Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting
FRIENDLY LINE
May 2026



Quaker Parrots: An Introducton

By Katie Jacoby



The Religious Society of Friends (Quaker) faith is not related to Quaker Oats, Quaker Chemical Corporation, Quaker Oil, Quaker Fabric Corporation or Quaker Steak & Lube. “Quaker” implies values associated with Quaker beliefs, notably frugality, integrity and honesty. Many businesses were quick to capitalize on the positive connotations associated with the name regardless of alignment with Quaker values. (Looking at you, Quaker Oil.)

Additionally, Quaker parrots are not actually Quakers! This is not to say conclusively that birds don’t have spiritual lives (we learn more about birds every day), and they would likely appreciate Quaker tendencies towards reverence for our world and action to protect our shared habitat. But they are birds and don’t share our faith (as far as we know). However, Quaker parrots do have things in common with the average human Quaker. Quaker parrots are somewhat modest in appearance. It’s thought that their name comes partly from their grayish-white chest and crown, which to someone with naming rights thought resembled traditional Quaker attire like bibs, bonnets and capelets. However, their backside breaks with historical tradition, as their plumage and wings are a quite striking green or blue.

Quaker parrots have exceptional communication abilities. Talkative, noisy, expressive - once they get going, they have a lot to say.

They quake! When excited, Quaker parrots bob and shake. But they also bob and shake when irritated, bored or ill. Read the room as they say and conduct yourself accordingly.

Finally, Quaker parrots are smart and value community. In the wild they live cooperatively in flocks and share large elaborate nests. In captivity they thrive on interaction and companionship with their human family. That said, sometimes they just need to do their own thing and seek solitude and silence. As do we all.

IYM(C) Meets July 22-26 at Grinnell College.

Register by June 1!

You are invited to the Annual Sessions of Iowa Yearly Meeting of Friends (Conservative). Seventh Month, 22-26, 2026. This year’s theme will be Strengthening and Sustaining a Community of Hope.

This year’s very early deadline is required by Grinnell College, our YM host facility this year only, due to building and safety improvements going on this summer at Scattergood Friends School.

Grinnell College, in Grinnell Iowa, has a large college dining room, dorm rooms with air conditioning, elevators and beautiful grounds.

Activities will include programs and speakers, book table, stargazing (weather permitting), fellowship and meaningful discussion, along with IYMC business and reports.

View this year’s program and speakers. The advance program is also copied on page 5 of this newsletter. As always, you can attend virtually or in person.

There are two ways to register.

- Register online
- Print this document and mail to the address provided.

MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS

4/12/2026

Attendees:
Charlie Brown - Co-Clerk
Dorothy Lifka - Co-Clerk
Forrest Determann - Recording Clerk
Claire Cumbie-Drake,
David Drake, Cheryl Sutton
Catherine Dietz-Kilen
Katie Jacoby, Jim Dietz-Kilen
Deborah Fisch, Brock Wommack, Billie Wade

Meeting started with moment of silence

Review of the February minutes Tyler's last name, Walpole, was missing from the prior month's minutes.

Discussion of the Apartheid-Free Communities Pledge

Peter discussed antiapartheid in Israel/Palestine, and then read the pledge aloud. Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative is already one of the cosignatories, as is Bear Creek, Quaker Affinity. Some ways in which Des Moines Valley Friends could fulfill the pledge include include through: Education, advocacy and economic activism.

Peace and Social Concerns Committee is in favor of signing on.

A Friend noted concern that the pledge is too narrow, in light of violent acts having been committed by both sides. Another Friend responded to this noting that the focus of the pledge is on apartheid itself; there is no reference to other issues in in the pledge.

A Friend noted concerns that signing any kind of pledge would be in affect swearing an oath. Clerk noted that we're affirming the pledge, and not swearing an oath and a Friend reminded us there is an FAQ on the website that addresses this sort of concern.

Another Friend noted over the years we have also approved affirmation of other statements and letters in the past, but noted concern that once the affirmation has been signed, we have not followed through with action and asked what it means for us to sign on with this to follow through with action instead of just signing it and being done with it.

Concerns about the current administration targeting groups and individuals who are perceived as being opposed to Israel or antisemitic were discussed. A Friend shared having experience with someone believing that being affiliated with AFSC is antisemitic, but just because someone calls us that that does not mean that it's true.

Clerks noted a strong strong sense of the meeting to proceed with affirming the pledge, and offered any individuals that object an opportunity to stand aside, the Friend that has voiced concern about not wanting to sign as a form of swearing an oath indicated they had changed their mind and would like to sign on.

Minute: The sense of the meeting is to formally sign on to the Apartheid-Free Communities Pledge. Our Quaker faith compels us sign onto the pledge. We ask peace and social concerns committee to consider how we can take actions to support this pledge and to bring their suggestions back to business meeting. Friends are encouraged to share their thoughts and ideas with members of the committee.

The meeting noted appreciation to Claire for the reporting of the February meeting, and to Forrest for continuing to agree to record.

Finance Committee Report

Presented by Katie Jacoby and Catherine Dietz-Kilen

A Friend noted appreciations of how thoroughly and clearly the report was presented.

Clerk noted that everyone is welcome to attend the finance committee meetings.

If anyone would like to volunteer for Friendly audit, please let the committee know.

Minute: We approved the treasurer's reports with appreciation of the great work of the treasurer. We approve posting the committee practices and policies to the members section of the DMVF website. We express great appreciation to Katie and the committee for the work of revising the document.

Ministry and Council Report

Presented by Jim Dietz-Kilen

Jim reminded us that they are working on setting a time for a book group discussion of the early chapters of the book Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship and there is still time to sign on for the first meeting but to let them know soon.

Minutes: We appreciate the work of Ministry and Council.

Peace and Social Concerns report

Presented by Peter Clay

Discussion of Food for Love As Action vigils for March and April. Ann Robinson and John Tesdell have taken the lead on managing much of the April vigil, including documentation and guidelines of vigil and working out the details of things like costs of food and other things.

A Friend suggested having an obvious basket set out for cash donations to help fund the vigils. A Friend noted a significant portion of the budget for the mitt is going to food for the events, suggested using this money for cool drinks out of the budget but not using funds designated to the committee for food and let food be paid for by free-will donations. They may not have the budget to fund food through the year without asking finance committee for more funds. A Friend also suggested asking people coming to bring food to share.

Friends expressed that it's helpful to have something to eat in addition to having beverages, especially for those that have come long way to attend the vigils and suggested buying meals from local businesses that support the movement (as has been done every month so far).

A Friend noted concern for ensuing we have the proper human resources to ensure the work of continuing the events is well established and that the significant work of organizing these events.

Another Friend suggested having the committee prepare a job description of what's needed for organizing and hosting the events and to ask the meeting for volunteers to fulfill the role.

Minute: The sense of the meeting is that Outreach Committee, Peace and Social Concerns Committee and the clerks work on finding a volunteer to organize the upcoming vigils. We appreciate the work of the Peace and Social Concerns committee in giving us a way to our faith into action. We also thank and acknowledge the work of AFSC for initiating the Love and Action Vigils.

Library Committee Report

Minute: Thanks to Katie and everyone else on the committee of their work.

Other Items

Tim Button from the Church of the Brethren (another traditional peace church) has inquired about use of the meeting house on a quarterly basis for their worship and a meal on a late Sunday afternoon once per quarter.

A Friend asked to ensure that they're open and affirming of the LGBTQ community before approving their use of the building. The Clerk will look into more information on their beliefs to bring to the next business meeting.

Images prepared by Katie were presented as ideas for garden outside.

Friends discussed the picnic for this year. Sense of the meeting is that we'd like to have clerks work with the scheduler to find a date for the picnic.

Meeting ended with a moment of silence.

FRIENDS JOURNAL

Quaker SPEAK



View Bille Wade's thought-provoking commentary featured in a new Quaker Speak video by Friends Journal. Congrats, Billie!

Query #11 Social & Economic Justice Discussion: May 3, 2026

Present: Ann Robinson, Deborah Fisch, Andrea Holveck, Jack Holveck, Dick Douglass, Cheryl Sutton, Stan Sanders, Dorothy Lifka, Brock Womack, Billie Wade (convener), Susan Myers (recorder)

For when I was hungry you gave me food, when thirsty you gave me drink,
When I was a stranger you took me into your home, when naked you clothed me,
When in prison you visited me.
Matthew 25:35-36

Many people approach the queries from a perspective of separation – division between the rich and the poor – and we benefit more from coming from a place of unity.

We discussed the benefits we would accrue from participating

in the Alternatives to Violence program, which would give us tools to be grounded in love as we work toward a society that values everyone. Jesus sought to meet the needs of individuals and change their hearts and minds to find another way to relate to one another – this is also the message of AVP, which emerged from a Quaker community.

We recognize justice comes from the grass roots up, beginning with orienting our hearts and minds toward love.

Most quakers come to our faith with a deep desire to address injustice. We wrestle with questions of what is enough for us, what can we share?

We recognize the ways our own Des Moines metro community contains both the potential for compassion and for callousness toward unhoused people. One week after groups such as JOPPA had provided blankets, tents, heaters for an encampment of unhoused people, the city bulldozed the camp, destroying all of the people's belongings. We punish people for being poor and homeless.

Every time the system knocks them down, it knocks us down too. Then we must find ways to keep getting back up. It seems elected people fear the homeless because they fear becoming poor themselves.

We need to act locally, including voting for people who offer solutions. We also need to express gratitude when elected officials vote for solutions we support, as well as let officials know what we don't support. The outreach committee is working on creating easy opportunities to write postcards to elected officials during soup Sundays.

Recognizing we can't possibly do everything, our meeting needs to discern what we, as a community, are called to do. We are stronger as a community, both discerning what to do, and contributing to solutions.

Together with AFSC, our meeting has been hosting a monthly Love is Action vigil, followed by a meal, which itself builds community.

The state of Iowa recently removed constitutional rights protecting trans people against discrimination; the need to address prejudice and discrimination is very real. This needs to emerge from compassion.

We need an evolving human spirit – in the future, social anthropologists will wonder how our society could live with the negative effects of predatory capitalism, just as we look back and wonder how we could have supported slavery.

From the first moments of an AVP training, the program builds community within the diverse attendees by creating the space for effective, respectful communication, listening and discernment. Our meeting could use the same process to help us identify what matters to us, where we can find the spirit to transform the world.

Query 11 Suggested Changes

In what ways do we oppose prejudice and injustice based on gender, sexual orientation, class, race, age, and physical, mental and emotional conditions?

Change: sexual orientation to sexual identity (or both).

How can we improve our understanding of those who are driven to violence by subjection to racial, economic or political injustice?

Change 'How can we improve our understanding…' to 'What is our understanding of…'

Change 'violence' to 'violent and harmful behaviors'

Suggested New Queries (when yearly meeting take up major revisions):

1. Add a specific query to address the injustice of homelessness
2. Add a query that addresses the challenge of dying with dignity.

-- Respectfully submitted by Susan Myers



Quaker F(f)riends at Love as Action vigil in April hosted by AFSC and DMVF Meeting. Photo by Jon Krieg.

News of Our Friends

Dorothy Lifka's daughter **Alix Lifka-Reselman** and her partner, **Matt Favors**, are recovering from injuries suffered when they were hit by a truck while walking. Alix is back at work using a wheelchair and had her first post-accident swim in the Drake pool recently. For more information, read this article written by an ADM high school student.

Upcoming Events

Nakba Observance, Saturday, May 15; 11 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., Cowles Common,

A time to remember the Palestinian "catastrophe" as Palestinians were driven from their homes to make way for the new state of Israel. The nakba continues today throughout the West Bank and Gaza. Education and displays. Event hosted by Circle of Peace Makers (CPM).

Iowa Yearly Meeting Conservative Yearly Meeting, Wednesday through Sunday morning, July 22-26, at Grinnell College. Advance program below.

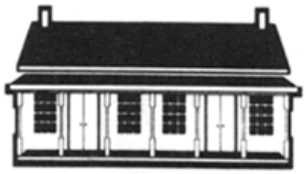
Hosting Schedule

May 10- – Charlie & Dorothy
May 17 – Claire & David
May 24 – Deborah & Katie
May 31 – Ann & Ted
June 7 - ?
June 14 – Jim & Catherine

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.

Iowa Yearly Meeting of Friends
(Conservative)
Advance Program for
149th Annual Sessions
Seventh Month 22-26, 2026
Grinnell, Iowa @ Grinnell College Campus
TEMPORARY NEW LOCATION!



Strengthening and Sustaining A Community of Hope

Fifth Day/Thursday through Seventh Day/Saturday mornings: **Bible Study** with **Angelika Shafer**.

Evening Collections

Fourth Day/Wednesday: **Emily Guenther** Presents a panel of students and teachers from Grinnell's *Liberal Arts in Prison Program* giving a program overview with Q&A about their lived experiences.

Fifth Day/Thursday: **Rabbi Sarah Brammer-Shlay** Talks about what community, obligation and love look like in the Jewish Community.

Sixth Day/Friday: **Mary Klein** Shares with us a presentation on Inspiring Hope. It will be developed with IYMC influence and include some interactive bits.

Seventh Day/Saturday: **Fun Night.** Open Mic, Trivia and Games. Bring your ideas.

First Day/Sunday: Pre-meeting with **Mary Klein** followed by Meeting for Worship.

Bible Study, Worship, Business and Evening Collections will be shared via Zoom, thanks to the IYMC Virtual Access Committee.

PRESENTERS AND LEADERS

Angelika Shafer is a member of Penn Valley Friends Meeting and serves on AFSC's Midwest Regional Group. She has many years of leadership service in yearly and monthly meetings where she has been a member.

Emily Guenther is Director of Grinnell's Liberal Arts in Prison Program which enrolls incarcerated students in college curriculum. This fosters reciprocal learning enriching lives both inside and outside the fences and affirms the power of liberal arts education to support human flourishing.

Rabbi Sarah Brammer-Shlay is Dean of Religious Life and Chaplain at Grinnell College. At the core of her identity as a spiritual leader is the desire for people to get out of isolation and into connection.

Mary Klein is a member of Palo Alto Monthly Meeting and Pacific Yearly Meeting. She's a retired editor *of Western Friend* and involved with FCNL's Advocacy Teams. Speaking engagements are a relatively new adventure.

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, facilitator.

Upcoming Second Hours:
May 17 – Soup Sunday
May 24 – TBA
May 31 - Steven Dressel - Iowa Legal Aid Disaster Relief

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 June FL by Fri, May 29, 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