

Embrace the Healing Power of Community 2022 Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Annual Sessions



The Quaker Quill

The 202nd annual sessions of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting will be held **June 8 to 12, 2022 at Mount St. Joseph University, Cincinnati, Ohio.**

Since safety is our main concern, we chose this location because we will be the only group on campus. You will be informed of any changes due to unforeseen conditions, then we may offer a simplified Zoom version.

If anyone has a suggestion or wishes to volunteer at sessions, perhaps lead a workshop, or a worship sharing session, please contact Gloria Stearns Bruner at gloriabruner@gmail.com or Terre Holada at terreholada@yahoo.com before February 28th.

First-timers and young adults attend for half-price. If you have questions about Yearly Meeting, reach out to this committee through Terre Holada or Gloria Bruner.

We encourage families with children and teens to attend and reach out to the planning committee with suggestions and concerns. The Children's Program at OVYM is FREE for children ages 0-10. We have activities planned for all children to partake in at any time they are at OVYM. We will have arts and crafts and singing and games and playdough and bubbles and sewing. We will go on walks in the parks and go swimming on hot afternoons. We will lead worship sharing discussions and plan a service project that the children can choose and maybe go visit an animal shelter and take them some treats. We hope everyone will join us for all or part of OVYM. We will have staff and committee members interacting with the children and leading them through the wonderful experience of the annual yearly meeting gathering of Friends.

Dear Friends:

On a recent conference call with other yearly meeting clerks across North America, one clerk described the Friends in her yearly meeting as "so exhausted they need to be scraped up off the floor with a spatula." As we enter the third calendar year of the pandemic, we are all worn down by the fear and grief and uncertainty we've faced, as well as the ongoing diminishment of community and support. It has been immensely challenging to carry on with life as usual, and many Quaker meetings report lower engagement on committees and a feeling of burnout among Friends. When my child's school closed this month due to staffing shortages and I had to (again) supervise a first grader while also working from home, I felt depleted by the weight of it all, desperate for someone to come along with a spatula to scoop me up.

I ask myself, and all of us, *where is Spirit during this hard time?* How can my faith guide me as I seek replenishment, connection, hope, and stillness? I know that when I'm feeling worn down and over

Rachel Ernst Stahlhut



-tasked, the first thing I tend to let go of is my time for prayer and reflection. And yet God is constantly calling me into relationship. I know that when I am spiritually grounded, I'm better able to navigate the challenges of life, but how do I create space for Spirit in a life that already feels too full?

As I prayed on this question, holding in my heart my own life circumstances and the wellbeing of our Quaker meetings as spiritual communities, the response I found was *be still*. As we begin this new year, I pray for all of us to create times of intentional stillness so that we may find replenishment and respite in the eternal.

Blessings for this new year,
Rachel

HAPPY MEMORIES OF A PAST YEARLY MEETING (2018)



Regional Friends Indiana Yearly Meeting

"You are my witnesses," declares the Lord, "and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me. I, even I, am the Lord, and apart from me there is no savior. I have revealed and saved and proclaimed—I, and not some foreign god among you."

"You are my witnesses," declares the Lord, "that I am God. Yes, and from ancient days I am he. No one can deliver out of my hand. When I act, who can reverse it? See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland."

Isaiah 43:10-13, 19

This passage is highly pertinent as we enter into this New Year. First, it is a great reminder that we are the witnesses. We are the plan. Even in Old Testament times, God had set up His people as His witnesses in the world. We, today, get to continue that legacy. Also, we get this wonderful phrase... "See, I am doing a new thing!" What is cool about this is that it was written thousands of years ago, and God is still doing this. He is *still* doing a new thing. And what better time than at the beginning of a new year for us to consider what new thing God is doing right now!

What is the 'new thing' you are praying our God would do in 2022? What 'new thing' may He want to do in us, collectively, in IYM in 2022?

-Pat Byers

Indiana Yearly Meeting Communicator January 5

Wilmington YM 2021 Epistle

To All Friends Everywhere:

Earlier this year, every Monthly Meeting received the Wilmington Yearly Meeting State of Society queries, based on the Yearly Meeting theme of compassion through action. There were three queries:

- How has God's compassion been present in your life, and in the life of your Meeting?
- In what ways is your Meeting feeling called to put compassion into action, both within the Meeting, and in your community?
- Recognizing the Light in others is an act of compassion. How do you give voice to that compassion—both in your Meeting and in your own life?

Throughout these sessions, we found ourselves considering the second query over and over, applied at the Yearly Meeting level: "In what ways is the Yearly Meeting called to put compassion into action, both within the Meeting, and in our community?"

We found this query to be especially relevant in the discussions we held on how Wilmington Yearly Meeting relates to Wilmington College—how we serve and are served by that relationship. ...

An underlying concern for compassionate action was also expressed in our discussion and decision on the fate of our three Quarterly Meetings...

We discovered the same deeper concern for compassion in action in the proposal that the Yearly Meeting gather four times a year:

...What we found in our annual sessions, in business and worship-sharing and fellowship alike, is the depth to which we are held in God's healing compassion. We were able to pray fervently for healing, to consider potentially healthier ways forward, and—even through our own confusion—to envision a future of wholeness and life, in which we are clearly able to match compassion and action...

For the complete text, see <https://tinyurl.com/WYMepistle>

News from Monthly Meetings Bloomington

Perhaps the most outstanding event in our meeting was the 11/13/21 Experiment with Light (<https://experiment-with-light.org.uk/>) all day workshop led by Daniel Mudd. This had 23 participants, both live and via Zoom, who were very moved by the experience. We are proceeding with setting up ongoing Experiment with Light worship groups. We strongly encourage other monthly meetings to sponsor this workshop. Rex Ambler, British Quaker theologian assembled the groundwork for this meditation practice based on the worship of early Friends.

Furthermore our Meeting has been blessed with the opportunity to take under its care the leadings of Gloria Stearns Bruner towards music ministry and activism.

Our membership has taken up a concern about redlining by several banks, including Old National Bank with whom we have accounts and our mortgage, as is alleged in a recent lawsuit. Redlining is *the discriminatory practice of denying services [typically financial] to residents of certain areas based on their race or ethnicity*. We have an ad hoc committee developing a plan of action.

Lastly our environmental action comes in the form of hiring professionals to remove a variety of invasive plants on our several acre grounds. Much of this is being done in December and January since this is an ideal time to focus on woody shrubs, but it will continue into the spring when other invasive species emerge.

Along with other Friends we are vigilant about safety and the COVID-19 pandemic. Several members have become sick with the Omicron variant, though none have required hospitalization and none became sick due to live attendance at the meetinghouse. We are keeping our meetinghouse open for worship and other activities but we no longer serve refreshments during fellowship and require use of N95 masks or the equivalent. More Friends attend worship via Zoom at this time with about 1/4 to 1/3 live attenders. Despite this we have been joined by several live visitors.

Submitted by Christine Carver

Campus

Campus Friends Meeting has been gathering this past fall in person in the T. Canby Jones Meetinghouse on the campus of Wilmington College. Following college protocol, masks are worn and remain on during worship; speaking loudly through them becoming ‘just the way spoken ministry happens’ these days.

The two attenders who joined our fellowship over the summer have now become members of Campus Friends Meeting, one as a new Friend and one a transfer. It is heart-warming to see Friends on all the benches around the square circle.

We held an all-meeting retreat at Quaker Knoll Camp in October and had lively discussion and worship-sharing with the Pendle Hill Pamphlet *God’s Invitation to Creative Play*, followed by a hearty carry-in meal and creative play time with Frisbee Fellowship outside on the expansive front lawn of the Quaker Knoll House.

With a relaxation of the visiting rules at Cape May Retirement campus, we have resumed our mid-week worship with Friends who live there on the second and fourth Tuesday evenings. We also led a Christmas program for all residents the Tuesday before Christmas.

Campus Friends Meeting is participating in a program sponsored by Catholic Social Services in Cincinnati to provide household items for Afghani refugees who are settling in the greater Cincinnati area. We continue to support the local ministry of the Clinton County Youth Council and Hope House, a low-barrier shelter for women and children, with financial and hands-on contributions.

Submitted by Patricia Thomas

Clear Creek

With many of our gatherings continuing in a hybrid in-person and online format, the Ministry and Oversight Committee has been considering matters of technology and its role in our meeting. Volunteers are sharing the task of bringing a laptop to facilitate hybrid worship. We purchased a Zoom account and are using an omnidirectional microphone/camera.

Earlham School of Religion graciously allowed our Meeting to gather in their classroom building during renovations of the Stout Meetinghouse in December. However, due to rising COVID-19 cases that forced ESR to return to virtual operations, we are temporarily meeting online, at least through January 23rd.

Of this ever-changing situation, co-Clerks Erica Pearson and Gwen Halsted reflected in a joint letter together with the Ministry and Oversight Committee that “over the past almost two years with increased use of virtual or hybrid meetings for worship, we have discovered that our meeting community and worship have remained more resilient and vibrant than many of us previously might have imagined possible.”

Highlights this quarter for Adult and Religious Education Committee included an exploration of sadness in a worship sharing format, “Taking Time to be Sad,” and a discussion, led by Doug Gwyn, on the theme “How Long-Mournful Seekers of the 1640s Became Vibrant, Troublesome Quakers in the 1650s.” The committee also facilitated a sharing of memories of people who are no longer living who have influenced our lives.

The Anti-Racism group met virtually in October. The Peace and Social Concerns committee led a discussion on Open Arms Ministry and offered a showing of a video by scholar John Dominic Crossan, *The Challenge of Jesus*. Our book group read and discussed *Gardens in the Dunes* by Leslie Marmon Silko.

Holiday season observances included a contemplative winter solstice labyrinth walk with fireplace light, candlelight, and soft, meditative music, and a lovely Christmas Eve service. It was Clear Creek Meeting’s turn to host the three-meeting worship service for Christmas Eve, and we were grateful that West Richmond Friends welcomed us to host the service in their space while Stout Meetinghouse is under renovations. We enjoyed musical offerings, a reading of the Nativity story, a poem, a period of waiting worship, and passing of light from candle to candle as “Silent Night” was shared in Swahili, Spanish, and English.

Submitted by Karen Bays-Winslow

Community

Greetings to all our Friends in OVYM. Our meeting is slowly returning to pre-pandemic ways. Our meetings are now hybrid and will remain that way. We have members from across the United States in our meeting and former members occasionally present as well. All activities at the meeting house are masked so we have not had our monthly communal meals. But committees and group can meet at the meetinghouse. Most are hybrid as well.

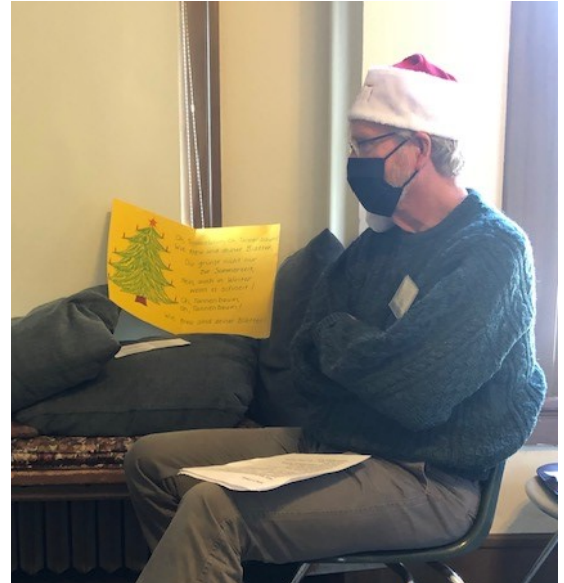
We have had excellent Second Hours each Sunday after Worship. In November Pam Cobey lead us in expressing our gratitude in a most prayerful way. Ministry and Counsel presented on clearness committees. There was a second hour on “Solidarity with Immigrants, A Call to the Faithful.” Mary Anne Curtiss invited people working with immigration issues and immigrants themselves, including the family we help support. There are so many issues for the immigrants here in Cincinnati, not just at the border. Wage theft is a big problem. Mary Anne arranged translators in Spanish and French. Deborah Jordan and Bill Cahalan led reflections on “Gratitude, Grief and Compassion for the Earth.” A major point is that we follow the steps of accepting death as regards to the destruction of our planet. At our annual variety show, Jim Rhein served as emcee and regaled us with jokes. There were several poetry recitations, a story, a skit and singing. We closed with Gene Marquis playing his clarinet. (See photos.)

On April 3rd, Adam Clark, a Xavier University professor will discuss Howard Thurman, a Quaker involved in the leadership of the Civil Rights movement. We invite everyone to join us. There is a movie that will be shown March 27, but it is also available on-line.

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Our First Day school has been happening when children are present, but some attend worship virtually. The children did go to the zoo's Festival of Lights together for fellowship and a good time. Hardy souls went for a walk along the river one Sunday afternoon. There was a much needed work-day for projects around the meeting house. Our monthly outreach to Tender Mercies has continued throughout the pandemic. We have been delivering the meal, rather than serving it, sorely missing the interaction with the residents. We have been actively working with FCNL to virtually lobby our representatives. For the first time, there was an all-Ohio meeting to coordinate our efforts, such as sharing our letters to the editors.

Submitted by Susan Gerke



Dayton

We have been getting ready for winter and getting ideas for spring. Plans for a pollinator garden using native plants in 2022 were made by Al McGrew, Beth Lewis, Phyllis Tonne, and Nikki Coffey Tousley. The Meeting has been discussing creating a labyrinth on the grounds. Michael Grear and his partner took care of the meeting lawn and Phil Henry replaced some of the plastic in the windows with glass. Nikki and Phil also worked on the fence and the picnic table.

Dayton Friends Meeting has gone back to wearing masks as COVID concerns have grown. This included a pause in our volunteering to serve meals at St. Vincent's (at their request) due to COVID spread. The Meeting then discussed whether to look into other organizations where we could serve.

We had a second hour discussion on maturing into an actively anti-racist meeting. Some members spent a field day at Null House in Springboro to learn about the Underground Railroad. The meeting held a clothing drive for a local shelter. We had an excellent discussion of the 11th Query: "When has our meeting avoided doing things that are hard to do?" that included spirited discourse from members and new attenders that assessed clearly where we stand as a meeting.

We had some losses and health issues this year. In October we held a memorial service for David Wood. Sue Brezine had to be placed in hospice and passed away on November 28th. A memorial is being planned at the meeting for January. We continue to hold Mariah Branham's family and father in the light as his condition has worsened and hospice has been consulted. In addition, Danielle Vrtar's father fell and we have kept them in our prayers as he had to have surgery. Marian Alter, the elder of our meeting, has chosen to step down from many decades of committee work. We all appreciate her dedication to Dayton Friends.

There have been many joys as well! We have had many new attenders including Cindy Gomez who is taking over our book discussion group. She also has many outreach ideas for the meeting. In November, we held an open house for Anna Henry who grew up in Dayton Friends and is expecting her first child soon.

Submitted by Scott Hadley

Eastern Hills

With joy, Eastern Hills Friends took under our care the marriage of Madeline Murray and Adeline Roberts; the wedding occurred in October. In December, our meeting enjoyed a masked and abbreviated carol sing following the rise of meeting. We pray that by next December, we can safely enjoy our usual holiday potluck and sing as long as we wish! For our Christmas giving, Eastern Hills joined Wilmington Yearly Meeting's Afghan Resettlement project. Members and attenders have given generously to provide household items that will be delivered to Cincinnati's Catholic Charities, who are assisting about fifty families in making new homes in our area. We also continue our ministry of delivering meals to a housing first facility for formerly homeless men and our support for GAPP (Greater Anderson Promotes Peace), an organization that promotes diversity, inclusion, and understanding, of which we are a founding member. Our small size enables us to continue to meet in person with a Zoom connection for those who are risk averse, nursing a cold from home, or otherwise unable to join our masked worship. Second hours and business meetings also use the hybrid format to join "roomers and zoomers." We have welcomed a few visitors and new attenders in recent months. Still, members and attenders sometimes struggle to plumb the depths of Spirit. Limited time together and the changed habits of pandemic life pose challenges that we continue to work to overcome.

Submitted by Martha Viehmann

Fort Wayne

Fort Wayne Friends is meeting every Sunday morning in person for worship. We continue to provide a First Day School for children, when we have them, and adults. We enjoy meeting together!

We continue to help at the local homeless shelter with meals. We provided Christmas gifts of clothing and toys to one of the families staying there.

We have been blessed that COVID has not caused any serious illnesses in our group. We have all been vaccinated and use precautions when called for.

Winter has moved in here in the north. Fred Feitler has been enjoying preparing logs for their fire that is always providing warmth. Pat Brubaker heads south to Florida but visits us on her short visits home. Some of us are back in school and others are enjoying their retirement, but keeping busy with grandchildren, great grandchildren and volunteering in the community. We send love to all in OVYM and the world at large from FWFM!

Submitted by Terre Holada

Lafayette

Hello Friends, we hope that COVID is nothing more than an inconvenience to you. We have a number of folks who have tested positive, and so we have decided to return to Zoom meetings until the end of January, when we'll reconsider. It hasn't been decided what to do about the next potluck or our recently formed song group, which sometimes meets an hour prior to meeting for worship, but we'll figure it out.

We are very sad to report that the husband of one of our long-time members died recently after a long illness. A neurobiologist and science administrator at Purdue, he was an intelligent and kind man. He was more than worthy of the accolades mourners gave him, and he will be missed.

We are still helping with the Lafayette Urban Ministry's shelter meal by making up a good supper for forty. Diners can also take a grab-and-go bag with breakfast in it. Friends are helping at the Food Bank as well.

We set aside our Quakerism 101 study, which meets monthly for discussion, until after the holidays and we are ready to begin again. At the end of this month we'll be looking at the function and history of yearly meetings.

There are several new attenders, including three preschoolers, and a request for membership. It's quite exciting! We have a new arrangement for First Day School and we will be pulling a committee for clearness together very soon.

We now have a quarterly game night at LFM! It's hosted at a Friend's private home, a pitch-in dinner is served and various games are played. The first session was Halloween night and some of us wore costumes. Hopefully COVID will have crested before the next game night, but if it hasn't, we'll have to find a way to play in open air! Maybe a field day event?

Submitted by Michele Tomarelli

Lexington

Making the Monthly Meeting Newsletter Easier By Growing It

In June 2020, just as I was becoming its editor, a Friend wondered in Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business whether Lexington Friends Meeting's monthly newsletter should continue. Were people reading it? Was it getting news to Friends in a timely manner? Was it worth the trouble? The biggest issue seemed to be timeliness; next was the lack of space for items of interest other than "just the facts." Due to postage concerns and the physical difficulty of folding larger issues for mailing, we had always held to a strict six-sheet limit. As I listened to the concerns being raised, I was led to recommend that we expand the newsletter rather than contract or eliminate it. I offered to edit two separate publications, which I soon called *LFM News* and *LFM Views*. The Friend who had been mailing physical copies to a few Friends who requested them polled that group and found that all had email access and would be willing to stop receiving them in the mail. I was allowed to try the new format, and we've never looked back!

LFM News comes out monthly and includes time-sensitive information: birthdays and anniversaries; joys and concerns; minutes of the business meeting; attached documents (via hotlink) that pertain to items discussed in the business meeting; and announcements or notes that have been submitted from meetings of the KY Council of Churches or other groups of interest. My goal has been to publish *LFM News* within 1 week after the business meeting, and after a few hiccups we've met that goal pretty consistently. Items that require even a quicker turnaround than *LFM News* can offer are sent to the email listserve as they come out, as Quaker Announcements. These are not curated by newsletter editor.

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The distribution schedule for *LFM Views* is less demanding. It comes out when we have enough material to make it worthwhile. Usually that's monthly, but sometimes it skips a month. This is where the less-businesslike heart of the meeting community resides! All Friends are invited to submit items that they think others would find worthwhile. We've had poems, art, "Getting to Know [a Friend]", book reviews (including new acquisitions in LFM's library), essays, and even "Dear Obadiah," a homegrown Quaker advice column. *LFM Views* has stayed true to its Quaker core and has been a welcome source of enrichment and enjoyment for Friends.

Having both the *LFM News* and the *LFM Views* has taken much of the pressure off me as the newsletter editor, and off the meeting as a whole. I can focus on getting the time-sensitive material out quickly, and Friends can feel welcome to offer whatever has been meaningful or inspiring to them, without worrying about space limitations. Win-win!

Submitted by Melissa LeVine

Miami

Miami Monthly Meeting re-opened to meeting in person on Easter, and only returned to remote meetings this month. We have experimented with going hybrid, and keep searching for ways to improve that experience. Even 200-year-old meeting houses can learn new tricks. We replaced the outhouses on the porch with indoor plumbing in the 1960s. Half a century later, we are looking at getting wi-fi instead of wrestling with i-phone hot spots for hybrid meetings.

Attendance has usually been less than 10 people, with a few more on Zoom. Lifelong members have relocated, or have health and caregiving commitments at home. Often half the attenders on our zoom screen participate from other states, which makes us especially grateful for Zoom.

One bright spot is the request by Travis Cook and Becky Selzer to be married under the care of the meeting later this year. A clearness committee looks forward to fulfilling its joyful duty.

Travis, living in Chicago, volunteered to clerk a committee to shape a long-range plan for our meeting and meetinghouse.

Jeanette Rockwell is our new clerk, with Joy Forcier as recording clerk and Peg Schorreck continuing as treasurer. Jeanette replaces Milton Cook, who took over the clerking role from his mother Sara 26 years ago. We offer hearty thanks to all of them!

Submitted by Gretchen Stone

North Meadow

North Meadow Circle of Friends wishes all of you and your loved ones a blessed Christmas and a Spirit-filled, healthy new year throughout 2022.

North Meadow Circle of Friends has successfully survived our second year of the COVID era. We have been blessed that no members or attenders died, were hospitalized, or even (to the best of our knowledge) sickened by COVID this year. One long-term member, however, died recently after a long illness unrelated to COVID. Ron Haldeman was a founding member of North Meadow, Quaker minister, printer, activist, and 2012 Socialist candidate for the Indiana House of Representatives (at age 79). Many of our current members and attenders never met Ron, but those who knew him during his long active life with North Meadow remember his many contributions and his larger-than-life personality.

This year our meeting has made a series of adaptations to keep our community united through multiple obstacles presented by the pandemic. Many of our long-time adult education and fellowship activities were put on hold as being too difficult to do via Zoom. Even before COVID, no children had been active in the Meeting. COVID has prevented newly-born children from coming to our meetinghouse.

As in much of 2020, we started 2021 using Zoom for meeting for worship and for business and committee meetings. With more and more Friends vaccinated in spring of 2021 and with warmer weather, we began to meet for worship with some Friends gathering outside masked and others joining via Zoom. Getting the technology to work outside, however, was challenging, and eventually we eliminated computer-linked meetings for worship. Many friends were delighted by the chance to gather again in person. We also found outdoor worship closer to the earth spiritually enriching. As the weather turned colder in the fall, we moved worship indoors and remain masked. We returned to a monthly practice of spiritual deepening through discussion of the Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting queries. In December we resumed socializing with refreshments on the first Sunday of the month.

Looking ahead to 2022 as the Omicron variant surges, we are watching closely to discern whether we should return to hybrid meetings so Friends have the option to worship from the safety of their homes. One previous fellowship practice that had been discontinued was an after-meeting check in. During the pandemic when Zoom was our only contact, Friends found resuming this sharing strengthened our bonds with each other.

Probably the most significant change this year has been forming a partnership with another Quaker meeting, Iglesias Amigos, although we have yet to actually meet as communities together. They have painted the trim and walls and re-carpeted the first floor on the north side of the meetinghouse. Rupert's Kids, a not-for-profit, young adult recovery and employment organization, is currently painting the exterior.

Our meetings for worship are blessed by the participation of both longtime and new members and attenders. We hope you will be able to join us for meeting for worship on Sundays at 10:00 AM at North Meadow Meetinghouse in person (or via Zoom, should we return to hybrid meetings).

Submitted by Eric Hailperin-Lausch

Oxford

We participated in two fundraising efforts to alleviate hunger locally and abroad: the CROP walk, sponsored by Church World Service; and the local Empty Bowls sale and virtual celebration. (See photos of our CROP walk team and our members with the bowls we have purchased to support our community food pantry.) We also celebrated our annual Advent Event with a hybrid gathering, featuring readings, singing, cookies and candle-lighting.

We joyfully welcomed Karen Francis into membership.

We approved the following minute, which was forwarded to Miami Quarter: *Oxford Friends Meeting deplores the display and sale of the Confederate flag at Levi Coffin Days in Fountain City, IN, and encourages Friends to sign the petition to protest this activity. We believe that promoting that flag is antithetical to the spirit of an event named for a Quaker abolitionist because it serves as a symbol of white supremacy.* <https://www.ipetitions.com/petition/stop-the-sale-of-confederate-flags-at-levi-coffin>.

Submitted by Cecilia Shore



Yellow Springs

We are somewhat pleased and relieved that Antioch College's new leadership has withdrawn the offer to sell Rockford to us. We are pleased because of the leadership's promise to work together with us to provide a new much needed rental lease. (Antioch's new president is Jane Fernandes, a former President of Guilford College.) Our relief comes from our increasing awareness that our current membership is aging, while new membership seems to be declining.

After several months struggling to create a minute on anti-racism for our meeting, these words rose from within the January Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business and were minuted and approved: *Yellow Springs Friends Meeting commits to anti-racism as a core principle of our spiritual lives, and one which guides our corporate and individual actions in our Meeting and in our wider world.*

Since this fall when we reopened Rockford for worship, attendees had the choice of coming to meeting to worship or business meeting either in-person or via Zoom. While we were able to continue worshipping, there was a sense of some division. Spirits lifted a bit when both were combined as hybrid meetings, bringing us together again, blending newcomers, long distance returners, regular attenders, only Zoomers and only in-person worshipers together.

In January 2022, due to the increase of COVID cases across the nation, including Ohio, we recently determined that meetings for worship need to be via Zoom only. This was with painful awareness that we will again be separated, and that there are those who will not be attending via Zoom, including some newcomers and some weighty elderly Friends. This is hoped to be a very temporary situation.

Outside meetings under a tent are likely to return in the spring.

Submitted by Annie Blanchard

News from the Wider Quaker World

American Friends Service Committee

AFSC seeks liaisons within monthly meetings

The American Friends Service Committee is working to create, strengthen and sustain deeper relationships between Monthly Meetings, Yearly Meetings, and the American Friends Service Committee. Our goal is to connect with Friends in a more intentional way, and we write to you in order to find the connections that may be willing to support and strengthen the connection.

We are seeking AFSC Meeting/Church liaisons. Friends in this role would be key in facilitating connections and communications between their Monthly Meeting and AFSC. They will be responsible for forwarding AFSC engagement opportunities to their Monthly Meeting's Newsletter, Listserv, and/or social media sites and announce key activities. We hope these Friends would organize and mobilize their Monthly Meeting community for specific engagement opportunities. We are currently building infrastructure for this communication and we appreciate your patience during this building process. We would love to receive names of other key contacts as well, such as newsletter editor, Peace and social concerns clerk, clerk, etc. There is room on the form to identify these roles as well.

Resources we have for Friends to stay connected include our Friends Engage pages, with lists of workshops available for meetings/churches to invite to your space, ways to host events, the Quaker social change ministry manual, and other engagement opportunities. Please take a look and pass along the [Friends Engage opportunities](https://www.afsc.org/friends-engage) (<https://www.afsc.org/friends-engage>). We also wanted to share the AFSC Corporation program presentations which focused on different dimensions of abolition and included an event on Quakers and abolition today. You can find the presentations here: [Making New Worlds: Pursuing peace with justice](https://www.afsc.org/corpprogram) (<https://www.afsc.org/corpprogram>). We wrote a report for yearly meetings this year, [which you can find here](https://www.afsc.org/blogs/acting-in-faith/hope-discipline) (<https://www.afsc.org/blogs/acting-in-faith/hope-discipline>).

As working to end white supremacy is such a rising concern among Friends, I wanted to share a few of the resources we have to support that work. A coalition of Quaker organizations (AFSC, Friends Council on Education, FGC, and Pendle Hill) just launched an initiative to accelerate racial justice work among and beyond Friends through a 10-month Quakers uprooting racism community of practice. The cohort of Quaker racial justice changemakers will meet for two retreats (one online and one in person) and in monthly online sessions to learn tools, strategies, deepen analysis, and plan and experiment with actions. [Learn more and apply here](https://www.afsc.org/quakers-uprooting-racism) (<https://www.afsc.org/quakers-uprooting-racism>). Last summer in response to George Floyd's murder, Shanene Herbert asked Lucy Duncan to work on anti-racism among Friends, so together with Sharon Goens-Bradley, Lisa Graustein and Mila Hamilton they pulled together the e-course, [Radical Acting in Faith for white people](https://tinyurl.com/E-courseracism) (<https://tinyurl.com/E-courseracism>), now a standalone free online course that any folks can take to strengthen anti-racist practice. For working on principled accompaniment as anti-racist practice, we also recommend our e-course, [Changing Systems. Changing Ourselves: Anti-racist practice for Sanctuary, accompaniment, and resistance](https://www.afsc.org/csco-mainpage) (<https://www.afsc.org/csco-mainpage>).

We hope you will help us to stay better connected and in touch as we create and share these opportunities. Below is a form we will be using to invite Quaker meetings to share names of liaisons, and other contacts. We would love your help circulating this to your monthly meetings. We also would be happy to chat with you if you like as well. <https://www.afsc.org/content/quaker-contact-information>.

Please let us know if you have any further questions!
Sofia Di Pietro Communications
Lucy Duncan Intern Director of Friends Relations
Source: email from AFSC

Friends Committee on National Legislation

Discern legislative priorities for the Friends Committee on National Legislation in your Quaker community!

Every two years, Quaker meetings and churches around the country come together in community to discern [FCNL's legislative priorities](https://tinyurl.com/FCNLpriorities) (<https://tinyurl.com/FCNLpriorities>) for the next Congress. FCNL values your meeting or church's worshipful input and guidance—we invite you to be a part of creating the legislative priorities that we'll push for in Washington for the coming two years!

A good way to prepare for the priorities process is by getting a discernment meeting scheduled on your community's calendar now, so that your circle of Friends has completed this process by April when the priorities are due....In addition, keep an eye on the mail in January, when FCNL's policy committee will send your Quaker meeting or church instructions and resources for discernment!

Questions? Email Emma Hulbert ehulbert@fcnl.org.

Exciting announcement: Bridget Moix to serve as next FCNL General Secretary!

At its November meeting, the FCNL General Committee [named Bridget Moix as the fifth FCNL General Secretary](https://tinyurl.com/FCNLGenSec) (<https://tinyurl.com/FCNLGenSec>). Bridget comes to FCNL with a strong commitment to peacemaking, the Religious Society of Friends, and working for racial justice. We're thrilled to share this exciting news.

Source: email from Emma Hulbert

Friends General Conference

The Quaker Parenting Initiative. Gathering Youth Coordinator Marian Dalke shares the following information: The Quaker Parenting Initiative is dedicated to helping parents find direction and spiritual meaning in their journey with their children, as they love and live with them while seeking how to nurture and guide them. QPI is a resource for Yearly Meetings, local Meetings, and Friends schools. Online and in-person programs gather parents and Friends seeking to support Quaker family life. For more information, contact [Harriet Heath \(harriet.e.heath@gmail.com\)](mailto:harriet.e.heath@gmail.com), Coordinator of the Quaker Parenting Initiative and visit www.quakerparenting.org.

The Gathering. The 2022 FGC Gathering will be held in-person at Radford University from July 3 – 9, 2022! The theme is "... and follow me." <https://www.fgcquaker.org/connect/gathering>

Ministry on Racism. FGC is so proud of Vanessa Juley, Ministry on Racism Program Coordinator, for delivering the Stephen G. Cary Memorial Lecture at Pendle Hill! The lecture can be viewed at: <https://tinyurl.com/julylecture>

Sources: *Vital Friends Newsletters, October, December 2021*

Right Sharing of World Resources

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Field Team and beneficiaries in Sierra Leone, I want to appreciate the donors for their tremendous support to beneficiaries of RSWR Project Grants.

The RSWR projects in Sierra Leone have spread to 15 of the 16 districts. Each district can now boast of having received a RSWR Project grant, which has increased the food security of many families and communities.

Eighty percent of the women involved with our programs can now send their children to school. The women know the value of education and see how it can help them move out of poverty. Their husbands appreciate these projects, because their wives are now able to complement the running of the home financially. In their communities, where women were previously not given the right to speak or make decisions, women are now part of the decision making.

Thank you for participating in the expansion and daily implementation of RSWR women's groups.

Blessings,

Sallian Salimatu Sankoh

Field Representative in Sierra Leone

Source: email from RSWR

Quaker Heritage Center

Dear Ohio Valley Yearly Friends Meeting, November 29, 2021
Thank you for your donation in 2021 to the Quaker Heritage Center at Wilmington College. This Summer student staff were able to develop and present an exhibit in honor of long-time Wilmington College faculty member and war resister, Larry Gara. The exhibit will be open to the public until May 10, 2022. In addition, the Quaker Heritage Scenic Byway was officially designated an "Ohio Scenic Byway" by the Ohio Department of Transportation in Summer 2021! Your contributions help carry out projects such as these to celebrate Quaker Heritage at Wilmington College and throughout Clinton County, Ohio. We are grateful!

Sincerely,
Shannon Browning
QHC Student Staff
Junior History Major

Tom Macos
Director

Friends World Committee for Consultation

Friends World Committee for Consultation Section of the Americas is busy, even in this time of COVID. Robin Mohr, Executive Secretary, Karen Gregorio de Calderon, COAL Program Coordinator from Guatemala, and Raul Perez from El Salvador, a member of the Section Executive Committee, recently visited Friends in Bolivia, both in affiliated and not-yet-affiliated yearly meetings.

All are invited to attend the upcoming one-day Section Meeting, being held online on Saturday March 12, 2022. This will be a perfect opportunity to meet and worship with Friends from throughout the Americas, and learn more about FWCC. The theme is "Hope & Resilience: Drawing Strength from our Quaker Faith." Details and a registration link are available at <https://fwccamericas.org/wp/event/2022-section-meeting/>

FWCC with Beacon Hill Friends House is offering a monthly bilingual Quaker Bible series on Zoom. This will be a participatory event with a chance to let God speak to our hearts through the Bible. These will be held Saturdays from 4-6 p.m. (EST): January 22, February 26, and March 26. For more information and to register, visit <https://bhfh.org/caminando-con-la-biblia/>

Submitted by Foote Lund

Black Quaker Lives Matter Film Festival

The Black Quaker Project says: "We are thrilled to announce the Black Quaker Lives Matter Film Festival, a first-of-its-kind film festival that endeavors to educate all about the importance of Quakers of Color who for too long have remained within the margins of the Society of Friends and the wider world. From 12 February 2022, during Black History Month, until Paul Robeson's birthday on 9 April 2022 we will screen a film centered on a Quaker of Color with an introduction from a guest expert and a follow up discussion facilitated by BQP Director Dr. Harold D. (Hal) Weaver. Screenings will take place every other Saturday on Zoom at 1pm ET."

Source: <https://tinyurl.com/BlackQuakerFilms>

Live Streaming and Recorded Events at Pendle Hill

From anywhere you have a desktop computer, laptop/tablet, or mobile device, you can watch many of the lectures and presentations we have on campus each and every month.

Sampler of recent events

Evolutionary Creativity: Bridging Creativity, Spirituality, and Social Action (Jan Phillips)

Into the Night: Holiness of Darkness (Rev. Rhett Morgan)

Hope and Witness in Dangerous Times (Brent Bill)

Myths of Gender (Cai Quirk)

The Stephen G. Cary Memorial Lecture 2021: Radical Transformation ~ Long Overdue for the Religious Society of Friends (Vanessa Julye)

A Quaker Theological Ecosystem (Christy Randazzo)

Better Than Good: Seven Testimonies for Quaker Caregiving (Windy Cooler)

Healing the Disconnect (Marcelle Martin)

To view any of these lectures, go to the source of this article: <https://pendlehill.org/learn/live-recorded-lectures/>

Friends Association for Higher Education 2021 Conference Epistle

...We have been invigorated by plenary sessions with George Lakey (author of *How We Win: A Guide to Nonviolent Direct Action Campaigning and Facilitating Group Learning: Strategies for Success with Diverse Learners*) and Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge (whose leadership has included terms as Deputy Minister of Defense and of Health for South Africa), 23 workshops, worship and other opportunities for community and emboldened with better understanding of the foundations and history of the Friends Peace Testimony and renewed commitment to supporting our student activists as campaigners for the loving community we seek.

It is natural, Lakey explained, to fear and be repelled by the rising polarization around us. Polarization is an inevitable consequence of the extreme economic inequality and racial injustice of our society. Just as a forge makes metal malleable, so polarization provides the heat that drives societal transformation — for good (as with the Nordic countries in the early 20th century) or ill (Nazi Germany and fascist Italy in the same era). Since today's polarization is inevitable, we must prepare to engage with it.

Lakey's plenary and other sessions — by providing us with a better understanding of historical peacemaking that emerges from close study of Quaker origins in the 17th century, case studies of Friends service committees in the 19th and 20th centuries, the 1960s Civil Rights campaign, and the dismantling of Apartheid in South Africa — gave us reason for optimism...

Madlala-Routledge reminded us that the "search for Peace is always a collective effort. It starts with truth-telling, incorporates justice tinged with Mercy...and a lot of meeting with other fully-as-flawed human beings." She gave us a careful accounting of the successes and continuing challenges of South Africa's experience with Truth and Reconciliation...

For complete text go to: <https://tinyurl.com/FAHE2021>

URGENT! SUPPORT NEW YORK YEARLY MEETING SUIT ON BEHALF OF PREPARATIVE MEETING

NYYM is seeking meetings to file an *amicus curiae* brief re: NYYM's appeal to the USA Supreme Court regarding denial of the Green Haven Prison Preparative Meeting to continue to hold monthly and quarterly meetings in the prison. The deadline is **FEBRUARY 22nd**, so fast action is needed! For more information contact lawyer [Frederick R. Dettmer](#) and read the [Petition for a Writ of Certiorari](#) at the United States Supreme Court's website. [Susan Lee Barton](#) can also forward the NYYM information to you.

Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting

OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

1117 South A Street
Richmond, IN 47374

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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The winter tree Resembles me,
Whose sap lies in its root:
The spring draws near
As it, so I Shall bud, I hope, and shoot.
~ Thomas Ellwood

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