



The Quaker Quill

Dear Friends: Greetings from the Clerk

By Rex Sprouse

My experience is that Friends' business process, committee work, and other projects are often derailed by particular Quaker versions of dysfunctional paralysis, an inability or unwillingness to act when action is called for.

We often over-think how others will respond. For example, over the past seventeen years, I have all too often witnessed "liberal" Friends remain silent about and complicit in homophobia, not because they were overtly homophobic themselves, but because they were "concerned" about how other Friends might respond. Even today "liberal" Friends remain one of the most LGBTQ-friendly faith communities internally, but one of the least visible faith communities in the US when it comes to a public witness for equality.

Another version of "liberal" Quaker paralysis lies in the fear of "ghost" Quakers. Ghost Quakers do not actually show up for monthly, quarterly, or yearly meeting business sessions, but some of those who do attend are afraid to make decisions, despite unity among those present, for fear that there might be ghost Quakers who would not be in unity. This fails to take into consideration that reaching unity in the Spirit emerges through the process of the gathered meeting for business and is not a matter of pre-established opinions.

Over the years I have also felt frustration at the inaction of committees or other bodies that were specifically constituted to act on behalf of Friends or to discern recommendations to present

to Friends, but who simply felt that they could not take actions or make recommendations because they did not want to "impose" anything on Friends who might not agree. But even a small monthly meeting will become dysfunctional if every single action has to be "vetted" by every single member of the community. Part of living in community is learning to trust other community members to act on behalf of the community within general guidelines that the community has established.

The essence of the Quaker faith is the belief that we as individuals and as gathered bodies have direct access to our Inward Guide. It is important that we not outrun our Guide. However, it is equally important that we go where our Guide is indeed guiding us. When we are not yet clear, it is time to return to waiting worship and open our hearts, minds, and spirits to the Guide. When the Guide's guidance has become clear, it is time to act—in both humility and confidence.



OVYM REPRESENTED AT FRIENDS WORLD COMMITTEE ON CONSULTATION (FWCC)

Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting will be represented at FWCC World Plenary Meeting by Anne Hutchinson of Oxford Friends and others from OVYM January 19-27 in Peru. The theme is: "Living the Transformation: Creation Waits with Eager Longing for the Revealing of the Children of God."

<http://www.fwccworld.org/peru> In social media, #fwcc2016 is the hashtag for the FWCC plenary.

Quilt Project: Bring greetings and take greetings home Representatives bring greetings on a piece of cloth and then take home with you the greetings that someone else has brought. For example, Joseph from Nairobi brings a cloth greeting card from Nairobi, Kenya and takes home with him the cloth greeting card brought by Susan from Finland. During the meeting in Cusco the greetings will be tied together and displayed. (see our contribution, right).

You can subscribe to either the printed or electronic versions of Friends World News by writing to FWCC World Office, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2AX, or online (donations accepted) at <http://fwcc.world/e-newsletters>.





CALLING ALL FRIENDS

BUDGET AND FINANCE SEEKS INPUT

In our letter to OVYM Monthly Meetings last year the Budget and Finance Committee said, "Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting's budget shows what we most care about as a Quaker community.

OVYM strives to provide spiritual, social, and intellectual opportunities for pre-school, elementary, middle and high school students; as well as activities for younger and older adults.

All this costs money and nearly all of that money comes from our monthly meetings." At the last OVYM Executive Committee meeting our minutes recorded, "After the clarification and discussion of many facets of questions related to the current budget and proportional assessment, it became clear that there is a movement of the Spirit among Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Friends seeking greater intentionality not just about the budget, but also about the discernment and articulation of the priorities that underlie the budget." The beginning of the drafting of the July 1, 2016 - June 30 2017 OVYM budget begins today.

Committees and Officers of OVYM should prayerfully consider their service to the Yearly Meeting. Actual costs for 2014-2015 and the 2015-16 budget are printed in the minutes of the 2015 Yearly Meeting Session. Please send the budget requests, including some details, such as categories where the money is expected to be spent, to the Budget and Finance Committee. The due date is Monday, February 29, 2016. Monthly Meetings that have reached a consensus on their priorities and concerns for the future of the Yearly Meeting should also communicate with the committee by February 29, 2016.

Please send your messages to Wilson Palmer wilsoncp@fuse.net, or anyone else on our committee.
Paul Buckley bucklpa@earlham.edu
Fred Feitler ffeitler@kent.edu
Ann Pellegrino annpell1@comcast.net

Yearly Meeting Sessions Return to Earlham, 7/27 to 7/31

The OVYM Planning Committee looks forward to welcoming Friends to another wonderful annual session. We will be sharing the campus with Friends Music camp, and they have laid claim to Mills Hall, so we will be looking for new locations for our youth programs. The planning committee welcomes input from families who look forward to more easily juggling music camp and OVYM, from families whose children start school in July and feel they cannot attend OVYM, from members of youth committees who want to visit campus to help select locations for youth programs, and from anyone else interested in helping plan. Martha Viehmann, marthaviehmann@fuse.net 513 324-8953

DAVID AND RHONDA PFALTZGRAFF-CARLSON

TRAVELED IN MINISTRY TO JAPAN

This past summer, David and Rhonda Pfaltzgraff-Carlson traveled in ministry to visit Friends in Japan. Read Rhonda's blog post about their trip that puts it into a broader political, historical and religious perspective.

<https://namingspirit.wordpress.com/2015/09/29/god-empire-and-a-visit-with-friends-in-japan/>

EXAMPLE OF EARTH AWARENESS

In October 2015, Bloomington Monthly Meeting added twenty solar panels of 5.7 kW to an existing three panel array on the south roof of the meetinghouse, thanks to a solar grant from Indiana Office of Energy Development, The Center for Sustainable Living, and Hoosier Interfaith Power and Light. Friends celebrated on the fifth First Day of the First Month by inviting community members to a potluck lunch with games, a *Going Solar* forum given by Southern Indiana Renewable Energy Network, and musical performances. This grid-tied system is expected to provide over thirty percent of the Meeting's electricity each year. Friends are also working to improve building energy efficiency. In 2016 the Meeting House will undergo a large renovation project, which includes replacing electric resistive heaters with a geothermal heating and cooling system and insulating walls and attic space. In all, they expect to save more than 27,000 pounds of CO2 annually – the equivalent of planting 40 mature trees every year, as well as saving the Meeting hundreds of dollars each year in utility bills. They hope this example of energy stewardship will inspire households, congregations, and businesses to consider turning their rooftops into power stations. For further information, contact Chandra Romel, romelcha@gmail.com.

FROM THE INDIANA YM COMMUNICATOR

I hope you've enjoyed the letters I wrote to George Fox in 2015. He didn't answer any of them, so I'm giving them a rest for now. I hope they helped you better understand the times in which he lived, but now I'm concerned about understanding the time in which you and I live. In 1964 Bob Dylan sang "The Times They are a Changin'." I don't intend to start a new series of "Dear Bob" letters, but I have to agree that he nailed it. Those of us who have been around for a while are keenly aware that our world has changed exponentially in the last 50 years with no end in sight.

One of my favorite stories is about a single man who had six theories about raising children. Later he married after which he had had six kids and no theories. I only had three kids, but every time I figured out how to respond to a stage in a child's life, that stage had already passed and we were on to something different. I learned that treating a teenager like a preschooler wasn't wise and knowing what my now adult children need from me is sometimes a challenge, too.

The Old Testament mentions men of Issachar who understood the times and knew what Israel should do (1 Chron. 12:32). Similarly Romans 13:11 tells us to understand the present time. Just like our approach to parenting needs to adapt to changing seasons in our families, maybe the way we witnessed for Christ 50 years ago needs to be updated, too. Do you have any theories about how to do that?

Doug Shoemaker

QUAKER HEIGHTS ANNOUNCEMENTS

Quaker Heights Care Community is proud to announce the official opening of our brand new Short-Term Care & Rehabilitation Unit! The Board of Trustees began the work of planning for a new short term care rehab wing with a new rehab gym back in 2008. They were very intentional in their research, design process, and funding. Now, after many years of effort, there is a wonderful new wing to serve our community. We extend gratitude and appreciation for all those who helped Quaker Heights achieve this dream. It takes courage and dedication to remain patient and steadfast in the journey to build a new wing. The Trustees were both and because of their leadership, the residents have a beautiful new facility to recover and go home after rehabilitation. The Grand Opening was an opportunity to affirm the organization's commitment to provide high quality care with state of the art equipment and private suites. As your biggest ministry we would love for you to like us on Facebook so that you can stay up to date on all the wonderful things happening here at Quaker Heights Care Community. We would also love to have you come visit us!

Submitted by Sydney McBride

AFSC GAINS ON INCARCERATION

For more than a decade, AFSC has worked in Arizona to end mass incarceration. Like many states, Arizona hires for-profit prison companies to manage its correctional facilities. ... In July, a series of riots in a privately run prison in Kingman, Arizona, shed further light on the true cost of incarceration for profit.... Incensed by years of mistreatment by the company that managed the facility, [AFSC released an investigative report on the riots](#), based on interviews with prisoners and staff. Our report revealed several contributing factors to the riots, including chronic understaffing at the prison, poor management of the facility, and mistreatment of prisoners. **After the release of our report, Arizona's governor canceled the contract with MTC.** ... But our work is far from over. ... Throughout the U.S., AFSC is supporting communities that are working to end mass incarceration in many important ways. [I encourage you to read the latest issue of Quaker Action](#) to learn more about these efforts and how you can get involved.

Excerpted from email by Caroline Isaacs



Divesting in Fossil Fuels: the Experience of Community Friends Meeting

OVYM's Earthcare Committee's concern about fossil fuel use and the dangers this poses to the future of all of the occupants of planet Earth led them in 2012 to begin discussions of the possibility of Community Friends making a decision to divest from fossil fuels in their financial holdings. Disagreements soon surfaced and by 2013 they had created conflicts and stress. Some members felt that to divest with integrity everyone would have to make significant lifestyle changes and some felt unable to do this. Some saw divesting as losing the ability to advocate for change at corporations stockholder meetings. One felt that divesting from fossil fuels would necessitate advocacy for nuclear power. Two committee members quit because of the discord.

The committee selected Marjorie Issacs to be a new clerk. Marjorie went to work researching the topic. She discovered that existing technology could address the problems and create sustainable power world-wide but that political cooperation was lacking. As clerk of the committee, she also discovered that other social action topics seemed easier to address than climate change and wondered if this was because the facts about climate change are so hard to face that people want to dismiss them as opinions. She was frustrated that some members did not want to listen to the facts reported by scientists.

Marjorie also saw a conflict between Friends' slow process of patient waiting while taking time to season differences and the urgency of the need to address climate change promptly to avert irreversible global climate disasters (according to the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change). She felt that attention to climate change was a higher priority than other Meeting concerns. Yet this seemed incompatible with Friends' Testimony on Equality. The question of whether divestment would be practical for Community Friends Meeting was researched by making phone calls to socially responsible mutual fund offices and discovering that there were seven mutual funds that had the social screens that Friends Meetings would require and that several of these funds consistently made money. With this knowledge Marjorie changed from uneasy skeptic to excited divestment advocate as she saw that divestment would speak truth to power in a language corporations understood: money.

However others were not so easily convinced. The resistance of the opposition was responded to by more aggressive persuasion attempts by those who felt divestment was the right thing to do. People became afraid and discouraged from talking about climate change. But as time went on there were more and more record breaking temperatures and destructive storms, including a storm that sheared off the top 30 feet of the pine tree in Marjorie's yard and a very unusual Midwest spring drought.

Earthcare Committee finally completed a Divestment Minute and Stewardship Committee agreed to bring it for discussion in monthly meeting. The presiding clerk sent the minute back to Earthcare Committee who attempted to rewrite it. At a called meeting of Earthcare Committee with the presiding clerk's guidance they came to unity on a minute. The committee prepared information sheets and the presiding clerk announced a threshing session along with a work group to prepare for it, including someone with opposing views. Explanations about mutual funds were deleted from the

background information at someone's suggestion while Marjorie stood unhappily aside.

At the threshing session about 20 people spoke out of the silence, all in favor of divestment. Afterwards the monthly meeting treasurer asked Marjorie "Could we lose money from divesting?" and she realized not only that the question should have been asked during the meeting but that the answer was in the mutual fund information that had been deleted from the background information pages. When people who had reservations did not express them during the threshing session Marjorie worried that they would bring their objections to the business meeting and that more arguing would occur making discernment difficult and approving a divestment minute impossible.

The day before the business meeting on June 2014, Marjorie saw pastel stripes in the blue sky as she was swimming on her back. A rainbow had been God's promise to Noah never to cause another environmental disaster and Marjorie felt this as a good sign. Sure enough, the next day Community Friends Monthly Meeting peacefully approved the divestment minute, becoming the first Quaker monthly meeting west of Philadelphia to approve a divestment minute!

Earthcare Committee also wanted to bring their Divestment Minute to Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting. After viewing the Earthcare Committee's display table at Yearly Meeting in August, Miami Quarterly Meeting divested in October. At the February 2015 Quarterly Meeting, Earthcare Committee facilitated a workshop about divesting and then presented a skit to lighten the mood. Marjorie wrote and told a story of a professional environmentalist who could not afford to make instant lifestyle changes. Afterwards, as one person claimed that divestment was only a token gesture and that only lifestyle changes would make a crucial difference, Marjorie's epiphany was that divestment is just a quick simple thing to do while planning what really matters.

At the April 2015 Quarterly Meeting the Divestment Minute was on the agenda. The socially responsible mutual fund information that had been deleted earlier was distributed with the title "Simple, Small, and Practical". When the clerk called for discussion there was none; the Minute was approved and then forwarded to Yearly Meeting. The usual process was to present a minute one year and bring it up for approval the following year at Yearly Meeting. Marjorie felt strongly that they should not wait that long. Earthcare Committee decide to survey monthly meetings to find out if there was a chance of approving a divestment minute during the same Yearly Meeting that it was presented. By summer they estimated ten monthly meetings clearly agreed with divesting and one would stand aside. Eight had not responded to voicemails and email.

One week before Yearly Meeting NASA scientists announced that the hole in the ozone layer of Earth's atmosphere, which was allowing too much ultraviolet light to reach the earth and increase skin cancer and cataracts, would close. This improvement came from global political cooperation to invent and use new technology to replace the chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) in refrigerants and aerosol sprays that had allowed the ozone layer to thin. This news brought hope and optimism and a fresh motto "Divestment for a Bright and Breezy Future". At the end of the threshing session the presiding clerk asked "Do Friends approve this Minute?" and voices rang out "approve!" In 2015 OVYM became the third Yearly Meeting in North American to adopt a Divestment Minute, one year ahead of the usual Quaker process schedule.

Submitted by Jane Stowe on behalf of Earthcare Committee

Faith and Practice Committee
Corrected Proposal for Expedited Revision Process
OVYM Executive Committee
February 6, 2016

Explanation: The proposal for an expedited revision process that was presented to and approved by Executive Committee at its October 2015 meeting included an extra step. This corrected version was approved by the Executive Committee on Feb. 6, 2016.

Expedited *Faith and Practice* revision process

Background:

Discipline Revision Process

1978 OVYM *Book of Discipline*

“Proposals for change of discipline may originate in the Monthly Meeting, and if so, they should receive the approval of the Quarterly Meeting, and then be transmitted to the Yearly Meeting for final action; or they may originate in the Yearly Meeting itself. In this case, final action may not be taken until the following year after the proposed change has appeared in the minutes of the Yearly Meeting or has been presented in a printed form for approval.”

Faith and Practice Committee Corrected proposal for increasing the pace of the revision process

This expedited revision process is in keeping with the guidelines in the *1978 Book of Discipline*.

Goal – Complete the revision in 3 years.

- Prioritize and focus on the topics most important to OVYM Friends; some topics that are less essential may be left for development at a later date.
- Develop a coherent book.

We ask Friends to remember that the perfect is the enemy of the good. To achieve a revised book of *Faith and Practice* in a reasonable amount of time, we must accept that text will meet the standard of adequacy to convey our faith and practices rather than a perfect expression of them.

To speed-up the process of getting feedback from monthly meetings:

Newly written texts: Under most circumstances, each newly developed text will go through only two drafts. The first draft will be Friends’ opportunity to make suggestions for substantive changes. Draft 2, developed in consideration of this feedback, will be published in the *Quill* and then presented for approval at annual sessions.

The anticipated schedule for this work is

September – November: Committee develops text and distributes it to monthly meetings. Meetings will be reminded that this is the time for suggestions for substantive revisions.

March: Responses from monthly meetings due back to committee

April: Committee develops the final draft after consideration of feedback from monthly meetings.

May/June: The final draft is published in the *Quill*. The distribution of the *Quill* will remind Friends that it includes *Faith and Practice* text that will be brought for approval at YM sessions.

July-August: The final draft is presented for approval at annual sessions.

Texts retained (with minor changes) from the 1978 Book of Discipline: They will be printed in the *Quill* and brought for approval to next yearly meeting session.

Texts that have not been changed will not require approval.

The Faith and Practice Committee will distribute larger chunks of text at a time to monthly meetings

The Committee is currently revising the working Table of Contents so that our 3-year goal for completion will be achievable.

Submitted by Betsy Neale on behalf of Faith and Practice Committee

Tarzan in Kentucky

Judy Moffet is a one-time member of Lexington Friends Meeting and still has friends there, and attended both Cincinnati meetings when she lived in Cincinnati. Her third poetry collection (and twelfth book) was published last fall by David Robert Books. A number of the poems deal with religious issues. Friends can buy the book at Morris Book Shop, or from Amazon at http://www.amazon.com/Tarzan-Kentucky-Judith-Moffett/dp/1625491476/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1450652075&sr=8-1&keywords=moffett+tarzan+in+kentucky. A sample poem can be found at: <http://writersalmanac.org/episodes/20160203/>.

From Faith and Practice Committee:

The Committee decided the "History" section of the 1978 *OVYM Book of Discipline* could be retained in the new *Book of Faith & Practice* with only minor editing. Such sections do not require the extensive review given to new or heavily re-written sections and are only published in the *Quill* before being presented to the yearly meeting for approval. This section will come to sessions this summer.

A Brief History

The Beginning of Quakerism

The Religious Society of Friends originated in England at the time of the Puritan Revolution (about 1642-1660). There was a growing sense of personal religious independence among the people that resulted in the temporary overthrow of the monarchy and the installation of Oliver Cromwell as Lord Protector. Dissatisfaction with the established church resulted in many quick-growing, but often short-lived, sects and in a large number of restless, searching spirits.

George Fox, one of the first Quakers, was of this seeking type of mind. Born in 1624, he began when nineteen years old a solitary, spiritual quest for Truth. He recorded in his Journal that at last in 1646, "when all my hopes in... all men were gone, so that I had nothing outwardly to help me, nor could tell what to do, then, Oh then, I heard a voice which said, 'There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition,' and, when I heard it, my heart did leap for joy." In 1647 Fox began to preach, convincing many people, and in 1648 a whole community in Nottinghamshire accepted his message and, associating together, called themselves Children of the Light, the earliest name by which Friends were known. From this time on, the number of his followers grew rapidly.

Puritan ministers then taught that God's revelation to humanity lay only in the Bible and in the work of the historic Christ and that, until the judgment at the Second Advent, God would not speak again. Fox proclaimed that God speaks directly to each human soul through a present, living experience of revelation, the Inward Light of Christ, requiring no human mediator to translate God's meaning to the individual.

George Fox was a powerful personality. In *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, William Braithwaite described him as having "combined in a singular degree the burning zeal of the enthusiast with the magnetic force of a born leader of men" and such was the power of the truth he preached, "that a single man or woman living in the spirit of the apostles and prophets would shake all the country... for ten miles round." He soon attracted a group of young men and women who became inspired preachers of this new religious force and were called Publishers of Truth. These were joined by other earnest men and women. They engaged in the difficult work of spreading the movement, traveling in twos and threes throughout the length and breadth of England, extending their labors also into Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, although often hindered by imprisonment and persecution. Undismayed by every sort of difficulty, they fed the inward spiritual flame of widely separated groups, stimulating their zeal, holding them in the bond of group-consciousness, and providing for them a channel of communication.

Margaret Fell, often called the Mother of Quakerism, was an early convert and an equally powerful personality. Swarthmoor Hall, her home, became a center of activity, a stable focal point giving the movement a sense of communi-

ty and strength. She set up a central fund to help those on long preaching trips, in prison, in isolated meetings, and to promote the establishment of women's meetings. Eleven years after the death of her husband, Judge Thomas Fell, she and George Fox were married.

The powerful preaching of these leaders was supported by the daily life of the first Friends. Along with an intense religious fervor there ran a life of practical righteousness. Justice, temperance, commercial honesty, and observance of all civil laws that did not violate their conscience were vitally important matters. Braithwaite wrote, "None could dispute the validity of a Christianity which resulted in consistent and Christ-touched lives. In such lives, amid all their imperfections, the Inward Light was justified of its children."

A deep realization of the equality of all persons before God led to the early recognition of the spiritual gifts of women as equal to men and the acceptance of their public preaching. Among other behaviors, it brought about the use of the "plain" language and Friends' refusal to remove their hats in the presence of their social superiors, customs which caused frequent persecution. Still greater suffering resulted from their refusal to take oaths or to pay tithes for the upkeep of the state church.

With the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, the Anglican Church was re-established as the official religion of the state and no other worship was permitted. An era of persistent persecution was inaugurated for all religious non-conformists. Friends endured long imprisonments, disastrous fines, and cruel treatment. Their meetings were often broken up and meetinghouses destroyed. But because their consciences assured them that resistance to an unjust law was no sin, they continued their way of worship openly and bravely in spite of every effort to stop them. In some places, when all adult Friends were in jail, the children held meetings alone.

This faithfulness in persisting according to their religious conviction, with no evasion of the penalties of the law, was an important factor in finally winning legal recognition for liberty of conscience and religious toleration. But for the Society of Friends itself, the persecution had some unfortunate results: it restricted the itinerant services of the Publishers of Truth, isolated meetings, and hastened the necessity for organizing what had been a glorious creative movement into a sect.

From 1667 on, George Fox was active in helping to organize the system of monthly, quarterly, and yearly meetings and in arranging methods of procedure therein. Women's business meetings were set up in addition to men's. A Meeting of Ministers and a Meeting for Sufferings (a yearly meeting Executive Committee) were established.

The earliest concerns of these business meetings were to provide for the poor and prisoners, to check the vagaries of individual judgment, to admonish delinquents, to provide for carrying on work at home and covering the expenses of ministers traveling beyond the seas, and to keep accurate records. While the discipline thus set up was no equivalent for the compelling power of widespread evangelism, it did foster well-ordered and noble lives.

Efforts at formulation of doctrine soon followed, and in this, Robert Barclay (1648-1690) and William Penn (1644-1718) were the foremost figures. Barclay's most complete exposition was his *Apology*. His Quakerism was affected by current Puritan theology. The influence of their writings was so great as to be felt as late as the nineteenth century when the various separations occurred within the Society of Friends.

A period of development into a sect was underway. Along with the formulation of doctrine there were growing experiments toward improving the social order. These included justice toward

workmen and employees and refusal of election bribes. Efforts were made to reestablish the poor in business, along with plans for giving work to those in prison, the establishment of humane workhouses, and active concern for the treatment of the insane. Temperance and the question of slavery claimed the attention of Friends. In Pennsylvania and Rhode Island bold attempts were made to establish truly Christian commonwealths.

Friends in the American Colonies

As early as 1655 the New World had attracted Friends, and efforts were made during the following years to plant the seeds of Quakerism in Massachusetts, New York, and Virginia. In the latter two colonies there was some persecution, but the martyrs of Quakerism in America met their test in Massachusetts. Everything that the authorities could devise was tried to stop the publishing of Quaker Truth in this colony. Harrowing tortures were endured, many underwent punishment again and again, and four suffered death. After ten years of persecution, they succeeded in breaking down the intolerant laws.

During this period a haven was found in Rhode Island, where the first meeting in the New World had been established. This colony became the center of New England Quakerism. Its long line of Quaker Governors and men in public positions did eminent service in the political life of the colony until the time of the Revolutionary War.

A period of expansion followed George Fox's visit to America in 1671-1673. Meetings were established in New York, Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas, and in greater numbers in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

These last two colonies had been opened for settlement later than the others, but conditions were especially favorable. West Jersey was bought by a group of Friends in 1674 and in 1681 Pennsylvania was granted to William Penn, so that there Quakers had freedom and peace and unparalleled opportunity to try out their ability to conduct a Christian government. William Penn was a statesman of high order, an outstanding advocate of justice for Native Americans, and a champion of liberty of conscience. He designed a government based on his advanced ideas of civil and religious liberty and equality, which was a forerunner of that laid out in the Constitution of the United States. Friends maintained almost absolute control of Pennsylvania until 1740 and were a power for fifteen years longer, when measures to support the French and Indian War led most to resign from the Assembly.

The successful policy of Friends toward Native Americans was the outcome of their sense of justice and their conviction that before God all persons are equal, irrespective of their color. These principles slowly formed their attitude on another great question—that of slavery. In 1671 George Fox had advised giving slaves their freedom after a period of years. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting advised against the slave trade in 1696, and such sentiment grew slowly until 1758 when John Woolman made a moving plea for the liberty of slaves and began the great work of his life. He aroused Friends in both America and England, many of whom became influential factors and tireless workers until slavery was finally abolished.

Friends' opposition to war largely took them out of public life, and this fact together with the increasing influence of Quietism caused a profound transformation in the Society. More and more Friends in the latter half of the 18th century withdrew from the outside world and centered upon perfecting their own spiritual lives, hedging their Society about with the rules and customs of a peculiar people. This preserved some valuable features, but it also brought a narrowing introspection that was

fertile ground for controversy.

The Second Period of Quakerism

Early in the 19th century two very divergent tendencies could be seen within Quakerism. One was toward a zealous evangelicalism which was fostered by a number of prominent Quaker ministers, some of whom came over from England, and accelerated by the popular rise of the Methodist movement. The other was toward a reaffirmation of the Inward Light of Christ as a sufficient basis for faith. Job Scott, a saintly man and true mystic, and Elias Hicks, a prophetic minister, were the chief spokesmen for the latter.

The chasm grew steadily wider until 1827 when a separation occurred in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. This tragedy, due to lack of historical knowledge, lack of spiritual understanding and lack of love for one another, was followed by withdrawals by one side or the other in many other meetings, forming so-called "Hicksite" and so-called "Orthodox" branches. Further separations occurred over the last 200 years, resulting in the fractured Society seen today.

Yet the 19th century did contain some advances in Quaker development. A great migration of Friends into new territory in the Midwest took place and new yearly meetings in Ohio, Indiana, Iowa and Illinois were established.

The retirement of Friends from public affairs also helped to stimulate their zeal for purely moral causes, such as the abolition of slavery, the welfare of African-Americans and Native Americans, the work for social morality, the suppression of liquor traffic, and prison reform.

The women's rights movement grew out of the involvement of Quaker women in the anti-slavery movement. By lecturing extensively against slavery, they did much to break down the barrier against women speaking in public. Lucretia Mott, a Quaker minister and abolitionist, along with Mary Ann M'Clintock, Martha Coffin Wright, Jane Hunt, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, called the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848, which marked the formal beginning of the organized crusade for the rights of women.

Education has been a deep concern of Friends from their earliest history, and monthly meeting schools, boarding schools and colleges have been established.

History of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting

During the early 18th Century many Friends were attracted southward into Virginia and the Carolinas and some became involved in the institution of slavery. As a result of the labors of Francis Daniel Pastorius, Benjamin Lay, John Woolman, Anthony Benezet, and others, Friends came to believe slavery a curse; and slowly the conscience of the Society of Friends was awakened to the evil. Many Friends in the South decided to migrate to the slave-free lands in the Northwest Territory to begin a new life.

The migration to the Waynesville, Ohio area began in 1799 when Abijah O'Neal and his family left Bush River, South Carolina, and settled on some 3,000 acres on the east bank of the Little Miami River north of Caesar's Creek. Within 15 years, more than 18,000 followers of Fox and Penn left the land of slavery and made for the North to find a new home. Others came to the Miami country from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and other seaboard states.

In April, 1801, twelve families (81 individuals) in the Waynesville area began meeting for worship in a member's home. Near the end of that year they sent a request to Westland Meeting, Pennsylvania (Baltimore Yearly Meeting)

to establish a regular meeting for worship on First and Fifth Days. This request was granted in Ninth Month, 1802. Early in 1803 they asked Redstone Quarterly Meeting for permission to establish a monthly meeting; and when the request was approved, Miami Monthly Meeting was opened on Tenth Month 13, 1803. The eastern boundary was the Hocking River, the southern was the Ohio River, but there was no limit to the north or to the west. During this period of migration, hundreds of Friends from the Carolinas and Georgia brought their membership to Miami Monthly Meeting, until such time as other meetings could be established in the Northwest Territory. By 1815, Miami Monthly Meeting was said to have the largest membership of any Friends Meeting in Quakerdom.

After its establishment in 1803, Miami Monthly Meeting set off many new Meetings. Among the earliest ones were Lees Creek, Hardin Creek, Caesar's Creek, West Branch, Elk, Center and Whitewater. In 1807 Miami, West Branch and Center Monthly Meetings requested that a new quarterly meeting be established to be known as Miami Quarterly Meeting, to be held at Waynesville, Ohio, on the second Seventh Day in the Second, Fifth, Eighth and Eleventh Months. Baltimore Yearly Meeting having approved the request, Miami Quarterly Meeting was opened in Fifth month 1809. The building of the White Brick Meetinghouse at Waynesville was begun in 1811 to accommodate the Quarterly Meeting.

In 1812, Baltimore Yearly Meeting granted permission to the quarterly meetings west of the Alleghenies to form Ohio Yearly Meeting. The first session was held at Short Creek on the 14th of Eighth month, 1813. The Ohio Yearly Meeting included all meetings in Ohio, Indiana Territory and adjacent areas of Pennsylvania and Virginia.

In 1820, Miami Quarterly Meeting proposed that all Meetings in Illinois, Indiana and western Ohio form Indiana Yearly

Meeting. The quarterly meetings making up the proposed Yearly Meeting were Miami, West Branch, Fairfield, Whitewater and Blue River Quarterlies. Ohio Yearly Meeting approved the proposal, and the first session was held at Whitewater (Richmond, Indiana), Eighth month 10, 1821.

When separation occurred in 1828, the Yearly Meeting split into two bodies: Indiana Yearly Meeting (Orthodox), and Indiana Yearly Meeting (Hicksite). At Waynesville, the Hicksite body retained the Meetinghouse. However, in most other cases west of the Alleghenies, the Orthodox body retained it.

For nearly 150 years, there were two bodies known as Indiana Yearly Meeting. In 1975, it seemed desirable for Indiana Yearly Meeting of Friends General Conference to change its name to eliminate the unavoidable confusion which resulted from identical names and to better identify the area included in its membership. For these reasons, in 1976, the name was changed to Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting. The Yearly Meeting is composed of two Quarters: Miami and Whitewater.

In 2015, Whitewater Quarter consists of Bloomington (Indiana), Clear Creek (Richmond, Indiana), Fall Creek (Pendleton, Indiana), Fort Wayne (Indiana), Hopewell (Dublin, Indiana), Lafayette (Indiana), North Meadow Circle (Indianapolis, Indiana), and White Rose (Wabash, Indiana) Monthly Meetings. Miami Quarter consists of Campus (Wilmington, Ohio), Community (Cincinnati, Ohio), Dayton (Ohio), Eastern Hills (Cincinnati, Ohio), Englewood (Clayton, Ohio), Green Plain (South Charleston, Ohio), Lexington (Kentucky), Louisville (Kentucky), Miami (Ohio), Oxford (Ohio), and Yellow Springs (Ohio) Monthly Meetings.

NEWS FROM MONTHLY MEETINGS

BLOOMINGTON

A strong and faithful core group of members and attenders come together at our meetings for worship and gather at social events of which there were quite a few recently: for example, a Thanksgiving lunch; a Christmas party with the usual play by the children followed by carol singing; and our Second Annual New Year's Day brunch. On an ongoing basis, many gather in the kitchen after the meeting for worship to enjoy snacks or potlucks and conversation. Visitors often join in and we get to know each other better.

Attendance at the meeting for worship has declined over the past year or so. This can happen in a university town where people come and go. We also know that several Friends can no longer attend on a regular basis because of deteriorating conditions in the meeting room, especially mold which can aggravate health conditions. This is a concern that gives a greater urgency to renovating and remodeling the meeting house.

In two Called Meetings during the fall, we modified the Master Plan, "Green Embrace" that we approved over a year ago. We are comfortable with the new version, "Green Embrace Reimagined," - it is simpler, less costly, and will meet our needs while embodying the same values of sustainability and accessibility. We are planning for construction to start in April and largely to be completed by the end of this year. We rejoice that an array of solar panels is already in operation and look forward to a grand celebration in late January when the wider Bloomington community will be invited to attend.

Also, starting in February, as an inreach and outreach effort, the Ministry and Counsel and Pastoral Care committees are jointly sponsoring a series of "Conversations on Being a Quaker." In an informal setting, old and new members and attenders will have the opportunity to come together, to exchange information, and to discuss interpretations of faith and practice.

Submitted by Phyllis Martin

CLEAR CREEK

If you come to Clear Creek Meeting on a typical First Day, you will find a large space that rises almost 3 stories to the roof line, with tall windows on three sides. Those give us views of skies and of campus trees as they are visited by winds and the Earlham College squirrels.

From the outside, passing by, you might not realize anyone is in this room during worship hour, because we don't turn on the overhead fluorescents, so natural light is all there is.

Usually about 30 or 40 people gather for worship at 10 AM on a Sunday morning in this room. Sometimes there are more if there is a college event that brings in alumni, or a conference or intensive course at Earlham's School of Religion.

The people who meet here on Sunday mornings range in age from toddler hood to mid-nineties. Most are probably what we like to call "middle aged". There are usually a couple of walkers tucked in between the benches, and a wheelchair is often waiting outside the door for our oldest member, who flunked out of hospice last year, to our collective relief.

Submitted by Palline Plum

COMMUNITY FRIENDS

Community Friends Meeting has had Solar Panels Installed on the roof of the meeting house.

Eileen Crowe, who was born into Quakerism in Pennsylvania, and has been a youth member at Cincinnati Friends, has been welcomed as a new member to Community Friends Meeting.

Community Friends is again sponsoring a "Quaker Diversity" meeting for next summer. Stay tuned for the details.

Submitted by John Tim Leonard

DAYTON

Dayton Friends are looking forward to a spring retreat which we have planned for April 9 at Bergamo. The theme for our retreat will be "Sharing our stories," with time for worship, personal spiritual time and fellowship. We continue to hold second hour discussions. The topic for our next one will be social media. We will discuss the best ways to continue our outreach through social media and how to possibly improve what we are already doing in this regard. We would like to connect with both local and broader communities concerning basic information about our meeting and also peace and social concerns issues.



Our meeting is proceeding optimistically with the process of purchasing a meetinghouse. Again, please hold us in the light as we progress toward this transition in the life of our meeting. In November we enjoyed an "Evening With" Marian Alter. We plan to continue with the revival of these gatherings where a member shares their spiritual journey with us. We have decided to hold these events quarterly

We celebrated Christmas with a special worship sharing. A few Friends shared Christmas related readings and others shared more spontaneous Spirit-led messages. Two of our youth shared in the Spirit by beautifully singing "Simple Gifts." After worship we had a potluck luncheon. The photo I've included shows us around the table during this potluck.

Submitted by Terri Scarpelli

EASTERN HILLS

Amid the busy holiday season, Eastern Hills Friends paused to celebrate Christmas together with a potluck luncheon, carols, and sharing of talents.

Some also celebrated the New Year with a candlelight vigil at the Peace Pole in Beech Acres Park. This event was held by Greater Anderson Promotes Peace. Attendees shared reflections on peace – "in our homes, in our communities, in our country and in our world".

Eastern Hills Friends recently celebrated the joyous occasion of the marriage of Dale Hayes and Terry Miller. We congratulate our newest newlyweds and members, and wish them much happiness!

Best wishes for a peaceful and full 2016!

Submitted by Susan Reutman

FALL CREEK

As of this writing, we are preparing to host Whitewater Quarterly Meeting (1/17/16) and looking forward to it, weather permitting! Friends may note an entry in this newsletter by Christopher Matson, an inmate at a local state prison who corresponds with a few of us.

In late September, we delightfully welcomed the Fitzgraff-Carlson family from Cincinnati, and - following worship - they presented to us details of their travels in the ministry among Japanese Friends. It was a great time of fellowship and encouragement to hear of their faithful response to a spiritual calling.

We mostly meet for worship in the meetinghouse basement through the winter months to save on fuel use. Our finances have noticeably improved in the last year, largely due to members responding to requests by the treasurer for donations.

We've had a tradition of lovely candlelit Christmas Eve services, and this year's was at the home of Diann Herzog.

Submitted by Josh Medlin

MIAMI

Religious Education remains an important part of Miami's spiritual growth incentive. In 2015, we dug deeply into the Epistle of James, the book of Nehemiah, Social Change and Religion in America, the Quaker Message: A Personal Affirmation, and Witness and Testimony in the Biblical and Quaker Traditions. We also studied the History of Quakers and other Dissenters in England and how they changed the world. Discussions are open and lively.

Miami regularly supports operations at Quaker Heights Care Community and several members are on the Board and various committees. On December 27th, Miami hosted a Meeting for Worship at Quaker Heights involving carol singing, inspirational readings, and silent worship, which touched the hearts of the residents. A member of the Meeting also clerked the Annual Memorial Meeting for Worship on November 19th.

Facilities and grounds remains a concern and we have contracted to have the insulation in the White Brick Meetinghouse's attic improved and have dealt with that building's basement flooding.

Thanks to Lexington Friends for taking our spare bench and to Ben Griffith for driving all the way to Waynesville to load and haul the bench all the way back to Lexington.

We were pleased to welcome new members long-time attender Robert Finley and Joy Forcier who transferred her membership from Beacon Hill Friends Meeting, Boston MA.

We have enjoyed the participation by the Pfaltzgraff-Carlson family in our worship and First Day discussions. Rhonda, who is a participant in the School of the Spirit has shared her work on the Spiritual Care Committee in which she has invited us to participate.

Submitted by Lonny Burger

NORTH MEADOW CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

We enjoyed a wonderful holiday season, with caroling and a New Year's Watch with a potluck meal and worship. Friends continue to be active in several community efforts, including the Khephrw Institute, a community organization in urban Indianapolis focused on youth development and the environment. Friends are also gathering regularly to participate in Small Group Social Change, addressing issues of race and justice in their lives. North Meadow recently hosted an open house to update neighbors on several updates from the Hoosier Environmental Council about key legislative priorities for the 2016 Indiana General Assembly

We continue to have visitors come to our meeting and a few new members as well. Our First Day School has at least 10 children—not usually all at once—ranging from infant to age 13. We meet monthly for Quaker Bible Study. Worship Sharing also continues monthly, usually held in the house of a Friend on a Friday evening.

Submitted by Alexia Mary Torke

OXFORD

Oxford has enjoyed both inward and outward activity since our last report.

Anne Hutchinson, of this meeting, will represent OVYM at the upcoming FWCC plenary in Peru. With her, we read a nourishing collection of testimonies stemming from Romans 8 in preparation for her attendance.

As usual, many of us participated in cooking and serving soup at Oxford's now-annual Empty Bowls luncheon, which this year raised more than \$7000 for the local food pantry. Apparently our lentil soup speaks to the condition of generous Oxford patrons.

In November, Shannon Murray drafted and we approved a public statement urging gun control, in the wake of the recent epidemic of gun violence. Our statement is available on request to other meetings who may want to issue statements of their own.

Our First Day School continues to be active. Recent units developed by Cecilia Shore include an examination of the "Hero's Journey" myth, as a pattern for conscience-based action, and a look at the work of children's television activist Mr. Rogers and his nurturance of the spiritual lives of his young audience. Our meeting children continue to be a source of refreshment and inspiration to us.

We ended the year with an Advent event, including a lavish potluck dinner, a children's Christmas play on the surprise of the Messiah, and a caroling visit to a family who were unable to attend the event.

Submitted by Andrew Garrison

YELLOW SPRINGS

In adult meeting for learning we have focused on global warming as a peace and social justice issue and explored the mystery of Mary in the Christmas story. We said goodbye to our member Bill Houston at his October 31st memorial service. Friends Tim and Julia Honchel were married. Our annual meeting retreat was A Workshop on Spirituality and the Body. Our leader was Stephanie Crumley-Effinger, Director of Supervised Ministry at ESR. Member Laura Hyde began her work with Quaker Voluntary Service in Georgia. This winter we are reading the book The Leap: How to Survive and Thrive in the Sustainable Economy, by Chris Turner. Submitted by Heather Snediker-Morscheck

RELIGIOUS NURTURE AND EDUCATION RETREAT

Theme: Intergenerational Connections

April 23

Quaker Hill, Richmond IN

Remember the great retreat we had in 2014?
SAVE THE DATE!

Incarcerated Quaker (since 2007) would love to hear from fellow Friends to share in Fellowship and study.

I believe the key to our similarity is in following the leadings of the spirit of love and unity, encompassing us all in the Eternal Light of the Creator

Christopher Matson #985600, NCCF, PO Box E, New Castle, IN 47632

Submitted by Josh Medlin of Fall Creek

Westheimer Peace Symposium Making Peace with the Environment: Continuing the Conversation

We've already heard stories of inspiration from some of you, and the recognition that there is much work to be done. Below you'll find resources to continue the conversation in your own communities, make changes in your own life, and continue learning about how YOU can "make peace with the environment."

- If you couldn't join us for "The Lorax," check out these ideas for [recycled art projects](#) and [Lorax flower pots!](#)
- Learn more about the work of Quaker Earthcare Witness and join their mailing list [here](#).
- Check out the film's [website](#) for steps to properly dispose of your electronics, tools to purchase greener electronics, and ways to encourage electronics retailers to promote recycling. For another good resource on reducing and disposing of "stuff," check out [The Story of Stuff](#)
- Want to learn more about the modern-day scything movement? Check out the [Scything Improver's Forum](#) on Facebook!
- If the film raised questions for you about fracking, you may want to follow organizations like [Food & Water Watch](#) and the [Ohio Environmental Council](#)
- To keep up with the Lytle Creek League of Conservators, No Child Left Indoors, and Energize Clinton County, check out the [Clinton County Green Alliance](#) website.
- Want to know more at Tim DeChristopher's story? Check out the websites for [Peaceful Uprising](#) and the [Climate Disobedience Center](#) or watch [Bidder 70](#).

"Peace Corps: 50 Years of Service, Bringing the World Home" Exhibit Quaker Heritage Center Wilmington College

February 29, 11:30 a.m.: Global Service Panel and Fair (McCoy Room)

March 2, 9 p.m.: Peace Trivia Night (Top of Pyle)

March 22, 7:30 p.m.: International Club Spring Festival (McCoy Room)

March 23, 6 p.m.: "A Peace of My Mind: Exploring the Meaning of Peace One Story at a Time" Exhibit Opening Reception with Photographer John Noltner (Harcum Art Gallery)

March 24 through April 20: "A Peace of My Mind: Exploring the Meaning of Peace One Story at a Time" (Harcum Art Gallery)

GALLERY HOURS

9 a.m. to 4 p.m. - Monday through Friday

Saturday: 12 noon to 5 p.m. - January 23, February 27, March 19, April 30, May 21

Closed: March 10, 11, and 25

SUPPORT YOUNG ADULT FRIENDS FGC

In high school, my FGC Gathering experience was about being around other Quaker teens and getting to see how they were living their Quaker faith. Now it's one of my spiritual homes. It's a moment to pause and reconnect with people from all over the US and Canada who I've known since I was a kid. We celebrate each other's struggles and successes, and we come back to support each other year after year. This community helps me feel more connected to my Quaker faith throughout the year.

[Please give to cultivate Quaker communities for young people across yearly meetings.](#)

I'm so grateful for the opportunity to serve you.

In the Light,
Piper Lewis
Communications Fellow, FGC



Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting

OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

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Cincinnati, OH 45229

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

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Cecilia Shore, editor.

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From the readings in preparation for FWCC Plenary

Quakerism began three hundred years ago by people seeking: people desperately wanting to LEARN the way of sincerity, of reality, of truth. We are still learners, or disciples. I find that Quakers and Quakerism are friendly to learners, and in this too I find myself at home in the Society.

Roger Carter 1948, Natal Monthly Meeting, South Africa, *Living Adventurously*, 2009 pg 31

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