

Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting

FRIENDLY LINE

March 2022



Update on Status of Edna Griffin Mutual Aid (EGMA) Activities

A report from DMV Friends Meeting's EGMA Liaisons Deborah Fisch & Peter Clay

In a regular email exchange this past month with Arianna Calleja (our contact person with the Edna Griffin Mutual Aid (EGMA)) she told me they have completed the move to their new long-term kitchen facilities. They have not been using the Meeting's kitchen for several weeks and all their gear has been moved out as well. This explains why the boxes and bags of usable winter clothing, and other winter gear had been able to pile up and spread out high and deep on the kitchen counter and the floor. Arianna said, "We have completely transitioned out of the kitchen. Thank you from all of us for letting us use the space for so long and being patient with us as we found another place to work out of. I hadn't realized that there was so much there!"

I am reminded of the times that Jesus, seeing that people were hungry and tired called over his disciples and told them to feed the people. Even though the disciples initially questioned him, pointing out that they barely had enough to feed themselves, Jesus repeated his request advising them to share what they had and it would be enough and he took what they came up with (five

loaves and two fish in one case (and seven loaves and a few small fish the second time) blessed it and had it sent out among the people gathered (5,000 men). [We aren't told how many women and children yet we know many of both were present in those who sought to hear him.]

I have come to believe the miracles of the feeding of the thousands happened because the people, seeing that Jesus's disciples sharing their own food, decided they could also add what they had brought along. I believe that EGMA and Mutual Aid operate in the same way. They bring together people and organizations, inviting them to share what they have, and when
(continued on page 7)

IYMC MidYear Meeting: 'Joy, Irreverence & Working with Love

Midyear Meeting of Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) will be held 26-27 Third Month (March 26-27). With story, song and more, Decorah Friend Ruth Hampton will share with Friends about Joy, Irreverence, and Working with Love.

More information and registration information and forms can be found at the Yearly Meeting website, www.iymc.org (downloadable paper and electronic registrations are available).

A Quaker Minute SPIRIT'S PRESENCE

There is a living, dynamic, spiritual presence at work in the world which is both within us and outside of us. We use many names to describe this spiritual presence. Early Friends spoke of "the seed planted in the heart". Today Friends speak of God, Spirit, the Divine, the Light, the inward light, the inner light, Christ, Truth, Love.

-- One in a series on Quaker history and practice, contributed by Pam Blackburn and Jan Falb. This month, adapted from Nine Core Quaker Beliefs, as presented by Arthur Larrabee on Quakerspeak.

Midwest AFSC Offers Virtual Workshop on Alternatives to Police Response

Are you interested in learning how communities are responding to emergencies without involving the police? Join Midwest AFSC's eight-week participatory workshop to learn more, set for every other Saturday at noon CT starting March 12. See what community-based programs are working across the country. Assess the needs and assets for emergency response in your own community, and prepare to develop a concrete plan to move toward community-based justice.

**Des Moines Valley
Friends Meeting
Meeting for Worship with
Attention to Business
2/13/2022**

Meeting began with a period of worshipful Silence.

Those present included: Dorothy Lifka, clerk; Deborah Fisch, recording clerk; Gordon Bivens, Peter Clay, Claire Cumbie-Drake, Catherine Dietz-Kilen, David Drake, Kelsea Gillespie, Andrea Holveck, Jack Holveck, Susan Meyers, Fred Nelson, DJ Newlin, Billie Wade.

The clerk read a passage from Confessions of a Reluctant Quaker Treasurer by Michael Sperger in the August 2021 "Friends Journal:"

Within the Quaker world in the United States, we also live with two financial issues that might be less common elsewhere in our lives: a persistent narrative of decline and the special challenges posed by forever money. We seem convinced as a group that Quakerism is doomed to fade away. We believe this despite the incredible longevity of our meetings and schools. Abington Meeting had already existed for nearly 100 years when the Declaration of Independence was written!

Review of 01/2022 Minutes – Friends reviewed the January 2022 minutes as published in the most recent issue of *Friendly Line*. If a F/friend finds a typo or other correction in the minutes within the next week, the minutes will be amended by the recording clerk so they can be corrected for the official Minutebook. Any major error will be brought

before the next business meeting for reapproval.

Minute– The minutes for the 01/2022 business meeting were reviewed and approved.

If within the next week a member on further perusal of the minutes finds a typo or an error in the text of the minutes they are asked to contact the recording clerk (Deborah Fisch).

Treasurer's Report (Catherine Dietz- Kilen shared the report of treasurer Kelsea Gillespie who could not attend the meeting) –

At the end of December, we were 50% of the way through our fiscal year. We had received 59% of our anticipated revenue and accrued 35% of budgeted expenses. Thanks to all who gave so generously around the holiday season.

Minute– Catherine Dietz-Kilen reviewed the balance sheets for 12/2021. The treasurer's report was approved with appreciation.

Finance Committee Report (Catherine Dietz-Kilen, convener) The Finance Committee met on 01/25/2022 via Zoom.

Attendees: Catherine Dietz-Kilen and Kelsea Gillespie

The Committee reviewed and approved the December financial statements. We are halfway through our fiscal year and have received 58% of our budgeted receipts. We are also being cautious with our expenses. The only expense that exceeds 50 percent of the budgeted amount is the website. This is because we pay for a full year at a time.

Of note, are the flexible funds to handle the transition of \$3,000.00 assigned to the Finance Committee. There have

been no matters that have arisen that have been considered by the Finance Committee for the use of those funds.

We also took note of the unrestricted use of funds intended for individuals to access technology to be able to join the Des Moines Valley Friends via Zoom or other means. There have not been any applications, so there are funds that are still untouched.

The quarterly payment to the Iowa Yearly Meeting (C) has been made as planned.

The inaugural Friendly Audit is scheduled for 02/08/2022, at 6:00 p.m. The Audit Committee members are Billy Wade and Dorothy Lifka. Documents for the audit have already been sent out to the Audit Committee.

Catherine will give brief opening instructions and the Audit Committee will begin the audit. The audit is scheduled for two hours. We recognize that this is the initial audit, and our intent is not only to provide an audit of our financial records but also to learn so that this audit and future audits can be effective as possible.

We talked about the Peace and Social Concerns Committee's budget for the current fiscal year and determined that it would be wise to simply place the budgeted funds into the designated Peace and Social Concerns account. Therefore, there would not be any distinction between the designated funds and budgeted funds. They will be handled in the same way as we handle the Sharing Funds.

We are about ready to begin our budget process for the next

fiscal year. For our next meeting, Kelsey will have a budget document prepared shifting everything to the next fiscal year starting with the figures we currently have budgeted. The Finance Committee will need to hear from all of the other committees regarding their request for budgeted funds for the next fiscal year. We plan to have some very initial discussions at our February meeting with the goal of completing our proposed budget at the April meeting. The proposed budget can then be presented to the business meeting in May and acted upon at the business meeting in June 2022.

Other business – The Finance Committee is tasked with determining when the budgeted contributions to the affiliated organization should be paid. Because our receipts to date are more than we budgeted, we are in a healthy position and can go ahead and pay budgeted contributions. Kelsey was directed to make those payments.

Minute – Meeting listened with interest to the report of the Finance Committee. The scheduled Friendly Audit was postponed because the assistant treasurer could not be present. They expect to have a report from the Audit Team for next month's business meeting. If Friends are interested in attending the Friendly Audit they are to contact Catherine. She reminded Friends the audit is not just of the treasurer's books, but also looking at how the Finance Committee is doing.

Catherine also noted that the designated budget amount for Peace and Social Concerns will

now be kept in the same manner as that of Ministry & Counsel. The funds will be more readily available to be spent as approved by the P&SC Committee. Catherine clarified the difference between designated and budgeted funds.

The proposed FY23 budget will be presented at the May business meeting and then considered for approval at the June business meeting. Committees are asked to review their budgets and get their budget requests for the new fiscal year to the Finance Committee as soon as possible. We approve the report with thanks.

Ministry & Counsel Committee Report (Gordon Bivens, convener) – We considered with pleasure Billie Wade's application for membership and also the make-up of a possible clearness committee. The convener of M&C was asked to check with Billie about some members she might like on the clearness committee before formally appointing it.

The budget for M&C was discussed. It was concluded that \$100, the amount in the current year's budget, would likely be sufficient for the FY23 budget.

We discussed the possibility of a variety program (talent show) with members and attenders. Carol Spaulding-Kruse will follow up to find a date.

Discussion was held on the possible need for fire-proof boxes for membership files.

We were mindful of the continuing need to hold in the Light and contact members and attenders facing special circumstances.

Minute– Meeting received the report of the Ministry & Counsel Committee and Friends were delighted to learn that Billie Wade has asked for a membership clearness committee. Meeting approves of the idea of having a variety show sometime this spring and looks forward to other opportunities to gather outside of meeting for worship and committee meetings, whether via Zoom or preferably in person if possible. We appreciate the work of the committee.

Peace & Social Concerns Committee Report (Patty Wengert, convener) – The committee convened via Zoom on 02/01/2022. Those attending were: Patty Wengert, Billie Wade and Peter Clay. Jack Holveck was at their farm and unable to Zoom with us. The committee meeting opened with a moment of Silence and prayer.

*Have faith
Believe in healing
Trust the possibilities
Embrace your Truth
Release your fear
Celebrate the Love that exists
in your life
Ask for what you need,
Listen to forgiveness
Be yourself always
Nurture your soul
Hold onto your hope.*

We reviewed the financial report of our meeting to remind ourselves which organizations Meeting affiliates with for our charitable activism, time and/or funds. We also reviewed the two donations we previously approved and agree that those should be made from the P&SC Committee funds at this time.

Those donations are to the Catholic Worker and the Afghan family we are co-sponsoring. The fund for co-sponsoring the Afghan family should be sent to the Unitarian Church earmarked to be directed to the family. The Afghan family should be expected in Des Moines in mid-March, as it can take 90 days after they begin the sign-up processing. More information will follow.

We are going to follow-up with our meeting about why the Edna Griffin Mutual Aid will no longer need the meetinghouse and where they have relocated to give further support in the future.

We want to follow up with Meeting to set up two possible Second Hour discussions, namely 1) having Frank Cordaro come speak on the Drone Center in Des Moines Iowa; 2) Jeff Kisling of Bear Creek Meeting to lead a discussion on the concept of the Mutual Aid paradigm of various peace groups going forward as a means to conduct our time and energy on peace and social justice matters in our community and state more efficiently and beneficially.

Peter participated in an Iowa Yearly Meeting (C) Peace and Social Concerns Committee meeting called by clerk Jeff Kisling to review how various monthly meetings in our yearly meeting are approaching their peace and social concerns work. We heard about direct action and also about financial contributions to groups that are doing good work around our state. Peter shared about Des Moines Valley's collaboration with Edna Griffin Mutual Aid, and we talked about how mutual

aid is becoming a new framework for doing peace and justice work. Four meetings of Iowa Yearly Meeting attended-Bear Creek, Iowa City, Penn Valley and Des Moines Valley Friends.

We feel that as a meeting we should discuss our goals and future P&SC Committees. It is also a good time to discuss our connection to American Friends Service Committee and Friends Committee on National Legislation, and whether we wish to be more or less proactive.

Thank you to everyone in our meeting. Be well.

The committee will meet again on the first Tuesday of March (03/01) at noon.

Minute– We listened carefully to the P&SC Report. We appreciate Peter Clay's participation in the Zoom meeting set up by Jeff Kisling, co-clerk of IYM(C)'s Peace & Social Concerns Committee for the IYM(C) monthly meetings' Peace & Social Concerns Committees (P&SC) and the members of IYMC's P&SC Committee. We appreciate our committee's plans to host Second Hours with guest speakers on the Drone Center in Des Moines and on Mutual Aid. We also look forward to the possibility of the Committee leading us in consideration of our relationships with AFSC, FCNL, and the work of our own P&SC committee sometime in the future.

EGMA Report - See the report from Deborah Fisch and Peter Clay, beginning on page 1 of FL.

Minute– We listened with interest to the EGMA report. We reflected briefly on the time we shared our kitchen with EGMA

and wonder if there are ways we can continue to support their efforts, such as through continuing to donate winter clothing and gear, making a regular financial donation, a donation in a time of special need or in some other way. Perhaps the Des Moines Mutual Aid group, whose office is in the original portion of Friends House, would have some ideas of other Mutual Aid project with which we could work.

Deborah is asked to contact EGMA in the next week to let them know there are a few more donations for them in the basement, to ask for their new address and contact information so we can continue to be involved with the group since they are no longer using our kitchen and ask about return of the meetinghouse key. Deborah will share the new contact information with the editors of *Friendly Line* when she gets it. Meeting approved the report with thanks to the liaisons for their work with EGMA during the organization's time using our facility.

Hospitality Committee Report

– Present: Dorothy Lifka, David Drake, Charlie Brown, Andrea Holveck. Charlie Brown agreed to convene the committee. He will also take responsibility for ordering paper goods and cleaning supplies for the meeting house; in-person meeting hosts should check supplies each week and report any needs to Charlie. We discussed a talent show (in person and on zoom) and showing movies at the meetinghouse.

Minute– Meeting received the report of the Hospitality Committee with interest.

It was suggested that the kitchen and dining area receive a thorough cleaning since it has had dozens of meals prepared and many months have passed since we last used it. It was noted that M&C Committee also mentioned interest in holding a talent show.

Friends wondered about the possibility of having a clean-up day for the lawn and exterior of the building later in the spring. The clerk will contact the members of Building and Grounds and ask them to organize a spring cleanup day in collaboration with the Hospitality Committee

Old Business – No old business was brought forward.

New Business

AFSC Sharing Opportunity – Peter Clay, one of IYM(C)'s representatives to the AFSC Corporation has helped arrange a Zoom presentation by Jon Krieg, who is the remaining AFSC staff in Des Moines and a Meeting attendee. All IYM(C) meeting clerks are being sent emails inviting their interested members/attendees to join us. Jon has been asked to speak to F/friends about where AFSC is in its process of discerning how to implement the 10-year reorganizational plan that was approved approximately three years ago, and answer questions from attendees.

Peter said that this will be an opportunity for us to develop suggestions to be shared with AFSC concerning how they could better serve our meetings

and strengthen the bonds between us, including sharing ideas for current or possible future programs. This will be held via the Yearly Meeting's Zoom link on 02/27. Peter will share the Zoom link and more information when it is made available.

Minute – We appreciate that as one of the IYMC representatives on AFSC's Corporation Board, Peter is trying to keep our meeting apprised of AFSC plans, especially since Meeting is feeling less connected since AFSC pulled its programs from Friends House and for all intents and purposes out of Des Moines.

We are pleased that Jon Krieg has stayed in Des Moines, and we appreciate all he does to answer our questions and keep us informed about what is happening in the organization.

Friends House (FH) Board Quarterly Report (Fred Nelson gave oral report on behalf of Meeting representatives to the FH Board Billie Wade, Deborah Fisch and himself.) The board of Friends House Corporation met on 01/21/2022 via Zoom. Cole Fuller, the new clerk of the Board led the meeting. Heidi Yang of Iowa Immigrant Dreamers recorded the minutes. All three DMV Friends Meeting reps were present.

Much of the meeting was spent considering the proposed revisions for yet-to-be-approved new Friends House by-laws. The board members feel a pressing need to be able to approve new by-laws for the Friends House Corporation (Necessary because AFSC moved out of the building).

The sticking point continues to

be about decision-making processes, if, for some reason, DMVF Meeting determines the need to relocate due to financial or other circumstances. Other potential wording was suggested, but none around which members could find Unity. Therefore, the Board temporarily approved the proposed new House By-Laws, with the exception of the paragraph in question, agreeing that they would immediately look for a mediator to work with the Board to find wording that could be approved for that section at the next board meeting, at which time the new By-Laws will hopefully be ready for approval.

Fred brought to the Board's attention a concern of the Meeting that the plumbing for the House is very old and may need repair or replacement sometime sooner than later. The Meeting's concern is that FH has enough funds in budget and/or reserve to pay their share of repair or replacement if/when it becomes necessary. Managers reported that FH has a large reserve for that type of need.

There is one office empty at this time and more efforts need to be made to make sure any new renter's nonprofit or business falls within the guidelines for renters and that more needs to be done to advertise availability of the space. The House managers will put up a For Rent sign in the yard. Members will also look for other opportunities to let potential renters know of the vacancy.

Minute– We appreciate the work of our FH board members and share the concern about the timely approval of the by-laws and also the wording concerning

sale of the property should we need to change location. We will be interested to learn about results of the mediation.

We appreciate Fred carrying our concern about the age of the plumbing pipes and having the funds available to repair or replace their share if/when needed and are glad to know that FH has funds set aside for such a purpose.

We approve the report. We ask Fred or another FH rep to obtain a list of current occupants of FH, names of the staff, and contact information. We are reminded that we should go through one of our representatives to the Board if we want to contact the managers. Fred is the current representative serving as contact person.

Announcements

New Hosting List (Dorothy Lifka) – There is now a hosting list of individuals/couples willing to take turns serving as hosts for meeting for worship. If a host cannot serve on the date assigned they are asked to arrange for another host to cover for them. The list is posted on the bulletin board in the entry and *the clerk sent emails to the volunteer hosts*. She encouraged others to consider joining the hosting group so those currently serving won't have to host as often. Instructions for hosting will be emailed to hosts and a copy will also be in the cabinets near the front door.

Priorities for FCNL – The clerk reminded Friends that Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) traditionally asks their participating monthly meetings to consider a list of

legislative concerns that have been expressed and/or are currently primary priorities for the organization and rank them in order of their focus during the next legislative sessions. They will look at responses from meetings to develop their priorities. FCNL would like input from meetings by April. Claire Cumbie-Drake received a packet of information on how meetings might take up consideration of their request and she will share it with Meeting. Consideration of priorities will be taken up at the March business meeting.

Review of Reorganization of Membership Files –

The clerk shared that Andrea Holveck, DJ Newlin, Peter Clay, Deborah Fisch and she have been appointed to review the official and back-up records of Meeting. They have been asked to make sure information is up to date, filed in correct folders and a complete copy of records is in both files. Both files contain folders holding recordings of: the current and active members of the Meeting; members who are inactive (such as those living at a distance, not regularly attending meetings for worship or activities of Meeting, etc.); those who have transferred membership to another meeting or church or asked to be released from membership; those who have passed away; births/adoptions of children of members; marriages made under the care of Meeting. They also hold records of such things as burial requests, statements of conscientious objection, poetry, etc. Records of new members, transfers of membership in or out of Meeting, deaths, marriages, and births are

reported annually to the IYM(C) recording clerk to be recorded in the IYM(C) Recorder's Report and included in Yearly Meeting's statistical records. They are also asked to bring a recommendation on the best way to keep the records safe in case of fire, etc.

Midyear Meeting – The clerk reminded F/friends that Midyear Meeting will be held via Zoom, 03/26 & the morning of 3/27. Ruth Hampton, of Whittier Meeting and clerk of Scattergood Friends School Committee has been asked to be this year's presenter and she plans to share and explore "Joy, Irreverence, and Working with Love" through story, song, and more. Even though the pandemic necessitated the Midyear Meeting Planning Committee making the decision to meeting virtually again this year, they encourage monthly meetings to consider inviting F/friends to gather at their meetinghouses or in small groups in homes and attend via Zoom in groups so they have the opportunity to have some in-person worship and fellowship.

Visit <https://www.iymc.org> for more information or to register.

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 03/13/2022.

EGMA (cont. from page 1)
that happens others pitch in what small amount they feel they can offer and in the process there is enough, maybe not an overabundance, but *enough* for everyone.

As our sharing (of the Meeting's kitchen) with EGMA comes to an end I ask myself, "What and where am I called by the Spirit of Christ to share with others? What does Love ask Meeting to share, not just of our abundance, but of our time and gifts? Peter adds these good queries as well: What did our meeting learn from this experience? What does it mean for our community going forward? Are we called to follow-up to this sharing/mutual aid in some particular way? Will *Way Open* for us to discern where else our resources can be shared to mutual benefit?

Peter and I want to thank Meeting and EGMA for the opportunities to be of service.

Friends House Contacts

The nonprofit Iowa Immigrant Dreamers is the current manager for Friends House. They occupy the front offices previously occupied by the American Friends Service Committee.

If DMV Friends need to contact Friends House regarding issues, they should proceed through FH board members appointed by DMV Friends. Fred Nelson is the primary contact person between DMV Friends and FH. Other FH board members are Deborah Fisch and Billie Wade.

NEWS FROM A FRIEND **Reflections on Retirement** **from Charlie Brown**

Ann Robinson recently asked me what I planned to do with my retirement. I'm hoping to keep busy and luckily, I have lots to do. As some of you know I enjoy photography, especially film photography. I also enjoy camping, traveling to National and State Parks, and backpacking. I've also enjoyed spending time in the mornings with Susan.

I've recently started framing up the walls for a family/office and a bedroom in the basement of our new home. I have worked construction in the past including as the job superintendent on a large apartment building and garages in Ames, including a tunnel to connect the apartments with the garages. Following in my Dad's footsteps I've done a lot of research on the best current practices in framing walls and running the electrical. I must say I had a lot to learn. When I get these two rooms finished, I'll start in on a bathroom and darkroom for my photography.

I'm hoping to visit most of the State Parks in Iowa. I plan to start this adventure in the spring with a trip to Northeast Iowa. I plan to pick one park to camp in for a few nights and then visit other parks in the area. Iowa is blessed with a wonderful park system. I'm hoping to take grandchildren on some of these trips.

Speaking of the grandchildren I've enjoyed and plan in the future to enjoy attending their extracurricular events. Just this past weekend I was able to watch the two youngest play basketball.

The two girls will give me lots to choose from including chorus, band, track(hurdles) and cheering. I was introduced to the Grandparents card. Gets me into all home events in a school year for \$20.

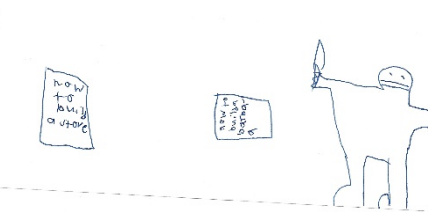
The photography will be varied. I have many cameras at my disposal. A good Canon digital with several lenses and several other 35mm film cameras to choose from. Then there are the medium-format cameras that is where I started as a young boy with my first camera purchased at a garage sale for \$2. It was a Brownie Six-20 that was built in England, licensed by Kodak. It made the trip to the US when an American waist gunner returned to England for a reunion and forgot his camera at home and purchased this one. I have some film I shot with it back in the 60's and early 70's. I like to shoot landscapes and architecture most. I have an idea to shoot front porches in my travels and post them on Instagram. The idea came to me when I listened to a podcast about the theory about the disappearance of true 'front porches' affecting the nature of neighborhoods. I also enjoy photographing Graffiti.

During the recent cold weather, I've started walking in the Skywalk downtown and a couple of the malls. On the skywalk I prefer the weekends when traffic is reduced, so at times I can walk mask-less. In the malls I never remove my mask and try to keep as far from others as I can.

This spring gardening will start up again, which I enjoy. I've recently put up a couple bird feeders that have not seen many customers yet. I have had several

Juncos lately, but as they are mostly ground feeders, I've sprinkled feed on the ground and the deck railing.

I think this is a good start for me and look forward to this change in my life.



Artwork (above) contributed by Adeline: A scene from "The Knight and the Dragon" by Tomie dePaola (which they read recently with Dorothy).

Query Discussion #6: Education

Billy Wade, facilitator; Brock Wommack recorder. Other Friends present: Andrea and Jack Holveck, DJ Newlin, Dorothy Lifka, Ann Robinson.

We began in idle chatter as members became present on Zoom. The chat progressed as one Friend spoke about his inability to understand violence. Another Friend told of her experiences in educational workshops, where colors were assigned to depict a personality. She would assign the color blue to his non-violence.

He responded with a chuckle that his Hebrew friends in Chicago called him their "goyem bleu" their blue boy as a way of saying gay.

The group settled in silence.

Concerning educational resources, Friends agreed that low pay and lack of resources and general support, not to mention growing outright attacks

politically (and even physical threats), must be making teachers feel very downcast these days.

We seem to have been in harmony that for such valuable members of our society, they need support at higher levels that reflect their value and challenging work. That needs to include greater funds to educational bricks and mortar concerns. This is possibly a rallying call for Friends to gather around as a project for consideration.

One Friend responded that there seems to be a lack of knowledge in younger people about the experiences of their elders. It comes from the changes in education which began 60 years ago, lacking the-true-and-true methods of generations that came before. One Friend reminisced a moment when they were playing music and Peggy Lee came on. A young adult said, "Who's Peggy Lee?!" Point taken.

Another Friend recalled being at the food court at the mall when descending on the escalator was a group of young people conversing using profanity at the top of their lungs. It was a most disheartening experience because they were oblivious to the others in the court and were showing a form of ignorance by using so much profanity. Manners are no longer a part of the educational experience it seems. That's huge.

Then one Friend noted wisely that teachers are expected to educate, not discipline.

Friends then discussed the Meeting's connection to Scattergood School. One questioned our relationship with changes at Scattergood School,

not mentioning any specific concerns. Another said that the pandemic had made her feel lost and out of touch with her relationship with Scattergood. It is her concern, not of the school's doing.

There are scholarships available to Scattergood, especially for Quaker youth. Scholarships availability doesn't help with students living with shackled brains. Too many computer games, little guidance to a spiritual life seems to be present in the mass media unless one considers the big box churches and even those limit the individual creativity. A scholarship could offer one the ability to access a new mindset and experience.

A Friend then offered her thoughts on children in society's present opportunities. We don't know yet what the outcome will be because of the attitudes, and disrespect to others so prominent in our midst. It suggests there is little joy in these people's lives. Children are surrounded by the violence in movies and games, yet take no real joy out of it.

Another offered that priorities are skewed—evil is normal and is out of balance in our culture. We need the bright spot! Be Iowa nice (chuckles) if that still exists.

It is difficult to attract teachers to the profession because the overall society seems to not care about treating teachers badly.

One Friend recounted being a part of a Hindu wedding and in that group teachers are held in high respect, which felt good and as if breathing in fresh air.

As a group we offered our thanks for our Meeting's First

Day School. A friend commented that it does take a lot of work and is discouraging when the same people are always responsible.

Then a Friend spoke to the underlying energy of education; what do you need? Less dogma aids in finding creative means in education. She admitted bristling to Christianity in context as a single source of educating youth.

The group turned its discussion to gender-based expectations in education. It was asked and unanswered how do Quakers see gender? Overall, men have often stepped up to teaching both within their family as well as within Meeting. George Welch's example was remembered.

Another asked how many men Clerks have served the Meeting in recent years? Thus we were reminded of the service of David Drake, Barclay Kuhn, and Bill Howard.

By incorporating children within the meeting we are providing a discipline by example. We learn social practices in the guise of meeting being a family affair. After all kids learn by example, and really don't learn much by being told what to do or think.

Query # 8: Home and Family, for April 2022

Life is meant to be lived from a Center, a divine Center—a life of unhurried peace and power. It is serene. It takes not time, but it occupies all our time.

-- Thomas Kelly

ADVICE: Historic testimonies of the Religious Society of Friends against taking oaths, joining secret organizations, gambling and using addictive substances

grew out of efforts of Friends to live with integrity and consistency. To swear an oath implied that one is obliged to be truthful only under oath. Joining secret organizations, gambling and using addictive and/or consciousness-altering substances were recognized as practices which diverted resources from useful purposes, distracted attention from the Inner Light, and placed obstacles in the way of Friends seeking to lead lives of integrity. We recognize the spirit of these testimonies and endeavor to apply the same principles in our lives today.

Honesty and simplicity are essential parts of personal responsibility. We manifest our commitment to Truth in all we do. We can have joy and beauty in our lives without allowing material things to dominate them. We need to free ourselves from distractions that interfere with our search for inner peace, and accept with thanksgiving all that promotes fullness and aids in service to the Divine Center.

QUERIES

How do we center our lives in the awareness of God the Spirit, so that all things may take their rightful places?

How do we structure our individual lives in order to keep them uncluttered with things and activities?

How does meeting help us examine our personal lives for simplicity?

Do we choose recreational activities which foster mental, physical and spiritual health?

How are our lives affected by tobacco, alcohol and drug use?



Artwork (above) contributed by Ezra, showing how important it is to care for the Earth.

What can we do to deal with problems resulting from their use?

What can we do to recognize and deal with unhealthy ways we treat ourselves?

How do we ensure that we act with fairness and integrity?

Are we sensitive to our own use of language which may be offensive or oppressive to others?

Thank You for Your Support

The Des Moines Valley Friends Finance Committee wants to express our deep appreciation for the many ways members and attenders generously support our community, including through gifts of time and talents.

Financial contributions should be sent to Treasurer, Des Moines Valley Friends, 4211 Grand Ave., Des Moines, Iowa, 50312.

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

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

Second Hours Coming Soon:
Sunday, March 20 – Talent Show (Charlie Brown)
March 27 – (pending confirmation) Drone warfare (Frank Cordaro/Dorothy).
April 17 – Peace & Social Concerns committee presentation (directly after worship)

Query Discussions: First Sundays at 1:00 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.

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 Charlie Brown, 515-689-6470.

Friendly Line: Please send info for next Friendly Line by Thursday, March 31, 2022, to Ann at anny@mediacombb.net

Find us online at:
www.desmoinesvalleyfriends.org

Check out our Facebook group for members/attenders. To be added, email Jan Falb, at jfalb0326@yahoo.com