



“Embrace the Healing Power of Community”

OVYM Annual Sessions June 2022, Mount Saint Joseph University

Epistle, Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Annual Sessions 2022 (Approved 2022-06-12)

Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting of Friends gathered for its 202nd annual sessions on Sixth Month 8-12, 2022 on the campus of Mt. Saint Joseph University in Cincinnati, OH. Our sessions had the theme, “Embrace the Healing Power of Community.” Having met entirely online over the preceding two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Friends present felt deeply blessed to meet with one another in person. We maintained a hybrid format to enable participation online, and valued the involvement of Friends not able to meet with us in person. Our opening meeting for business and first plenary presentation both began with acknowledgments: of the indigenous Shawnee and Miami peoples forcibly removed from this, their ancestral land by European colonizers; the enslaved Africans and their descendants, whose forced and stolen labor created prosperity for the colonizers; and the institutionalized racism that has continued to transfer wealth and power from people of color to those considered white, including most of us.

The tumult and sufferings of the world touched each of us and made our theme timely. Throughout our gathering, the need for healing – of our ecosphere, our society, our Religious Society, our meetings, and ourselves – came into focus. We received reports on our Yearly Meeting revealing smaller membership, fewer volunteers, and dramatically lower participation by children and young Friends. Sadly, committees serving Friends under the age of 25 continue to have inadequate staffing. We noted that the pandemic accelerated, but did not cause, these trends.

The healing hand of the Divine reached out to us in many forms. Worship-sharing elicited our personal experiences of the healing power of community. The Living Witness of Paul Buckley and Peggy Spohr inspired Friends with many examples of this power. In her plenary presentation, Gloria Stearns-Bruner introduced us to ways in which music and the sharing of our own stories can help to heal trauma. We reflected on how we might get to “know one another in that which is eternal” (George Fox). Plenary speaker and workshop leader Angela Hopkins, founder of Friends Center for Racial Justice in Ithaca, NY, led us in considering how Friends meetings can become anti-racist faith communities. A Healing Center gave us opportunities to receive gifts of physical and emotional healing from one another. Our presiding clerk guided our business with a spacious pace, clearly rooted in worship. (*Epistle continued p. 2*)

Dear Friends

I attended my first Quaker meeting for worship twenty years ago, in Fall 2002. This milestone has prompted me to reflect on how it felt to discover Quaker faith and worship during those early days in my journey. I would sit in worship not quite knowing what these “Friends” were doing, but every week I left feeling energized, grounded, and excited to go deeper. Quaker community and spirituality have anchored my life since then.

When we come together as Friends, we open ourselves to a depth of worship, discernment, learning, and energy that isn’t possible when we’re alone. We’ve had two years to practice this from afar, and now we are rediscovering the joy of connecting with each other in-person.

Our time together at annual sessions in June, both at Mt. St. Joseph University and over Zoom, gifted us with opportunities for sharing, listening, laughing, and worshipping. I left annual sessions exhausted and also energized, and I continue to reflect on the theme of the week: *Embrace the Healing Power of Community*.



Rachel Ernst Stahlhut

During these sessions, the yearly meeting approved a “listening project” in which members of the Ad Hoc Restructuring Committee will visit each of our OVYM monthly meetings this fall. The grounding question that will shape these visits is *what type of community do we want to be together?*

I invite us all to reflect on the ways our connections to each other brings healing to our personal struggles and to the wider world. On reflection, perhaps we’ll find ourselves longing for greater intimacy or new structures to bring us closer. This time is ripe for reinventing, rediscovering, and embracing the healing power of our spiritual community. Let us move forward together with prayer and joy.

(Epistle continued from p. 1) Love and concern pervaded the meetings for business, with deep appreciation for steadfast and Spirit-led service by many Friends.

Hope rose to the top of our awareness as our annual sessions drew to a close. First-time attenders participated fully in the week's activities and expressed gratitude at the welcome they received. Our annual variety show was filled with mirth and energy. Friends finishing terms of service to the Yearly Meeting continued into new roles and several Friends accepted committee posts for the first time. We faced our challenges. We experienced our love for one another and our devotion to our Religious Society. Following George Fox, we glimpsed the infinite ocean of Light that overcomes the ocean of darkness and death.

Epistle from Youth Program

To Friends Everywhere,

On the eighth day of the sixth month of the year 2022, OVYM Youth gathered at Mt. St. Joseph University. Cecilia Branson, Elana Branson, Max Dean, Toby Dean, and Bryan Rivera were all in attendance. Our first activity was a group walk to get to know the campus since it was our first time gathering in that space. Meeting for Worship with the entire Yearly Meeting centered us for the week ahead. We stayed up for a good part of the night playing UNO where Max reigned victorious.

On the ninth day of the month, we started our day with silent worship and business meeting. Our main activity for the day was visiting the Holocaust and Humanity Center at the Cincinnati Museum Center. We were joined by Peter, Lupe, Paz, Maria, David, Hannah, Adam, and Alondra, and were led through the exhibits by Martha. The museum's more local survivor stories gave a more vivid and tangible connection to what would otherwise remain an abstract tragedy of the past. We then attended Gloria's thought-provoking musical plenary. That night, we settled down for another round of UNO, where Max and Cecilia proved their mighty UNO abilities.

On the tenth day of the month, we continued the tradition and went rafting on the Whitewater River in Brookville, Indiana. We were joined by Yoshiya, Hannah, David, Paz, Lupe, Adam, and Alondra. We took three rafts down the quickest 7 miles in youth history, finishing moments before rain came down. This trip proved eventful, as Max was bonked in the head and Yoshiya left his license in the raft. Afterwards, we took a quick trip to the convenience store where David very kindly treated us to some snacks. Cecilia and Elana left for the airport to visit with family. That evening, Max and Bryan, along with Adam and Alondra took a very ominous and educational ghost tour of the historic Over the Rhine neighborhood of Cincinnati. Post-tour, Bryan enjoyed his first Skyline Chili experience.

On the eleventh day of the month, we volunteered at Bahr Farm. Lupe joined us for this trip, and Dylan Cahalan gave us a tour of the farm. We weeded some beet rows, and enjoyed some delicious mulberries and farm-fresh cucumbers. Max saw some bunnies. Overall, we learned about sustainable agriculture along with the importance of the hard work put in for the food we eat. After supper, we attended and performed at the variety show. Our ensemble was called "Circus Boyz" (with a z) led by Adam Funck, we performed various circus acts to the motion-picture soundtrack of FunkyTown from DreamWorks' hit masterpiece, Shrek 2, followed by a profound and emotional solo performance of the song Francis Forever by Mitski, by Maximum Dean.

On the twelfth day of the month, we prepared the epistle while Max drew. After the close of Annual Sessions, the youth will be taking an educational and highly-beneficial trip to Jungle Jim's International Market. We enjoyed our time together, and enjoyed reconnecting after a 3-year hiatus. We plan to see each other again throughout the coming year and once again gather for OVYM in 2023.

Epistle from Children's Program

Greetings to Friends Everywhere!

Children of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting met at Mount St Joseph University June 8-12, 2022. "To Embrace the Healing Power of Community" was our theme. The children consisted of one child age 2, but the committee itself took up the slack and participated in the activities of t-shirt design and hat painting and card designing and book reading. We joined in with the youth and combined activities as they joined us in arts and crafts and we joined them on the rafting trip and the trip to the Holocaust Museum.

We are concerned about the future of the children on OVYM. We are excited to think of the possibilities of our future with the children of OVYM. We hope there will be more children at OVYM in the future. We dream of a day when we are swamped with children at OVYM. We have learned that we can't have active participants without the vaccine.

Our message is to get vaccinated so the program can be accessible to the children of OVYM and they can join us in the fun!

Love to all, The Children's Program of OVYM





Of Earth We Are

Of soil we are,
And to soil we shall return.

Of Water we are,
And by the way of rivers
The oceans shall beckon us home.

Of air we are,
And with each breath,
Earth also breathes.

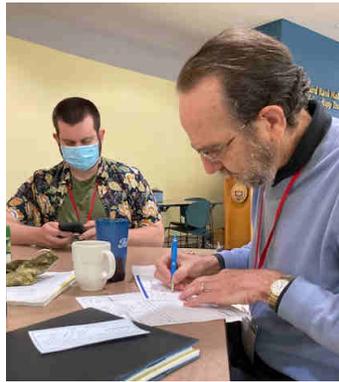
Of Life we are,
And as to all lives we give,
So, too, with the One Life,
We Live.

Of Song we are,
And our voices will echo forever
With the bird song in the trees.

Of Light we are,
And on the waves of Sol,
We, too, shall sail
to touch
A distant galaxy.

Of Earth we are.
Of Life we are.
Of Song we are.
Of Light we are,
And at last to know ourselves
Will set us Free.

*By Al McGrew, delivered in Closing
Worship*



Reflections on Annual Sessions by Adam Funck, Youth Secretary

It was such a joy for me to be back at Annual Sessions this year after being apart for a while. My adventures with the Youth were full of excitement as we explored the campus of Mt. St. Joseph University and Cincinnati together. My favorite part, the signature rafting trip was a wonderful bonding moment that was a long time in the making. I can't wait to see even more Youth come to Annual Sessions next year!



LIVING WITNESS and PLENARIES

Video links for OVYM Sessions

Here are links to YouTube videos from OVYM sessions. We have a good video of our Living Witness with Paul and Peggy. It is a rich sharing of their spiritual journeys. Sadly, the videos from our plenaries this year had technological problems and are not great videos to watch. However, we were able to recover the lost plenary from Carl Magruder in 2021 (and a number of Friends requested this last year when it was “lost”) and we give you this viewing as a bonus! The links to all these videos are below:

2022 Living Witness -- Paul Buckley and Peggy Spohr <https://tinyurl.com/Buckley-Spohr>

2021 Plenary by Carl Magruder <https://tinyurl.com/OVYMMagruder>

Angela Hopkins OVYM 2022 <https://tinyurl.com/OVYMHopkins>

Gloria Stearns-Bruner OVYM 2022. <https://tinyurl.com/GloriaStearnsBruner>

Friends Center for Racial Justice

At OVYM Annual Sessions this year we hosted plenary speaker Angela Hopkins, from the Friends Center for Racial Justice. She would love to hear from OVYM Friends and get folks on the FCRJ mailing list. Contact Angela at AngelaForestGlenn@yahoo.com

Below is a link to the website for this national resource:

<https://fcrj.org/>



American Friends Service Committee: Concerns and Recommended Response

A Note from Jana Schroeder, OVYM Appointee to the AFSC Corporation

A number of Corporation members, AFSC governance volunteers and staff have raised concerns about several matters related to organizational restructuring and the distribution and uses of power within the organization. I was among the signers of an open letter published by the *Western Friend* in December 2021. <https://westernfriend.org/media/afsc-perilous-crossroads> Lucy Duncan, Director of Friends Relations at AFSC, who also signed the letter, was subsequently fired. Despite concerns about how faithfully AFSC is adhering to Quaker process, the organization continues to carry out important work around the world. I urge Friends to engage with AFSC and help ensure its continued vital connection with Friends. Please share your input by completing a brief survey via the link in the *Western Friend* article.

Report from interest group after minutes were concluded at the last Yearly Meeting business session

An interest group of eight met yesterday after lunch to consider the AFSC report on p. 28 of our Advance Reports. The AFSC report contains the AFSC epistle sent to yearly meetings with an opening note from Jana Schroeder, our representative to the AFSC Corporation. In her note, Jana expressed concerns about organizational restructuring within AFSC and AFSC's level of faithfulness in utilizing Quaker process.

Members of the interest group agreed to make the following recommendations at this business session: We recommend that OVYM monthly meeting representatives return to their respective meetings and in turn recommend that their Meetings educate themselves 1) about how AFSC is gathering information from and responding to monthly and yearly meetings in our Religious Society, and 2) about how AFSC is or is not utilizing Quaker process within its organization. Meetings can start by reading the December 2021 letter to the *Western Friend* which is referenced in Jana's note. This was a letter signed by a number of Corporation members, governance volunteers, and AFSC staff. We suggest that meetings then consider expressing their concerns in a letter to the Executive Director of the AFSC.

Presented and submitted by Bruce Heckman

Save the date! Clerking Workshop November 12

Sponsored by Religious Nurture and Education

Hybrid: Eastern Hills Meetinghouse and Zoom

**FINAL NOTICE:
DO YOU WANT TO RECEIVE THE QUAKER QUILL ON PAPER?**

In order to receive (or continue receiving) *The Quaker Quill* on paper, you need to contact Susan Lee Barton (admin@ovym.org) or 1117 South A Street, Richmond, IN 47374. We are updating our mailing list and need to make sure that the copies we are printing are going where they are needed. (Each copy costs approximately \$1.20 to print and mail.)

Advantages of receiving online copies: Color photographs! Weblinks for more information! Saving the yearly meeting money!

We are happy to mail paper newsletters to those who want them. If you are already receiving *The Quaker Quill* in the mail, contact [Susan Lee Barton \(admin@ovym.org\)](mailto:admin@ovym.org) before the end of the year if you would like to remain on the mailing list. Thanks for your help in updating our mailing list!

Source: email from Susan Lee Barton

Joint Quarterly Meeting October 22-23

Joint Quarter is a fall gathering for the two quarters of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting. It will be a day-and-a-half session at Happy Hollow camp near Bloomington, IN. The place is beautiful and the food (last we knew) was fantastic. We stay in group cabins and there are two shower/toilet houses. It is an opportunity to get away for the weekend and meet other Friends in a relaxed setting. The cost is \$70 per person; Miami Quarter has a fund that may help defray those costs.

There will be time on Saturday for interest groups and committee meetings and the organizers would like a couple of people to bring a craft to share. One interest group will be about green burials, by Karen Atcheson of Lafayette Meeting. Tables for displays and fundraising will be available. **TWO PAID CHILDCARE POSITIONS ARE OPEN.** For now, if people have questions, they can contact Diann Herzog at Ldiann@yahoo.com.

Source: emails from Diann Herzog



**Top: Dining Hall Exterior
Middle: Dining Hall Interior
Bottom: Cabin Interior**

Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting

Words can go in any direction and they may share letters. Miami occurs twice because it is the name of both a monthly and quarterly meeting.

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K N M O N T H L Y I A T O J P G X O
Q F O D L W H I T E W A T E R N D E
F O D I U V J Z P Y K C U T N E K N
D A W R T E A S T E R N H I L L S O
E N L H O A E T T E Y A F A L Q E R
L W O L I F T S Y I B W Q K G N N T
L S Y T C T X I J L G C M W O F Y H
I K X C Y R E O S R R B E T B I A M
V E V O S A E R S I I A G B L T W E
S E L M N U D E O B V N E O O S T A
I R U M E M I G K S I R I Y O Y R D
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O R D N A C P Y E C O G P T I L F W
L A Q I Y E L L O W S P R I N G S Y
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Y C I N D I A N A O R B G N O U G J
M G Z X H Q U A R T E R L Y N D Z Z
    
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BLOOMINGTON	CAMPUS	CLEAR CREEK
COMMUNITY	DAYTON	EASTERN HILLS
FALL CREEK	FORT WAYNE	INDIANA
INTERVISITATION	KENTUCKY	LAFAYETTE
LEXINGTON	LOUISVILLE	MIAMI
MIAMI	MONTHLY	NORTH MEADOW
OHIO	OVYM	OXFORD
QUARTERLY	WHITE ROSE	WHITEWATER
YELLOW SPRINGS	YEARLY	

Submitted by Christine Carver

Meeting News

Bloomington

This year has been a time of both excitement and self-examination at Bloomington Meeting. Our self-examination was prompted by our Nominating Committee’s report that they were facing challenges filling positions this year and that several Friends who have been carrying much of our Meeting’s work were experiencing exhaustion and asking to be released from their responsibilities. We held a Called Meeting for Business on May 1 to share thoughts and feelings, identify the underlying problems, and seek possible solutions. It was our best-attended Meeting for Business in recent years, with deep worship and honest sharing.

Friends spoke from the heart, describing the tension between needs in the community and the energy required to fill them; the joy and love we experience together; and the way the pandemic and other outside events have stressed us individually and as a Meeting. We recognized that the number of Friends available may be too few to fill positions in our current structure, and that we need to build our community, cultivate new attenders and members, deepen our individual and collective grounding in Friends’ practices, improve communication, support officers and committee clerks, and focus on what we most need to do. Suggested solutions include expecting less of ourselves this year; considering whether there are roles we might consolidate or lay down; renewing our energy and building relationships by doing informal things together; holding workshops on clerking; having regular meetings of committee clerks and officers; adding material to our Meeting website for those considering attending for the first time and on how to become a member; and creating an Advancement Committee to help reach out to our community, invite newcomers to Meeting, acculturate new and longstanding attenders to our faith and practices, and help those interested learn more about Quakerism and about how to become a member. We have already started to take these steps, and as we do, we are beginning to feel new energy. *(Bloomington news continued next page)*

(Bloomington news continued from previous page)

The excitement is evident in many ways. We have a new member, Debbie Heaton, and several active new attenders. Through a fundraising effort by our Campaign Committee and the generosity of dozens of Friends, we are getting close to paying off the mortgage on our newly rebuilt and remodeled Meetinghouse by the end of 2022, seventeen years early! A workshop we hosted last November on the Experiment with Light, led by Daniel Mudd, stimulated the formation of two groups meeting regularly for guided meditation and personal reflection. A Quaker Study Group sponsored by the Religious Education Committee is reading and discussing Lloyd Lee Wilson's *Essays on the Quaker Vision of Gospel Order*, and a book group sponsored by our Committee on How We Talk about Race is reading and discussing Heather McGhee's *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together*. Among other new initiatives, a craft group meets weekly at the Meetinghouse, and once a month Friends share afternoon tea for informal conversation. These and other activities are bringing us closer to each other and helping to build a blessed community in our Meeting.

Submitted by Peter Burkholder

Campus

The summer months continue with Friends attending meeting for worship in person on Sunday. In lieu of holding our own meeting for worship on July 31, Friends were encouraged to join the closing worship of Wilmington Yearly Meeting (WYM) annual sessions. Campus Friends also participated in the workshop *What does the Peace Testimony mean in Wartime* presented by ESR Emeritus Professor of Peace and Justice Studies Lonnie Valentine, and the Bible Study led by Patricia Thomas, clerk of Campus Friends and presiding clerk of WYM at the rise of yearly meeting.

We held a memorial service in the T. Canby Jones meetingroom on Sunday, June 24, 2022, for Friend Ruth Stuckey who along with her husband Roy Joe was a founding member of Campus Friends Meeting. The meeting room was full as friends and family celebrated the life of this remarkable Quaker woman. With her death, we suspended the bi-weekly worship at Cape May Retirement Center pending further discernment of its value given the small number of Quakers living at Cape May who do not regularly attend meeting for worship on Sunday morning.

Submitted by Patricia Thomas

Clear Creek

The Earlham School of Religion graciously hosted Clear Creek Meeting during continuing renovations on Stout Meetinghouse during late spring and early summer. Friends continue to hold Meetings with a hybrid in-person and zoom format.

Our various committees have continued some activities over the summer. Adult Religious Education Committee facilitated a session entitled "How is Your Meeting a Community?" Our Peace and Social Concerns Committee led an after-meeting discussion in May. The Ministry and Oversight Committee reflected on the Meeting's experience with "Friendly Pairs," a program to help facilitate informal sharing and support amongst Meeting members; the committee is also considering other ways to meet in small groups, to enrich the spiritual life of the meeting. We held a Retreat and Meeting for Worship at Quaker Hill on May 15.

Working towards peace and justice, both collectively and individually, is important to many of our members. Several Friends participated in the Richmond Friends Committee on National Legislation Advocacy Team call-in day to members of Congress in support of a Yemen War Powers Resolution and adding pressure to lift the Saudi blockade of humanitarian supplies to Yemen. Additionally, our Meeting endorsed the Urgent Call to the Religious Society of Friends on the state of democracy in our country, and we continue to discern how our Meeting might take effective action to improve the situation.

Clear Creek participated in a gathering for the three Richmond Friends Meetings in a Meeting for Worship on June 26. Some of us participated in Whitewater Quarterly Meeting and Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting. Several Friends began a midsummer outdoor worship time on the Earlham campus this year.

Instead of holding one annual retreat this year, our Meeting has instead embarked upon a series of retreats to allow time for contemplation and processing in between gatherings. Our first two retreats focused on how we interact as a community. The third retreat is planned as an exercise in living in community, to be hosted at Hueston Woods State Park in mid-August. We plan to worship, hike, swim, sing, tell stories, and ponder our meeting purpose and needs together.

Submitted by Karen Bays-Winslow

Community

Five people joined together on July 31, 2022 at Community Friends to participate in the Urgent Quaker Call via Zoom to defend and build a better democracy. Others from Community Friends participated from their homes. This was the second call with more than 260 screens with one or more people in each screen, so around 300 folks. Whether we may still be discerning our call or already in motion, it was good to gather with Friends to discern what we as a community could do. While a way has not opened yet for a plan, we sensed there is untapped power in the process that might be motivating.

A family outing on July 24 was a great success! The weather was perfect and everyone enjoyed being together at the pool! We are waiting for the Covid conditions to improve before planning any activities at the meetinghouse. We had our annual breakfast and outdoor worship in June. Many people return home to us for this so there was a large turnout.

Our Fall Renewal will be held on September 17. The theme will be The Healing Power of Community, facilitated by Gloria Stearns Bruner from Bloomington Meeting.

Our outreach committee facilitated marching in the Northside July 4th parade wearing Quaker t-shirts. Those who participated agreed that although they were a small group, it was worth it to march. We seemed to make an impact. They also coordinated a booth at the Festival of Faiths at the Cintas Center at Xavier. This event brings together many religious traditions, and much discussion (see photo).

We are members of an interfaith group sponsoring an illegal immigrant family. We cleaned the apartment at a local church since a new immigrant family will be arriving soon. We contribute time, money and companionship with families that are here. We participate in Immigrant Dignity Coalition, which keeps us abreast of the needs and accomplishments of other immigrants in the Cincinnati area.

The FCNL lobby group has been active. We recently met with our representative's Washington aide on the war between Saudi Arabia and Yemen. We will lobby our senators in the coming months regarding Yemen. (See FCNL article p. 12.)
Submitted by Susan Gerke



Dayton

Dayton Friends was pleased to have a wedding celebration for Carol Anne Ferlatuo and Robbie Coleman on June 4th at the Dayton Arcade. They were legally wed in 2020 (pandemic quarantine fashion) and wanted to have friends and family attend this time.

Phil Henry had successful knee surgery and was able to visit with his son William (who came from out-of-state) as he recuperated.

On June 10th, Archer Bunner talked to the meeting about Alternatives to Violence. Archer works with AVP in Indiana.

On June 16th, First Day School youth had a lemonade stand from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The proceeds from lemonade and lemon pound cake purchases were given to a homeless shelter.

In July, we were sad to send off Dean Parmelee (and his dog Otis who also regularly attended) to New York City. He moved to be near his son. Dean was an integral part of Dayton Friends, and will be greatly missed.

Some members had to quarantine recently, but were able to attend worship thanks to Zoom.

We were greatly saddened to learn that long time meeting member Carolyn Applegate passed away on August 6th. Her kind, positive attitude affected many lives within and without the meeting. Our prayers go out to her family.

Dayton Friends applied for and received a small grant from Quaker Earthcare to put in native plants around the meetinghouse. The meeting garden has been bountiful this year and much enjoyed by Friends.

Submitted by Scott Hadley

Eastern Hills

In June, Eastern Hills said goodbye to Linda and Jim Coppock, who have moved to Vermont, where their children and grandchild currently live. We miss them. In July, we marked the 50th anniversary of our founding. Several far-flung former members joined us on Zoom for worship and to hear Wilson Palmer's presentation "50 years in 15 minutes." We shared other recollections followed by a lunch featuring "Fred's Barbecue" (actually Sweets and Meats BBQ), a traditional celebratory meal dating from a time when the women of the meeting refused to cook for a special event and Dick Day provided barbecue. We were so pleased to have several visitors from Community Friends join us and stay through lunch. (See photo below.) In August we gathered for a memorial service for Franchot Ballinger, who died on August 24, 2021. Franchot was warmly remembered for his wisdom, integrity, depth of spirit, faithful voluntary service at the Cincinnati Nature Center and Hospice of Cincinnati, and his love of chocolate.

Submitted By Martha Viehmann



Miami

Miami Monthly Meeting chugs along, enjoying being together in person again. In June, we commemorated those buried in the graveyard near our Meeting House. Friends including Eula McDermott, Christine Snyder, and Milton Cook have made valiant efforts to identify those in unmarked graves. We seem to have reached the end of the investigative line on the Orthodox side in particular. This Meeting helped us honor them and lay them to rest.

About 30 Friends from area meetings attended Meeting for Worship, potluck, fishing, bike trail wandering, etc., at Phil and Gretchen Stone's farm on August 21. Phil and Gretchen made us very welcome and shared the historical heritage of their family home.

Travis Cook and Becky Selzer will be married under the care of the Meeting in October. We have not had a wedding in our midst for some time, so are pretty excited about that! Woody Stone and Komaki Mizuno were married in Japan on May 2, and are spending 6 weeks at Butterworth Farm to get better acquainted while putting new siding on a 165-year-old house. Both couples were with us for the picnic on August 21.

We celebrate lives well lived along with new marriages. Dr. Bob Finley, who graced our Meeting with his example of service and his spoken messages, passed away in July, just shy of his 98th birthday. Jim McDermott, who maintained his Catholic faith while being married to Eula for 70 years, died in June. We feel their absence, but also sense their influence and presence amongst us.

Submitted by Gretchen Stone, updated by Cecilia Shore



Oxford



We began the summer with cleaning and replanting the garden and rehabilitating the lemon tree at the Interfaith Center where we meet. We rejoiced in celebrating Gillian Murray's graduation from high school. As outreach and interfaith connections, we donated quarters for laundry for low-income apartment residents and staffed a table at Miami University's new student orientation (see photo). The meeting endorsed the Quaker Call regarding threats to democracy and have outlined a number of steps that we can take. We are delighted to welcome three newcomers and are discussing what we can do to support their spiritual growth. A group of us attended the inter-meeting worship and picnic at Butterworth Farm August 21.
Submitted by Cecilia Shore

Yellow Springs

How can we keep from singing? After 2 years and 4 months, Yellow Springs Friends have begun singing together again - outside and masked, as long as we aren't rained out (see photo). This has had a positive effect, although it's been a little challenging. In pre-pandemic days, it was easy to glide from the last song and into worship. Now the transition involves moving bodies back into the social room to join with others, some already sitting in waiting silence. Every week it seems to go more smoothly.

Yellow Springs Friends continue to worship inside Rockford, using our social room instead of the chapel. The summer months have been easy, with all windows open, there's a pleasant breeze flowing through. After experimenting with different sound and camera systems, we've settled on a very simple and usually easy system, so we can all worship together in blended, or hybrid, meetings. Antioch College has given us a well working wifi system, we've purchased an Owl camera/speaker, and added a larger flat screen tv so the Zoom worshipers can be better seen and included. We usually have 20+ people attending, most at Rockford - if everyone showed up at the same time, we believe we might be challenged to make enough space between chairs!

On Saturday, August 13, we held our first hybrid Memorial service for our long-term member, Carolyn Treadway, who died in July at the age of 88. Her siblings, children and grandchildren attended, most in person, but some on Zoom. Carolyn was a well-loved and active member of our community who will be missed.

Submitted by Annie Blanchard



Wider Quaker World

Friends General Conference (FGC)

The FGC Impact Report 2021 focuses on Right Relationship. FGC has been reflecting on our programs, volunteers, and the evolving needs of Friends. How do we continue to steward this precious gift of Quaker faith in ways that disrupt embedded power dynamics and lead toward new growth and vitality? <https://tinyurl.com/FGCimpact2022>
Vanessa Julye, Program Coordinator for FGC's Ministry on Racism, is the author of *Radical Transformation: Long Overdue for the Religious Society of Friends - Pendle Hill Pamphlet #476* based on the Stephen G. Cary Memorial Lecture at Pendle Hill. It can be purchased through QuakerBooks. <https://tinyurl.com/JulyePHP>.
Source: *Vital Friends June, August 2022*

FGC added a Thursday evening worship sharing for white Friends confronting racism in addition to its weekly Friday worship sharing, which it has held since 2020. They are worshipping around queries based on Tema Okun's *Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture* <https://tinyurl.com/OkunWSCinfo>. "All white Friends are welcome while we ground our practice of anti-racism in spirit. Join us at 8pm EDT on Thursdays or 12pm EDT on Fridays." Sign up to attend: <https://tinyurl.com/signupWS> or contact ministryonracismassistant@fgcquaker.org for more information.

Quaker parent mutual support groups! These free groups are open to any Friend currently raising children under the age of 19. They will meet for one hour every other week for a total of twelve gatherings between November 2022 and April 2023. They will be conducted in English on the Zoom. *The registration deadline is November 1.*

Information: <https://tinyurl.com/Quakerparents> **Registration:** <https://tinyurl.com/QParentregistration>

FGC is now posting monthly updates of job openings in Friends' organizations
(<https://www.fgcquaker.org/category/news/quaker-jobs/>)

Source: *Emails from Susan Lee Barton*

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)

AFSC's Military Recruiter Abuse Hotline: Military recruiters work in schools and our communities. In some cases, they harass young people, make false promises, and even threaten violence. That's why AFSC launched a hotline and online form where people can report cases of abuse. Help spread the word. <https://tinyurl.com/MilitaryRecruitersAFSC>

New Mexico Farm to School project. Every year this program brings fresh, local produce to around 30,000 school children across New Mexico. That helps schools with limited budgets serve healthy, sustainably grown food to students. And it benefits local farmers, ensuring their success in the long term. Learn more at <https://tinyurl.com/FarmSchoolAFSC>.

Sources: *AFSC Weekend Reading emails, July 9, July 30, August 6.*

AFSC Midwest

Twin Cities hosts "amazing" summer intensive for Black youth. AFSC hosted "Money, Power & Respect," a week-long in-depth exploration unpacking the layers, causes and effects of gun violence. The gathering uplifted the work of local organizers and community members who are developing community-based solutions that successfully reduce gun violence.

Website shares stories of people inside. The AFSC Michigan Criminal Justice Program continues to highlight stories of people serving life and long sentences on its **Let Me Tell You** site: <https://tinyurl.com/prison-stories>

Source: *email from Jon Krieg*

Urgent Call to Friends

The urgent call to USA Quakers about threats to democracy had three Zoom meetings, and Friends were encouraged to spread the word and get conversations going in monthly meetings regarding possible actions. Three OVYM meetings have endorsed the call. More information here: <https://quakercall.net>

Source: *email from Susan Lee Barton, August Executive Committee minutes*

Friends World Committee on Consultation (FWCC)

A Bible Quote for World Quaker Day 2022. This year, every Friends Church or Meeting is encouraged to send or receive visitors to or from another Quaker group, to bring greetings, build relationships and share ideas. A team of Quaker pastors and leaders in Kenya proposed a Bible quote for the day: "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden." Matthew 5:14. If you would like to be part of World Quaker Day, either as an individual or as a Meeting/Church, please sign up at <https://fwcc.world/wqd/>. Posters can be downloaded from WorldQuakerDay.org/resources/

Friends in the Midwest have organized a fellowship gathering and you are welcome to join for this in-person event in Plainfield, Indiana on September 24, 2022. You may find more info and register here: <https://tinyurl.com/FWCCMidwest>. All Friends are welcome!
(FWCC continued next page)

(FWCC continued from previous page)

"**Becoming the Quakers the World Needs**" is the theme of both of our big annual events in the coming year:

- **World Quaker Day:** October 2, 2022 - Sign up at <https://fwcc.world/wqd/>.
- **FWCC Americas 2023 Section Meeting** - March 2023 - This will be a hybrid event, and the in-person events will be at Haw River State Park in Greensboro, NC. More information will be posted at <https://tinyurl.com/fwccamericas23>.

Source: email from Anne Hutchinson

Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)

By Susan Gerke

FCNL's mission "is to advocate to our locally elected federal officials for ... legislation and action, and to hold accountable our elected officials to work for the common good by teaching, advocating, and encouraging." Our policies...rise out of our belief that there is that of God in every person and that all creation has dignity. We work by speaking truth with integrity while respecting all we lobby because they have the light of the divine within."

FCNL is headquartered right across from Capitol Hill. It is very active and well-regarded as one of the few lobbyist organizations that is advocating positive ways for peace. Our Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky Advocacy Group is one of 123 teams across the nation that regularly contacts their own Congress members. Some of us make regular phone calls to the various offices, write letters or meet as a group with the officials or their aides either in person or by Zoom. We each participate as we feel led. The National FCNL is a great resource for us as a group and as individuals in many ways. Their website is outstanding. There are two monthly calls, one to connect with other teams, and another to be updated on the issues.

For the past few years, we have been discussing the War Powers Act. After 9/11, Congress relinquished their constitutional duty to debate and declare war to the President. This action is meant to be taken in an emergency, but the situation has continued for over twenty years. It has allowed our military to be active in over 63 countries without Congressional approval, and often without public knowledge. We believe that when participation in these conflicts is debated, the public will be more aware, and our country will not be so quick to be involved. During the last administration, a bi-partisan Bill returning war-making power to Congress was sent to the White House, but was not signed. And so the struggle goes on.

The national FCNL focus this year has been the war in Yemen. The war has been on-going for seven years and has created the worst humanitarian crisis in the world. We are participating, by selling arms, supplying training and technological services. It has recently come to light that the United States has known that many of the missile strikes they assist with have targeted civilians. (We are therefore as culpable as the Russians are in the Ukraine. But we can do something about it!) There now has been a cease fire between Saudi Arabia and Yemen for several months. Missile strikes have stopped, and the blockage lifted so that humanitarian aid can finally be sent to the starving Yemeni. We are asking that the U.S. not resume aid if the truce is broken. One congressperson has said that supporting the Yemen ceasefire would not even be on their radar if it not for FCNL.

We invite anyone interested in making good things happen in Congress to check us out. It is very fulfilling to advocate for peace, individually or as a group. Each person can choose their own level of involvement, whether becoming informed on issues, making a weekly phone call, writing a letter to the editor, or researching information to share. Even being a "warm-body" at a visit can be important, no experience in lobbying needed to be a part of FCNL. Our team meets monthly the second Tuesday of the month by Zoom. Contact Rick Boyce at Richard_1_boyce@icloud.com or Susan Gerke at l_s_gerke@yahoo.com to find out more about our FCNL team.

Why I am part of an FCNL advocacy team

By Rick Boyce

I first joined the Cincinnati Advocacy Team two years ago, after I was inspired by an FCNL workshop at yearly meeting sessions. Like most of you, I knew that FCNL was the Quaker lobby in Washington that advocated for Friends' perspectives on matters of national policy. I had written letters for years on behalf of FCNL, and I had served on the General Committee and attended the national meeting.

But I wanted to do more and make a stronger connection with those in Congress. I had never lobbied before and had no idea how it worked. Fortunately, FCNL is well-experienced at training newbies on how to do this. As part of a team, I was able to learn from the more experienced members how it is done. One of the most important things I've learned is that establishing a relationship with a Member of Congress's office is just as important as the issues that are lobbied. It takes months, and sometimes years, before legislation is passed. A solid relationship helps keep the issues on which we lobby in the forefront of the Members' minds. And while a single lobby visit may feel like a drop in the ocean, they make a difference. Rep. Pramila Jayapal mentioned in a recent national advocacy teams call that the efforts to end the war in Yemen are only happening because of FCNL's constant, long-term advocacy.

The easiest way to become an effective advocate is to join an existing team. But what if there isn't one in your area? You can attend the meetings of a nearby team and even accompany them on a lobby visit. You can learn more about advocacy teams at <https://www.fcnl.org/act/join-advocacy-team>, and you can connect with teams who are in, or at least near, your area at <https://tinyurl.com/findadvocacyteams>). If you would like to visit the Cincinnati Advocacy Team, contact me at [Richard L Boyce@icloud.com](mailto:Richard_L_Boyce@icloud.com).

Quaker responses to war in Ukraine

Friends House Moscow supports a webpage of news about Friends' responses to the war in Russia, Ukraine, the UK, US and Europe and the Middle East. Links are provided for meeting for worship to hold in the Light those affected by the war. Information is provided on the Alternatives to Violence Project in Ukraine as well as ways to provide humanitarian support. Find more at the source for this article: <https://friendshousemoscow.org/news-about-ukraine/>.

Friends General Conference and World Council of Churches statement on Ukraine <https://tinyurl.com/FGCWCC>
Source: *Vital Friends*, August 2022

Right Sharing of World Resources (RSWR)

We are excited to announce that Right Sharing plans to serve in Guatemala.

Why Guatemala?

- Guatemala has a high level of poverty – 59.3% according to the World Bank
- Quakers in Guatemala are enthusiastic about partnering with Right Sharing

We anticipate partnering with COOSAJO, a cooperative in Chiquimula.

Your generous support has made it possible for Right Sharing to be of service to women in Central America. Your prayers and support are greatly appreciated as we begin this new chapter.

Source: *email from Jacqueline Stillwell*

RSWR has also posted several job opening announcements:

- **Director of Finance** <https://rswr.org/director-finance>
- **Associate Secretary of Operations** <https://tinyurl.com/AssocSecOperations-RSWR>
- **Associate Secretary for Advancement** <https://tinyurl.com/AssocSecAdvancement>
- **Associate Secretary of Programs** <https://tinyurl.com/AssocSecProgs-RSWR> (Position requires Spanish fluency)

Source: *Emails via Susan Lee Barton*

Regional Yearly Meetings Indiana Yearly Meeting

I know I have written before, in at least one of these articles, while sitting on my front porch. Well, if I am perhaps being accused of sitting here a bit too often, I am certainly guilty as charged.

My porch has become a bit of a haven. When my wife and I need to have a conversation, it is usually the porch where we are able to do that. When our kids come back from camp, and we want to ask them how they responded to Jesus during their camp week, we have had those conversations on our porch. When we have friends over to eat, catch up, sip from a cup of coffee, or just chat about what's going on in life, again, much of that happens on our porch. Sometimes I sit here by myself. Either I do some morning devotions, read, watch a game on the iPad, or just watch the traffic go by and think about life.

Today, is one of those times I am here by myself. The boys are off with friends, and my wife is away with our daughter having some special time with her. I am here on a perfect evening, enjoying a gentle breeze, the last of the bird activity for the day, and just being. Breathing...enjoying...resting... being.

According to Webster.com, the word 'haven' is a nautical term for a place where the water is deep enough to provide some semblance of safety for ships. A place of safety... Another word for a place of safety would be a *refuge*. This led me to this passage in Psalm 5:

But let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you. Psalm 5:11

My porch may not be any sort of stronghold or offer protection in the physical sense, but it is a place of peace. It is a place where the Lord has offered protection where 'those who love (His) name (have) rejoiced in (Him)'. Perhaps, in the spiritual and emotional sense, it is a place where the waters are deep enough to offer protection.

My hope and prayer is that all who read this today have their own place of safety. May God bless you in that place today!

-Pat Byers

Source: *Indiana Yearly Meeting Communicator, July 20*

Searching for speakers for South Central Yearly Meeting

Cielo Grande Quarterly Meeting of South Central YM is looking for presenters, perhaps for a Keynote, perhaps for a panel or a workshop at their Annual Sessions (held in April) on their theme, "Spiritual Refreshment for the Long Haul." Please send any suggestions you might have for presenters of this theme. Please include their contact info and a brief description of why they might be a good fit for the theme. They are seeking someone who enjoys life, who can inspire or suggest other possible presenters

Please send your nominations to Susan Lee Barton (admin@ovym.org) by October 1.

Source: *email from Val Liveoak*

We're on the web:
<https://www.ovym.org/>

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Contact: quakerquill@gmail.com
Cecilia Shore, editor.
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I look not to myself, but to that within me, that has to my admiration proved to be my present help, and enabled me to do what I believe of myself I could not have done.
--Elizabeth Fry

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