

Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting

FRIENDLY LINE

February 2023



Hybrid Midyear Meeting scheduled for April 15-16 will feature theme Meeting in the Middle with Quaker author Helen Thorpe

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."

Helen Thorpe will be this year's resource person. She is an author, a deep listener, and a storyteller. Helen is part of Mountain View Meeting in Denver. Her published books include, "Just Like Us" and "The Newcomers."

How do we have constructive dialogue across differences in philosophy, perspective, and thought when discussing the current condition of our country, our meetings and even our families?

Helen will share stories from her personal experience, and elicit some of our own, centered on these questions 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, with those on the Interim Committee asked to attend, and others welcome.

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

Information provided by Carol Gilbert, IYMC Clerk, and Midyear Meeting Conveners Jackie Leckband and Liz Oppenheimer.

Bill Deutsch, Decorah Friends Meeting, is seeking volunteers to help with youth activities at MidYear meeting. Anyone willing to help for a couple of hours – or even a shorter time – should contact Ann Robinson (anny@mediacombb.net) or contact Bill directly (billbdeutsch@gmail.com).

A Quaker Minute:

Historic Friends – Activist Bayard Rustin, Part 2

Part of a series on Quaker Minutes on past and present influential Friends. This minute continues the introduction to 20th Century Quaker activist Bayard Rustin.

Rustin was a pacifist and admired Gandhi's nonviolent resistance in India. He is credited with promoting nonviolent civil disobedience in the American Civil Rights Movement.

He took part in the April 1947 Journey of Reconciliation across four southern States, to protest against illegal segregation in interstate travel. He was arrested, along with his fellow protestors, several times in the course of the journey and in North Carolina was sentenced to 30 days on a chain gang. The protest became a model for future 'Freedom Rides'.

In August 1963, Rustin took on the organization of the March on Washington – a rally attended by 20,000 people that culminated in King's 'I have a dream' speech. In 1968, shortly before King's assassination, Rustin drafted the 'Economic Bill of Rights' which called for – among other things – a meaningful job and a living wage for people of all colors.

Rustin was an openly gay man. In the 1970s and 80s he wrote a number of essays which drew parallels between the black civil rights movement and the gay liberation movement.

-- One in a series on Quaker history and practice, contributed by Pam Blackburn

DMVF Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

January 8, 2023

Present: Dorothy Lifka, Jim Dietz-Kilen, Katie Jacoby, Peter Clay, D.J. Newlin, Andrea Holveck, Jack Holveck, Billie Wade, Dick Douglass, Ann Robinson, Bob Henderson, Virginia Smith, Deb Fisch, Claire Cumbie-Drake

The Assistant Clerk opened the Meeting with a moment of silence and the following quote: *“Be kind whenever possible, and it is always possible.”* Dalai Lama

APPROVAL OF MINUTES from December 2022

Andrea Holveck, Carol Spaulding-Kruse, and young Friend, Bryn were present but were not listed in the Minutes. Jack Holveck was listed, however, he was not present.

Minute: The Minutes were approved with these corrections.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Day of Remembrance will be held during Meeting on 1/15 @ 10:30 AM.
- Edith is doing better and would love to have visitors. Her ph # is 271-6936. She's in Rm 142 in the Wesley Health Center. (Virginia Smith & Dorothy Lifka))

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Treasurer (Kelsea Gillespie) – The Report was sent out for review. The Treasurer was not

present at Meeting for Business. Friends may contact Kelsea if they have questions about the report.

Finance Committee (Convener, Catherine Dietz-Kilen) – No Report

Ad Hoc Committee (Dorothy Lifka)

The Ad Hoc Committee on Committees will meet Jan. 22nd, from 1:00 to 2:00 to wrap up its work. Anyone wishing to join us can contact Dorothy (515-991-1358) to get the zoom invite. It may also be a hybrid meeting if some people want to attend at the meeting house.

Religious Ed Committee (Dorothy Lifka)

Committee will meet in January to discuss IYMC Yearly Meeting's recommendations regarding the safety of the children in the Meeting.

Building & Grounds Committee (Dick Douglass)

No one is aware of any pressing issues. The geothermal seems to be functioning well, according to Fred. Dick expects that B&G will have an actual meeting in January or February to talk about any long-range issues. Charlie reports he is working on fixing the light switches that control stairway lighting to the basement.

Minute: The Meeting accepted the report with appreciation to the committee. Friends with any concerns regarding the building should get in touch with Dick

Peace & Social Concerns Committee (Patty Wengert)

Patty Wengert shared the following note from WILPF (Women's International League

for Peace and Freedom) from the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). A measure Israel hopes the UN passes includes a broad definition for antisemitism that would prohibit or silence criticism of the Israeli government in actions taken against Palestinian people in occupied territory. I have not researched this issue for awhile but I am opposed to the legal challenges the Jewish community has litigated to end the divestment movement that supports Palestinian human rights.

The Meeting is not being asked to take any action on this matter. (Submitted by Patty Wengert)

PSC continues work on a survey “to better understand the priorities and concerns of our community to assist us in leading the peace and justice work for our meeting.” They are working on the wording of the questions, which they will submit to Carol Spaulding-Kruse, who has offered to create a Google form to submit to meeting. (Submitted by Peter Clay)

Minute: The Meeting expressed its appreciation for the work of the committee. Friends were reminded that everyone is welcomed and encouraged to attend the PSC meetings. Friends should contact Billie Wade if they would like to be added to the Peace and Social Concerns email list for the purpose of receiving the date and time of the Meetings.

Ministry & Council (Jim Dietz-Kilen)

We gathered in silence at our 8:30 am appointed time on Sunday, 1 Jan. 2023. Gordon

Bivens, Peter Clay, Deborah Fisch and Jim Dietz-Kilen (convener) were in attendance.

Jim reported on a brief zoom interview he had with Sharlee DiMenichi, a Friends Journal reporter. Katie Jacoby forwarded Sharlee's inquiry that came via our website. Sharlee's questions were about any experience we have in offering spiritual care and support to members/attenders with eating disorders, and how we would support someone from the meeting who lifted up such a concern. Jim replied that he was unaware of such a concern being brought to M&C in the past, but that he would anticipate offering to form a Clearness Committee if such a concern were brought forward. He suggested that Clearness Committee members could provide spiritual support and accountability, if desired, as well as to help identify supportive community resources.

M&C was asked by Clerk Carol to consider in advance whether we would recommend allowing Michael Luick-Thrames to use the meeting email list to solicit support for his upcoming summer project in the Midwest. The committee felt that a one-time use for this purpose was appropriate, and we provided Carol with a statement of provisions for that use, to be shared with Michael.

Leo (Hussain Kooshan) is organizing a series of zoom English lessons for Afghan girls, to try to counter some of the effects of the Taliban's closing of schools for girls and women. Leo is looking for volunteers—native English speakers—to participate in one or more of

these sessions, which will occur on Saturday mornings. Jim asked M&C whether it seemed appropriate to use the meeting email list to promote this volunteer opportunity and the committee felt it was. Jim will forward the information to Carol for possible one-time dissemination.

Peter anticipates being able to move back into his house over a four-day period in mid-January. He is looking for some assistance with cleaning on 11 Jan. and with physical moving 13-15 Jan. Please contact Peter directly if you are available to help.

We closed with silence.

Minute: The report was received, with appreciation to the committee for its work.

Outreach Committee (Ann Robinson) Attending: Ann Robinson, Billie Wade, Katie Jacoby

Outreach flyer. We need to make more efforts to distribute our outreach flyer in hard copy or possibly on the website. Katie will consider ways to include some of the wording on the website.

Report to Ad Hoc committee on Committees. Outreach Committee (Katie Jacoby, Ann Robinson, Billie Wade) and Hospitality Committee members (Charlie Brown and Andrea Holveck) met in October to discuss merging our two committees. Our conclusion: There doesn't seem like there is enough overlap in duties to warrant merging, nor that merging the committees would significantly lighten the load of anyone or result in fewer people needed to fill the responsibilities

of the two committees. We agreed there are areas where we can coordinate efforts with Hospitality or other committees. The Outreach Committee needs to develop a new committee description on this in early 2023: Katie volunteered to write a first draft.

Members-only section on website - sharing Friendly Line and other information.

- We discussed whether Friendly Line archives should be on the website for all to see or saved on a password-protected area for Members/Attenders only. This has been discussed in the past and people were concerned that sometimes financial or other sensitive information could be shared that we would not want readily available on the Internet. We aren't sure this is really the case. Would new people be attracted or discouraged to attend Quaker Meeting by reading the newsletter? We think this should be discussed again by the Business Meeting.
- We plan to make a section of the password-protected area website for members/regular attenders to post personal reflections and spiritual journeys rather than including them in Friendly Line. We would try to avoid political or commercial content.
- We could include committee and/or financial reports in the members' only area of the website, but then, how often would the reports be read? That would require more work for the treasurer and

finance committee, and probably the Friendly Line editor.

- We concur with the recommendation of Ministry and Council to work with Brock to help make the story of his Parkinson's journey accessible to friends, but not to run it in Friendly Line. With Brock's permission, we plan to post on the website with a link from News of Our Friends. Billie is taking the lead in communications with Brock on this.
- As we put information on the Members section of the website, we need to remind Friends to take a look, and we need to make it easy to find the password. Where could we put a PW that would be accessible only to members/attenders? A good place could be right under the title of our directory. We will propose this at the next Business Meeting.

Policy Guidance for Friendly Line material

The committee plans to draft a policy to share with the Business Meeting to guide Friendly Line editors and contributors to make sure that all feel they are treated respectfully and fairly. Our preliminary discussion included that FL should focus on the Meeting and its business/activities, Quakerism and Quaker groups, partners in service and events of clear interest to Friends, especially that members/regular attenders are participating in. In terms of personal information, we would like to continue sharing short newsy items in News of our

Friends, but otherwise publish personal information when it is clearly focused on the spiritual/faith journeys of members/regular attenders.

We discussed notices for Outreach contacts and Zoom/web payments -- who is responsible for responding? At this time, Katie will be the primary responder for both, and Ann and Billie will be back-ups as needed.

- We recommend inviting Friends House "neighbors" to a Fifth Sunday potluck (next one would be Jan. 29, 2023), depending on the public health situation closer to that time. The Outreach Committee could be responsible for that, but it would be good to get the Meeting's approval.
- There has been confusion about the Zoom account(s). Katie will write an article for Friendly Line to explain.
Next meeting - January 24th, the fourth Tuesday.

Minute: The FL is currently online under the Member's only section. Friends agreed that the FL should be posted on the website without the necessity of a PW, but that any name of a young Friend should not include the last name without permission of the parents, or the full name of anyone who has requested that their name or be information be kept confidential. The Treasurer's report will continue to be posted on the Member's only section. The committee will share the current password

The Meeting expressed appreciation for the work of the Outreach Committee.

OTHER NEWS/BUSINESS

Scattergood School service project in Des Moines. (Katie Jacoby)

6 students and 2 adults from Scattergood plan to come to Des Moines on Monday, Feb. 5, 2023, through Friday, Feb. 9, 2023, and will need hospitality. Friends discussed using the Meetinghouse for that purpose, and whether there might be conflicts with other groups using the Meetinghouse. (FLU now meet the last Friday of the month only; dancers on 3rd Thursday only; meditation group every week on Tuesday night)

One Friend suggested we host a potluck for the students and have them share about their project.

The Meetings representatives to Friends House Board will contact Friends House Board about use of the shower in Friend's House.

This is an important opportunity to connect with Scattergood and the Yearly Meeting.

Clerk's Minute regarding seeking right relationship toward indigenous peoples:
January 8, 2023

Friends,

I seek a sense of the Meeting on the subject of Quaker right relationship toward indigenous peoples.

Peter Clay and perhaps some others have brought forward for our consideration many times in recent years issues related to the rights of indigenous peoples. In December, Peter attended a compelling webinar sponsored by the National Native American Boarding School Coalition

regarding the current state of the Indian Child Welfare Act, whose constitutional standing is being challenged before the Supreme Court. The Court will issue a ruling in June. Peter also had a conversation with Bill Deutsch from Decorah Friends Meeting about their work supporting the Meskwaki Settlement in their efforts to keep the Meskwaki language alive among the next generation, work that they see as one of their highest priorities according to one spokesperson.

The subject of right relationship toward native peoples is multi-faceted and interconnected, for example, destroying native sovereignty in a case like the ICWA could erode their ability to defend their land against big oil and mineral corporation interests. The issue of adoption, especially among Evangelical churches, and treaty rights are other significant aspects of indigenous justice. Perhaps the issue most relevant to the question of Quaker right relationship to Native peoples is that of Quaker boarding schools. The December issue of *Friends Journal* on the theme of atonement contains some thought-provoking writing on the subject (see, especially, page 45).

Peter has helped to keep Friends updated on several of these issues through his involvement with Peace & Social Concerns, has actively supported many of the causes and continues to educate himself as opportunities arise. Other Friends in IYMC are actively involved. I am less aware of Des Moines Valley Friends involvement, although I know there has been some.

While I don't presume that Des Moines Valley Friends are of one mind regarding right relationship to indigenous peoples, I do wonder if it is time to take up the question as a monthly meeting. That is, if we should seek *as a meeting* how we want to recognize and respond to the question. What do we discern is an appropriate response? What is actionable here? One concrete suggestion for now: PS&C has discussed the subject of a meeting statement of land acknowledgement and wishes to take up this question at a future Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. Perhaps that is where we begin. Perhaps that is where we leave it.

I seek a sense of the meeting so that Friends who have strong commitments to these issues can have clarity on whether we, as a body, support those commitments, however that looks; and so that individual Friends have an opportunity to look squarely at their own disposition and intentions. While this might be asked of us regarding any number of issues (and perhaps it will), it is this issue that has been brought forth repeatedly by our concerned Friend; and it is one that other meetings have taken up in earnest.

Carol Spaulding-Kruse

Minute: Friends are in agreement that the Meeting should move forward with a second hour on the matter of right relations with indigenous people. The purpose of the second hour will be to continue to educate ourselves on this matter and to discern the Meeting's path forward.

Jim Dietz-Kilen and Ann Robinson will assist the Peace and Social Concerns committee in organizing a second hour.

The Meeting closed with silence.



Query Discussion # 9 for March 5: Civic Responsibility

ADVICE

Because Friends believe there is that of God in all people, we strive for a world of freedom, justice and equality for everyone. Believing that progress toward these ideals is advanced by those who devote themselves to the shaping of a just society, we urge Friends to be active and conscientious citizens. This means staying informed on social issues, and on the opinions and activities of our elected representatives and of those seeking office.

It is important that Friends speak truth to those in power. We recognize that, in our world, power in government and private sectors lies disproportionately with those of economic means. Speaking out on a personal level in our communities may be difficult, even dangerous, yet by doing so we may encourage others to work for justice.

Our first allegiance is to the Holy Spirit. In general, Friends support the laws of the State, but if those laws directly violate our religious convictions, we may be led to oppose them. When contemplating civil disobedience or unpopular personal testimony, we must carefully consider the spiritual basis for, and honestly

face the consequences of, our actions.

QUERIES

What conflicts do we perceive between the laws of the State and our religious convictions? How do we resolve those conflicts in our lives?

In what ways do we assume responsibility for the government of our community, state, nation and world?

How do we share our convictions with others?

Do we express our opinions with courage, yet with love, mindful of the Divine Spirit within everyone?

How do we maintain our integrity when we find ourselves in a position of power?

How do we respond when we feel powerless?

Do we really respect and help those we seek to serve?

Are we careful to reach our decisions through prayer and strengthen our actions with worship?

Are we open to divine leadings?

NEWS OF OUR FRIENDS

Kudos to **David Drake**, who had a letter to the editor on gun violence, "Take action to stop mass shootings," published in The Des Moines Register, Sunday, Jan. 29.

Hosting List for Upcoming First Days

Feb. 5 – Claire & David
Feb. 12 – Jim & Catherine
Feb. 19 – Charlie Brown
Feb. 26 – Bob & Patty
March 5 – Ann Robinson
March 12 – Deb & Katie

UPCOMING EVENTS

Potluck with Scattergood School, Thursday, Feb. 9, 6 p.m., at the Meeting House

DMVF Members and Attenders are invited to share a potluck with Scattergood School staff and students when they are in Des Moines this week and camping out at the Meeting House during a winter break service project.

All are invited. Friends are encouraged to sign up for the category of side dish we intend to bring [on this Google doc](#).

The Dingman Award Dinner

Catholic Peace Ministries' Dingman Award Dinner will be held March 4, 2023, at Holy Trinity Catholic Church, 6:00 p.m. Social Time, 7:30 p.m. Program and Awards Ceremony.

The featured speaker will be Johnny Zokovitch, executive director of Pax Christi USA. Carla Dawson, long time peace and justice advocate and educator, is the 2023 Bishop Dingman Award recipient.

Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC)

will hold a hybrid Section Meeting on March 23-26, 2023, at Haw River State Park in Greensboro, North Carolina. Any Friend is welcome to register and attend. Noah Merrill will be the lead keynote speaker on Saturday night, on the theme of "Becoming the Quakers the World Needs." Friends are invited to participate - either virtually or in person. Learn more and register at: <https://fwccamericas.regfox.com/fwcc-2023-section-meeting>

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:

2/9 (Thurs.) 6 p.m. Potluck at Meetinghouse with Scattergood guests, bring a side dish!

02/19: Iowa's Native Nations (video, from State Historical Soc.) Jim Dietz-Kilen

02/26 Ethan Huelskamp, Scattergood development director

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

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 Feb. 24, 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.