

# Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting

## FRIENDLY LINE

### February 2026



### Bearing Witness, Building Hope: Love as Action

DMVF Meeting will continue to hold monthly Love as Action vigils with the American Friends Service Committee in February and March. The next two vigils, on February 21st at 11 a.m. and on March 21st at 11 a.m., will include opening our meeting house early so that people can gather inside ahead of time to make or share signs. There will also be social time inside afterwards with food.

The location is the corner of 42nd Street and Grand Avenue in Des Moines (the address of the meeting house is 4211 Grand Avenue).

At our January vigil, a man from Kansas who was driving to Minnesota joined us who knew of our vigil from the AFSC outreach.

Our intent is to gather peacefully each month as a public witness of our Quaker values in a time of rising fascism. Our hope is that our presence will give hope to all who see and remind everyone of our moral obligations to one another.

Resources -- including an organizer guide, outreach materials, printable signs and a directory of existing vigils—can be found at [afsc.org/love-action](https://afsc.org/love-action).

*Save the Date*  
Iowa Yearly Meeting conservative

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**Midyear Meeting**  
Third Month 28-29, 2026 (March)

Bear Creek Friends Meeting Earham, Iowa  
Hybrid format- in person and online

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with facilitator  
**Carol Spaulding-Kruse**  
Des Moines Valley Friends, clerk  
Award winning author and educator  
(pen name- Carol Roh Spaulding)  
Drake University, Professor of English

assisted by authors:  
Billie Wade and Stan Sanders

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**YIELDING: TOWARDS AN EXPRESSIVE PRACTICE  
for FRIENDS**

Who gets to be creative?  
What is the role of creative expression in ordinary life?  
Is there such a thing as writing-in-the-Light?

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Let's address these and other questions as we explore the  
idea of yielding in its two distinct definitions:

as a "giving way" (to the spirit)  
and as generating useful and beautiful returns on our  
(creative) investment.

After March's vigil, we will assess any changes that might be needed or whether or not to continue.

### What's Inside, includes:

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- 2026 Committee & Positions list, pg. 6

MEETING FOR WORSHIP  
WITH ATTENTION TO  
BUSINESS – January 11, 2026

**Attendees** In-person: Dorothy Lifka-Co-Clerk, Charlie Brown-Co-Clerk, Forrest Determann-Recording Clerk; Peter Clay, David Drake, Dick Douglass, Cheryl Sutton, Jim Dietz-Kilen, Catherine Dietz-Kilen, Katie Jacoby, Ann Robinson, Deborah Fisch, (a guest visiting for the first time); Online: Billie Wade, Andrea Holveck, Jack Holveck

Meeting opened with silence.

The minutes from the November Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business were discussed and accepted with one amendment: Katie Jacoby and Deborah Fisch participated in the meeting and were not included in the minutes.

Minute: Approved the minutes from November Meeting for Business with a minor correction.

Appreciation was noted for the recording clerk.

**Finance Committee Report**

(presented by Catherine Dietz-Kilen) Correction to report: An expense stated as \$30 dollars annually in the prior report should have been \$30 per month.

The expense for property and liability insurance shared with Friends House for 2025 had not been received. The expense is higher for 2026 because it includes expense for both

Minute: We approve the budget for 2026 with appreciation for the work of the treasurer and finance committee.

**Ministry and Counsel**

**Committee Report** presented by Jim Dietz-Kilen

At Ministry and Counsel's

recommendation, we encourage Friends to read Peter Clay's article about membership in the January Friendly Line. Friends should pass along any comments they have in response to the article to Jim Dietz-Kilen at [jimdhyphenk@icloud.com](mailto:jimdhyphenk@icloud.com).

Debora Fisch will have an upcoming article on marriage.

The committee is developing a book club opportunity for collective exploration of the book, *Fit for Freedom, Not For Friendship: Quakers, African Americans and the Myth of Racial Justice*, by Donna McDaniel and Vanessa Julye. More to come.

**Nominating Committee Report**

It has been decided that committees and other positions will be two-year terms. The nominating committee will not be contacting you until next fall. However, if you wish to change to a different committee or have your name removed, please contact Andrea Holveck, Cindy Winchell or David Drake.

We appreciate everyone who contributes to the work of the Meeting. (See the DMV list of committees and positions for 2026 at the end of this newsletter, on page 6)

**Outreach Committee Report**

presented by Katie Jacoby. The committee met in January. No action items.

**Building & Grounds**

**Committee:** No report.

**Library Committee:** No report.

**Religious Education:** no report

**New Business:**

There was discussion of reducing number of meetings for business: A change is being considered to not hold monthly meetings for business for the months of March (Midyear meeting), July (Annual meeting) and December (holidays). The biggest impact would be on Finance Committee -- this change may postpone financial reports on months we do not have business meetings. The sense of a meeting is that we're comfortable with this change. Friends noted that we may also have flexibility to schedule meetings at regularly scheduled times if needed.

It was also noted that reports do not need to be provided every month if not needed.

Minute: The sense of the meeting is that we will not schedule business meeting for March, August and December of 2026. If items that need attention occur, the clerks will schedule a called meeting to address those issues.

Minute: The meeting noted appreciation for Carol's long and faithful service to this meeting as clerk. The current co-clerks express appreciation for her time and assistance with the transition to the new clerks. A friend expressed thanks for Carol's role in innovating clerk's notes to be sent with more frequency.

Minute: Clerks express appreciation to Forrest for his technology skills and willingness to share them.

February/March Love In Action Vigils at the Meeting House – Peter, Katie and Deborah have agreed to take the lead in organizing the March vigil.

## Announcements

1) Potluck for Palestine, Friday, February 13th, 5:00 p.m. at Saint John's Lutheran Church, 600 6th Avenue, Des Moines. P & S C is co-sponsoring the event. Peter Clay has volunteered to help them with the set-up and tear-down.

2) P & S C invites you to dust off your musical instruments, polish your poetry, practice that song, or whatever else you choose. On First Day, April 19, we are combining finger foods instead of soup lunch with a Des Moines Valley Friends Talent Show. We will eat upstairs. There will be a sign-up sheet on the triangle.

Meeting concluded with silence.



*Discussion after potluck with Scattergood students and staff, who stayed at the DMVF Meeting House in early February during a school break. Photo by Cindy Hemingway.*

## Query 7: Home and Family

1/4/2026

Convened by Billie Wade, recorded by Susan Myers. Attending: Claire Cuimbie-Drake, David Drake, Dick Douglas, Ann Robinson, Mujtaba Nikzad, Charlie Brown, Dorothy Lifka, Brock Womack, Jack Holveck.

**Advice:** We seek an atmosphere within our homes and within our families which nurtures the many physical, social, spiritual and emotional needs of each of us. This is true whether we live alone or with others.

A family, whatever its composition, is a unique and sometimes fragile bonding of people. At its best, it is concerned with the welfare of the whole and each of its constituents.

Part of the challenge of being human is to learn to constructively channel the energy of anger, relying on the Divine Spirit for love and guidance.

Offering hospitality can foster mutual bonds of friendship and love and can enrich our own lives and the lives of others.

### **Queries:**

- How can we make our homes places of love and hospitality?
- What different expectations do we hold for women and men, boys and girls?
- How can we bring more equality into our relationships?
- How do we develop and maintain ties of communication?

- In what ways do we share our deepest experiences, struggles, concerns and beliefs with our children and others, yet encourage them to develop their potential as the Spirit leads them?
- What place do we make in our daily lives for meditation, spiritual renewal and reading of inspiring literature, such as the Bible?
- How does our meeting support families of all kinds?

### **Discussion:**

We agree with the importance of taking time to re-create a sense of renewal and wholeness in our lives – a fitting query for this new year season. The holiday season offers times for quiet reflection as well as sharing our memories of the past year and joy for the year that has come and gone.

We reflected on how Meeting has become a family to us. Some experience a sense of welcome and belonging even as we pull our vehicles into the meeting parking lot, park our bikes and see signs of our F/friends moving toward meeting.

One friend shared from reading The Book of Joy, about Desmond Tuto and the Dali Lama's practices and friendship. The Dali Lama prays daily for five hours. By contrast, Desmond Tuto prays a modest 3-4 hours per day.

The new year prompts us to consider what we want to do differently. A daily practice is often helpful, and we realize even a few minutes of meditation in the morning can suffice (or is all we can manage). We don't always do as much as we set out

to with respect to resolutions to keep a daily spiritual practice, but we are excited to set goals. One friend shared the goal of reading through the Bible this year (beginning with the New Testament), if for no other reason than it gives us the information to be critically aware of claims others make from biblical texts.

We expose our own children to our beliefs, which we hope gives them a basis from which they can build their own belief systems. Even now, adult children sometimes express appreciation for having been raised in the Quaker faith, which became the basis of their ethics.

We reflected on the importance of commitment to love our family members, no matter how different our beliefs or how little we get along – to keep loving one another, even when it's not easy. This commitment is a foundation for common love, gratitude and reflection of the family life we have experienced together.

If we are lucky, we live long enough to have the experience of the younger generation – our adult children - teaching us things – like how to search for answers online to problems we're working on. We could change our perspectives on challenges in our families. It is often the most difficult relationships that teach us how to love. It can be challenging to bring a deeper level of sharing into our family relationships. The freedom of friendship enriches our family relationships. Friendship takes work, dedication, commitment, as does love in our biological families.

Bringing more equality into our relationships. Our experiences are shaped by the generations into which we are born. An earlier generation may have brought segregation in terms of gender roles and friendships. Building equality or equity into our current relationships (for example, domestic chores shared by couples or families) does not mean everyone does the same things, but that family members share a fair portion of the work of maintaining a household. Establishing equity is challenging, as it is based on the time, skills, abilities and interests of each member of the family.

Our meeting community has become a tight-knit family, which complements our biological families. How do we make sure this sense of closeness does not present a barrier (being too cliquish) to new attenders feeling at home in this meeting. The outreach and communication committee tries to live up to this ongoing challenge. Before the Covid virus, we had mixed folks up through planning periodic "Friendly 8s" get-togethers. This may be an idea to try and resurrect.

We also enjoy the opportunity to know members of the Iowa Yearly Meeting community, through attending Yearly Meeting and/or Mid-Year Meeting. Also through the 6-month Spiritual Sharing Small Groups (now with its own acronym, SSSG) (<https://www.iymc.org/spiritual-sharing-small-groups/>).

As a meeting, we think we are doing pretty well in welcoming new attenders to meeting and to committee responsibilities, but less well in including folks to join us in casual activities after or between meetings – such as going to lunch or a movie after meeting. We are called to know one another. We must be intentional to resist habitual patterns of gathering (cliques) and be mindful of people with whom we may struggle to know for some difference or other (folks who identify as LGBTQ+, single, older or younger than us, coupled or un-coupled, with various ability and disability status). Still, weaving new patterns through warp and weft creates more complex and beautiful connections.

Meeting invites us to enter into this beautiful mystery of greater vulnerability and intimacy. One Friend shared how participating in grief groups has helped him to share more openly in other areas of his life. The ability to share our different experiences and feelings from a position of safety opens doors for greater intimacy which rests on and is fed by our connection with divine Love.

-- Respectfully submitted by  
Susan Myers

*Everything we do that makes the world a better place we do in collaboration with others. Each action moving the world toward good has a ripple effect.*

-- AFSC Corporation member  
Shannon Isaacs, from Quaker Action Newsletter, Fall 2025

## News from a Friend

Charlie Brown shares: I've been selected to present my second story written for Open Book, Feb. 12, at Hearthstone, a Wesley-life facility in Pella Iowa. It is titled 'A Journey Through Time' about the loss of my dad to Alzheimer's and the fear that I carried after that.

My own symptoms eventually began to appear, dismissed by friends and family as 'just aging.' Eventually David Drake spoke to me about his experience with Broadlawns Hospital's Geriatric Center. I went through the process of obtaining a referral from my GP. Susan accompanied me to my first appointment so they could interview her on her observations. I took the 'Cognitive Assessment' test and had an interview with a med student, then a visit with Doctor Shah. I was given a test to assess my eating habits, exercise habits and social interaction habits. I got a score of 50 out of a possible 80 points. I also took the pTau217 blood protein test.

The answers I gave led to a plan for me to make adjustments to these areas of my life (eating, exercise and socialization) to try to forestall the progress of my condition. This has inspired me to take the opportunity to spread the message to move to better health through change and self-care.



## WALK

Walking in the dark  
in my coverall cocoon,  
crossing frozen fields.  
to the river where I stop,  
listen to my heart warmed there,  
and look up to the Dipper  
its handle reaching down.  
So saved from early sleep  
I give thanks for winter's night  
its reminders and spare clarity.  
Metamorphosis postponed,  
I leave my wings encased,  
and wend my larval way  
back home.

-- a poem by Iowa City Quaker  
Larry Marsh, from his book,  
*"Our Neck of the Woods"* with  
woodcuts by Anna McMaken-  
Marsh (contributed by Peter  
Clay)

## Upcoming Events

**Interfaith Alliance of Iowa  
Action Fund Reception – with  
Ross Wilburn, Feb. 16  
(Monday), 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.** at  
Windsor Heights Community  
Center. Get [more details](#).

**American Wilderness A  
Service in Solidarity with  
Refugees and Immigrants  
Feb. 22 (Sunday), 3:00 p.m.**  
First United Methodist Church  
(downtown Des Moines)

## **28th annual Bishop Maurice Dingman Peace Award Celebration, March 7 (Saturday)**

This year's Dingman Peace Award celebration will be held at Holy Trinity Catholic Church, 2926 Beaver Ave., Des Moines. Activities begin at 6:00 p.m., with awards program at 7:30. The suggested contribution is \$50, donations of any amount are welcome.

This year's featured speaker will be Jonathan Kuttub, director of the Friends of Sabeel North America (FOSNA). This year's award recipient will be the Iowa-based HOPE Foundation for Palestine. HOPE provides emergency medical support to the people blockaded inside Gaza, facing the Israeli's military onslaught, forced displacement, and severe food shortage.

## **Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) 2026**

**March 28-29 (Saturday-Sunday)**, at Bear Creek Meeting near Earlham, Iowa. This year's theme will be Yielding: Towards an Expressive Practice for Friends, with resource leader Carol Roh Spaulding.

See flyer on page 1. More details on the schedule with registration information coming soon at <https://www.iymc.org/midyear-meeting-2/>.

## **Palm Sunday Peace Service**

March 29, 7:00 p.m.  
Aldersgate Methodist Church,  
3600 75th St. Urbandale.

## DMVF Meeting 2026 Committees

Clerk: Dorothy Lifka and Charlie Brown, co-clerks

Recording Clerk: Forrest Determann

Asst. Recording Clerk: Claire Cumbie-Drake (Peter Clay as backup)

Treasurer Katie Jacoby

Asst. Treasurer Dorothy Lifka

2nd Hour Scheduler: Carol Spaulding Kruse (also updates the Directory)

Query Facilitator: Billie Wade

Query Recorder: Susan Meyers

Asst. Query Recorder Peter Clay

Finance Committee: Catherine Dietz-Kilen, (Convener), Charlie Brown, Cheryl Sutton

Ministry & Counsel: Jim Dietz-Kilen (Convener), Dorothy Lifka, Gordon Bivens, Andrea Holveck, Peter Clay, Deborah Fisch, Billie Wade

Peace & Social Concerns: Billie Wade (Convener), Patty Wengert, Petra Lange, Peter Clay, Dick Douglass

Religious Education: Dorothy Lifka, Andrea Holveck, Ann Robinson, Carol Spaulding Kruse, Cindy Winchell, Deborah Fisch, Cheryl Sutton

Buildings & Grounds: Charlie Brown (Convener), Fred Nelson, Bob Henderson

Library: Deborah Fisch (Convener), Patty Reynolds, Dorothy Lifka

Friendly Line: Ann Robinson, Billie Wade

Property Management: Fred Nelson, Bob Henderson

DMARC Representatives: Kari Noble, Andrea Holveck

FH Board Representatives  
Deborah Fisch, Billie Wade, Dorothy Lifka

Outreach: Katie Jacoby (convener), Ann Robinson, Billie Wade, Forrest Determann, Lindsey Baker

Audit Committee: Billie Wade, Peter Clay

Hospitality: Hosting Scheduler, Supplies, and Potluck organizing: Charlie Brown – *need backup for Charlie?*

House Scheduler: Claire Cumbie-Drake

Committee for Migrant and Refugee Concerns (CMARC):

Dorothy Lifka (convener) Jim Dietz-Kilen, Peter Clay, Andrea Holveck, Ann Robinson, David Drake

Interfaith Alliance

Representative: Dorothy Lifka

Nominating Committee: Andrea Holveck (Convener), David Drake, Cindy Winchell

### Hosting Schedule

Check out the First Day hosting schedule at the DMVF web calendar for hosting [here](#).

If you feel led to serve the meeting as a host, contact co-clerk Charlie Brown at 515-689-6470, or [charlie3501@msn.com](mailto:charlie3501@msn.com).

## Des Moines Valley Friends

**Meeting for Worship:** Sundays at 10 a.m., at the Meeting House and by Zoom via email invitation from co-clerks, Charlie Brown and Dorothy Lifka, at

[clerk@desmoinesvalleyfriends.org](mailto:clerk@desmoinesvalleyfriends.org)

**Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business:**

Regularly held on the second First Day each month at 11:45

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

**Upcoming Second Hours:**

Feb. 15: Soup Sunday

Feb. 22: Outreach (Katie Jacoby)

Mar 22 Amy Gottlieb, AFSC (Billie Wade)

**Child Care:** If you have a child who would like to be included in childcare or first day school for older youth, contact Andrea at [aandjholveck@gmail.com](mailto:aandjholveck@gmail.com).

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

**Friendly Line:** Send info for the Feb. FL by Fri, Feb. 27, to [anny.robinson1@gmail.com](mailto:anny.robinson1@gmail.com)

**Find us online at:**

<https://www.desmoinesvalleyfriends.org/>.

**Check out our Facebook group** at Des Moines Valley Friends (Quakers) and our (separate) **Facebook page** at Des Moines Valley Friends – Quakers