longer uses cash bail. This work, in which a number of younger members of Meeting participated, has been important to many of us. This past year, our focus has been on care-based safety and unarmed response in our community.

This has been a year of challenge, conflict, and sorrow, on the one hand, but also one of opportunities, growth, and development. As we face the challenges and consider the grief and conflict that this year has presented to us, we are grateful for Spirit guiding us through these difficulties with renewed opportunities, growth in numbers and spiritual depth, and possible new ways of working together as a faith community.

Reported by Laura Lein for Ann Arbor Friends Meeting

Athens Friends Meeting State of the Meeting Report 2023–24

1. Big events this year

Friends appreciated the outdoor meetings for worship held at Dow Lake this summer on each 4th Sunday of the month. Picnic tables at the shelters provided a fine setting for socializing over potluck lunch. We continue to offer Friends the opportunity of participating in meeting for worship over Zoom, although our in-person attendance has been growing with the decreased pandemic threat, now being typically in the range of 20 to 30. Friends appreciate sharing in music before meeting, for an hour on first Sundays, and for 15 minutes on the other Sundays. Words of the songs sometimes find their way into vocal ministry during meeting for worship.

Second hour Forum sessions on a number of topics have engaged Friends in several ways, including the sharing of spiritual journeys and confrontation of current ideas and social issues. One Forum session involved a tour of the Meeting House led by the Meeting House Committee to better familiarize Friends with the resources and peculiarities of the building, including the children's area and the bizarre placement of light switches throughout the building.

In March, the Meeting held a memorial service for Marjorie Nelson, who passed away in December, 2022. It was well attended both in the Meeting House and more widely by Zoom.

Marjorie was a founding member of our Meeting and an active member for at least 20 years until she retired and moved to Foxdale, a Quaker retirement community in State College, PA. We are grateful to have been able to bring together in celebration of Marge's life people whose lives Marjorie had touched in many wonderful ways.

Other events included a Quaker presence at a community dedication of new bike trails, the trailheads of which are in the Village of Chauncey, where our Meeting House is located, and the serving of a meal at Good Works, a local shelter for those in need.

2. Meeting Committees

Our Meeting House Committee has been very active over the past year. Our pattern of volunteer cleaning of the Meeting House was lost during the pandemic, and we turned to hiring for the cleaning. Those hired both for cleaning and maintenance have been members or attenders of Meeting. The more thorough cleaning and the needed maintenance work that have been done have both been appreciated. We have been able to tap into our reserve funds to cover maintenance costs.

Our Aging in the Light Committee handled the memorial service for Marjorie Nelson. We were grateful to have the expertise to handle the technology aspects of the hybrid service smoothly.

Our youth program has tripled in size, a wonderful development. The First Day School Committee had been handling things in an informal way with only two children involved. More help may be needed there.

Last year's focus of the Peace and Social Concerns Committee continued into our March Seekers' Sessions this year, which used the book, *So You Want To Talk About Race*, by Ijeoma Oluo. Following a visit by FCNL's Riley Robinson, we had a session on Palestine. One of our members, with experience in

Palestine, also participated in an Athens community discussion of that situation.

Members of the Ministry and Nurture Committee have reached out to people in our directory who haven't attended recently to see how they are doing and to encourage them to re-engage with Meeting. We hope to involve more members and attenders in the committee work of the Meeting this next year.

In addition to our Sunday morning meetings for worship, meetings are also held in town at the United Campus Ministry Building on the 1st and 3rd Sundays at 5 p.m. The format is about a half hour of silent worship followed by a time of sharing and discussion, often based on a selected query.

3. Spiritual condition of our Meeting

Attendance at meeting for worship has been returning to pre-pandemic levels. People feel that there is an appropriate mix of speaking and silence. At times, there has been little speaking, but our sense is that people needed silence. A sense of beautiful energy is sensed by many and particularly intensely by some.

Attendance at meeting for worship for business has also seen a good level of participation as we make decisions together. Several people have expressed gratitude for the caring they have received from Meeting members and attenders when they had special needs. With attendance increasing and having several members with hearing deficits, we are aware of the need to take steps so that people's messages can be heard by all.

Athens Friends continue to provide assistance in paying utility bills for people in our area facing shutoff of service. Doing so involves interactions with various agencies that also provide such help. We also continue to support the community through payments to local entities that would be required of us were we not tax-exempt.

4. Connections to the wider Quaker community

Our connection with Quakers through LEYM remains important to us. Our children participated in the October LEYM Youth retreat this year, as they have in past years. We are grateful for the visit of Riley Robinson of FCNL. Riley led a forum discussion after meeting for worship, which led us into deeper exploration of the situation in Gaza and Israel. Regular announcements are made in meeting about the receipt of publications such as *Friends Journal*, Pendle Hill pamphlets, and material from Quaker organizations. Members of Meeting continue to work within the community with food banks, the Athens Mediation Service, and a long-standing noontime peace vigil every Monday at the Courthouse.

Birmingham Friends Meeting 2023-24 State of the Meeting Report

Birmingham Friends Meeting continues to hold meeting for worship in person at the Royal Oak Chamber of Commerce, as well as on Zoom, First Days at 10:30 am. On rare occasions when the Chamber is not available, we meet in homes, and during the summer we try to hold worship in a neighborhood park a few times.

Our budget remains stable. Our administrative expenses are very small, and most of the budget consists of contributions to groups that we want to support. Our focus is on Quaker organizations plus World Central Kitchen, Alternatives to Violence, and the soup kitchen where we volunteer twice a year.

Queries are an integral part of Quaker practice. Currently we are using the queries in Philadelphia *Faith and Practice* at the beginning of meeting for worship with attention to business. In discussing the place of queries in our Meeting, we came to realize that we might like to shift our consideration of queries to different times, at the beginning of meeting for worship or at the

end. Our query responses have been substantive, meaningful and sometimes lengthy.

Our meeting averages 15–18 participants each First Day. Every other week, young and older adults join in person or online for First Day School. Our other First Day School attendee is a kindergartener who often attends meeting with her parents. We have coffee and snacks together after meeting. Ministry and Nurture meets on Zoom once a month and seeks to provide a sense of concern and spiritual stability. We have a Spiritual Formation book group, monthly Friday-night potlucks, and occasional gatherings to cut and sew fleece hats for community welfare. Books in our Meeting library storage have been moved to our cabinets at the Chamber, with the goal of having a smaller but more active library. We present high school graduates related to the meeting with copies of *Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice* and the *Access Bible*. Many are involved in our Quarterly and Yearly meetings as well as national Quaker organizations.

Several changes in leadership have happened or are soon to happen. Our co-clerks are putting together information for the incoming clerk. Our long-term and much appreciated treasurer has passed the books to another member. We are small, many of us are aging, and we are grateful for the time and energy volunteers give to keep us going.

Broadmead Friends Meeting State of the Meeting Report, April 2024

Broadmead Friends Meeting continues to be one monthly meeting with two worship groups, one in Bluffton and one in Toledo. In pre-pandemic years, we met in our separate worship groups every Sunday except the third Sunday of each month, when we met together at one of our meeting places. During the height of the pandemic, we met all together weekly on Zoom. We have now solidified a new schedule, which seems to be working well for us. On the first and third Sundays of each

MEETINGS AND WORSHIP GROUPS

month, we meet all together in a hybrid format with about half of us on Zoom and the other half in person at the Victory Center in Toledo. On the other Sundays, we meet in our separate worship groups with Bluffton meeting only in person and Toledo meeting in person and on Zoom. 11th hour programming is scheduled for each Sunday, including meeting for business four times a year and sharing of personal spiritual journeys, discussions related to our annual theme, hearing from outside resource people on topics important to us, book discussions, and potlucks and simple meals on the other Sundays.

Getting the hybrid technology to work effectively for us has been a year-long process. Clear communication between those on Zoom and those in person, in addition to technical expertise of some of our members, has been needed to make sure we can all hear and see each other. We are grateful that Zoom has allowed Friends to participate in worship and other programming who could not otherwise participate.

Our experience is that being together in person is important for nurturing our sense of community. Thus, we intentionally provide opportunities for all of us to meet together in person at various times throughout the year. On two Sundays during the summer of 2023, we held meeting for worship, followed by a potluck, in a park that is central to the wide territory covered by members of our meeting. Our annual fall retreats provide another opportunity for us to get together in person. We also enjoy joining together in Toledo on the third Sunday in December for worship, carol singing, and potluck.

At the end of each year, we choose a theme to consider throughout the next year. The theme for 2023 was “Hope and Witness in Dangerous Times.” We used Brent Bill’s book by the same title as a basis for our pre-retreat sessions (three Sundays of 11th hour programming). Brent then led our fall retreat, at the St. Francis Spirituality Center in Tiffin. This year’s annual retreat, as have our past retreats, nourished us individually and collectively.

We are grateful that we have maintained a strong community of committed Friends in spite of our physical separation.

Broadmead Friends are committed to regularly attending meeting for worship and other meeting events. We find our community to be a safe space in which people show respect and concern for each other. We forgive each other's shortcomings and celebrate each other's gifts, though we feel that we sometimes have difficulty naming and encouraging each other's spiritual gifts. Friends are willing to serve on committees and fulfil other tasks as needed by the Meeting.

We treasure the young Friends in our Meeting and provide First Day School in Toledo twice a month. We have three regular young attenders, ranging in age from high school down to early elementary. All of us enjoy the reports the First Day Schoolers present to us at the rise of meeting.

Broadmead has had a strong Spiritual Formation group since the launching of LEYM's Spiritual Formation Program. Those in the program find that participating in the Yearly Meeting Spiritual Formation retreats and the semi-monthly Monthly Meeting sessions feeds them spiritually and strengthens their sense of community. In addition, a small group of Broadmead Friends gather semi-monthly for a meeting for healing. These groups nurture both the participants and the Monthly Meeting as a whole.

We continue to challenge ourselves to intentionally prepare throughout the week for Sunday's meeting for worship. We recognize that the clutter in our lives can inhibit centering ourselves during worship. Some of us yearn for more vocal ministry during worship, even as we know that it is up to each of us to be open to the messages Spirit might be giving us. If we pay attention to what is going on in our lives and in the world and watch for the movements of the Spirit, we will sense the nudges leading to a message.

We continue to strive to make our meetings for business spiritually guided by maintaining a mindset of continuing

MEETINGS AND WORSHIP GROUPS

worship throughout the business session and allowing for silence between Friends' contributions. It has been suggested that we ask Friends to hold the business session in the Light as we meet. We know that good preparation by the clerk and committees and disseminating material ahead of time allow for more efficient, effective and Spirit-led decision making. We appreciate our patience and lack of need to rush reaching a decision. We are able to give ourselves time to sit with our concerns.

In November, Broadmead Friends engaged in thoughtful discernment regarding creating a minute calling for an end to the ongoing violence and conflict in Israel-Palestine, highlighted by the current situation in Gaza. The minute was approved by the Monthly Meeting and has been sent to our two Ohio senators and to representatives in districts in which Broadmead members live. We continue to mourn the lives lost around the world through war and violence encouraged through the support from our government.

Broadmead Friends enjoy each other's company, show care and concern for each other, and support each other in our spiritual journeys. We are grateful for our small, faithful community spread throughout northwest Ohio.

Cleveland Meeting Religious Society of Friends 2024 Annual Report

The Cleveland Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends met on First Day, May 19, 2024, and considered the annual reports of its various committees. Several themes were clear in the reports. Meeting was recovering from the pandemic years of Zoom meetings and low physical attendance on Sunday mornings; more attenders are coming to Sunday worship; interest in spiritual deepening was increasing; social action and involvement in the local community was desired; and the Meeting needed to continue to move forward on finding a more suitable and permanent home.

The Meeting has once again taken up the practice of query consideration during meeting for worship with attention to business. There are many voices in the Meeting, so different viewpoints, reflections, and interpretations of queries make the conversations interesting and thoughtful. Quaker Studies continues to explore the history of Quakers through books and materials. Recently the group has begun to read George Fox's *Journal*, and it has been something of a discovery as well-known quotes from Fox come into context, often giving rise to interesting discussions as Friends contrast Fox's experiences and words with how they have come to be used and understood. As we read from the *Journal*, we have also looked at other writings and commentaries to help us better understand and reflect on Fox's experience. Reading Fox's *Journal* has returned the Quaker Studies group to its original calling of deepening our understanding of the foundations of Quakerism and the Quaker experience.

Bible study sessions continue to be held before Sunday meeting for worship. The discussions are often very rich, both around understanding the message of the various scriptures and their context as well as how they are reflected in Quaker writings, attitudes, and practices.

Our Witness in the World group set a goal to increase the Meeting's corporate activity in the world. Individual members of the Meeting are all engaged in all sorts of ways with the quest for peace and justice in the world individually, but these activities are not a big part of the collective life of the Meeting. A mission statement was prepared and is being considered by the Meeting for adoption. While some activities, such as meals with other organizations and churches, are ongoing, others are considered as needed as one-off events in the broader community. Support for an immigrant family (from Ukraine) was offered and partly accepted.

First Day School for the children continues to pose challenges. There are two elementary school-aged children and four pre-

MEETINGS AND WORSHIP GROUPS

school kids. The older kids are willing to work on activities that incorporate greater efforts for learning, while the younger kids always want to be actively running around. Securing separate space appropriate for each group is not always possible, and the Meeting is always seeking ways to include the children in the Meeting before, during, and after meeting for worship.

Ministry and Care continues to provide oversight for the Meeting, seeking ways to engage and nurture the Meeting as a whole and its individual members. New members have joined, more attenders are present, and some members have passed on or left. M&C is looking at ways to increase participation outside of First Day meeting for worship. The mission statement for the Committee recognizes the role it plays in the Meeting:

The Ministry and Care Committee holds the weighty responsibility of nurturing the spiritual life of Cleveland Friends Meeting. Our role is to tenderly care for the spiritual and practical needs of this community – offering counsel, support, and accompaniment to members and attenders through life's transitions and difficulties. We meet monthly to discern how to best foster an environment for corporate and individual spiritual growth through clearness committees, pastoral care, guidance, and a listening presence. Above all, we aim to uphold this beloved worship group with open hearts, minds, and hands.

The Library Committee reports that, although many of the books the Meeting owns are stored, usage remains constant, with new books and materials being added as needed. As soon as the Meeting's new website is firmly established, the Committee hopes that the catalogue will be added so that more exploration of the materials available will happen.

Finally, the corporate structure fiscal status of the Meeting is stable. The major issue facing the Meeting is finding a new location. Efforts over the past few years have led to the acceptance that a more permanent location is desired and needed.

The choice to buy, as opposed to build or rent, seems the most appropriate. Once again the Meeting is on the journey to find a new place.

Detroit Friends Meeting State of the Meeting Report, 2024

The discussion opened in waiting worship at 11:45 am, Fourth Month, 28, with eleven adults in attendance. The annual queries on the State of the Meeting were read and considered in a worship-sharing format. Comments were also invited to be sent in writing if Friends could not attend the in person session.

A powerful spiritual element often emerges among us during meeting for worship. As we visit other Meetings around the country, we recognize the differences between groups and realize that one of our strengths is how welcoming we are to all visitors. During the past couple of months, however, there is a sense that we would benefit from considering queries more often and more deeply.

We have good opportunities for discussion, provided during Book Club and Antiracist Committee meetings. It was suggested that we might also make more use of similar tools provided by AFSC, FCNL, FGC, and many other Quaker organizations that offer regular enrichment opportunities and inspiration. There was a sense that we need to continue to have these deepening discussions on a regular basis. We are aware that having a hybrid meeting (in person and on Zoom) decreases the sense of community that we might achieve if we were all in the same physical space. However, we have heard from individuals who can join us only because we offer an online means to participate. This is true for meeting for worship, as well as Book Club and other meetings.

One of the hallmarks of our Meeting is to be accepting and welcoming to all. A continued strength of our Meeting is the realization of how much we have accomplished during the relocation process, especially considering what a small group we

MEETINGS AND WORSHIP GROUPS

are. One weakness is that we do not seem to be able to attract younger adults and children to the Meeting; or, if they do visit, they do not seem to come back. We also seem to miss female voices in vocal ministry.

We continue to value silence during meeting for worship and are able to balance it with the need to share vocal ministry. We are a non-creedal, non-liturgical religious group and fit into the very wide variety of Christian denominations. Anyone joining us would be welcome in our group, and we do not expect everyone to think exactly alike or to follow a particular view of sacred texts. Expectant waiting allows each of us to construct our view of reality and be in contact with what we consider to be the Divine.

Our discussion indicates that we need to be mindful of the level of comfort that each of us has with respect to silence vs. vocal ministry, while maintaining the cohesiveness of the group. In the old days, meetings for worship could last for hours. Now we have limited time. One Friend commented that vocal ministry results in lack of silence and that means a lack of time for discernment. It was noted also that when an individual is moved to speak, it gives us an opportunity to support each other by listening to others' messages. We don't respond but we internalize the message and this makes us stronger as a group. However, for this to be a spiritual benefit to the community, it is important that vocal ministry be Spirit-led. We continue to find ways to reach unity, mostly because we know and trust each other. We are good at following Quaker practice and we allow the process to work as intended.

We often talk about the desire of attracting more families with children to the Meeting. We should consider strategies to build a core of members and attenders that includes children. We also need to build on our work of outreach, some of it already begun, in the community and at the local, national, and international level. In addition to our contemplative practices, we need to be active in the cause for peace and justice. Active engagement and

spiritual practice are not distinct aspects of Quaker life but are the center. It was noted that much effort and creativity has been given to finding, planning, remodeling and moving into a new meetinghouse and a new neighborhood, and that this has been a work of both heart and hands. Our ongoing community life has benefitted.

The meeting closed with silence at 12:50 pm.

**Granville Friends Meeting
State of the Meeting Report
Spring 2022 – Spring 2023**

Note: This is the most recent State of the Meeting Report we have received from Granville Friends Meeting. It did not arrive in time for inclusion in last year's Annual Records.

The Meeting gathered on March 5, 2023, to discuss the State of the Meeting using the guidelines from Lake Erie Yearly Meeting. Friends joined our monthly forum in-person and via Zoom.

We describe the spiritual condition of Granville Friends Meeting as good, in that we are caring and supportive of each other, and we are actively getting to know newer attenders to our Meeting. We are challenged by our small size and the wide distribution of our homes, which makes it difficult to engage with each other beyond our Sunday gatherings. Key events or activities of the past year included a late summer 2022 move to a new location for meeting for worship and the production of new signs to deploy outside our Meeting location to advertise our presence (including a QR code – high tech for us)! We now meet in a fairly central location on the campus of Denison University and this may make it easier for some folks to find us. The move to our new location also provided us an opportunity to refresh how we welcome people to meeting for worship, so we began a practice of having a volunteer Greeter who is tasked with welcoming and explaining worship as newcomers arrive. In

response to summer legislation in Ohio that made likely that more guns would be permitted in public schools, we wrote a Minute in response to that legislation and shared it with our local newspaper. In December, we enjoyed a lunchtime potluck in the home of one of our members, the first such event since the COVID pandemic began and a welcomed opportunity to gather, share interests, and enjoy each other's company.

We describe the nature of our meetings for worship as containing good quality and welcome silence. Remote friends reported that they value the opportunity to join in worship during our now-routine hybrid meetings. Some commented on the low level of vocal ministry during meeting for worship, and the lack of vocal ministry during worship has been discussed several times during the past year. One strategy we adopted late in 2022 was to begin reading aloud a query about 10 minutes into meeting for worship. We are hoping that the query provides a focal point or structure that can be helpful as we try to center ourselves in the silence (a focal point to help quiet our minds) and may also enhance connectedness among those present, as well as stimulate vocal ministry on occasion. At the rise of meeting, when everyone is invited to share, the query and thoughts arising from it have been mentioned several times, so this practice of reading a query is one we plan to continue for now.

In discussing the nature of meeting for worship with attention to business, we noted that the meetings are well run, productive, and well attended. Our business tends to be simple because our Meeting does not own property or employ staff. We pair meeting for worship with attention to business with a monthly potluck, and this pairing likely fosters our good attendance. Because of our small size, we do not have specific committees within the Meeting; rather we operate as a committee of the whole.

Our Meeting's routine opportunities for engagement include book discussion groups and monthly forums. We held book group discussions in fall 2022 using Zoom and had 4–8 participants each week, including Meeting attenders who have

moved away from our area. During our fall book group, we read and discussed *Persuade, Don't Preach: Restoring Civility across the Political Divide* by Karen Tibbals, in an effort to better understand how we might engage with people who hold views different from our own. For our monthly forums, we often read and discuss articles from *Friends Journal*. These gatherings provided us opportunities to discuss spiritual, social, and cultural issues, often reflecting on our Quakerism and how we respond to these issues as Quakers.

In discussing the spiritual life of our Meeting and our witness of Friends' testimonies in the world, we discussed how Quaker spiritual life and Quaker witness can be interpreted differently by different Friends. Indeed, Quaker spirit and witness range from the quiet and contemplative to the more secular, humanitarian, or activist aspects of Quakerism, and our Meeting tries to balance and navigate this continuum. We reflect that it can be hard to sit quietly and center ourselves, given the chaos and clutter of the world that can fill our minds and spirit. We also noted that, although our worship tends to be quiet, the sharing taking place at the rise of meeting contributes positively to our spirit and nurtures our community. Following our December home-based potluck, we have realized that a few social gatherings away from our Meeting space each year can enhance our spiritual life together.

Given the small size of our Meeting, participants maintain good connections with the wider Quaker community. Various attenders engage with FCNL by serving on the Board or making donations, our Clerk participates in some LEYM activities such as Clerk Chats and Representative Meeting, and various Meeting members and participants keep abreast of activities by AFSC and Olney Friends School. Zoom also allows us to connect and support more distant Friends and allows local members and attenders to join worship when weather or illness prevents in-person participation (so we use Zoom to connect us with us). Our Meeting outreach includes a website and Facebook page. Our Meeting has individuals participating in social justice advocacy,

MEETINGS AND WORSHIP GROUPS

but as a corporate body the Meeting hasn't been unified in doing this work. Individually as well, members who travel sometimes visit other Meetings, and our Meeting has planned to be more intentional about visiting nearby Meetings annually, now that COVID restrictions are generally gone.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jessica Rettig, Clerk of the Meeting
Granville Monthly Meeting
March 25, 2023

Holland Monthly Meeting State of the Meeting, 2024

Considering the state of our Meeting, we acknowledge its importance to each of us. Especially, we claim our collective spiritual centering, our collective emotional support for each other, particularly in times of trouble, and our collective support for civic action.

Specifically, we continue to support members who lead us in feeding the food-challenged through our local CROP Walk, in peacemaking through a weekly "Stand for Peace" demonstration along our town's main thoroughfare, in supporting the un-housed with both financial and personal hands-on support of two local families, and in gathering regularly around meals to enjoy each other's company.

We continue to exist in the tension between comfort with our current state of participation and commitments and a need for structures that enable and facilitate continuity as changes arise.

Respectfully Submitted,
Larry Dickie, Clerk

Kalamazoo Friends Meeting State of the Meeting Report - May 1, 2024

As we consider the state of the Kalamazoo Friends Meeting, the word that arises, over and over, is “community.” The bonds of community are strengthened as we labor together; in our individual and corporate seeking; in revelation and growth. And those bonds endure even as we are challenged and despite our failings.

Our center of gravity resides in our worship together, whether in spiritual seeking or the consideration of business. Meetings, still offered in hybrid format, are well attended and are enriched, particularly during worship, by vocal ministry and occasional music. We take pleasure in the continued increase of in-person attendance, while appreciating the technology that allows participation even when in-person attendance isn’t possible. Our Sunday gatherings for worship are further enhanced by weekly “First Hour” discussions/presentations/activities, and by the planful opportunity for regular post-worship fellowship (at potluck lunch the first Sunday of each month and over beverages and snacks—introduced this year—on other Sundays).

We were particularly enriched, socially and spiritually, by a fall weekend-long retreat on Quaker Theology. In examining the “theology” of the earliest Quakers and exploring how those theologies have evolved, we were challenged to consider our own beliefs, together and individually.

That gravitational center then anchors us to be deeply involved in community outside our walls. We continue to maintain the Peace Park on our property as a safe space for neighborhood children and their families. In addition to providing a place for daily play, the Park and Meetinghouse regularly host communal gatherings from neighborhood socials to holiday-themed fun to anchoring an annual “National Night Out” observance. Additionally, in coordination with Western Michigan University’s Student Dietetic Association, the Meeting provides

monthly “Family Table” meals, while also supporting a Neighborhood Assistance Program that makes key household staples not covered by MI Bridge cards available to local residents.

Beyond our formal Meeting outreach into the community, many of our members and attenders are also deeply involved in the pursuit of peace and justice. They work individually or with and through outside organizations – locally, regionally, and nationally – laboring toward, or witnessing for, a community that lives up to the ideals suggested in the Quaker testimonies.

Our community also wrestles with significant challenges and concerns as we and the world around us continue to change and evolve. Not unlike other Meetings, we wonder what the future holds as Kalamazoo Friends continues to age. And though we are, at root, a spiritual community, our concerns are often crystalized in distinctly secular ways. How do we deal with the need to pay others to do more of the work required by our property – work that we used to do ourselves – while managing the likelihood of slowly diminishing financial resources? What do we do with a balky elevator that will need major investments to return to reliable operation? How can we more effectively reach out to and attract new people to us?

While we are far from definitive answers to any of these (and other) questions, they have provided impetus for exciting new seeking and, perhaps, new openings. The Meeting has developed an ad hoc ‘Visioning Committee,’ exploring how we might navigate future challenges and what we can do to “come down right.” We’ve also asked an ad hoc Accessibility Committee to explore options not only for what we do about the elevator, but for how we deal with issues of building accessibility generally. And we have recently rolled out a new website—through the efforts of yet another ad hoc committee—as a primary public-facing informational vehicle.

We are encouraged and energized in our efforts by the appearance of new faces in our circle over the past few years. Some only appear once, or very sporadically, but several have

become valued parts of the community. As they worship and labor with us, they bring fresh perspectives, additional insights, new ideas, and we are grateful.

As in any community of diverse, strong-willed individuals, we sometimes wrestle with the presence of, and results from, internal conflict. Some relationship dynamics within the Meeting are colored by underlying animosities that bubble to the surface from time to time, and we often fall short in working to address or overcome these dynamics. At times the easy path of ignoring or avoiding issues of conflict proves to be an irresistible temptation. With recognition that all of us fall short on a regular basis; with understanding that we're all doing the best we're able in any given moment; and with appreciation that every one of us is a seeker at heart, we'll continue to look for Light to move us forward.

Looking back on the year just passed – and forward to the one ahead – we're filled with gratitude for the community we are: on our best days, a group of individuals, bound by love, caring for and supporting each other as we make our way and bear witness in this world while seeking the mystery that lies beyond; on days that are less than our best, a group of individuals working to get back to those ideals. To paraphrase one of our members, "We still seem to enjoy showing up week in and week out . . . we must be doing something right!"

Kent Friends Meeting State of the Meeting Report - May 19, 2024

Kent Friends Meeting continues to hold meeting for worship at 10:30 AM each Sunday in the United Christian Ministries Lounge at the United Methodist Church of Kent. Our average attendance has increased and now numbers 12–15! We have been energized and lifted up spiritually by the presence of four new regular attenders: Bill Marthaler, Caroline McLeod, Garrett Moran, and Hal Walker. We have been deeply saddened by the loss of a regular attender, Jay Chun, who passed in July. His

MEETINGS AND WORSHIP GROUPS

cheerful presence is deeply missed. Friends shared in his memorial meeting: “Living Angels: Circle of Love,” so beautifully planned by his wife, Edna. Friends also shared in a memorial service in October honoring Shirley Parsons Reiner, a former member of Kent Friends Meeting.

Our committees continue to organize us, call us to action, and add spiritual depth to our Meeting.

Ministry and Counsel/Religious Education Committee has met prior to meeting for worship on the first Sunday of each month. This committee has been tenderly clerked by Annette Dowling. Consideration and planning of the committee have benefited the spiritual well-being of the Meeting.

Connecting with new attenders has been a focus of the committee. One Friend requested home visits for spiritual support as well as basic practical needs, as he deals with ME/CFS. His occasional ability to attend meeting for worship in person is always met with great joy! Another Friend, whom we originally met as a recipient of our Education Assistance Project a number of years ago, joined our worship community for several weeks and received much love and support as she transitioned to a new job in Washington, D.C.

The committee facilitated two retreats this past year. The first was a gathering held in October at Moebius Nature Center to celebrate the joy of nature and our spiritual community. A nature hike, ably led by Jim Tomko, was followed by singing, meeting for worship, a shared meal, and some silly games. It was a wonderful refreshing break from some of life’s harsher realities.

The second retreat, held in January, was of a more serious nature. Warmly hosted by Annette Dowling, sensitively facilitated by Dick Melecki, and summarized in written form by Barb Warrington, its focus was the Lake Erie Yearly Meeting Annual Query and its incorporation into our theme, “Discernment and Quaker Practice.” Friends considered

questions of “What is the definition of discernment?” and “How does discernment work among Friends?” Our well-attended discussion resulted in meaningful sharing and enlightenment for both those new to Quaker practice and seasoned Friends. Meaningful conversations continued afterward as we enjoyed a delicious shared meal.

The reading of an LEYM query on the third Sunday of each month during meeting for worship was facilitated by Ministry and Counsel Committee members. The Kent Friends Meeting directory and phone tree – valuable tools for communication – were also updated and distributed by Committee member Dave Warrington.

We are delighted and uplifted by Sara Koopman’s request to lead “Meeting for Singing” on the third Sunday of each month prior to meeting for worship! We are discovering new gifts!

Peace and Social Action Committee, due to Nancy Warlop’s dedicated leadership, has brought much to Kent Friends Meeting’s attention and many paths for action on items of concern.

Through the Meeting’s associations with Kent Interfaith Alliance for Racial Reconciliation and Justice (KIFA), Friends participated in the CROP Walk in October, a January food drive benefiting Kent Social Services, and the showing and discussion of the film “Just Another Mile,” concerning the history of the Skeels/McElrath areas of Ravenna, where the director, Gloria Matlock, was raised.

The Committee interviewed and accepted Ogulkeyik Hodayberdiyeva, a Kent State student from Turkmenistan majoring in International Studies, as the recipient of our Education Assistance Project. The committee was impressed with her outgoing personality and grasp of multiple languages.

Nancy Warlop contacted Portage County Learning Center and received information on children from three families as our

MEETINGS AND WORSHIP GROUPS

“adopted” Christmas families. Friends enjoyed being part of this gift-giving process! Gifts were brought to Nancy’s home at our annual carol sing in December – another joyous time of fellowship and delicious desserts!

The Kent Social Services evening meal program has been reinstated. Volunteers happily signed up to serve the first of four meal dates assigned to Kent Friends Meeting in March. Member Annette Dowling has been committed to this outreach as a regular volunteer.

Kent Friends Meeting continues to support United Christian Ministries through donations to their in person/virtual fundraiser. Donations go toward the students’ service activities.

FCNL requested input from Friends Meetings on what FCNL’s priorities should be moving forward. The Committee gathered responses through e-mail and compiled a report to send back to FCNL. It was a challenge to condense 14 responses down to 5 priorities, but the Committee prevailed! Our priorities, in no particular order, are under the headings of: International Peace Building, Gun Violence Prevention, Climate Change, Economic Justice, and Voting and Elections.

Our treasurer, Jim Tomko, has kept accurate and easily understood financial records throughout the year and is much appreciated. In addition to budgeted items, donations were made to Moebius Nature Center and CROP Walk. A donation to World Central Committee to support their efforts to address the humanitarian crisis in Gaza was made in May and will be reflected in the 2024–25 fiscal year accounting.

The Finance Committee, clerked by Dave Warrington, has reviewed Jim’s records and found them to be complete, with minimal adjustments. The Committee has proposed an increased amount in the 2024–25 budget for the Education Assistance Project, either to be increased for one student or divided between two students. It was also noted that any contributions to Kent

Social Services would go directly to the hot meal program if given in gift cards rather than cash.

Greeting Committee (of one – Caroline Stilwell) has organized volunteers to greet and set up prior to weekly meeting for worship. Volunteers were also obtained to host Shared Meals in their homes on the first Sunday of each month – a wonderful time of fellowship for all!

Nominating Committee tactfully and gently twisted arms to fill all committee spots for the 2024–25 year!

The Archivist, Barb Warrington, reports no changes in membership statistics, but increased attenders. The archives are in the process of being prepared to send to Swarthmore Library – finally!! Minutes of our meetings for business have been carefully and cheerfully submitted by Recording Clerks Caroline Stilwell and Sarah McNally, making the Archivist's job so much simpler!

Our Webmaster, Doug Van De Motter, reports that Facebook followers have increased to 208 to-date. Our posts are typically informational or inspirational and centered on our core beliefs, which we hope may speak to individuals seeking a welcoming environment for worship and fellowship. The Facebook group for our Meeting is meant to help organize and disseminate information important to the Meeting and to motivate members to purposeful action. This coming year we aim to increase usage of the group site to facilitate better communication among our members. This may require a series of educational sessions to get Kent Friends Meeting members more knowledgeable about the possible uses for the page, likely an ongoing effort.

Kent Friends Meeting strives to make a difference in each individual life within our Meeting and as a whole in the world around us. It is an oasis that refreshes and recharges our spirits and a call to action to do our part in making this a better world. We are blessed to be a part of this community.

Respectfully submitted,
Barb Warrington, Clerk

**North Columbus Friends Meeting
State of the Meeting Report - May 2024**

Our Meeting matters and is worth cherishing. Worshiping together is exciting, simple, true, and real. We envision our Meeting as a vibrant community inspiring, encouraging, and holding one another in all aspects of our lives. We continue to learn how to live in community, one that is welcoming, safe, and equally accessible in all ways. Our values are grounded in Quaker faith and practice, which enable us to discern and follow leadings in our personal lives and with regard to the wider world. We hope that, when people discover us, they will feel invited in and that all will be enriched. (Vision Statement, North Columbus Friends Meeting)

Our Meeting continues our exploration into becoming more welcoming, safe, and fully accessible in alignment with the above vision statement. We have discerned that our present space will not be one we can bring up to our standard of full accessibility for all, leading us to move in January 2024 to a temporary space for worship that does provide the level of accessibility our community desires, while we look to sell our Meetinghouse and move to a more permanent worship space. While next steps requiring further discernment are in motion, we are having conversations around how we're experiencing Spirit and one another in a new worship space with all the logistical, emotional, and spiritual adjustments this entails.

As we've been attending to the discernment process regarding the Meetinghouse, we've tried to balance our inward focus with outreach into our own community of Friends and beyond. Our Outreach and Inreach Committee has focused efforts on ensuring that our events (such as Quakerism 101, Seeking Quakers, weekly fellowship hour) are welcoming and accessible. We are intentional about stating that the invitation to attend is for all,

regardless of connection to any branch of Quakerism, level of knowledge about Quakerism, or experience with our social media, website, and handouts. Efforts like this and others help us “come together to learn and deepen in the Light.”

We’ve continued our hybrid meetings for worship, valuing those who found us during the pandemic and those who find the availability of worship by Zoom an acceptable alternative to in-person meetings. We have offered an afternoon First Day meeting for worship with a 30-minute format that we lovingly refer to as our “meeting for worship with attention to fidgeting,” for those who find a shorter, looser worship dynamic more inviting for gathering in Spirit. In March 2024, *Friends Journal* published a feature article about this new meeting written by the Friends at NCFM who initiated it. We have also maintained Spiritual Companion groups for those who wish to participate in a perhaps more intimate form of worship sharing.

In February and May 2024, our Peace and Social Action Committee (PSAC), along with the LEYM’s Friends Peace Team rep, brought awareness and participation to the Alternatives to Violence Project, a worldwide, grassroots movement to build peace in ourselves and our communities, by hosting workshops in Columbus, Ohio, dedicated to creating cultures of peace and justice.

North Columbus Friends Meeting

**Oberlin Friends Meeting
Spiritual State of the Meeting Report
May 20, 2024**

Addressing the LEYM request for a Spiritual State of the Meeting Report, the OFM Ministry and Nurture Committee followed LEYM’s suggestion to pick a query from Mathilda Navias’s section on this topic in *Quaker Process*. At first, we considered:

What is most needed to deepen the spiritual life of the Meeting?

Considering this query for itself, the Ministry and Nurture Committee felt that our Meeting has deepened spiritually in the past year, and it noted that more Friends are now speaking, enriching the range of the ministry. To affirm this growth, Ministry and Nurture added the word “continue” to the query making it:

What is most needed to continue deepening the spiritual life of the Meeting?

Ministry and Nurture then shared this query during a meeting for worship and a meeting for worship with attention to business and collected the responses.

Most responses centered on the need to develop more community within the Meeting. Comments included:

- We need to understand and communicate with each other better.
- We need to get to know each other better by socializing more.
- The Activities Committee is doing a good job of providing ways for us to socialize.
- We need to speak from our own experience, sharing what we know from our lives and respecting that others will have had different experiences.
- We need to honor the diversity within the Meeting and the different needs and experiences of its members.

The Nominating Committee heard similar comments during their conversations with the community. Speaking to the Nominating Committee, Friends felt that the Meeting would be strengthened if: “As a community, we would continue to encourage Friends to speak from their own personal experience, using their own vocabulary and listening to others speaking from their

experience and vocabulary with respect and a willingness to listen and learn.”

Other Friends suggested that small group activities might help build community within the Meeting:

- Workshops given by members of the Meeting or other individuals, including Friends.
- Worship-sharings around a Pendle Hill Pamphlet.
- General topic book groups.
- Monthly coffee and craft groups either in person or by Zoom.
- A monthly lunch bunch visiting different restaurants in the area.
- Art Museum visits around the area.
- There could be show and tells after meeting for worship.
- Poetry reading groups.

Given these responses, the future direction for the Meeting seems clear. We need to continue sharing from our personal experience and vocabulary while respecting and honoring the different needs, vocabulary, and experiences of others. We also need to continue building our sense of community and trust through a variety of activities, so that our meeting for worship is a safe place to share our leadings with our community.

Pittsburgh Friends Meeting Annual Report to LEYM, 2024

Pittsburgh Friends Meeting continues this year to feel the reverberations of events and circumstances that have left us in an ongoing state of transition. This position of uncertainty can leave us feeling uncomfortable or even unstable. However, through the challenges that change presents, we remain in an occasion for the expression and exercise of our testimonies as Quakers.

Pittsburgh Friends Meeting has seen community members making extra effort to contribute to the well-being of our faith community in myriad ways.

MEETINGS AND WORSHIP GROUPS

A renovation of our worship space provided a beautiful room for seeking Spirit together, but also a substantial financial obligation for the Meeting community. Just a few months after this project was completed, the COVID pandemic closed the Meeting House for worship, and also for outside renters, a significant source of revenue for the Meeting. Although we had largely returned to our pre-pandemic activities and occupancy by the beginning of this corporate year, we still faced a significant financial shortfall. Many Friends questioned the viability of remaining in our building. We also considered if continuing to devote the overwhelming majority of our financial resources to the building was consistent, or in conflict, with our values as Friends.

Ultimately, after two sessions for discussion of the benefits and drawbacks of ownership of the Meeting House, it became clear that Friends would be unable to reach unity on leaving the building. The question remained of how to meet our financial demands, both the long-term savings obligation that good stewardship of resources demands of us, and also our immediate operational deficit. Some Friends have been able to increase their monetary support of the Meeting, and we are currently in the midst of a fundraising effort to address the deficit in the current fiscal year budget.

The loss of our long-term house manager during the pandemic left a hole in our community where his kindness had been. Over three years since his death, we continue to hear from folks outside the Meeting how he made folks feel welcome and brightened the days of our neighbors.

Thus far, circumstances have allowed us to function without a paid house manager. As part of a visioning process, Friends expressed concern that we had not been the employer our values would require us to be, and that we could not properly support an employee. Our decision to proceed without an employee continues to make more substantial demands of Friends who volunteer for duties to keep our building functioning. Through the gifts of their considerable time and effort, community

members have taken over the work of keeping the building clean and providing a Friendly presence for renters, as well as the considerable undertaking of making the rental arrangements. This has enabled us to rent space in the Meeting House to both long-term and occasional-use tenants, dramatically strengthening our financial position and providing predictability to our revenue. But, this is not without other costs. We must remain mindful of the significance of the gift of Friends' effort, and take measures to avoid imposing on this generosity and risking burnout on the part of these community members.

Reconciliation remained unattainable with a member who continued to suffer harm as a result of her experience as an employee and as a woman of color in our Meeting over 25 years ago. The Meeting undertook a lengthy process involving the formation of ad hoc committees to seek resolution. After repeated efforts could not relieve the conflict among friends, we reached a largely dissatisfying conclusion. The Friend involved ultimately resigned her membership.

A number of other Friends withdrew from the Meeting community. Their absence has created a reduction in the number of weightier or more experienced Friends to provide guidance and leadership at a time when we welcome numerous new people to our community. Furthermore, the lack of true resolution, the presence of friction, leaves an impediment to more authentic relationships among Friends. Nonetheless, if we want to remain in community, we have to find ways to continue, understanding that resolution doesn't always happen, and many Friends have lived with their discomfort and continued to try to build connection.

Throughout this year, we have seen an unusually high number of Friends step away from their roles of service on committees, which do the work of the Meeting, including roles of leadership. This has required committees to reconfigure, new individuals to step into leadership, and other Friends to take on a greater portion of work. That process has interfered with the work of the

committees and disrupted momentum. Additionally, since returning to more extensive Meeting activities post-pandemic, we have struggled with having enough volunteer participation. In particular, our First Day School Committee has struggled to find consistent teaching volunteers in order to fulfill their vision of curriculum and activities for the Meeting's children. Tasks performed for the set-up and conduct of worship have frequently been performed by the same Friends, somewhat by default, after no volunteers have come forward. We have had difficulty staffing certain committees, and our Nominating Committee has been unable to identify an assistant clerk for the coming year.

We have had the good fortune to have many new regular attenders join our Meeting community over the past few years. There has been some challenge introducing newer folks to Quaker practices and traditions, perhaps because a significant portion found us during social distancing, when there were substantially fewer Meeting activities or other opportunities to engage with Friends outside of worship. In particular, some more seasoned Friends have been concerned about vocal ministry, some of which appears to have not been tested or arise from the Spirit. Nevertheless, our community has benefitted from the new perspectives and enthusiasm that newcomers provide, as well as the opportunity for more seasoned Friends to provide guidance and more consciously model our testimonies and values.

Submitted by Gina Godfrey, Co-Clerk
May 15, 2024

Red Cedar Friends Meeting State of the Meeting Report, 2023–24

In 2023–24, Red Cedar has experienced spiritual intimacy, new Light, and humbling challenges.

We completed our year-long Faithful Meetings engagement with School of the Spirit, during which many of us participated in monthly Saturday learning/sharing sessions led by Mary Linda

McKinney. The best part for many of us was the small Spiritual Formation groups; over 40 of us took part in sharing our spiritual condition with each other on a frequent and regular basis. We hope some of those for whom this is a new practice will continue as the Lake Erie Yearly Meeting fall retreat kicks off another year of spiritual formation. We're discerning how to build on the shared energy in 2024-25 as a full group as well.

New learning got underway for us this year when parents asked us to revisit the Child Safety policy we'd adopted six years ago, to consider anew asking childcare providers to undergo background checks. Surprisingly deep and emotional discernment was required as we worked to balance care for our precious young Friends with respect for privacy and for keeping our community welcoming to all. We came to understand proactive background checks as a good way to keep our own awareness of the issue high and also to signal to potential predators that we're paying attention. We're learning how to use the online background check system and plan to be ready with checked volunteers in time for fall's Religious Education program re-start.

Our learning about being in Right Relationship with the Earth and with others continued on many fronts. For the second year, we contributed \$7000, a substantial portion of our operating budget, to The Justice League, a Lansing-based endowment gathered from area faith communities to be used for racial reparations. The Justice League's first ten reparation-fueled college scholarships to Lansing area high school graduates have just been announced, and we are working with the organizers to share our discernment process with other small congregations that might want to contribute from their relatively small budgets and assets. Additionally, the Gathering Society, a group of indigenous women and allies seeking to learn about and share traditional ways of living in harmony with Creation (who originally came to us to rent space), has invited Red Cedar women to join them, and we've shared maple sugar-making, a Give-away circle, foraging, and seed-sharing Saturdays. Young

MEETINGS AND WORSHIP GROUPS

Friends are having fun learning Anishinaabemowin words and stories.

In the past year, two members of our Meeting community tried to work with us to describe their experiences of racism in our Meeting. During the meeting, there was a question asked by one of us that caused even more racial wounding to the persons of color. Both of the persons who experienced the racial wounding have felt that they needed to withdraw from the Meeting while we educate and transform ourselves to practice knowing and being a place of safety and welcoming of all.

We've struggled to even find words, much less constructive actions, with which to respond to our nation's culpability (in our names) for fueling deadly war and conflict – notably, but not only, in Ukraine and Gaza. We were able to find unity in a minute addressing the Gaza violence. And, after learning the legal definition of “apartheid” and how it applies to Israel, we joined the Apartheid-Free Community pledge that is being sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee and others.

Here too, we're just at the beginning of finding out how to live into that intention. But at a deeper level, we realize we have more work to do to explore Spirit's call to non-violence and our Peace Testimony – is it absolute or situational? What does it have to say about structural violence? How do we respond when racial wounding occurs during our meeting for worship? How do we build the spiritual reflexes and muscle to be ready when an occasion for violence occurs?

When we built our Northtown Lansing meetinghouse (now 14 years ago), it was with the deliberate intent to move ourselves from university-centered East Lansing to more urban Lansing proper, in the hopes that proximity would offer more ways to connect with our community's whole economic spectrum. We succeeded. Our neighbors include working class, poor, and unhoused people as well as educated professionals and hip boutiques. We are making some progress in finding concrete

ways to connect as fellow North Town people rather than slipping into the easy condescension of “charity.” Our Tiny Pantry is filled with \$20–30 of non-perishable items 360 days a year, no questions asked, and it’s cleaned out most days. Our external electricity, water, and Wi-Fi connections are shared open-heartedly. We stock bus tokens and food cards for use when people ask for help.

But becoming a place where neighbors can look for help comes with real tension and discomfort as we practice setting limits – no, we don’t allow camping in the (sheltered, attractive) backyard, even though we’ve put benches there for resting. No, we can’t manage an onsite porta-potty. No, you can’t clean out the refreshment table into your backpack. Well, yes and no, some of us are okay with explicit requests for money from someone waiting by the front door as they arrive at worship, and some of us aren’t. Yes, we need to find a way to keep renters from having to negotiate such limits with anyone who comes in the door while they’re here. We’re finding it a good spiritual practice to welcome these challenges instead of being annoyed to have our smooth existence troubled.

Wooster Friends Meeting **Annual report submitted to LEYM – May 2024**

Wooster Friends Meeting has emerged from the pandemic with a new schedule for our weekly meeting for worship. First and third First Days are in person at our traditional meeting place on the campus of the College of Wooster. Second, fourth, and fifth First Days are Zoom-only format. This seems to be a comfortable arrangement: we have the fellowship of seeing each other in person twice a month, while the other weeks we are considering the environment by not driving long distances to Meeting, plus we are able to accommodate folks who cannot regularly drive to Wooster. While our Meeting is small, our home locations continue to span quite a wide area.

MEETINGS AND WORSHIP GROUPS

This has been a year of loss for our small Meeting. Phil Balderston died in June 2023. Evelyn Kirkhart died in January 2024. John Holliger died in March 2024. Each of these individuals was significant in the life of our Meeting in his or her own way. Phil was a steadfast member for several decades, our historian, and a steady source of practical and spiritual wisdom. Evelyn was a member from many years ago who was able to return to regular attendance with us when we moved to a virtual format with the pandemic; she was a spiritual inspiration in our worship and discussions. John Holliger was a creative soul, generous with his talent and with his ideas about a spiritual journey.

Some in our Meeting have joined with Friends outside our Meeting for worship, for study groups, and for workshops. This is a positive way that the pandemic and the resulting use of technology have affected our Meeting.

This year we have deeply considered our finances, which remain strong in spite of our shrinking size. We want to be sure our use of resources and our sharing of resources are in keeping with our values and beliefs as Friends. In this time of conflict and crisis in our own area and around the world, supporting the work of Friends organizations is a way that small Meetings can encourage nonviolent, peaceful, and loving solutions to problems of great magnitude.

In the year before us, we hope to maintain our numbers and our support for each other in our spiritual journeys.

Memorial Minutes and Obituaries

Obituary for Phil Balderston (Wooster)

July 26, 1938 – June 20, 2023

Life on earth for Claire Philip Balderston ended on June 20, 2023, at age 84. Born near Alburnett, Iowa, to Kenneth Raymond and Alma Agnes (Machacek) Balderston on July 26, 1938, Phil was the second of three sons. In addition to earning degrees in the biosciences from Iowa State and Pennsylvania State Universities, he served his national obligation with the Pacific Fleet and served part of his obligation to humanity in Latin America, under the care of the American Friends Service Committee. He was joined in marriage to Joyce Ann Moore, daughter of Frank Gifford and Ella Jane (Lewis) Moore, at Whittier, Iowa, Friends Meeting on October 15, 1966. They were members of Wooster Friends Meeting in Ohio for the remainder of their lives.

Phil was engaged in various aspects of agriculture his entire life. He loved his family and he loved the land. He was perpetually inspired by God's gift of humor and music to humankind. Meaningful artists and works included Antonín Dvořák, Henry David Thoreau, Dominick Argento's *Walden Pond* arrangement, Joyce Kilmer's "Trees," and John Cardina's *Lives of Weeds*.

He is survived by his wife, Joyce Balderston, son, Eric Balderston, and daughter, Beth Balderston. He was preceded in death by his parents and brothers, Keith Kenneth and Randal Wayne.

At his request, a natural burial was in the Highfields Cemetery located on the family farm in Knox Township, Holmes County, Ohio. Phil reported that he eagerly anticipated full knowledge of Truth in his next adventure and encouraged everyone to "Nourish a tree!"

Those who knew Phil within the Wooster Friends Meeting remember his simple and unequivocal kindness and his compassionate feelings toward everyone and every good cause. One Friend described him in this way: “He was lighted from the inside, a glowing lantern of ever-present attention.”

Those in Wooster Friends Meeting recall the wisdom Phil had developed by holding closely to Friends testimonies. He kept our business meetings grounded, especially at times when the rest of us might have decided too hastily or made a decision that was not quite in keeping with Friends’ tradition.

Friends also recall his memory for relationships. He and Joyce were the link with countless individuals who had come through our Meeting, starting in its earliest days (1950s). Phil and Joyce shared the serenity of their rural life and their beautiful home (built by Phil, with the assistance of dedicated friends) with Wooster Friends Meeting and Lake Erie Yearly Meeting by hosting retreats and youth events there over the decades. Whether in Meeting or giving a tour on his farm, Phil was a teacher. He taught by example, and he taught by storytelling that was actually instruction.

Phil made his life a testament to the kind, the everlasting, the simple and sustainable life, and left a message and a continuing example for us who remain.

Memorial Minute for Linda Brandenburg (Cleveland) September 8, 1949 – April 4, 2023

Linda Brandenburg lived a life of radical hospitality, mostly without realizing it. Her openness about her own darkness and doubts helped assure many of us that there was a place for us here too, as did her open-hearted curiosity.

She was vulnerable and honest about the things that matter. It’s easy for people to speak of the Divine from a safe emotional remove. Linda spoke plainly, even bluntly, about her feelings and doubts and what she wondered about. She recognized

darkness and doubt as important parts of her faith and often said that the lyrics of Leonard Cohen were her Scripture. ("If you are the dealer, I'm out of the game // If you are the healer, it means I'm broken and lame // If thine is the glory, then mine must be the shame // You want it darker// We kill the flame." And at the same time: "Hineni, hineni. I'm ready, my Lord.")

She lived with many losses. A divorce left her to raise her son, Christopher, as a single parent. A massive heart attack quickly ate through her savings in middle age, and she lived with disability and on the thin edge of near-poverty the rest of her life. She lost parts of her body as she went on: an eye early in life, then a leg, then her uterus. (Many of us knew that she was secretly a pirate queen.) While she struggled with depression and feared losing her autonomy, she did not embrace bitterness. Seeing that her doctor was distressed that he could not save her leg, she comforted him. She told him it had been a relief to lose an eye which had caused her so much pain and that it would be a similar relief to let the leg go.

Linda welcomed those who were different or marginalized in a way that radiated genuine curiosity, not liberal magnanimity. She asked questions, sat with the answers, then asked more.

Sometimes the answers led her to consider how her own sense of self might have been different in different circumstances.

Many of us recognized that Linda was one of the quiet foundations for Cleveland Friends Meeting, though she had trouble seeing this herself. The author of this minute once wrote to Linda: "You bring weight to the Meeting. And you're vulnerably honest about things that matter. It's easy for people to get abstract and intellectual about the Divine. Safer. You just say it like it is, plainly, whether it's what you're feeling or your doubts or what you're wondering about. When you're at [our small book discussion group], people are more open and more honest. And I do not know how you've dealt with some of the losses you've gone through. That you can be this open, this at

peace more often than not – it makes me want to get closer to that Light. I think it makes a lot of people want to get closer.”

She had a wry sense of humor. She loved poems about bad girls and women who refused to follow the rules. She adored Christopher, her daughter-in-law, Sarah, and grandson, Logan, and the joy they shared with her. She was a crone who could say anything and did. She was a member of Cleveland Friends Meeting for over 20 years. She is sorely missed.

Memorial Minute for Lois (Loie) Gilbert (Ann Arbor)
April 27, 1947 – August 28, 2023

Lois “Loie” Gilbert was born on April 27, 1947, in the Bronx, New York, to David and Ruth (Jaffe) Gilbert and died on August 28, 2023. She is survived by her wife, Sally Ryon, and her two sons, two daughters-in-law, and five grandchildren. Loie believed strongly in the Oneness of all humans and the Holiness of all human beings respecting one another. Following her beliefs, her profession was as a social worker who worked in a variety of fields: Neighborhood Senior Services, Public Housing Projects, Employee Assistance Programs, and programs for troubled adolescent boys in the Ann Arbor and Detroit areas. She loved advocating on behalf of those whose voices were not heard or taken seriously.

Loie was a compassionate Friend, committed to discovering the spiritual richness of both her childhood Jewish upbringing in the Bronx and in the Quaker Meeting she found as an adult, here in Ann Arbor. In her application for membership, in 1990, Loie described how she first came to AAFM purely as a seeker and gradually became part of the Meeting:

[The] Meeting has, from the beginning, been a special pleasure in my life; in recent years the event that defined the weekend, that centered and reminded me of that which is best in us all. At first, I believed that I would, if I “did it” right, experience a transcendent, transforming experience of Light

here, The Light, whatever that was . . . I imagined it as physical light that I would “see” in my meditative state. That has never happened, but it comes to me now, as I write this, that I have had a transforming experience here with you in these last ten years – slowly over time, with no explosions of Light (or light either), . . . simply the slow accretion of trust and love over time. And I have come to know this Meeting, this Meetinghouse, and the unprogrammed tradition of Quaker worship as my spiritual home.

At that point Loie began referring to herself as a Jewish Quaker, and she asked for, and was granted, acceptance as an Affiliate Member of the Ann Arbor Meeting in the autumn of 1990, so that she could honor both of her faith traditions.

During her 32 years with us, Loie participated in the Ann Arbor Meeting in numerous ways, serving on the Membership and Outreach, Nominating, Care and Visitation, and Contributions committees and supporting the Gay and Lesbian Concerns group, the Meeting Library, and a Celebrations group. Her experience as a social worker and her deep knowledge of community resources for people in need were especially helpful to the Care and Visitation Committee.

Loie and Sally had a commitment ceremony in the Ann Arbor Friends Meetinghouse in August 1994, followed by a legal marriage in July 2015, after that became possible. They blossomed in their rich and rewarding partnership of 42 years.

Loie was forthright and stood up for causes she believed in, protesting in New York against the war in Vietnam and in Ann Arbor for women's rights and LGBTQ rights. She was a devoted vegetarian, believed in never eating or killing a living being, and dearly loved her pet cats and dogs. Loie loved to read and write, especially poetry, until memory loss took its toll in her later years.

In the spring of 2023, Loie and Sally came to say farewell to the Ann Arbor Meeting before moving to Traverse City, Michigan,

to be closer to family. We were very grateful for that opportunity to say good-bye to Loie. Within months, on August 28, 2023, she lost her life in an auto accident. She will be long remembered as a spiritual seeker with a loving, caring, and generous nature.

**Memorial Minute for John C. Holliger (Wooster)
December 20, 1946 – March 10, 2024**

John Holliger died on Sunday, March 10, 2024, from head injuries sustained in a fall. He is survived by his wife, Carol, three daughters, two sons-in law, and the unexpected gift of a year-old grandson. His family chose to have a private celebration of life, according to the rites of the Episcopal Church.

John graduated from Oberlin College and Yale Divinity School and was ordained by the Episcopal Church in 1975. He served parishes in Connecticut and Ohio, retiring after 30 years, in his late 50s. Following his retirement, he embarked on a second career as a nature photographer and retreat leader. He named his business “A Contemplative Nature,” and that described both his choice of subjects for his photography and the way he integrated photography, music, and poetry in his retreats and his life.

John came to Friends in his 60s, drawn by the experience of silent waiting worship. We remember the framed photographs he brought to meeting for worship, placing them into the circle of our silence. We remember his thoughtful messages in meeting. We remember his many Thought and a Photograph essays sent to our inboxes. We remember his efforts to become acquainted with members of the Meeting. John searched out and became a member of the Fellowship of Quaker Artists. Some of his photographs were published in its newsletter, and he participated in offerings of that group at Friends General Conference on at least two occasions. He also provided the illustrations for a book written by a fellow Quaker. Late in life, he became increasingly generous with his life work, donating several hundred framed

photographs to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources for use in their state park lodges. All members of his numerous medical team received photographs for their offices.

In John's last years he participated less and less in the Meeting. Partly this was the result of distance, partly the result of the restrictions of the COVID years, partly the result of health limitations, and partly a certain frustration with the organizational side, not the spiritual side, of the Meeting. He remained a member of the Meeting and we remember him as an unusual and gifted spirit among us.

Memorial Minute for Evelyn Kirkhart (Wooster)
May 4, 1933 – January 5, 2024

Dr. Evelyn Kirkhart, a beloved member of Wooster Friends Meeting, died January 5, 2024, at the age of 90, due to complications of pancreatic cancer. Evelyn was born May 4, 1933, to Bertha and August Schroeder in Mansfield, Ohio, during the peak of the Great Depression, the second of two daughters. Despite her family's hardships, she was an outstanding student who loved animals, nature, and music. She played piano and organ at her church and wrote original musical compositions from an early age. Music was a great source of joy, expression, and inspiration throughout her life, and she often shared this love with her family and wide circle of friends.

She graduated from Mansfield High School in 1951 and received a BA in education from Kent State University, graduating cum laude. At Kent State, she met Robert O. Kirkhart. They married in 1955 and became foundational members of Kent Friends Meeting. She later completed her master's degree and PhD in clinical psychology. She practiced as a clinical psychologist in Cuyahoga Falls, Ashland, Wooster, and Thurman, Ohio.

She served as recording clerk of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting of Friends. She is remembered by meeting members as "a spark of light, joy, and peace, a guiding light to our Meeting. She helped

MEETINGS AND WORSHIP GROUPS

make meeting a place of comfort and refuge. Her joy, humor, and love were infectious.” Prayer and meditation have been part of her daily life for many decades, as have her humanitarian concerns and desire to find peaceful ways to resolve conflict. During a transitional time in her life, she gathered with others in a journey of faith, creativity, and exploration at Pendle Hill Quaker Center.

Evelyn was always an advocate for the underdog, and stepped up to help when others faced hardship. She, in good spirit, fulfilled her roles in life as sister, wife, mother, and grandmother with joy and humor, always exhibiting God's love. She approached her own challenges with endurance, humor, and thoughtfulness. Her laugh was embracing and distinctive: anyone who knew her could pick her out from a crowd without seeing her face. She loved nature and gardening, and swam regularly until her recent severe illness. She was generous with love and concern for people in all walks of life. She valued listening to others, understanding, connection, tolerance for differences, and especially forgiveness. In this spirit, she touched the lives of many people. No task was too big or too small. For all of these things, and so many more, she is deeply missed.

At the end of her life, as she wished, she was at home with hospice support, surrounded by her beloved animals and her children and grandchildren, who were comforted knowing that her love for them extended from their first breath to her last. She shared this love with everyone she knew, and those facing challenges everywhere.

Survivors include her sister, Miriam Schroeder; children Beth Kirkhart and husband Victor Yodaiken, Mark Kirkhart and wife Cyndi Kirkhart, Laurel Kirkhart and husband Michael Owens; grandchildren Jasmine Owens and husband Michael Long, Micaela Owens and husband Korin Miller, Aaron Yodaiken, and Chaia Yodaiken.

A celebration of Evelyn's life was held at the Tyn Rhos Church in Thurman, Ohio, on April 27, 2024.

Donations in Evelyn's memory may be made to the Ohio Valley Symphony in Gallipolis, Ohio, and Pendle Hill Quaker Center in Philadelphia [Wallingford], Pennsylvania.

**Memorial Minute for Adele S. Looney (Akron)
February 13, 1923 – February 4, 2024**

Adele S. Looney passed away on February 4, 2024, just a few days short of her 101st birthday. She was one of the founders of Akron Friends Meeting, and served the Meeting in many valuable ways – including multiple terms as clerk, recording clerk, and treasurer. She also hosted the Meeting in her home.

Adele grew up in River Forest, Illinois, and earned her BA in English and Dietetics from Rosary College. She met her husband, John, while he was a law student at DePaul University in Chicago. They moved to the Akron area (living in Wadsworth) and learned about Quakerism from their work with the American Friends Service Committee. John eventually became the NE Ohio Director and set up the Akron AFSC Office. Adele volunteered for AFSC for many years.

They had attended a programmed Friends meeting at the Akron YMCA and the Cleveland and Kent Meetings. Along with other AFSC volunteers, Adele and John founded the Akron Friends Meeting. As Quakers, Adele and John worked tirelessly for peace and social justice. They advocated for fair housing, nuclear disarmament, church integration, community education, and peace. Adele helped found the Akron-Barberton-Norton-Wadsworth Peace Group, served on the board of Wadsworth Meals on Wheels, and was active in Women's Interfaith Spiritual Heritage and Sorosis (a local women's organization.)

Adele did all this while raising two children and teaching 7th and 8th graders English and Home Economics at Wadsworth Junior High School.

She left Akron Friends a short essay on why she was delighted to be a Quaker. In her words:

MEETINGS AND WORSHIP GROUPS

Religion for Quakers is not something apart from life, not something for special days or sacred places. It is the whole of life. It is a way of life. It is something that one does and is.

Adele lived those words. She gave us a superb example of how to live the Quaker life.

She is survived by her children, Mark and Marcia; two grandchildren, Catherine and Matthew; and a great granddaughter, Ramona.

We miss her dearly – her steadfastness, her wisdom, and her sense of humor. Thank you, Adele, for all you've taught us.

Statistics – Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups

Recorded Members of Monthly Meetings

Monthly Meeting	Adult	Child	Last Update	New Members	Births	Ended Members ¹	Marriages ²	Avg. Mtg Attendance
Akron	5	0	7/24	0	0	1	0	4-6
Ann Arbor	122	4	6/24	2	0	2	0	70
Athens	49	5	6/24	2	0	1	0	30
Birmingham	21	0	7/24	1	0	0	0	16
Broadmead	21	0	7/24	1	0	0	0	27
Cleveland	38	6	7/24	1	0	3	0	18
Delaware	1	0	7/24	0	0	1	0	5
Detroit	24	3	7/24	3	0	0	0	24
Grand Rapids	12	0	6/24	0	0	0	0	17-27
Granville	13	3	7/24	0	0	0	0	11
Holland	2	0	7/24	0	0	0	0	10
Kalamazoo	27	4	7/24	0	0	0	0	20
Kent	17	0	6/24	0	0	0	0	12-15
Mid-Ohio Valley	5	0	7/24	0	0	0	0	7
North Columbus*	10*	8*	8/23	0*	0*	0*	0*	30*
Oberlin	20	0	7/24	0	0	0	0	23
Pittsburgh	116	6	6/24	1	0	3	0	50
Red Cedar	80	0	7/24	1	0	2	0	28
Wooster	17	1	7/24	0	0	2	0	7
Total # Meetings: 19	600	40	--	12	0	15	0	--

¹Ended by request, transfer, or death²Marriages or ceremonies of commitment under care of the meeting

* Not reported

Members Gained and Lost

New Memberships (as of 8/1/24)			
Name	Action	Start Date	Primary MM Affiliation
Laura Scott	Application	9/17/23	Ann Arbor
Dennis Gregg	Transfer	5/19/24	Ann Arbor
Stella Grover	Application	11/12/23	Athens
Robin Wilson	Application	2/10/24	Athens
Bill Warters	Application	1/24	Birmingham
Paul Helbling	Application	4/21/24	Broadmead
Lynne Kinucann	Transfer	5/19/24	Cleveland
Christian Toglia	Application	4/14/24	Pittsburgh
Cathy Clifford	Application	1/14/24	Red Cedar

Ended Memberships (as of 8/1/24)			
Name	Reason	Date	Primary MM Affiliation
Adele Looney	Death	2/04/24	Akron
Mae Wilson	Transfer	11/12/24	Ann Arbor
Lois Gilbert	Death	8/23/23	Ann Arbor
Sara Gilfert	Death	3/15/24	Athens
Leslie Walden	Death	11/14/23	Cleveland
Chatham Ewing	Requested	4/15/24	Cleveland
Anastasia Lakhtikova	Requested	4/15/24	Cleveland
David Carr	Transfer	5/24	Delaware

MEETINGS AND WORSHIP GROUPS

Harriet Paxson	Death	11/2/23	Pittsburgh
Beni Downing	Death	1/3/24	Pittsburgh
Celeste Taylor	Request	4/14/24	Pittsburgh
Mary Stanford	Request	6/27/23	Red Cedar
Peter Wood	Request	6/27/23	Red Cedar
Evelyn Kirkhart	Death	1/5/24	Wooster
John Holliger	Death	3/10/24	Wooster

<p>Marriages or Ceremonies of Commitment Under the Care of a Meeting: None reported</p>
--

Contacts and Communications

Note: The locations shown for meetings and worship groups tell where their meetings for worship take place when Friends are gathering in person. Many meetings for worship occur virtually. Check the website of a meeting or worship group to learn the latest information on how and where they are meeting.

*To contact individual Friends listed below, see the Directory section, starting on p. 231. **Note: There is no Directory in the online version.***

Akron Monthly Meeting	
Day and time	Sunday 11:00 am
Worship location	2047 Wyndham Rd., Akron, OH 44313
Contact	Janet Dando, Clerk, 330-666-7222 dandojanet4@gmail.com
Date offices change	July 1
Officers	Clerk: Janet Dando Treasurer: Leah Holden

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Ann Arbor Monthly Meeting	
Day and time	Sunday 9:00 am (7:45 am on 3rd Sundays) Sunday 11:00 am (with children's program) 5th Sundays: one meeting at 10:00 am Some meetings are hybrid (online and in-person)
Worship location	1420 Hill Street Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Meeting Phone	734-761-7435
Contact	Pat Micks (Meeting Worker), 734-761-7435 aafmoffice@sbcglobal.net OR Karen Connor (Clerk), 734-717-6353 clerks@annarborfriends.org
Website	www.annarborfriends.org
Date offices change	September 1
Officers	Clerk: Karen Connor Assistant Clerks: Ben Kuipers & Susan Hartman Recording Clerk: Peggy Daub Recorder: Pat Micks Treasurer: Karla Taylor, transitioning to Alex Houser
Reps to LEYM	Jeff Cooper Susan Hartman

Newsletter Editor: Eric Wozniak

Webmaster: Ben Kuipers

Committee for Children & Families Conveners: Claire

Tinkerhess & Molly Tinkerhess

Contributions Convener: TBD

Earthcare Convener: Richard Tucker

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

East Africa Education Action Group: Harry Sheehan
Finance Conveners: Debs Roush & Steve Morehouse
Furnishings: Pat Micks
Justice Action Group Co-convenor: Lynn Drickamer
Membership & Outreach Co-Convenor: Susan Cooper
Ministry and Counsel Co-convenor: Margot Finn
Ministry and Counsel Representative to LEYM Ministry &
Nurture: Tom Blackwell
Nominating Convener: TBD
Palestine-Israel Action Group: Ed Morin
Peace & Social Justice Convener: Phil Volk
Personnel Convener: Brian Jones-Chance
Property Convener: Harry Sheehan
Quaker House Convener: Jeff Cooper
Refreshments & Potluck Co-conveners: Cynthia Lempert and
Jan Wright
Sanctuary Convener: Johanna Kowitz
Technology Convener: Matt Butler

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Athens Monthly Meeting	
Day and time	Sunday 10:00 am, preceded by singing at 9:45
Worship location	22 Birge Drive Chauncey, OH 45719
Mailing address	Athens Monthly Meeting PO Box 17 Athens, OH 45701
Meeting phone	740-797-4636
Contact	John Howell, 740-592-5789, jhowell45701@gmail.com; Christa White, 740-274-2308, ChristaWhite1016@gmail.com
Facebook	www.facebook.com/Athensfriendsmeeting/
Date offices change	June 30
Officers	Clerks: Christa White, John Howell Assistant Clerk: Peggy Gish Recording Clerk: Joanna Mitchell Recorder/Historian: Tim Dransfield Treasurer: Warren Haydon Assistant Treasurer: David Herold
Rep to LEYM	Dale Pratt-Harrington

Directory Publisher: Tim Dransfield

Newsletter Co-Editors: Carol Beale, Joanna Mitchell, Birch Moonwoman

AFM Forum Coordinator: Connaught Cullen

AFM Listserv: Ivars Balkits

AFSC Contact: [No one named]

Aging in the Light Convener: Birch Moonwoman

Athens Food Pantry Contact: Deedee Dransfield

Community Emergency Services: Tim Dransfield, Joanna Mitchell

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Community Outreach/Sunday Evening Meetings: Tim Dransfield, Bob Lachman, Rick Zielinski
Fall Campout Contact: Joanna Mitchell
FCNL Contact: Ivars Balkits
Finance Committee Clerk: Warren Haydon
First Day School Committee: StarMary Castro
Greeters: Suzanne Howell, Carey Lea
Library Committee Contact: Donna Lofgren
Meetinghouse Committee Clerk: StarMary Castro
Meetinghouse Scheduler: David Herold
Ministry & Nurture: Marcia Goldstein, Trisha Lachman, Shannon Pratt Harrington, Warren Haydon, Mary Hogan
Music Committee: Donna Lofgren, Carol Beale, John Howell, Steve Mowrey
Nominating Committee: Tom Medley, Peggy Gish, Carol Beale, Shannon Pratt-Harrington, Patty Mercer, StarMary Castro
P.O. Box Collector: Warren Haydon
Peace and Social Concerns Contact: Robin Wilson
Pendle Hill Contact: [No one named]
QEW Contact: [No one named]
QUNO Contact: [No one named]
Seeking the Light: Trisha Lachman, Marcia Goldstein, Rick Zelinski, Regina Warfel
Technology/FaceBook Admin: Christa White

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Birmingham Monthly Meeting	
Day and time	Sunday 10:30 am (hybrid)
Worship location	Royal Oak Chamber Office 200 S. Washington Ave. Royal Oak, MI 48073
Mailing address	Birmingham Monthly Meeting 18746 Old Homestead Dr Harper Woods, MI 48225
Contact	Bill Warters, 313-648-8626, clerk@birminghamfriendsmi.org
Website	birminghamfriendsmi.org
Date offices change	September 1
Officers	Clerk: Bill Warters Recording Clerk: Tom Hulbert Treasurer: Heather Matora
Rep to LEYM	Ellerie Brownfain

Archivist: Ellerie Brownfain

Web Master: Bill Warters

First Day School Coordinator: Heather Matora

Ministry & Oversight Clerk: Tom Hulbert

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Bluffton Worship Group <i>Part of Broadmead Monthly Meeting</i>	
Day and time	2nd, 4th, and 5th Sunday 10:00 am in person; 1st and 3 rd Sundays online with all of Broadmead Meeting
Worship location	118 S. Spring St. Bluffton, OH 45817
Mailing address	Jon and Sally Weaver Sommer 118 South Spring St. Bluffton, OH 45817
Contact	Sally Weaver Sommer 419-953-9455 sommerjs@bluffton.edu See note for Broadmead Monthly Meeting
Website	broadmeadfriends.org

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Broadmead Monthly Meeting	
Day and Time	Sunday 10:00 am
Worship location	<i>See notes below</i>
Mailing address	Broadmead Monthly Meeting C/O Sally Weaver Sommer, Clerk 118 S. Spring St. Bluffton, OH 45817
Contact	Sally Weaver Sommer, 419-953-9455 Or see the contact information for the group in Toledo or in Bluffton
Notes	Broadmead Meeting pulls people from an area 65 miles long and 60 miles wide in northwest Ohio. On 1st and 3rd Sundays, worship is held at 10:00 in Toledo and on Zoom. On 2nd, 4th, and 5th Sundays, worship is held at 10:00 in Bluffton, in Toledo, and on Zoom. Call for more information.
Website	broadmeadfriends.org
Date offices change	July 1
Officers	Clerk: Sally Weaver Sommer Recording Clerk: Shelley Kotz Recorder: Linda Yoder Szilagye Treasurer: Ken Lawrence
Rep to LEYM	Ken Lawrence

Newsletter Editor: William Greenberg

Web Manager: Brad Wade

Database Keeper: Ken Lawrence

Finance Committee Clerk: Paul Helbling

Ministry & Nurture Co-Clerks: Linda Dangelo, Kathleen Helbling

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Nominating Clerk: Linda Yoder Szilagye

Site & Arrangements Clerk: Greg Mott

Youth & Children Clerks: Sally Weaver Sommer, Jonathan Sommer

Cleveland Monthly Meeting	
Day and time	Sunday 11:00 am
Worship location	11205 Euclid Ave. Cleveland, OH 44106 (in concrete addition next to the Church of the Covenant)
Mailing address	Cleveland Monthly Meeting Unit 554 11459 Mayfield Rd. Cleveland, OH 44106
Meeting phone	216-804-3471
Meeting email	clevequakers@yahoo.com
Contact	Jim Brinza, 216-398-8069 jbrinza07@aol.com
Website	clevelandfriendsmeeting.org
Date offices change	May
Officers	Clerk: Jim Brinza Assistant Clerk: none Recording Clerk: Robert Loftis Recorder: Jim Markel Treasurer: James Wilson
Rep to LEYM	Vickie Finger

Communications Contact: Jo Steigerwald

Business Clerk: Lynn Clark

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

First Day School: Chris Farrand
 Library Clerk: Chris Farrand
 Ministry and Care Clerk: Steven Finger
 Nomination Convener: Chris Farrand
 Witness in the World Convener: Rob Loftis

Delaware Monthly Meeting	
Day and Time	Sunday 10:00 am September – May No meeting during summer months
Worship location	Andrews House 39 West Winter St. (corner of W. Winter and N. Franklin) Delaware, OH 43015
Mailing address	Delaware Monthly Meeting 175 Pennsylvania Ave. Delaware, OH 43015
Contact	Marianne Derr, 740-362-8921 maderr@owu.edu
Website	delawarefriendsmeeting.org
Date offices change	September
Officers	Acting Clerk: Marianne Derr Acting Recording Clerk: Carol Army Treasurer: Meredith Wolfe

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Detroit Monthly Meeting	
Day and Time	Sunday 10:30 am (online only)
Worship location	19309 Greenfield Rd. Detroit, MI 48235
Mailing address	Detroit Monthly Meeting 19309 Greenfield Rd. Detroit, MI 48235
Meeting email	detroitfriendsmeeting@gmail.com
Website	detroitfriendsmeeting.org
Date offices change	2 nd Sunday of March
Officers	Co-Clerks: Cristin Graham, Michael Kelly Recording Clerk: Maria Milletti Recorder: Maria Milletti Treasurer: Peter Dale Treasurer Assistant: Kevin Howley
Rep to LEYM	Erika Smith

Archivist: Maria Milletti

Newsletter Editor: [No one named]

Technology Working Group: Joel Ottenbreit

Outreach Committee Convener: Jacques Aharonian

Ad hoc Universal/Inclusive Design Working Group Convener:
Emily Obert

Anti-racist Working Group Convener: Charles Thompson

Auditor: Dave Goeddeke

Development Subcommittee Convener: Sharon Ottenbreit

Earth Care Clerk: Bernard Miller

Finance Clerk: Joel Ottenbreit

Library Clerk: Peter Dale

Meetinghouse Convener: Dave Goeddeke

Ministry & Counsel Clerk: Ellen Barnes

Nominating Committee Convener: Maria Milletti

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Peace & Social Action Co-Clerks: Carmen Kelly, Michael Kelly
 Quaker History & Theology Working Group Convener: Charles Thompson

Religious Education Convenor: Sharon Ottenbreit

Spiritual Enrichment Book Club Convener: Ellen Barnes

Representative to GPQM: Cristin Graham

Representatives to FWCC: Mike and Carmen Kelly

Representative to FGC: Chuck Thompson

Erie Worship Group <i>Under the care of Pittsburgh Monthly Meeting</i>	
Day and time	Some Sundays 10:30 am. Schedule and location vary; ask the Contacts (see below) to confirm.
Worship location	Varies week to week in attenders' homes
Contact	Linda Williams, 814-825-2030 desertplumpt9@aol.com OR Clémence Ravaçon-Mershon, 814-587-3479 andre14@earthlink.net
Website	leym.org/lista-z/#erie
Officers	Co-conveners: Clémence Ravaçon-Mershon and Linda Williams

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Grand Rapids Monthly Meeting	
Day and time	Sunday 10:30 am (hybrid)
Worship location	Browne Center, Aquinas College 2001 Robinson Road SE Grand Rapids, MI 49506
Mailing address	Grand Rapids Monthly Meeting PO Box 1274 Grand Rapids, MI 49501
Meeting email	clerk@grandrapidsfriends.org
Contact	Wayne Norlin, 616-292-8263 waynelnorlin@gmail.com
Website	GrandRapidsFriends.org
Date offices change	2 nd Sunday in July
Officers	Clerk: Patricia Pennell Assistant Clerk: Gerard Akkerhuis Recording Clerk: Wayne Norlin Treasurer: Walter Marston Archivist: Wayne Norlin
Rep to LEYM	Jana (Terry) Norlin

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Granville Monthly Meeting	
Day and time	Sunday 10:00 am
Worship location	<p>Center for Spiritual Life (Denison campus) 500 Chapel Dr. Granville, OH 43023</p> <p><i>Directions:</i> From the Denison campus entrance, follow Presidents' Drive, turn right at T-shaped intersection, continue <i>past</i> Chapel Dr. and take second right on East Loop. Park in the lot just beyond the Chapel, on the right. The Center is a white house on the east side of the parking lot.</p> <p>On 5th Sundays, at Otterbein Senior Living, 2158 Columbus Rd. Granville, OH 43023</p>
Mailing address	Granville Monthly Meeting PO Box 287 Granville, OH 43023
Contact	Jessica Rettig, 740-587-9847 rettig@denison.edu
Facebook	Search for "Granville Friends Meeting"
Website	https://granville.quakermeeting.org
Date offices change	July 1
Officers	Clerk: Jessica Rettig Recording Clerk: Jean Backs Treasurer: Patrick Hunkler Archivist: Mari McLean

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting	
Schedule	<i>Fall Gathering:</i> 3rd Saturday in September, usually at Michigan Friends Center, Chelsea (business) <i>Midwinter:</i> Often February, at a monthly meeting (worship, fellowship, singing, recreation) <i>Spring:</i> 3rd Saturday in May, Michigan Friends Center (business, worship, presentation followed by discussion) <i>Summer:</i> Sunday in August nearest to Hiroshima Day, Quaker Park, Battle Creek (worship and picnic)
Mailing address	Kevin Miller, Co-Clerk Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting 2115 Nature Cove Ct., Apt. 305A Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Contact	Kevin Miller, Co-Clerk kevinfmiller@gmail.com
Website	leym.org/green-pastures-quarterly
Date offices change	July 1
Officers	Acting Clerk: Kevin Miller (Ann Arbor) Recording Clerk: TBD Treasurer: Jeff Cooper

Resident Agent: Jeff Cooper

Finance Convener: John Williams

Nominating Clerk: TBD

Communications Coordinator: Peggy Daub

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Holland Monthly Meeting	
Day and time	1st, 3rd, and 5th Sunday 10:30 am
Worship location	Western Theological Seminary Prayer Chapel, Room 106, 101 E. 13th Street, Holland, MI 49423
Mailing address	Larry Dickie, Clerk Holland Monthly Meeting 6108 Old Allegan Road Saugatuck, MI 49453
Contact	Larry Dickie, 269-857-4694 (h); 616-566-7905 (c) lawrencedickie@gmail.com
Website	www.hollandquakers.org
Officers	Clerk: Larry Dickie Treasurer: Jane Beggs-Joles Web Master: Eric Sooy

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Indiana Worship Group <i>Under the care of Pittsburgh Monthly Meeting</i>	
Day and time	Sunday 10:30 am
Worship location	Indiana Theater, Room 402 637 Philadelphia St Indiana, PA 15701
Mailing address	Yolanda Broad, Convener Indiana Worship Group 215 N. 4 th Street Indiana, PA 15701
Contact	Yolanda and Peter Broad, 724-463-9827 Ybroad1326@earthlink.net OR Erik Stern Blank, 724-762-1084 Erik_Blank@yahoo.com
Website	quaker.org/legacy/indianapa/
Officers	Convener: Yolanda Broad Treasurer: Yolanda Broad

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Kalamazoo Monthly Meeting	
Day and time	Sunday 10:30 am (online and in-person) Religious Ed for adults, 9:30 Religious Ed for children and teens, 10:30 (school year only) Child care, 9:30 (also 10:30 during summer)
Worship location	Kalamazoo Friends Meeting 508 Denner St. Kalamazoo, MI 49006
Mailing address	<i>See above</i>
Phone at Meeting	269-349-1754
Contact	Cordelia Greer, 269-349-1754 CordeliaG@aol.com
Website	KalamazooQuakers.org
Date offices change	May 1
Officers	Co-clerks: Joseph Ossmann, Carol Meyer-Niedzwiecki Recording Clerk: Raelyn Joyce Treasurer: George Hebben
Reps to LEYM	Flo Friender, Valerie Groszmann

Newsletter Editor: Elizabeth Nagler
 Web Master: Rebecca Joyce
 Building & Grounds Clerk: Paula Allred
 Earthcare Clerk: Tom Small
 First Day School Clerk: Joseph Mills
 Library Clerk: Paula Allred
 Ministry & Worship Clerk: Kathleen Ossmann
 Nominating Clerk: Amy Vance
 Pastoral Care Clerk: Paula Branch
 Peace & Social Action Clerk: Valerie Groszmann
 Peace Park Clerk: Tacie Draznin

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Kent Monthly Meeting	
Day and time	Sunday 10:30 am
Worship location	United Christian Ministries Lounge 1435 E. Main St. Kent, OH 44240
Mailing Address	Barb Warrington, Clerk Kent Monthly Meeting 155 Sunset Dr. Hudson, OH 44236
Contact	Barb Warrington 330-342-3503 bjwarrington55@gmail.com OR Annette Dowling 330-297-0302 amfmdowling@gmail.com
Facebook	Kent Friends Meeting – Quakers
Date offices change	June 1
Officers	Clerk: Barb Warrington Recording Co-Clerks: Caroline Stilwell, Sarah McNulty Treasurer: Jim Tomko
Reps to LEYM	Margaret Liske Barb Warrington

Archivist: Barb Warrington

Earthcare Contact: Karl Liske

Finance Clerk: Dave Warrington

Ministry & Counsel Clerk: Annette Dowling

Peace & Social Action Contact: Nancy Warlop

Religious Education Contact: Annette Dowling

Mid-Ohio Valley Monthly Meeting	
Day and time	2nd and 4th Sunday 11 am (online and in-person)
Worship location	Office building of First Unitarian Universalist Society of Marietta (next to church) 232 Third St. (corner of Third and Putnam) Marietta, OH 45750
Contact	Chris Jacobs, 740-373-6045 jacobsc4@asme-member.org
Website	movquakers.org
Date offices change	1 st Sunday of May
Officers	Clerk: Chris Jacobs Treasurer: Jane Hearne Archivist: Chris Jacobs

North Columbus Monthly Meeting	
Day and time	Sunday 10:30 am (hybrid: online and in-person)
Worship location	North Broadway United Methodist Church 48 E N Broadway St. Columbus, OH 43214
Mailing address	North Columbus Monthly Meeting PO Box 141323 Columbus, OH 43214
Contact	Meeting Clerk NorthColumbusFriends@gmail.com 614-450-2368
Website	northcolumbusfriends.org

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Date offices change	January
Officers	Clerk: Rick Adams Assistant Clerk: Brian Edmiston Treasurer: Judy Hartman Recording Clerk: Sarah Reimer
Reps to LEYM	Barbara LeSage Bob Roehm

Archivist: Gail Thornburg
 Trustees: Pat Enciso, Sarah Reimer, Bob Roehm
 Recorders: Judy Hartman, Pat Enciso
 Statutory Agent: Tom Kangas
 Adult Education Clerk: Martha Maas
 Adult Young Friends Clerk: Marin Waltz
 Archives Clerk: Gail Thornburg
 Audit: Cicily Sweet, Chris Wells
 Finance Clerk: Tom Kangas
 First Day School Clerk: Brian Edmiston
 Harassment Response Clerk ex officio: Brian Edmiston
 House Committee: Tom Kangas
 Library Clerk: Gail Thornburg
 Ministry & Nurture Clerk: Brian Edmiston
 Nominating Clerk: Tom Kangas
 Outreach and Inreach Clerk: Brian Edmiston
 Fellowship Hour: Penny Stow Herd
 IT Manager: Sean McGovern
 Seeking Quakers: Brian Edmiston
 Social Media Coordinators: Cara Fassino, Brittany Koresch
 Weekly Digest: Brittany Koresch
 Peace and Social Action Clerk: Pat Enciso
 Child Caregiver: Mica Edmiston
 Designated to solemnize weddings: Don Buckingham, Bradley Clymer, Susan Towner-Larsen

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Mentoring Clerks: Bradley Clymer, Judy Hartman, Tom Kangas,
 Susan Towner-Larsen
 Piano: Bob Roehm, Robin Sommerlad
 Rep to AFSC: tbd
 Rep to FCNL: Bob Roehm
 Rep to Neighborhood Services: Barbara LeSage
 Rep to OSU Interfaith Council: Bob Roehm
 Rep to St. Sophia Syriac Orthodox Cathedral: tbd
 Rep to Theta Tau: Bradley Clymer

Oberlin Monthly Meeting	
Day and time	Sunday 10:30 am (hybrid online and in-person)
Worship location	Kendal at Oberlin, Education Center 600 Kendal Drive (north end of Pleasant Street) Oberlin, OH 44074
Mailing address	Oberlin Monthly Meeting PO Box 444 Oberlin, OH 44074
Contact	Elizabeth Hole, 304-704-1729 eliz.hole@gmail.com
Date offices change	July 1
Officers	Clerk: Elizabeth Hole Recording Clerk: Chuck Kelly Treasurer: Taylor Allen Membership Recorder: Elizabeth Hole
Rep to LEYM	David Finke, Nancy Finke, Lyn Cope

Activities Clerk: Brian Hedges
 Ministry & Nurture Clerk: Elizabeth Hole
 Peace Building & Justice Clerk: David Finke

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Pine River Worship Group <i>Under the care of Red Cedar Monthly Meeting</i>	
Day and time	We try to meet on 1st and 3rd Sunday, 10:30 am
Worship location	Wesley Foundation 1400 South Washington Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858 <i>If attending for the first time or unsure if Meeting is to be held, please call the contact below. Let us know if you need child care.</i>
Mailing address	Pine River Worship Group 615 E. Wisconsin Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858
Contact	Laura Gourlay, 989-621-6986 lauragourlay@hotmail.com
Officers	Convener: Laura Gourlay

Pittsburgh Monthly Meeting	
Day and time	Sunday 9:00 am (in-person); 10:30 am (hybrid; children's program or child care available)
Worship location	Pittsburgh Friends Meeting 4836 Ellsworth Ave. Pittsburgh, PA 15213
Mailing address	<i>See above</i>
Contact	Phone at meeting 412-683-2669 pfmclerks@gmail.com or on Facebook: Pittsburgh Friends Meeting (Quakers/Religious Society of Friends)
Website	pittsburghquakers.org
Date offices change	2nd Sunday of May

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Officers	Co-Clerks: Elise Yoder, Alexa Lake Assistant Clerk: Ali-Asghar Aghbar Recording Clerk: Jim Morgan Treasurer: Darryl Phillips Assistant Treasurer: George Bradley
Reps to LEYM	Susan Loucks Claire Cohen

Childcare Clerk: Jo Schlesinger
 Clearness & Care Clerks: George Bradley, Joe Marchesani
 Communications Clerk: Mary King
 Fall Gathering Clerks: Asghar Aghbar, Regina McGowan
 Finance Clerk: Robert Bowman-Labbie
 First Day School Clerk: TBD
 Funeral Committee Clerk: Wanda Guthrie
 Hospitality Committee Clerk: Asghar Aghbar
 House Committee Clerk: Brian MacWhinney
 Library Committee Clerk: Pat May
 Ministry Committee Clerk: Geoff Hilsabeck, Susan Loucks
 Nominating Committee Clerk: Barry Beal, Jim Morgan
 Outreach Committee Clerk: Laura Cathey-Lubinski, Regina McGowan
 Peace & Social Concerns Clerk: Alexandra Neumann, Ryan Reagan
 Personnel & Building Use Clerk: Nick Coles, Gina Godfrey
 Quaker Community Fund Clerk: Emily Anderson

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Red Cedar Monthly Meeting	
Day and time	Sunday 9:00 am (no child care, in-person only) Sunday 10:30 am (with First Day School, hybrid) Weekend Cafe, Saturday and Sunday, 5:00 pm (online only)
Worship location	Red Cedar Monthly Meeting 1400 Turner St. Lansing, MI 48906
Mailing address	<i>See above</i>
Contact	Phone at Meeting: 517-371-1047 Email for Meeting: jabell8@juno.com
Website	redcedarfriends.org (email also received through a form on this website)
Date offices change	June 1
Officers	Clerk: Jack Smith Recording Clerk: Mae Wilson Treasurer: Susan Waltz
Reps to LEYM	Carolyn Lejuste Brad Shaw

Archivist: Yvonne LeFave

Publications Editor: Ann Blumer

Listserv Manager: Julia Bell

Rep to GPQM: [No one named]

Adult Religious Education Reporter: Vicki Hoelzer-Maddox

Building & Grounds Clerk: Jeanne Donado

Building Rentals: Kathy Booth, Joann Neuroth

Directory: Becky Payne

Finance Clerk: Susan Waltz

Hospitality Clerk: Jim Bloomfield

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Landscaping Working Group: Susan Waltz
Membership & Outreach Clerk: Becky Payne
Newsletter Editor: Ann Blumer
Nominating Clerk: Carolyn Lejuste
Pastoral Care Clerk: Thoralf Hoelzer
Peace & Social Justice Convener: Erick Williams
Religious Education Clerk: Lynette Biery
Worship & Ministry Clerk: Jane Bush

Somerset Worship Group <i>Under the care of Pittsburgh Monthly Meeting</i>	
Day and time	Sunday 10:00 am
Worship location	331 Trolls Lake Road Somerset, PA 15501 <i>Call or email to confirm location of worship</i>
Mailing address	c/o Carol Famariss 331 Trolls Lake Rd Somerset, PA 15501
Contact	Carol Famariss, 814-443-3010 OR Brenda Benner, blbenner66@hotmail.com
Officers	Co-Conveners: Brenda Benner, Carol Famariss

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Toledo Worship Group <i>Part of Broadmead Monthly Meeting</i>	
Day and time	Sunday 10:00 am (online and in-person). On first and third Sunday, joined online by the Bluffton Worship Group
Worship location	The Victory Center 3166 N. Republic Blvd Toledo, OH 43615
Mailing address	1532 Bernath Pkwy Toledo, OH 43615
Contact	Mary Igoe Meyers, 419-867-9727 migoemeyers@gmail.com
Website	broadmeadfriends.org

Tustin Worship Group <i>Under the care of Grand Rapids Monthly Meeting</i>	
Day and time	Wednesday 7:00 pm
Worship location	Will vary; please call for location.
Mailing address	Mitzi Ruswick, Convener Tustin Worship Group 17617 20 Mile Road Tustin, MI 49688-8513
Contact	Mitzi Ruswick, 231-829-3440 OR Betsy Erickson, 231-829-3328
Officers	Convener: Mitzi Ruswick

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Waysmeet Worship Group	
Day and Time	Sunday 10:30 am Thursday 2:15 pm (social time 2:00 – 2:15)
Location	Friends in Columbus, OH, area, online only
Mailing address	Paula Deming, Convener Waysmeet Worship Group 6775 W. Alloway Street Worthington, OH 43085
Contact	Paula Deming, 614-846-7459 pdeming3506@wowway.com
Officers	Convener: Paula Deming Zoom Host: Sylvia Thomas

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Wooster Monthly Meeting	
Day and time	Sunday 10:30 am 1 st Sunday online (Small Footprint Sunday)
Worship location	The Meeting Place Westminster Church House College of Wooster 353 E. Pine St. Wooster, OH 44691
Mailing address	Wooster Monthly Meeting 353 E. Pine St. Wooster, OH 44691
Contact	Cathy Quinn, 330-241-2713 cquinn7@outlook.com
Website	woosterfriends.org
Date offices change	January 1
Officers	Clerk: James Gentry Corresponding Clerk: Dottie Stratton Recording Clerk: James Gentry Treasurer: Catherine Quinn

Web Master: Shaun McFee

Finance and Location Contact: Mike Hinshaw

Outreach Contact: Joyce Balderston

Program Contact: Dottie Stratton

LEYM Officers, Committee Members, & Representatives

Nominating Committee Report Final Slate, June 16, 2024

Officers

<u>Role</u>	<u>Name & Meeting</u>	<u>Year of Service</u>	<u>End Year</u>
Presiding Clerk <i>ExC</i>	Joe Mills, Kalamazoo	1	2025
Assistant Clerk <i>ExC</i>	Jack Smith, Red Cedar	1	2028
Recording Clerk <i>ExC</i>	Peggy Daub, Ann Arbor	2	2026
Treasurer <i>ExC</i>	Tom Kangas, North Columbus	6	2025

Communications and Other Workers

Bulletin Editor	Christopher Farrand, Cleveland Approved by ExC, Sept. 18	2	2025
Annual Records Editor (appointed by Publications & Archives)			
	Elise Yoder, Pittsburgh	4	2024 (thru Oct)
Meeting Workers (contracted by presiding clerk)			
Database Manager	Susan Loucks, Pittsburgh*	1	2025
Digital Comms Facilitator			
	Bill Warters, Birmingham	6	2025
Bookstore	Valerie Groszmann, Kalamazoo	21	2025
* Contracted by presiding clerk after Annual Sessions			

Committees (3-year terms unless otherwise noted)

Advancement & Outreach			
Suggested # of Members: 6			
Susan Hartman, Ann Arbor, Co-Clerk <i>ExC</i>		2	2026
Barbara LeSage, North Columbus, Co-Clerk <i>ExC</i>		2	2026
Stephanie Charlot, Red Cedar		2	2026
Mary Igoe Meyers, Broadmead		2	2026
Susan Loucks, Pittsburgh		1	2027
Valerie Groszmann, Kalamazoo		1	2027

Earthcare. This committee is dormant. No nominations were made.

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Finance		
# of Members: 7		
Joann Neuroth, Red Cedar, Clerk <i>ExC</i>	7	2027
Ellen Barnes, Birmingham	4	2027
Aran Reinhart, Broadmead	3	2025
Treasurer serves <i>ex officio</i> .		

Ministry & Nurture		
Suggested # of Members: 6 + 1 rep. from each monthly meeting		
Flo Friender, Kalamazoo, Co-Clerk* <i>ExC</i>	3	2025
Ellerie Brownfain, Birmingham	3	2025
Kathleen Helbling, Broadmead	1	2027
Christopher Farrand, Cleveland *	1	2027
Dennis Gregg, Ann Arbor *	1	2026
OPEN (1)		
(and other representatives as appointed by Monthly Meetings)		
* Approved by Executive Committee after Annual Sessions		

Nominating		
Suggested # of Members: 6; appointed by YM through Naming Committee; Years of Term: 3		
Stephanie Charlot, Red Cedar, Co-Clerk <i>ExC</i> *	3	2025
Mike Hinshaw, Wooster	2	2026
Clémence Ravaçon-Mershon, Erie WG, Co-Clerk <i>ExC</i> *	1	2027
Mary Igoe Meyers, Broadmead	1	2027
OPEN (2)		
* Selected as co-clerk by Naming Committee and the three clerks		

Peace & Justice		
Suggested # of Members: 6		
Claire Cohen, Pittsburgh, Clerk <i>ExC</i>	1	2027
Don Buckingham, North Columbus	1	2027
Paul Hebling, Broadmead	1	2027

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Publications & Archives		
Suggested # of Members: 4		
Jeff Cooper, Ann Arbor, Clerk <i>ExC</i>	2	2026
Peggy Daub, Ann Arbor	6	2025
Bob Roehm, North Columbus	8	2027
Rosemary Coffey, Pittsburgh	6	2025
Bulletin Editor serves <i>ex officio</i> .		

Note: The Annual Meeting Planning Committee consists of the following three committees

Adult & Family Program		
Suggested # of Members: 6		
Clémence Ravaçon-Mershon, Erie WG, Clerk <i>ExC</i>	3	2025
Greg Mott, Broadmead	3	2025
Valerie Groszmann, Kalamazoo	2	2026
Ellerie Brownfain, Birmingham	1	2026
Wink Coventree, Birmingham	1	2027
OPEN (1)		

Arrangements & Site		
Suggested # of Members: 6		
Carolyn Lejuste, Red Cedar, Clerk <i>ExC</i>	2	2026
Bill Warters, Birmingham	6	2027
Mike Hinshaw, Wooster	3	2025
Sally Weaver Sommer, Broadmead	9	2025
Janet Dando, Akron	2	2026
Jon Summer, Broadmead	21	2026
Registrar (selected by committee): Sally Weaver Sommer, Broadmead		

Youth & Children Program		
Suggested # of Members: 12-16; Years of Term: 2 (Clerk only)		
Diane Mott, Broadmead, Clerk <i>ExC</i>	2	2025
Erika Smith, Detroit, Asst. Clerk	3	2025
Ellerie Brownfain, Birmingham		
Jonah Brownfain, Birmingham		
Cathy Clifford, Red Cedar		
Cristin Graham, Detroit		
Greg Mott, Broadmead		
Su Penn, Red Cedar		
Carla Pratt-Harrington, Athens		
Owen Pritchard, Broadmead		

CONTACTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Representatives to Other Quaker Organizations

AFSC Corporation		
Bill Warters, Birmingham	7	2025
Paul Helbling, Broadmead	6	2025
Kathleen Helbling, Broadmead	6	2025
Chelsea Middlemiss, Red Cedar	1	2027

FCNL General Committee (3-year terms, limited to two consecutive terms)		
John Deikis, Ann Arbor	5	2026
John Howell, Athens	9	2025
Wink Covintree, Birmingham	2	2026
Michael Fuson, Granville	2	2026

FGC Central Committee (3-year terms, limited to two consecutive terms)		
(LEYM Reps appoint Rep to FGC Executive Committee)		
Ellerie Brownfain, Birmingham	3	2025
Brad Shaw, Red Cedar	3	2025
Rick Adams, North Columbus	2	2026

FWCC (3-year terms)		
Ellerie Brownfain, Birmingham	4	2027
Clémence Ravaçon-Mershon, Erie WG	4	2027
Jana Norlin, Grand Rapids	1	2027
Mike Hinshaw, Wooster	1	2027

FLGBTQC		
Nancy Reeves, Cleveland	10	2025

Olney Friends School		
Ellerie Brownfain, Birmingham	6	2025

Quaker Earthcare Witness		
Richard Tucker, Ann Arbor	3	2025

Friends Peace Teams		
Don Buckingham, North Columbus	2	2026