

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting, Executive Committee
March 27, 2026

Present: Jack Smith (Clerk), Peggy Daub (Recording Clerk), Ellen Barnes (Finance), Jeff Cooper (Publications & Archives), Flo Friender (Ministry & Nurture), Susan Hartman (Advancement & Outreach), Tom Kangas (Treasurer), Carolyn Lejuste (Arrangements & Site), Joann Neuroth (Finance), Clémence Ravaçon-Mershon (Adult & Family Program, Nominating), Erika Smith (Children & Youth), Bill Warters (Digital Communications Facilitator), Ellerie Brownfain (guest), Patricia Penell (guest)

The Executive Committee of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting gathered in blended worship (some in person at Red Cedar Meeting, Lansing, Michigan, and some on Zoom) at 6:35 pm on Friday, March 27, 2026.

Clerk Jack Smith welcomed the group to Red Cedar Meeting and asked us to consider three items from our last meeting, in January:

1. Publications & Archives Committee Proposal

Are we still in unity with the proposal? Yes. This will be brought up tomorrow at Representative Meeting with the endorsement of Executive Committee.

2. Laying down of Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting

We received a report and supported the work of the ad hoc committee working on laying down GPQM at the January Meeting of the Executive Committee. Yearly Meeting needs to hear about it tomorrow. Are we still comfortable with our support? Yes. And we want to encourage informal get togethers. This will be brought to Annual Meeting for official approval. Peggy will make the report based on what she wrote about it in January. Jeff Cooper reported that GPQM's monthly meetings have been notified that this is the last year it will be supporting the organizations to which GPQM gives, with an invitation for monthly meetings to consider making up the difference. Susan Hartman suggested there may be a question of whether LEYM might want to take on support for organizations formerly supported by GPQM as well. Finance Committee will look at this. The three organizations are: Michigan AFSC office, Michigan Alternatives to Violence Project, and Michigan Friends Center.

3. Covering the duties of Assistant Clerk

Someone is needed to take the lead in writing our annual Epistle at the time of Annual Meeting. The Clerk will be looking for someone who might do this. Clémence will select epistles from other organizations to be read at Annual Sessions.

4. Schedule of Representative Meeting

After “No Kings Lansing” was announced for this day, Jack arranged the Representative Meeting schedule so that people who wish to can participate in it. The solution is: First, an early lunch. Second, those who wish to attend the rally can gather and figure out carpools to get to the Capitol. Walking may take 15-30 minutes. Jack hopes that people can be back by 2:00 but recognizes it could be a little later. For those who remain at the Meetinghouse, he has planned an activity of people “visiting” other Meetings by hearing reports.

5. Representative Meeting Next Year

A host Meeting is needed for Representative Meeting in 2027. Jack suggested that Ohio would be an ideal place for Representative Meeting to be next year, after Pittsburgh last year and Lansing this. Cleveland may be a possibility, and Friends would like a chance to see their new Meetinghouse. We don’t know if renovations will be completed by then. Tom Kangas (North Columbus) noted the budget line intended to help with meetinghouse renovations or purchase will not be used by his Meeting this year and wondered if Cleveland needs it to help with their renovation. Finance Committee will reach out to ask about need.

The Clerk invited committees to report on items they will bring to Representative Meeting.

6. Nominating Committee: Clémence Ravaçon Mershon (Erie Worship Group)

Since 1980 LEYM has attempted to have a four-year rotation of those serving as clerk, which has worked fairly well. But the rotation has not been kept recently and it feels like we’re hobbling along. Jack suggested looking at a co-clerking situation. Clémence wonders if the work of the clerk has changed.

To clarify Jack’s commitment, he is finishing his 1st year as presiding Clerk, which is the 2nd year of his four-year term. He expects to serve the full four years. It would be good for there to be an Assistant Clerk who could be mentored by Jack next year. Jack said he was surprised that so little was expected of him as Assistant Clerk and believes more duties could be shared between the Clerk and Assistant Clerk.

The Nominating Committee is not in agreement that the four-year expectation for clerking should be continued. It has been quite difficult to find anyone to serve. A Friend suggested that another approach for the Committee would be to discern people they feel are ready to be good leaders for LEYM and then discuss with them what would make it possible for them to serve. Executive Committee confirmed that we are in support of either a four-year or two-year model for clerking.

7. Adult & Family Program Committee: Clémence Ravaçon Mershon (Erie Worship Group)

Happily, the *LEYM Spring Bulletin* has come out and has full information about the program for the Annual Meeting.

8. Children & Youth Program Committee: Erika Smith (Detroit)

Diane Mott (Broadmead) will give the Committee report at Representative Meeting. Ellerie Brownfain may give a report on the Fall Youth Retreat. The Committee wonders where the Youth Epistle from the 2025 Annual Meeting now resides. It consists of a group of photos, and they had hoped it could circulate among meetings to encourage others to attend.

9. Site & Arrangements Committee: Carolyn Lejuste (Red Cedar)

Things are going great and the Committee is enjoying a good relationship with staff at Ashland University. There are changes in the dormitories we will use this year. Some other buildings on campus (such as the Chapel) may be used for some of our activities. We will be sharing the dining space with other groups who will be on campus. One meal will offer a “simple” choice with just beans, rice, and a simple salad. Jayson Smith is the new Registrar. Erika Smith asked if it would be possible to find a space for the younger children nearer the Convocation Center.

10. Other Committees.

Clerks of the Finance Committee (Joann Neuroth), Ministry & Nurture Committee (Flo Friender), Publications & Archives Committee (Jeff Cooper), and Advancement & Outreach Committee (Susan Hartman), briefly described the items their committees will bring to Representative Meeting without any need for discernment by Executive Committee.

11. LEYM Peace & Justice Committee: Jack Smith

Claire Cohen (Pittsburgh) has reported that she is discouraged by being the last remaining member of the committee and doesn't see a path that will enable it to continue. Jack asked what we see as the extra value of having a Peace & Justice Committee at the yearly meeting level when we know that various monthly meetings are doing active peace and justice work.

12. Other updates

Tom Kangas (North Columbus) gave a short description of the property they have acquired for a Meetinghouse. They are beginning to plan and design a building for the site.

Joann Neuroth reported that Barbara Lesage (North Columbus) had planned to be with us, but her apartment building burned last week and there were fatalities and injuries. Barbara is fine but has access to only a few of her belongings. Joann asked us to hold Barbara in the Light. Donations for her will be collected.