

Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting

FRIENDLY LINE

July 2023



Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative), July 26-30 Knowing Ourselves: Knowing Our Neighbors

The 146th annual session of Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative will be held July 26-30, 2023, at Scattergood Friends School near West Branch. The session will be held as a hybrid meeting, with meeting for worship for business and evening collections held in person and online with Zoom.

The theme will be “Knowing Ourselves: Knowing Our Neighbors.” Speakers will include DMVF member Billie Wade, who will be the pre-meeting speaker on Sunday before meeting for worship on the topic, “Unrelenting: The Trauma of Racism on Black People in America.”

Get more information or register at <https://www.iymc.org/2023-annual-sessions/>



Homecoming: Circle of Healing and Renewal By Billie Wade

On May 19-21, I attended the 2023 FGC (Friends General Conference) Ministry on Racism Spring Retreat for Friends of Color in Scottsdale, Arizona. FGC first hosted the hybrid retreat in the spring of 2022. They also hosted the first Fall Retreat for Friends of Color in 2022.

The Franciscan Renewal Center (The Casa) provided a tranquil atmosphere, good food, and comfortable lodging. Attendees used the conference room, the swimming pool, strolled the grounds, and shopped at the onsite bookstore.

There were eight of us in person and six virtual attendees. The theme, the title of this article, was evident throughout the weekend. We created a safe, brave space for our time together, worshipping and sharing. We opened our minds and hearts with people with a shared humanity without racial unease.

I look forward to attending the 2024 Spring Retreat for Friends of Color. I cannot attend the 2023 Fall Retreat for Friends of Color because of other commitments.

Ministry on Racism also hosts, for Friends of Color, Worship, Worship Sharing, and Open House.

A Quaker Minute SCRUPLING (Part 2)

The dictionary defines to scruple as: To hesitate or be reluctant to do something that one thinks may be wrong. (In Latin, a scrupus is a small pebble – a scruple is a prick of conscious.)

George Fox advised early Friends to: “Mind the light of God in your consciences, which will show you all deceit; dwelling in it, guides [you] out of the many things into one spirit, which cannot lie, nor deceive. Those who are guided by it, are one.”

The old Quaker practice of scrupling – listening, sharing, and searching together for the way forward – sought unity as assurance of right purpose.

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

Correction to the June Friendly Line:

Juneteenth became a federal holiday on June 17, 2021. All 50 states and the District of Columbia recognize Juneteenth as a holiday or observance, and at least 22 states and the District of Columbia have designated Juneteenth as a permanent paid and/or legal holiday through legislation or executive action.

DMVF Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, June 11, 2023

Present: Jim Dietz-Kilen, Catherine Dietz-Kilen, D.J. Newlin, Pam Blackburn, Carol Spaulding-Kruse, Logan Jimenez, Dorothy Lifka, Claire Cumbie-Drake, Dick Douglass, Billie Wade, Virginia Smith

The Meeting opened with a Moment of Silence

Minutes from the May 2023 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

Minute: The minutes were approved.

Announcements

- Registration is open for Iowa Yearly Meeting. Online registration is encouraged: <https://forms.gle/3L6g2opsxmwyhczg6>. Registration form and program are available on the IYM website.
- Edith Munro's birthday is June 21. Birthday cards can be sent to: 3520 Grand Ave #201, DM IA 50312
- Jack Holveck is recovering from health issues. Cards are appreciated (send to 2007 47th St. DM, IA, 50310).

Ministry and Counsel Committee Report (Jim Dietz-Kilen)

DMVF M&C Committee met Sunday, 4 June, 2023. We gathered in worshipful silence to begin our meeting, with members Dorothy Lifka, Andrea Holveck, Peter Clay, Deborah Fisch and Jim Dietz-Kilen in attendance via zoom. Billie Wade joined later at our invitation, as noted below.

We began by updating each other about concerns for several members or attenders and considering how we or in the wider Meeting might be able to support them. Two people were mentioned who might enjoy visits from Friends. The first is Mikel Johnson, who is at Edencrest, 3410 Beaver Avenue, DM, where she resides in Memory Care. Friends are advised that Mikel will likely not know who they are but will likely enjoy the visit anyway. Edencrest is located at .

The second Friend who would likely welcome a visit is Chuck Day, who recently moved to Ramsey Village (1611 27th Street, Des Moines), due to concerns about his physical health. Peter Clay recently visited Chuck there and has established a communication channel with Chuck's son Chris, in order to help keep our meeting informed about how Chuck is doing.

We next reviewed the second draft of our State of the Meeting report, edited to reflect and reconcile suggestions received from committee members. The report we are recommending for approval at our upcoming Business Meeting is included with this committee report.

Billie Wade joined us at 9:15 for a scheduled conversation with Meeting's representatives to Friends House Board. (Our other two representatives, Dorothy and Deborah, were already in the meeting, as they are M&C members). This discussion centered on concerns about rental/property management, difficulty in conducted business with a Board that meets for only

four hours per year, whether Friends House can be sustainably maintained given the current structure and whether it is feasible for DMVFM to stay in the current Meeting House for the long-term. We anticipate that others will want to participate in discussions on these topics and wanted to begin with a small group conversation in volving M&C and our representatives to Friends House.

Discussion following the report: Dorothy Lifka reported that Friends House Board (FHB) is considering hiring a professional property manager. Any Friends who know of reputable property management companies are encouraged to share that information with Dorothy.

State of the Meeting – Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting (DMVFM) 2022-2023

We continue to offer “blended” meetings for worship, Second Hours and meetings for worship with attention to business, making it possible for Friends near and far to join, either in the Meeting House or on-screen. Many of our members and attenders also took advantage of virtual options to attend both Annual Sessions and Midyear Meeting of IYM(C).

We have experienced several opportunities over the past year to come together as a community in support of our members and attenders experiencing a variety of needs. We also continue our collaboration of more than a year with meetings in several other states and in Canada (including Bear Creek and Penn Valley) to support an Afghan refugee family whose eldest son graduated from Scattergood Friends School and

Farm a few years ago. Just as this report was being written, we received the exciting news that the family will likely soon be reunited in Canada!

Over the past year, we have begun discussions on such topics as reproductive rights, Indigenous history and rights and white privilege/structural racism. We will continue to try to gain a sense of our Meeting regarding these and other issues of concern and to ascertain the Meeting's role in engaging on such issues.

We struggle with finding enough people with time to devote to our committees and the other work of the Meeting. Dwindling and aging membership contribute to this dilemma, as do individual concerns that consume our time and energy in other directions. This concern spills over into difficulty in finding people to fill positions with IYM-C. While we are mindful of these concerns, we are especially grateful to those who make it a priority to do this work on behalf of all of us.

At the same time, we are blessed by both visits and regular attendance from several younger adults, which is both encouraging and nurturing to our community. We are also delighted to have a small, but very active, group of middle-and high-schoolers participating in Religious Education.

The departure of AFSC's regional office from Friends House has left us with a number of concerns that are intertwined with the challenges of maintaining the physical structure of the Meeting House.

We are grateful for the faithful representation of our Meeting members who serve on the Friends House Board (past and present).

DMVFM continues to benefit from our longstanding warm connection with the nearby Bear Creek Friends Meeting. We have also been spiritually-enriched by the addition of a "Quaker Minute," thoughtfully selected and presented each First Day by Pam Blackburn. These quotations from notable Friends are shared following the break of Meeting for Worship. We are continually touched by their appropriateness and deep meaning.

We continue to find nourishment by gathering in worshipful silence together and in working together on behalf of both our Meeting and the wider community/world.

Minute: Friends approved the State of the Meeting Report. Jim will send the report to Deb Fisch.

Finance Committee & Budget Report (Catherine Dietz-Kilen)

DMVF Finance Committee Minutes, May 30, 2023
Attendees: Catherine Dietz-Kilen, Dorothy Lifka, Cindy Winchell, Dick Douglass, Kelsea Gillespie, and Katie Jacoby

1. Monthly Financials. Finance Committee reviewed the financial reports for April 2023 and found them to be very straight forward and

complete. Nothing unusual to report.

2. Action Item. Finance Committee discussed the proposed budget and comments from last month's business meeting. We decided to present the budget to Meeting for Business on June 11, 2023, without making any changes to the proposed budget previously presented in May.
3. Informational Only. Finance Committee discussed the best process for transitioning the roles of Treasurer from Kelsea Gillespie to Katie Jacoby and Assistant Treasurer from Cindy Winchell to Dorothy Lifka. The Committee notes that the transition to a new Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer is taking place in lieu of a Friendly Audit.
4. Our next scheduled meeting will be July 25, 2023, at 7:30 p.m. We are tentatively holding June 27, 2023, at 7:30 p.m. if a Committee meeting is needed as a part of the transition process.

Friends discussed several items related to the proposed budget including the status of the Peace and Social Concerns committee

which does not currently have a convener; the IYM allocation; and increasing revenue from use of the Meeting House.

Following the discussion, Friends decided that each of these areas should be discussed in more depth at a later time.

Minute: Friends approved the proposed budget, with much appreciation for the work of the Finance Committee.

Nominating Committee (Claire Cumbie-Drake)

The Nominating Committee presented a proposed roster of positions and committee members for the 2023/2024 fiscal year. Certain positions remain unfilled. The Nominating Committee will continue to seek attenders and members who are willing and able to fill these positions, and will bring updates to the Meeting accordingly.

With regard to committees, we ask Friends to consider the following:

1. The Hospitality Committee is not currently active. We're recommending that the committee be set aside for now, and that ad hoc committees form for events such as a Meeting picnic; talent show; and other social events.
2. The Finance Committee currently has two members in addition to the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer, and would like to have at least one additional member. We encourage Friends to consider serving on this committee.

The Nominating Committee also presented revised Position and Committee Descriptions, with a request that each committee review their description for any edits. The revised descriptions will be considered at the August Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business.

Submitted on behalf of the nominating committee:
Claire Cumbie-Drake, Andrea Holveck, and Dick Douglass

Discussion followed regarding some additions/revisions to the committee roster. With regard to Hospitality, Friends noted to Charlie Brown is currently purchasing supplies and compiling the hosting lists. Friends suggested that these duties could rotate to a different individual every six (6) months.

Minute: The Report was approved with revisions as discussed. Nominating Committee will provide a revised roster of committees to the Clerk to disseminate to Meeting members and attenders. The Clerk will assist with forming ad hoc committees for various Meeting events that were formerly organized by the Hospitality Committee.

Building & Grounds Committee (Dick Douglass)

Building and Grounds Report for June 2023

The Committee celebrated spring with a clean-up day on Saturday May 27. At the end of the morning, the large windows, the flower beds, the outside basement stairway, the garden and a downstairs carpet—all had received needed TLC. Thanks to

Bob Henderson, Fred Nelson, Ann Robinson, Deborah Fisch, Jon Krieg, and Katie Jacoby for transforming work into an experience of community.

Religious Ed Committee Report (Dorothy Lifka)

Des Moines Valley Friends (DMVF) Meeting
Religious Education Report for 2022-2023

First day school for several middle school and high school aged children moved to primarily in person this year, with “blended” or virtual meetings when circumstances made it necessary. First day school for a family with two younger children met only on Zoom for the first part of the year until the family transitioned to in-person activities closer to home. The first day school teachers are grateful for the opportunity for involvement with this family and for the joy of working with the children.

The teens have started a garden at DMVF. In addition to helping start the seeds indoors and transplant the plants outside, the teens talked about why they wanted to have a garden and discussed what they wanted to grow. They also put together a proposal to Friends House, the nonprofit that owns our land, requesting use of outdoor space for the garden.

We recently had an evening potluck for the teens with two teens, one parent and two teachers attending. We hope to have more of these and to invite other Friends to make more and stronger connections between the teens and the meeting.

We have not yet resumed in-person first day school for younger children or child-care. Our religious education committee is discussing how best to do this. While we have no younger children yet who would attend regularly, we hope to practice, "If you build it, they will come." We were delighted recently with the visit of the toddler grandchild of members. It was a joy to hear a child's voice and laughter as part of worship.

For more than a year, our meeting has been enriched by a weekly "Quaker Minute" immediately after Meeting for Worship. Researched and presented by a long time member of DMVF, these have included thoughts on Quaker history, beliefs and practices. We appreciate this opportunity to learn more about our Quaker roots.

Peace & Social Concerns Committee (No current convener)

Hospitality Committee Report

(Andrea Holveck)

NO REPORT

Outreach Committee Report

(Ann Robinson)

NO REPORT

Library Committee (Virginia

Smith)

NO REPORT

Ad Hoc Committee (Dorothy

Lifka)

NO REPORT

With no new business, the Meeting closed with a Moment of Silence.

NEWS OF OUR FRIENDS

Ann Robinson enjoyed a trip to Asheville, North Carolina, in June for the annual conference of the Association for Communications Excellence. While she was there, she received a second-place award for a news story she wrote and was a panelist for a presentation on tips for research writers. She also was able to visit the Biltmore Estate, winery and forest and learn about its history.

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:

June 25: Picnic on the patio at DMVF became picnic in the meeting house due to heat and high winds. We enjoyed delightful company and a variety of delicious food.

July 23 – Joe Stevens, co-founder of [Joppa](#) presents for 2nd Hour.

Query Discussions: First Sundays, 11:30 a.m. - Online & in person. Billie Wade, facilitator. July Query #2: Outreach

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 Convener, Dick Douglass, 515-864-1119.

Hospitality Committee:

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

Friendly Line: Info for next FL due to Ann Robinson by July 28, at anny@mediacombb.net.

Find us online at:

anny@mediacombb.net

Check out our Facebook group

for members/attenders. To be added, email Jan Falb, at jfalb0326@yahoo.com.