

JUNE 2020

FRIENDLY LINE



Query Discussion,

May 6, 2020: Query #12: Peace and Nonviolence

Query #12 Advice and Questions, at Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative website: <https://www.iymc.org/fp2/advices-and-queries-2/>

A small group gathered by Zoom and opened the query with a moment of silence. As we considered the query, friends offered beliefs that two keys to a more peaceful existence and world are listening and prayer. One friend told a powerful story of how listening in a political situation, letting a constituent vent (repeatedly), eventually led to a good, appreciative relationship.

It was suggested that fear is the source of much conflict (that includes fear of not being right and of not being respected). Listening may help overcome some of that fear and provide an opening to get past it. As for prayer, we often feel like we want to do something more active to resolve a conflict, but sometimes perhaps prayer is the best action to take at the time.

We appreciated another story told recently by a Friend, about how

being “slow to respond” and active listening to a party who felt like they had been wronged allowed for room to avoid conflict and possibly violence.

We discussed some of the ideas during Cheryl Sutton’s presentations at Mid-Year Meeting and the related discussions. These included principles of the Alternatives to Violence Program/AVP, such as honesty, respect, expecting the best, and setting the stage for even tiny acts of empowerment.

One friend said she is in touch with a close, longtime friend who has many of the same values, yet sees things very differently. Their disagreements on politics, etc., often strain the relationship, but they keep trying to respectfully disagree and have learned to avoid many important issues. She wonders if that’s the best approach (am I a “collaborator?” she asks.) Others face similar issues with friends and family, but at a certain point, we agreed it is important practice to still care about people and listen -- maybe that leaves an opening for them to listen to us, too.

Sometimes it is necessary to take a stand. Especially when it comes to treatment of others, of bullying or exploitation of people or the

creation. We appreciate the organizations, including FCNL, AFSC and LULAC, that nonviolently address issues of racism and systemic violence at many levels. We also appreciate Scattergood School, which is doing important work in the world to help youth practice respect for the light within each individual and which provides a community in which to study and practice peace and nonviolence.

We also appreciate that we need to always be mindful of using principles of peace and nonviolence in our own homes and with our family members and close communities. We acknowledge that Friends can be perpetrators of violence and injustice, at home and in our institutions, and want to be mindful of addressing that and seeking healing.

A book on nonviolence and conflict resolution that the Meeting owns was recommended: [“Sweet Fruit from the Bitter Tree: 61 Stories of Creative and Compassionate Ways out of Conflict”](#) by Mark Andreas. It’s amazingly diverse stories give examples of how conflict resolution; interpersonal and international. There are also some Youtube links of these

stories worth watching for inspiration and encouragement.

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

May 17, 2020

Present: David Drake, Claire Cumbie-Drake, Peter Clay, Fred Nelson, Deborah Fisch, DJ Newlin, Dick Douglass, Andrea Holveck, Jack Holveck, Cindy Winchell, Virginia Smith
Co-clerk presiding: Ann Robinson
Recording clerk: Dorothy Lifka

The meeting opened with a period of silence and a quotation:

By love, the bitter
becomes sweet,
By love, copper becomes
gold,
By love, dregs become
clear,
By love, pain becomes
healing.

-- Rumi/Jalal ad-Din Rumi
(1207-1273)

Minutes: The minutes from March were read and approved. (There was no meeting for business in April.)

Peter expressed appreciation for the meeting's support of his attendance at a Pendle Hill conference, "Working Toward Right Relationship with Indigenous Peoples." The conference has been cancelled but may be offered virtually at a later date.

Treasurer's Report: There was no report due to the treasurer

having recent health and computer and Internet problems. The clerks have been in communication with the treasurer.

Ministry and Counsel (Gordon Bivens): We continue to try to be in touch with members and attenders to check during these difficult times. If you have needs, please be in touch with a member of M&C: Gordon Bivens, Jim Dietz-Kilen, David Drake, Deborah Fisch, Andrea Holveck, D.J. Newlin, Dorothy Lifka and Ann Robinson.

Finance Committee April - May 2020 (Cindy Winchell): The Finance Committee was scheduled to meet last month when everything suddenly shut down. However, the committee has communicated by email and has draft recommendations to bring to the Business Meeting regarding DMVF Meeting finances. Consider the following:

1) Add the Assistant Treasurer to the checking account at Financial Plus Credit Union.

2) Consider closing DMVF accounts at Financial Plus Credit Union and opening a new account at another financial institution. Ann looked into her credit union, Community Choice. I would also recommend Earlham Savings Bank (Ebank). The Credit Union and Ebank have much the same services. There would be no service charges for the account. (The credit union has a \$10/monthly fee that would be waived) and there are no charges per check.

Both offer debit and credit cards. And, both offer several convenient locations.

Some people prefer a credit union. I have also been asked if it would be a conflict of interest to be a signer on an account where I work (Ebank). I do not believe it would be a conflict of interest. I am the treasurer for two other organizations with accounts at Ebank, and I would not be the only signer on the account. My reason for recommending Ebank is convenience and because I would keep a close eye on the account and resolve any problems efficiently.

I would recommend having the Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and Finance Committee Convener be signers on the checking account.

As Assistant Treasurer, I would like to help Pam more and relieve some of her work as treasurer. I can collect the donations and make the deposits. I can also work closely with Pam and assist making the monthly payments.

3) Conduct an annual audit as soon as possible.

- Submitted April 21 by Cindy Winchell, Assistant Treasurer and Convener, DMVF Finance Committee. Recommendations reviewed by committee members and clerks: Pam Blackburn, Bob Henderson, Dorothy Lifka, Owen Newlin, Ann Robinson. (No dissenting comments.)

Discussion of the report: It was requested that the monthly treasurer report include the bills that have been paid for the month. It was clarified that we

would have at least three signers on the bank account, but that individual checks would only need one signature. Concerns were expressed that deposits are not being made on a regular basis and some bills have not been paid in a timely way. Checks should not be sent to the treasurer's home address. We are working on having additional people added to the account and anticipate that this will resolve some of the current problems. Sometime before the next business meeting, the clerks and treasurers will talk about the issues with donations and bills and send out an email to all.

The following minute was approved: DMVF authorizes opening an account at E bank with the following people on the account: the treasurer, the assistant treasurer, the convener of the finance committee and the clerks. Currently, the treasurer is Pam Blackburn, the assistant treasurer is Cindy Winchell, the convener of the finance committee is Catherine Dietz-Kilen and the clerks are Ann Robinson and Dorothy Lifka.

Library Committee (Virginia Smith). Claire donated a copy of "Wherever I Go," a children's book about refugee resettlement and "To Be Broken and Tender: A Quaker Theology for Today." Ann recommended that the meeting purchase the new book by the Drake Community Press, about the efforts of Above and Beyond Cancer, which includes stories by Iowa Quakers.

Building and Grounds (Dick Douglass): All projects are currently on hold. The committee may be getting more bids for projects discussed previously. Dick suggested clarifying the meeting's financial position before going ahead with new projects. Fred has been watering the plants.

Property Management: No report.

Peace and Social Concerns (Jack Holveck): Thanks were expressed to David for coordinating a second hour with Joe Henry of LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens) on the situation of workers in the state's meat processing plants. The following related letter was approved for submission to the "Des Moines Register." It will be signed: Jack Holveck on behalf of Des Moines Valley Friends.

Quakers Call for Action

Communities of color are dying of COVID-19 at rates two to three times that of white communities. This is true across the United States and it is true in Iowa, where largely immigrant workers of color in the meatpacking plants perform dangerous and difficult work for little pay and few benefits. This is structural and systemic racism and it is wrong.

These workers must be provided safer working conditions including effective PPE, physical distancing, slowed down processing lines, COVID-19

testing for all workers, affordable health care, treatment when they fall ill and hazard pay that doesn't require them to work even when sick.

As a faith community Quakers are guided by testimonies that include equality and community. We share our deep concern for the welfare of our fellow Iowans who are doing the hard work that many others will not do. The lives of our brothers and sisters of color are being diminished and discarded as if they do not matter. Thousands of Iowans who work in this industry have tested positive for the virus and dozens have already died. As a society we are failing to care for all of our people with the respect and resources that they deserve. These individuals are proud Iowans who are contributing their hard work to the place that they call home. We call for action now to protect them, their families and all of our Iowa communities.

Hospitality Committee: No report.

Religious Education (Dorothy Lifka): Activities for the younger children and First Day School for the school aged children are currently being provided on Zoom. Guest speakers are welcome at First Day School. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Dorothy or Ann. First Day School has sometimes not met during the summer months. We will consider the needs and wishes of the children and families involved and the availability of teachers.

Addition: The time for meeting with the younger kids will be changed to a weekday evening.

Nominating Committee

(Dorothy Lifka): The members of the nominating committee will be contacting you soon to talk about positions on DMVF committees and other meeting jobs for the next fiscal year (July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021).

Ad Hoc Committee on Health and Safety

(Dorothy Lifka): The committee met on May 1, 2020. The committee was in unity that DMVF should not resume in-person worship at this time. The committee will meet again at the end of May.

As we begin to discuss how and when we might resume in-person worship (even if that won't be for a while), I've put together a list of possible actions, based on suggestions from our insurance company, Guide One:

- Form a Reopening Team
- Review guidelines from governmental agencies such as the CDC and state and local health departments
- Gather feedback from members and attenders about their willingness and interest in attending in-person services
- Discuss which DMVF's activities might begin to meet in person
- Discuss use of the meeting house by other groups

- Talk about what to do about First Day School and other children's activities
- Consider how to continue providing online opportunities even once in-person worship is available
- Think about how to handle weddings, funerals and other special events
- Develop a safety plan to address:
 - Social distancing requirements
 - The need for personal protective equipment such as masks and gloves and the availability of hand sanitizer at entrances and other key places
 - Whether there is a need to conduct health screenings for those entering the meeting house
 - How to replace physical contact with contactless options
 - Cleaning and disinfecting the meeting house including frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, railings and light switches
 - Possible increased risk of violence due to higher levels of stress in the community
- Identify the need for additional volunteers to meet any of the above

If you have questions, concerns or comments, please contact Dorothy, David, Deborah or Andrea.

Discussion: The Ad Hoc committee will continue with their work. The above questions will be sent out to the meeting with the request that people respond to the committee.

Peter has been in contact with Folks Like Us about when they can resume meeting at the meeting house. Ann will contact them.

Old Business: Mid-Year Meeting -Video recordings were made of each of the 2020 Mid-Year Meeting sessions and have been made available online so Friends can view them, but they will only be available until June 30, 2020. To view, click on the following links and enter the password (for all sessions): MYM2020! (*include the exclamation point)

Saturday, Seventh Day, afternoon: <https://vimeo.com/417234571>

Saturday, Seventh Day, evening: <https://vimeo.com/41725267>

Sunday, First Day,
morning: <https://vimeo.com/417217019>

New Business: This year's Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) will be held on Zoom with meeting for business, committee reports and limited programs. The planned programs for this year with the theme: Sharing the Light: Nurturing Our Community of Hope may be postponed until next year possibly including John McCutcheon.

Reports from DMVF for IYM will need to be submitted and will be discussed at next month's meeting for business. We may also need to appoint representatives for IYM positions. The peace and social concerns committee should consider whether there are concerns that DMVF want to pass on to IYM. Since IYM will be on Zoom, it was suggested that we arrange computer access for DMVF members and attenders who need it..

A second hour planned on Right Relationships with Indigenous Peoples will be facilitated by Peter on June 28th.

Meeting for business ended with a period of silence.

NEWS FROM OUR FRIENDS

Please consider a phone call or card to Charlie Day this week, to let him know you are thinking of him. At 515-271-6613, 3520

Grand Ave, #C201, Des Moines, IA, 50312

Report from your Iowa Sanctuary Movement representative

As your Iowa Sanctuary Movement representative, I participate in a monthly meeting with the ISM Des Moines Cluster. DMVF is one of 16 churches that belong to the cluster. I am also a member of the ISM Finance Committee. At first, the mission of the Iowa Sanctuary Movement was to support someone seeking sanctuary in a church. The mission has evolved into three parts: assisting the undocumented seeking asylum, helping with the financial needs of DACA designees, and assisting families whose family members have been arrested by ICE. The Iowa Sanctuary Movement is a project of the American Friends Service Committee Iowa, under the leadership of Erica Johnson. Financial support for these programs is needed to carry on this important work.

Contributions can be sent to:

ICE Raid Family Support,
Walnut Hills United Methodist Church, 12321 Hickman Road,
Urbandale, IA 50323
www.whumc.org

**ISM Asylum Support and
DACA Renewal Support,** First
Unitarian Church of Des Moines,
1800 Bell Ave. Des Moines, IA
50317 www.ucdsm.org

In addition to these funds, the Des Moines Community Foundation offered a one-time grant of \$75,000 to help those left out of the COVID-19 relief programs, people who did not qualify for government assistance. The demand for this money quickly outgrew our capacity to respond, so AFSC joined with Al Exito and Proteus, Inc. to form Central Iowa Immigrant Emergency Fund. Part of the grant money was used to hire a person to handle the applications and disperse the money. As of May 20th, we have 202 applicants asking for help with rent and basic necessities. As of May 18th, \$33,877.37 had been dispersed covering 47 families/households. At this rate, 30 additional families could be served before funds run out. If you would like to help with this need, checks can be sent to Proteus Inc., 1221 Center St. Suite 16, Des Moines, IA 50309. Please note "Central Immigrant Emergency Relief Fund" in the memo line of the check.

Thank you for any support you can give to help these families in need.

Andrea Holveck

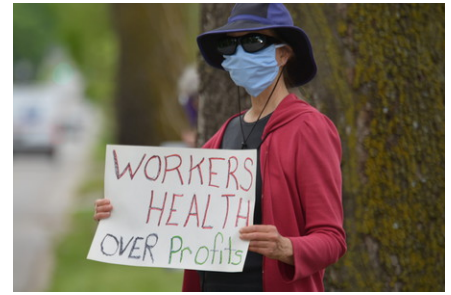
Update on June 28th 2nd Hour Examining Our Relationship With Indigenous Peoples

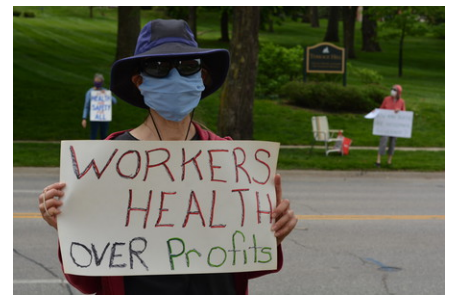
From 1 PM until 2:15 PM (Central Daylight Time) on June 28th we will gather by Zoom for the 2nd Hour approved by Peace and Social Concerns Committee back in February. I will send out the Zoom invitation ahead of time. Let me know if you wish to be with us. Friend Jeff Kisling of Bear Creek Meeting will share some of his experience with and perspectives on building relationships with Native/ Indigenous Peoples one on one. Friend Judith Brown of Ottawa Monthly Meeting will also join us. Judith attended the Truth and Healing Conference at Pendle Hill in 2018 and has participated in some epic walks with First Nations Peoples in Canada to highlight the importance of recognizing traditional land rights established first by treaties and then by judicial decisions. Judith has recently completed her monthly meeting's annual update on reconciliation work with Canada's First Nations. They submit an annual report to Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. I am eager to hear how this ongoing accountability helps to keep her Quaker meeting engaged and responsible as they continue this important work which they feel a leading to do. Finally, Chris Adkins, Environmental Education Coordinator/Naturalist with the Dallas County Conservation Board will join us. For over twenty years Chris had been central to the Prairie Awakening gathering, which honors Native Americans who have a history on our shared Iowa landscape going back many hundreds, even thousands of years. Prairie Awakening has created wonderful opportunities for friendship and understanding. In

addition to the resources mentioned in the March Friendly Line I encourage all members and attenders to make time to watch two powerful films recommended by Judith Brown. The first is from 2015 and it is called "Reserve 107." This film documents the still ongoing process of reconciliation and friendship between the Mennonite and Lutheran communities in the Saskatchewan town of Laird and the descendants of the Young Chippewyan Band on whose land they are living. It is a very powerful film and will provide a good foundation for our 2nd Hour. Afterwards, please watch "Treaty Talk – Sharing the River of Life," made in 2018. You can watch both of these incredible films here: <https://www.rebelskymedia.com/documentary>
Thank you Friends!
Peter Clay

Iowans Rally for Health and Safety

Photos Courtesy of AFSC







Check out our Facebook group for members/attenders. If you'd like to be added, email Jan Falb, at jfalb0326@yahoo.com

Friday of month, at sandiebnelson4416@gmail.com

Second Hours:

June 28: Right Relationships with Indigenous Peoples - Peter Clay (see article)

Building & Grounds:

Any question about the building or grounds of the Meeting-house can be directed to Building & Grounds Committee Convener, **Dick Douglass, 515/864-1119.**

Hospitality Committee:

If we are running low on kitchen or bathroom supplies or if you see a housekeeping problem that needs attention, please contact the Hospitality Committee Co-Conveners, **Cindy Winchell, 515/720-5516 & Charlie Brown, 515/689-6470**

Meeting for Worship, 10 a.m.

Worship by Zoom via email invitation from clerks, in-person meetings temporarily suspended due to corona virus

Meeting Hosts:

SUSPENDED DUE TO CORONA VIRUS

Child Care:

SUSPENDED DUE TO CORONA VIRUS

Find us online at:

www.desmoinesvalleyfriends.org

Meeting for Worship/Business,

11:30 a.m. second First Day each month - currently not being held due to corona virus.

Meeting for Music: Third First

Day of each month, 9:15 a.m. - currently not being held due to corona virus.

Friendly Line:

Please send info for next Friendly Line to Sandie Nelson no later than June 26, 2020, last