

Community Companion

QUAKER MEETING HOUSE
3960 WINDING WAY, CINCINNATI OH 45229-1950

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Queries for Third Month:

What helps me seek Divine guidance in business meeting? How does our meeting seek and follow the group's spiritual discernment in our meetings for business?

This gathered worship, as Quakers call it, is not only absence of noise. Gathered worship springs from the reverent, silent expectation that God will come among the people. The silence deepens as we feel ourselves drawn beautifully to God and each other. Our hearts and souls burst with thanksgiving—a thanksgiving best expressed by silence. Silence growing from awe is the natural human response to hints of the Divine.
J. Brent Bill



Miami Quarterly Meeting Feb. 16,
2020 at Miami Meeting in
Waynesville OH

After worshipping in the old red brick Meetinghouse, the 3 of us from Community joined 40 or so others for a wonderful carry in lunch. I sat near Al McGrew, Dayton Meeting, the Quaker Earthcare Witness representative who is also Jean Stoffregen's nephew! For those who remember Jean, one of our co-founders, her papers about the Nuremberg Trial are at Earlham College

After good fellowship, we circled up for our program led by Eastern Hills Meeting and based on the Pendle Hill Pamphlet, Members One of Another by Thomas Gates. The handout was very interesting by itself.

The Business Meeting followed. Nominating Committee is seeking "candidates" for the following: 1. Development Committee 2. Wider Quaker Bodies such as Friends General Conference, American Friends Service Committee, and Friends World Committee on Consultation 3. Assistant Treasurer. Planning Committee announced the plenary speakers as our own Rachel Ernst Stahlhut and her work with FGC, as well as Cathy Roma (from Yellow Springs Meeting) who will focus on her prison ministry. Jt . Quarter Meeting will be held Oct. 17-18 at Happy Hollow and will try out "pay as you're led." The basic cost per person is around \$70 so the hope is this will be available/accessible to more people, especially families who don't get a child discount like they do at Annual Sessions. Some items were postponed until May as the treasurer wasn't present but also MQ nominations as we forgot until the end. Next meeting is May 17th at Yellow Springs Meeting focused on State of the Meeting reports.

Meeting Officers

Presiding Clerk: Doug Burks

Assistant Clerk: Mary Anne Curtiss

Recording Clerk: Lisa Cayard

Assist. Recording Clerk: Deborah Jordan

Treasurer: Lynn Funk

Web Clerk: Eira Tansey

Archivist: John Sniegocki

Directory Editor: David Funck

Statistician: Eugene Marquis

Assistant Statistician: Paul Buckley

Jean Stoffregen

Jean Stoffregen was a long-time member of Community Friends. Though she led an eventful life that had great impact she seldom talked about her past. She was outgoing and enjoyed talking and having discussions with all. She enjoyed life and lived her beliefs.

Jean Elizabeth (McGrew) Stoffregen was born in Chicago, Illinois, on October 14, 1919. After graduating (1936) from York Community High School, in Elmhurst, Illinois, she enrolled at Indiana University. Stoffregen graduated, Phi Beta Kappa, with an A.B. from I.U. in 1940.

Jean Stoffregen joined the Fellowship of Reconciliation and traveled to Washington to protest WWII in the early 1940s. In 1941, she enrolled at the Law School of the University of Chicago, before transferring to the Indiana University Law School in the summer of 1941. She received her J.D. from the law school in 1942.

Stoffregen began her legal career clerking for Indiana Supreme Court Justice Frank Richman, before working for the Diamond Chain and Manufacturing Company in Indianapolis. In 1947, Judge Richman, who had been appointed Judge of the American Military Tribunal, in Nuremberg, Germany, asked Stoffregen if she would assist him. Stoffregen became one of the few women to work on the trials. Additionally, she traveled throughout the wore-torn European continent, assisting residents displaced by the war with emigration documentation and processing. Upon her return to the U.S., she continued her humanitarian efforts to assist refugees and immigrants in their efforts to rebuild their lives.

After her marriage to David Stoffregen, in 1949, she joined her husband in the practice of Quakerism for the next sixty years and remained active in causes relating to peace and social justice. While in her 60's she went to graduate school and earned a master's degree in Social Work. Jean McGrew Stoffregen died on October 4, 2008

Deborah Jordan

<https://www.repository.law.indiana.edu/notablealumni/98/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean_Stoffregen



Community Friends Meeting

March 2020

Sunday, March 1

10:00am

Worship

11:30am

Potluck lunch

Monday, March 2

10:30am

Book Discuss on Holy Silence

Sunday, March 8

10:00am

Worship

11:30am

Business Meeting

Sunday, March 15

10:00am

Worship

Second Hour: Nonviolent or Compassionate Communication - What it is, how it fits with Quakers, and an interactive exercise. Presented by Pamela Wilz, a former attender of Community Friends

Sunday, March 22

10:00am

Worship

Second Hour: Race: the Power of an Illusion. Beth Rosen will be hosting a second hour about racism on March 22nd. We'll watch part 1 of "Race, the Power of an Illusion", a 3 part PBS series, followed by a brief discussion. I personally found this series to be interesting, informative, and very watchable. I hope you'll join me.

Sunday, March 29

10:00am

Worship

Second Hour: Eileen Crowe's Spiritual Journey

Friends Committee on National Legislation FCNL

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.

FCNL's strategic lobbying gets results. From the creation of the Peace Corps and passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, FCNL has been pivotal to some of our country's landmark legislation. Our power stems from the integrity of our positions, our effective lobbying in Washington, and our committed grassroots network.

Advocacy Teams are Quakers and friends from across the country who use their power as constituents to make change in Washington. Community Friends Meeting hosts the Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky Advocacy Team.



New Inreach Groups Forming This Spring

Contact Paul Buckley

Faithfulness Group(s) – Paul Buckley

The goal of this group is to launch one or more faithfulness groups. We will start by meeting all together **once** to familiarize ourselves with and practice the elements of a faithfulness group:

- Learning to quiet our own minds and our inner commentary as we listen to others.
- Listening without judgment, analysis, or opinions.
- Being quietly present and allowing the sacredness of the other person and of the moment to fill our attention.
- Putting aside the urge to ask questions out of curiosity, intellectual reflection, or emotion.
- Asking questions that evoke spiritual deepening; seeking the subtle movements and whispered guidance of the divine voice within.

We will gather briefly after meeting for worship on February 23 to choose a time to meet.

Practicing the Examen – Tim Leonard

The Examen is a technique for prayerful reflection on the events of our day in order to detect the Holy Spirit's presence and discern God's direction for us. It is an ancient practice that can help us see the divine hand at work in our whole experience. The Examen facilitates an awareness that we are living in the presence of God. A person can practice it for 10 or 20 minutes in the evening or morning or both. The group will study this process and practice it over a three week period to see if it suits you as a regular spiritual practice.

We will meet on three successive Monday evenings 7PM-8:30 on 2/24, 3/2, and 3/9.

Making the Psalms Yours – Franchot Ballinger

After exploring what a chosen Old Testament Psalm means to us individually, each person will rewrite the Psalm in their own words. This is a spiritual practice, not a creative writing exercise, so we won't be judging writing ability but will be sharing in each other's spiritual lives. At the first meeting, we will decide how to choose Psalms.

7:30-9PM on Thursday evenings, once a week starting 2/20 (organizational meeting), ending 3/26.

Sanctuary and Torture – Mary Anne Curtiss

Community Friends Meeting

March 2020

Inreach Group for purposes of helping our Congolese family and learning more about torture and asylum. Activities will include help with fundraising, driving, and providing a social event for our family.

One weekas hosts—either February 16 or February 23—and meeting together to learn about gross violations of human rights & how we can make a small difference.

The Family: Discussion and Reading Group – Doug Burks

Few can say that family relationships are not without their ups and down. The ways we relate to our parents, spouses, and children are complex. This is also true of extended family. Family brings great joy and great frustration. The intricate and complex relationships within a family change over time as children grow and couples mature and age. This group will focus on the dynamics of family life and relationships by reading articles and selections of Quaker writers and by members bringing their experiences to the discussion. For each session there will be a short reading to help lead the group into discussion. As we move forward the group will decide which specific topics around family life to center on.

We will meet on the first Monday of each month at 10:30 A.M. in the Meetinghouse, starting on Monday April 6, 2020.

Experiment with Light: A Quaker Meditation Practice for Inner Guidance and Discernment – Paulette Meier

Are you seeking inner guidance for some issue or concern in your life? Might you be interested in a mediation practice that can help you see beyond your own ego, one that aims to get to the very bottom of issues in your life and point the way forward? “Experiment with Light” is a contemporary Quaker practice based on an understanding of the profound spiritual transformation that the founding 17th century Quakers experienced by stilling the mind and focusing the heart on “the Light within.”

We will begin with 10 minutes of chanting Quaker quotes and move into this meditation practice. The meditation is quite simple, starting with deep centering and emptying the mind of thoughts, then proceeding for about 40 minutes through five questions, spaced out between 5-6 minutes each, leaving the awareness open to what is shown. With such an amazingly simple process, its power is all the more remarkable! The group takes time to journal their experiences and to voluntarily share what emerged for them. The total time takes about 2 to 2.5 hours, depending on the size of the group and the amount of sharing.

The group will meet monthly with the day and time to be set by those who sign up.

Midweek Meditation (continuing from Fall) – Paul Buckley

Meeting place: A quiet place in your own home, outdoors, or wherever

Description: This is an entirely virtual group. Each week on Wednesday, a brief reading from a Quaker spiritual source will be sent by email as a cue for participants to spend half an hour (more or less) in quiet contemplation and spiritual refreshment.

Writing to Prisoners

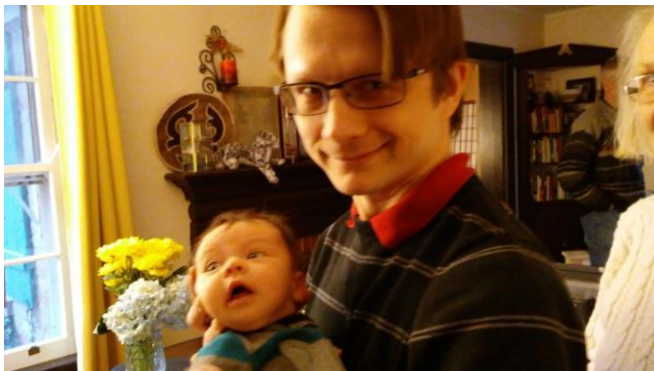
Did you know...

The Writing to Prisoners Inreach Group, which started September 24, 2019, has sent 21 letters to six different men on Death Row, five in Chillicothe and one in Warren Co. Correctional psychiatric facility. We have received back 13 letters. One of our letters was sent back by the prison for having a picture made with colored pencils! It is fair to anticipate that none of our pen pals is ever going to be free. None of them claim innocence. One was convicted at age 18 and has been on Death Row for 36 years.

Their personalities range from bright and engaged to sad and limited, but even the latter wrote “your letters give me something to look forward to”. One thing they all agree on, prison food is just terrible, largely consisting of ground up turkey parts. Any visit or little bit of money is appreciated, as then they can get vending machine food, which is a big step up.

Our group consists of Don Rucknagel, Jennifer Snow Wolff, Andrew Boniface, Evie Hoffmann, and myself, Mary Anne Curtiss. Some of us meet together to write, as it helps keep us going.

“But when saw we thee in prison and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” (Matt. 25: 38-40)



Sid and Celandine



Richard and Eric



Community Friends Meeting Meeting for Business Second Month 9, 2020

Present: Doug, Mary Anne, Lisa, Eugene, Don, Tim, Paul, Eric, Sue, Eira, Bill, Andrew, Lynn, David, and John.

1. **Opening worship:** The meeting opened with centering worship.
2. **Community Committee:** No report
3. **Treasurer's Report:** Lynn shared that she is feeling overwhelmed with all the tasks that must be accomplished at the beginning of the new year, including transfers between various funds, sending out tax letters, and transferring the QuickBooks spreadsheets into an Excel file. The excess above our 6% budget to bank balance ratio at end of 2019 was \$3,814.32 which is transferred from the general fund into the building reserve fund. Also \$5,692.22 in investment gains from the Parnassus fund has increased the building reserve fund. \$9,713.27 in interest will also be credited from the other Parnassus fund into the general fund. A revised front page of the treasurer's report will be brought to the March business meeting. We are currently at 7% of expenses on hand with a goal of 6%. Property taxes were paid, and parent bodies were paid. Appreciation was expressed to Lynn for all this work. There was discussion regarding whether tax letters were necessary, and it was decided that if anyone needed a tax letter to please request one. The report was accepted.
4. **Minute of Appreciation:** The clerk proposed a minute to express the meeting's profound appreciation for the important work of our treasurer, Lynn
5. **Peace and Social Concerns Committee:** Tim reported that the committee is beginning the process of discernment of our meeting's priorities for the next two years for the work of FCNL. The committee wants to alert the meeting to the housing crisis in Cincinnati. There is a shortage of about 40,000 housing units in Hamilton County. Housing is the current priority of MARCC (Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition.) Tim handed out the list of FCNL priorities and encouraged Friends to do research and select our top three priorities for the committee to use for making recommendations. The report was accepted.
6. **Library Committee:** John noted that we received a new Pendle Hill pamphlet on Spiritual Gifts, the Beloved Community, and Covenants. The report was accepted.

7. **Stewardship:** Mary Anne reported that Stewardship Committee is having difficulties, which are being addressed by Ministry and Counsel. The committee has not met. The report was accepted.
8. **Religious Development Committee:** Lisa reported that the committee met on February 2 and reviewed with great joy the growing number of children who are attending First Day School! For the past three weeks there have been 6 to 8 children in the primary class, and 3 to 4 younger children in the nursery! Hannah and Lynn are available to assist with child care and teaching as needed. The committee expressed gratitude to Mary Anne, who is doing an amazing job teaching the primary class! She reports that the children really relate to the Bible stories about the lost sheep and the prodigal daughter. The committee is working on developing a flyer for visitors with information about programming for children. The committee was asked to share this flyer to be posted on our web site. The report was accepted.
9. **Clerk's Report:** The clerk reported that Eugene and others completed the meeting's Statistical report and submitted it to Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting. Also, MARCC expressed appreciation for using our space for the ID project. House and Grounds and Stewardship Committee are asked to consider the ongoing sustainability of supporting the Meetinghouse property, by gathering key information. David offered to convene this meeting of both committees. After gathering financial and facility information, a report will be shared at Business Meeting and further consideration will be undertaken.
10. **House and Grounds Committee:** No report
11. **Unity with Nature Committee:** Bill reported that the committee showed the film "Paris to Pittsburgh" on January 17 and had 25-30 people attend. The film was followed by questions and discussion. The film showed various locations around the U.S. with increasing damage due to rising seawater, fires, and flooding related to climate change, and the efforts of many cities to live up to the Paris climate accord. The next second hour in April will focus on spiritual inspiration in the natural world. There will be an online sustainability conference on February 22. The report was accepted.
12. **Outreach Committee:** No report
13. **Statistician Report:** Doug reported that the report was completed and submitted to OVYM. Deborah Jordan noted that the OVYM statistician asked for age brackets, and she provided her best guess on ages. Questions were raised about how this statistical information is used, and some clarifying information was shared regarding suggested financial contributions to the Yearly Meeting, and the historical record of Yearly Meeting membership and attendance at meeting through the years. The report was accepted.
14. **Web Clerk:** Eira reported that she is implementing the new language on the meeting's website. There is more information about what Second Hour is, about child care, and she is in the process of creating a new proxy email address that is forwarded to the clerk. The report was accepted.
15. **Membership Transfer for Evie:** A letter was received from Vassalboro Quarterly Meeting in Maine, to transfer the membership of Evangeline J.B. (Evie) Hoffmann from North Fairfield Monthly Meeting, Vassalboro Quarterly Meeting, New England Yearly Meeting (NEYM) to

Community Friends Meeting. Vassalboro Quarterly Meeting is in the process of laying down North Fairfield Friends Meeting. Evie moved to Maine to serve as Pastor for North Fairfield Meeting in 1982. NEYM has the custom of recording Gifts of Ministry, and Evie's gift of vocal ministry was formally recorded by North Fairfield Monthly Meeting in February 1984. Since Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting does not maintain the practice of recording gifts of ministry, we propose to simply keep this letter from NEYM as part of Evie's membership records. The transfer of Evie Hoffmann's membership to Community Friends Meeting was approved. Since Evie was not present at the meeting today, it was decided that the clerk would inform her of this action, and invite her to attend business meeting in March, when we would reaffirm this transfer of membership, and appoint a welcoming committee.

16. **Ministry and Counsel Committee:** Lisa reported that Ministry and Counsel Committee met on January 26, and made plans to form a clearness committee that had been requested. The second hour on Faithfulness Groups was well-received. The committee reviewed a letter requesting a transfer of Evie membership to Community Friends Meeting, and will bring it forward for action at business meeting. M&C is developing a list of queries to be shared by email during the week in order to support the quality of worship. Pastoral care concerns were discussed, and committee members were scheduled to be available on the stairs after meeting. The report was accepted.
17. **Adult Religious Education Committee:** Paul reported that the ARE Committee met on February 2, 2020. Major business was consideration of new inreach groups - seven will be offered. The sign-up sheets will be available in the meetinghouse on February 9 and 16. All second hours are booked until June, except for one open date in May. If there is a need, additional second hours can be scheduled in July. Appreciation was expressed for the work of this committee. The report was accepted.
18. **FCNL:** Doug reported that the lobbying group met with Brad Wenstrup's aide about the Authorization of the Use of Military Force. They were surprised to hear that Brad Wenstrup does support the repeal of this authorization! They also discussed the need for additional housing in Cincinnati. The lobbying group will be looking at priorities for topics to address in the future. Mary Anne Curtiss added that she has information about training on how to do lobbying from FCNL. The report was accepted.
19. **Tender Mercies:** David expressed thanks to the meeting for ongoing support for this ministry. He noted that Tender Mercies has been named one of the top ten places to work in the city. They will soon be opening another facility. The residents are very thankful for the home-cooked meals our meeting provides. The report was accepted.
20. **MARCC Delegates Council:** Doug shared a report about the work of the Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition. They are seeking funding for the Housing Trust Fund by collecting signatures on a petition to put this initiative on the November 2020 ballot. Individuals are sought to collect signatures outside polling locations on primary day, March 17. Three organizations are working together on this initiative. Doug asked if there was support in the meeting to participate in this effort. Friends expressed concern that we should read the wording of the petition before minuting our support, but individuals may work on this effort as led.

21. **Miami Quarterly Meeting** will meet next Sunday at Miami Meeting in Waynesville, with the program on “Members One of Another” provided by Eastern Hills meeting. The report was accepted.
22. **Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting:** Eric reported that the Executive Committee met by Zoom on Feb. 1. There is a new coordinator of the Quaker archives at the Watson Library at Wilmington College, Elizabeth House. There is ongoing discussion about the process of monthly meetings bringing names for YM Nominating Committee members to Executive Committee for approval. The 200th Yearly Meeting Sessions will be held June 17-21, 2020 at Earlham College with the theme “Embracing our Call to Faith, Imagining Our Shared Future.” Joint Quarterly Meeting will be held October 17-18, 2020 at Happy Hollow Camp. It was noted that there is an unresolved conflict within OVYM involving the interacting work of several committees. Mediation attempts are continuing. The YM Clerk drew attention to the practice of “Noticing” outlined by Melissa Foster. The report was accepted.
23. **Friends General Conference:** No report
24. **Pickett Fund:** Doug shared that the Pickett Endowment Fund has laid itself down, and is transitioning stewardship of its assets to other Quaker institutions that will continue the development of Quaker leadership.
25. **Announcements:** Mary Anne announced that our meeting will be supporting the Congolese family again this month, and especially invited help with coordinating opportunities for active social outlets and interactions with other children for their daughter.
26. **Approval of Minutes:** The minutes were read and approved.

First Day School

The Primary Class this month has been a cornucopia of 12 wonderful children. Children were given their choice of whether to attend the Primary “Bible Study” class or the infant “Play” class, so everyone had a good time. We made a detailed landscape of a lost sheep (see illustration), planted sunflower and squash seeds for the Parable of the Sower, and made cookies to illustrate Abigail feeding David in the wilderness. Sadly, we cannot print the names or faces of foster and former foster children, though they were a gracious mainstay of the program. But here are some of our flock



The Bible got a real work-out this quarter! Additionally, the children had a variety of religious opinions and life practices, and helped each other discuss them with real engagement. If you want to help our children move into the future with a solid background in Bible stories and parables, as well as personal exploration and “Quaker talk”, please talk to Jim Rhein or Lisa Cayard, co chairs of the Religious Development Committee.



Parable of the Sower

Mary Anne Curtiss

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.

Publication every first day of the Month.

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