Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting
FRIENDLY LINE
August 2026



Spiritual State of the Meeting Report 2025-2026

Des Moines Valley Friends welcomed several new regular attenders over the past year, including—to our great joy—families with young children.

Unfortunately, another family decided to leave Iowa because of legislation making the state a hostile environment for a trans family member. We held a fond and sad farewell party for them and assisted with their move.

We have had an unusual number of requests for Clearness or Support Committees, probably a reflection of our troubled times. We have also considered and revised our procedures for requests to be married under the care of the meeting and for requests for membership.

We are grateful for the faithful service of our standing committees: Peace & Social Concerns, Ministry & Counsel, Library, Outreach & Communications, Buildings & Grounds, Religious Education, and Finance. These committees have:

- amplified our voices through collaboration with and financial support for community organizations;
- kept our meetinghouse a safe and welcoming environment;
- tended to the spiritual, physical and financial well-being of our members/ attenders;
- invited others to join us in worship through our presence at tables for community events and an underwriting buy on Iowa Public Radio.

DMVF is one of 35 meetings holding monthly "Love as Action" vigils. We also recently signed the Apartheid-Free Communities Pledge and are participating in the Affinities Group.

We continue to have a special focus on immigration through our Committee for Migrant & Refugee Concerns (CMARC), funded through the remarkable generosity of one of our members. The committee collaborates with and supports many local aid and advocacy efforts and the national Quaker organization, North Star Network. Our Peace & Social Concerns committee recently hosted a "Racial Wealth Gap Simulation" exercise, illustrating how governmental policies have long disadvantaged Black individuals and families. We hope to deepen the understanding gained from that activity by organizing a book discussion group to explore together Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship.

We also recently welcomed AFSC's Amy Gottlieb for a hybrid presentation, attended by individuals from other IYM(C) meetings, about the organization's work on immigration issues. And in February, we had a Zoom presentation, again attended by folks from our meeting, and other IYM(C) meetings, about North Star network, a national organization that conducts "Quaker relays" to help endangered immigrants and refugees reach safer and more welcoming homes.

Our meeting has also, with involvement from other Friends, initiated an effort to secure funding so that a recent international Scattergood graduate can attend Luther College. This all requires significant involvement from individual members and attenders.

We are currently grappling with how we can more equitably share these responsibilities and how we can respond to the multitude of concerns without being stretched too thin.

Our meeting's spiritual state is strong. We find hope by beginning where we are and acting with love as individuals, as a faith community, and in partnership with others. In these troubled times we continue to see – and to experience – the power of love at work.

-- Drafted by DMVF Ministry & Counsel Committee

Quaker Meeting for Worship with attention to Business, 6/7/2026

Attending: Charlie Brown and Dorothy Lifka, co-clerks; Forrest Determann, recording clerk; Claire Cumbie-Drake, David Drake, Deborah Fisch, Andrea Holveck, Katie Jacoby, Ann Robinson, Cheryll Sutton, Billie Wade

Clerk started with a minute of appreciation to Forrest and Claire for being recording/alt recording clerks.

Clerk read aloud the State of the Meeting report for IYM(C), developed by the Ministry & Counsel Committee. Minor changes to the report were discussed. It was suggested that the last paragraph should be shorted to "Our meeting, along with other meetings and individuals, have initiated an effort to secure funding so that a recent international Scattergood graduate can attend Luther College."

A friend suggested removing the items that would be in peace and social concerns report and instead state simply the broad work of the committee instead of enumerating the items they're stated.

Another friend also indicated the work of the committees should be represented and that the yearly meeting appreciates shortening the reports.

Removing the paragraphs on "Our Peace & Social Concerns committee…" and "We also recently welcomed AFSC's Amy Gottlieb…" since these overlaps with Peace and Social concerns separate report.

Discussion of removing, "We continue to have a special focus on immigration support through our Committee of Immigrant & Refugee Concerns" paragraph, but another friend suggested leaving it in. A friend noted that this report is read in annual meeting, but the individual committee reports are not, so these items could perhaps be left in to better communicate these times to the broader state of the meeting.

A friend agreed with leaving these parts in so that they will be read during the annual meeting and also suggested adding an ending paragraph summarizing how this times have impacted the spiritual life of the meeting.

Clerk suggested giving Ministry & Counsel permission to further some of the changes discussed and work out the details so that report can be submitted in a timely manner. One friend did object to this.

Clerk noted a sense of the meeting to update the paragraph regarding the funding for the Scattergood sentence and to add a couple sentences at the end to summarize the report and its impact on meeting.

A friend noted that going forward we should be communicating the spiritual sense of the meeting, and not just a list of what has been done.

Minute: The meeting appreciates the work of M&C and also for the Business meeting in crafting the state of the Spiritual State of the Meeting report that accurately reflects our spiritual life.

We will have a brief business meeting to finalize the State of the Meeting report for Yearly Meeting once friends have received a copy of the report to be discussed at the rise of the meeting for worship.

Financial Committee report

Presented by Katie Jacoby

The Treasure's report was discussed. How to make donations to the meeting was discussed. Details for making donations to meeting, including giving at a donation box in foyer, will be communicated in the Friendly Line.

It was also noted that the financial situation of the meeting is healthy, but for those that have the means, providing donations is one way in which spiritual support can be expressed.

Minute: We appreciate the many ways that friends support our meeting through service, time, energy and financial donations. Meeting noted appreciation of work of the treasurer, assistant treasurer and the finance committee.

Outreach Committee Report

Presented by Katie Jacoby

The Meeting discussed staffing of the table for PrideFest next weekend, as well as for potentially marching in the parade. It was suggested a schedule be sent for people to sign up for specific times. It was also suggested we reach out to Bear Creek Meeting regarding this.

Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee

Dorothy has been serving in this capacity on interim basis, but is asking for the meeting to confirm this role and ask to volunteers for others to consider joining. A friend nominated Dorothy to serve this role and thesense of the meeting agrees.

For Yearly Meeting, Ann is a representative, Annual Meeting encourages two people to represent meetings. A friend noted it's important that the representative know and understand what the Meeting is going to contribute financially.

Nominating Committee has appointed Cheryl Sutton to serve on the Monthly Meeting Ministry and Council Committee.

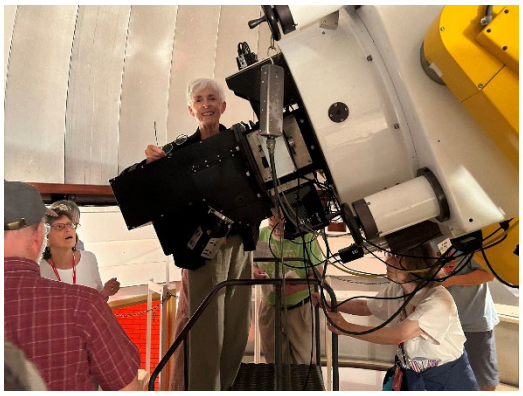
New Business

The "Bucks for Bugs" report was discussed.

There was a discussion of DMVF PROPOSALS FOR OUR OUTSIDE SPACE report. This includes a children's play area. This has been presented to Friends House, which has approved this work, since this work will be paid for by Meeting.

DMVF book group begins August 16

All Friends are invited to join F(f)riends who will be reading and discussing "Fit for Freedom Not for Friendship: Quakers, African Americans, and the Myth of Racial Justice" by Donna McDaniel and Vanessa Julye.



IYM(C) attenders, including Claire Cumbie-Drake (looking at the moon), on outing to the Grant O. Gale Observatory on the Grinnell campus, with Grinnell physics professor and Quaker Robert Cadmus (left), in red checked shirt.

The first meeting will be held Sunday, August 16th time 1:30 p.m in person and on Zoom. Several books are available through the DMVF's library or can be ordered through Friends General Conference QuakerBooks.

The dates/timing of subsequent meetings of the group will be decided at the end of the first meeting.

The proposed plan for reading/discussion is designed to cover the first two chapters over five sessions. After that, we will decide when to continue with discussion of more of the book.

- Session 1—pp. 3-14 (Quaker Treatment of Enslaved People)
- Session 2—pp. 14 (The Sensitive Few …)-29 (An Intensifying Critique)
- Session 3—pp. 29-42 (end of Chapter 1)
- Session 4—pp. 44-56 (Friends and Formal Antislavery Affiliations)
- Session 5—pp. 56-67 (end of Chapter 2)

Can you help?

DMVF at Ingersoll Live

DMVF will again have a booth at the Ingersoll Live street festival on August 28, from 3:00-8:00 p.m. If you would like "a place at the table" please let Katie know.

If you haven't been, Ingersoll Live is a family-friendly street festival with music and other performances, food vendors, face painting and information booths set up by various businesses and groups who are members of The Avenues of Ingersoll & Grand.

More details regarding scheduling, set-up and take-down will be shared with those interested in participating.

Queries #1&2 Discussion, August 2, 2026

Present: Billie Wade, convener, Claire Cumbie-Drake, recorder; Deborah Fisch, Dorothy Lifka, Cheryl Sutton, Ann Robinson

Query 1: Meeting for Worship

The practice of attending Meeting for many years has helped one Friend be more aware, mindful, and worshipful in their everyday life.

One Friend does not always arrive at worship prepared in "mind and spirit". Unconditional acceptance of just showing up keeps this Friend coming back; whatever is considered divine by a particular individual is accepted. Perhaps it is better to sit outside and prepare for worship, even if it means being a few minutes late.

The short drive to Meeting with no radio is one way to help prepare for worship.

Regarding Yearly Meeting, one Friend noticed that it took longer to center into worship in the large meeting room, compared to worship in the Meeting House on the Scattergood campus.
Meeting does not do a good job of recognizing and nurturing those who have a gift of vocal ministry or other spiritual gifts.
To some degree the nominating committee recognizes the special gifts of individuals in selecting friends to serve on committees.
A Friend says 'thank you' throughout their day for the miracles in their life. They pause in those moments to try and understand why miracles are prevalent in some lives and not in others.
After reading this advice, one Friend appreciated that there is a way to worship that is very different from what she grew up.

Query 2: Outreach

Our outreach is stronger than ever, thanks to the those serving on the Outreach Committee.
We believe a number of our new regular attenders first encountered Quakers at the Meeting's booth during a community event. The sponsorship on Iowa Public Radio has been a good reminder of our presence in the community.
How do we share the "faith that sustains us" with others? This is complicated by the fact that individual Friends have a diversity of personal beliefs within the broader framework of Quakerism, based in the belief that there is that of God within each of us.
We pondered how we can better share our faith and practice with others, as individuals and as a community. For example, we could add to our signage something like: "There is that of the divine in each of us."
Our Meeting community could think of more structured ways to have conversations about our own spiritual journeys.
This can provide us with greater confidence in sharing with others outside of Meeting.
We could more openly share with others our practice of sitting in silence to listen for how the spirit speaks and moves in our lives.
"Love is Action" vigils have been a way of showing that we are here. Our message is clear and powerful in our silence.
It takes courage to reach out to those with whom we disagree, especially when we don't know the outcome.

News of Our Friends

Peter Clay shares that he continues to support his best friend, Larry Traiman, who has been in hospice at his home in Lynn, Massachusetts, since mid-June. Peter arrived on June 3rd for a nine-day visit to help Larry celebrate his 76th birthday. After four years with metastatic lung cancer that has spread throughout his brain, Larry's situation went rapidly downhill coincident with Peter's arrival. He writes, "I am deeply grateful for the love in action of Fred, Dorothy and Forrest in continuing to check on my Des Moines home."

Larry was an oncology nurse for over 35 years in Boston. Most of that time he worked at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute. At the present time Peter has no reservations and no set date for his return to Iowa.

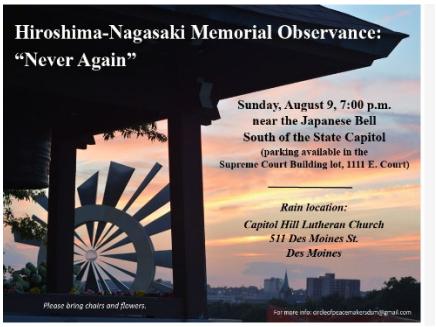


Peter (right) and Larry taken during an earlier visit (after his cancer diagnosis but at a time when he was still doing well).

Congrats to DMV Friends for recent letters to the editor in the Des Moines Register. **Dorothy Lifka**'s letter, "Florida puts limits on fertilizers; why can't Iowa?" appeared Sunday, July 11. **Carol Spaulding-Kruse**'s letter, "Local journalism is key to revitalization," appeared Sunday, July 26.



Nora Dietz-Kilen and her fiancée, Max, took a trip to Seoul to visit her birth family. While there they participated in a traditional ceremony to announce their intention to be married.



Hiroshima/ Nagasaki Memorial: Never Again
Sunday, Aug. 9, 7:00 p.m.
at the Japanese Bell, Iowa State Judicial Grounds, Des Moines

The annual remembrance of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. See attached poster/ flier. Participants are encouraged to bring flowers and your own chair!

Cosponsors include the Iowa Peace Network.

Visualizing Palestine Exhibit
August 2 – 12, DMVF basement

The exhibit, created by the American Friends Service Committee, provides opportunities to deepen our understanding of the Palestinian viewpoint. It also provides a way to encourage larger conversations in our local communities that speak to the issues of justice for Palestinians today.

Pendle Hill Cary Lecture: Love Crosses Borders
September 14, 7:30 pm - 8:00 pm

A free, hybrid lecture by Anton Flores-Maisonet, Love Crosses Borders, will weave stories from a 25-year journey alongside immigrant communities

Registration is required. Learn more and register at the Pendle Hill website.

News from the Friends Committee on National Legislation: Rare Opportunity

Recently, the House of Representatives narrowly passed, by a vote of 216-212, its annual military policy bill, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). This bill would authorize an astounding $1.15 trillion in Pentagon spending. Most years, this bill moves forward with strong bipartisan majorities, so this level of debate is a real win!

Lawmakers across partisan divides are reconsidering if they should authorize such a massive bill for weapons and war. Many members of Congress cited the illegal and immoral war with Iran in their opposition to the NDAA.

Now the legislation is going before the Senate. Through Sept. 11 is a window of opportunity to stop or downsize the Pentagon budget. Find more information from FCNL at https://www.fcnl.org/resources/congressional-recess-resources

Hosting Schedule

Aug. 9 – Charlie & Andrea
Aug. 16 – Deborah & Katie
Aug. 23 – David & Claire
Aug. 30 – Jim & Catherine
Sept. 6 – Kari & Steve
Sept. 13 – Ann & Ted

You can view the 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.

Des Moines Valley Friends

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

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business: Held on the second First Day each month at 11:45 a.m.

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

Upcoming Second Hours:
8-24 – Film "Citizen George" (Ted Lee & Library Committee)
8-31 - Nuclear weapon abolition (David Drake)

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.

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 September FL by Fri, Aug. 28, to 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