

Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting

FRIENDLY LINE

April 2023



IYMC to Gather for Mid-Year Meeting, April 15-16

Midyear Meeting of Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) will be held 15-16 of Fourth Month (April) in a hybrid format, both online and in person at Bear Creek Meetinghouse. The theme of this year's sessions are "Meeting in the Middle" with resource person Helen Thorpe, Quaker author and storyteller.

Helen will share stories from her personal experience, and elicit some of our own, centered on the desire to have constructive dialogue across differences -- and finding a meeting place where they can be considered.

Midyear Meeting begins after breakfast on Seventh Day (Saturday) and ends with lunch on First Day (Sunday). A short business meeting/Interim Meeting will happen on 7th day at 3:30 PM.

Watch the yearly meeting website (www.iymc.org) for details and registration information.

Get Involved in Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative

The representatives, and members of the nominating, ministry & counsel, and interim committees are chosen by monthly meetings.

The other committee members and representatives to Quaker-

affiliated organizations are chosen by the IYM(C) nominating committee. Dorothy Lifka is currently DMVF's member on this committee. She has provided a list of positions available (starting on page 4 of this FL). Please contact her at dmlifka@yahoo.com if you would like to be on one of the other committees.

This is a great opportunity to give DMVF a voice at the yearly meeting level and to get to know other members of IYM as well as to be of service to the Friends community.

Please consider whether you might be led to serve on one of these committees and learn more about IYMC. IYMC will be held this year, July 26-30, though attendance at the yearly gathering is not required to participate in many of the committees.

Representatives Prior to the annual sessions, each monthly meeting shall appoint two Friends to serve as representatives at yearly meeting sessions. Their first meeting shall take place before the first business session.

Duties are to:

- select its own clerk
- attend the sessions of yearly meeting and meetings of the representatives committee
- name a person to call for the opening of business at the first session

A Quaker Minute: Individual Interpretation & Spiritual Discernment.

Friends believe that each person is capable of direct, unmediated experience of the Light. What the Light reveals to us is "mediated through our humanness" and passes through our multiple lenses, which include personality, gender, age, experience, culture, time, world view, mental models and belief."

These lenses focus on parts of the Light so that our experience of it is an interpretation that is unique to the individual at a particular point in time and place and therefore partial. We understand it is not the "whole" Truth.

Inspired by "Individual Infallibility & Community Discernment" by Murray Short, Australia Yearly Meeting *One in a series on Quaker history and practice, contributed by Pam Blackburn*

- name readers to assist the clerks at yearly meeting
- suggest a budget and the amount to be raised by apportionment from the monthly meetings for the offer names for yearly meeting approval to serve on the Exercise, Epistle, Special Replies, and Auditing Committees, and as yearly meeting Reporters coming year.

(continued on page 4)

DMVF Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, March 12, 2023

Present: Carol Spaulding-Kruse; Virginia Smith; Andrea Holveck; Billie Wade; Deborah Fisch; Katie Jacoby; Brock Wommack; Patty Reynolds; Dorothy Lifka; Ann Robinson; Elaine Wedeking; Claire Cumbie-Drake

The Meeting opened with a moment of silence, followed by a short reading by the Clerk.

Approval of Minutes from February Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

Minute: The Minutes were approved with one correction. Deb Fisch is trained to facilitate dialogue through Honest Conversations, not “Unpacking the Backpack,” as reported in the February minutes.

Announcements

Upcoming second hour discussions:

March 26 – FCNL Seeking Divine Guidance and Holding Compassion on Abortion
Friends discussed whether the Meeting is ready to have this discussion, emphasizing the importance of a clear structure for the discussion. The Meeting will move forward with discussion of this topic, with the focus of the initial session being to discern the purpose and structure of further discussion.

April 16 – Live on Zoom from Brock Wommack’s home. BUSEUM students will take your questions

April 23 – Deb Fisch will lead a discussion on issues related to

white privilege, based in part on the article by Peggy McIntosh - Unpacking the Knapsack of White Privilege

FCNL Workshops

Friends are encouraged to visit the links attached to the agenda emailed by the Clerk and communicate with the Clerk about workshops they would be interested in seeing at the Meeting.

Mid-Year Meeting is April 15 – 16, 2023, with an option to appear by Zoom.

Hanna Clampitt memorial is upcoming. Her spouse, Phil Clampitt, has written a memoir about her that Carol will plan share through the Friendly Line.

BUSEUM home stays for five students are needed on Thursday, April 6, 2023. Anyone who can host should contact the Clerk. Friends discussed the possibility of a potluck for the BUSEUM students on April 6th.

Committee Reports

Treasurer's Report (Kelsea Gillespie)

Minute: Friends reviewed and approved the financial report.

Finance Committee: no written report

Friends were reminded that committees need to provide their proposed budget requests to the Finance Committee by March 26.

Ministry & Counsel (Jim Dietz-Kilen) We gathered at our appointed time (Sunday, March 5, 2023) via zoom, with Gordon Bivens, Peter Clay, Deborah Fisch and Jim Dietz-Kilen (convener) in attendance. Andrea Holveck was unable to join because she has a bad cold and Jack has tested positive for

COVID. We continue to hold them both in the Light.
Sharing Fund—We reviewed the fund balance (\$1,370.03 as of January) and that with planned \$10 monthly allocations to the fund, we could expect that to grow to \$1,410.03 by the end of our 30 June fiscal year.

We also reminded ourselves that the meeting used to have a fund to help members and attenders with expenses for such things as attending meetings of Quaker-based organizations, studying at Pendle Hill or going to a Quaker Camp. This fund was laid down several years ago, because there had not been requests for such assistance for a couple of years. The understanding has since been that such requests can be made of the Sharing Fund. In light of all this, we decided to request an increase in the monthly allocation for the Sharing Fund to \$20. We also want to remind Friends that individuals have, from time-to-time, made designated gifts to the Sharing Fund and that this is still an option. We just want to be sure that such gifts do not take away from support for the Meeting’s general fund.

We then considered a request to help Logan Jimenez with expenses for his upcoming participation in the FCNL Lobby Day later this month. Logan has become a regular attender in recent months, and we are pleased to support his deeper Quaker engagement by providing \$385 to help with his expenses. Logan has offered to present a Second Hour on his experiences, an idea that the committee endorses.

Second Hour for Discernment on FCNL & Possible Position on Reproductive Health/Abortion—FCNL is asking Meetings to consider the question of whether they should take a position on this issue. They have not taken one in the past because they found there was not unity amongst Friends. With the overturning of Roe v. Wade, FCNL is revisiting this question with Meetings.

We were asked to consider whether we would recommend a Second Hour on this question and we do. Carol has a “soft hold” on 19 March for such a discussion and we propose holding it then. FCNL has prepared a guide for dialogues on this issue and we would like to use that resource, with M&C members facilitating.

Minute: The Meeting accepted and approved the report, with gratitude for the work of the Committee.

Nominating Committee (Claire Cumbie-Drake) From Kelsea Gillespie: I have been so grateful for the chance to serve as treasurer these past two years, but as the kids get older and with our distance from Des Moines, I think it will be time for me to step down at the end of the fiscal year.

I was hoping nominating committee might be able to find a replacement soon- hopefully by mid-March at the latest- so that I can begin transferring knowledge and files immediately, and to allow the incoming treasurer to be part of a few months of statements/meetings before the transition is complete. I expect it will take some time to bring someone up to speed and am

hoping to have that process completed by July 1.

Minute: Friends are asked to contact the Nominating Committee if they are interested in serving in the capacity of Treasurer or assistant Treasurer.

Building & Grounds (Dick Douglass)

This month the committee met for one Zoom meeting and three work sessions. Issues addressed include:

1. Members met with Shawnee Sorrenson the new owner of Clean Des Moines who was very helpful and responsive in reviewing our contract. Currently the Meeting House is cleaned every two weeks, usually on Saturday. As usage increases, we can increase frequency.
2. Since the committee has taken on the responsibility for coordinating the service of Clean Des Moines, we are recommending that the funding for that service be shifted from the current Hospitality Committee budget to the Building and Grounds maintenance budget.
3. The committee agreed to clear snow off the sidewalk leading to the Meeting House in situations where snowfall is less than one inch (no snow-removal service under those conditions.) Thanks to Deborah Fisch for identifying that need.
4. The spring maintenance of our geothermal is scheduled for Tuesday, March 7, with James of Holt Heating. He is the technician who correctly diagnosed the part we needed to keep the system going this fall. We are hopeful we can

keep the system functional with regular maintenance.

Addendum: Members of the B&G committee met with James of Holt Plumbing on 3/7/32 for seasonal maintenance of the geothermal. We decided to purchase a one-year maintenance agreement in the interest of lower costs on heating and plumbing services and priority access to service. With the agreement, there is no charge for seasonal maintenance calls (excluding repairs needed.) This service call required the replacement of a capacitor (we saved \$45 with the agreement).

Maintenance agreement: \$359

Capacitor: \$305.25
Total: \$664.25

5. We are planning a spring clean-up event sometime in April which will include window washing, which was quite fun a few years ago. More to follow on this.
6. Recent tasks completed include spot-cleaning the carpet with a steamer (Charlie), replacing outside ceiling lights (Fred), securing filters for the geothermal (Bob). And thanks to all three for their presence, concern for the Meeting and their know-how.

Please be in touch with any of us should you spot a B&G issue.

Minute: The Meeting received the report, with great appreciation for the work of the committee and for the convener’s thorough report. Friends discussed Building and Grounds increasing their budget request to

provide for an increase to weekly cleaning and to determine later if the weekly cleaning is needed as use of the Meeting House increases.

Peace & Social Concerns (Patty Wengert) The Committee met on Feb. 7, 2022 - In attendance were Billie Wade, Patty Wengert and David Drake

We started with a moment of silence and a short statement for peace and hope.

We discussed Billie's great presentation about race, and her experience with being the only black person in our meeting and her ongoing sharing of her experience with our meeting and in our community. I especially thanked her for the reminders of the disruption of the 235 Freeway to our black community businesses, churches, schools, houses and families. We look forward to further sharing. A 235 reparations movement was mentioned and could be a further discussion point.

We will Co-sponsor two Peace events, The Bishop Dingman Peace Award Dinner of Sat. March 4, 2023, and the Palm Sunday Procession for Peace of April 2, 2023. We are sharing the expense of these peace events with other peace groups.

We approved a donation to the DMARC food bank of \$100 dollars.

Our December Committee funds were reported at \$1,783.95 of the treasurer report.

Minute: The Meeting reviewed the report, with appreciation for the work of the committee.

Friends also discussed the important issue related to the conflict between DMARC and

the Food Bank of Iowa. The Meeting representatives to DMARC will attend the annual meeting and listen to what the leaders of the organization are saying about the conflict.

Outreach Committee (Ann Robinson, Katie Jacoby) The Outreach and Communications Committee proposes a book club. The book we are suggesting, *In The Upper Country*, is set in 1859 Canada and inspired by true stories of Black refugee and Indigenous communities that forged alliances to protect themselves from white colonizers. It's a far-ranging story about the Underground Railroad from Virginia to Ontario, the power of remembering and storytelling, and the strength of community to survive tragedy.

We think this story fits well with our meeting beginning to delve more deeply into the United States' "original sin" of slavery and our collective history of oppression of native peoples. We are considering a four-week time frame in April or May, when we would meet for one hour or so weekly. We plan to meet in person at the meetinghouse but also have the option for friends to join via videoconference.

Minute: The Meeting received and approved the report. Friends should contact Katie Jacoby if they are interested in participating in the book discussion.

Religious Ed Committee - no report

Ad Hoc Committee - no report

Hospitality Committee - no report

Other/New Business

Dorothy Lifka is on the IYM nominating committee. She will prepare a list of available committee positions for Friendly Line and encourages DVFM members/attenders to get involved with Yearly Meeting committees.

The Meeting closed with a moment of silence.



IYMC Committees & Positions *(continued from page 1)*

(Apportionments are not based strictly on numbers of members, but are discerned by the representatives who are familiar with both their meetings' financial situations and the yearly meeting's needs.)

- offer names for yearly meeting approval for clerk, assistant clerk, treasurer, assistant treasurer, and statistical recorder
- name a person to break meeting for worship on First Day
- suggest a time and place for the following year's annual sessions.

Other duties may be designated by yearly meeting. The representatives report at the closing session of yearly meeting regarding the fulfillment of the above duties.

Nomination Committee The duty of this committee is to suggest names for members of yearly meeting standing committees and representatives to other organizations for approval by yearly meeting. Well in advance of yearly meeting sessions, each monthly meeting

appoints a person to serve on the Nominating Committee. Each member of the Nominating Committee checks with members of their own monthly meeting who are currently serving on a yearly meeting standing committee or who would be potential nominees, to explore their willingness/ability to serve.

This committee meets during yearly meeting sessions. Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee takes care to include representation from the various monthly meetings in appointments to yearly meeting committees. Other duties may be assigned.

Archives Committee is charged with collecting and preserving publications, documents, and records important to yearly meeting.

Document Committee reads epistles and other correspondence received by yearly meeting and selects items to be read at annual sessions.

Entertainment Committee is charged with planning, coordinating and making arrangements for non-business activities at annual sessions. This includes evening programs, meals, child care and hospitality. Nominating Committee names the monthly meetings charged with this responsibility, in a three-year rotation and suggests a convener. The committee members are appointed by those meetings.

Junior Yearly Meeting Committee plans and coordinates activities during annual sessions for children entering grades 1-8.

Young Friends Planning Committee plans and coordinates

activities during annual sessions for high school age Friends.

Young Adult Friends Planning Committee is responsible for planning and coordinating activities for post high school age young adult Friends.

Interim Meeting serves in order to make possible official action of yearly meeting between annual sessions. Yearly meeting appoints 10 Friends to this body each year, each for a term of three years. The committee should include representation from all monthly meetings. The committee meets during Midyear Meeting and may call special meetings. All members are to be notified of called meetings.

Attendance of at least 10 members is required to transact business. If it is known that a member of Interim Meeting will not be able to attend a session, that member's monthly meeting may appoint a substitute. The Interim Meeting may draw on the treasury of yearly meeting such sums as may be necessary to conduct yearly meeting business.

Book Table Committee makes arrangements for books and other publications of interest to Friends, to be available for sale at annual sessions.

Midyear Meeting Planning Committee plans and makes arrangements for the program, facilities, child care and meals for Midyear Meeting.

Midyear Meeting Jr. Yearly Meeting and Young Friends Committees plan and coordinate activities for yearly meeting youth during Midyear Meeting.

Publications Committee is charged with producing the electronic and print publications

of yearly meeting, most notably minutes of each annual session and *Faith and Practice*, and maintaining the yearly meeting website.

Peace and Social Concerns Committee meets during annual sessions, Midyear Meeting and at other times at their discretion. They bring to yearly meeting business sessions or Interim Meeting drafts of letters to public officials, or may request that the yearly meeting take action on a specific issue. This committee has a budget out of which they can make donations to other organizations. The Earthcare Subcommittee of the Peace and Social Concerns committee provides a focus and shares resources for Friends' concern with preserving the bounty of God's creation.

Pendle Hill Scholarship Committee reviews applications and may award scholarships to Friends attending Pendle Hill programs.

Religious Education Committee receives reports from the various monthly meeting religious education committees and creates a summary report to yearly meeting. They may also respond to requests from monthly meetings for help in finding materials for religious education for children or adults.

IYM(C) Representatives to Friends Agencies

- AFSC Corporation
- FCNL General Committee
- Friends Peace Teams Council
- FWCC
- Quaker Earthcare Witness Steering Committee
- Iowa Peace Network Joint Oversight Committee

**Query # 10 Discussion:
Environmental
Responsibility
April 2nd, 2023**

Simplicity is at the root of the complexity of our interdependence with all of life. We are deeply and fully sustained by the mysterious web of life that we are but a part of. The key to this query is opening up to everything.

As we accumulate more and more things during our lives, a commitment to finding where the things we have accumulated can be put to use rather than end up in landfill is important.

Living near or on natural landscapes makes us want to give back, to support the natural processes that surround and sustain us. How can I be a co-creator with nature?

How can our individual choices make a difference in harmonizing our human presence with the rest of creation? Can we use less plastic? Can we bring in our own bulk containers to refill them where that is an option? Friends reflected that we could make different choices. What keeps us from doing that?

We take nature's bounty for our use without appreciating our role in disrupting the interdependence of all of life on planet Earth. How can we address the large numbers of people who seem unaware of these vital relationships? It seems so overwhelming.

Reverence for life must start with us, with each of us. It must start there.

In our own lives and communities we can support nature by not mowing our lawns in April and May to allow many



Logan Jimenez meeting with Iowa Senator Joni Ernst (above) during Spring FCNL Lobby Weekend activities in Washington, D.C., in March. Jimenez also met with Iowa Representative Zach Nunn (below). Thanks to Logan for representing Friends to Iowa members of Congress!



life forms to thrive. Our vision of healthy homes and surroundings must change!

Could our meeting hold off on mowing the grounds around our meetinghouse until June this year? How could we proceed with that? Could Des Moines Valley Friends help model new ways for our neighbors? Can we consider this at our April meeting for worship with attention to business?

-- notes submitted by Peter Clay

Quaker discernment around reproductive health and abortion

Last summer, the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, ending 50 years of legal precedent. This decision prompted Friends to reopen the conversation around what position, if any, Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) should advocate on reproductive health and abortion.

The FCNL Policy Committee is seeking guidance from Quaker communities on FCNL's policies in this area. This will guide the committee as it forms its recommendation on whether or how to change FCNL's Policy Statement guidance on reproductive health and abortion. Responses will be due by May 1, 2023.

These are challenging, emotional topics to discuss. We encourage you to hold compassion for each other as these conversations unfold. Tools such as guides to dialogues around abortion can help your conversation honor both the complexity and the urgency surrounding this discernment. Tips include honoring stories from lived experience, taking short breaks for moments of reflection, and building cultures of trust and understanding.

The Policy Committee plans to bring a recommendation to the General Committee at its Annual Meeting in November 2023. Find more information at: <https://www.fcnl.org/about/world-we-seek/legislative-priorities/request-discernment-regarding-reproductive-health-and-abortion>

NEWS OF & FOR FRIENDS

Long-time Iowa City Meeting member **Dorothy D. Rogers**, died March 28, 2023. Dorothy was 96 and was living at Oaknoll retirement community in Iowa City. A memorial service will be held for her at Oaknoll on April 30, 2023, at 2:30 p.m.

Michael Luick Thrans and the BUSEUM students were in Des Moines, April 6, and planned to visit a class of **Carol Spaulding-Kruse's** at Drake University. The website produced by the students is beautiful and informative. You can find it at [Heartland's Future](#).

A Friend suggests that we might want to be aware of the **Franklin Library** community fridge. It is stocked almost solely by community donations and donations are always needed. Milk and eggs "fly off the shelves" in the words of one librarian. Anyone can take what they need during library hours.

Also, at the Franklin Library, Books on the Margins evening book discussion may be of interest. The first discussion on April 13 is on Gender Queer by Maia Kobabe. Books are available at the library. Info at: <https://www.dmpl.org/event/reading-margins-book-discussion-10>

UPCOMING EVENTS

AFSC Annual Corporation Program, Keynote Address and Workshops, April 14

All are invited to attend the 2023 Annual Corporation Program of the American Friends Service Committee which is being held in-person and online. This year's theme "Connecting for Lasting Change" speaks to the importance of the

relationships that are built among Friends, with staff and community partners, and throughout a world in powerful need of the lasting change.

The keynote address on Friday, April 14 at 5:30 pm CT, will be given by civil rights activist Ambassador Andrew Young. On Friday and Saturday afternoons will be workshops. Topics include: Tanks, Tear Gas, and Assault Rifles; California Exposes Police Militarization and So Can You; Planting the Seeds for People and the Planet; and Light in Gaza.

[Link for further information and registration.](#)

"Think Twice Before Calling the Police" AFSC webinar series to begin in May

Many people have an understanding that police violence targets certain communities. Many want to avoid calling the police but don't know what to do in case of an emergency. Join AFSC for a four-part series that will provide you with concrete skills and strategies to avoid calling law enforcement unless absolutely necessary.

[Learn more or register to attend](#) Thursdays in May, 7:00-8:30 p.m. CT. Recordings will be available.

Hosting List for Upcoming First Days

Apr 9 – Charlie Brown
Apr. 16 – Charlie Brown
Apr 23 – Bob & Patty
Apr. 30 – Deb & Katie
May 7 – Ann Robinson

Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting for Worship: Sundays at 10 a.m., at the Meeting House and by Zoom via email invitation from clerk, Carol Spaulding-Kruse, at carol.spaulding@drake.edu

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

Upcoming Second Hours & Events:

April 23: White Privilege discussion (Deborah Fisch)

April 30: TBA

Query Discussions: First Sundays, 11:30 a.m. - Online & in person. Billie Wade, facilitator. May Query: Social & Economic Justice

Child Care: If you have a child who would like to be included in Zoom childcare or first day school for older youth, contact Dorothy at dmlifka@yahoo.com.

Building & Grounds: Questions about the building or grounds of the Meetinghouse to Building & Grounds Committee Convenor, Dick Douglass, 515-864-1119.

Hospitality Committee: Questions about housekeeping at the Meeting House to Hospitality Committee convenor Charlie Brown, 515-689-6470.

Friendly Line: Info for next FL due to Ann by April 28, 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.