

Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting

FRIENDLY LINE

August 2024

Blessed are the Quakers – and Reflections on Quaker Beatitudes

Shared at Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative), July 28 by Angelika Shafer, Penn Valley Friends Meeting
(Slightly revised with permission)

Blessed are the Quakers who are the mystics, the scientists, educators, the cooks, the window washers, the holders, the healers, the privileged, for together we can build.

Blessed are the truth sayers, the contrary ones, the poets, the seekers, the doubters, the believers, for together they can shake the foundations.

Blessed are those in community, because they are not alone. Blessed are those who reach under the fence, over the wall, across the divide, for they will show us the way.

Blessed are the risk takers, who step out of comfort, for they shall explore new lands.

Blessed are those who stay in for the long haul, those who turn the other cheek and don't turn back, for they shall be trusted.

Blessed are those who listen to the stories of our elders, for they will be respected.

Blessed are those who remember the ones who went before us in the struggle, for they are well grounded and will keep us real.

Blessed are the poor in spirit for they shall find joy,

Blessed are the humble listeners,

Blessed are those who live their faith as witnesses,

Blessed are those who take the words of Jesus seriously.

Blessed are the broken, for they shall become a new whole.

-- Nancy Peterson, November 2010

Comments from Angelika Shafer

This poem is a wonderful and eloquent description of the blessed community we seek to build. As we are striving to Keep the Faith across Generations, let us look at some of the suggested requirements it will take to bring the beloved community to life.

1) Everyone is included. No matter what our background, upbringing, spiritual maturity, theology, status in life, our job, our identity, our race, sexual orientation or political views are, we need all in order to truly build the beloved community.

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A Quaker Minute

Observation from the “Quaker Living” blog, Sponsored by Friends Journal

Officially, Quakers are the “Religious Society of Friends,” but—as you may have noticed—we tend not to concern ourselves with what many people would consider “religious” matters, including the details of what other people, even our fellow Quakers, believe about God. While Friends offer a welcoming space and support for people who seek a more intimate relationship with the divine, we have little or no interest in controlling that relationship. Because Friends see “that of God in everyone,” how we treat other people is a demonstration of our relationship with God.

It might sound a bit corny to suggest that Quaker faith and practice is all about “being a good person,” but it fits!

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



Friends from DM Valley & around the region singing with song book compiler and Quaker historian Peter Blood (holding guitar) at recent Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative). Photo by Jon Krieg.

**Des Moines Valley Friends
MEETING FOR WORSHIP
WITH ATTENTION TO
BUSINESS May 16, 2024**

The Meeting began with a
Moment of Silence

Present: Carol Spaulding-
Kruse, Jack Holveck, Andrea
Holveck, Billie Wade, Ann
Robinson, Fred Nelson, Deb
Fisch, Dick Douglass, Katie
Jacoby, Claire Cumbie-Drake,
David Drake

The Meeting approved the
minutes from June 2024.

The Clerk expressed thanks to
Ann Robinson for her work on
the *Friendly Line*.

**Ministry & Counsel Committee
Report (Jim Dietz-Kilen)**

July Committee Report

In attendance: Dorothy Lifka,
Gordon Bivens, Andrea Holveck,
Deborah Fisch & Jim Dietz-
Kilen (convener).

We began at our appointed
time with silence.

As usual, we began with
consideration of needs for care
and concern for Friends in our
midst. We also noted
appreciation for those who are
checking in on Peter's house
while he is traveling.

Questions arose recently
regarding overnight use of the
meetinghouse. We have had
some instances where guests
have spent the night on the
meetinghouse side and used the
shower, which is located on the
Friends House side. It has been
fairly easy to determine
parameters for shower usage that
were comfortable for Friends
House tenants.

We have become aware,
though, that there are insurance
concerns regarding overnight
guests that relate to the lack of an
automatic fire alarm system.
Dorothy will check with Katie
regarding any guidance from
Meeting's insurance company
and with Renee (Friends House
manager) regarding requirements
from Friends House' insurance.
We will consider this further next
month, with this additional
knowledge, and make a
recommendation for August
Business Meeting.

Jim asked committee members
for guidance about discerning a
sense of the committee when
considering questions via email.
It was determined that a deadline
for response should always be
included when a question is
posed and that if at least half of
the committee has responded by
the deadline, a sense of the
committee can be drawn from
that.

A recommendation from
Finance Committee to transfer
the remaining transition funds
(\$2,175) to the Sharing fund was
considered and gratefully
approved by our committee.
That recommendation will now
go to Business Meeting.

We also discussed appropriate
uses of both the Sharing and
Quaker Education, Enrichment
and Advocacy (QEEA) funds.
We clarified that the Sharing
Fund should be for "human
needs," such as to help cover
unexpected expenses that pose a
hardship for an individual.
QEEA funds are for such
purposes as paying fees and/or
travel expenses to participate in
Quaker education programs,
conferences, etc., as well as for

children to attend Quaker camps.
We will draft simple application
forms—that also offer
descriptions of their intended
uses—for each fund for
consideration at our September
committee meeting.

Additional comments: The
insurance company indicated
there are no concerns regarding
overnight use of the Meeting
House so long as no one is living
in the Meeting house full time.

Friends were reminded that the
Sharing Fund is confidential.

Minute: The Meeting approved
transfer of the funds put aside for
the transition committee to the
Sharing Fund. The Meeting
approved the report.

**Finance Committee & Budget
Report (Catherine Dietz-Kilen)**

DMVF Finance Committee
Minutes, June 19, 2024

Attendees: Catherine Dietz-
Kilen, Katie Jacoby, Dorothy
Lifka and Dick Douglass

- 1) Financial Statement. The
Committee reviewed and
approved the May 2024 financial
reports.
- Action Item. The Finance
Committee recommends to the
Business Meeting that the
Finance/Transition Funds
designated account be closed and
the funds currently in that
account be transferred to the
Sharing Fund account. The
Finance/Transition account
currently holds \$2,175.00. It is
the opinion of the Finance
Committee that it is no longer
necessary to hold funds for
transition. We have completed
our new bookkeeping protocols
and are on good working terms
with the Board of the Friends
House. The Finance Committee

has also noticed that the requests made to Ministry and Counsel for designated funds held in the Sharing Fund have increased considerably during the past approximately eighteen months to two years and therefore concludes that the better use of the funds are for those funds to be placed into the Sharing Fund.

Our next scheduled meeting will be on the third Wednesday of next month at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom, July 17, 2024.

Minute: The Meeting approved the Finance Committee report, as well as the reports reviewed by Katie Jacoby including the Budget Detail, Summary of Funds and Designated Funds reports.

Building & Grounds Committee (Dick Douglass)

The committee is in the final stages of securing bids from vendors to address the concerns by the architectural consultant re sections of our brick walls. We plan on meeting in the next week or so to discuss the bids and make a recommendation to the August Meeting for Business. Please feel free to share any questions or concerns with me or other committee members.
Dick Douglass

Dick added that the additional vendors have found that the brick is in reasonably good shape and that the costs of repairing the walls should be less than the original estimate.

Minute: The Meeting approved the report.

Religious Ed Committee Report (Dorothy Lifka)

July 2024

Friends who would like to work with the youth of the Meeting – child care, first day school, or Young Friends (teens) – are asked to complete a background check through a program offered by DMVF’s insurance company. Please email Dorothy Lifka at dmlifka@yahoo.com and she will have the form sent to you so that you can complete it on-line. Completed background checks will be forwarded to Catherine Dietz-Kilen as convener of the finance committee and will be stored securely and confidentially in our safety deposit box. The convener of the religious education committee will keep a current list of those who have completed background checks.

Minute: Meeting approved the report.

Friends House Board (Dorothy Lifka)

FHB Clerk’s note: Not a report, but please be advised that August 25th Second Hour is scheduled with Renee Cawthorne from FH to discuss thoughts about observing the 50th anniversary of the bombing at the meetinghouse.

Peace & Social Concerns Committee (Patty Wengert)

No report this month.
Fund is about \$1400 (per Carol). Clarification is sought re who is the clerk of this committee.
Attendance has been spotty.

Outreach Committee Report (Katie Jacoby)

June 25, 2024 – Billie Wade, Katie Jacoby, Lindsey Baker

T-shirts: Due to communications among committee members before the meeting, we felt like we could finalize the design of the T-shirts. Originally the phrase decided upon was advocating for peace since the 17th century, but a suggestion was made to add *and justice* as Quakers were instrumental at the very beginning in things such as prison reform and evolved with the times to encompass ongoing peace and justice issues.

We discussed payment for the shirts. We don’t want to assume everyone has extra money for a shirt and we don’t want that to be an obstacle for anyone who wants one. We decided that we would state the cost of the shirt and people could pay as they are able.

Second Hour: We spent some time discussing what we plan to share during our Second Hour later this year. Stay tuned!

Minute: The Meeting approved the report.

Library Committee (Deb Fisch)

No report this month.

Nominating Committee (Claire Cumbie-Drake)

No report this month.

New/Other Business?

1. All Are Welcome in Iowa:

Many partner organizations are joining together to educate Iowans about the passage and potential impact

of Iowa's 2024 Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) that elevates one person's religious freedom above the civil rights of others. Plain and simple, RFRA uses personal religious beliefs as justification for discrimination. Together, we are empowering Iowans to reject the message of RFRA that is based in bigotry and hate, potentially harming marginalized communities, including LBGQTQ, religious minorities, Black, Brown, immigrants, and women. Together, the Interfaith All are invited to join this effort to stop discrimination.

[CLICK HERE](#) to sign up! Organizations and faith communities can join as partners in this work. Contact info@interfaithallianceiowa.org to be added to the list.

2. Meeting for Business Timing

David Drake suggested that business meeting meet every other month. With some committees meeting less frequently (building & grounds, religious ed, finance), do we want to try this? David brought up how low our attendances is – 10 or so monthly, should we have a 2nd hour on the role of Meeting for Worship for Business in our Meeting? Especially for newer attenders. Meeting every two months might make it more special and interesting for folks to attend who usually don't or perhaps never have?

Our Meeting tends to run

long - can we also be more succinct so that more people might be more likely/able to attend? Dorothy was in agreement with what David said and also presented option of not having a Meeting for Worship for Business in July and December.

A discussion took place. Bringing up action items only or things that need highlighting was brought up re committee reports. Carol noted the long-time tension between Quaker process and being "efficient." Discussion followed about the role of discernment. The importance of time between speakers was brought up. The Meeting will discuss further during the upcoming Query discussion focused on Meeting for Worship.

3. Archives & "Old Stuff"

From Dorothy: in looking for a form for M&C, I discovered that there are many, many folders of past committee work in the downstairs file cabinets near the restrooms and by the first day school area, as well as binders, photo albums and other materials that Lynne put together. I wonder if the library committee or an ad hoc committee would be willing to go through these files and discard, digitize and/or catalog as appropriate.

Carol suggested possible hiring of an archivist – perhaps a student.

Iowa Year Meeting Business

Registration is open for Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) Annual Sessions 2024 to be held 7th month 24-28 at Scattergood Friends School. The program and business agenda are attached and posted here: <https://www.iymc.org/2024-annual-sessions/>. Please register by 5pm on July 3rd to help with housing, meal planning, and programming for children.

We could still use another person to serve as a Caretaker and also someone to serve as co-clerk for Midyear Meeting planning committee.

By Ethan Huelskamp's invitation (Scattergood's development director) Carol is planning to bring the Peaceable Kingdom wall hanging to Annual Sessions for all who are interested to work on it

The Website Committee would appreciate another person with whom to share their work. Katie and Carol discussed. Carol suggested nominating committee take this up and two names were suggested.

Consider visiting other Conservative Yearly Meetings

Iowa Yearly Meeting sends representatives to the two other Conservative Yearly Meetings (North Carolina Yearly Meeting in July and Ohio Yearly Meeting in August). If someone wants or plans to attend, especially in person, please let the IYMC Clerk know. Funds to help with travel are available, and we would love an informal report.

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business closed with a moment of Silence.

Query #2 Discussion:

Outreach – August 3, 2024

One of the first comments during the discussion was the hope that it would be a “spark” to be continued in a second hour by the DMVF Outreach Committee in the fall. Many of the comments focused on the idea of outreach being to reach out to the surrounding community -- and also, inward to the meeting and to our own selves.

The purpose and goals of our outreach committee were clarified for a new attendee: reaching outside of Meeting through participation in community events, co-sponsoring events, especially peace related, and working with other IYM(C) meetings on events and issues. Updating our sign, the Friendly Line and the DMVF website are other examples of outreach. Resources for finding out more about Quakers include: the DMVF welcome brochure, Quaker Speaks videos, videos of Friends that will be available on the IYM(C) website and Quaker podcasts, such as Thee Quaker Podcast or QuakerSpeak.

To reach out to visitors and new attenders, we are asked to wear our name tags and ask visitors if they would be willing to wear a name tag (so that we can remember their names).

When people contact DMVF for information, they could be sent a copy of our welcome brochure which might help address FAQs about Quakerism and Des Moines Valley Friends.

There was a discussion of how to be welcoming to and inclusive of visitors and newcomers without being overwhelming. There was also a discussion of

how we can reach out to others outside DMVF without aggressively proselytizing (some people’s experience of their previous religious organizations).

One Friend suggested a strength of Quakerism is that we can authentically say what we believe without telling others what they should believe. We encourage each person to follow their own path and determine how the Divine works in their life.

One Friend referenced Peter Blood’s collection at our recent yearly meeting that described the origins of Quakers and what makes us unique. Should we speak more loudly to others about who we are, where we come from, what we stand for and what we have accomplished? It was asked how we can better reach out to potential Friends who may or may not live locally.

Suggestions for future activities included: a mid-week Meeting that would focus on the basics of Quakerism, a mid-week potlucks, a resumption of monthly singing, and a mid-week group meeting in person that would provide a more intimate setting for personal and spiritual sharing.

The IYM(C) spiritual sharing groups were mentioned as way intervisitation among members from different Meetings currently occurs virtually. It was suggested that a Quakerism 101 group does not have to be limited to just DMVF but could be offered in collaboration with other Meetings.

In response to the query about how we treat those with whom we may disagree, it was suggested that just like the parts of each one of us (from the

Internal Family Systems approach to therapy), there are no “bad” Friends or visitors and each is valued and contributes to the whole.

The group’s sense was that we do a good job with the last query of welcoming everyone though we wonder how accepting we would be (or have been) of someone with strong views in opposition to those generally held by DMVF members and attenders.

Query#3 for September: Meeting for Business

ADVICE

In our meeting for business, Friends seek Divine guidance in handling the affairs of the meeting. By opening the meeting with a period of worship, Friends can more easily wait patiently upon the will of the Divine Spirit while conducting business. This assists our meetings for business in finding the loving unity that might never be achieved through discussion alone. The right conduct of meetings for business, even in routine matters, is important to the life of the meeting. Friends are encouraged to prepare for and attend meetings for business just as they would other meetings for worship.

Participating in meetings for business and acceptance of responsibilities within the meeting should not be taken lightly. When filling positions within our meetings, it is important to consider the suitability of individuals for specific tasks. Although the Clerk is particularly charged with gathering the sense of the

meeting, all Friends can assist the process by committing themselves to be faithful in opening their hearts and minds to wait upon the Divine Spirit.

QUERIES

- How can we hold our meetings for business in the spirit of love, understanding and patient search for unity without becoming frustrated by differences of opinion or the pressures of time?
- How do we respond when no one else in the meeting seems to hold the views that we do on an issue?
- How do we respond to a dissenting minority?
- How do we share responsibilities among Friends in our meeting?
- How do we serve our meetings?

News of Our Friends

Deborah Fisch, Katie Jacoby and their son **Nick** are traveling this week to attend the wedding of their daughter **Janie**. While no one is looking forward to the long drive, a good time by all is nevertheless anticipated.

Upcoming Events

Labor Day Picnic and Potluck

Peter Clay would like to host a Labor Day weekend picnic at his home on the southeast side of Des Moines. He is open to any of the three days of the Labor Day weekend- Saturday, Sunday or Labor Day itself. Please reach out to Peter at if you are interested in joining him. Selection of which day will depend upon who is available



*DMV Friend Addison Williamson speaks on a panel sharing insights on **IYMC Faith & Practice Across Generations** at IYMC 2024 annual sessions in July. The panel was moderated by Peter Clay and also included Friends from Iowa's West Branch Meeting and Penn Valley Meeting in Kansas City. Photo by Jon Krieg.*

and what day works best for most of us in the DMVF community who are interested to co-create a holiday picnic together. Contact Peter at peterclay1@me.com

Hiroshima – Nagasaki Memorial Observance

This year's observance, Hiroshima – Nagasaki and the Fierce Urgency of Now, will be held Friday, Aug. 9; at 7 p.m. at the Japanese Bell of Peace and Friendship on the grounds of the Iowa Judicial Building, 1111 E. Court Ave. The rain site is Wesley United Methodist Church, 800 E. 12th St., Des Moines.

Participants are invited to bring chairs for this outside memorial. The service will include music, poetry, and will end with those gathered ringing the peace bell and laying flowers at its base.

Speakers will include DMVF David Drake and Ann Suellentrop of Peace Works–KC, and Physicians for Social Responsibility. She will offer insights and experience as a nurse challenging nuclear development and nuclear policy at the National Nuclear Security Campus in KC. Suellentrop, was arrested while protesting at the site in October 2023. <https://peaceworkskc.org/ann-suellentrop-gets-a-gift-not-guilty/>

Upcoming Hosting List

Aug. 11 - Deborah & Katie
Aug. 18 – David & Claire
Aug. 25 – Peter & Andrea
Sept. 1 – Jim & Catherine
Sept. 8 – Steve &
Sept. 15 – Charlie & Dorothy

Reflections on Quaker Beatitudes

(continued from page 1)

2) Those Friends that seem the most difficult to listen to and to live with may be the ones God uses to shake us out of our complacency. It is for me often the biggest challenge to love and listen to the contrary Friends in order to hear what the Spirit wants me to learn.

3) Bridgebuilders are needed, because they prepare and guide our way. Bridgebuilders make the passage across troubled waters possible. Whether they are personal or communal troubled waters. They also build bridges so that we are able to leave the safety of our community and go into the world.

4) We need the inquisitiveness and openness of explorers in order to seek new ways and horizons. One of the things I so appreciated and am so thankful for is the new insights, new ways of doing and thinking I was confronted with when I lived in community with young people from all over the world and from all different churches and theological beliefs. It will take courage to explore, to step out of our comfortable ways and try something new.

5) Commitment and staying power is needed to work through disagreements, hurts and disappointment in order for this holy experiment of community to work. At the same time the commitment and staying power is a testament to our love for each other, and trust me the outside world will take notice.

6) We need the wisdom and experience of our elders, and the knowledge and appreciation of our History in order to stay grounded. I think of a tree, where the roots go deep and wider in order for that tree to grow, expand and bloom.

7) Even as we try to live our lives as a testimony to the light of God within us, there come times for all of us where we see ourselves as poor in spirit, humble and broken human beings. But especially then we are blessed, because it is at those times that our lives will testify to the power of God to create a new whole.

I would like to leave a few queries with you to ponder as we go into worship, and then home to our meetings and wider communities, with the task to build God's beloved community.

- Where do you see yourself in these Quaker Beatitudes?
- Do you put your light under a bushel or do you have the courage to let it shine in community and the wider world?
- Are we in our Meetings and in IYMC looking for new horizons and openings as we look to build the blessed community?

Are we willing to endure the conditions of poor in spirit, humility and brokenness in order let God remake us into a new creation?

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:

Aug 25 – Discuss thoughts on observation of 50th anniversary of Friends House bombing (Renee Cawthorne)

Query Discussions: First Sundays, 11:45 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: For questions about the building or grounds of the Meeting House, contact Building & Grounds Committee Convenor, Dick Douglass, 515-864-1119.

Hospitality Committee: For questions about housekeeping at the Meeting House, contact Hospitality Committee convenor Charlie Brown, 515-689-6470.

Friendly Line: Send info for August FL to Ann Robinson at anny.robinson1@gmail.com by Friday, Aug 30.

Find us online at:
<https://www.desmoinesvalleyfriends.org/>

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