

# Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting

## FRIENDLY LINE

### November 2025



#### Help with Youth Programming

DMVF is excited to have children attending our meeting many first days! We are looking forward to getting to know them and their families better, and we want to provide a friendly, welcoming atmosphere to let them know we value them -- and to help them become familiar with Quaker testimonies of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality and stewardship and just to have fun.

To serve them, we need to recruit more volunteers for our youth programs.

**Child care** is provided for infants, toddlers and preschoolers from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. on Sundays.

**First day school** is provided for elementary and middle school aged children from 10:00 to 10:45 a.m. on Sundays, after which children will join their parents for silent worship.

We are using a curriculum that provides children's books and ideas for easy activities. We also have a wealth of other educational materials that can be used. Volunteers can start as an "assistant" if you want to try this out without having the responsibility of being the teacher.

**Young Friends** will primarily consist of conversations with high school age youth, and planning activities or studies that they are interested in.

We ask all volunteers working with children to get a background check. To request one, please email Dorothy at [dmlifka@yahoo.com](mailto:dmlifka@yahoo.com)

#### Faith Leaders Denounce All Forms of Political Violence and Attacks on Free Speech and Nonprofit Independence

The American Friends Service Committee is one of a very long list of churches and faith-based groups that have issued a recent statement expressing deep concern about the escalating frequency of acts of violence and threats, and the growing acceptance of violence as an appropriate response to political disagreement.

As part of the statement reads: Our traditions call us all to be peacemakers – seeking repentance, reconciliation, and repair. We call on all people, especially elected officials, to call for an end to violence, violent and divisive rhetoric, and to commit to seeking shared values through civil discourse and dialogue.

Read the [full statement](#).

#### News from the [Midwest Digest of the American Friends Service Committee](#)

##### Iowa updates

AFSC alums with [Iowa Migrant Movement for Justice](#) recently hosted IMMJ's annual meeting and talent show in Des Moines. The vibrant sharing of cultures emphasized the resilience and unity of our community.

Read the latest [Resistance Update](#) from IMMJ.

The AFSC Midwest Region co-sponsored the annual International Day of Peace celebration in Des Moines. Brian Campbell of Physicians for Social Responsibility gave the keynote. AFSC alum Eloise Cranke offered an opening prayer.

##### Short takes

Here's [AFSC's statement on the Gaza ceasefire](#).... AFSC supports [the right to learn](#) for children in Gaza.

.... Ask Congress to stop illegal military airstrikes in the Caribbean

.... Mary Zerkel of AFSC shares why [mutual aid networks](#) are one good way we can support each other while building community power to create lasting change.

## DMVF Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business 9/14/2025

### Attendees

Charlie Brown - Clerk  
Forrest Determann - Recording Clerk  
Katie Jacoby, Andrea Holveck,  
Daniel Murphy, Fred Nelson  
Jim Dietz-Kilen, Catherine  
Dietz-Kilen, Deborah Fisch  
Cheryl Sanders, Brock  
Wommack, Billie Wade  
Jack Holveck

### Meeting started with a moment of silence.

### Meeting reviewed and accepted minutes from September meeting.

Regarding the notes from September and how the expenses of clearing the yard debris, a friend noted that there is an existing policy/agreement that states Meeting would pay 1/3 and Friends House would pay 2/3 for outdoor maintenance.

The Friends House board has not yet met since the notice from the city related to this was received. Billie and Deborah will discuss this at the next Friends House board meeting. Charlie indicated he will send them the quote he has for this work to share with the Friends House board.

Cheryl noted the she and Stan have a pickup that could be could used to haul away debris if needed -- and that once a month the city allows yard waste to be dumped for for free.

A friend noted concern with liability with volunteers doing heavy work with sharp tools, etc.

A friend suggested waiting for input from Friends House, since the difference of Meeting paying 1/3 vs 100% is a significant difference.

Also, if we wait, leaves will have fallen which will make cleanup earlier. A friend suggested having the existing debris that's already been cut down hauled away now, ahead of waiting to cut down the rest, and that the costs of doing so has already been approved.

The sense of the meeting is to hold off for input from Friends House Board.

### Meeting Reviewed Announcements, Miscellaneous

Thursday evening at 6:00-7:30 Friends will gather at Friends House to prepare signs for the No Kings protest. On the day of the protest, several will meet at the pedestrian bridge by Roosevelt; 10-11:30, to welcome people headed to the event before heading to the capitol for the protest.

### Ministry and Counsel Committee (Report Presented by Jim Dietz-Kilen)

The Committee is in agreement to proceed with the proposed memorial garden.

Forrest will provide records of prior members, and Deb will go back through directories for other attenders outside of members of the meeting to include as well.

The committee will attempt to gather a list of members and attenders that have passed away, along with some details about their lives.

A Friend asked who will be responsible for determining costs

and ordering them, and how will we ensure that recognition continues through the years.

Cost has been determined to be as low as \$25 per stone on the lower end.

Friends discussed concerns with maintenance. Who would maintain this? Maintenance is often an issue with the property, and this would be another thing that to actively maintain. There have been issues in the past with things that have been set up and then not continued to be maintained.

It's been proposed that the location of the memorial garden would be out front, in the area near the entrance, this way it will be regularly visible to all that come, and not behind the building where it's out of sight and out of mind and like to be forgotten.

A Friend suggested and alternative idea of engraving existing bricks on the wall out front of meeting house instead of stones, another Friend suggested this could perhaps metal/brass plates to be attached to the bricks. There is plenty of area for these bricks and this may be lower cost and address concerns with continual maintenance of a memorial garden. Several friends agreed that this may be a good idea.

Another friend with experience with similar work indicated costs of engraving the bricks could be significantly higher, perhaps \$250 each so would be higher cost and we may be cautious about moving forward with this due to concerns with ongoing costs and maintenance.

A Friend expressed a need for maintain the memories of

members. Quakers have a history of recoding individuals spiritual lives, cited records at Bear Creek that details individual lives, not just their names, but their spiritual contributions to the community and what they stood for. These records can be more meaningful than a plaque or stone bearing someone's name.

M&C would be most likely to maintain this and writing up a spiritual obituary for members and attenders, or to find someone to do this. It was suggested having a second hour for Friends to share what they know about individuals and keeping a notebook with notes and pictures. It was suggested this be done for people that attend now as well, for the past and the future.

Minute: The sense of the meeting is for the committee to do more exploring what the intent is and how it will maintained in the future, costs and how many people would be memorialized. We'll take this topic up again in the future.

A friend on the Ministry and Council Committee noted concern that committee does not necessarily want to proceed without approval before putting additional work into the planning.

A friend also had asked about Quaker tradition, and that perhaps Quakers don't traditionally put names on things like this. Another friend noted the Day of Remembrance may be more appropriate than the memorial garden.

A friend said she's not aware of Quaker traditions to do this, but the idea is that we're part of a community. Another friend noted

that intent may be not to honor people, but to remember people.

It was also noted we do not own this building so should consider that before engraving the structure.

Amy Gottlieb of AFSC will be speaking on Dec. 7, invited by Dorothy and Billie. Catherine noted that the costs of her coming will be paid for out of CMARC and Peace and Social Concerns budgets.

### Finance Committee

(Presented by Catherine Dietz-Kilen)

The Finance Committee held meeting via email. They have received a request from Outreach Committee for an additional \$320 be added to their budget for signage and handouts for events. The Finance Committee recommends that we approve doing so.

The committee will be having its regular monthly meeting this coming Wednesday and will be putting together a proposed budget for 2026. If any other committee wants changes from their budget from last year let them know.

Minute: The Sense of the meeting is to approve an amendment for additional \$320 for this year's budget for the Outreach Committee.

The Meeting also expresses appreciation for the work of the Outreach Committee, which is beneficial to meeting and the broader community.

### Outreach Committee

(Report presented by Katie Jacoby)

### Building and Grounds Committee

(No report)

### Religious Education Committee

(No report)

### Nominating Committee

Nominating Committee has decided going forward there would be two-year appointments. If anyone wants to change, or new people want to join, let the committee know. But, going forward, they will actively re-assess this every two years instead of every single year.

### Committee on Migrant and Refugee Concerns (CMARC)

Friends that are interested in participating in this committee should reach out to Dorothy Lifka.

### Outreach Committee

(Presented by Katie Jacoby)

Committee set their budget and asked for an additional \$320, which was mentioned earlier by the Finance Committee

Committee has now had the proposed sandwich board sign sent to be printed and are working on getting the permanent sign updated (for the corner of 42<sup>nd</sup> and Grand).

The committee is talking about an Iowa Public Radio underwriting campaign. We wanted to have everything in place to be ready for when it occurs and to be sure we're ready to welcome new people if this results in more people attending. Considering doing is in the next six months or so.

Cost for about six weeks of airplay is approximately \$1600.

Several friends indicated they believe this is a great idea. Another friend noted from past experience that when there are IPR events that sponsoring those events gets a lot of visibility and suggested also considering “digital” sponsorships that display in the IPR app.

A friend asked how we would measure success, and what the message and intent would be. Suggested going through M&C for content.

Katie shared a draft script for these 15-second spot. That will be brought back to meeting final message for approval.

Jim noted that he used to work writing and approving these segments for IPR and would happy to help.

Friends shared ideas for welcoming people and for ideas for statements to include on our website.

Minute: The sense of the meeting is to approve budgeting additional funding for the IPR underwriting campaign. We’ll also consider sponsoring events that may be coming up.

### Library Committee

(Report presented by Deborah Fisch)

The intent is to ask for the same amount of funding this year as last year.

They intend to order a video about George Lakey, who was active demonstrating on peace and justice concerns, racism and immigrant concerns, and who has held many workshops. This is a documentary about his life. The committee would like to show it at some point during a second hour.

The committee noted concerns about securing a metal bookshelf to the wall to help ensure it can’t fall down.

They’ve considered moving the book sale to November or would like advice on possibly moving it back to after the New Year. Another friend had expressed interest in moving it back as well. It had also been proposed the booksale could be done before the (previously Planned Parenthood) book sale, since they could donate leftovers to the sale. Another friend suggested moving to after the new year so there is less competition with the (formerly) Planned Parenthood sale.

They want to find ways to encourage others to use the library more. They’re considering doing reviews of books to share.

They’ve also been working on preparing donated books for circulation and are looking for recommendations for new books.

Katie has prepared a form to request books from the website on the members page. They’ll be making a purchase by the end of the year to purchase new books using this year’s budget.

Deborah requests for ideas and suggestions be sent directly to her.

A friend asked what proceeds to book sale go for. This goes to Library committee budget, which often goes for bigger purchases such as bookshelves and book repairs, as well as buying books, and for subscriptions for Friends Journal, motto calendars, etc.

### New business

There is old CRT from downstairs that we would like to take away for scrub day.

The Sense of the meeting is to approve taking the CRT to be recycled.

Cheryl indicated she has not been added to Des Moines Valley directory. Charlie will work to get communication prepared for her to be added to the directly.

### The meeting ended with moment of silence.

### Query 4 Discussion: Harmony within the Meeting 10/5/2025

“This is my commandment: Love one another as I have loved you.” John 15:1

It is sometimes difficult to remember that love is a gift of the Divine Spirit and not simply a human emotion. As imperfect human beings, it is not always possible for us to feel loving toward one another, but by opening ourselves to the Light Within, we can receive and give love beyond our human abilities.

In our time, with so many professional commitments, it is difficult to find free social space in which we can spend informal time together.

Don’t just do something, sit there. Sometimes we forget that our loving presence is sufficient – bringing our love and singular presence into the meeting community.

We are grateful for Spiritual Sharing groups, which were created so we could know one another in that which is Eternal. We have also been intentional



about arranging one-on-one times with another member of the meeting – in person or through zoom. We would benefit by continuing this practice. We also deepen our connections through efforts like Friendly 8s and organized book studies. Potlucks and food are other means of building friendships within meeting.

Within a rural meeting, we tend to cohere more throughout the week, to build spiritual richness, to care for the meeting house and grounds, activities (such as clearing snow from the drive, maintaining the grounds during summer) provides richer connection. The collaboration through these meeting-based activities lead organically to other kinds of mutual aid.

We considered how we sometimes undermine our friendships within meeting, perhaps through being reserved, or judgmental.

It can be difficult What about looking for that of God within ourselves. Are we mindful of our own self-judgment and how not seeing the divine within ourselves might limit our ability to be fully with others? We get to choose how we nurture that of God within.

We are looking forward to hosting the AVP training, as we want to learn how to better address conflict and remain friends, linked together in the Spirit. This could help us get beyond avoiding conflict within the meeting.

Learning the practice of forgiveness gives us the opportunity to become curious about others who have hurt us. If you bring a conflict into worship,

and you ask for clarity until you find it, you will be given answers. Some people avoid conflict through cutting themselves off, but that avoids accountability for our part in a conflict. You can't always address the conflict with another person; sometimes you have to come to resolution on your own. Forgiveness creates harmony, as it allows us to be more genuine in relationship with another.

One way we are working to bring more harmony is to be conscious of how we welcome our Zoom participants into this blended (in person and virtual) meeting. We have changed where we place our monitor and camera to help the meeting room be brighter and more visible. We need to improve recognizing when people join on Zoom so we don't overlook them during and after our worship time.

In this time together, we had the experience of threshing out needs expressed by Zoom participants to be recognized and included, as well as grace needed by people attending in-person for understanding we may be doing the best we can and still unintentionally drop a ball or two.

We recognize our meeting takes on a lot -- many members wear multiple committee hats. It takes discernment to understand how much we need to take on and whether there are things we need to decline.

Sometimes a conflict doesn't need to be 'fixed' immediately. Sometimes patience, waiting for way to open is the solution. We need to remember we can also ask for assistance if we find ourselves in a place where we

can't find love or forgiveness for someone. As loving beings, we remember, referencing Rumi, that we are novices, after all.

Carol shared the following Rumi quote:

There are endless explanations of love, and undoubtedly you've read many of them and have perhaps grasped a few secrets. Nonetheless, you're a novice, still learning literal meanings. You should know that a lengthy, winding road still lies ahead — a road you must negotiate before you can experience the intensity of the invaluable spiritual insight that comes with love.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Myers

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Des Moines Diversity Chorus Concert

Nov. 10, 7 p.m., Grace United Methodist Church, 3700 Cottage Grove Ave, Des Moines



### **Two Years of War in Gaza, and Where Do We Go From Here?**

Tuesday, Nov. 11, 5 pm social time, 6:30 pm program, First Unitarian Church, 1800 Bell Ave., Des Moines. The speaker will be Dr. James Zogby, president of the Arab-American Institute. Sponsored by Catholic Peace Ministries and others. RSVPs are requested to [catholicpeaceministry@gmail.com](mailto:catholicpeaceministry@gmail.com)

### **Iowa Peace Network Annual Holiday Open House & Alternative Gift Fair**

Saturday, Dec. 6, 1:30-4:30 p.m., at the Des Moines Mennonite Church, 4001 56th St, Des Moines.

David Drake and Claire Cumbie-Drake will speak about their trip to Nagasaki, Japan, with the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War.

#### **Upcoming Hosting List**

Nov. 9 – David & Claire  
Nov. 16 – Jim & Catherine  
Nov. 23 – Steve & Kari  
Nov. 30 Ann  
Dec. 7 – Peter & Andrea  
Dec. 14 – Charlie & Dorothy  
Dec. 21 – Deborah & Katie

### **News of Our Friends**

**Nora Dietz-Kilen** will be married next fall to Max Florea in an intimate ceremony for family and close friends of the couple. Max is a fifth-grade teacher and Head Boys' Varsity Soccer Coach at Lebanon High School (Indianapolis suburb). Nora is a Senior Philanthropic Advisor for the Central Indiana Community Foundation. The couple plans to reside in Indianapolis.

### **Dear American Friends of the Ramazani family (family of Leo)**

(excerpts from a letter from a member of the Ottawa Friends Meeting)

I just want to let you now that the Ramazanis are settled into Ottawa life and enjoying local culture.

Some of the committee continue to work with Nawroz and Gullandam to supplement their English language and numeracy skills that they are also improving at local government classes. The younger kids speak only English at home now.

I hire Nawroz (and usually one of the older boys) to be my gardener - a rather large lawn and perennial beds. I am so glad to have them as the work is quite beyond me now. And Nawroz is very keen - farmer and gardener at heart.

We hope that you are all keeping well and looking forward to winter and all it brings.

In Friendship,

### **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,

[carol.spaulding@drake.edu](mailto:carol.spaulding@drake.edu)

**Meeting for Worship/Business:** Regularly held on the second First Day each month at Noon.

**Query Discussions:** First Sundays, Noon - Online & in person. Billie Wade, facilitator.

#### **Upcoming Second Hours:**

Nov. 23: Thanksgiving Potluck  
Nov 30 No 2<sup>nd</sup> Hour

Dec. 7: Amy Gottlieb, AFSC  
Migration Director

**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:** For questions about the building or grounds of the Meeting House, contact Building & Grounds Committee Convenor, Charlie Brown, 515-689-6470.

**Hospitality Committee:** For questions about housekeeping at Hospitality Committee convenor Charlie Brown, 515-689-6470.

**Friendly Line:** Send info for the Oct. FL by Friday, Nov. 28, to [anny.robinson1@gmail.com](mailto:anny.robinson1@gmail.com)

**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](mailto:jfalb0326@yahoo.com).