

# Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting

## FRIENDLY LINE

### January 2022



#### VIEW FROM A FRIEND: Why do all police need to carry handguns?

In my role as physician I have worked with law enforcement officers at all levels. I was invited to enroll in the Des Moines Police and Polk County Sheriff's citizens academy several years ago. Later I would also attend the FBI Citizens Academy.

Throughout this exposure to the various roles of law enforcement officers and from ride-alongs in every community I have lived in, I have had a good view of what our law enforcement faces on a daily basis.

Seeing the video where former Brooklyn Center, Minnesota, Officer Kim Potter yelled "Taser! Taser! Taser!" and then tragically pulled her handgun in a grievous error is heartbreaking for the former officer and life-taking for Daunte Wright, whom she mistakenly shot.

It makes me wonder how it is we don't have better non-lethal weapons that officers can use when the need arises. If the firearm were not in her belt to begin with, Wright would still be alive.

Perhaps we can learn from our mother country in England to have only some of our officers armed and to call in those with firearms when needed, or when predicted to be needed, and not

to have every officer armed with lethal weapons at a traffic stop. Better training in de-escalation and in the use of nonlethal weapons may save lives — especially among people of color and those who are mentally ill.  
— David E. Drake, Des Moines, in a letter to the editor published in the Des Moines Register, December 16, 2021

#### Donations Needed for the Houseless

The recent cold snap brings a reminder that those who are houseless in the Des Moines area need help to stay safe.

Volunteers for Edna Griffin Mutual Aid (EGMA) encourage Meeting F/friends to assist by checking their closets, garages and storage for good, used clothing and supplies that will help the houseless get through the bitter cold. Donations such as: warm clothing (sweaters, sweatshirts, long underwear, warm socks, long sleeve shirts/t-shirts, thick jeans/pants), outdoor gear (coats, winter vests, mittens, gloves, winter hats, masks, scarves, snowmobile suits, coveralls, sweatshirts, felt lined boots, lined snow boots), equipment (tents- including stakes and canopies, blankets, fuel for space heaters, cots, sleeping mats), etc. would be of great help.

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#### A Quaker Minute

A traditional Quaker Testimony:  
SIMPLICITY

*"Simplification comes when we "center down," when life is lived with singleness of eye, from a holy Center where the breath and stillness of Eternity are heavy upon us and we are wholly yielded to God."*

--Thomas R. Kelly, "A Testament of Devotion," 1941

The word simplicity refers to practices of Friends which nurture a constant awareness of God in all of creation.

Friends of earlier generations adopted plain dress, in part to exclude distracting influences from their lives. While few Friends today feel called to follow the traditional plain dress, they strive nonetheless to live simply in many ways.

As we exclude superfluous possessions and activity from our lives, we hope to better hear "the Still, Small Voice" (I Kings 19:12) when it speaks from within. The testimony of simplicity also confers an obligation to be mindful of consumption of material resources so as not to impose hardship on others and on the natural environment.

- from Faith & Practice of Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative

- One in a series of short items on Quaker history and practice, contributed by Pam Blackburn and Jan Falb.

**Des Moines Valley  
Friends Meeting  
Meeting for Worship with  
Attention to Business  
12/12/2021**

Meeting began near the appointed time with a period of worshipful Silence.

Those present included: Dorothy Lifka, clerk; Deborah Fisch, recording clerk; Gordon Bivens; Peter Clay; Catherine Dietz-Kilen, Jim Dietz-Kilen; Andrea Holveck; Jack Holveck; Fred Nelson; Virginia Smith, Billie Wade

Consideration of Minutes for November 2021 - Friends approved the November 2021 minutes as published in the most recent issue of *Friendly Line*. However, Friends are encouraged to contact the recording clerk (Deborah Fisch) if they find an error or typo within the next week. Any major error will be brought before the next business meeting for reapproval. Typos will be corrected, but they do not require approval.

Minute - The minutes for the 11/2021 business meeting were reviewed and approved.

**Finance Committee Report**  
(Catherine Dietz-Kilen, convener)

DMVF Finance Committee  
Minutes 11/16/ 2021

Attendees: Catherine Dietz-Kilen, Kelsea Gillespie, Dick Douglass, and Cindy Winchell

Review of Financial Reports  
- The treasurer (Kelsie Gillespie) was unable to complete the financial reports before our meeting, which we had moved forward one week, in order to avoid the holidays, because she is

still waiting on an invoice. We will have two months of financial reports to review at our December meeting. (A copy of the form is attached at the end of these minutes.)

Approval of Forms for Committee Request for Payment Forms - The Committee reviewed and approved the form for use in communicating to the treasurer for payments approved by committees, primarily Peace and Social Concerns and E&C.  
Friendly Audit - The Committee discussed the upcoming Friendly Audit. The Committee would like two or more non-committee members to participate in the Friendly Audit. Billy Wade has volunteered. Catherine will ask Dorothy Lifka (meeting clerk) to send out an email asking for a second volunteer. Cindy Winchell has provided Kelsea a list of Quick Book documents that had been used in an internal audit for another nonprofit organization and Kelsea provided that list to the Committee. The Committee approved the list for the initial Friendly Audit. Of course, Kelsea will provide any additional documentation or reports that the audit members request.

Kelsea will be available for the audit so that she can provide any information and additional documents requested, but it will also be the intent of the Finance Committee to quietly attend the audit to observe and be available for questions with the goal of determining whether any revisions would be appropriate for future Friendly Audits. We also discussed that if the audit reveals any errors in the financial records, that it will be the

Finance Committee's responsibility to discuss how to handle those errors, so that the Finance Committee will not miss similar errors in the future. Keep in mind that it is the Finance Committee's responsibility to thoroughly review the financial reports before those reports come to Business Meeting each month.  
Zoom Account - We believe we are making some progress on setting up a Zoom account for the Meeting. Catherine has been in contact with Ann Robinson, a member of the Outreach Committee, who is working on the logistics of getting the Meeting Zoom account set up.  
Reminder from Treasurer - Kelsie reminded us that her term as treasurer will be complete in June 2022. Catherine will reach out to Nominating Committee to inquire about progress in identifying the next treasurer for the Meeting. The Committee would like the future treasurer to join the Finance Committee as soon as possible to become familiar with the procedures and policies set up by the Committee and to work with Kelsea for a smooth transition.

Next Meeting - The next meeting will be December 28, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Minute - Meeting received a review of the Finance Committee Report by Catherine Dietz-Kilen, convener. We look forward to receiving a treasurer's finance reports for both November and December at next month's meeting. The Committee Request Form is attached at the end of these minutes. Catherine also reported that Dorothy Lifka has volunteered to be the second member of the Friendly Audit

Committee. She will join Billie Wade who volunteered and was approved last business meeting. This ad hoc committee will be meeting with Kelsie, likely in early January. We appreciate all the work being done by the Finance Committee and are pleased to have use of the new Committee Form.

**M&C Committee Recommendation for**

**Membership** (Gordon Bivens, convener) – 12/07/2021 Ministry & Counsel Committee takes pleasure in recommending membership for Kelsea, Matthew, Adeline and Ezra Gillespie. Separate committees for clearness met with the adults and each child after receiving letters from all four indicating their interest in becoming members. Those clearness committees found themselves in joyful unity in recommending all four for acceptance to membership in the Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting of Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative) Religious Society of Friends and the whole of Ministry & Counsel approved. We are pleased to recommend all members of the Gillespie family for membership.

**Minute** – The meeting approves with unity and welcomes with deep joy Kelsea Gillespie, Matthew Gillespie, Adeline Gillespie and Ezra Gillespie as members of the Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting, a part of Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative), and look forward to continuing to worship and build mutual spiritual relationships with each of them. We ask the clerks to prepare paperwork necessary to reflect

Meeting's approval of membership and also to send documentation of membership to each member of the Gillespie family.

**Ministry & Counsel Committee Report** (Gordon Bivens, convener) M&C held its regular meeting 12/05/21. Meeting opened with a brief period of waiting worship.

Jim Dietz-Kilen elaborated on the multi-meeting support group for Leo (Hussain) Kooshan and his family. That group is hoping to be a Refugee Committee able to help Leo financially with the expenses involved in bringing his family to Canada from Afghanistan. Our committee felt the cause worthy of support and suggested \$2,000. from the Sharing Fund if that fund had adequate funds. [Jim later determined that the Fund had about \$4,000. and, thus, he will be indicating to the larger Support Committee that we stand ready to help in the amount of \$2,000.] This will be done in coordination with Peace and Social Concerns Committee work on Afghan refugees more generally.

Dorothy Lifka reported that the annual Day of Remembrance would in all likelihood be the third First Day of January, hopefully with harp music as part of the service.

The committee was pleased to hear reports regarding clearness held with the Gillespie family — one committee for the adults and another for the children. M&C takes pleasure in recommending acceptance of the family into DMVF's membership.

The meeting opened and closed with moments of Silence out of which to proceed with business and to bring closure to the meeting.

**Minute** – Friends joyfully approved the recommendation from Ministry & Counsel to accept into membership in Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting of Iowa Yearly Meeting of Friends (Conservative) Kelsea Gillespie, Matthew Gillespie, Adeline Gillespie, and Ezra Gillespie. Meeting had received letters of request from membership from each of them earlier this fall. They recently participated in clearness committees appointed by M&C. Both committees reported unity in recommending them to M&C for membership. The clerks will prepare documentation of membership for each Friend for Meeting's records and send certificates to the new members as well.

**Leo Hussain Kooshan Family Sponsorship Meeting**

(Jim Dietz-Kilen, DM Valley representative) A group representing several meetings and Quaker organizations seeking ways to help Leo Hussain Kooshan and his brother, Hassan bring their family from Afghanistan to safety in Canada, held its first meeting (via Zoom) on 12/01/2021.

Friends introduced themselves and how they came to know Leo. Some met Leo when he was a student at Scattergood Friends School and Farm and others when he was an intern with Michael Luick Thrums's Buseum tour last summer. There

were 13 F/friends in attendance, plus Leo. Others were invited but were not able to attend the first meeting. The 13 in attendance were from eight monthly meetings/four yearly meetings and Scattergood Friends School and Farm including: Ottawa FM, Ottawa, Ontario in Canadian YM; Penn Valley, Des Moines Valley, West Branch & Bear Creek Meetings in IYMC); and Twin Cities & Minneapolis Meetings (both in NYM).

Leo presented a brief Power Point including slides of his family (parents, four brothers and infant sister) in Afghanistan, information he has already gathered from and what he has applied for through the Canadian government with the help of Ottawa Friends. He expressed gratitude for donations sent to his family that have allowed them to buy heating supplies and winter clothing. He summarized risks to his family which include: 1) They are ethnic Hazara who have been highly persecuted by the state and militant groups for over a century. 2) His father is a former anti-Taliban fighter. 3) They are hiding in their basement near a former military base that is now a Taliban base and is a significant military target. 4) There are rumors going about that they are Christian because Leo attended Scattergood on scholarship.

There are two possible ways for Leo and Hassan's family to immigrate to Canada. 1) Once Leo becomes a permanent resident he can invite his family to join him if he has the funds to support them. It will take about two years for his residency to be finalized, and only then can he

start to try to get his family to Canada via this method. 2) A Private Sponsorship Program allows a church/club/neighborhood/qualified group willing to take on the responsibilities involved and can show that they have the resources and commitment needed to bring refugees into Canada. However, they must not be in Afghanistan at the time of application. The minimum amount of funding for a family of seven is about \$33,000 USD and it must be in the sponsoring organization's bank account at the time of application.

Leo's family tried to go to Iran a few months ago but were not successful because fighting at the border made it too risky for the small children. There is a possibility that officials from a different province than Kabul could issue passports if Leo's mom can get a doctor to certify she is sick, and they are working to find a doctor who will do this. They have the funds to pay the doctor. (It is not clear if the mother actually has a medical condition.)

If they are successful in getting passports they plan to go to Islamabad, Pakistan, where they have contacts. They hope to live in Karachi with the help of those contacts while waiting for their Canadian applications to be approved. Airline tickets to Islamabad are currently \$3,000 per person, so they are looking for smugglers. Trusting smugglers is risky, but they feel it is more dangerous to stay where they are.

Carol Dixon, co-clerk of the Ottawa Monthly Meeting Refugee Committee, and who

has a lot of experience working with the Canadian system of private sponsorship of refugees, outlined the procedure involved in group sponsorship. Her meeting sponsored a Syrian refugee family. It took over three years from the time of submitting the application to the arrival of the family in Ottawa.

\*Note – Following the committee meeting someone checked the Canadian website concerning refugees and learned the following: The process has three stages and can take up to four months for a refugee to arrive in Canada after the sponsorship is approved. Stage 1) Sponsorship applications – Applications are processed about a week after received. Stage 2) Visa & Exit Permits – It can take up to eight weeks for refugees to get their visas and exit permits, depending on where they are. Stage 3) Travel to Canada – Refugees usually travel within three to six weeks of getting their travel documents. However, in some cases, factors outside of the Canadian government's control, there can be a delay such conditions inside the refugee's country changing quickly.

Leo's family will have to get their passports and other official documents including photos, marriage certificates, school records that have been officially stamped as legitimate. They will also have to provide a personal narrative about themselves. Since his parents are illiterate they will need to narrate with Leo writing for them.

The sponsoring group will need to provide proof they understand the full extent of their responsibilities to support the

family (meeting them at airport, getting them housing and setting up their home, enrolling children in school, getting medical and dental care, etc.) and proof that they have a minimum of \$33,000 USD on hand.

Ottawa FM will agree to be the sponsoring organization; however, they are not financially able to provide any direct financial support. They have already committed to financially support Leo and Hassan as they seek permanent refugee status. All funds will need to come for other persons and organizations. Penn Valley Friends are also already providing some monthly support for Leo & Hassan.

Friends agreed to the following actions: 1) Talk to meetings about potential financial support. 2) Talk to their networks and contacts about potential financial support. 3) Have rough figures ready to report at the next committee meeting.

We learned via email that a Support Committee member who is on staff at Scattergood had already received pledges totaling \$11,075 from about 20 individuals.

I am asking Friends for permission to contact members and regular attenders of our meeting to seek donations to help with this cause.

The next Support Committee meeting is scheduled for 01/05/2022 at 6 p.m. Central time.

**Minute** – Meeting approved Jim's request to contact members and regular attenders to ask for pledges for this cause. Because the Support Committee has yet to formally establish the fund and open a Canadian bank account to

receive donations, only pledges are being requested at this time. Donations from individuals will not be run through Meeting's budget. Once the planned Canadian checking account is opened, donations will be deposited there. We do not believe donations will be tax deductible, but Catherine Dietz-Kilen volunteered to check on that and report back to the next business meeting.

We appreciate the decision by M&C to give \$2,000 from Meeting's Support Fund. This does not need approval by Meeting because M&C is charged with the distribution of that fund.

We appreciate all being done by Ottawa Friends and those willing to serve on this joint committee, and especially Jim Dietz-Kilen who has been representing our meeting.

### **Peace & Social Concerns Committee Report (P&SC)**

(Patty Wengert, convener) – Peace and Social Concern Committee Meeting met via Zoom on 12/07/2021 at 11:30 a.m. Attending: Patty Wengert, Peter Clay, Jack Holveck. Thank you to Andrea Holveck for making our Zoom connection. The convener also talked with Billie Wade to discuss the committee discussion.

The Committee noted the local Feast of the Holy Innocents will be taking place on 12/28/2021, Tuesday, at 6:30 p.m. at Capitol Hill Lutheran Church located at 511 Des Moines Street. In light of the new variant of Covid, our committee decided not to encourage in-person attendance, but to inform our

meeting of the event. The event will also be live streamed.

Our committee received and discussed an email from David Drake regarding the U.S. drone warfare, and how drones are used and abused. David noted the event "Don't Look Away" which is national movement to address our government killing by the use of drones, including any known deaths of civilians, unintended deaths.

We noted that six of our friends from the peace movement participated on the 11/29/2021 vigil. Frank Cordero and the Catholic Worker House members have been holding weekly vigils at the Des Moines Iowa Drone command Center for years now.

We noted the efforts of Jim Dietz Kilen who was involved in a virtual meeting of volunteers from several Friends meetings and Scattergood Friends School & Farm seeking to be supportive of Leo Kooshan's efforts to bring his family from Afghanistan to Canada to live as permanent residents.

Our committee approved two donations. 1) \$100.00 to the pastor of the Unitarian Church earmarked to help with costs associated with the church's adopting an Afghan family that is receiving assistance through the volunteer work of Judy Davis and others. We approved coordinating with Judy to determine how our members may be helpful. The donation will come from our allotted \$100.00 budget for that project. Andrea Holveck will be in touch to find the address for the church and name of the pastor. 2) We also approved sending \$100.00 to the Catholic Worker House to

support their efforts to organize vigils opposing the government's use of drones as weapons. A command center for those drones is right here in Des Moines.

We would also like Meeting as a whole to discuss our commitment to peace and the U.S. policy on use of drones to strike targets of enemies in places around the world where we are not currently involved in any declared warfare. We discussed whether our meeting has made public statements of our position on killing by use of drones.

**Minute** – Peter Clay read the report and it was approved as amended. The clerk will send out a report explaining the program in more detail via email to members/attenders of our meeting.

**Follow-up on P&SC request of Meeting** – The clerk held up P&SC's request that Meeting consider the matter of the U.S. government using drones to make strikes at suspected enemy strongholds, become better educated about exactly what is happening as a result of their use. She also asked that if Meeting is against the use of drones in this way, what kind of action we could take to make our concerns publicly known and what other things we might feel called to do in an effort to get our country to cease using drones in this way.

The clerk asked if Friends had any ideas how Meeting and its members/attenders could join other voices to help educate the public about use of drones in this way? After a time of Silence the following ideas were lifted up:

- 1) Meeting could ask P&SC to research what other

local religious bodies are doing in this regard and ascertaining if Meeting could either join an already formed group or help to form a committee of DSM religious communities to recommend actions that could be taken by their religious bodies, or in unity with each other through the joint committee.

- 2) Since this concern was originally brought to P&SC by David Drake, Meeting could ask him to: draft a letter stating our opposition to the use of drones by the government and why for consideration by Meeting to be sent, if approved, by Meeting to our senators, representatives, the president, and government bodies; and could also be used as a letter to the editor to the *Des Moines Register* by Meeting.

**Minute** – The sense of Meeting is that we have unity in opposition of use of drones in this way. The clerk will get in touch with David to ask him what kinds of actions we as a meeting can take in this regard. .

**EGMA Report** (Deborah Fisch & Peter Clay liaisons, Deborah reporting) There was no written report this month, but Deborah did remind Friends that with the onset of cold weather, those who are houseless in the Des Moines area need of clothing and

supplies to help them get through the bitter cold. Things such as: warm clothing (sweaters, sweatshirts, long underwear, warm socks, long sleeve shirts/t-shirts), coats, mittens, gloves, winter hats, tents, sleeping bags, blankets, fuel for space heaters, etc. EGMA volunteers are happy to collect and distribute donations. Friends are asked to put donations in a sack or box on top of the cabinets on the far wall of Meeting's kitchen and clearly label each container "Donation for EGMA" so volunteers know it is for them and not a project of our meeting. Deborah will provide a list of needed donations to the clerk, to be sent out via email to members/attenders. Deborah is also asked to make a request to Ann Robinson that the list appear in next month's *Friendly Line* as a stand-alone item.

**Minute** – Friends heard the oral report from Meeting's liaison to EGMA. The clerk thanked Deborah for the report and asked that a list of ideas for donation to the houseless of the Des Moines area that EGMA volunteers serve. The clerk asks Deborah to provide a list of items that are needed to the editors of *Friendly Line* to be included as a standalone separate from the Meeting's minutes.

### **Old Business**

#### **Appreciation for Quaker**

**Minutes** – Meeting approved a minute of appreciation and special thanks for Pam Blackburn who has been selecting and sharing weekly "Quaker Minutes" at the beginning of Introductions/ Joys & Concerns each week. She shared that

several F/friends have commented on how Pam's choices inform and stick with them during the week.

**Minute** – Meeting greatly appreciates the “Quaker Minutes” Pam Blackburn has been selecting and sharing at the beginning of Introductions/Joys & Concern each week and approves this special minute of appreciation for her faithful work.

The clerk will also send thanks and a copy of the minute to Pam – so she doesn't have to wait until the minutes are printed in the *Friendly Line* (and in case she doesn't see them in the minutes.)

**Appreciation to Hosts** – The clerk thanked the two or three people who have been volunteering to host Meeting each week. She then shared a concern that if this continues much longer those F/friends might burn out. She said these Friends should not be the only ones taking on this responsibility week after week and asked for others to step forward to help in this way. The clerk went on to share some of the basic tasks for hosting. They include: arriving early to unlock the front door and turn on the lights; making sure the computer and mic are turned on and logged on to Zoom; greeting people as they arrive; inviting visitors to sign the guest book and asking if they had visited a silent meeting before that day, if not, directing them to the brochures near the guest book and asking if they have any questions, perhaps sharing briefly about what they can expect in worship; if a Second Hour,

making sure someone present will shut down the computer before leaving, and if no Second Hour making sure it is put to sleep or shut down before leaving; turning off lights; and locking the front door before leaving.

Katie Jacoby is currently working on putting together easy to understand instructions for starting and ending use of the computer and easy directions for connecting the computer to the Meeting's Zoom address, including a couple of basic troubleshooting recommendations if something doesn't seem to be working correctly.

*\*The recording clerk learned after business meeting that the Outreach Committee was already in the process of developing a checklist to remind F/friends of hosting tasks. They also hope to provide a Second Hour sometime in the new year to share information and ideas about how we can each help newcomers feel welcome, answer questions they may have about Meeting, and talk about Quaker faith and practice in a simple, general way, etc. The Outreach Committee hopes to work with Hospitality Committee on several of these items.*

**Meeting Closes** – With no additional business, meeting for worship with attention to business ended with a period of silent worship.

The next meeting for worship with attention to business is scheduled for 01/09/2022.

### **You Can Mail DMVF Contributions**

Interested in helping to support the Meeting, but won't be visiting the Meetinghouse in the near future?

Feel free to mail donations to the Meetinghouse any time! Just send to:

Des Moines Valley Friends  
Meeting  
c/o Treasurer  
4211 Grand Ave  
Des Moines, IA 50312

### **NEWS of OUR FRIENDS**

We are very sorry to hear news of the passing of long-time DMV Friend **Joan Tjossem**. The family hopes to hold a memorial for her in late spring or early summer. An obituary will be shared when it is available. Condolences can be sent to the family c/o Norman Tjossem, Box 160, Ripton, VT, 05766.

### **AFSC's 'No Way to Treat a Child' Campaign Webinar, Jan 11**

Collective efforts to end the Israeli detention of Palestinian children are making a difference, says Jennifer Bing with AFSC's Palestine Activism Program in Chicago.

“This year, we have seen unprecedented congressional support for bold legislation on behalf of Palestinian rights,” says Bing.

AFSC invites you to join a webinar on the “No Way to Treat a Child” campaign on Tuesday, January 11 at 7 pm CDT that will focus on plans for 2022.

## Donations Needed

*Continued from page 1*

EGMA volunteers are happy to collect and distribute the donations. Friends are asked to put donations in a sack or box on top of the cabinets on the far wall of Meeting's kitchen and clearly label each container "Donation for EGMA" so volunteers know the donations are for them and not a project of our meeting.

If you have donations but cannot get them to the meetinghouse please call or text Deborah Fisch, liaison to EGMA, and she will arrange for them to be picked up and delivered to the meetinghouse.

## Query Discussion #4, Harmony within the Meeting

December 5th, 2021

Facilitated by Billie Wade,

Recorded by Brock Wommack.

Attending: Dorothy Lifka, Peter Clay, Andrea Holveck, Ann Robinson, Pam Blackburn, Jan Falb.

The recorder wishes to express that this discussion was more recording a stream of consciousness rather than the typical reply to the individual question prompts.

- A. What can we do to deepen our relationships with one another?
- B. How does gender affect the way we relate to each other?
- C. How does our Meeting balance the needs for honesty and kindness? What topics do we avoid for the sake of unity?
- D. When in conflict with others do we cultivate a forgiving spirit?
- E. Do we look to God in ourselves and seek to address that of God in those with whom we disagree?

## Responses

We try to understand and look past hatred to see the other side of it. Use a built-in and innate listening response while being there for one another.

A friend who grew up attending large congregations spoke of the toxic environment created when the size of the group allowed cliques and power plays to manifest. This was quite toxic and attending Friends showed another response is possible for worship.

One Friend described being a member of a programmed Meeting that actually decided to discharge the minister in order to restore harmony within its Meeting.

Harmony doesn't mean we all have to be the same. Harmony is by its definition a tone created by a grouping of different frequencies. The ACLU is an example of dissonant harmony! (Laughter) Cosmic elements are harmonized in their existence.

Harmony is so much more than just being nice. If being nice is an effort, then something is out of whack. But several Friends agreed that being nice is better than not caring it seems.

One Friend described attending a woman's retreat during which within the circle gathering, they were asked to start humming. The first few minutes were dissonant, but then remarkably, the humming came to an almost magical harmony. The Friend is still quite moved recalling the experience. Another recalled humming in a sports arena creating the same kind of experience within a stadium. It was suggested that this type of exercise be included

in next years Mid-Year and/or Yearly Meeting.

When there is disharmony within the Meeting on small issues, Friends usually make an effort to come to some kind of reconciliation. We're not the same, as individuals we have different passions which sometimes makes it difficult to find a place of unity.

It was suggested that it's better to try to address dissensions rather than hope they'll evaporate.

No matter what we're still here together; find forgiveness within becoming open to others.

Friends will have very strong opinions and feelings like anyone else, and we traditionally try to work through them within the collective eyes of our group.

Overarching Peace and a practice of unity gives one the sense of the Meeting rather than an act of consensus. Seeking unity within supports a willingness to be able to practice together. It is within the Testimonies of Peace in the World—if we're not doing it ourselves, how can we expect it of others? It's as if operating without a net—a person knows their motion by confidence in themselves and others.

Another Friend spoke of finding personal harmony by seeking better sources of journalism than what is being offered by big media in the US. It is hard to find the humanity and to seek unity when large groups insist that we argue or set us up to do so.

An alternative to violence is to assume the best of others, their kindness and goodness. In an



instance when one becomes annoyed at another in their difficulties, the simple response to is try and help them. For example, a friend shared a situation where a woman slowed checkout because she couldn't manage heavy packages. By just stepping in and assisting her, the way cleared.

Cheer up about the small things! Pay forward when possible! Watch something that helps you smile, like Teletubbies. (Laughter)

And finally, there can be great harmony from avoiding violence in our language when we begin to stop using labeled speech, such as in democrat or republican to explain a point of view.

The group ended with silence.

#### **Query #6: Education for February:**

ADVICE: Friends see an education which integrates our intellectual, emotional and spiritual dimensions and enables us to face difficult moral issues with courage.

While the religious education of our children is primarily the concern of parents, everyone benefits when the entire meeting is concerned with nurturing them. If a spirit of common concern is present, children will gain a sense of belonging to the larger community, and, knowing they are loved and respected, will be able to face the mysteries of life with trust.

Friends promote learning throughout life and encourage freedom of thought and inquiry in all educational pursuits. Our complex and changing world

demands that we learn to think and act creatively to meet its challenges.

QUERIES: How can we most effectively foster a spirit of inquiry and a loving and understanding attitude toward life?

What effort are we making to become better acquainted with the Bible, the teachings of Jesus, our Judeo-Christian heritage, the history and principles of Friends, and the contributions of other religions and philosophies to our spiritual heritage?

In what ways can we encourage an educational process that is consistent with the values Friends cherish? How do gender-based expectations affect the goals we set and the way we learn?

Do we take an active and supportive interest in schools, libraries and other educational resources in our community and elsewhere? How do we prepare ourselves and our children to play active roles in a changing world?

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#### **In preparation for Query # 6**

Friends are encouraged to review Scattergood School reports to the 2021 Annual Iowa Yearly Meeting Sessions. Learn more about this way that DMVF and other monthly meetings within IYMC seek to address our values and testimonies. Read the Head of School Report, The Farm Report and the Scattergood School Committee Report at <https://www.iymc.org/scattergood-school/>. Find out more at the Scattergood website, at <https://scattergood.org/>

#### **Des Moines Valley Friends**

**Meeting for Worship:** First days at 10 a.m., at the Meeting House and by Zoom via email invitation from clerk, Dorothy Lifka, at [dmlifka@yahoo.com](mailto:dmlifka@yahoo.com)

**Meeting for Worship/Business:** Regularly held on the second First Day each month at 1 p.m.

#### **Second Hours Coming Soon:**

Sunday, Jan. 23: Day of Remembrance

Sunday, Jan. 30: "Journey to Friends" with Matthew Gillespie and Ann Robinson

**Query Discussions:** First Sundays at 1:30 Online & in person. Billie Wade, facilitator

**Child Care:** Temporarily suspended at the Meeting House. If you have a child who would like to be included in Zoom childcare or first day school for older youth, please contact Dorothy at [dmlifka@yahoo.com](mailto:dmlifka@yahoo.com).

#### **Building & Grounds:**

Questions about the building or grounds of the Meetinghouse can be directed to Building & Grounds Committee Convener, Charlie Brown, 515-689-6470.

#### **Hospitality Committee:**

If you see a housekeeping problem that needs attention, please contact the Hospitality Committee Convener Cindy Winchell, 515-720-5516

**Friendly Line:** Please send info for next Friendly Line by Friday, Jan 28, 2022, to Ann at [anny@mediacombb.net](mailto:anny@mediacombb.net)

#### **Find us online at:**

[www.desmoinesvalleyfriends.org](http://www.desmoinesvalleyfriends.org)

**Check out our Facebook** group for members/attenders. To be added, email Jan Falb, at [jfalb0326@yahoo.com](mailto:jfalb0326@yahoo.com)