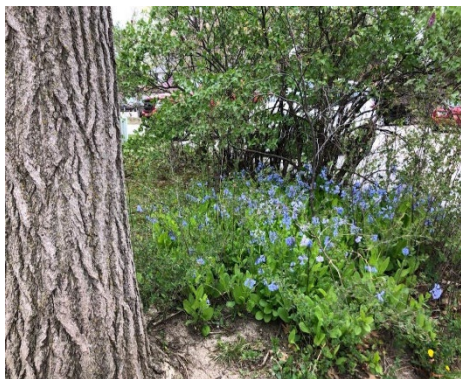


# Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting

## FRIENDLY LINE

### May 2023



Bluebells blooming at Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting. Photo by Ann Robinson

#### Connect with FCNL

Thanks to Logan Jimenez for his excellent, second hour presentation, April 30, about Friends Committee on National Legislation and his experience attending FCNL's spring lobbying weekend.

As a follow-up, Logan sent this additional information about FCNL and how others can get involved and informed.

1) FCNL Witness Wednesdays: FCNL gathers each Wednesday for worship at 4:15 pm (c) on Zoom. Everyone is welcome to join. Interested folks can register at [https://www.fcnl.org/events/witn\\_esswednesday](https://www.fcnl.org/events/witn_esswednesday).

2) FCNL Advocacy Teams meet for their national call on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 on Zoom. We often meet with Senators, Representatives, and folks who are working towards various peace issues.

In May, the group will meet

with Tarig Ahmed, of Invisible Children, who works to prevent atrocities and promote peace building in central Africa. We will also be hearing from two experts at the State Department Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, & Labor. Directly after the National Call, the Western Iowa Advocacy Teams meets on zoom. The Western Iowa team is led by Charlie Johnson of the Ames Meeting. The Western Team has met with Iowa's senators and their staff so far this year. Anyone who is interested in joining can contact Charlie Johnson at [3goats67@gmail.com](mailto:3goats67@gmail.com) or by filling out the official form at: <https://www.fcnl.org/act/join-advocacy-team>

If there is enough interest from folks from our Meeting, FCNL would love to have a team based out of the Des Moines area.

There are also a couple of monthly calls for folks who are interested in meeting about other topics.

- Climate Action: <https://act.fcnl.org/event/call-conscience/search/>
- Immigration: [https://act.fcnl.org/event/voices\\_for\\_migration/3140/signup/?akid=&zip=](https://act.fcnl.org/event/voices_for_migration/3140/signup/?akid=&zip=)
- Changemaker Series: <https://www.fcnl.org/events/quaker-changemaker-series>

3) The Annual Meeting and Quaker Public Policy Institute

#### A Quaker Minute: Leadings

As Friends, we commit ourselves to allowing Spirit to teach and transform us.

We believe we are better positioned to come to a spirit-led sense of how to proceed after allowing for open inquiry and discussion.

Among Friends there is wide diversity of expertise and personal experience. We value input from many sources and encourage personal research, discussion, and reflection when considering complex issues.

Friends Meetings offer formal Clearness Committees to help a member find clarity around an issue or leading. The committee will worship with the member, listen deeply to their questions and concerns and reflect back what has been heard.

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

will be Nov. 15-19. Hundreds of Friends will gather in DC to set policy priorities, worship and lobby their representatives. Corey and I are planning on going. I think it would be great to get a good-sized Iowa delegation to go. Get more information at: <https://www.fcnl.org/events/annual-meeting-and-quaker-public-policy-institute>

## **DMVF Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, April 9, 2023**

Present: Ann Robinson, Catherine Dietz-Kilen, Jim Dietz-Kilen, Charlie Brown, DJ Newlin, Carol Spaulding, Andrea Holveck, Jack Holveck, Billie Wade, Bob Henderson, Deborah Fisch, Dorothy Lifka, Gordon Biven, Brock Wommack, Dick Douglass

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

Minute: The Minutes from March 12, 2023, Meeting for Business were reviewed and approved.

### **Announcements**

The Clerk announced the death of Dorothy Rogers, member of West Branch Meeting

### **Committee Reports**

**Ministry and Counsel:** Jim Dietz-Kilen (Convener). M&C met April 2, 2023, with committee members Gordon Bivens, Andrea Holveck, Deb Fisch, Peter Clay and Jim Dietz-Kilen gathered shortly after our appointed 8:30 start time, with the delay caused by technical difficulties with everyone being able to join the Zoom meeting. Dorothy Lifka also joined us, as a proposed new member of our committee. We welcomed her gladly and recommend to Business Meeting that she be added to our committee roster.

The rest of our time was spent discussing a topic referred back to us by Meeting. We were asked to make recommendations to the full Meeting regarding:

1. A response to FCNL regarding their query about whether we think they should add legislative advocacy on abortion and reproductive rights to their portfolio and, if so, to specify what position(s) our meeting supports.

2. Whether we think DMVF should conduct discussions around these issues, either during Second Hours or another avenue.

3. If discussions are to be held, how do we propose they be organized and conducted.

Our recommendations are as follows:

1. To ask the Clerk to reply to FCNL, saying that we appreciate being asked for input, but we are unable to do so within the time frame offered.

2. That we provide opportunities for individuals from Meeting to sign-up to participate in small group discussions about abortion and reproductive rights. Peter has offered to serve as a conduit for this, with people who wish to participate asked to let him know by the end of April.

3. That we ask people to indicate, when they sign up, whether they have a preference for being part of a same-sex group or mixed.

4. That these small group discussions be self-directed, with the Essential Partners format (attached) as a possible way to approach them.

5. The people participating in small groups be asked to attend an organizational meeting to discuss how we can be inclusive with these dialogues and open to each other.

**Minute:** The Meeting received the report, and approved Dorothy Lifka joining the Ministry and

Counsel Committee. The Meeting also approved the recommendations of the committee regarding discussions about reproductive rights.

**Action item:** The Clerk will write letter to FCNL as recommended. The Clerk will also include a summary of the Ministry and Counsel report in her Clerk's notes so Friends can contact Peter in a timely manner. Ministry and Counsel will initiate the first meetings.

**Finance Committee:** Catherine Dietz-Kilen (Convener). The committee met March 28, 2023.

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

1. Monthly Financials. We reviewed the financial reports for February 2023 and found all to be in good order.

2. Treasurer. The committee discussed the fact that the Meeting needs to find a new treasurer because Kelsea's term as treasurer will end at the end of the fiscal year in June 2023. Assistant Treasurer Cindy Winchell has also resigned her position. We are grateful for all of the work that Kelsea and Cindy have done and are very appreciative for their service.

We discussed the possibility of budgeting for an outside bookkeeper to assist the new treasurer, or, if a new treasurer cannot be found, to take on much of the responsibility for maintaining the books of the Meeting. We will explore this option

further in our next Committee meeting.

3. We started work on the proposed budget for fiscal year 2023/2024. The committee started by considering the requests from each of the committees regarding their budgets for the next year.
4. We also discussed the cost for cleaning the Meeting House. The cost of weekly cleaning is significantly greater than the current cost for bi-weekly. We will probably budget for weekly cleaning, but not switch to weekly cleaning until the Meeting, as a whole, decides to do so. We also discussed whether or not the tenants of Friends House should be asked to contribute some for the cost of cleaning since they use the kitchen and bathrooms during the week.

Because there is more to do on the budget and other important issues to discuss, we will meet in April. Our next meeting will be April 25, 2023, at 7:30 p.m. via Zoom.

**Minute:** The Meeting received the report with appreciation for the work of the Finance Committee, the Treasurer and the Assistant Treasurer. The Meeting agreed that the budget for cleaning should remain unchanged for now.

**Hospitality Committee:** Andrea Holveck (Convener). The committee decided to keep \$300 in the budget for supplies. Buildings and Grounds Committee is handling the carpet cleaning, so there will no longer be a line item for

“Housekeeping” under Hospitality Committee.

The previously planned potluck for the students touring with the Buseum was cancelled, as alternate plans were made for a community meal.

### **Religious Education**

**Committee** – Deborah Fisch (Reporting). The committee met March 23, 2023, with Dorothy Lifka, Andrea Holveck, Ann Robinson

There may be several children who would attend first day school/child care once we have those programs up and running again. We need volunteers who would be available if children did show up. Ann and Charlie have expressed willingness to work with this age group, but we would like additional help.

We are also looking for volunteers to help with the teens as either “second adults” or as “guest speakers.” Andrea volunteered to send reminders to the volunteers. We will talk to the outreach committee about making signs that indicate both who is the host for the day and who is working with the kids.

Once we have volunteers, we can start the process of getting background checks for everyone working with the children. For the moment, we will simply continue with our practice of having two adults present. One could be with the teens and one with the younger children since the child care door opening makes it possible to see the other group.

Dorothy will talk to B & G about putting a Plexiglass window in the child care room above the couch to increase visibility. This might also enable

the parents of younger children to check on them unobtrusively.

The teens have expressed interest in meeting on Monday evenings perhaps over dinner. Deborah, Dorothy and the teens invite Friends to join us.

Katie is helping us prepare for a garden at the meeting house. The following is a request from the teens:

First day school is asking DMVF to support our plans to plant a flower and vegetable garden on the Grand Avenue side of the building. If our proposal is approved by the meeting, we will take it to the Friends House board for approval. We would appreciate help from the gardeners in the meeting. We have already started seedlings in the basement and they’re thriving.

The garden’s purposes are to:

- Build community bonds.
- Give back to the community.
- Make the yard look nicer.

**Minute:** The Meeting received and approved the report. Friends support the teens desire to plant a garden. Pending approval from Friends House Board, the teens will follow-up with preparing a budget.

**Action item:** Charlie Brown volunteered to install the plexiglass in the childcare room.

### **DVFM Nominating**

**Committee:** Claire Cumbie-Drake (Convener) Claire presented a short report verbally.

The Nominating Committee will be working in conjunction with the Finance Committee to explore alternatives for fulfilling the duties of the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer. The Committee is requesting that

anyone interested in serving in this capacities contact a member of the Nominating Committee – Dick Douglass, Andrea Holveck, and Claire Cumbie-Drake.

**Iowa Yearly Meeting  
Conservative Nominating  
Committee:** Dorothy Lifka

(reporting). 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. Please contact her at [dmlifka@yahoo.com](mailto: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 Yearly Meeting and to get to know other members of IYM as well as to be of service to the Friends community. Descriptions of IYM(C) committees and positions ran in the April 2023 Friendly Line and are available in IYMC Faith and Practice, beginning on page 75.

**Minute:** Friends approved Dorothy's participation on the Iowa Yearly Meeting nominating committee, with appreciation for her service. Carol Spaulding-Kruse and Ann Robinson volunteered to serve as representatives. (Ann said she may not be able to attend this year's Yearly Meeting, but could do the work of a representative that does not require presence at IYM.)

**Ad Hoc Committee** No Report.

**Outreach** No Report.

**Library** No Report.

**Peace & Social Concerns:** No Report

**Building & Grounds:** No Report

The Meeting ended with a moment of silence.



**IYM(C) gathered for  
Mid-Year Meeting,  
April 15-16**

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

Highlights included the presentations by Helen, time with friends from around the region, singing, the great food provided by chef Sarah Winchell, and Logan Jimenez' interesting presentation to young friends about his beautiful birds (plus a little bonus bubble fun).



Young friends (either side) with Logan Jimenez, Babs the bird and Corey Suesakul, at IYM(C) Mid-Year Meeting at Bear Creek.

**NEWS OF & FOR FRIENDS**

**David Drake** attended a five-day meeting of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) meeting in Kenya that included international physicians and medical students on the health consequences and actions to take on climate, environmental justice, and eliminating nuclear weapons. **Claire Cumbie-Drake** went along and after the meeting, they spent several more days on an eco-safari.

Kudos to **Dorothy Lifka** for her letter to the editor published in the Des Moines Register, Thursday, May 4, entitled, "Dystopian scenarios play out in Iowa," speaking against policies meant to deny youth access to books.

**Query #12 for June: Peace and Nonviolence**

*[We] seek to live in the virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars.*

-- George Fox

**ADVICE**

We seek peace within our own lives. Sometimes there are barriers to peace within families and meetings, and among individuals. Anger and frustration may result in hurtfulness which leaves physical, sexual or emotional wounds. Healing and forgiveness are possible when our hearts are opened to the transforming love that comes from the Spirit Within.

The violence we oppose is not only war, but all unloving acts. Friends seek peaceful resolution to conflicts among nations and peoples. Wars can easily erupt when nations depend upon armed

forces as an option for defense and order. To oppose war is not enough if we fail to deal with the injustices and inequalities that often lead to violence. We need to address the causes of war, such as aggression, revenge, overpopulation, greed, and religious and ethnic differences.

## QUERIES

What are we doing to educate ourselves and others about the causes of conflict in our own lives, our families and our meetings?

Do we provide refuge and assistance, including advocacy, for spouses, children, or elderly persons who are victims of violence or neglect?

Do we recognize that we can be perpetrators as well as victims of violence? How do we deal with this?

How can we support one another so that healing may take place? What are we doing to understand the causes of war and violence and to work toward peaceful settlement of differences locally, nationally, and internationally?

How do we support institutions and organizations that promote peace? Do we faithfully maintain our testimony against preparation for and participation in war?

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **“Boycott” film**

Monday, May 15, 7:00 p.m.,  
Northwest Community Center,  
5110 Franklin Ave, DM

See the award-winning film that “exposes attacks on freedom of speech” in state legislatures across the U.S. Sponsored by the Middle East Peace Education Coalition, Catholic Peace

Ministry, Iowa Peace Network and Women’s International League for Peace & Freedom.

For more information about the event, contact [catholicpeaceministry@gmail.com](mailto:catholicpeaceministry@gmail.com). Learn more about the film at: <https://justvision.org/boycott>.

### **DMVF Meeting Cleanup Day**

Saturday, May 27, Building & Grounds Committee has scheduled a clean-up day at the Meeting House, starting at 9:00 AM. Will be cleaning up the yard, the windows and the fence line. Would appreciate anyone who can come help! Coffee and treats welcomed, as well.

### **Mother’s Day of Prayer & Contemplation**

Iowa Peace Network invites interested people to join them in signing a letter to President Biden, calling for a National Day of Prayer and Contemplation this coming Mother's Day, May 14, 2023. Find out more at <http://www.iowapeacenetwork.org/>.

**2023 Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative), July 26-30**, will be held at Scattergood Friends School near West Branch and online with Zoom. The theme will be “Knowing Ourselves: Knowing Our Neighbors.” Get more information or register at [iymc.org](http://iymc.org).

### **Upcoming Hosting List**

May 7 - Dorothy Lifka  
May 14 - Claire & David  
May 21 – Ann Robinson  
May 28 - Charlie Brown  
June 4 -Bob H. & Patty R.  
June 11- Jim & Catherine  
June 18 - Deborah & Katie

### **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](mailto: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:**

May 21: TBA

May 28: Abortion/reproductive rights discussion pending M & C planning, 11:30 a.m. - Host Charlie Brown (Tentative)

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

**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](mailto: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 May 26, at [anny@mediacombb.net](mailto:anny@mediacombb.net).

**Find us online at:**

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

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