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High School Teen Retreat Report

# Minutes of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting

## 52nd Annual Sessions

### July 30 - August 2, 2015

#### Bluffton University, Bluffton, Ohio

#### *Thursday Evening Session*

#### **YM15-01 Worship and reading of epistle from Pacific Yearly Meeting**

Annual Meeting opened with a period of open worship at the appointed hour. Assistant Clerk Mike Holaday (Grand Rapids) read the epistle from the 2013 Annual Session of Pacific Yearly Meeting. The epistle shared their experience of an intense spiritual connection with each other and also with distant Friends through the tradition of letters between Quaker bodies. They strive for greater integrity between their outward communications and their lived witness, as they wrestle with the role of the corporate body which seems to be shifting toward supporting each other's individual witnesses. They ask, "If our life as a yearly meeting is an epistle, what does it say, and to whom?"

#### **YM15-02 Welcome, introduction to the business**

Clerk Sally Weaver Sommer (Broadmead) welcomed Friends, and noted that her opening worship includes watching each attender enter and join the gathered body. She thanked those whose advance efforts helped make these sessions possible and all those in attendance this weekend. She trusts that the Spirit's presence will be evident in the fellowship and the discernment that we engage in this weekend, and invited Friends to review the guidelines for our processes for business which are scattered throughout the room.

There are three significant concerns which will require our attention and discernment this weekend: Follow-up work on the sexual abuse concern brought to our attention at our last annual meeting, the roles of the Advancement & Outreach Committee and Ministry and Nurture Committee, and the Friends School in Detroit and recent related events.

Friends with concerns for our work together who are not sure where those concerns should be taken, including new concerns, are asked to speak with the clerks. If you have announcements, please give these to Mike Holaday.

#### **YM15-03 Introductions, welcome to visitors and first-time attenders**

The clerk introduced those present at the clerk's table with her: Mike Holaday, Assistant Clerk; Nancy Reeves (Cleveland), Recording Clerk. Also introduced were: Jon Sommer (Broadmead), clerk of the Site Committee; Berch Carpenter (Broadmead), registrar; Janet Dando (Akron) and Dale Pratt-Harrington (Athens), co-clerks of the Program Committee; Valerie Groszmann (Kalamazoo), book store; Abbey Pratt-Harrington (Athens), clerk of the Nominating Committee.

We welcomed visitors and first time attenders Tom Blackwell (Ann Arbor), John Deikis (Ann Arbor), Russ Adams (North Columbus), Mary Ellen Coolman, (Akron), Richard Shaw (Pittsburgh), Sam Milford (Pittsburgh), and Brad Shaw (Red Cedar).

We also welcomed Eric Evans, Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, who is our FGC visitor to this annual meeting.

#### **YM15-04 Roll Call**

Akron	3	Circleville Worship Group	1
Ann Arbor	16	Delaware	0
Athens	9	Detroit	5
Birmingham	10	Erie Worship Group	0
Broadmead	20	Grand Rapids	8
Cleveland	11	Granville	2

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Holland	0	Pittsburgh	13
Kalamazoo	8	Red Cedar	8
Kent	0	Waysmeet Worship Group	1
Mid-Ohio Valley	0	Wooster	3
North Columbus	5	Other organizations	7
Oberlin	1		
Pine River	2	<b>Total:</b>	<b>133</b>

**YM15-05 Regular attenders not here this year**

We note the absence of regular attenders who cannot be present with us this year: Thomas and Nancy Taylor (Ann Arbor), Mathilda Navias (Broadmead), John and Dottie Stratton (Wooster), Richard Lee (Red Cedar), Susan Hartman (Ann Arbor), Robb Yurisko (North Columbus), and Betty Ford (Grand Rapids).

**YM15-06 Naming Committee**

The Clerk identified Carla Pratt-Harrington (Athens) and Rosemary Coffey (Pittsburgh) to serve on the Naming Committee which nominates individuals to serve on the Nominating Committee. Friends **approved**.

**YM15-07 Epistle Committee**

Friends **approved** an epistle committee to be convened by Assistant Clerk Mike Holaday and joined by Aran Reinhart (Broadmead), and Josephine Posti (Pittsburgh). These Friends will listen deeply throughout the weekend and bring a draft epistle for our consideration at our Sunday meeting for worship with attention to business.

**YM15-08 Travel minutes**

The Clerk requested that Friends bearing travel minutes give them to the clerks. In addition, any Friend with an endorsed travel minute from this body should return it to the clerks, as well.

**YM15-09 Program Committee announcements**

Janet Dando shared announcements from Program Committee. The Program Committee has provided packets of seeds which Friends are encouraged to pick up and share with at least one new Friend, take home, plant, and remember the weekend. Friends are also invited to smile broadly for the roaming cameras, and to enjoy the resulting slide show displayed on the cafeteria wall. The slide show includes photos gathered this weekend, as well as those sent by Monthly Meetings in advance of our gathering. Friends were also invited to sign up for our annual talent show on Saturday night. Please don't be shy!

**YM15-10 Friends who have died this year**

In worship, we heard memorial minutes for Wendell Cotton (Broadmead), Marie Cotton (Broadmead), and Kyo Takahashi (Pine River). Copies of these minutes are attached. Friends named Rilma Buckman (Broadmead) and Mary Burgess (Birmingham) who also died this year.

*Friday Morning Session*

**YM15-11 Worship, reading of epistle from Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting**

The second session of Annual Meeting opened with a period of open worship at the appointed hour. Assistant Clerk Mike Holaday read the epistle from the 2014 session of the Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting of Friends. Reflecting on their theme, "Living up to the Light," they came to realize that the Light is entrusted to all of them, not just to one person. Realizing they were not alone in their enterprise, they were given encouragement, tools, and opportunities to put their gifts and testimonies into practice, and emerged from their gathering with a powerful sense of hope that "in living up to our light together, we are empowered to change the world."

**YM15-12 Welcome, Travel minute for Jerry Knutson, visitors and first-time attenders**

Clerk Sally Weaver Sommer welcomed Friends, and read a travel minute from the Orlando Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends for Jerry Knutson (Monongahela).

We welcomed visitors and first time attenders: Marcia Roberts (Akron) and Firmin Charlot (Red Cedar).

### **YM15-13 Preliminary report of Nominating Committee**

Abbey Pratt-Harrington, clerk of the Nominating Committee, gave a preliminary report for the committee.

The Nominating Committee has developed a questionnaire that provides an opportunity for each attender to note interest, or non-interest, in LEYM committees and in other roles which provide opportunities to do work on behalf of LEYM. Friends were requested to complete a form.

The preliminary slate of nominees was presented, and a final slate will be presented for our consideration at our meeting for worship with attention to business on Sunday. Friends who are curious about the role of each committee are invited to visit the LEYM website where the *LEYM Policies and Procedures Manual* can be found.

We were reminded that Ministry and Nurture and Peace Committees include representatives appointed by Monthly Meetings. The Nominating Committee is asked to send a letter to Monthly Meetings to invite them to appoint representatives to these committees. If your Monthly Meeting appoints, or wishes to appoint, representatives to these committees, please invite it to forward the names of these representatives to the Nominating Committee so they can be recorded.

Nominating Committee is asked to consider how best to record these Friends and to share that process with us.

Friends also shared their questions and concerns about formal and informal participation in committees, about recording that participation, and about whether our *Policies and Procedures Manual* is consistent with what we would like to have happen. Executive Committee is asked to consider these concerns.

### *Friday Afternoon Session*

### **YM15-14 Sexual Abuse Task Force report**

Joann Neuroth (Red Cedar) reported for the Sexual Abuse Task Force. The Sexual Abuse Task Force was created in response to a specific incident in Athens Monthly Meeting. The work of the Task Force was not to respond to that incident, but to consider how best we might help LEYM address sexual misconduct within the youth programs of LEYM.

The task force believes that *LEYM Policies and Procedures Manual* includes solid reactive policies, but offers little formal guidance on how to create an environment which proactively creates a recurring community in which opportunities abound for authentic intra- and intergenerational relationships, full of spontaneity, warmth, trust, curiosity, reflection, and joy which includes clear safety boundaries and expectations within which both children and adults can be freed from worry or wariness about potential abusive behavior of any kind and also about being falsely accused. At the core, the Task Force sees the mindfulness of the community as the best means of preventing sexual misconduct and encouraging those impacted by it to seek help.

They proposed several broad principles for our consideration:

1. An educational session should be presented annually as a required preparation for anyone who will be working with the young Friends program.
2. Volunteers who work with young Friends should be currently approved caregivers in an LEYM Monthly Meeting with a caregiver safety policy or else should agree to have LEYM ask for a reference from a clerk or a designee of their Monthly Meeting.
3. At a minimum, two volunteers who have completed the preparation described in #1 and #2 above should always be with any group of children under LEYM's care.
4. Everyone involved in LEYM Young Friends' programs – adult volunteers and participating children – should agree to stay within sight of the group at all times.

The Task Force is willing to continue its work and to draft a formal policy, if Friends are in unity with these principles.

Friends shared their reactions and questions including:

- Whether each Monthly Meeting has child safety policies, and, if so, whether LEYM should trust meetings' individual discernments even if their policies might not precisely match the policy LEYM would develop.
- Mandatory reporting: What are our legal responsibilities? What do we believe LEYM should be doing with regard to reporting? How do we reconcile the reality that mandatory reporting sometimes discourages survivors who do not want to be involved with the legal system from seeking help, with complying with the law and with protecting others who might also be targets of sexual misconduct by that individual?
- Whether criminal background checks are useful, legally required, or provide a false sense of safety.
- Whether to strive for the greatest flexibility in our policies, or instead write them anticipating strict insurance and legal requirements that have already been imposed on many meetings.
- How do we design or implement an educational program that does more good than harm; and that educates not only the adults, but the children? Are we now ready, as a body, to formalize our current informal practices, which are largely reflected in the third and fourth points of the recommendation?
- How the proposed cultural change, requiring advance vetting of child care providers, will impact our ability to staff a program that often has gaps in staffing until the last minute.
- Whether any policy we develop can address our practice of using last minute volunteers for specific projects, such as off-campus bowling trips.
- What role the members of the community who are not formally involved in the youth program should play.
- Whether the Task Force should also address adult-to-adult interactions; interactions between youth in our programs, particularly in the teen program; interactions between parents and children at LEYM, particularly clear delineation about when children are under their parents' care and when they are under the care of LEYM programs; interactions which may begin in LEYM but continue outside of LEYM; or interactions which may take place entirely outside of LEYM.

Friends **approved** asking the Task Force to continue its work, and to develop a draft policy for consideration by LEYM, which is consistent with the draft guidelines and what was shared today.

The Task Force full report appears below.

### **YM15-15 Ministry and Nurture Committee report**

Paula Deming (Waysmeet Worship Group) reported for the Ministry and Nurture Committee, which includes oversight of the Ministry and Scholarship Fund and the Spiritual Formation program.

#### **Scholarship Fund**

This year, the committee received no requests for funds from the Ministry and Scholarship Fund. Friends who are following a leading that may be aided by scholarship funds are encouraged to make a request for funds to their Monthly Meeting, which will season it and, if appropriate, bring the request to the Ministry and Nurture Committee.

#### **Spiritual Formation**

The theme of the Spiritual Formation retreat this year was, "The Gospel of John: Stories of What God's Love Looks Like," led by Eric Evans.

The theme for the coming year is "Experiment with Light," and will involve a guided meditation based on advice George Fox gave to early Friends in his epistles. The fall retreat will be held September 11-13, 2015, at the Weber Retreat Center in Adrian, Michigan. The spring retreat will be May 14, 2016.

#### **State of Meeting Reports**

Ministry and Nurture received State of the Meeting reports from 15 Monthly Meetings and no worship groups. These reports are included in LEYM *Annual Records*, and all Friends are encouraged to read them. As the committee read the reports, it noted some challenges in our meetings, but it also noted many strengths and

growth. There was general expression of the loving, caring, supportive experience of Friends in their Meetings for Worship, which is treasured both by members and new attenders. Most describe action in the larger world toward social and environmental justice.

**The Annual Query for 2016 was announced:**

*For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; I was naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me.*  
(Matthew 25:35-36, Jerusalem Bible)

How might our meeting support individuals and the meeting as a whole in working to increase racial justice within our world? In what ways do we as a Meeting recognize white privilege in our own Meeting? What tools and practices do we use to foster awareness of our personal and corporate biases?

The complete report is below.

**YM15-16 Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting report**

Ellerie Brownfain (Birmingham) reported for Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting.

Their year has been joyous and heart-wrenching, and filled with growth and change. Lower attendance at its meetings this year has been a challenge, as has been the ability of the Quarterly Meeting to fill its committees.

The finances of the Friends School in Detroit and its infrastructure have continued to deteriorate. The May meeting was the first time Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting received relatively complete financial information about the Friends School in Detroit. At that meeting, Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting reached unity to lay down the school, with one member standing aside.

**Friends School in Detroit**

Ellerie Brownfain and Joe Mills (Kalamazoo) reported on the Friends School in Detroit. The Friends School began the school year last September with 82 students, 17 faculty members, and an average tuition payment of \$6,500. A sustainable enrollment, in the current facilities, is around 140. It was hoped that the McCree Dinner, as a fundraiser for the 50th anniversary of the school, would spark new interest in the school, bring in new funds, and increase enrollment to a sustainable level. That did not happen. The school was able to remain open through the end of the 2014-15 school year, in part because of donations and personal loans obtained to pay some portion of the salaries.

The school has been unable to provide accurate financial records for some time, because it has been unable to afford a bookkeeper. It is believed that the debt at the end of the school year was close to \$1 million, including \$100,000 dollars in unpaid staff salaries, a \$537,000 first mortgage which is in default, an additional secured debt owed to individuals of \$74,000, and a secured unemployment lien of \$18,000.

Options under exploration by an independent group to form a new school, outside of the care of the Quarterly Meeting, included a donation of proceeds from the sale of a James Turrell work of art, anticipated to be around \$1,000,000. That donation is contingent on the continued existence of a school, in some form. Some Friends feel it is unlikely that a new school will open in the fall for lack of sufficient administrative structure.

The school building is currently listed for sale with a realtor, at a price that would come close to covering the remaining bills, if a sale can be completed during the redemption period following foreclosure.

We were reminded that, even though wrestling with this the past few years has felt like a dark cloud, the school has been a very bright cloud to those it has served.

The complete reports are below.

*Saturday Morning Session*

**YM15-17 Reading of epistle from Britain Yearly Meeting**

Assistant Clerk Mike Holaday read the epistle from the 2015 Annual Session of Britain Yearly Meeting. Acknowledging that they are complicit in the root causes of social and economic injustice in our threatened planet, they are restless to take corporate action to do the things they can only do together to change the

unequal and unjust world. They look to their youth, whose response to an incident of inequality during their gathering was, "here's how I know I can help and what else can I do?" They recognize power as an obligation to service, not a right to dominate. Doing nothing is not an option.

#### **YM15-18 Welcome of visitors**

We welcomed visitors Diane Randall, Hartford Monthly Meeting, New England Yearly Meeting and Executive Secretary of Friends Committee on National Legislation, and Vaughn Peebles, White Rose Monthly Meeting, and Ron Simpson Bey, Michigan American Friends Service Committee Office.

#### **YM15-19 Publications and Archives Committee report**

Susan Carpenter (Broadmead) reported for Publications and Archives Committee.

The committee publishes our *Annual Record*, and reports that it cost \$3.55 per copy to print.

The committee has been exploring ways to make our publications more widely read and more useful to the members of LEYM. It used themes for each issue of our *Bulletin* this year, and mailed a hard copy of the *Spring Bulletin* to each of the 1070 households in LEYM in an attempt to increase readership of the *Bulletin* and attendance at our Annual Meeting. This mailing was expensive, and did not clearly increase attendance this year. For now, the committee will return to delivering copies of the *Bulletin* in bulk to the clerk of each Monthly Meeting.

The committee asks each attender to complete a survey indicating preference for future *Bulletins*, and making suggestions to improve the work of the P&A Committee.

It was suggested that attendance might increase if the Publications & Archives Committee could clearly articulate reasons why new attenders would choose to come to LEYM, and could provide a more detailed schedule in advance.

Other suggestions for the Publication and Archives Committee to consider included a "Save the day" note in the fall *Bulletin* or by postcard announcement, making the registration electronic, moving to an opt in or opt out system for the mailed *Bulletin*, continuing to mail some copies to irregular attenders at meeting, continuing to send copies to each meeting for distribution, updating the mailing list, and recruiting a person in each meeting to talk up the annual meeting.

#### **YM15-20 Treasurer's report**

Mike Hinshaw (Wooster), Treasurer, reported that LEYM received, and is grateful for, contributions from every Monthly Meeting during the 2014-15 fiscal year. No monetary contributions to the general fund came from individuals, although many individuals made in-kind donations of time and travel costs. Our investment funds in Friends Fiduciary grew slightly, and earned dividends of \$955.94.

Our expenses stayed within our budget during the 2014-15 fiscal year, although some of the individual expenditures were higher and others lower than budgeted. Our balance going into the 2015-16 fiscal year is approximately \$68,000. We spent approximately \$30,500 in the 2014-15 fiscal year.

The treasurer noted that we have a line item of \$3,500 for Travelling Ministries. None of the funds were used this year, and Friends are encouraged to consider whether they are led to travel in the ministry.

The Treasurer and the Finance Committee were asked to consider whether the large number of individual funds add complexity without adding significant value.

A copy of the report appears below.

#### **YM15-21 Draft budget**

Jeff Cooper (Ann Arbor) reported for the Finance Committee, and presented the draft budget for our consideration.

A new line has been added for a one-time contribution of \$1,000 to help make the entrance way of Michigan Friends Center more accessible to people with physical disabilities. Michigan Friends Center is an independent Friends' facility on Friends' Lake which is used by a wide variety of Friends and community groups. The

overall cost of the project is \$16,000 to \$18,000.

For the past several years, we have contributed \$4,500 annually to Friends School in Detroit. No contribution to Friends School in Detroit is included in the budget for FY 2015-2016. We ask the Executive Committee to continue to monitor the situation, and authorize it to respond as it is led, including with a financial contribution of up to \$4,500 from the General Fund. Friends are mindful of the toll this situation has taken on individuals directly involved in Friends School in Detroit.

In furtherance of our commitment to education, the budget includes an increased donation of \$2,000 to Olney Friends School, up from \$600 last year.

Friends **approved** the budget; a copy appears below along with the full report from the Finance Committee.

### *Saturday Afternoon Session*

#### **YM15-22 Roles of the Advancement and Outreach and Ministry and Nurture Committees**

Clerk Sally Weaver Sommer reported for the Executive Committee on a concern that arose about overlap between, and lack of clarity about the roles of the Advancement and Outreach and the Ministry and Nurture Committees, and the struggle we sometimes have to find individuals who are led to serve on these committees. In addition, a request from an individual for support of her emerging ministry resulted in the recognition that our *Policies and Procedures Manual* does not address how to support such individual ministries in our midst.

A task force including the clerk of Ministry and Nurture Committee, the Clerk of Advancement and Outreach Committee, the Presiding Clerk, the Assistant Clerk, and Mathilda Navias met and recommended the following two changes to the Executive Committee:

First:

“Advancement and Outreach is assigned the role of nurturing and encouraging small meetings, new Monthly Meetings, and worship groups by means of correspondence and personal visits.”

The task force recommends changing this responsibility, listed in the current LEYM *Policies and Procedures Manual* for A&O (1.b (1)) to:

“Encourage preparative meetings, worship groups, and new Monthly Meetings by means of correspondence and personal visits.”

Second:

The Executive Committee recommends the following be added to the responsibilities of the Ministry & Nurture Committee (6.b (6)):

Encourage and support Monthly Meetings as they recognize, publicly affirm, and practically support those individuals who exercise their gifts in faithful ministry. This includes but is not limited to:

- a. preparing minutes for traveling ministers to be approved by the Yearly Meeting.
- b. overseeing the traveling ministries fund.

Friends **approved**.

The report appears below.

#### **YM15-23 FGC report**

Helen Hebben and Eric Evans reported for Friends General Conference. Friends General Conference provides direct service to yearly meetings, Monthly Meetings, and individuals by helping to build, nurture, and support loving, diverse, healthy, and growing meeting communities.

Upcoming events sponsored by FGC include the Autumn Retreat for Friends of Color and their families, to be held at Clarkston, Michigan, Friday Nov. 6-8, 2015; the White Privilege Conference, to be held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, April 14-17, 2016; and the annual Gathering of Friends, to be held at St Benedict's College, St. Joseph, Minnesota July 3-9, 2016.

FGC also provides a number of free resources for Monthly Meetings that can be downloaded from the FGC website, including a series of free newcomer cards, the *You are Welcome Here* booklet (an outgrowth of Quaker Quest), Quaker Activity Pages for children, and a poster on Transforming Quaker Welcoming. Additional highly adaptable and affordable workshop, study, and travelling ministries resources are available to Friends Meetings through the website. Friends are encouraged to explore the FGC website.

Eric Evans' report appears below.

Helen Hebben, our representative to FGC, reports that the ministries of FGC which are carried out through Quaker Books of FGC and Quaker Press are at risk. FGC has made changes to reduce costs and increase exposure, but these ministries still need our financial support to continue. Friends are encouraged to support this ministry by purchasing Quaker books, and by purchasing them directly from FGC.

### **YM15-24 Service Project**

Peggy Daub (Ann Arbor) and Jonah Brownfain (Birmingham) presented a report on the 2015 LEYM Service Project, held in advance of our annual meeting. Nine Friends volunteered with Habitat for Humanity ReStore in Findlay, which sells recovered furniture and furnishings at a low cost to support Habitat's work. Among other things, the group tested appliances, created a marquis sign for an upcoming Habitat event, refinished tables, tested electronics, and stuffed informational bags.

A copy of the service project report appears below.

### **YM15-25 Youth and Children Committee report**

Kate Spry (Cleveland) reported for the Youth and Children Committee. Our youth include an amazing collection of youth who delight in each other's company, look forward to our annual meeting, and eagerly incorporate newcomers. This year the program includes six elementary age, twelve middle school, and seven high school youth, plus eight teachers and one convener. So far they have hiked, played spud, giggled, made Friendship bracelets, and gone swimming.

The committee brings three recommendations for our consideration:

- Name six teachers, one convener, and one co-convener by the end of this annual meeting for next year's program. Six teachers is the bare minimum; our *Policies and Procedures Manual* requires ten.
- Reinstigate the two-year commitment for teachers, so that each teacher spends one year as a rising teacher before assuming a primary teaching role.
- Institute a one hour meeting for teachers and conveners without youth, before the youth program actually begins each year.
- Ensure that each year at least one committee intentionally incorporates youth participation in its work at annual meeting.

We ask the Presiding Clerk to communicate with the clerk of the youth and children's program to carry out this last suggestion.

### **YM15-26 Advancement and Outreach Committee report**

Dolores Avner (Pittsburgh) reported for Advancement and Outreach. Advancement and Outreach is a committee which supports Monthly Meetings in their own outreach work, but it cannot do the work for the Monthly Meeting. Monthly Meetings are asked to let the Advancement and Outreach Committee know what outreach activities they are engaged in so that the Advancement and Outreach Committee can better serve LEYM's constituent bodies.

### **YM15-27 Earthcare Committee report**

#### **Quaker Earthcare Witness**

Judy Greenberg (Broadmead) reported on Quaker Earthcare Witness. The Sustainability, Faith and Action Working Group of Quaker Earthcare Witness requests Friends to consider acting on four "Asks":

- That all Friends Meeting Houses plant patches of native plants useful to pollinators.

- That all Friends Meeting Houses that are able shift to renewable electricity suppliers by 2016.
- That meetings develop plans of action to encourage their state to hold the highest possible standard to address risks of climate change, and to protect our health and environment now and for future generations.
- That all Yearly and Monthly Meetings address the moral dimension of investments in fossil fuels and consider reinvestment options that reflect your meeting's values.

A copy of the Quaker Earthcare Witness report appears below.

The Earthcare Committee feels a great sense of urgency about climate change, which is at odds with its limited energy. It has been working to articulate the clerking responsibilities, take turns clerking, and discern where to focus its efforts to maximize its impact. Working with the Youth Program at this year's annual gathering has been a high point, as has the addition of new members, the presentation of two workshops, and the work of one volunteer who agreed to set up and manage a Facebook page.

### **YM15-28 Peace Committee report**

Lucia Kalinosky (Oberlin) reported for the Peace Committee. Monthly Meeting participation in the Peace Committee has been light this year, but the committee is aware that Monthly Meetings have been deeply engaged in a broad variety of peace and social justice work, including work with the Israel Palestine conflict, anti-racism work, anti-colonialism work, monetary policy, Iran, nuclear disarmament, U.S. weapons testing in the Marshall islands, immigration, service projects (especially anti-poverty projects), military spending, reproductive justice, LGBT rights, affordable housing, death penalty, incarceration and private prisons, and compassionate communities.

The committee is happy to support and celebrate the wide range of peace work being done by Monthly Meetings, including work done by individuals, but it is uncertain how to encourage broader Monthly Meeting involvement with the Peace Committee, particularly when a number of Monthly Meetings have indicated they do not have their own Peace Committees.

To help discern what work the Peace Committee should be doing, it posed three queries for our brief reflection:

- Is there any work that you see as being outside of the charge of the peace committee?
- How can we better support the work that Monthly Meetings are doing?
- Is all social justice work peace work?

Friends offered that the Peace Committee might help LEYM discern what peace work we are led to do, which might include following the lead of Monthly Meetings who are already engaged in specific peace and justice work, facilitating communication between Monthly Meetings, and modelling peaceful ways of doing social justice work to non-Quaker groups because not all social justice work is currently being done in a peaceful manner. If Friends have further thoughts, please forward them to the Peace Committee.

The committee brought to our attention a minute passed by Athens Monthly Meeting in support of the National Emergency Employment Defense (NEED) Act, introduced in 2011 to the 112th U.S. Congress. The NEED act seeks to fundamentally transform how money is introduced and circulated in the US, shifting from creating money as credit to issuing and circulating new money under the authority of an independent Monetary Authority. The goal of the act is to promote economic justice by the creation of money to fund repairing our physical and social infrastructure, create jobs, and lay the foundation for a sustainable economy. The Peace Committee encourages other Monthly Meetings to consider supporting the reintroduction of the NEED Act, and will mail resources and the full minute to each Monthly Meeting.

The Peace Committee recommends that LEYM send a letter to the Emanuel AME Church, the site of the recent racially motivated shootings in Charleston, South Carolina, extending our condolences and expressing our unity with them in their work for racial justice.

Friends **approved**.

### **YM15-29 Updated Nominating Committee report**

Abbey Pratt-Harrington updated the Nominating Committee report. The final slate will be presented for our approval at our Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business on Sunday morning.

### **YM15-30 Right Sharing of World Resources**

Rosemary Coffey, Right Sharing of World Resources' representative to LEYM. We are reminded that there is a display in the lobby. Monthly Meetings which did not pick up their game box at the last gathering should pick up.

### **YM15-31 Naming Committee report**

Rosemary Coffey, for the Naming Committee, recommends Paul Helbling (Broadmead) be appointed to serve a two year term on the nominating committee (2015-2017), and Janet Dando and Linda Mills (Kalamazoo) each be appointed to serve three year terms (2015-2018).

Friends **approved**.

### *Sunday Morning Session*

### **YM15-32 Nominating Slate**

Michael Fuson (Granville), Nominating Committee, presented the slate of individuals it is bringing forward to serve Lake Erie Yearly Meeting as members of committees, officers, representatives to other Quaker organizations, and visitors to neighboring yearly meetings.

It was noted that Publication and Archives has two open slots, and that the AFSC has a dedicated position for an LEYM representative as a member of its Corporation. These two roles are particularly important to fill, from a functional perspective.

Friends **approved** the nominations. A copy appears with the reports.

Friends are urged to let Nominating Committee know if they are willing and led to serve in any of the open slots, or if they know of Friends that Nominating Committee might consider.

Friends are encouraged to consider serving LEYM in our youth programs, and to invite other members of their Monthly Meeting to serve as well. We were reminded that serving our youth is not an all-consuming commitment during annual meeting, and that LEYM provides a stipend that covers registration, room, and board to anyone doing so.

### **YM15-33 Site Committee report**

Jon Sommer reported for the Site Committee. This year 133 adults and children attended Lake Erie Yearly Meeting. Our attendance is up from 124 last year. We are scheduled to meet again in Bluffton in 2016 from July 28-31, and in 2017 from July 27-30. We are grateful and blessed to have this site available to come home to each year for our time together.

### **YM15-34 High School Teen Retreat report**

Peggy Daub presented the High School Teen Retreat report. At our Representative Meeting, we agreed to scale back the number of teen retreats because of low attendance. Teen participation in the Quake that Rocked the Midwest will continue, as will our teen program at annual meeting. Robb Yurisko will accompany the teens to the Quake that Rocked the Midwest this year, but has indicated that he will step down after this year. We are grateful for his service in this role.

In the coming year, the committee will discern how great the need is for teen retreats going forward. Anyone having suggestions for a new High School Coordinator should approach Peggy Daub.

### **YM15-35 LEYM Epistle**

Mike Holaday, Aran Reinhart, and Jo Posti presented the draft epistle for our consideration. Friends **approved**, with our gratitude for the service of the epistle committee.

**Epistle from Lake Erie Yearly Meeting  
in annual sessions at Bluffton University  
in Bluffton, Ohio, July 30-August 2, 2015**

Loving greetings to Friends everywhere.

The Friends of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting met in annual sessions on the pleasant campus of Bluffton University to “Sow the Seeds of Friendship.” We were 109 adults and 24 youth and children, representing meetings from Pennsylvania, Ohio and Michigan. In our workshops, worship groups, informal gatherings and, most especially, our plenary session, we have explored the deeper meanings of friendship and its transformative power.

Nine Friends met for two days prior to our business sessions to work on a service project with Habitat for Humanity. The group volunteered at Habitat’s ReStore in Findlay, Ohio, cleaning donated furniture and building materials, testing donated appliances, stuffing bags for contest giveaways, and crafting a marquee for a local road rally. We were very impressed by Habitat’s dedicated staff and local volunteers, who have made significant contributions to the community in the 15 years the Findlay affiliate has been in operation. We are grateful that our service projects build friendship among us while providing assistance to organizations doing important work in the region where we meet.

We listened to the work of our task force on sexual abuse policy with appreciation for the care they have taken in considering a topic that often elicits deeply emotional responses. They presented us with a clear framework for further discernment of what we need to do to achieve a balance of safety and freedom for our young people and those who work with them. We are mindful of how far our meeting has come from our first pain-driven responses when we heard of an incident of sexual abuse among us. This led us to form the task force, and we are grateful for this opportunity to demonstrate our way of showing true friendship.

We heard of the sad duty of Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting as it confronts the need to lay down the Friends School in Detroit. After 50 years of service to the Detroit community, the school has become financially unsustainable. This has been a source of friction for some time among the Michigan Friends who make up the quarter. The closing of a school is always emotional, always personal. We share in their sense of loss, for this school has been much loved and admired. But Friends in Michigan have shown their understanding of the deeper meaning of friendship as they’ve reached unity on this difficult matter.

Our plenary speaker, Merry Stanford, was no stranger to us, having served as clerk of our meeting and made countless other contributions. She delivered a wonderful address on “Unconventional Joy: The Scandalous Ministry of Befriending.” Her talk was a far-ranging meditation on friendship and the power it has to create true community. At times her talk was deeply intimate and personal as Merry shared with us five “teachers,” incidents in her life that have shown her the folly of carrying “20-ton shields” called perfectionism, timidity, righteousness and strong desire intended to fend off “the other.” She reminded us how scandalous it was when early Friends refused to carry the 20-ton shields of the day, such as by not taking off their hats, according equal status to men and women, and inviting men and women of disparate classes to worship together. Merry led us deep into the science of the brain and its structure as she showed the intimate power of neural networks we are only beginning to understand and challenged us to use the scandalous, barrier-breaking power of friendship to multiply the networks of friendship among us in our meetings and in the wider world.

Merry reminded us that as Friends we have adequate desire for peace but inadequate skills, and that for the very survival of our species we must see others as of “our tribe.” This means we are required to be unilaterally vulnerable by opening ourselves to the other, for which we need the support of a spiritual practice. As we become more inwardly spacious, she promised, we will be able to extend our loving gaze to everyone.

Our Bible study and worship sharing groups helped us to grow our understanding of Jesus’ command to live as Friends and more deeply appreciate how friendships have changed our understanding of the world. Our time reflecting on John 15:9-17 has renewed our commitment to the charge set forth in verse 12: “My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.”

The rich programming offered this year included packets of actual seeds, which we have given each other

as tokens of the friendships we have sown together. We trust we've also begun to sow seeds that will grow rich conversations in our meetings about topics like white privilege, how to develop social change ministry, how Friends can support prison outreach, and how we can work to address the pressing concern of global climate change. We are grateful to our presenters for challenging us to bring our faith into action. As we begin plans for the coming year, we are challenged by Ministry and Nurture, who offered a query that will call our meetings and each of us as Friends to examine current events as they pertain to racial justice and police killings and to respond as meetings and as individuals.

With gratitude for the enduring witness to the power of friendship that is the Religious Society of Friends, Sally Weaver Sommer, clerk

### **YM15-36 Youth Epistles**

With delight, we heard the reports and epistles from the elementary school, middle school, and high school programs. The elementary children's program included an Earthcare recycling project. They shared their pictures of recycling and shared their favorite activities at annual meeting which included sleeping, the playground, bowling, swimming, the rock maze, being with the kids, and recycling.

### **Middle School Epistle**

#### **Friday**

It was the first official day of LEYM, and the first thing we wanted to do was go on a hike to the Swinging Bridge, fleeing from mosquitoes. And when we were heading back, we sat on the porch of a farmhouse, with the owner's permission, and read the Parable of the Sower from the Bible (read by Jonah's impersonation of Morgan Freeman), and talked about how it related to seeds of friendship. When we arrived back at the Ramseyer lounge, we taught each other to create "rainbow loom" friendship bracelets, and some people made origami paper cranes and flying carpets. After lunch, as some kids went bowling, some stayed to make the bracelets and chat about friendship at the lounge. At dinner, the middle school group, as always, ate a lot of ice cream, and afterward we listened to the wonderful speech given by Merry Stanford about the possible false assumptions of our view of the world.

#### **Saturday**

After breakfast on Saturday, we headed towards the Bluffton farmer's market and the thrift store. When we arrived back at the Ramseyer main lounge, we learned about the tragedy of the commons, the situation where people would use up all of owned land resources due to increased greed and competition, represented with a hilarious play. Then Kate Engler helped us prepare for the talent show with round singing. Lunch followed with more ice cream, and then swimming at the swimming pool in town. We all agreed that the major highlights were the diving boards and the water slide. Dinner was next, and while we were waiting for the talent show to begin, some of us played air hockey and pool. For the talent show, the members of the middle school group that were in the talent show sang, danced, and played musical instruments. After the talent show, some of us gathered in our lounge for a sleepover party that included popcorn, Picwits, and sleep.

It is agreed that the friendship flower of LEYM's bloom time lasts for these past 4 days every year.

### **Epistle from the Teens of LEYM**

Sowing the seeds of friendship. This was our theme for LEYM 2015, and we took it to heart. Not only did we strengthen old friendships, we also formed several new ones. Between shared programs with the middle-schoolers and a visiting Friend from Brazil, we made many new connections. Nutella and pretzels features prominently (as per usual) and many attempts were made to drag an increasingly hyper Norma away from the ice-cream machine.

Mary's plenary spoke of a "20-ton shield" which many people seem to create in order to protect themselves from possible embarrassment. This was an image and situation many of us could appreciate. We also met with the Earthcare committee, who taught us about what they name "the Tragedy of the Commons." This parable speaks of how shared responsibilities often become depleted because so many people are eager to pull all they can from these resources and don't stop to consider the needs of others.

We found a new swimming location, although Emma was the only one who could get down the water slide

with any speed. Most of us wish to return to Twin Lakes. To wrap up the weekend, we enjoyed the talents of f/Friends both young and old, at our annual talent show.

Wiebke Charlot, Noah Malia, Wynston Peters, Emma Seif, and 讲诺

### **YM15-37 Reports Received**

#### **Olney Friends School**

July 31, 2015

Dear Lake Erie Yearly Meeting Friends,

Olney Friends School has had an active and eventful school year. Many changes have the school anticipating the upcoming academic year, starting with changes at the top.

Head of School, Charlie Szumilas, has retired to the great Northwest. Continuing his progress is Ken Hinshaw, Olney alumnus from the class of '74, and former head of school at Scattergood Friends School. Ken is now spearheading several initiatives: a new and updated website that is set to launch before the opening of the 2015-16 school year; USDA Organic Certification for the entire campus; a new approach to admissions outreach with the Olney Ambassador program; and much more.

One of the largest initiatives is an advancement of the school curriculum, which will consist of project-based work called "endeavors" that incorporate multidisciplinary skills. For example, each student will compose "An Owner's Guide to Oneself", in which students determine how they learn, how they study and strategies they can use that will work best for them as individuals. Although Olney maintains its accreditation by the Independent Schools Association of the Central States, as a private school it is not burdened with the standardized testing which has hampered so many public schools. This gives Olney the flexibility to be creative, innovative and holistic in its schooling. The results are evident, as 100% of students who were eligible to return have chosen to do so.

While those close to Olney have long known its many special gifts, it is now getting some recognition in wider circles. Niche.com rated Olney as the third-best private school in the state of Ohio.

Olney provides students with a connection to community, nature, and themselves, and the LEYM support of Olney is well-placed.

Respectfully submitted,  
Greg Mott (Broadmead)

#### **AFSC Annual Meeting**

A March blizzard shut down much of the east coast and left travelers stranded all over the country. At Detroit Metro, oddly, several AFSC-bound Quakers found one another and eventually arrived in Philadelphia together for the annual Corporation Meeting. The Corporation is a large group representing a broad spectrum of American Quakers and it serves as a channel for Friends' concerns and a source of guidance for a large and very busy organization. LEYM appoints several representatives who serve three-year terms. Despite the necessary cancellation of Thursday night's program due to the snow, approximately 100 Friends attended from as far away as Alaska Yearly Meeting and several foreign countries.

Phil Lord presided as Clerk. General Secretary Shan Cretin noted that while AFSC was formed to provide alternatives to military service, AFSC has never been a substitute for individual witness. She described two themes identified in recent strategic plans: engaging youth in spiritually grounded work for social change in their communities; and changing the narrative about war and violence. This year's theme was "Radical Hospitality: Working for Immigrant Justice."

Friends Relations Committee Clerk Doug Bennett described volunteer opportunities for Friends within and partnering with AFSC, including service on governance committees, volunteer work for AFSC programs, and the emerging Quaker activist/partner role. Your LEYM representatives would welcome the opportunity to speak with F/Friends about ways to become actively involved in the operation of AFSC on a national, regional or local level. Please contact one of us with your questions.

A new AFSC initiative being piloted this year is *Small Group Social Change Ministry*. A small group of four to eight meets regularly throughout the year for worship sharing, and spiritual growth with a focus on concretely impacting one identified social concern. This new model of engagement works through “accompanying” and partnering with disenfranchised others in the community.

Each day of the Corporation meeting involved Meeting for Business, afternoon workshops, and stimulating evening plenaries. Afternoon workshops showcased some of AFSC’s programs including “Shared Security,” “Mass Incarceration,” and “Immigrant Justice.” The workshop “Palestinian Fragmentation and Movers” brought three young Palestinian women to describe the pervasive corrosive effects of fragmenting and isolating populations of Palestinians. Travel between or out of tightly controlled areas is at best difficult and often impossible. Friends were urged to support Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) as a means of promoting meaningful change and human rights. One of the Palestinian youth, who is from Gaza, described AFSC’s work as unique in the region. She told us that while other organizations provide specific kinds of humanitarian assistance, she was happily surprised that AFSC is willing to talk about those things that matter most to her and other Palestinians. AFSC is the “one organization that cares for my dreams and aspirations and supports communication with my history and my land.”

Speakers at the evening plenary session vivified the current work of AFSC in the decades-long struggle for immigrant rights. Immigrant youth brilliantly expressed their experiences in poetry using bilingual spoken word and visual art including large murals. We heard their stories of struggle against poverty, family separations, violence, and indifferent or hostile officials. We heard the importance of listening to their authentic voices to change the narrative and change the culture.

An interesting change for next year's Corporation meeting involves opening up all of the sessions to any who wish to attend. This will expand Quakers' access to AFSC information and stimulating workshop programs beyond just the Corporation and the Board of Directors. A wonderful source of inspiration and information continues to be AFSC's *Acting in Faith* e-newsletter and podcasts. As an organization, AFSC has renewed its commitment to connecting with F/friends around the country through its Meeting Liaison Program which identifies one person in each Meeting who acts as a contact and conduit. Could this be YOU for your Meeting? Your LEYM representatives to AFSC again welcome your thoughts and questions.

Respectfully submitted,  
John Deikis, Ann Arbor Friends Meeting  
Joann Neuroth, Red Cedar Friends Meeting

### **YM15-38 Close**

The annual sessions closed for the year.

Submitted by Sally Weaver Sommer, Presiding Clerk,  
Nancy Reeves, Recording Clerk

## **Committee Reports Referred to in Minutes**

### **Sexual Abuse Task Force Report**

June, 2015

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting intends to provide for our young Friends a recurring community in which opportunities abound for authentic intra- and intergenerational relationships full of spontaneity, warmth, trust, curiosity, reflection and joy. To do that, we realize we must provide some clear safety boundaries and expectations within which both children and adults can be freed from worry or wariness about potential abusive behavior of any kind and also about being falsely accused. For trust of the kind we envision to flourish, we need to take care to create an environment that eliminates unnecessary risks and dangers. To that end, the committee named below has been asked by Clerk Sally Weaver Sommer to consider whether and how our existing policies should be revised.

We note that LEYM's current policy addresses how an incident of suspected abuse should be handled and reported, but does not establish any practices designed to minimize the risk of its happening. We believe that some additional practices could substantively reduce the potential for abuse.

After reviewing policies developed (or under development) by Friends General Conference, Ann Arbor MM, Kalamazoo MM and Pittsburg MM as well as others from Pima, AZ and Wellsley, MA, we are united in our sense that a Yearly Meeting policy should be developed which includes elements listed below. We intend to test that sense during this year's annual session. We are willing, if Way opens, to draft such a policy, incorporating feedback that is gathered during the session.

We appreciate your thoughtful consideration of these ideas.

Claire Cohen (Pittsburgh)  
Flo Friender (Kalamazoo)  
Susan Hartman (Ann Arbor)  
Joann Neuroth (Red Cedar)  
Robb Yurisko (North Columbus)

**Principles which should be incorporated** into a written Yearly Meeting policy designed to balance safety and freedom for both young Friends and the adults who work with them:

**An educational session about sexual abuse should be presented annually as a required preparation for anyone who will be working with the young Friends program.**

1. Volunteers who work with young Friends should participate before beginning each year's program in an educational session that matter-of-factly outlines the risk of various kinds of abuse (intentional or otherwise), why these strategies have been designed to mitigate those risks, and the importance of being able to talk frankly about situations that don't feel right.

Attendees to Yearly Meeting sessions all should get a brief explanation of our practices and an invitation to attend this session in their orientation materials.

RATIONALE: Done well, such a session can help shift the topics of safety, abuse and sexuality out of the realm of hushed dread and unspoken fear into the matter-of-fact domain of known risks that can be managed and avoided. Asking people to repeat this (short) presentation regularly ensures that everyone involved during a given year has the same information from the same source.

2. Volunteers who work with young Friends should be currently approved caregivers in a LEYM Monthly Meeting with a caregiver safety policy or else should agree to have LEYM ask for a reference from the clerk or a designee of their Monthly Meeting.

The form that Ann Arbor Meeting uses for reference checks adapts three questions from the FGC process. We believe these would be good for LEYM to use as well:

- A. How long has the applicant been an active member/attender of the Meeting or Quaker Organization?
- B. Do you believe your Meeting or Quaker Organization has a sufficiently close relationship with the applicant that you would know if there was reason to be concerned about their working with children?
- C. Do you or the Meeting or Quaker Organization have any knowledge about the applicant that would suggest she/he would be inappropriate as a youth and child care worker?

RATIONALE: Formally establishing the connections which give us confidence in the character and intentions of all people to whom we entrust our children ensures that a relative stranger does not become part of the teaching team merely because it would seem awkward to ask for "credentials" for someone we don't know as well.

3. At a minimum, two volunteers who have completed the preparation described in #1 and #2 above should always be with any group of children under LEYM's care.

RATIONALE: The presence of two sets of caregiver eyes at all times helps ensure not only doubled awareness of what is going on, but also increased availability of listening ears in case a child wants to talk about something that leaves them uneasy. It also provides the adults involved with a witness in case of potential accusations of abusive behavior.

4. Everyone involved in LEYM Young Friends' programs - adult volunteers and participating children - should agree to stay within sight of the group at all times.

This means that no two people are ever alone together behind a closed door. This doesn't preclude in-depth, one-on-one conversations; it just means that they happen in sight of other people. This safety practice should

be included among other expectations that are matter-of-factly established and regularly reinforced with participating young Friends. For example:

- a. We play safely and peacefully at all times.
- b. We use kind words to everyone.
- c. We listen to adult directions the first time asked.
- d. Keep hands and feet to ourselves. Check to be sure it's ok before touching someone.
- e. We stay within sight of the rest of the group at all times.
- f. We tell an adult if we are uncomfortable with anything another person says to us or does to us.

RATIONALE: This agreement keeps the young Friends' community a public one, thus minimizing opportunities for either adult-with-child or child-with-child abusive behavior. Including the safety practice among other expectations keeps it matter-of-fact, minimizing fear-based warnings.

### Frequently Asked Questions

1. Won't this chill the recruitment of volunteers for the kids program?

*It's possible -- some meetings have experienced having adults who find this much "checking" intrusive and choose not to participate as adult volunteers. We hope that many of us will be willing to do the preparation necessary and volunteer for the young Friends' program when we understand how essential this is to establishing the trust needed for successful relationships with kids.*

2. Where do we get the "staff" time required to do all these checks and prepare the educational session etc.?

*As always, LEYM will depend on volunteers. Materials are available from several sources (FGC and Monthly Meetings) for a solid, introductory presentation. A PowerPoint and supporting materials could be developed once as part of the policy development that the committee stands ready to undertake. Obtaining references will definitely require some time on the part of each year's coordinator, though an on-going list could be maintained that carried over from year to year.*

3. What about an emergency that takes one of the two caregivers away?

*Yes, in fact there are many non-emergency tasks like bathroom visits, going to get supplies, searching for a parent or dealing with an injured child, which may also pull one of the caregivers to leave the group. We need to include specific expectations for what to do then in any final policy. We believe everyone will be safer if these practices are standard policy - even if thoughtful judgment leads to occasional brief exceptions.*

4. Why haven't you recommended criminal background checks? Many organizations are requiring them these days.

*The research we could find cited no evidence that criminal background checks actually decreased incidents of abuse. We believe them to be largely a result of insurance companies' efforts to reduce liability. Because we aren't compelled by insurance company directives, we believe we are free to use our best judgment. And we have more faith in the practices we propose above than we do in background checks (which vary from state to state, cover different data-bases, and may in fact give a pass to someone with very bad judgment about behavior).*

5. What about times when kids are between programs/buildings etcetera?

*Except during program time, children's safety remains their parents' responsibility. Parents may choose to advise their kids to stay in twos.*

### Ministry and Nurture Report

The Ministry and Nurture Committee has several charges. First, we administer the Ministry Scholarship Fund. Second, we hold the Spiritual Formation program under our care. Third, we collect and assess the annual State of the Meeting Reports. And fourth, we craft an annual query to be considered by Monthly Meetings and worship groups as an enrichment tool.

### **Ministry Scholarship Fund**

This year, we received no requests for funds. We encourage Friends who are following a leading that may be aided by scholarship funds to bring it to their Monthly Meeting; after seasoning, the Monthly Meeting may then bring a request for a scholarship to this committee.

### **Spiritual Formation**

Mathilda Navias, clerk of the Spiritual Formation Committee, is not here with us this year, but she shared her report with Ministry and Nurture, and I will give a synopsis.

The Spiritual Formation theme last year was “The Gospel of John: Stories of What God’s Love Looks Like.” Eric Evans, leader of the retreat, was accompanied by a spiritual companion at each retreat. A total of 35 Friends participated in one or both retreats this year: 31 in the fall, and 16 in the spring. This is an increase over the past several years; there were 26 participants in 2013-14, and 30 participants in 2012-13. Evaluations filled out by the participants were overwhelmingly positive and indicated that the participants felt inspired and rewarded by the retreat material and the leader.

### **Finances**

Last year at LEYM Annual Sessions, the yearly meeting agreed that money from LEYM for the Spiritual Formation program can henceforward be used without restrictions, while the amount of LEYM’s annual contribution was raised to \$800.

The Planning Committee took a fresh approach to setting fees. In the past, there was a set fee for attending the retreats with a deep discount offered for couples. This year, while we raised fees, we also gave participants information about how much the program actually costs and then asked them to decide what they could afford. That might be more, or less, than the full program cost. The full cost figures were based on an assumption that we would have a certain number of participants.

We gave two suggested payments: enough to cover the full cost of \$190 a person for both retreats; and a minimum fee of \$150 for those who couldn’t afford the full amount. There was the option of making an additional contribution to support others. There was a \$20 discount for first-time attenders and couples. We encouraged Friends to request help from their Monthly Meeting and then from the program if they needed assistance, and proceeded in faith that by the end of the program year the costs would be covered. A number of people made contributions and we did cover costs, so we are continuing with the same fee structure next year. Responses to the new fee structure were all positive.

The theme for the coming year is “Experiment with Light.” Experiment with Light is a practice originating with Rex Ambler, a British Friend. The practice involves a guided meditation based on advice George Fox gave to early Friends in his epistles. The leader for the retreats, found through FGC’s Traveling Ministries Program, is JoAnn Seaver from Philadelphia, who will be accompanied by her husband as her spiritual companion.

The fall retreat will be held September 11-13, 2015, at the Weber Retreat Center in Adrian, Michigan. The spring retreat will be May 14, 2016. The committee has brought flyers and brochures for Friends at the annual sessions.

Mathilda’s complete report for Spiritual Formation follows this report.

### **State of the Meeting Reports**

M&N received State of the Meeting reports from 15 Monthly Meetings and no worship groups. As we read the reports, we noted some challenges in our meetings, but we also noted many strengths and growth. There was general expression of the loving, caring, supportive experience of Friends in their Meetings for Worship, which is treasured both by members and new attenders. Some indicated increased and uplifting vocal ministry; others found the silence in their Meeting to be quite powerful.

About half of the meetings identified themselves as small meetings. Because of this some have combined committees and decreased the frequency of committee meetings. One quite small Meeting wrote “we intend to carry on as best we are able.” Yet some of these small meetings are celebrating new attenders and members, and some are involved in outreach. First Day School is difficult to maintain in small Meetings but some provide for it once a month. One report spoke of “sadness at sporadic attendance of children and youth.”

Several experienced the death of long time members and one is planning a memorial garden on their property. Some larger Meetings celebrate growth in attenders and members as well as young families with children. Some described vibrant, well-staffed First Day Schools and intergenerational activities which enhance the well-being and enliven the spirit of the Meeting as a whole. In one Meeting an Adult Young Friends group is active and involved in staffing First Day School. Many describe rich Adult Religious Education programs. Several report annual Meeting Retreats.

All report meaningful Meetings for Worship for Business, and one identified the importance of the situation at Friends School as of great concern. Most report sound finances though it is a struggle for some. A few Meetings have approved Child Safety Policies. Several have active Spiritual Formation groups which enhance the spiritual well-being of their Meeting. Two Meetings find the regular Meeting for Healing to nurture and sustain the body. Several Meetings have hosted Quaker groups or representatives of Quaker organizations or brought in Quaker resource people for workshops.

Several Meetings describe ongoing weekly or monthly worship sharing groups, forums on topics such as death and dying/aging in the Light, use of *Friends Journal* articles for group reflection, workshops on conflict resolution and white privilege, learning reflective listening.

A few Meetings need to move to a different location and find that challenging, while others have needed to repair a Meeting House.

A few Meetings wrote very candidly of some extremely difficult issues and holding special meetings to gain Spirit leading in how to move forward in kind and loving ways. Some of these involve difficult relationships within the Meeting and mental illness. (A query this Meeting identified to help focus is “What are our values as Quakers and as a Meeting and how do we live our values when one member’s behavior presents a barrier to the spiritual nourishment of others?”) Another issue involves relationships with community youth using Meeting property in inappropriate ways.

Most describe action in the larger world toward social and environmental justice. To name a few:

- supporting antiracism coalition’s interfaith gathering and partnership
- withdrawing investments in PNC Bank because of their support of mountain top removal
- vigils re: Black Lives Matter and shooting deaths in Charleston, S.C.
- supporting center for non-violence
- providing for emergency needs for food supplies and hot meals
- learning about and keeping Meeting informed about Palestine/Israel issues
- hosting AFSC’s Eyes Wide Open exhibit
- establishing a Carbon Footprint fund so Friends can contribute to offset costs of carbon use
- attending to making Meeting House more energy efficient
- filing an amicus brief for a Supreme Court case on same-sex marriage
- bringing awareness to Meeting of “glaring inequalities and racism” in our country
- seeking to discern how to identify “communal witness - a shared community concern that can be taken up by all that are able”
- seeking to walk gently on our planet
- writing letters to editors re: police killings of black men and women

Our actions as Friends grow out of our spiritual communities, where support of individual and communal spiritual journeys are treasured. Such love and support led one meeting in particular to refer to these as being “one of the key insights of the Quaker way: that faithful presence, openness to new light, and deep trust are required to discern the Spirit’s leading.” As one meeting summed up, “Sometimes, we do feel that ‘Christ has come to teach his people Himself.’”

The M&N Committee has enjoyed reading all of the details of these reports. Many contain items that are of interest to all meetings. We encourage all Friends and meetings to take the time to read all of the reports.

### **Annual Query 2015**

*For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; I was naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me.*  
(Matthew 25:35-36, Jerusalem Bible)

How might our meeting support individuals and the meeting as a whole in working to increase racial justice within our world? In what ways do we as a Meeting recognize white privilege in our own Meeting? What tools and practices do we use to foster awareness of our personal and corporate biases?

## Spiritual Formation Report

The theme for the 2014-15 program was “The Gospel of John: Stories of What God’s Love Looks Like.” We held a weekend retreat in the fall at the Columbiere Retreat & Conference Center in Clarkston, MI, and a Saturday retreat in the spring hosted by Birmingham and Detroit Friends. The leader was Eric Evans, who was accompanied by a spiritual companion at each retreat.

There were a total of 35 participants in all plus the leaders; 31 in the fall, and 16 in the spring. They were from 9 meetings: 6 in Michigan (Ann Arbor, Birmingham, Detroit, Grand Rapids, Pine River, & Red Cedar), and 3 groups in Ohio (Broadmead, Delaware, and Waysmeet WG). Last year, we had a total of 26 participants; the previous year we had 30.

The Planning Committee took a fresh approach to setting fees. In the past, there was a set fee for attending the retreats with a deep discount offered for couples. This year, while we raised fees, we also gave participants information about how much the program actually costs and then asked them to decide what they could afford. That might be more, or less, than the full program cost. The full cost figures were based on an assumption that we would have a certain number of participants.

We gave two suggested payments: enough to cover the full cost of \$190 a person for both retreats; and a minimum fee of \$150 for those who couldn't afford the full amount. There was the option of making an additional contribution to support others. There was a \$20 discount for first-time attenders and couples. We encouraged Friends to request help from their Monthly Meeting and then from the program if they needed assistance, and proceeded in faith that by the end of the program year the costs would be covered. A number of people made contributions and we did cover costs, so we are continuing with the same fee structure next year.

The evaluations filled out at the fall retreat indicated the following:

- Most Friends came to the retreat because they were interested in the Biblical material, in the leaders, and/or being with the other participants. Some came because the retreat is the beginning of the spiritual formation year.
- Many found the story-telling approach to Bible study useful as well as the invitation to hold the stories lightly.
- Responses to the new fee structure were all positive.
- Friends’ responses to Eric Evans’s leadership were wonderfully positive.

In the evaluations, Friends wrote:

- “This was an inspired choice. I’m very grateful to the committee for this experience.”
- “It was an amazing experience on a deep level. The questions we were asked to consider were totally relevant.”
- “I don’t get to meeting very often and I like to be with other Quakers.”
- “Openings, new ways of thinking cracked open.”
- “How on earth do you keep coming up with good retreats?”

The evaluations from the spring retreat showed that Friends really, really liked it and got a lot out of it. People really liked Eric, his gentle but firm and clear leadership, and the careful preparation he had done. Some comments:

- “The day was something I needed in every way.”
- “It forced me to confront various issues.”
- “I didn’t expect to get so much out of Bible study - but it was very worthwhile.”
- “I thought the leadership was *wonderful*.”

Of Eric’s leadership:

- “Joyful, thoughtful, engaged and engaging. Kind and loving, well prepared and knowledgeable ... willing to be vulnerable.”

## **2015-2016 Year**

The theme for the coming year is “Experiment with Light”. Experiment with Light is a practice originating with Rex Ambler, a British Friend. The practice involves a guided meditation based on advice George Fox gave to early Friends in his epistles. The leader for the retreats, found through FGC's Traveling Ministries Program, is JoAnn Seaver from Philadelphia, who will be accompanied by her husband as her spiritual companion.

The fall retreat will be held September 11-13, 2015, at the Weber Retreat Center in Adrian, Michigan. The spring retreat will be May 14, 2016. We encourage members of LEYM Ministry & Nurture to participate in the program.

## **News**

Last year at LEYM Annual Sessions, the yearly meeting agreed that money from LEYM for the Spiritual Formation program can henceforward be used without restrictions, while the amount of LEYM's annual contribution was raised to \$800.

We have worked hard to bring new Friends onto the Planning Committee. We are being joined this fall by Karen Hooker of Red Cedar Meeting, Rebecca Hatton of Ann Arbor Meeting, and Ellerie Brownfain of Birmingham Meeting. Mathilda Navias continues as clerk of the committee, along with Aran Reinhart and Paula Deming, who serves as liaison with Ministry & Nurture.

Mathilda Navias  
Clerk, Spiritual Formation Planning Committee

## **Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting State of the Meeting Report 2015**

The past year has been a both joyous and heart-wrenching experience for Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting. It is marked with both growth and change.

Ellerie Brownfain agreed to continue as clerk of the Meeting for the year. Mary Takahashi was unable to assume the position due to the death of her husband Kyo in August and subsequent relocation to Corvallis, Oregon in January. A memorial service, coordinated by Birmingham and Pine River Friends Meetings, was held for Kyo on November 16, 2014 at the Birmingham Unitarian Church. Over 60 people were in attendance, including some who flew in from Japan to honor Kyo's work in designing a logo for All Nippon Airways. Green Pastures mourns Kyo's passing and wishes Mary much love and support in this new phase of her life.

Green Pastures took on a number of challenges at Meeting for Business during the year. Increasing attendance to and participation in Quarterly Meeting has been a concern this year and last. The Quarter has had difficulty in finding people to serve on various committees and offices, particularly in planning programs and to serve as clerk. In Spring 2014, an ad hoc Envisioning Committee was formed to investigate what might encourage Friends to be more active in the Quarter. Over the summer, the committee surveyed meetings and worship groups, asking such questions as to whether people attended Quarterly Meeting and how often, what drew them to attend, what types of activities and functions were of most interest, what their understanding was of the Quarter's oversight of three Quaker organizations in the region, and what they envisioned for a more enticing gathering. The Envisioning made the following recommendations at the Fall Meeting for Business based on survey and personal conversations:

- Restrict business to a half day at the spring and fall meetings, with programming, service opportunities, and/or fellowship filling the other portion of the day. Ideally, this additional programming would call on “in-house” resources and talent found within GPQM.
- Obtain regular written reports from Friends Lake, AFSC/AA, and the Friends School rather than hearing verbal reports at each business meeting. A more in-depth educational program could occasionally be offered by Friends working with each of these organizations. This might be more engaging for Friends who attend the quarterly.
- Develop a children's program as an integral part of the programming. The program should offer more extensive activities/education than simply childcare.

- Have more frequent communication between the quarterly and the Monthly Meetings, so we are more visible and Friends know how to become engaged. Perhaps a newsletter.
- Designate a group to review the original bylaws and recommend any needed changes so that they conform to our practices.
- Clarify what “oversight” means, both legally and to the Quarter, in relationship to the Friends School, the Friends Center/Community, and the Ann Arbor AFSC.
- Allow the committee to continue its works, as suggested above.

The committee was approved to continue to explore ways in which the Quarter can nurture spiritual growth and fellowship amongst Friends and meetings.

Friends continued to struggle with the deteriorating financial situation at Friends School Detroit. An ad hoc committee was created to improve communications and transparency between the School board and the Quarter. Despite the work between the Quarter and the School board, the School's financial situation worsened over the school year. After much heart-rending discussion and worship at the Spring Meeting for Business, those present reached unity, with one person standing aside, and the following Minute was approved:

Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting deeply appreciates and wishes to honor the generous donations of time, effort, and financial support on the part of teachers, administration, the Board, parents, and students to educate the youth of Detroit over the past 50 years in the Quaker manner through Friends School in Detroit.

Unfortunately, under the present circumstances of the school, both in its financial and infrastructure deterioration, we are in unity that the Board [should] lay down (close) the school. It is our hope and expectation that this will be done following Quaker ethics and integrity.

Friends gathered in joyous worship, spiritual exploration and musical journey at the Winter Gathering on Sound Spirituality, hosted by Red Cedar Friends Meeting in Lansing. The retreat was lead by Mike Green, a member of Durham (NC) Monthly Meeting and a core teacher at the School of the Spirit's program *On Being a Spiritual Nurturer*. Mike was accompanied by his wife, Marsha, as his elder and piano companion. Even those who considered themselves musically challenged became musicians in spirit for the weekend.

*Green Pastures will continue to provide spiritual support and oversight for the AFSC chapter in Ann Arbor, its Michigan Criminal Justice Program, and the Michigan Friends Center, as well as spiritual and intellectual nourishment and resources for the 8 meetings and 3 worship groups within the Quarter. It will also continue creating opportunities for building stronger spiritual bonds and relationships among Friends.*

The most current financial situation for the School is as follows:

- The current enrollment at the school is 84 students.
- The total outstanding amount for unemployment taxes and liabilities is currently \$61,000.
- Unpaid utility charges total \$87,500.
- The mortgage (which the School has again stopped paying) is \$502,000 plus interest and foreclosure appears imminent.
- Second mortgages, held mainly by Quaker lenders, total \$80,000 plus possible interest.
- Faculty and staff are owed \$88,000 in unpaid payroll.
- Loans from members of the board, parents and a previous private lender \$85,000.
- We have an unpaid insurance deductible claim of \$5,000 outstanding.
- The acting head of the school believes that miscellaneous unpaid bills add up to another \$5,000.
- The current total of outstanding/unpaid debt exceeds \$913,500.

Tuition income to the end of the year will amount to approximately \$54,718 but the remaining salary expenses, including taxes, will be about \$140,000.

Friends School in Detroit has gone through several periods of uncertainty and some of relative stability. At the moment, it is deeply in debt. There are possible solutions on the table.

The most recent information we have (as of 11 April 2015) about the future of the school are these:

- The MDOT purchase of the school's building for the Detroit Meeting
  - The school proposed a \$1.2 million sale price to cover the most of the debt and to bring the building up to code
  - MDOT has neither accepted nor rejected the request although there is anticipation that information will be forthcoming this month
- If MDOT agrees to the amount as proposed, the Detroit Monthly Meeting will need to come to unity on moving forward with FSD as a possible tenant. The board has agreed to list the building for sale and if the MDOT sale does not go through, the proceeds from the sale will be used to pay debts.
- There is a possibility that works of art will be offered for sale by James Turrell to help pay the debts and the estimates indicate the benefit to the school could be six figures
- The board is also considering a move to a shared space with mid-town Montessori. It is exploring the cost of rental and moving and if enough parents would move with the school or if new parents would enroll
- Finally, the school could sell the building, pay its debts and close either temporarily or permanently
- Draft budgets and planning for each of the above options is underway

The ad hoc study group mentioned above identified some changes to board process that can be instituted that would help going forward if the school were to remain open in some form.

- Accurate and timely financial records

Respectfully submitted by Ellerie Brownfain  
Clerk, Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting

## Friends School in Detroit Report

July 31, 2015

At the September 2014 session of Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting held at Friends School, Friends School in Detroit reported as follows:

- The School opened this September with an enrollment of 82 students, 17 faculty members and an average annual tuition payment of \$ 6,500. Roof and kitchen repairs are in progress.
- A draft income statement for the preceding school year showed net loss of approximately \$213,776 for the fiscal year ending 6/2014. The school has not had a bookkeeper since the previous July and Trustees and Assistant Clerk, Joan Sampieri, had been managing the bookkeeping although the school's inability to provide accurate and timely records made this task difficult.
- Trustee Toby Barlow observed that the upcoming 50th anniversary of the school provided an opportunity to raise the school's visibility -- to potential parents, to the Detroit business community and to national Quaker organizations. He believes the school has a fantastic story to tell, especially in the current renewal climate of Detroit.

The Quarterly Meeting expressed appreciation for the dedication and effort of current and former Board members and school staff in maintaining the school. Two continuing members of the Board of Trustees of Friends School in Detroit were approved for additional three year terms: *Jane Fran Morgan* and *Mark Thames*.

At the same session, Susan Hartman read a "Draft Guidelines" document from the ad hoc study group for the Quarter's relationship with Friends School in Detroit. Members of the study group are: Ellerie Brownfain, Jeff Cooper, Susan Hartman, Mike Holladay, and Linda Mills. Friends approved continuing the process begun by the ad hoc study group, taking into account the views expressed about ways to bring the process forward with the School's Board of Trustees.

Throughout the fall and winter several fundraisers garnered less support than had been hoped and the school's financial position worsened. However, the Detroit Friends Meeting indicated that in a proposed purchase of its current site by the Michigan Department of Transportation, the Meeting might consider the purchase of the Friends School property and site its Meeting at the School. In addition, Quaker artist James Turrell took an interest in the school's continued existence and began to look for ways to help through donations of works of art.

In May of 2015, at the request of the Quarterly Meeting, Joan Samperi as Assistant Clerk of the Friends School in Detroit presented the following updated report:

- Although the board requested that a bookkeeper be hired, none ever was.
- There are no financial statements and haven't been since September, which has made decision-making problematic.
- Training for incoming clerks on Quaker decision-making process
- Annual training for all board members in the role of the board
  - To meet the budget in the past, critical positions (bookkeeper and business manager) were cut.
  - To keep costs down, a full-time director of development was not hired

These and other shortcuts meant that board members often took on the role of staff and did not attend to the critical strategic and oversight responsibilities that have led to hurried decisions, not enough important information, and a level of frustration for everyone involved. The Board of Trustees developed a plan for continuing a Friends school in Detroit at the School's present location and shared it at an informal listening at the School in late June of 2015 with more than 20 Friends from Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting in attendance. The plan consisted of:

- Establishing a new "interim" corporation with its own Board of Trustees to operate the School next year for a short-term while the debt of the current corporation (Friends School in Detroit) is paid. This will help protect the current corporation from any legal or fiscal responsibility associated with the school moving forward.
- To continue operating as a Quaker school, efforts are underway to identify individuals to serve on the Board of this new corporation. A significant number of the new Board members of the new corporation will be Quakers from the Detroit Monthly Meeting. As Quakers, they will advocate and be ambassadors of the school's Quaker identity.
- Proceeds of the sale of James Turrell's art work will go to the current corporation to pay off the school's debt. It is anticipated that this will occur over the next six months, with a formal letter of commitment coming in the next couple of weeks. Details of this contribution are being ironed out by Mr. Turrell's attorney. Additionally, a new Head of School or any new staff would not be hired until all outstanding pay to current faculty and staff has been paid. At that time, staff will be hired under the new corporation.
- When the debt is paid off, the interim corporation will be merged with the current corporation. The new Board will remain in control and, with the school's debt paid, the Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting will have no further legal connection to the school.

The Quarter made no decisions at the meeting except to recommend to those interested in going forward gather a specific, written proposal from James Turrell and a new corporation formed. Once those steps were taken, the Quarter could more fully address the proposal.

At the July 16, 2015 Board of Trustees meeting a draft of a letter from James Turrell was presented for review. An attorney for the Board members wishing to continue a Friends school recommended that the bylaws be re-written to remove the Quarterly Meeting from its responsibilities, rather than having to form a new corporation. This would avoid the cost and delay of obtaining charitable status and becoming state certified as a private school. At the meeting, it was reported that Urban Partnership Bank had scheduled a foreclosure sale on August 27th, and the Board then approved entering into a listing agreement to sell the school's property.

Respectfully yours,  
Ellerie Brownfain

## Treasurer's Report

### GENERAL FUND INCOME - 2014/2015 Fiscal Year

updated 6/30/15

Meeting (Giver)	Amount	Date		
Akron Friends Meeting	180.00	11-Aug		
Ann Arbor Friends Meeting	5,207.00	15-Jan		
Athens Friends Meeting	2,460.00	22-Sep		
Birmingham Friends Meeting	738.00	16-Dec		
Broadmead Friends Meeting	1,890.00	3-Feb		
Cleveland Friends Meeting	1,927.00	19-Mar		
Delaware Friends Meeting	492.00	18-Mar		
Detroit Friends Meeting	989.00	10-Nov		
Grand Rapids Friends Meeting	943.00	18-Feb		
Granville Friends Meeting	900.00	25-Aug		
Holland Friends Meeting	200.00	20-Mar		
Kalamazoo Friends Meeting	1,353.00	2-Mar		
Kent Friends Meeting	680.00	17-Nov		
Mid-Ohio Valley Friends Meeting	180.00	15-Jan		
North Columbus Friends Meeting	800.00	16-Dec		
Oberlin Friends Meeting	574.00	3-Nov		
Pine River Friends Meeting	615.00	16-Dec		
Pittsburgh Friends Meeting	5,658.00	12-Apr		
Red Cedar Friends Meeting	3,116.00	16-Dec		
Wooster Friends Meeting	600.00	5-Jan		
Individuals				
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,502.00</b>			
FFC Dividends, Base Account	955.94	30-Jun		
FFC change port value, + or -, Base Account	356.92	30-Jun		
			<b>Misc. Donat'ns &amp; In-Kind Income*</b>	<b>Total Cash plus In-Kind</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		30,814.86		30,814.86

\*Includes donations at annual sessions

LAKE ERIE YEARLY MEETING MINUTES  
ANNUAL SESSIONS JULY 30-AUGUST 2, 2015

**Individual Budget lines, 2014-2015 Budget Year**

ACCOUNT	BUDGET	ACTUAL EXPENSE	BUDGET %	In-kind & Restricted Donations	TOTAL EXPENSE	TOTAL BUDGET %
Travel	3000	3000	100%	1286.8	4286.8	143%
Office	50	48	96%		48	96%
Contract worker	2040	1638.19	80%		1638.19	80%
Finance <sup>2</sup>	50	11	22%		11	22%
Publications	3000	3083.21	103%		3083.21	103%
Advancement	600		0%		0	0%
Ministry & Nurture	300	-324.93	-108%		-324.93	-108%
Clerk	300		0%		0	0%
FGC	4500	4500	100%		4500	100%
Records project	100	100	100%		100	100%
FWCC Travel Fund <sup>1</sup>	2400	2400	100%		2400	100%
Youth Activities Fund <sup>1</sup>	1000	1000	100%		1000	100%
H. S. Teen Retreat Fund <sup>1</sup>	6300	6300	100%		6300	100%
Spiritual Formation Fund <sup>1</sup>	800	800	100%		800	100%
Friends School in Detroit	4500	4500	100%		4500	100%
Olney Friends School	600	600	100%		600	100%
Consultation Fund <sup>1</sup>	0				0	
Scholarship Fund for Ministry <sup>1</sup>	500	500	100%		500	100%
Summer Work Project	1200	1200	100%		1200	100%
Insurance	500	500	100%		500	100%
Sub-total	31,740.00	29,855.47		1,286.80	31,142.27	
Misc. <sup>3</sup>					0	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>31,740.00</b>	<b>29,855.47</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>1,286.80</b>	<b>31,142.27</b>	<b>98%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Subsidy from General Fund to other funds

<sup>2</sup> Includes banking costs

<sup>3</sup> FFC Dividends & portfolio value changes, formerly shown here are now on sheet 1

**Summary of Funds 2014-2015 Fiscal Year; as of 6/30/2015**

	Starting Balance	Income or Change	Subsidy from General Fund	Cash Expenses	End Balance
General Fund <sup>1</sup>	23746.74	30814.86		29855.47	24706.13
Granville Youth Fund <sup>2</sup>	7192.02	310.92		245.87	7257.07
Annual Meeting Fund <sup>3</sup>	1473.31	15530.41		14271.55	2732.17
Youth Activities Fund <sup>4 5</sup>	7092.37	1175.87	1000.00	2861.08	6407.16
High School Teen retreat Fund <sup>4</sup>	5773.30	215.00	6300.00	4213.91	8074.39
Spiritual Formation Fund <sup>4</sup>	1107.51	5335.00	800.00	4915.31	2327.20
FWCC Travel Fund <sup>4</sup>	2339.83		2400.00		4739.83
Consultation Fund <sup>4</sup>	3143.68				3143.68
Ministry Scholarship Fund <sup>4</sup>	1000.00		500.00		1500.00
Summer Work Project Fund <sup>4</sup>	100.00	975.00	1200.00	920.00	1355.00
Traveling Ministries Fund	3500.00				3500.00
Travel Contingency Fund <sup>4</sup>	3000.00			727.87	2272.13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>59468.76</b>	<b>54357.06</b>	<b>12200.00</b>	<b>58011.06</b>	<b>68014.76</b>

- 1 Includes line item accounting from Budget plus contributions; also reflects dividends and changes in net portfolio value, FFC base account
- 2 Granville Youth Fund is separate FFC account; 'Income or Change' reflects both dividend and change in portfolio value; 'Cash Expense' reflects dividends that have been paid and are then are transferred to Youth Activities Fund.
- 3 Income includes -0- in individual donations.
- 4 Other funds are managed through accounting and may be subsidized by the corresponding budget lines of the General Fund.
- 5 Income includes dividends from FFC Granville YF account.

## Finance Committee Report

Jeff Cooper reported.

Unlike in the past few years, all we are bringing today is a budget. The draft budget was presented at Representative Meeting, printed in the spring *Bulletin*, and, a few weeks ago, distributed to Monthly Meetings, along with a message noting three lines where changes from that budget might be expected. We now have recommended amounts for those lines, as well as changes in two other lines, the total of which results in surprisingly little change to the total expenses.

The changes are:

- 1) **Travel:** Added \$1000, reflecting actual expenses for last year.
- 2) **Publications & Archives:** At Representative Meeting, while we were in one corner of the room reducing that committee's budget line by \$600 to reflect actual spending, they were in another corner proposing to mail printed copies of the spring *Bulletin* to all households. This resulted in adding about \$900 in cost. P&A may wish to repeat this practice with the spring *Bulletin* next year, but apparently will not decide until Representative Meeting. We have added \$800 to the P&A budget line to cover this potential cost.
- 3) A new line: Since Representative Meeting we have received a request from **Michigan Friends Center** for a one-time \$1,000 contribution to support a building project to make the entranceway more welcoming and accessible to individuals with mobility issues, with the goal of increasing use of the building.

Michigan Friends Center is an independent non-profit facility for meetings, retreats, and community events on the grounds of Friends Lake, near Chelsea, Michigan. It is used by Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting, Ann Arbor Meeting, and community groups, and over the past few years has hosted a one-day retreat of the LEYM Spiritual Formation Group, a day for at least one LEYM teen retreat, and, this spring, one day of the Quaker Earthcare Witness steering committee meeting held in Ann Arbor.

The building project improvement plan was developed with the help of an architect and advice from disability advocates. It includes new and larger entrance decks with handrails, a cement ramp to an entrance, and an enlarged parking area with dedicated disability parking. The project, partly completed, is budgeted at \$16,000 to \$18,000. Both GPQM and AAFM have contributed \$1,000. As of the date of the request (May 25), MFC was embarking on a fundraising campaign with the aid of a \$5,000 donation of matching funds.

Finance Committee recommends this one-time contribution, especially because it would improve access for the physically disabled, while also recognizing that three-quarters of our small committee are Michigan Friends.

- 4) **Friends School in Detroit.** For the past many years our budget has included a contribution of \$4500 to FSD. Yesterday you heard a description of the bleak situation there. While we acknowledge the plea for continuing contributions to assist with the closing costs, we have also heard many Friends' desire to contribute mainly toward the payments owed to the teachers and staff, which will not likely happen with a contribution directly to the School. Hence we propose that we make no contribution to Friends School in Detroit. You will of course tell us if we are misreading the sense of the Meeting.

Yesterday Joe Mills expressed the hope that Green Pastures Quarterly might establish a fund to assist in payment of teachers and staff. If such a fund is established, we encourage donations to it from Friends individually or from Monthly Meetings or worship groups, and will happily help publicize this to Friends in the Yearly Meeting.

- 5) **Olney Friends School.** Because of our testimony on education, we propose increasing our contribution to Olney Friends School from \$600 to \$2,000. (This increase would remain in place only if we agree to discontinue our contribution to Friends School in Detroit.)

With these changes, the **total expenses** become \$24,500 (\$300 less than in the draft budget), enabling us to keep the draft budget's **suggested per-member contribution of \$32** (down from \$41 in the year just completed). This budget again has a slight deficit (\$410, or just over a third the size of last year's deficit) which, if need be, can be **covered through the General Fund.**

## LEYM 2015 - 2016 Budget

General Fund Expenses	FY 11-12	FY 2012 - 2013		FY 2013 -2014		FY 2014-2015	
	Act 11-12	Bud 12-13	Act 12-13	Bud 13-14	Act 13-14	Budget	ACTUAL 14-15
(* = transfers)							
Travel	2,961.97	6,000	3,972.64	5,000	1546.70	3,000	3000.00
Office	17.47	100	18.00	50	18.00	50	48.00
Contract worker	1,510.00	2,040	1,313.29	2,040	938.12	2,040	1638.19
Finance	59.77	210	229.75	50	40.40	50	11.00
Publications	2,940.49	3,400	3,371.43	3,200	2030.71	3,000	3083.21
Advancement	0.00	100	0.00	600	-175.77	600	
Ministry & Nurture	0.00	100	0.00	300	150.00	300	(324.93)
Clerk's Fund	0.00	300	27.00	300	0.00	300	
FGC	4,500.00	4,500	4,500.00	4,500	4,500.00	4,500	4,500.00
FGC - Special Program	500.00						
FWCC one-time donation	1,200.00						
Records project	100.00	100	0.00	200	200.00	100	100.00
FWCC Travel*	2,480.00	1,000	1,000.00	1,200	1200.00	2,400	2400.00
Youth Activity Fund*	0.00	1,000	1,000.00	1,000	1000.00	1,000	1000.00
High School Retreat Fund*	3,300.00	4,900	4,900.00	6,000	6000.00	6,300	6300.00
Spiritual Formation*	100.00	100	100.00	100	100.00	800	800.00
Friends School in Detroit	4,500.00	4,500	4,500.00	4,500	4500.00	4,500	4,500.00
Olney Friends School	600.00	600	600.00	600	600.00	600	600.00
Consultation Fund*	472.97	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	
Scholarship Fund for ministry*	1,000.00	1,500	1,500.00	1,000	1,000.00	500	500.00
Summer work project						1,200	1200.00
Insurance			500.00	500	500.00	500	500.00
Misc.	0.00	0	-1,212.83	0	-2357.70	0	
<b>Total Expense =</b>	<b>26,242.67</b>	<b>30,450</b>	<b>26,319.28</b>	<b>31,140</b>	<b>21,790.46</b>	<b>31,740</b>	<b>29,855.47</b>

MFC

FY 2015-2016	
BUDGET	CHANGE From 14-15
4000	1,000
50	0
2000	(40)
50	0
3200	200
100	(500)
100	(200)
300	0
4500	0
1000	1,000
100	0
1500	(900)
1000	0
1600	(4,700)
800	0
0	(4,500)
2000	1,400
0	0
500	0
1200	0
500	0
0	0
24500	(7,240)

Contributions Income	29,998.50		29,543.00	29,000	29,001.00	29,725	29,502.00
FFC Dividends Income					738.71	600	955.94
Other Income				250	4010.91	250	
<b>Total Income =</b>	<b>29,998.50</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>29,543.00</b>	<b>29,250</b>	<b>33,750.62</b>	<b>30,575</b>	<b>30,457.94</b>

23,040	(6,685)
1050	450
0	(250)
24,090	(6,485)

<b>Income - Expenses =</b>	<b>3,755.83</b>		<b>3,223.72</b>		<b>11,960.16</b>	<b>-1,165</b>	<b>602.47</b>
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<b>-410</b>	<b>755</b>
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Total Contribs / Members	\$40.05	\$40.60		\$40.00		\$41.00	
Members	760	\$750		725		725	
Suggested contribution/member	40	\$40		40		41	

32	(9)
720	(5)
32	(9)

BUDGET UNDERFUNDING. Balance, if needed, comes from General Fund.

## **Task Force on Advancement & Outreach and Ministry & Nurture Report**

**Conference call, July 18, 2015. Present: Mathilda Navias, Dolores Avner, Mike Holaday, Paula Deming, and Sally Weaver Sommer**

The task force was called together to discern how to move forward given the concerns about the functioning of Advancement and Outreach Committee [A&O] and suggestions about the responsibilities of A&O and Ministry & Nurture [M&N] committees that were expressed during the executive committee meeting in April 2015. We opened with worship sharing during which each person shared something s/he has been grateful for during the time since we were last together.

We considered helpful materials related to these two committees that Mathilda had sent us before our meeting from: *LEYM Policies and Procedures*, Baltimore Yearly Meeting *Manual of Procedure*, and Philadelphia Yearly Meeting *Faith & Practice*.

Members of the task force unite with the yearly meeting's leading to engage in advancement and outreach work, even as they recognize that in recent years it has been difficult to find people with the commitment and expertise to carry out the work. Mathilda shared that she is willing to serve on A&O. Sally will inform the clerk of nominating committee of Mathilda's willingness to serve and that task force members support her appointment.

Members of the task force thought it good to focus the A&O committee's charge on outreach and advancement, rather than nurture. The task force recommends changing the first responsibility listed in the current *LEYM Policies and Procedures Manual* for A&O (1.b (1)) from "Nurture and encourage small meetings, new Monthly Meetings, and worship groups by means of correspondence and personal visits" to "Encourage worship groups and new Monthly Meetings by means of correspondence and personal visits."

Members of the task force recognize that our *Policies and Procedures Manual* does not address the support of individuals with gifts in ministry. They recommend the following responsibility from Baltimore Yearly Meeting's *Manual of Procedure* be added to the responsibilities of the LEYM Ministry and Nurture Committee (6.b (6)):

- (6) Encourage and support Monthly Meetings as they recognize, publicly affirm, and practically support those individuals who exercise their gifts in faithful ministry. This includes but isn't limited to:
  - a. Preparing minutes for traveling ministers to be approved by the Yearly Meeting.
  - b. Overseeing the traveling ministries fund.

## **Friends General Conference Report**

Friends General Conference (FGC) is a service organization which provides direct services and resources to individual Quakers, Quaker meetings, and people interest in the Quaker way. Our work is to help build, nurture, and support loving, diverse, healthy, and growing meetings and yearly meetings, and to help provide outreach to seekers.

*And you* are all a part of FGC!

FGC is made up of Friends from many monthly and yearly meetings. Lake Erie Yearly Meeting Friends have been very active and helpful resources for others through their work with FGC:

- As FGC visitors with the Traveling Ministries Program
- As Couple Enrichment Leaders working with Monthly Meetings and Yearly Meetings on Racism, white privilege and supporting Friends of color through the Ministry on Racism Program
- As New Meeting project mentors supporting religious education for children and adults at the Gathering,
- And much, much more

### **Important events and dates:**

- The autumn retreat for Friends of Color and their family members will be in Clarkston, Michigan at the Columbiere Center, Friday, November 6<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, November 8, 2015.
- The White Privilege Conference will be in Center City, Philadelphia this spring, April 14-17, 2016.

- The 2016 FGC Gathering will be in the Midwest this next summer, at the College of St. Benedict in St. Joseph, Minnesota (Near St. Cloud) from July 3<sup>rd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016.
- FGC will again be offering discounts to Quakers and local Quaker hospitality.

Please let Friends in your meetings know about these events!

#### **Free Online Resources from FGC for your Meeting:**

- **Newcomer Cards:** For new visitors to your meeting
- *You are Welcome Here*, a booklet of learnings from Quaker Quest to help meetings to be welcoming to new people.
- **Quaker Activity Pages for Children:** Three sets of coloring pages, word searches, criss-cross puzzles, and mazes, inspired by the FGC Newcomers Cards, Quaker Testimonies, Quakers and Prayer and *You are Welcome Here*. They are useful for First Day School lessons, to give to families, and to give to visiting children at Meetings without First Day School.
- **“Transforming Quaker Welcoming”** - A brand new, free, downloadable poster. Contains advice for greeting diverse newcomers.

#### **New Programs for Meetings**

The Spiritual Deepening Program is being piloted right now. If all goes as planned, it will be available for meetings in 2016. It is highly adaptable and easy to use for small and large meetings, it is designed to introduce the Quaker way to seekers as a form of spiritual practice, and to serve existing meetings through learning materials that address topics important to the personal and communal spiritual journey.

Quaker Quest is going do-it-yourself! Online materials will soon be available for a nominal fee so that meetings can more easily afford, participate, and offer the Quaker Quest program.

Finally consider inviting the FGC Traveling Ministries Program to work with your meeting. We support meetings by providing visitors to lead workshops or retreats, to help meetings deepen worship, vocal ministry, and meeting for worship with attention to business, to nurture loving spiritual community, and to help meetings work through difficult issues or conflicts.

Eric Evans, FGC Visitor

## **Service Project Report**

Nine Friends spent a delightful time from Tuesday afternoon through Thursday morning this week helping the Habitat for Humanity affiliate in Findlay, Ohio, just 18 miles away from our meeting place here in Bluffton. Despite being a thriving community with three major industrial concerns including the corporate headquarters of Marathon Oil and Cooper Tire, as well as a large Whirlpool plant, there is poverty in Findlay, and the Habitat affiliate has built over 30 homes in its fifteen-year existence. Like some other affiliates it also recently began some home rehabs and repairs. Their ReStore provides significant financial support for their building enterprises, and since there wasn't a build in progress at the time we came, we were put to work in the ReStore.

The staff impressed us with their friendliness and devotion to their work, as they guided us through projects ranging from moving and cleaning newly donated furniture, testing donated appliances, stuffing gift bags and preparing a marquee sign for an upcoming event, and assisting in refinishing furniture to be resold.

Our nine participants represented Ann Arbor, Birmingham, Broadmead, and Grand Rapid meetings plus Erie Worship Group. Having a service project feels like a great way to build closer community within LEYM as we lived and worked together for those two extra days before our annual sessions. With assistance from Jon Sommer, we were able to stay in the dorms and eat many of our meals here at Bluffton University as a simple extension of the yearly meeting's annual sessions contract. We very much appreciated this convenience. There were an additional four people who registered for the project, but in the end were unable to attend due to various personal reasons.

During the next year we will be deciding whether to pursue a longer service project in Detroit or another urban area next year, or to do another short project, probably near Bluffton. We would like to hear from you if you

have an interest in participating or helping to plan next year's activities. Please talk to me or to the Clerk about your interest or any suggestions you might have. And thank you to the yearly meeting for supporting us in this work.

Peggy Daub

## **Quaker Earthcare Witness Report**

Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW) moves around for spring and fall meetings. This year QEW Friends of the Sustainability, Faith, and Action Working Group met at Pendle Hill in Wallingford, PA. This group made a number of recommendations for all Friends to consider in 2015. These were called "asks." They were, briefly,

1. That all Friends Meeting Houses plant patches of native plants useful to pollinators.
2. That all Friends Meeting Houses that are able shift to renewable electricity suppliers by 2016.
3. That meetings develop plans of action to encourage their states to hold the highest possible standard to address the risks of climate change, and to protect our health and environment now and for future generations. (Clean Power Act is going to be a battle in Ohio.)
4. That all Yearly and Monthly Meetings address the moral dimension of investments in fossil fuels and consider reinvestment options that reflect their meeting's values.

The Sustainability, Faith, and Action Working Group has also begun a subgroup about population control. A quote heard a lot is, "If you care about Peace support Reproductive Rights." Two related trifolds available from QEW on population are "A Friends' Witness on Population" and "Adoption, an Earth-Friendly Alternative."

At the spring meeting in Ann Arbor, QEW saw a presentation by the Center for Biological Diversity who passed out cards saying, "The single biggest cause of environmental degradation is on your plate," and condoms with endangered animal pictures on the packages and messages such as "Wrap with Care, Save a Polar Bear."

I love this wonderful, caring group of people and hope to be able to be part of it in the future.

Submitted by Judy Greenberg

## **Earthcare Committee Report**

The Earthcare Committee plans to stay a committee at this point, perhaps taking short turns at clerking for the time being. We plan to make a simple list of responsibilities for clerks and committee members for Earthcare. We also plan to make some decisions about what area we feel led to focus on at a time, so we can be more effective in helping YM. One of our bright spots is Shannon Pratt-Harrington agreeing to set us up and manage a Facebook account, and we have agreed to try to participate. Stay tuned to join us! Another thing we're happy about is committee members have begun visiting the youth group during YM this year. Also we have put on two excellent earthcare workshops. We have some new energy, some new attenders, and we all feel a great sense of urgency about climate change. NASA reports the first four months of 2015 were the hottest on record, and the extreme weather conditions and species extinctions have become very apparent. Global warming is getting worse.

The United Nations has called for all member nations to develop plans for cutting their greenhouse gas emissions and present them to be signed in December 2015. The U.S. EPA is finalizing standards for reducing power plant emissions for each state. This is called the Clean Power Plan. States are to decide how they will meet their reduction standard. Your committee feels this is critical to lessen the effects of global warming, and beg Friends to study our handouts. We all need to inform ourselves about what our states are doing about this order. It's past time to focus on climate change together, seek out our inner light for leadings about what we need to do, and buckle down to it in the blessed company of Friends.

Judy Greenberg  
Earthcare Committee

## **Peace Committee Report**

Hello everyone. I want to start this report by highlighting the work that Monthly Meetings are doing. I'm

happy to report that the Monthly Meetings have been doing amazing work in at least the following areas. This is everything that we know that Monthly Meetings are doing.

- Israel Palestine
- Anti-Racism Work
- Anti-Colonialism Work
- Monetary Policy
- Iran
- Nuclear Disarmament
- U.S. Weapons Testing in the Marshall Islands
- Immigration
- Service Projects especially Anti-Poverty Projects
- Military Spending
- Reproductive Justice
- LGBT Rights
- Affordable Housing
- Death penalty
- Incarceration and private prisons
- And Compassionate communities
- **And that's just the work we know about.** Which brings me to our next topic.

This year we have experienced fairly low engagement from the Monthly Meetings. We only had a handful of points of engagement with Monthly Meetings. We sent out a few rounds of communication, both email and phone, and got a lot of no responses and a lot of responses telling us the Meeting doesn't have a Peace Committee. We're not quite sure how to deal with this problem. We know that some Meetings are busy or have had extenuating circumstances that have prevented them from responding, and we know that that is normal. I want to make sure that everyone knows that we are happy to support and celebrate any kind of peace work taking place in Monthly Meetings, including work done by individuals or by Monthly Meetings as a whole, not just Peace Committees.

Ok, now lets get into some of our concrete concerns.

First of all, while we do not have any new minutes or discussion to bring on Israel Palestine today, we continue to hold the Israel Palestine concern in the Light, and welcome new ideas on how we can be effective there. There is a display upstairs about some of the work that Friends are doing in that area. If you would like that display in your Meeting, talk to Joyce.

We were approached and asked to join Friends Peace Teams. Friends Peace Teams is an organization that includes the African Great Lakes Initiative, with which many Friends are familiar, and two similar programs in Indonesia and Bolivia. Officially joining would involve donating, appointing a representative to their Council, and funding our representative to their annual in person meeting. We talked to some people that we know have been involved and no one seemed excited to be the official representative. Additionally, many Monthly Meetings already donate to FPT or AGLI on their own. We do not recommend joining FPT at this time, but if Friends are interesting in being the representative or want us to do more research on participating in this organization, please let us know and we will continue this work into next year.

We would like to present a Minute of the Athens Monthly Meeting. Their minute supports a piece of draft legislation called the National Emergency Employment Defense [NEED] Act.

This act would change how money creation would work in our country, moving it from being created as privatized debt to being created as money by the government. They've been laboring on this for 2 years now, and just a few weeks ago came into unity on this minute. They feel that this issue is fundamental to social justice by increasing democracy, and decreasing poverty and debt. Monetary policy is complicated and we don't have time to explain it today, but we'd like to hold that work up by handing out resources and reading their explanation. We're not going to read the full minute because it is long, so instead we'll read the summary sent to us by Athens Friends Meeting. We encourage other Monthly Meetings to consider this issue. We'll be mailing out these resources and the full minute both electronically and by snail mail, so please watch for them.

Information being sent includes: Cover Letter from Peace Committee, Cover Letter from Athens, Links to Web

Resources on monetary policy and banking, and Minutes at bottom. Again, we'll be sending this by mail and email.

**Cover Letter from Peace Committee**

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting Peace Committee  
July 30, 2015

Friends,

We are passing along a minute, with an introduction and context, from Athens Monthly Meeting. Athens has been working on this issues for 2 years, and this is where their work has lead them.

We are happy to hold up this work by bringing it to the attention of other Monthly Meetings. We encourage all Monthly Meeting to consider this issues. Athens Monthly Meeting has included a page of resources that may help Friends engage on this issue.

Additionally, John Howell, a member of the Athens Peace and Social Concerns Committee, and Greg Coleridge of the American Friends Service Committee Northeast Ohio Office, have offered to serve as resources for Friends. Their contact information is included on the resources page and they are happy to talk to Friends on this issue.

In peace,  
Lucia Kalinosky  
Joyce Balderston  
Co-Clerks of LEYM Peace Committee

**Cover Letter from Athens Monthly Meeting**

The Athens Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends  
July 15, 2015

To Friends everywhere,

The Athens Friends Meeting, after two years of consideration, has endorsed a piece of federal legislation central to Friends' commitment to social justice. That piece of legislation is the NEED Act (National Emergency Employment Defense Act), which was introduced in 2011 to the 112th U.S. Congress. The Act represents a fundamental reform of the way money is introduced and circulated.

Understanding why the Act is critical to social justice requires understanding of the current monetary system and how it systematically shifts wealth from the many to the few. This understanding is not widespread, but there are now easily available resources for people seeking to learn. (Nick Egnatz, "Linking Social Justice to Monetary Reform" at <http://www.alpheus.org/linking-social-justice-to-monetary-reform/> and <http://www.monetary.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/HR-2990.pdf>)

We urge other groups committed to social justice, including Friends Meetings and other Friends organizations to consider endorsement of the NEED Act. Such considerations, whether they result in endorsement of the Act or not, will elevate people's understanding of the monetary system and the need for change.

The endorsement, adopted at a Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, on July 12, 2015, is attached.

In peace,  
The Peace and Social Concerns Committee of Athens Friends Meeting

**Endorsement of the National Emergency Employment Defense Act**

The Athens Friends Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends endorses the National Emergency Employment Defense [NEED] Act, originally introduced into Congress in 2012 as HR 2990.

Friends are committed to working toward a world free of violence and oppression, in which no one's development is hindered by meager income, insufficient education, or too little freedom in directing his or her own affairs. In the words of the Friends Committee on National Legislation, "We seek a world free of war and the threat of war. We seek a society with equity and justice for all. We seek a community where every

person's potential may be fulfilled. We seek an earth restored.”

The NEED Act promotes, in a fundamental way, such a world.

The NEED Act promotes political justice by restoring to “We the People” through our government the power and authority to issue and circulate money, as stipulated in the U.S. Constitution. The money thus created will be spent into circulation, and will replace money currently in use, which is created as credit (i.e., as debt) by banks as they make loans.

The NEED Act promotes economic justice by funding the creation and repairing of our physical and social infrastructure. Millions of quality jobs would be created under the bill – helping put people back to work, addressing the needs of our communities and laying the foundation for a sustainable economy. This would be accomplished, not through additional taxation or government borrowing, but through the power of money creation taken back from banks and restored to government.

The Act establishes an independent Monetary Authority, whose only function is to set the rate of issuance of money in accordance with the rate of economic growth, thus eliminating the cause of inflation and of the cycle of recurrent booms and busts which destabilize the economy. It incorporates the Federal Reserve into the Treasury Department and makes monetary policy accountable to the public. Banks would continue to provide financial services, including making loans, but they would only loan money they actually possess. They would not create money as they make loans.

The NEED Act is a significant contribution to the growing national movement to control both the economic and political power of financial corporations and to (re)assert governance across our nation that is just and inclusive. We urge our representatives to reintroduce the bill for Congressional consideration.

The Act is consistent with the convictions of Friends that we can have a better and more just world.

July 12, 2015

### **Web Resources on monetary policy and banking**

John N. Howell, Athens Friends Meeting

1. *Money as Debt, an excellent, 47 minute video, on money and banking.*  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jqvKjsIxT\\_8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jqvKjsIxT_8)
2. *Linking social justice to monetary reform*, Nick Egnatz. (This article describes the potential impact of the NEED Act.)  
<http://www.alpheus.org/linking-social-justice-to-monetary-reform/> or (for pdf version)  
<http://www.alpheus.org/html/articles/parapolitics/Linking%20Social%20Justice%20to%20Monetary%20Reform%28f%29.pdf>
3. *The current money system and an alternative*. John Howell (A briefer summary. Scroll down to 3rd article.)  
<https://democracyovercorporations.wordpress.com/>
4. *The need for monetary reform*, Stephen Zarlenga. (Argument for the NEED Act)  
<http://www.monetary.org/the-need-for-monetary-reform/2009/09>
5. *The National Emergency Employment Defense Act (Text of the NEED Act)*.  
<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/112/hr2990/text>; or  
<http://www.monetary.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/HR-2990.pdf>
6. *Creating a sovereign monetary system*, Positive Money. (A clearly presented British proposal, which like the NEED Act in the U.S., would reform the monetary system)  
<http://positivemoney.org/our-proposals/creating-sovereign-monetary-system/>
7. *Money Facts: 169 Questions and Answers on Money – a Supplement to A Primer on Money*. Subcommittee on Domestic Finance, Committee on Banking and Currency, House of Representatives, 88th Congress, 2d session.  
[http://www.usa-the-republic.com/banks/Money\\_Facts\\_%28Q\\_%29.html](http://www.usa-the-republic.com/banks/Money_Facts_%28Q_%29.html)
8. *Money in the modern economy: an introduction*, by McLeay, Radia and Thomas. Quarterly Bulletin,

2014. (Explains how the current banking system works)

<http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/publications/Documents/quarterlybulletin/2014/qb14q101.pdf>

9. *Money creation in the modern economy*, McLeay, Radia and Thomas. Quarterly Bulletin, 2014. (Explains how money is created in the current banking system)

<http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/publications/Documents/quarterlybulletin/2014/qb14q102.pdf>

10. *Modern Money Mechanics: A Workbook on Bank Reserves and Deposit Expansion*, Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago (A detailed document containing an acknowledgement by the Federal Reserve that the U.S. banking system creates money (credit) when banks make loans.)

<https://www.community-exchange.org/docs/ModernMoneyMechanics.pdf>

Additionally, Friends are welcome to contact John Howell or Greg Coleridge for help working through these issues.

John can be reached as Howell at [frognet.net](mailto:frognet.net) and Greg can be reached as GColeridge at [afsc.org](mailto:afsc.org) or 330-928-2301 (Northeast Ohio AFSC Office).

Next Friends, we'd like to ask for your approval on sending a letter to the Emmanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, which was the target of a mass shooting this year. The letter is primarily a condolence letter and it is based heavily off of the letter that Ann Arbor Monthly Meeting sent earlier this year.

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting  
July 31st, 2015

Dear Reverend Jones and Reverend Frayer,

Ann Arbor Friends Meeting recently sent a letter of condolences to you at Emanuel AME Church. Lake Erie Yearly Meeting, a regional association of Friends Meetings including Ann Arbor Friends Meeting, would like to extend our sympathy as well.

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting extends our deepest condolences for the loss of your beloved pastor, the Honorable Reverend Clementa Pinckney, and all those who died in the massacre at Emanuel AME. We mourn with you the loss of Cynthia Hurd, Susie Jackson, Ethyl Lance, Myra Thompson, and the Reverends DePayne Middleton, Doctor Tywanza Sanders, Sharonda Singleton, and Daniel Simmons, Sr.

As Quakers with a commitment to nonviolence and a belief in that of God in every person, we were deeply moved by the expressions of forgiveness that were shared by relatives of the victims during Dylann Roof's first appearance in court. We are inspired by their generosity of spirit and steadfast faith.

As recent events have made painfully clear, the struggle to end racism in this country is far from over. We respect and admire Emanuel AME's historic role in the Black freedom struggle, and its commitment to equality and universal brotherhood. As Quakers, we stand with you in solidarity and will work to oppose racist behavior, racist ideology, and racist structures that motivated Dylann Roof. We hope that one day we all will live together in beloved community.

In peace,  
Lake Erie Yearly Meeting

The final section of our report is asking for a little guidance. As the Peace Committee, we have the blessing of having a very wide charge in *Policies and Procedures*. I've picked up over the year that some Friends see Peace work as being fairly narrowly defined while others see it as wider. At this point, the only social justice issue that the Peace Committee feels like we know that we are NOT charged with dealing with is Earthcare, because we have a separate Earthcare Committee. I'd like to take 5 minutes to ask some questions and get some responses. We're not looking to draft anything binding, just get some thoughts that may help guide us into next year.

- Is there any work that you see as being outside of the charge of the Peace Committee?
- How can we better support the work of the Monthly Meetings?

LAKE ERIE YEARLY MEETING MINUTES  
ANNUAL SESSIONS JULY 30-AUGUST 2, 2015

- Is all social justice work peace work?

Ok Friends, that's been five minutes. If you have any more thoughts or guidance please let the Peace Committee know afterwards. Can the committee please stand up so that people know who to talk to if you have thoughts.

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting Peace Committee

# Nominating Committee Report LEYM Officers, Committee Members & Representatives

(Terms begin and end at rise of annual YM sessions.)  
(^ = serves on LEYM Executive Committee.)

Year of Service End Year

		<u>Year of Service</u>	<u>End Year</u>
<b>Officers</b>			
Presiding Clerk ^	Mike Holaday, Grand Rapids	2	2018
Assistant Clerk ^	Sally Weaver Sommer, Brdmead	4	2016
Recording Clerk ^	Nancy Reeves, Cleveland	2	2017
Treasurer ^	Mike Hinshaw, Wooster	4	2018

## Communications

Bulletin Editor	Susan & Berch Carpenter, Brdmd	2	2016
Database Manager	Mathilda Navias, Broadmead	11	2016

(Note: Mathilda Navias, Broadmead, to be Webmaster as part of paid work.)

## Committees:

### Advancement & Outreach

	<i># of Members: 6</i>	<i>Years of Term: 3</i>	
Mathilda Navias, Broadmead	1		2018
Ellen Barnes, Birmingham	1		
Aran Reinhart, Broadmead	2		2017
Becky Morehouse, Ann Arbor	3		2016
Erika Smith, Ann Arbor, Clerk ^	3		

### Earthcare

	<i># of Members: 6</i>	<i>Years of Term: 3</i>	
<i>Others interested are welcome to attend</i>			
Shannon Pratt-Harrington, Athens	4		2018
Russell Adams, North Columbus	1		
Richard Lee, Red Cedar,	3		2017
Jim Crowfoot, Ann Arbor	4		2016
Phil Clampitt, Birmingham	4		
Phil Balderston, Wooster	4		

### Finance

	<i># of Members: 3</i>	<i>Years of Term: 3</i>	
<i>Treasurer serves ex officio</i>			
Bob Orr, Detroit	4		2018
Jeff Cooper, Ann Arbor, Clerk ^	5		2017
Steve Morehouse, Ann Arbor	6		2016

## High School Teen Retreat Program

*# of Members:*

*3 adults with 3 year terms + 2 high schoolers with 2 year terms.*

Stephanie Charlot, Red Cedar	1	2018
Peggy Daub, Ann Arbor	2	2017
David Avner, Pittsburgh, Clerk ^	3	2016
To be appointed by teens	1	2017
To be appointed by teens	1	2016

## Ministry & Nurture

*# of Members: 6*

*Years of Term: 3+ 1 Rep. from each meeting encouraged*

Margaret Walden, Cleveland	4	2018
Ruth Carey, Ann Arbor	3	2017
Carla Pratt-Harrington, Athens	3	
Flo Friender, Kalamazoo	3	2016
Paula Deming, Waysmeet, Clerk ^	6	

*(and other representatives as appointed by local meetings)*

## Nominating

*# of Members: 6 (Appointed by YM thru Naming Committee)*

*Years of Term: 3*

Janet Dando, Akron	1	2018
Linda Mills, Kalamazoo	4	
Clemence Ravacon Mershon, Erie WG	2	2017
Paul Helbling, Broadmead	1	
Abbey Pratt-Harrington, Athens, Clerk ^	3	2016
Michael Fuson, Granville	3	

## Peace

*# of Members: 6*

*Years of Term: 3+1 Rep. from each meeting encouraged*

Shelley Kotz, Broadmead	1	2018
Joyce Balderston, Wooster	4	
Lucia Kalinosky, Oberlin, Clerk ^	2	2017
David Snyder, Oberlin	6	2016
Kathleen Helbling, Broadmead	4	

Paul Helbling, Broadmead MM rep

Year of Service End Year

Year of Service End Year

**Publications & Archives**

*# of Members: 4*      *Years of Term: 3*  
*Webmaster & Bulletin Editor serve ex officio*

<i>Bill Lefler, Pittsburgh</i>	1	2018
<i>Seth Reichenbach, North Columbus</i>	1	2018
<i>Peggy Daub, Ann Arbor, Clerk ^</i>	2	2017
<i>Leslie Walden, Cleveland</i>	3	2016

**Yearly Meeting Planning:  
Arrangements & Site**

*# of Members: 6*      *Years of Term: 3*

<i>Olwen Pritchard, Broadmead</i>	1	2018
<i>Jon Sommer, Broadmead, Clerk ^</i>	12	2017
<i>Janet Smith, Oberlin</i>	2	
<i>John Templin, Broadmead</i>	6	2016
<i>Berch Carpenter, Broadmead (registrar)</i>	8	

**Adult & Family Program**

*# of Members: 6*      *Years of Term: 3*

<i>Vanessa Fuson, Granville</i>	1	2018
<i>Josephine Posti, Pittsburgh</i>	1	2018
<i>Dale Pratt-Harrington, Athens, Clerk ^</i>	3	2017
<i>Sharon Ottenbreit, Detroit</i>	2	
<i>Claire Cohen, Pittsburgh</i>	3	2016
<i>Joel Ottenbreit, Detroit</i>	3	

**Youth & Children's Program**

*# of Members: 12*      *Years of Term: 2*

<i>Kate Spry, Cleveland</i>	Clerk ^	2016
<i>Joe Mills, Kalamazoo</i>	Assistant Clerk	2017
Employed student or YM vols.	Infants & Toddlers	

<i>Ellerie Brownfain, Birmingham</i>	<i>Jenn Seif, Grand Rapids</i>
<i>Conleth Croster, Cleveland</i>	<i>Marc Smith, Ann Arbor</i>
<i>Peter Crowley, Cleveland</i>	<i>Deborah Wicking, Grand Rapids</i>
<i>Diane Mott, Broadmead</i>	_____

Conleth Crotser, Cleveland	Fall retreat clerk
Peter Crowley, Cleveland	Fall retreat assistant

**LEYM Bookstore:** Valerie Groszmann, Kalamazoo 14

**Representatives to Other Quaker Organizations**

(\* indicates clerk of that group of representatives)

AFSC Corp	<i>Claire Cohen, Pittsburgh</i>	1	2018
AFSC Corp	_____	1	
AFSC Corp	<i>John Deikis, Ann Arbor</i>	4	

FCNL Gen Com	<i>David Snyder, Oberlin</i>	1	2018
FCNL Gen Com	<i>Richard Shaw, Pittsburgh</i>	1	
FCNL Gen Com	<i>Jo Schlesinger, Pittsburgh</i>	2	2017
FCNL Gen Com	<i>Michael Fuson, Granville</i>	1	
FCNL Gen Com	<i>Nancy Taylor, Ann Arbor *</i>	6	2016
FCNL Gen Com	<i>Dottie Stratton, Wooster</i>	4	

FGC Cntl Cttee	<i>Carolyn LeJuste, Red Cedar</i>	1	2018
FGC Cntl Cttee	<i>Robb Yurisko, N. Columbus</i>	2	2017
FGC Cntl Cttee	<i>Helen Hebben, Kalamazoo *</i>	3	2016

(LEYM Reps appoint rep to FGC Executive Committee)

FWCC	<i>Jana Norlin, Grand Rapids</i>	1	2018
FWCC	<i>Carmen Kelly, Detroit</i>	2	2017
FWCC	<i>Mike Kelly, Detroit</i>	3	
FWCC	_____	1	2016

Q Earthcare Witness *Russell Adams, North Columbus* 1

FLGBTQC      *Nancy Reeves, Cleveland* 1

Wm. Penn House      *Ellerie Brownfain, Birmingham* 8      2017

Olney Friends School *Greg Mott, Broadmead* 8

**Visitors to neighboring yearly meetings**

Canadian YM	_____	
EFI Eastern Region	<i>Abbey Pratt-Harrington, Athens</i>	4
Ohio YM	_____	
Ohio Valley YM	_____	1
Wilmington YM	<i>Al Connor, Ann Arbor</i>	6

## **High School Teen Retreat Report**

Our proposal to scale back the Teen Retreat Program in the coming year was accepted at Representative Meeting in April. The reason for reducing the size of the program was that no more than 2 or 3 teens were attending each quarterly retreat, and that was not enough of a critical mass to make the full program of four retreats per year viable.

For the coming year, the retreats will consist of a trip to The Quake that Rocked the Midwest in Evanston in January 2016, and the normal program here at yearly meeting's annual sessions. We are very grateful that Robb Yurisko is willing to coordinate the January trip once more, thus continuing his appointment as Coordinator of the Program, but with the expectation that he is responsible for only that one retreat, for which he will be paid the amount that he has received per retreat in the past (\$1200).

The committee's first task this coming year will be to discern the teens' level of interest in participating in The Quake or more frequent retreats. This will likely be accomplished by talking to teens and families of teens who are entering high school this year or next. Additionally, we will need to seek and hire a new Coordinator for the program regardless of what size it turns out to be, as Robb has indicated he does not wish to continue after this year.

We welcome your suggestions and ideas for matching the program to the interest levels of our high school teens as we move forward, and would especially welcome your ideas for candidates for the Coordinator position.

For the Teen Retreat Program Committee,  
Peggy Daub, Clerk  
David Avner  
Joyce Balderston  
Robb Yurisko