

Community Companion

QUAKER MEETING HOUSE

3960 WINDING WAY, CINCINNATI OH 45229-1950



Community Friends Meeting

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Queries for Twelfth Month:

Where have I experienced the Divine Mystery in my life? How do we keep the Divine Spirit at the center of the life of our meeting?



Seasons at the Meeting House

December 2019 Events

Sunday, December 1

10:00am

Worship

11:30am

Potluck Lunch and Hosting Congolese Family

Food Drive and Clothing Drive Bring a Donation

Monday, December 2

10:30am

Book Discussion Group: Holy Silence

Meeting House

Sunday, December 8

10:00am

Worship

11:30am

Business Meeting

Wednesday, December 11

8:00am

Stewardship Committee

Saturday, December 14

6:00 – 9:00 PM

Christmas Open House at Burks House

Sunday, December 15

10:00am

Worship

Intergenerational Variety Show

Sunday, December 22

10:00am

Worship

11:45am

Carol singing

Sunday, December 29

10:00am

Worship

Reflections on Community Friends Meeting Fall Renewal

October 5, 2019

I wanted to share my notes and reflections from the Fall Renewal with Friends who were not able to attend, because this was such a powerful and meaningful experience for those of us who attended.

Our facilitator was Sara Beth Terrell, a Friends minister from Greensboro, North Carolina, who graduated from Guilford College and Earlham School of Religion. The theme of our renewal was “Nurturing our Spiritual Gifts to Minister in this Hurting World.”

Sara Beth began by introducing herself, explaining that although she is comfortable with Christian language in talking about her spiritual life, she is equally comfortable with other ways of talking about religious experiences. She talked about the experience of living in the Kingdom of God, in the language of early Friends, which can also be called the Redeemed Community or the New Creation. In Biblical language, this means we are all part of the Body of Christ. Another way of saying this is that we are all in unity with God and all of creation.

Friends experience that this reality of living in unity with God and all of creation overlays the “world community” that we live in day to day. We can step into and out of each reality at any time. The Kingdom of God is based in love, which is the transforming force of the universe. Sara Beth talked about the “gift economy” which means that our gifts flow toward the needs of the world. She described “sin” as the belief in separateness, which results in inequality, fear, scarcity, and hierarchy.

We live in the world, but as we follow our spiritual path we are growing into the Kingdom of God.

Each of us has spiritual gifts. The more we live into our Gift, the more we heal and transform the world. Our work is to become aware of when we are living in and acting in love.

We also need to become aware of when we are separating ourselves. When we talk about “those people,” this is a statement of separateness. We need to ask the Light to show us where we are standing and how we can move into the Body of Christ, into unity with God and all of creation.

Gifts: Our gifts are an inborn expression of divine energy, to be given to others for the healing and transformation of the world, to mend the separateness in partnership with God, and grow into the full maturity of Christ. Gifts grow and expand when we release them. Offering our gifts is a ministry.

We were given an exercise to write about an experience of stepping into the “new creation” or the Kingdom of God. I wrote that I feel I’m living into my gifts in my work to heal trauma experienced by young children at Head Start. I feel this especially when I talk with others about the impact of trauma on children’s development, and the healing power of felt safety and compassion. I have felt my gifts stretching to include compassion for the parents who have been violent or addicted to drugs, aware that they too have experienced trauma. When I am able to communicate my understanding to others, and they look at these hurt people differently, I can see my gift making a difference in the world. We were also asked to write about when we feel we are “in the world”, separate from God. I wrote that I feel this way when I am mindlessly taking advantage of my white supremacy.

At the end of the renewal, we were asked to plan some “next steps” for our meeting in our continuing work to bring about the Kingdom of God in the world. The steps I wrote down for our meeting were:

- Attending to newcomers, following up and inviting them back, connecting them with Friendly Sixes and Quakerism 101, etc.
- Remembering to pray for guidance as a spiritual community
- Rejuvenate the Friendly Six dinner groups
- Consider where my great joy and the world’s great need come together (my calling)
- Engage in loving accountability: How are we called as a community?
- Encourage committees to take time for spiritual support and checking in at each committee meeting.

Submitted by Lisa Cayard

Celebrating World Quaker Day!

Community Friends Meeting marked the 6th annual World Quaker Day with a group photo following meeting for worship. World Quaker Day is sponsored by the Friends World Committee for Consultation.



Invitation to Holiday Open House of December 14

All are invited for an evening of holiday cheer and community.

Holiday Open House

The Burks Home
4270 Ashland Avenue
Cincinnati, Ohio 45212
513-252-7902

Saturday
December
14
6:00 -9:00 PM

RSVP at burksdouglas@msn.com

Meeting for Business Eleventh Month 10, 2019

1. The meeting opened with centering worship during which Doug Burks, Presiding Clerk, read the following: *"Now I find that in a state of pure obedience the mind learns contentment in appearing weak and foolish to that wisdom which is of the world; and in these lowly labors, they who stand in a low place and are rightly exercised under the cross will find nourishment."* (John Woolman)
2. **Clerk's Report** (No Report)
3. **Web manager's report:** Eira reported that currently, the primary contribution she makes to the website is to update the monthly business meeting minutes after they are sent by the Recording Clerk. When a digital copy is also supplied, she adds the Treasurer's Report as well. The monthly business meeting minutes are current through October 2019. There are some corrected Treasurer's Reports from earlier in the year that need to be retroactively added. Minutes can only be viewed by logging in to the website then clicking "Resources" and then "Minutes". If you are not sure whether you have website access, please contact Eira at eiratansey@gmail.com so she can check for you. Paul and Eira have also been updating a Google Calendar for meeting related events. These primarily reflect our hours for meeting for worship, carry-in, meeting for business, and various second hours. The calendar can be viewed at <https://www.fgcquaker.org/cloud/4599/calendar>.

Eira noted that there are many things about the website that could be improved to facilitate outreach to those interested in attending our meeting for the first time. As many of these items fall under what we might consider "Outreach," she will consult with the Outreach Committee and prepare a larger report with recommendations for the December or January business meeting. The clerk expressed much appreciation for Eira's work. The report was accepted.
4. **Report on Travelling Ministry:** Paul reported that he has several pages of endorsements on his travelling minute. In the last year he has visited 12 monthly meetings, Miami Quarterly Meeting, Colorado Regional Meeting, a meeting in the north end of Philadelphia, meetings around Minneapolis, Quaker United Publications, and Ben Lomond Quaker Center. The visits included 8 states and 7 Yearly Meetings. He will be meeting with his clearness committee later this month. The report was accepted.
5. **Sanctuary Coalition Report:** Mary Anne Curtiss reported that The Sanctuary Congregation Coalition of Cincinnati is hosting an asylum-seeking family who arrived Wednesday, Oct. 30 to the living space at Clifton United Methodist Church (CUMC). She shared information about the family. They have temporary legal status until June of 2020. As a Solidarity Congregation, the expectations for our meeting include identifying a point person (who is Mary Anne) and donating \$200 to help with groceries, incidental expenses, and legal fees. A jar will be put out for donations at the next carry-in meal, and the family has been invited to join us for the meal. During the week of December 1, we are responsible for transporting the family for weekly grocery shopping, donating funds for groceries, and transporting the family to appointments for the week. Each congregation is asked to furnish a French translator, and Mary Anne has found some translators. If anyone knows someone who can translate Portuguese or Lingala, please contact Amy Monson at amymagdic@gmail.com. We are also expected to plan and support the family in one social event during the week in consultation with the family. The report was accepted.
6. **Treasurer's Report:** Lynn reported that there is a negative balance in the General Fund. We have received 70% of anticipated donations at 83% of the calendar year. The telephone line item is higher than usual due to a \$300 payment for the Quaker Cloud account. Ministry and Counsel expenses were higher than usual due to the fall renewal. The directory was more expensive than anticipated because it had to be reformatted. Parent bodies and contributions are paid up to date. We have \$500 more to pay in contributions before the end of the calendar year. The Treasurer's report was accepted.
7. **Presentation of 2020 Budget:** Lynn presented the proposed 2020 draft Budget. It includes \$30,185 in unrestricted contributions, compared to \$26,830 in 2019. Income from interest on the Parnassus fund is a very rough estimate. Water and sewer costs keep increasing, so this line

item was increased. Ministry and Counsel expenses were increased to \$500. Library committee budget was reduced to \$100. Unity with Nature was increased to \$250 to include the ad in the CORRV guide. Other committees remain the same or slightly increased. Stewardship Committee noted that our annual contribution to MARCC is actually assessed membership dues, not a charitable contribution. Half is paid by Cincinnati Friends Meeting. There was a recommendation that this should be reflected in the budget as membership dues in the "Parent Bodies" section, rather than as a charitable contribution. Our share of the assessment would be \$650. Contributions in the 2020 budget were not changed. A concern was raised that we are planning a budget that is \$1,700 more than the current year, and yet we have not received enough contributions to cover current expenses. It was noted that Stewardship committee is taking a close look at patterns of giving, and is working on a fundraising letter and a Second Hour discussion to give Friends more information about the financial needs of the meeting. There was an attempt to be more realistic about certain expenses that are now reflected in the budget. Friends discussed whether or not we should continue the current practice of transferring \$200 per month from the General Fund to the Building Reserve fund. It was noted that the Building Reserve funds are probably less than adequate for possible emergency needs. It was also noted that several committees have not spent any money for the past five years, yet they still have funds budgeted. It might be possible to reduce the budget by deleting these unused line items. The clerk summarized by saying the budget reflects what the meeting wants to accomplish, and that we have a real challenge that needs to be addressed. He thanked Stewardship committee for developing a realistic budget. Adjustments to committee budgets by looking at five-year averages may be a good idea. However, if needs arise, the budget could be revised. Another suggestion was to add a line for "committee contingencies" for any unexpected costs. Stewardship committee is asked to use this discussion to discern a recommendation for a revised budget.

8. **Ministry and Counsel Committee:** Lisa reported that Ministry and Counsel met on October 27. After check-in and sharing, they discussed a fundraiser that Community Committee is planning to raise funds as our contribution as a Sanctuary Solidarity Congregation. M&C supported this plan and noted that the meeting has already approved this commitment. Evaluations from our fall renewal with Sara Beth Terrell were reviewed,

which were all very positive. There was a suggestion that Friends would have enjoyed more opportunities to share more deeply with one another in small groups. Perhaps M&C could work with Adult Religious Education Committee next year to plan a Second Hour follow-up discussion the week after the renewal to further reflect on the theme. Lisa wrote an article about the renewal and shared it by email. Notes were reviewed from the Second Hour worship sharing and discussion on sexual harassment. There did not seem to be clear need for additional follow-up at this time, other than posting our policy and reminding Friends about it from time to time. Friends needing pastoral care were discussed and committee members will contact some who have not been attending meeting recently. We especially were reaching out to Alvin Jose, who was in his last days. Plans were made for a committee retreat on Saturday November 23 at Lisa's home. The committee will consider what we can do as follow-up from the renewal to support the spiritual life of the meeting. The report was accepted.

9. **Religious Development Committee:** Lisa reported that Religious Development Committee met on November 3 and reviewed the schedule for childcare. Some additional teachers have signed up to teach First Day School. Hannah will teach Nov. 17- Dec. 15, Mary Anne will teach Jan. 26 – Feb 23, and John will teach March 1-29. Volunteers are still needed for Dec. 22 – Jan. 19, and for April and May. Plans for the Christmas program were discussed, and it was decided to have an intergenerational Variety Show again this year on December 15. Children can wear costumes if they like and will learn a Christmas song. There will be a sign-up sheet for Friends who would like to share music, poetry, a reading, or a skit. The report was accepted.
10. **Community Committee:** (no report)
11. **House and Grounds Committee:** Eric noted there will be a work day on Saturday Nov. 16.
12. **Peace and Social Concerns Committee:** Don reported on recent FCNL lobbying activities. On the first Wednesday of each month, the lobbying group has a conference call with the national office of FCNL. They are still focusing on repeal of Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF). The importance of that issue is that after 911, Congress relinquished its prerogative to have sole responsibility to declare war and gave it to the president. We now know that has resulted in perpetual war. Our troops are now engaged in seven countries in the Middle East

and Africa. The hope is that if the AUMF is repealed, Congress will be forced to debate our military empire's activity and scale it back. The report was accepted.

13. **Stewardship Committee:** Stewardship met on Friday November 8. It was noted that the Treasurer's Report shows a negative balance in our General Fund. Stewardship committee is actively working on a fundraising letter and analyzing Friends' giving patterns. 71% of members and regular attenders donate, which seems to be pretty good. We also get nice donations from previous attenders and others. The overwhelming majority of our budget comes from contributions. This remains true even when the Meeting Reserve Fund has been doing well. The committee will continue to meet and work to get General Fund out of the red, especially since last year's income tax changes might cut into our customary end of the year increased donations.

- **Action Item:** Stewardship Committee recommended that the line for MARCC on the Treasurer's Report and Budget will be removed from the Contributions section and put in the "Parent Body/Membership" section. This was **approved**.

14. **Unity with Nature Committee:** (No report)

15. **Adult Religious Education Committee:** Deborah reported that the committee is working on scheduling second hours starting in January. George Lakey would like to visit the meeting sometime in the spring. The report was accepted.

16. **Library Committee:** (No report)

17. **Outreach Committee:** (No report)

18. **FCNL** (See Peace and Social Concerns report)

19. **Tender Mercies:** Continuing the good work.

20. **MARCC Delegates Council:** Doug reported they will be having a planning meeting, and a contingent is signed up to attend. Focus areas will be the alternate ID program, social justice, and a court watch program. The report was accepted.

21. **Miami Quarterly Meeting:** Sue sent a report that she rode to Lexington with Tim, Mary Ann and Andrew. There were about 40 people in attendance at Quarterly Meeting. Paul Buckley presented the program about Living as Friends in the Twenty-first Century. It was very interesting and very well received. Guidelines

for use of the Green Plain Cemetery were proposed and approved. Kaia led a program for teens about bystander intervention. The report was accepted.

22. **Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting:** Eric reported that Daniel was approved as the new website administrator. An ad hoc website committee was also appointed, including Eric, Rachel, and Deborah. Doug was nominated to be the OVYM representative to FCNL. Kaia Jackson is seeking more youth to go to the Youth that Rocked the Midwest event. AFSC offices in Dayton and Indianapolis will be closing due to lack of funds. The Chicago office will be the closest AFSC office. Friends Billie Eastman and Peg from Yellow Springs meeting have died. The report was accepted.

23. **Friends General Conference** (no report)

24. **Announcement:** It was noted that Alvin Jose, a member of this meeting, died on November 9, 2019. His wonderful smile and gentle spirit will be greatly missed.

25. **Appreciation:** The clerk expressed appreciation to the Recording clerk.

26. **Approval of Minutes:** The minutes were approved.

27. **Closing Worship:** The meeting closed with silent worship.

Meeting Officers

Presiding Clerk: Doug Burks

Assistant Clerk: Mary Anne Curtiss

Recording Clerk: Lisa Cayard

Assist. Recording Clerk: Deborah Jordan

Treasurer: Lynn Funck

Web Clerk: Eira Tansey

Archivist: John Sniegocki

Directory Editor: David Funck

Statistician: Eugene Marquis

Assistant Statistician: Paul Buckley

House & Grounds Committee

Our House & Grounds Committee attends to the maintenance and operation of the CFM property, including house, grounds, and use of the building by outside groups. They recently hosted a workday in November in which many chores were done to maintain our beautiful space.



Members of the Committee are Eric Wolff, John Sniegocki, Sue Brungs, Richard House, Andrew Boniface, Jim Rhein, and Eugene Marquis.

Sue Brungs says that *“Being on house and grounds has been very interesting. I love old buildings and understand it takes a lot of work to keep them well maintained. We are lucky that the Meetinghouse was a very well built home. I have learned a lot from Eric, John and others about maintaining this beautiful building. Work days are so important for regular upkeep. They not only keep the house clean and well cared for but they offer an important opportunity to build relationships in our community. Many Hands Make Light Work! It’s always more fun and gets the job done quicker if you are working with others. We are so blessed to have such a special place to gather for worship and the many special occasions in all our lives. A little care and elbow grease go a long way in keeping the Meetinghouse in good repair.”*

Next work day give it a try you may be surprised how good you feel when you head home.”



FCNL: Greater Cincinnati Northern Kentucky Grassroots Advocacy Team

“The Friends Committee on National Legislation lobbies Congress and the administration to advance peace, justice, opportunity, and environmental stewardship. Founded in 1943 by members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), FCNL fields an expert team of lobbyists on Capitol Hill and works with a grassroots network of tens of thousands of people across the country to advance policies and priorities established by our governing General Committee. FCNL is a nonpartisan organization that seeks to live our values of integrity, simplicity, and peace as we build relationships across political divides to move policies forward.” <https://www.fcnl.org/about/who>

Our local advocacy group has several members from CFM including, Susan Gerke, Larry Gerke, Frank Huss, Doug Burks, Mary Anne Curtis, HT (Harvey Tharp), Pamela Coby, Tim Leonard, Don Rucknagle, and Paulette Meier. We have many nonmeeting members too.

This past year our local advocacy group has lobbied, Sherrod Brown, Rob Portman, Mitch McConnell, Steve Chabot, Brad Wenstrup, and Thomas Massie. We have lobbied on climate change/environment, repealing the Authorization of Use of Military Force (2002), and gun violence (red flag legislation). This November we met with Nan Kohlen Cahall the SW District Director for Senator Rob Portman to support Senate Bill 506 titled Extreme Risk Protection Order Act of 2019. It has red flag language in it.



Advocacy group meeting with Nan Cahall at Rob Portman’s Office in November 2019 on Gun Control

Publication Information

The Community Companion is a monthly publication of Community Friends Meeting of Cincinnati, Ohio.

Materials for the publication are due by the Wednesday of the last week of the Month. Materials received after that date will be published in two months if appropriate. Announcements, events, articles about CFM members, committees and concerns of Friends are invited and welcomed. The Community Companion is not possible without your submissions.

It has been some time since we have had a Community Companion. This first edition of this year was put together on the fly. Please forgive the typos, grammatical errors, and other insufficiencies. They are the editors fault.

Editor:

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Assistants: