



Embracing Our Call to Faith: Imagining Our Shared Future Save the date for Yearly Meeting!

Annual Sessions of
Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting
Earlham College
June 17-21, 2020



Dear Friends:

Greetings Friends. The calendar has turned to a new year, and the world is turning toward longer days and the renewal of spring. Are our spirits also turning toward the light? Or are we harboring darkness and a winter chill within?

Recent vocal ministry at Eastern Hills reminded our meeting that untreated emotional wounds or traumas interfere with both our personal relationships and with our relationship with the Divine. Addressing wounds or trauma may take renewed efforts over years, even decades, so this reminder was welcome. There are many options for treatment to heal both old hurts and new ones. The result of healing is access to deeper, closer relationships with each other and with God. Yet acknowledging that we are wounded, which often means we have wounded others, and overcoming resistance to seeking help are difficult. We resist change and avoid help, tending the familiar darkness rather than welcoming new light.

Ideally, Quaker meetings are places of refuge and safety. In the silence of waiting worship, we have an opportunity to face our fears and ask for help. Yet any regular spiritual or religious practice can become a hollow form. Each of us attends at times a "meeting for napping" or lets

Martha Viehmann



our squirrel brain jump from lists of chores to other superficial thoughts. And so we can squander our hour of worship, making it merely a quiet time out of our busy lives rather than a rich spiritual experience.

Friends, if we wish to see our meetings thrive, if we hope to nurture each other and to welcome visitors who are drawn to stay and deepen their own spiritual lives, then we must attend to whatever personal work keeps us from being deeply vulnerable with each other and with Spirit. Let us strive to love ourselves and to love each other enough that we may serve as patterns and examples of what love can do. For this world, our meetings, and each of us surely needs more love.

Touching Lives, Making Connections Though the Braddock Trust

The mission of the Braddock Trust Fund, a ministry of OVYM since 1992, is to provide support for education and projects for prison inmates that will promote their successful re-entry into their communities.

The Braddock Trust Trustees were touched and inspired by contact from a former prisoner at the Lebanon Correctional Institution. He called Wilhelmina Braddock Branson to ask if I was the daughter of Raymond Braddock, who was his teacher when he was a prisoner at the Lebanon Correctional Institution. He said Raymond Braddock and the other teachers changed his life when he took the classes they offered the prisoners. He was now out of prison, working at a good job in Clermont County and wanted to make a contribution to the Braddock Trust, as a gesture of his appreciation for what those teachers had done for him. He made a contribution of \$1000 to the Braddock Trust.

A recent recipient of the Braddock Trust is Catherine Roma (Yellow Springs Friends Meeting). She directed an in-prison performance of the musical "Hamilton." This occurred at the Marion Correctional Institution at Marion, Ohio on November 8 and 9, 2019. Tim and Mary Leonard and Wilhelmina Branson, from Community Meeting, drove to Marion, Ohio and attended this outstanding production (for free!) and met one of the actor -prisoner who also has received help from the Braddock Trust for his education. What talent and enthusiasm filled the stage for that production!! It all seemed unbelievable!

Submitted by Wilhelmina Braddock Branson

From Our Youth Secretary

Dear Community,

It has been a busy season for our OVYM Middle Youth and Teens Program, with the Quake that Rocked the Midwest just a few days away at the time of my writing this! We are looking forward to seeing our neighbors from ILYM, Evanston Friends Meeting, Scattergood Friends School and more! This year, we have two returning teens, one first-timer teen, and one newbie adult volunteer joining us on the journey. A few of our activity highlights include: a Kingian Non-Violence workshop, expressive arts and mask-making workshops, a trip to Curt's café, and service with Walk for Warmth (a fundraiser to help provide safe and warm places for our homeless neighbors in Chicago). And to top it all off, the teens are bound to drum up at least a few self-designed adventures to kick off the New Year! There is no doubt that we will have more than a few stories to share with you when we get back into town



In other news, information will be forthcoming for upcoming events, including:

Miami Quarterly Meeting: Sunday, February 16th in Waynesville, OH

Middle Youth Gathering and Youth Engagement/Parent Workshop(s): Date TBA, Lexington, KY

Teen Service Trip: Tentatively scheduled for June 8th-12th, Place TBA

Annual Sessions: Wednesday, June 17th-Sunday, June 21st, Earlham College

I also feel led to share with you a more personal update on my role with OVYM. This fall, I have been in deep discernment around my calling and next steps, post-graduation. While I do not yet have complete clarity on my destination, I feel clear that the next step of my journey will require me to conclude my time as Youth Secretary with OVYM at the end of June 2020. This role has challenged me to learn, grow, envision, step into places of vulnerability, and trust my voice in this community and my role in re-shaping our youth program. I will miss each one of the young folks I have had the opportunity to journey alongside and feel eager to see where the Spirit leads them in their unique journeys through this endlessly evolving world. I also look forward to celebrating our time together and saying goodbye to the youth in my current capacity at our upcoming Annual Sessions in June (details TBA). On a more logistical note, I want to assure you that the Youth Committee will be taking the necessary steps to publicize our upcoming opening, and to prepare the way for a new Youth Secretary to begin in good time. We will be sure to update you on our movement through the process, so that you can help to spread the word through your network!

As always, please don't hesitate to reach out anytime to request a meeting visit, youth engagement consultation, or more information on any of the events listed above.

Thanks for all you do to help our youth community flourish! Let us be grateful for the journey.

All my best,

Kaia Jackson

OVYM Middle Youth and Teen Secretary

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Faith and practice

Proposed Sections for the OVYM Book of Faith & Practice

Working from the comments from monthly meetings, the OVYM Faith & Practice Committee has revised the draft of what we believe to be the final bits of text for a new *Book of Faith and Practice*. These complete the section on **The Monthly Meeting** (much of which was previously approved – that text is marked by notes in square brackets).

This revised version will be presented during annual sessions in June for what we hope will be final approval.

The committee is also working on final editing of the complete book. This does not involve any changes to the content of the document, but such things as ensuring that the text is inclusive by such means as the elimination of “he or she.” We have also regularized capitalization, punctuation, and verb tenses.

We are also inserting cross references so that, for example, the marriage section “Marriages and Other Steadfast Commitments” points a reader to our affirmation of marriage equality in the section on the Equality Testimony.

This text is presented to prepare the OVYM membership for this summer’s annual meeting. No action is required from individuals or monthly meetings.

The Monthly Meeting

The monthly meeting is the fundamental organizational unit of the Society. As the spiritual home of its members and attenders, the monthly meeting provides for their spiritual and temporal needs, fosters the depth of its meetings for worship, supports Spirit-led ministry, and is a source of religious education. It seeks to help all to grow spiritually and to work cooperatively for the strengthening of the Religious Society of Friends. It receives and records the names of members, promotes their spiritual development, extends pastoral care and, when necessary, material aid to its membership. It oversees marriages and memorial meetings. The monthly meeting deals, in a spirit of restoring love, with those who fail to live in accordance with our principles and testimonies. It removes names from the membership list, if this course seems necessary. It collects the funds required to carry on the work of the meeting, holds titles to property and provides suitable administration of all funds.

When a concern arises to extend the work of the Society of Friends into a new field or to take up specific work under the care of the meeting, it is usually first introduced in a monthly meeting. A monthly meeting is free to undertake any work and to assume any function consistent with our testimonies and not specifically referred to a quarterly meeting or the yearly meeting.

Organization

Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting does not impose a specific committee structure on its constituent meetings; rather, each monthly meeting is advised to discern the structure and the qualifications of officers and committees needed to fulfill its functions and to meet its responsibilities.

Officers

Monthly meetings customarily name a suitable person to serve as clerk; this is typically a member. The clerk plays a leadership role in the life of the meeting. The primary duties of the clerk are to conduct all business sessions of the meeting, to see that a full and correct record of all proceedings is kept, and to ensure the accomplishment of the decisions of the meeting on all matters. Assistants to the clerk may be appointed if needed.

Many meetings appoint a recording clerk who makes a written record during monthly business meetings and records decisions that are made. During the business session, the recording clerk reads the minutes in the face of the meeting and the clerk asks for approval of those minutes.

A suitable person shall be named to serve as treasurer to see to the safe and orderly holding and disbursement of funds. The treasurer shall report regularly to the meeting and accounts should be audited annually.

[A previously approved section on **Meeting Trustees**]

Committees

It is the experience of Friends that duly appointed committees are beneficial to the functioning of the monthly meetings by bringing together people with unique skills and experience to address a particular set of issues. Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting leaves the number and definitions of committees to the discernment of its individual constituent monthly meetings. In some cases, committees directly carry out specific tasks; in others, committees season proposals for presentation and consideration at a monthly meeting for business. In especially small meetings, the entire meeting community frequently attends to many or all of its responsibilities.

Most often, a Nominating Committee is named to bring forward the names of members or attenders to serve the meeting for clearly defined terms. In doing their work, the Nominating Committee seeks a balance of Friends who already have appropriate gifts and skills for each office and committee, while keeping in mind the opportunity for Friends to grow once they have been appointed to a particular role. All nominations are subject to approval at meeting for business.

The work of committees is facilitated by the appointment of a committee clerk, who is responsible for calling and clerking committee meetings and presenting committee reports to the monthly meeting. In some meetings, the committee clerks are approved by the monthly meeting; other meetings appoint conveners who are responsible simply for calling an initial committee meeting, at which committee members discern who should serve as committee clerk.

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Friends are advised to hold committee meetings in the manner of Friends meetings for business. This includes opening with a period of centering worship, striving to listen with an open heart and mind for Divine Guidance, loving and respectful treatment of all participants when disagreements arise, and searching for unity in the Spirit rather than voting. Committees are helped by the practice of recording minutes that are read and approved in the face of the committee. Standing committees meet on a regular basis, generally once a month.

In addition to its value to the meeting, service on meeting committees is an important opportunity for spiritual growth and the deepening of Friendly bonds within the meeting as a whole. Committee members are also called to provide spiritual support to one another in their often challenging work.

Fostering the Meeting for Worship

Fostering the right order and spiritual depth of meeting for worship must be done in humility of spirit – confident that the power of God working in us will yield greater depth in worship and vocal ministry, opening new avenues of usefulness. Meetings are urged to appoint a committee (often called the Committee for Ministry and Counsel) to focus on the spiritual well-being of the meeting as a community and, in particular for the meeting for worship.

This committee should offer encouragement, support, advice, and useful feedback to those who are led to speak. The committee should be mindful that there are differences in ability, training, fluency of expression, and power of interpretation. Having tested an urge to speak and found it a genuine leading, no one should hesitate because of inexperience. The spirit of a message is more than its form and the example of one struggling to be faithful in a difficult task may be more helpful than the most polished address.

Meeting for worship is a balance between silence and vocal ministry. Words are important, as is quietly waiting for direct communion with God. This is the basis on which our meetings are held. When this stillness is unduly limited by an excess of vocal expression, this committee is tasked with calling attention to our need for silent waiting during worship. This committee may also be called on to labor with a member or attender who habitually speaks unacceptably, providing the speaker with prompt and loving counsel. Likewise, when there are prolonged periods of silence, the committee may need find ways to encourage Friends to respond when they feel divine promptings to speak.

Members and attenders who are troubled by the quality of the meeting for worship or the content of a message are urged to bring these concerns to this committee.

Pastoral Care

There are times when some members and their families need added consideration and compassion. This may result from changes in material circumstances, whether joyous events, such as the birth of a child, or adverse ones, such as illness or the loss of a job. At other times, a member or attender may be in the midst of an emotional or spiritual struggle. The meeting should be ready to provide help or assistance, to whatever extent it is able. Such work can be an overwhelming burden for individuals in the meeting to carry. A committee for pastoral care can provide a safe and confidential place to bring concerns. The committee should have a variety of skills and proficiencies from Friends who feel a special responsibility for the welfare of members and attenders. These Friends are charged with encouraging all members and attenders to faithful performance of their duties. This will require that committee members become acquainted with the whole meeting community and keep informed about various needs for encouragement or assistance.

Sometimes, a commitment to Quaker principles results in some form of hardship. Meetings should be sensitive to the conditions of their membership and prepared to release individuals to witness in whatever manner they feel called. This may mean taking on the care of a family, giving public support to the witness, or simply helping the individual to clarify priorities. Oversight of such situations may fall to the committee charged with pastoral care or it may be the charge of a specially appointed Clearness Committee (see **Clearness Committees** above). When an individual requests a Clearness Committee, our usual practice is for the committee charged with pastoral care to assume responsibility for naming the committee in consultation with the individual concerned.

In addition to encouraging faithful action, the meeting needs to be alert to instances of failure. If a member repeatedly disregards Friends' principles, the meeting's standards of conduct, or the obligations of membership, a designated committee will counsel that member in a spirit of loving concern, endeavoring to effect a change in the individual's conduct and reconciliation with the meeting. If these efforts are unsuccessful, the committee may be obligated to bring the matter to the attention of the monthly meeting with a report of their efforts. It is never acceptable for the committee to act alone in excluding an individual from attendance or participation in the monthly meeting.

Responsibility for pastoral care may be assigned to the committee charged with fostering the depth of worship or it may be the primary charge of a separate committee. It is important that both sets of responsibilities receive adequate attention. In the case of two separate committees, there needs to be a clear understanding of the division of labor between the committees and Friends have found it useful for the two committees to hold joint meetings at least once a year.

[Previously approved sections on **Religious Education** and **Outreach**]

State of the Meeting Report

An annual State of the Meeting Report is intended to describe the meeting's spiritual condition and needs, together with an account of its own efforts to meet those needs. These reports are typically drafted by the committee charged with the care of the meeting for worship and presented to monthly meeting for business for consideration and final approval. The State of the Meeting report is then presented in a timely manner to the appropriate quarterly meeting and forwarded to the yearly meeting in advance of annual sessions. The committee charged with drafting a State of the Meeting report may be aided in its deliberations by considering some or all of the following:

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(continued from previous page, *Queries for State of Meeting Report*)

1. What is the general spiritual condition of your meetings for worship and business?
2. Does your meeting assemble quietly and reverently for worship?
3. Do most of your resident members attend and find the meetings for worship and business valuable?
4. Do members assist according to their ability in making meetings spiritually profitable?
5. Is the vocal ministry helpful to the meeting? What steps have been taken to deepen the vocal ministry?
6. Do Friends feel a lack of vocal ministry when little or none exists? How do you think this lack can be met?
7. Are you careful to protect your meeting for worship from too much speaking or irrelevant addresses lacking spiritual value?
8. How do you keep Friends' spiritual principles clearly before your members and attenders?
9. What is the spiritual condition of the meeting community? Are there adequate opportunities for members and attenders to come to know each other in things that are eternal?
10. What conditions and activities have affected the life of your meeting in the past year?
11. How do your members and the meeting as a whole exercise stewardship for the things God has entrusted to you?
12. What are the most pressing needs which you feel for the meeting?

It is important to avoid submitting a list of events and activities undertaken over the course of the year as a State of the Meeting report. However, reflection on the spiritual benefits or hazards associated with a particular event or activity can in some cases be useful in helping ourselves and others understand the spiritual state of a monthly meeting.

The OVYM Religious Nurture and Education Committee reviews the State of the Meeting Reports, which helps inform the Yearly Meeting's State of Society Report. The State of the Meeting Reports are published every year in the Yearly Meeting Minute Book.

[Previously approved sections on **Membership, Marriage, etc.**]

We know the power of God's Spirit at work in the lives of people within the community of our meetings. These people may have been drawn into the community by a sudden conviction, a long period of seeking, or have grown up within it from childhood. We also know that we are engaged in a life-long growth into faith, and experience a continuing irruption of grace into our lives which demands and sustains a commitment to a life of discipleship. We recognise this power at work in people of all ages, races and creeds: a transforming power which can issue in lives of joy, humility and service.

London Yearly Meeting, 1986



News from Monthly Meetings

Bloomington

The last few months seem to have gone by in a whirl. While we are still finishing up the last few building projects (landscaping, acoustic treatments, and playground) we have jumped into using our Meetinghouse with joy. We have a very thoughtful Commons Committee that has had the courage and persistence to develop guidelines for the use of the Meetinghouse and grounds to put our intentions into writing to better preserve what the spirit has granted us to steward. Several committees coordinated efforts to host an open house and to lead queries to help us to build a richer community life. A group met regularly to discuss Michael Birkel's book "Silence and Witness: A Quaker Tradition". And our efforts included the first test of our new kitchen for a Thanksgiving meal that we shared with about 30 F/friends including Chagala Stanley Ngesa. He is an Earlham School of Religion graduate student who is a fourth generation Quaker from Kenya. We have partnered with local and national groups 1) to promote solar energy, 2) to provide holiday gifts of cleaning and personal care items for a group of families working to raise themselves out of poverty, and 3) to better understand the impact that the convoluted election process in Israel may have on the peace process in the Middle East. We have been joined by several OVYM visitors: Chris Harmer, the representative to FGC joined us as we learned more about how Friends can address racism and Paul Buckley who led us on an exploration of how our community may revive the spirit of early Quakers. And, so, we are looking forward to discovering where the spirit will lead us next.

Submitted by Christine Carver

Clear Creek

Over the last few months, Clear Creek has been very active both internally and in the larger community.

I confess that over the 13 years of my attendance at this meeting, part of my ritual has been to begin my hour of worship by checking out who is present and noting how many people are there. For many years our usual worship census was about 40, often more, depending on events at Earlham College or at ESR.

Lately that has changed pretty dramatically and often there are 20 or less. Given this, we especially enjoy the family with two young children who often make the trip from another town to grace us with their lovely spirits. (I like to think that with fewer people in attendance, there is more space for Spirit to be present among us.)

The reasons for our shrinkage are not really clear to me, although the overall aging of our group is probably a factor. My guess is that ESR's dramatic shift to offering largely distance learning is a larger cause. Currently almost none of their students are in full time "residence" during the school year. We miss those ESR students who brought a great deal to our community. Another factor may be that fewer of the undergraduate Earlham students seem to come from Quaker backgrounds than in the past.

As a result, much of our energy has been engaged in re-evaluating our sense of who we are, and what special gifts and opportunities arise from this shrinking attendance. A mini retreat and several Adult religious education sessions worked on identifying the possibilities for greater depth in our worship, closer personal relationships within the Meeting, and greater engagement in the larger community.

Some of the activities to those ends include: Potlucks with environmental themes, both indoor and outdoor (one involved taking public transportation to a park); sharing the creative/spiritual processes of the several visual artists within the meeting; a well-attended, long running book group continues; and a monthly Experiment with Light meditation group. Also, many of us have enjoyed outings watching meteor showers and so on.

Engaging with the larger community: we hosted a Labyrinth walk on Dec 21st that was well attended by the larger Richmond community. Several members have become very active within the Alternatives to Violence movement, attending/leading workshops in the larger community, schools and prisons. Others are involved with FCNL advocacy, with planning 3-meeting events with the 2 pastoral meetings in Richmond, with the Indivisible movement and with refugee advocacy training.

The core of our spiritual nurture remains the deep silence and lack of spiritual competitiveness we share during First Day Meeting for Worship, and for which I and others are deeply grateful.

Submitted by Palline Plum

Community

There are touchstones through the year – one is our annual Renewal in the fall. This year, the theme was "Nurturing our Spiritual Gifts to Minister in this Hurting World" facilitated by Sara Beth Terrell, a Friends' minister from Greensboro, NC. We continued our discussion of sexual misconduct in a second hour or after meeting program. While still uncomfortable, many seem to be willing to engage and learn. Alvin Jose died November 9th; he has been part of our Meeting since its founding in 1968. There was a visitation at his home before his body was taken away. That same day, a few members of our Meeting attended a showing of the play "Hamilton" at Marion Correctional Institution. They were very moved by the experience. The OVYM Braddock fund is giving an educational grant to the inmate who starred in the show.

We are part of the Sanctuary/Solidarity Movement in Cincinnati, which aims to help undocumented immigrants find sanctuary in Cincinnati. Although we lack the facilities to provide living space for immigrants in danger of deportation, we are committed to supporting those congregations that do. We sponsored a Congolese family for a week in December; they worshipped with us that Sunday. It was delightful to have their 3-year-old daughter present as well during the beginning of worship.

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We enjoyed welcoming a number of other visitors, Friends, and distant members over the holidays. Our annual Christmas play by the children has evolved into a variety show mostly of adults. We miss having more children but still enjoy our festivities. On January 1st there was an extended worship starting at sunrise for those who didn't stay up late New Year's Eve and ending at 11am. It focused on healing of the Earth and was well received with as many visitors as members of Community Friends present. We pray and work for clear vision in the new year.



Photo taken for World Quaker Day

Submitted by Deborah Jordan

Dayton

We've had a busy last few months! Here are some of the things we have been up to:

The Meeting talked about getting a "Little Library" near the meetinghouse. Several Friends attended a protest on July 2 to close the internment camps for immigrants, and delivered a letter to Congressman Turner's office expressing this. Some Friends have become involved in providing and packing supplies for asylees coming by bus through the Dayton area. A box for donations was set up in the meetinghouse and given to the families when full. Tying in with this, our Conversation Series was "Welcoming the Stranger Among Us", presented by Jacob and Corine, followed by the director at Cross-over Community Development, which serves refugees.

We discussed initiating an outreach program at high school and college events (such as career fairs) with information on "peace careers", as there are often many military recruiters at these events, but peaceful careers may not be represented there.

Shakespeare in South Park presented a non-Shakespeare play, Moliere's *Tartuffe* (or *The Hypocrite*), and members of the Meeting had lead roles in the successful production!

We had both losses and joys. Robert J. Hadley, father of member Scott, passed away on August 29, 2019. Julie Scarpelli and Matt Saco were married August 17 and the Meeting gathered to celebrate their marriage. Also, Brandon French married Amanda Green on November 2nd, in Burleson, Texas.

We were sad to send Phyllis Tonne and Tim Fleet off for a year in Minnesota and eagerly look forward to their return. Al attended Quaker Earthcare Witness steering committee meeting in October.

A Clearness Committee met at Dean Parmelee's home and recommended Sue Brezine for membership.

Al McGrew attended a meeting regarding immigration lead by an organization called LEAD and plans to follow up to see if our meeting should be represented within this organization.

Jim Davidson and Phil Henry did significant work on digging and laying the back patio in the Meetinghouse backyard for Tom Applegate's memorial.

Beth Lewis hosted mid-week worship on Wednesdays. We have also welcomed two regular newcomers to First Day School, along with their mother!

Submitted by Scott Hadley

Eastern Hills

This fall, Eastern Hills gathered to celebrate Franchot and Henrietta Ballinger's 60th wedding anniversary.



A white oak sapling was planted on the meeting house grounds to commemorate this blessed event.

Eastern Hills also welcomed Anne Hutchinson who joined us from Oxford Meeting. We look forward to Anne sharing her wealth of talent, knowledge, and experience with our meeting.

Our second hour program remains strong. We have discussed the distractions of the Digital Age and reflected how the *spotlight*, *starlight*, and *daylight* levels of attention relate to each other and how we can remain centered among modern distractions. Other second hours reviewed current changes in "Faith & Practice", explored the "Joys and Challenges of Being a Bridge Meeting", and sought to divine the meanings to be found in the "Parables of Talents" as presented in the gospels of Matthew and Luke.

Eastern Hills strengthened its ties to the wider community, both Quaker and non-Quaker. In November, as a part of Wilmington Yearly Meeting, we hosted Miami Center Quarterly Meeting. Later in the month we also hosted a joint Meeting for Worship with Campus Meeting. In addition to serving lunches monthly to the residents of Jimmy Heath House, Friends also joined together to donate much needed goods to brighten the Christmas season for members at another homeless shelter with which one of our members, Kate Lester, works

Submitted by Eric Heineke

Lafayette

Members of the Lafayette Friends Meeting community are mourning the loss of our beloved "weighty Friend," Tom Hull who died peacefully on Dec. 30 at the age of 92 with his daughters by his side.

In accordance with Tom's wishes, there were two services to commemorate his life. The first was a Meeting for Worship with attention to and gratitude for his life attended by his immediate family and members of the Meeting community. One member of the Meeting said that she would probably not have become a Quaker were it not for Tom and his warm welcoming of her to the Meeting. But probably the greatest tribute to Tom was from his son-in-law who said that Tom was simply the finest man he had ever known.

The second service was a more traditional celebration of life for the wider Lafayette community. Tom was known throughout greater Lafayette and Tippecanoe County for his work in the late 1970s as one of the members of the Lafayette Urban Ministry "Dream Team," the group of four men who established the structure for LUM that has enabled it to serve our community in ever growing ways that have touched the lives of literally thousands of our neighbors over the years.

As we think about what Tom's life has meant to us, Friends are remembering Tom's own words: "If you find it difficult to pray or don't know how to do it, you can easily commune with God by just saying: 'Thank you!'" Indeed, thank you Lord for the life of Friend Tom Hull.

Submitted by Karen Atcheson

North Meadow

Last year, 2019, was another busy year for North Meadow Circle of Friends. Much attention was directed to our Meetinghouse, an historic house near downtown Indianapolis in the Herron-Morton neighborhood. The previous year, we underwent a discernment process and recommitted to remaining in this building which has housed our meeting for nearly forty years. Last year, we completed a planned project to replace the roof. An unplanned project was to replace a collapsed sewer line. For 2020, North Meadow is upgrading a number of windows and also painting the exterior.

Our Meeting for Worship continues to nurture Friends in their spiritual growth. Over the past few years, weekly attendance has gradually increased, and many First Days see more people on the benches.

We have also seen an increase in children and youth joining in First Day School. The increase usually comes with young families and young children which is joyous. Some of our teens are aging out of First Day School. This is both joyous and painful. We hope to have given them strength to go forth into the world. And yet, there is always one thing more that we think they should carry in their hearts. And there is the hope that they will find being a Friend a way of life as adults.

In addition to Worship, North Meadow also enjoys other Friendly spiritual practices. We have maintained a bi-weekly Spiritual Deepening group for at least two years, using Quaker writings as prompts for deep discussion. In the year to come, we plan to renew Spiritual Journeys, monthly opportunities for people to discuss how their faith has developed over time. Though many Friends have already shared Journeys, we look forward to hearing how their stories have changed over time and hear their concerns and joys. We also will be renewing our monthly Worship Sharing, where a shared meal allows a Friday evening discussion about some topic.

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A new year sometimes causes a person to reflect on the last calendar year and to look toward the coming year. North Meadow is no different. There are things that we hope to improve or things that have gotten pushed off the schedule. This has been a rich practice that we need to renew.

An active meeting places demands on individual Friends. We also find that new people in attendance, especially young families have many other demands on their schedules. All of this means that North Meadow wrestles with placing people in a traditional committee structure. We have responded in some cases by forgoing committees, instead relying on ad hoc groups for specific purposes, such as First Day School and an Immigration Group.

Perhaps next year we will look back at these intentions and see that we have succeeded in addressing our challenges while also finding new things in our community to celebrate.

Submitted by Monty Hulse

Oxford

Oxford Friends Meeting mourns the passage of our beloved Friend, Barbara Diehl, who was a joint member with Clear Creek Meeting. A birthright Quaker, Barbara was a founding member of our meeting. Every year, she organized the Meeting to contribute school kits and hygiene kits for people in need, both in the United States and abroad, via Church Women United. She also annually helped the meeting participate in the Community Empty Bowls Luncheon. Every month, she would remind us of upcoming birthdays and anniversaries in the Meeting. Pictured is Sandra Ward-Angell, showing that Barbara posthumously received an Oxford Citizen of the Years award for her many and wide-ranging community contributions, as a forcefully compassionate witness to the world of human needs around us.

Our Advent Event centered on the theme “Love, Peace, and Joy, What Canst Thou Say?” We shared relevant inspirational poetry, quotations, lives, and art works. Pictured is the Ball family’s jointly-constructed “Peace” banner. Our service project was to collect coats and warm garments to be given away to needy students at the high school where a member teaches. We were reminded of the economic inequality that surrounds us and were grateful for the opportunity to share with others.



Submitted by Cecilia Shore

Yellow Springs

In this past quarter we at Yellow Springs Friends meeting have suffered the loss of 3 wonderful women who were pillars of our community and congregation. There are a wealth of loving tributes to Hazel Tulecke, Billie Eastman and Peg Champney out there in the world. But we, who felt the joy of them so dearly for so many years, will miss them all terribly. And we are honored for our time with them. They have left holes in our hearts and in our worship room.

On more mundane, but important matters: Yellow Springs has begun the work of revitalizing our meeting’s committee structure. This is a large task that requires much thought and collaboration.

We are about to begin a new book study group that will meet in February and March. We will be studying Paul Buckley’s “Primitive Quakerism” following on our fall retreat with the author.

As always, we invite all members of OVYM to come to worship and visit with us! We are very much looking forward to hosting Quarterly meeting in the spring. We hope to see you there!

Submitted by Heather Snediker-Morscheck

Friends World Committee for Consultation

The Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas (Comité Mundial de Consulta de los Amigos, Sección de las Américas) has had a successful year. The Traveling Ministers Corps has been able to visit more meetings throughout the Americas. We are now beginning planning for our next Section Sessions which will take place in Florida in 2021.

For [resources on contemporary Quaker thought](https://tinyurl.com/FWCCresources), (<https://tinyurl.com/FWCCresources>) including publications in English and Spanish, the newest Quaker Speaks video, and links to blogs, visit the Section website.

THIS MONTH: FWCC sustainability conference open to all **February 22, 2020:** See <http://fwcc.world/sustainability/conference2020> for details!

(Source: Foote Lund, Susan Lee Barton)

Friends Peace Teams: African Great Lakes Initiative Volunteer Designer Sought

"Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities" (HROC) is an initiative of the African Great Lakes Initiative of Friends Peace Teams. HROC was developed in Rwanda and Burundi for psycho-social healing of individuals and society after deadly conflict. HROC is looking for a volunteer to professionalize the HROC manual. Pictures, testimonies, exercises and illustrations need to be laid out in easy-to-use, attractive formats for both the print and web editions. Please forward this request to anyone who might be willing and able to take on this task. For inquiries, contact David Bucura at agli.coorindator@friendspeaceteams.org

(Source: email forwarded by Betsy Neale)

Pendle Hill Art Exhibit

Pendle Hill Conference Center is featuring paintings by Carol Sexton, from Richmond IN from Nov 19, 2019 - Mar 3, 2020 on the theme of Botanical Explorations. The artist's statement and more details can be found at <https://pendlehill.org/events/botanical-explorations/>. (Source: website)

Quakers in Pastoral Care & Counseling

Come refresh your spirit at the Quakers in Pastoral Care and Counseling annual retreat April 16-19, 2020 at Quaker Hill in Richmond IN. This year's focus: The Role of Ritual. See qpcc.us for details

(Source: email forwarded by Deborah Jordan)

American Friends Service Committee

Blogposts from the website:

Five ways to counter military recruitment in your school district

<https://tinyurl.com/Schools-Military>

Answering the call: Two Quakers reflect on their volunteer work responding to letters from people in prison.

<https://www.afsc.org/blogs/acting-in-faith/answering-call>



Wilmington College is celebrating 150 years of providing a value-based education to thousands of students from around the world. Launching events will be held during Homecoming/Alumni Weekend, Sept. 25-26. The series will include the Westheimer Peace Symposium Oct. 1, and a display at the Quaker Heritage Center. For more information and a link to scheduled events see:

<https://www.wilmington.edu/alumni/150th-anniversary/>

(Source: College website)

Right Sharing of World Resources

The [Fall Newsletter](https://tinyurl.com/RSWRFall2019) (<https://tinyurl.com/RSWRFall2019>) includes:

A Letter from the Clerk, Beth Henricks on why supporting Right Sharing is important to her.

Fiscal Year 2019 Financial Summary

Profiles from Right Sharing. Read about a Right Sharing project partner in India.

(Source: RSWR email)

Regional Friends

Indiana Yearly Meeting

Upcoming Events:

July 12-19 Friends United Meeting Triennial

July 23-25 Indiana Yearly Meeting Sessions

(Source: IYM Communicator)

New Association of Friends

Spring Business Meeting Sunday, April 26, 2020

Raysville Friends Meeting, Knightstown, IN

Family Camp May 23-25

Quaker Haven Camp, Syracuse, IN

(Source: website)

Friends General Conference



Gathering June 28-July 4, 2020, Radford VA

Plenary presentations will include: **Valarie Kaur** of the **Revolutionary Love Project**, social justice music and education duo **City Love**, Quaker climate activist **Kallan Benson**, and more.

Check out our full evening plenary offerings. (<https://tinyurl.com/plenaries2020>)

View this year's Gathering Workshop offerings. (<https://tinyurl.com/FGC2020workshops>)

Learn about Junior Gathering for children and youth here. (<https://tinyurl.com/JrGathering2020>)

Highlights from the Central Committee 2019 minutes. (<https://tinyurl.com/CCupdate2019>)

Read Regina Renee Ward's reflection on how FGC Gathering has helped shape her understanding of Quaker community - "particularly Quaker community for people of color." (<https://tinyurl.com/RRWardreflection>).

QuakerPress of FGC publishes two to three titles per year on topics of interest to Friends and seekers. **Submission guidelines and the Author Proposal Form.** (<https://tinyurl.com/FGCAuthorGuidelines>)

Discover tools to nurture the spiritual foundation of children's lives as well as resources to guide their journey as they grow. (<https://tinyurl.com/FGCReligiousEd>)

Spirit-Led Activism. Included among stories of Friends who answered Spirit's call to witness is OVYM member **Susan Lee Barton**. (<https://tinyurl.com/SLBwitness>) Included among activism education resources:

AFSC's Quaker Social Change Ministry (<https://tinyurl.com/AFSCSocialchange>)

Global Nonviolent Action Database, Swarthmore College, (<https://tinyurl.com/NonViolenceDatabase>)

Earth Quaker Action Team's Action Toolkit (<https://tinyurl.com/EQATtools>)

Check out the 2020 Spiritual Deepening eRetreat schedule. We're offering more opportunities to deepen your Quaker faith and practice through this unique interactive experience than ever before! (<https://tinyurl.com/eretreats2020>)

The 2020 White Privilege Conference (WPC21) will be held on April 1st to 4th, 2020 in Mesa, AZ. FGC will be providing discounts as well as sponsoring a Quaker hospitality room for the conference. We are also working on ways to support Friends with less expensive overnight housing. **Learn more and register.** (<https://tinyurl.com/FGCWPC2020>)

(source: *Vital Friends* newsletter)

AFSC Midwest Digest

October: Students in Ohio embrace digital storytelling. Migwe Kimemia, AFSC Ohio Program Director, facilitated an interactive Digital Storytelling Challenge for African student organizers from the University of Dayton and Wright State University. Students explored some ideas of combining the art of telling stories through a variety of multimedia outlets, e.g., graphics, audio, video, and film. More at: <https://tinyurl.com/DaytonDigital>

November: Students in Indy rally for Gaza. Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) at Butler University in Indy rallied following ongoing Israeli attacks on people in Gaza. They write: "We stand in solidarity with Palestinians worldwide in their fight for the right of return, and we will continue to work towards the liberation of Palestine and justice for Gazans who have suffered through atrocities." <https://www.facebook.com/sjpbutler/>
(Source: Jon Krieg, *AFSC Midwest Digest*)

Friends Committee on National Legislation

Rick Boyce and Frank Huss attended FCNL's annual meeting, which was held November 14-17, 2019, in Washington, DC. While they missed the lobbying on the 14-15th, they attended the business sessions on the 15-16th, which were devoted primarily to updating the statement of legislative purpose. Rick also attended two Lunch with the Lobbyists sessions, one on Sustainable Energy and the Environment, and the other on Peacebuilding. Benigno Sánchez-Eppler of New England Yearly Meeting was an inspiring worship leader on Sunday morning. FCNL will be seeking input from the meeting early next year for its legislative priorities for the next Congress, so please work with your Monthly Meeting FCNL contact to insure that you have a say in this important work.

(Source: email from Rick Boyce)

Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting

OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

3960 Winding Way

Cincinnati, OH 45229

We're on the web:
ovym.quaker.org

The Quaker Quill is published three times a year by Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. The first annual issue is published September 15, so the submission deadline will be August 15. The second issue will come out February 15, so the submission deadline will be January 15. The third issue will come out June 1, so the submission deadline will be May 1.

Contact: quakerquill@gmail.com
Cecilia Shore, editor.

Thanks to Susan Lee Barton for proofreading.

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There is something of God in every man, let us affirm it more certainly than ever, but surrounded as we are by millions of new-made graves and with the voices of the hungry and the dispossessed in our ears, let us not easily accept the impious hope that the natural goodness of ourselves is sufficient stuff out of which to fashion a better world.

~ Gilbert H. Kilpack, 1914-1999

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Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Officers

Martha Viehmann, Presiding Clerk

Betsy Neale, Assistant Presiding Clerk

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Dale Hayes, Assistant Treasurer