



Clerk’s Message from Jack Smith

What We Offer Our Communities

Spring is a season of expectancy and promise. Spring calls us to trust, that harsh, winter-like days will soon be supplanted by gentler, warmer hours that summon natural beauty. But we do need to step away from our routines to see the new life that is emerging.

Relative to our values and our hopes for living in the Light, we have experienced a lot of winter in recent months – measured in more ways than total snowfall and the average temperature. Just when we think that the direction of our country could not become more problematic, it does. In the face of this prolonged winter, despair and resignation have become readily-available emotions.

But Friends, these difficult times present us with an important challenge and spiritual opportunity: Many of our neighbors are hoping for and often searching for a sense of Spirit and a nurturing human community that is

*“The Humble, Meek, Merciful, Just, Pious and Devout Souls, are everywhere of one Religion; and when Death has taken off the Mask, they will know one another, tho’ the different Liveries they wear have made them Strangers.”*  
William Penn, *Some Fruits of Solitude*

respectful, inspired, and welcoming. They are there—at hand, coping with their own despair and hungering for some spiritual community to counteract it. Our challenge is to find them and reveal why Quakers carry on as we do.

I urge us all to take seriously what our seeking of Spirit and our communal and business practices have to offer our neighbors, who are either actively seeking or simply aware of their spiri-



tual hunger. How (and where) can we communicate what draws us to worship and what enriches us in it? What words are both accessible and true? How do we welcome seekers when we meet them face-to-face? How do we describe what is present in the apparent emptiness of (mostly) silent worship? Of course these are not simple matters. But we can address them from a place of some confidence – that Quaker Meetings offer many a safe place to stand, to recognize and nurture our measures of the Light, and to see what Love can do in our communities when we act from a sense of unity.

*In This Issue*

- “Exploring the ‘Secret Power’ Among Us” Spiritual Formation Workshop, 2
- Invitation to 2026 Annual Meeting, 3
- Annual Meeting Schedule, 4
- Workshop Offerings, 5
- Ministry & Nurture, 7
- Annual Meeting Registration, 8
- Responses to Annual Query, 10
- Fall Spiritual Retreat, 11
- FGC’s New Governance, 11

# “Exploring the ‘Secret Power’ Among Us”

## Spiritual Formation Workshop, May 3, with Michael Wajda

All LEYM Friends are invited to a workshop with Michael Wajda titled "Exploring the 'Secret Power' Among Us" to take place on **May 3** from 1:30 to 4:00 at **Detroit Friends Meeting House** (19309 Greenfield Rd. Detroit, MI). The workshop, sponsored by LEYM's spiritual formation program, will explore what Robert Barclay named the “secret power” among us. Friends then, and Friends today, have had many names for this Inward Light and many experience it quite differently, if at all. During this two-hour workshop we will explore this power individually and together. How does it show up in our individual and corporate experiences? What difference does it make in our lives? How might we broaden and deepen our experiences and commitment to this Inward Teacher?

### Spiritual Deepening and Vital Community Video

The video recording of the February 26 panel discussion titled *Spiritual Deepening and Vital Community: A Two-Way Street* is now available on the LEYM.org website and through the LEYM YouTube channel at <https://leym.org/spiritual-deepening-event/>. Join panelists from Broadmead, Red Cedar, and Athens Meetings for a presentation on their experiences of the joys and challenges of deepening spirituality and building community in their Meetings and reflections from participants on their experiences in other Monthly Meetings.

### Scholarships Available!

LEYM Finance Committee has moved the deadline for scholarship applications to **May 1, 2026**. Young Friends choosing colleges/universities in the FRIENDS ASSOCIATION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION or participating in a post-secondary internship/fellowship for a Quaker organization are eligible to apply. Please see a full description in LEYM’s Policies and Procedures manual available at [leym.org](http://leym.org) using the search bar.

*“Not by strength of arguments, or by a particular disquisition of each doctrine, and convincement of my understanding thereby, came [I] to receive and bear witness of the truth, but by being secretly reached by this life; for when I came into the silent assemblies of God’s people, I felt a secret power among them, which touched my heart, and as I gave way unto it, I found the evil weakening in me, and the good raised up, and so I became thus knit and united unto them.”*

– Robert Barclay, 1676

**Michael Wajda** is a member of Goshen Friends Meeting (Philadelphia YM) who is currently sojourning at Putney, VT Friends Meeting (New England YM). He is an active Friend who has traveled widely among Friends, leading retreats, giving talks, and helping to strengthen the spiritual life of meetings and Friends. Michael delivered the 2006 plenary address at LEYM, which has been published as a Pendle Hill Pamphlet titled, *Expectant Listening: Finding God’s Thread of Guidance*. Currently, Michael and another Friend in New England Yearly Meeting have begun to convene full days of extended worship around the Yearly Meeting.

### Lake Erie Yearly Meeting Contacts

**Presiding Clerk**

Jack Smith  
202 E. Riverside St.  
Williamston, MI 48895  
(517) 914-3927  
leymclerk@gmail.com

**Database Manager**

Susan Loucks  
susan@sloucks.net

**Digital Communications Facilitator**

Bill Wartens  
18746 Old Homestead Dr.  
Harpers Wood, MI 48225  
(313) 648-8626  
leymworker@gmail.com

**Assistant Clerk**

*Executive Committee for 2025-2026*

**Recording Clerk**

Peggy Daub  
1506 Arborview Blvd.  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103  
(734) 668-8063  
peggydaub@hotmail.com

**Bulletin Editor**

Christopher Farrand  
110 E. 291<sup>st</sup> St.  
Willowick, OH 44095  
bulletinleym@gmail.com

**Treasurer**

Tom Kangas  
3641 Weston Place  
Columbus, OH 43214  
(614) 598-2269  
LEYMtreasurer@gmail.com

**Lake Erie Yearly Meeting**

c/o Office Manager  
Ann Arbor Friends Meeting  
1420 Hill Street,  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104  
(734) 761-7435  
leym.org

# 2026 Annual Meeting

## “Finding Hope, Joy and Courage in Community”

June 18-21 at Ashland University - [leym.org/annual](http://leym.org/annual)

You're Invited to the LEYM 2026 Annual Meeting! Lake Erie Friends will be returning to Ashland, Ohio for our summer gathering and we'd love to have you join us. Our children and youth program is eager to welcome and support families wishing to attend. This year's theme – “Finding Hope, Joy and Courage in Community” – feels especially timely as we seek the renewal and resilience that come from being gathered as Friends. We look forward to a rich selection of workshops, worship, and shared time together. Registration will be fully online (see details in this issue), opening on April 6<sup>th</sup>, closing on June 10<sup>th</sup>.

### Plenary to Feature Joe Volk

The Friday evening plenary session on our theme will feature Joe Volk, a distinguished Friend (and member of Ann Arbor Friends Meeting) with decades of

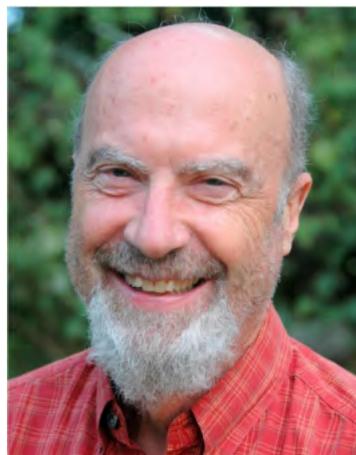


service in Quaker peace and justice work. Joe served as Executive Secretary of the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) from 1990 to 2011, and prior to that spent 18 years with the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), including eight years as its National Secretary

for Peace Education. He currently serves on FCNL's General Committee, the Corporation Committees of both AFSC and Haverford College, and as a trustee of Wilmington College here in Ohio. With a lifetime devoted to building the kind of principled, Spirit-led community that makes peace work possible, Joe is a natural and inspiring voice for our theme of “Finding Hope, Joy and Courage in Community.”

### Bible Study to Continue with Douglas Gwyn

Returning this year, Doug Gwyn will again lead our Bible Study sessions. A retired Friends/Quaker minister and former scholar in residence at Pendle Hill, Doug brings deep experience in pastoral ministry, peace education, teaching, and research-based writing and theology. You can explore his many publications at [douglasgwyn.life](http://douglasgwyn.life).



### A Full Children and Youth Program

The Youth and Children Committee is excitedly planning for another fun and meaningful Youth Program at the LEYM Annual Meeting. We welcome young Friends from infant through high school, with age-appropriate activities and outings designed to promote cooperative play, peaceful living, mindful care of the Earth, and artistic creativity. We hope to see new faces alongside familiar ones this June! Children under the age of 3 eat free, with a 40% food discount for those under 13. Adult attenders are also welcome to bring grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. For details about the Youth and Children program, please reach out to Diane Mott, Clerk, at [mottfam45@gmail.com](mailto:mottfam45@gmail.com).

### Online Access via Zoom

Online access to events will be limited. Friends wishing to remotely attend the Friday evening Plenary and various business sessions can register for Zoom access information at the Annual Meeting [webpage](#).

### Consider a Simple Meal at Saturday Lunch

LEYM Site and Arrangements Committee has arranged to offer an alternative lunch on Saturday as a Simple Meal. This is an opportunity for Friends to

consider the wealth of food opportunities available to many of us in this country.

Those who chose to share a simple meal will have a plate of beans and rice and choose from the salad bar no more than 3 items. We will eat at identified tables where queries will be posted to guide the conversation. If you are interested in participating be sure to check the “Simple Meal” option for Saturday lunch.

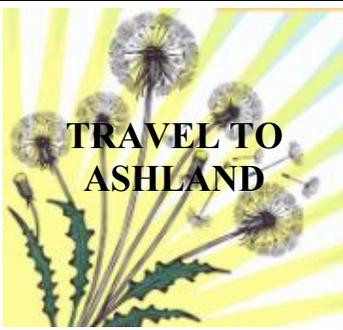
### Schedule of Activities

The schedule below provides a high-level overview of the many events our Annual Meeting features, including worship and business sessions, worship sharing, Bible Study, workshops, lunch-time table discussions, informal birds-of-a-feather social time, bookstore and information table browsing, and night owl movies. Something for everyone. Visit [leym.org/annual](http://leym.org/annual) to learn more. Please spread the word, bring a friend or family member, and get registered before the May 16<sup>th</sup> earlybird deadline to secure the best rate.

**Preliminary  
Schedule in Broad  
Strokes  
(adjustments may  
be made)**



**Registration  
Opens  
April 6**

Thursday, June 18	Friday, June 19	Saturday, June 20	Sunday, June 21
 <p><b>TRAVEL TO ASHLAND</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Early Worship</li> <li>● BREAKFAST</li> <li>● Worship Sharing</li> <li>● Bible Study</li> <li>● Ashland Center for Nonviolence Open House</li> <li>● MFW w Attention to Business</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Early Worship</li> <li>● BREAKFAST</li> <li>● Worship Sharing</li> <li>● Bible Study</li> <li>● Workshops Session 2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Early Worship</li> <li>● BREAKFAST</li> <li>● MFW w Attention to Business</li> <li>● Epistle Sharing</li> <li>● Meeting for Worship &amp; Closing</li> </ul>
Onsite Check-in Opens at 12:00	LUNCH (w Newcomer Welcome Table)	LUNCH (w Topic Groups)	LUNCH
Executive Committee Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● MFW w Attention to Business</li> <li>● Workshops Session 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● MFW w Attention to Business</li> <li>● Workshops Session 3</li> </ul>	Executive Committee Follow-up Meeting
DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Newcomer Orientation</li> <li>● Informal Birds of a Feather Time</li> <li>● Welcome and Roll Call Session</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Informal Birds of a Feather Time</li> <li>● Bookstore Browsing</li> <li>● Plenary Session with Joe Volk</li> <li>● Night Owl Movies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Bookstore Checkout</li> <li>● Informal discussion on clerking</li> <li>● Evening Celebration w world dance</li> <li>● Night Owl Movies</li> </ul>	

# LEYM 2026 Workshop Offerings

## **Friendly Persuasion in an Election Year** Justin Hurdle, FCNL staff

The Friends Committee on National Legislation is a national, non-partisan, Quaker advocacy organization that lobbies Congress and the executive branch to advance peace, justice, and environmental stewardship. As we move closer to another consequential election in November, Friends have a role to play. One way to participate meaningfully in the democratic process is by effectively engaging candidates running for office. This workshop will provide tangible strategies centering Friends' strengths of listening and engaging all candidates with curiosity so that individual Friends, groups, and Meetings can make their voices heard, uplift policy priorities, build relationships, and hold elected leaders accountable. It will also open space for shared learning and brainstorming among attendees, leaning into the fundamental notion that within community we find strength.

## **Body and Soul in Balance**

Thomas Taylor (Ann Arbor Friends Meeting)

Using some of the simpler moves in Tai Chi, we open and balance body and spirit. We free the joints to stretch the tendons and muscles. We give gratitude to our physical selves, asking how they would like to move so as not to fall. We'll learn alternatives to sitting, proprioceptive sensibilities, and practice worshipful movement.

**Pittsburgh Quakers Help Revitalize the Anti-War Movement in the Local Community through Neighborism, Resistance and Resilience** Claire Cohen, Wanda Guthrie, Joe Guthrie, Beth Schongar, Michael James, and Ryan Reagan - all members of the Peace and Social Concerns Committee of Pittsburgh MM.

This workshop will describe how the Pittsburgh MM Peace and Social Concerns Committee has been playing a vital role in revitalizing the local Anti-War

Movement in Pittsburgh by bringing together other local faith groups and peace and justice groups. By describing what we have been doing, giving an analysis of what has worked and what has not, we hope to be an example and inspiration for other Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups in LEYM since we believe that, in this time of war and violence perpetrated by our own government, Quakers can and should play a vital and formative role in helping to rebuild and revitalize the much-needed Anti-War Movement in this country.

## **Take an Art Break**

Wink Covintree (Birmingham Friends Meeting)

Renew your spirit with some time to relax and learn a few Zentangle-type patterns. We'll collect ourselves during a short silence, followed by some easy stretching. I will teach a few patterns as well as provide handouts for those and others. I'll bring small cards (one-sided card stock of various sizes and colors.) One side of most cards will have the words from our theme lightly outlined in block letters – JOY – HOPE – COURAGE – COMMUNITY. Participants can add patterns to the cards. I'll bring Micron pens, pencils and other supplies. Feel free to bring your own art materials. I should have enough basic tools for everyone.

## **Conflicts within Meetings - A framework for discernment and resolution**

Dennis Gregg (Ann Arbor Friends Meeting). Others may be added.

The workshop will provide a framework for thinking about the different kinds of conflicts that can arise between individuals, or groups, within a meeting. The workshop will begin with the presentation of a framework that describes the different kinds of conflicts that can arise and the underlying cause(s). We will discuss in the workshop whether this framework is complete and add to it if necessary. We will then "test" the framework by asking participants to describe conflicts they have observed in their meeting (without giving particular names) and

suggest where that conflict fits in the framework. We will then, using a series of queries with small groups, examine practices that can help resolve conflicts, particularly those which are not long-standing. The final portion of the workshop will be about how to transform conflicts rooted in personal animosities, clashes in values, or opposing long-term spiritual beliefs into openings for spiritual discernment. Once again, small groups will examine their experiences and share with the larger group.



### **Taking Courageous Action for Palestine with AFSC**

Zoe Jannuzi (AFSC Palestine Activism Program Coordinator) and Erika Gable (AFSC Director of Leadership Gifts)

Come learn about the American Friends Service Committee’s humanitarian work in Gaza and our advocacy and activism for Palestine here in the United States! Zoe Jannuzi, Palestine Activism Program Coordinator, and Erika Gable, Director of Leadership Gifts, will present. They will share opportunities to take courageous action for peace and justice, focusing on a new downloadable exhibit, “Why We Record: Defying Fragmentation and Erasure in Palestine” and the Apartheid-Free Communities network. Participants will leave with a better understanding of both current realities in Gaza

as well as AFSC programming on Palestine and feel confident taking next steps in community.

### **Quaker Makers Meet the Future**

Bill Warters (Birmingham Friends Meeting)

Where spiritual leadings meet innovation! Explore how 3D printing and current AI tools can spark new ideas while preserving Quaker values of community, simplicity, and service. We’ll use artificial intelligence as a creative brainstorming partner, watch a live 3D printing demonstration, and dive into hands-on collaborative crafts. Share how your own maker practice—whether high-tech or handmade—connects to your spiritual life. All experience levels welcome. Bring your curiosity and creativity!

### **Finding Joy, Hope, and Courage in Radical Resistance**

Joe Volk, FCNL Executive Secretary Emeritus, Member Ann Arbor MM, attended Kendal MM

We’ll engage in a conversation about our experiences of Speaking Truth to Power, of Exercising the Power of Love, and of Relying on the Force of Truth — from organized public Nonviolent Direct Actions to quiet individual Acts of Neighborly Kindness and everything in between. We’ll share how we have experienced Joy, Hope, and Courage in troubled times and places, both at home and abroad. We’ll look forward to what and how we may be called to witness for the rule of law during this period of authoritarian rule.

### **The Quaker Journey with Godly Play and the Development of Faith & Play**

Ann Pettigrew Nunes, a Trustee of Faith & Play Stories, attends Cincinnati Friends Meeting and is a member of Wilton Quaker Meeting, (Wilton, CT).

Godly Play and Faith & Play are storytelling programs which enable people of all ages to explore and experience the power of the Divine together. Godly Play and Faith & Play stories use Montessori-style materials to tell sacred stories, the parables of Jesus, and Quaker stories of faith, practice and

witness. This workshop will provide an introduction to the storytelling program as well as sharing an example of a Faith & Play story, with time for discussion and sharing of ideas about using these stories as a tool for intergenerational worship as well as in First Day/Children's Meeting programming.

## Money - The Spiritual is not separate from the Practical

Traci Hjelt Sullivan, Executive Director of Right Sharing of World Resources

When you think about the practical realities of money in your life, what feelings or images come up? Do those same things surface when you reflect on how Spirit shapes your relationship with money? In this Right Sharing of World Resources workshop, we'll explore where these experiences overlap and

where they differ, through guided conversation about how we use money and the spiritual traditions and writings that inform our lives.

## Paper Weaving

Beth Volk, attendee at meeting at Kendal in Kennett Square, PA

Make paper weavings to decorate a notecard you plan to send your legislators, your grandchildren, or your grandparent. They're creative, colorful and satisfying to make. No previous experience required... but, if you plan to attend, you will need to bring your own scissors. (Tweezers are optional, but very helpful to also bring along!) The leader provides a variety of paper, samples of weavings, and notecards – as well as advice and inspiration. Ages 6-100 with finger dexterity a requisite.

## Ministry & Nurture Committee Offerings at Annual Meeting

The Lake Erie Yearly Meeting committee on Ministry and Nurture will sponsor two events at the Annual Sessions this June.

First, a workshop on the varieties of **conflicts** which can arise in Meetings, with a framework for understanding them. (See description on Page 5).

Secondly, a conversation Saturday evening, after dinner, about the **role of clerks** in Quaker organizations. This is intended as an informal conversation about clerking, not as training in how to clerk. It is meant for all Meeting members, whether or not you may have previously served as a committee or Meeting clerk. We hope to demystify what the clerk does and to encourage people who might undertake such a role in their Meeting.

Both topics, Conflict and Clerking, have arisen during the quarterly zoom 'Chats' which the Yearly Meeting committee on Ministry and Nurture has hosted during the past year for the clerks of Monthly Meetings and local committees on Ministry and Nurture.

## Meeting Videos Wanted

**Please submit your videos by May 25!**

Reminder to Monthly Meetings – Last year we posted jigsaw puzzle pieces from Monthly Meetings at the Annual Meeting. The Advancement and Outreach Committee is hoping this year to inspire similar fascination with a different medium, and are requesting one- to two-minute videos from each willing LEYM Monthly Meeting and Worship Group to give us an virtual introduction to you that we can display for everyone this summer.

Will it include a rousing hello from the kitchen while preparing for a potluck, a glimpse of that deer that hangs out in the landscaping, the kids making pinwheels? (Maybe the kids want to be in charge of this project!) Don't overthink it and send your footage (or questions) to [SusanDHartman@gmail.com](mailto:SusanDHartman@gmail.com) by May 25, 2026.

If the thought of shooting video makes you shudder, we welcome your 'virtual introduction' with some still shots, too!

# LEYM 2026 Annual Meeting Registration

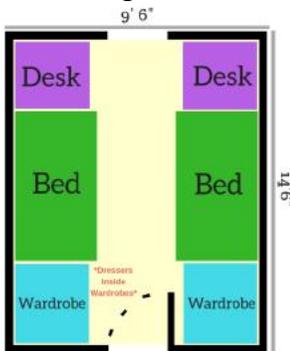
Visit <https://leym.org/annual> to get started.

Our online registration form provides a simple way for you to indicate your needs. It will calculate your final fee with any discounts and allow you to pay online via credit card. We will also accept payment by check or cash when you arrive, or after registration via our Friends Fiduciary donation form. Once registered, you will receive an email acknowledgment with your details.

**Registration:** Registration opens on April 6<sup>th</sup>. There will be no paper registration. If you are uncomfortable working online, please contact registrar Jayson Smith, who will help you fill out the information. His email address is [jaysonsmith5@gmail.com](mailto:jaysonsmith5@gmail.com) and his phone number is 248-952-1730. Please address other questions (large or small) to Sally Weaver Sommer. Her phone number is 419-953-9455 and her email address is [sallyweaversommer@gmail.com](mailto:sallyweaversommer@gmail.com).

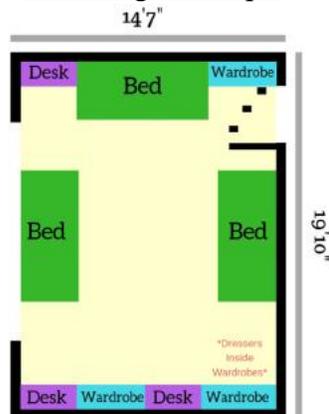
**On-campus lodging:** At Ashland, housing fees are per room rather than per individual. **Clark Hall** is a **non-air-conditioned** building new to us this year, about a five-minute walk from the Convocation Center where most of the action is. Fees are \$40 per night for a double room with un-bunked beds and \$45 per night for a triple room with un-bunked beds (a limited option reserved for families.) Beds

Clark Regular Double



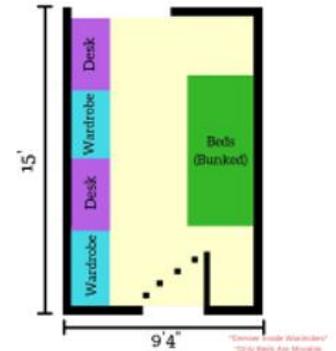
are higher off the ground than standard beds. We suggest you bring a step stool, if the height may be a problem for you, as well as a fan and a reading light and a power-bar/extension cord.

Clark Regular Triple



**Clayton Hall** is **air-conditioned** and also a five-minute walk from the Convocation Center. The fees are \$55 per night for a double room. Each room has two beds, bunked. Spare mattresses are not available, but sleeping on the floor is permitted. We suggest you bring a step stool, if the height may be a problem for you, as well as a reading light and a power-bar/extension cord. Each room has its own thermostat controls, but if the rooms above or below you in the same zone apply significantly different settings, results can be unpredictable.

Clayton Regular Double



Air Conditioned

**Additional Registrants:** During this registration process you can add additional registrants who may be sharing your room by selecting "add registrant" near the end of this form. Please indicate each Friend's meal options and linen needs and volunteer interests. By adding their email, they will be signed up to receive the Daily News. If they plan on paying their own fees, they will need to either register for themselves (noting you are their roommate) or arrange to reimburse you later.

If you wish to share a room and have us try to assign a roommate, please check "assign me a roommate" option found under the "comments" section. We will attempt to make the assignment and adjust fees as directed before you arrive.



Vans and small RVs are welcome to park near Convocation Hall but are not allowed to set up chairs outside the vehicle. If you plan to stay in your vehicle, check “off campus” option on the registration form.

**Off Campus Lodging:** Hotels near Ashland University can be found using online booking tools. One locally-owned, clean and no-frills option is the Surrey Inn at 1065 Claremont Ave, a 15-minute walk or 5-minute drive to campus. Other hotels nearby include: Hampton Inn and Suites Ashland, Quality Inn, Wingate, Super 8, and Motel 6. AirBnb and local B&Bs are another possibility. For people planning to stay in a hotel, select the “I’m staying off-campus” option when registering.

**Discounts:** LEYM seeks to encourage attendance by all members of our community. **Registrants under 36 years of age have their general registration fee waived.** There are three types of additional discounts available using a coupon at check-out: “First Timers” are those over 18 who are entitled to 33% off of total costs; “Youngster Meals” are those under the age of 13 who get 40% off total meal costs; and a discount for “Program Workers” for those who staff the youth program, run the bookstore or serve in other staff roles. With the proper code, the registration form will calculate the discount. We do not want anyone to stay away because of cost. Those desiring financial assistance should first contact their Monthly Meetings. If needs cannot be met by the Monthly

Meeting, contact our new registrar Jayson Smith via [LEYMregistrar@gmail.com](mailto:LEYMregistrar@gmail.com)

**Get the T-Shirt:** This year our online form includes the ability to order one or more T-Shirts! Note that young Friends participating in the Children and Youth Program will get their shirts for free as part of the separate consent form submission process.



**Consider bringing:** A coffee mug (the dining hall has very small ones), a water bottle, a note pad and writing utensil, a robe to wear to the shared bathroom, your own pillow and blanket (or two if you are in air-conditioning), a reading lamp, a multi-outlet extension cord or power bar, a step stool, a fan, additional towels, bubbles or other fun outdoor equipment.



# A Review of Monthly Meeting Responses to the Annual Query 2026

The following is a general review of those responses to the Annual Query received by LEYM Ministry & Nurture Committee from Meetings that responded.

## A. "How does your Meeting assure that members and attenders receive a solid and well-rounded foundation in the (a) religious thought, (b) experience, the (c) practice of discernment, and the (d) history of Friends?"

Religious education in the Monthly Meetings is largely conducted primarily through:

- small group book readings;
- discussions on various topics held either before or after Meeting for Worship;
- Bible study groups;
- brochures for visitors and new attenders;
- information and links on the Monthly Meeting website;
- periodic worship sharing;
- occasional forums or retreats.

## B. "Does your Meeting have an ongoing religious education program?"

The description of what constitutes an ongoing religious education program varies by Meeting. In most cases, what is indicated is some form of activity described in Section A.

A few Meetings indicated that they had an ongoing religious education program. The most structured of these indicated holding a six-part "newcomer session," attended on average by 10-14 newcomers, which covers Quaker history, the history of the Meeting, the testimonies, an introduction to the Meeting library, Quaker terminology, and Quaker process.

A number of Meetings indicated that they have held "Quakerism 101" classes, in the past, for new attenders, but that these have lapsed. Several Meetings are considering reinitiating these.

Most Meetings indicated that they had no adult religious education committee or committee responsible for religious education.

Religious education, in most Meetings, often appears to be at the initiative of individuals.

One Meeting described their Meeting as "not hav[ing] a great sense of Quaker history" and "we tend to pour whatever we want into the Quaker 'vessel'".

Smaller Meetings find it difficult to organize religious education due to their size and the limited number of new people coming in.

One Meeting felt "a foundation in Quakerism is best communicated rather than taught, by exposure to the experience of respect, thoughtfulness, joy and seeking."

A number of Meetings mentioned that, as a result of their considering the Annual Query, a sense arose that more attention should be paid to Quaker practice, theology, history, and the varieties of Quakerism. One Meeting expressed that this Annual Query has been much on their hearts; they are planning a retreat on ongoing religious education for adults.

A number of Meetings, independent of considering the Query, have also come to the sense that more is needed to be done within their Meeting to cultivate a deeper understanding among Friends and attenders of the foundations of the Quaker way.

One Meeting holds a bi-monthly discussion led by two Friends on "What it means to be a Quaker."

One Meeting provides regular attenders with a copy of *Faith and Practice* (which one is not specified). Another Meeting recently purchased 30 copies of North Pacific YM's *Faith & Practice*.

Several Meetings mentioned having a well-provided library.

Most responses addressed adult education. A number also referred to their First Day School. A number of other Meetings indicated that they had no children.

*Continued Next Page*

*Annual Query continued....*

### C. "How can the Yearly Meeting assist in this?"

A number of Meetings suggested that LEYM could offer a regular Quaker 101 online class for new attenders or provide a curriculum on Quaker history and Quakerism that Monthly Meetings could use.

One Meeting referred to having to reinvent educational materials and would like to have access to educational materials, both for First Day School and adult education, that have been tested and refined.

LEYM should publicize online presentations, discussions, or study groups open to Friends from different Monthly Meetings.

## FGC's New Governance

Friends General Conference has approved a new way of organizing its leadership. The new Governing Board replaces the Executive Committee and will focus on major responsibilities like budgets and supporting the General Secretary, while the Representatives Council replaces Central Committee and will help connect local and yearly meetings with FGC's programs. Each Yearly Meeting now sends two representatives to the Representatives Council. This streamlined structure will make it easier for the organization to conduct business more effectively.

Friends can also join FGC's committees without needing to be members of governance. The new structure ensures that Friends of Color, Young Adult Friends, Young Friends, and LGBTQ+ Friends have strong voices in FGC's work for equity and inclusion.

You can read more on Friends General Conference's website <https://www.fgcquaker.org/category/news/governance-restructure/>. If you're interested in learning more about how you can serve FGC, please contact Ellerie Brownfain:

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

*Note: Ellerie Brownfain (Birmingham MM) and Jayson Smith (Detroit MM) were appointed LEYM Representatives to FGC Representative Council by the Executive Committee earlier this year.*

## LEYM Fall 2026 Spiritual Formation Retreat

LEYM's spiritual formation fall retreat will take place **September 11-13** at the **Weber Center Conference and Retreat Center in Adrian, Michigan.**

Our facilitator for the 2026-2027 year will be **Steven Davison**, a member of Princeton Friends Meeting. Steven writes of himself: "I've been a Friend since the mid-1980s and I've always had a passion for the study of Quakerism – its history, its 'theology', its approach to the life of the spirit, both personal and corporate, its community dynamics and governance, and its distinctive language and practices." His writings have been published in *Friends Journal* and *Quaker Life*.

A flier with more information about the retreat will be available at LEYM's annual meeting in June and on the LEYM Website.

### A Quaker-led, Interfaith Immersion into Spirit and Identity

Amid the mist and quiet beauty of a mountaintop Costa Rican cloud forest, **Earth & Ember** invites spiritual seekers and contemplatives to explore how their lives can be rooted in compassion and peace – while still engaging with a world marked by injustice, greed, and cruelty. Each day offers centering practices, meaningful participation in our rainforest community, rich spiritual conversation, and the wisdom of local scientists, artists, and peacemakers.

Join us for five days of reflection, community, and renewal in the mountains that have inspired generations of Friends.

When: **July 16–21**

Where: **Monteverde, Costa Rica**

Focus: **Spirit, Creation, Community, and Peace**

Learn More & Register Here:

<https://earthnember.com/>



**April 1:** Registration for FGC Gathering opens.  
**April 6:** Online registration for LEYM Annual Meeting begins.  
**May 3:** “Exploring the ‘Secret Power’ Among Us,” 1:30 to 4:00 pm, Detroit Friends Meeting (see Page 2).  
**May 9:** Registration deadline for Annual Meeting.  
**May 15:** Deadline for submission of “State of the Meeting Reports.”  
**May 16:** ‘Early Bird’ Registration for Annual Meeting Closes.  
**June 1:** Monthly Meeting “Statistical Reports” due.  
**June 10:** Last Day for Registration for Annual Meeting.  
**June 18-21:** LEYM Annual Meeting at Ashland University.  
**July 1:** Due date for Meeting Statistical Reports.  
**July 7-12:** FGC Gathering, Burlington, VT.  
**July 30:** Due date for submissions to the 2026 *Annual Records*.  
**September 11-13:** LEYM Spiritual Formation Retreat, Adrian, Michigan.

## The 2026 FGC Gathering

### “A Window and a Door: A Prayer”

July 7-12, 2026

University of Vermont in Burlington, VT.

#### Schedule & Program

The 2026 Gathering will be held in-person for Friends of all ages! Expect worship, exciting workshops, vibrant youth programs, engaging speakers and more! Learn more about what happens at the Gathering at

<http://www.fgcgathering.org/>

Registration begins **April 1, 2026**

## LEYM Committee Clerks

2025-2026

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

#### **Adult & Family Program**

Clémence Ravaçon-Mershon  
andre14@earthlink.net

#### **Advancement & Outreach** (co-clerks)

Barbara LeSage  
barbaralesage@hotmail.com  
Susan Hartman  
SusanDHartman@gmail.com

#### **Arrangements & Site**

Carolyn Lejuste  
clejuste@gmail.com

#### **Finance**

Joann Neuroth  
jneuroth@gmail.com  
Ellen Barnes  
ellen@thebarnesfamily187.com

#### **Ministry & Nurture** (co-clerks)

Flo Friender  
flo@dougandflo.com  
Dennis Gregg  
dennisgregg@gmail.com

#### **Nominating** (co-clerks)

Clémence Ravaçon-Mershon  
andre14@earthlink.net  
Mary Igoe Meyers  
migoemeyers@gmail.com

#### **Peace & Justice**

Claire Cohen  
cmcmd80@gmail.com

#### **Publications & Archives**

Jeff Cooper  
cooperdaub@hotmail.com

#### **Youth & Children’s Program**

Diane Mott  
mottfam45@gmail.com

*Love is the hardest lesson of Christianity; but, for that reason it should be most our Care to learn it.”*  
*William Penn, Some Fruits of Solitude*