

# **Great Plains Yearly Meeting**

**of the Religious Society of Friends**

**Minutes of the  
One Hundred Tenth Annual Assembly  
Fifth-day, Sixth Month, First, 2017  
held at  
Heartland Friends Meeting  
Wichita, Kansas**

**Yearly Meeting Handbook  
Revised October 2014**

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One Hundred Tenth Annual Assembly  
Fifth-day, Sixth Month, First, 2017  
hosted by Heartland Friends Meeting**

**“UNIFYING OUR COMMUNITY WITH COURAGE  
AND LOVE TO MOVE FORWARD TOGETHER”**

**Thursday, June 1, 2017**

**GPYM 17-01 Friends Gather in Wichita, Kansas**

Registration began at 12:30, with a meeting for worship starting at 1:30. Committee meetings followed at 2:00 for Finance and Home Missions and 3:30 for Ministry & Counsel and Nominating, with dinner following at 5:00.

**GPYM 17-02 Opening Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business**

The 110<sup>th</sup> Annual Sessions of Great Plains Yearly Meeting began at 6:00. Presiding Clerk, LaVonna Loesch welcomed Friends and led us in a yoga-like exercise to learn the mountain pose, demonstrating the value and need to be grounded as we move into life. This can assist in opening space for the Spirit to teach us. She asked us to consider how it feels to be grounded and the responses of: secure, balanced, prepared, focused and connected were shared. Dorlan Bales, Assistant Clerk, and Cheryl Mallonee, Recording Clerk, joined her at the clerk's table.

Roll call of monthly meetings: Central City – Steve McConnell, Lisa McConnell, Neil Mesner and Grayce Mesner. David Nagle brought greetings from Frankie Sue Johnson and LaHunta from Council House. Heartland - Dorlan Bales, Kathryn Damiano, Jim Perkins, Connie Adams, Laura Dungan, Dean Young, and Angela Young; University Friends – Cheryl Mallonee, Paul Mallonee, Don Mallonee, Linda Mallonee, Liz Wine, Molly Loesch, LaVonna Loesch, Greg Newby, Rhonda Newby; Hominy – Angela Brown, David Nagle and Beth Green-Nagle; Topeka – John Wine, Sue Wine and David Ozaki; Lubbock – Jock Cameron and Sara Scribner.

Visitors to our sessions were introduced: Loring Henderson from Oread Monthly Meeting, Lawrence, KS; Jon Krieg from AFSC – Des Moines; Wess Daniels, Director of Friends Center and Quaker Studies at Guilford College, Greensboro NC; Jason Minnix of Austin TX, a traveling elder with Wess; Frank Barch, Presiding Clerk of FGC Central Committee, also a member of Schuylkill Monthly Meeting of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Minutes of travel were read for Frank from FGC and for Jon from AFSC. Wess presented a letter of introduction from Camas Friends Church, Camas WA.

LaVonna shared that the Extracts envelope is available for use again this year. Friends are encouraged to write down meaningful or amusing quotes from the sessions to be shared later. The envelope for Extracts will be on the clerk's table throughout the sessions. Epistle writing volunteers were sought and friends were asked to consider this while the State of Society reports were read. State of Society reports were shared from Central City, Heartland, Hominy, University Friends and Lubbock. (See appendix.) Sue Wine shared on behalf of Topeka Friends Meeting. They have a new attender who was in prison half of his life. This has been an unexpected enrichment for the meeting. Their membership is stable, averaging 12-14 in attendance on most Sundays. After Friends had time to consider being on the Epistle committee, Sue Wine and Beth Green-Nagle agreed to work on this together.

LaVonna went over some housekeeping items about the layout of the building, where to find the bathrooms, checking in at the registration table and signing the 'big book' in the meetinghouse entryway. If Friends wish, they may use #GPYM2017 when posting items on social media.

### **GPYM 17-03 Keynote Message from C. Wess Daniels**

We opened the evening session by singing two hymns: Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God and Open My Eyes, That I May See. We then settled into waiting worship.

Wess read from Revelation 1, then asked what we thought of when we hear of this book of the Bible. Some of the thoughts shared were: doom, end of time, codes, confusing imagery, warning, encouragement, perplexing, war, supercool that churches have angels, NOT bedtime scripture, not written to comfort, the Harlot/Beast, disagreement. Wess described Revelation as 'evacuation theology'. He would like to reorient us to the text and to try to re-understand



our own times and interpret age-old human patterns. How do we act in the age of great challenge?

Wess shared that when he started studying the book of Revelation, it was to predict the end of the world as many do. Then he went through a period of avoiding it altogether due to the harm it had done. The Holy Spirit led him to a new perspective when a friend encouraged him to challenge himself to learn more about the things you know nothing about. Things that baffle you. The book has been used to identify us vs. them; that God is a violent God who must not be crossed. Enemies would be tortured. But Revelation actually has nothing to do with the end of the world. Small minority faith communities can survive and resist empire. The text can be used as a tool to resist empire.

Two points that Wess wanted to cover were the Audience that the text intended and the Two Religions. We, today, are not the intended audience of Revelation. It represents first century Rome and, John of Patmos is writing to the seven churches of Asia to help his friends survive. The vision is for the community. It was written by and for marginalized people and we are not in the same context as 2000 years ago. White, middle-class males of today's society are not in the same place as these marginalized people. We need to adjust our 'lenses' to look at this in a different way. The audience was the oppressed and Revelation sympathizes with the suffering.

The Two Religions are the religion of Empire and the Religion of the Lamb that was Slain. Themes that can be compared in these two religions are: Relationships to others, Economic structure, Worship and Basic social order. In regards to the relationships to others, the Empire is violent and wants to destroy the enemy where the Religion of the Lamb is non-violent and strives to turn strangers into neighbors. The economic structure differs where the Empire believes that wealth should benefit some at the expense of others. They worship the image of Caesar, where the Religion of the Lamb worships the image of God and believes that abundance is a gift for all creation to be shared. Styles of worship differ where the Empire worships idols at temples and there are clear boundaries about who is in and who is out. The Religion of the Lamb is more centered with extended moments of worship in silence and uses hymns to lift of the victims of empire. Social order for the Empire rejects anyone who is different, has hierarchy and strives for sameness – segregating those who threaten them. The Religion of the Lamb views differences as unifying and wants all to participate -- differences are embraced.

Banality of evil is the inability to hear another voice or have a dialog with ourselves or the world. This leads to passivity and giving up. Where is the Spirit inviting the Lamb to have relationships with our enemies, reflect on our worship and build community?

After a period of open worship the evening session came to a close.

### **Friday, June 2, 2017**

#### **GPYM 17-04 Breakfast, Bible Study and Worship**

Breakfast was served by Heartland Friends followed by “Jazz” Bible Study (in the spirit of improvisation) led by Michael Barrett. After a brief break, we settled into worship.

#### **GPYM 17-05 Attention to Business – Session II**

LaVonna gathered us in, reminding us that we are all coming here from different places for a common cause. We then moved in to reports from Friends.

#### **GPYM 17-06 Report – Wichita Friends School**

Pam Chambers, head of Wichita Friends School, shared. When she started as HOS, there were 23 students enrolled at the beginning of the school year and by the end of the year, 31 students were enrolled. WFS is committed to small class sizes to give each child an individualized lesson plan, teaching Quaker Values, and academic success. They provide an inclusive, supportive and respectful environment, and teach that there is that of God in each one of us. She is grateful for GPYM’s support of WFS, both spiritually and financially. (See appendix for full report)

#### **GPYM 17-07 Report – Friends United Meeting**

Cliff Loesch reported about Friends United Meeting (FUM). He has served as clerk for the past 6 years and is nearing the end of his term and they are searching for a new clerk. The triennial sessions are approaching next month and will be held here in Wichita KS, mostly on the campus of Friends

University. He wants to deeply thank Connie Adams for her help in making a welcome gift for attendees of the conference. They have made quilted ‘mug rugs’ with a sunflower theme with blue skies. Six quilters from Kansas and one from the northwest have been making these. There will also be many quilts on display at Friends University for people to enjoy. Volunteers from UFM and Heartland will help with transportation and last minute details are starting to fall into place. Registration is still open if you want to sign up. Please feel free to come to the evening sessions without fees, as we are the host yearly meeting this year. Three out of the four speakers at the Triennial have been speakers at GPYM: Colin Saxton, Jan Wood and C. Wess Daniels. Miriam Khamadi will be the fourth speaker at these sessions.

Joyce Ajlouny, Ramallah head of school, will be transitioning to AFSC in September. Colin and a candidate for the head of school position are traveling to Ramallah to see if this will be a good fit. Belize has a school for boys who did not pass the test to get into high school. There are about 20 students at the school and they are very cramped for space. After years of discernment, FUM has decided they would like to grow their ministry in Belize. A bigger building has been bought and is currently being remodeled. A Friends worship group is also going to be started. They prefer an American not be sent for this mission. Oscar Mmbali, from Kenya, who is also a presenter at the Stoking the Fire pre FUM Triennial retreat this year, will be going to Belize to undertake this. This is a first for Friends, to have a Kenyan go overseas to do mission work.

There is a concern about many yearly meetings all around the United States that are fracturing. North Carolina, Wilmington, Northwest and Western Yearly Meetings are all going through possible splits, which is very troublesome. FUM is trying to be supportive where they can. Colin Saxton will be leaving FUM and this is very sad for FUM. Cliff feels he has been the most effective person the past 6 years. The job requires lots of travel and it takes a toll on family. Colin and his wife are feeling a call back to Oregon to be closer to family. Cliff is the head of a search committee to find a new FUM General Secretary and an announcement will hopefully be made at the triennial in July.

### **GPYM 17-08 Report: GPYM Home Missions**

Dorlan Bales reported for the Home Missions Committee. He expressed gratitude to Friends for this new vitality in GPYM. Topeka’s new affiliation

and Lubbock's relationship with GPYM are exciting. Young adults are taking on roles of leadership, Angela Brown is the nominating committee clerk, Michelle Barrett has taken on leadership roles at UFM, and Molly Loesch is becoming more involved in the YM which is wonderful to see. UFM is involved in Family Promise, an organization that assists homeless families get back on their feet. There are over 200 affiliates of Family Promise around the country. Heartland has initiated a new ministry by creating an FCNL Wichita Advocacy Team. There is new energy for engaging on the political level. Training for this happened by phone sessions during March to learn how to talk to our representatives about issues. The FCNL Advocacy Teams are focusing on restraining the military budget. The political representatives appreciate the Quaker way of wanting to build relationships and listening.

Financial support to the Home Mission budget is growing. A good portion of the budget comes from the farm property in Nebraska and the 2017 budget has been met. Fall gatherings are still happening in Nebraska, Oklahoma and Kansas.

#### **GPYM 17-09 Report – Ministry & Counsel**

Cliff Loesch reported for Ministry & Counsel about our excitement for Topeka Friends joining GPYM and the preparatory associate status of Lubbock. Inter-visitation among our yearly meeting was discussed and will be an item of focus.

#### **GPYM 17-10 Report - Nominating Committee**

Angela reported for Nominating that they are working on nominations and will focus on getting representatives for the upcoming FUM Triennial.

Friends were released to take a quick break.

#### **GPYM 17-11 Report – Treasurer**

Connie Adams brought the treasurer's reports. In round numbers, our assets are \$47,000 in the bank with \$23,000 operating fund and \$24,000 in the Home Missions fund. \$37,000 of the total assets is restricted: the farm property in Nebraska, student loan fund, Webb fund, and travel funds. \$9,000 is the average income from the farm each year. We ended up about \$1,600 in the

black at the end of 2016 because travel expenses were less than expected. More details will come later during these sessions.

### **GPYM 17-12 Report – Finance Committee**

Steve McConnell shared for the Finance Committee. We have money in the bank and this is a good thing. There is a need to encourage earlier registration so meals etc. can be adequately planned for. Travel reimbursement rates were discussed and they are working on the budget, fundraising strategies, possible endowment funds and encouraging bequests.

### **GPYM 17-13 Report: Home Missions, Part 2**

Part two of the Home Missions report was shared by Laura Dungan. They are working on plans for the Initiative and came up with many ‘cross branches’ of Friends in the Heartland. They are as follows: **Kansas**– Unaffiliated meetings -Oread Friends in Lawrence, Independence in SE Kansas is starting up worship group, Manhattan; Affiliated meetings - Topeka, Heartland and University Friends Meeting. **Nebraska** – Unaffiliated – Omaha and Lincoln; Affiliated - Central City. **Oklahoma** – Unaffiliated – Wyandotte, Kickapoo, Chandler, Kiamechee, Tulsa, Norman and Stillwater; Affiliated – Hominy and Council House. Work days at Council House have happened and another one is coming up later this month. **Texas** – discernment process is happening with Lubbock. Hominy has demonstrated to us that visitation is vital to keeping us alive. The Spirit gathers us together and is valuable to keep us from feeling isolated. Visitation is going to be focused on going forward. What does this need to look like and what has been helpful? They want to develop guidelines to implement this project. What types of gatherings or visitation is needed and what gifts can be shared? A reporting process would need to be put in place to keep track of progress. Candidates to be visitors are: Cliff Loesch, Dorlan Bales, David Nagle, Beth Green-Nagle, Jim Perkins, Cheryl Mallonee, Lynn Zeleski, Steve McConnell, Lisa McConnell, Connie Adams, Kathryn Damiano, LaVonna Loesch, Dean Young, Angela Young, Stan Brown, Angela Brown, Rhonda Newby, Greg Newby, Dave Newman, Michelle Barrett, Michael Barrett, Patty Savely and Molly Loesch. If you want to be involved in this, please let Laura know.

### **GPYM 17-14 Shared Moment of Gratitude for Laura Dungan**

Friends were invited to share in a moment of gratitude for Laura Dungan – Released Friend, serving the Revitalization & Leadership Development Initiative. Molly Loesch presented a power-point presentation showcasing the past few years of Laura’s work among the yearly meeting. Laura’s children, Paul, Lezlee and Scott sang while we enjoyed the memories. The Initiative started in 2012, the anchor committee was formed, and then the work began in 2013 with a focus on Discovery, Discernment and Implementation. The initiative is now overseen by the Home Missions committee which is on to new and exciting work. Friends expressed messages of love and gratitude for all of Laura’s ground work, and we are encouraged to all answer God’s call for work that lies ahead. Laura was then presented with a Chicago Peace Rose to plant in her garden.

We then broke for lunch, enjoying Key Lime pie first before going downstairs for the meal.

### **GPYM 17-15 Attention to Business – Session III**

Important, vital work is being done and we want it to continue, so some of the reports that were to be presented during this session will be moved to tomorrow. Visitors Gail & John Fletcher from Norman OK have arrived and were welcomed.

### **GPYM 17-16 Report – Ministry & Counsel**

Ministry & Counsel – Cliff Loesch, clerk reported. He will continue on as clerk for another year. Cliff, with Dorlan Bales and Laura Dungan representing Home Missions committee, will be working together on logistics for strengthening visitation within the yearly meeting.

### **GPYM 17-17 Report – Nominating Committee**

Nominating Committee – Angela Brown, clerk. The clerks for next years’ sessions will remain the same: LaVonna Loesch, presiding clerk; Dorlan Bales, assistant clerk; Cheryl Mallonee, recording clerk. This was approved. The following appointments were approved: Angela Brown and Cheryl Mallonee to continue as Trustees for the yearly meeting; Connie Adams will be the 2018 minute editor and publisher; proofreaders for the minutes will be

David Nagle, LaVonna Loesch and Dorlan Bales; Dorlan Bales will serve as an alternate to FCNL and Cliff Loesch will serve on the FUM board. (See appendix for full report)

### **GPYM 17-18 Report – American Friends Service Committee**

AFSC – David Nagle and Jon Krieg reporting. 100 years of service was celebrated this year. It was highlighted in the April 2017 Friends Journal. AFSC started in 1917 when about 100 people were trained and sent overseas to drive ambulances in France during WW1. The annual meeting also provided many workshops and academic presentations at the sessions that provided many challenging and inspiring ideas to consider. A very spiritual experience. AFSC has been and continues to be a prophetic voice for Friends and our world. (See appendix for full report)

Jon shared that he loves coming and being a part of our spiritual community. He works for the Midwest region of AFSC and is based out of Des Moines. A letter to all Friends in the Midwest outlines the work being done and is available. There is a new director in Des Moines AFSC office, Erica Johnson. They are working on protection for those at risk of deportation. Building a community of faith is a rewarding thing to be a part of. They are working on getting a better budget in order. Joyce Ajlouny will be the new general secretary for AFSC starting in September. Fundraising will probably start ramping up very soon.

Neil Mesner shared that his father, Raymond Mesner, was among the first groups of AFSC workers to go rebuild France after the war in 1917. Also of note, the Nobel Peace prize was awarded to AFSC in 1947.

### **GPYM 17-19 Report – Friends World Committee, Section of the Americas**

Beth Green-Nagle, representative to Friends World Committee for Consultation Section of the Americas, gave a report. Carl McGruder, Carennia Criana, Jonathan Vogel Borne shared vocal ministry. Carennia spoke on the parable of the talents, which demonstrates resistance by the third servant to Empire, who is the Master in the story. The "lazy" servant is the voice of the Light that reveals God the true Master.

Travelling ministers were commissioned. Friends can apply to become a travelling minister under the auspices of FWCC. Meetings can request a visitor to speak or facilitate a workshop.

Beth continues to serve as a translator for FWCC. Parity between English and Spanish has been achieved, with minutes published in both languages in parallel columns. She is also part of the Naming Committee that selects the Section of the Americas Nominating Committee and led a workshop with Cristella Martinez. People were divided into groups of three -- one bilingual, one a Spanish speaker, and one an English speaker. The groups were given questions to discuss that helped them know one another more deeply.

October 1 is Quaker Day. Beth encouraged American Friends to participate by teaching Quaker history, sending a photo to the FWCC office, and sending a contribution as an important way of working across Friends branches. (See appendix for full report)

### **GPYM 17-20 Report – Friends Committee on National Legislation**

Angela Jake Brown, representative, reported for FCNL. FCNL has a number of focus issues: Now is the Time; Love Thy Neighbor, No Exceptions; creating and supporting Advocacy Teams; Immigration, welcoming the stranger; Economic Justice; cutting Pentagon spending; Creating Space for Common Ground; Climate Change. Gail and John Fletcher from Norman, OK Friends Meeting, served as South Central YM representatives to the FCNL annual meeting. Gail observed that Friends have a gift of staying on task and on target!

Clerk LaVonna offered time for committees who need it to meet at 4:45. Jane and Keith Batterman from Topeka Friends introduced themselves. A tour of Wichita Friends School will start at 5:30 for those who have not been inside its expanded building.

### **GPYM 17-21 Friday Evening Meeting for Worship**

Joseph Nagle, saxophone and Cliff Loesch, upright bass, played a jazz prelude. Friends sang from the hymnal. LaVonna invited new attendees to introduce themselves.



## **GPYM 17-22 C. Wess Daniels, Revelation**

Wess Daniels reviewed what he had presented about the main themes of the Book of Revelation last night: house churches in what is now Turkey were the immediate audience of the book; the writer is describing two religions, the religion of Empire versus the religion of the Lamb who was slain.

We have within us both impulses (to follow Empire and to follow the Lamb), we are victims and victimizers. God wants to heal us from the religion of Empire, both in our ways of being and ways of acting. Something in us is addicted to winning at all costs, even if it means crushing someone else in the process. There is also something in us that is about learning how to play, build relationship, and lose with a playful spirit. The religion of Empire leaves a trail of victims. The religion of Christ the Lamb brings community and healing. The Book of Revelation has four themes.

### **1. Relationship to others**

Pain that is not transformed is transmitted. Though scapegoating is assigning blame where it does not literally belong, it was progress in human history. It put a space between communities and their faults by symbolically placing the sins of the people on a goat as sin bearer that was driven out of the camp. This corporate action brought relief from the cycle of violence. Humans were not offering a sacrifice to God, but rather God was providing a way to overcome the community's violence. The God Jesus revealed is not Zeus, a violent God who zaps people.

Empire replaces animal scapegoats with human bodies. It needs the “them”, someone to point fingers at. Image of the Lamb who was slain shows up 28 times in Revelation, the main point of the book. Reveals that the scapegoat is innocent, even more, is the victim who forgives, who loses gracefully and steps out of the system of violence.

### **2. Economics**

Revelation 18 is the cargo list of empire, lists what the ships were bringing for sale. Empire economics are an entire system of oppression, from cinnamon to humans taken from conquered lands. What we see is not the sign of a broken system, but an Empire's systems that are working all too well. God condemns the nations for war, slavery, and economic exploitation.

### **3. Liturgy/how we worship together**

Chapter 12-15: three scenes of worship. Two liturgies have their respective symbols and ceremonies. The Roman Empire had ritual crucifixions and those who resisted sacrificed in the coliseum as human torches. Today Empire's choreographed acts look different but have the same effect. KKK lynching's

around a cross or the widespread use of torture and solitary confinement. Political theater today thrives on rallying one against the other and builds up to sacrificing Empire's scapegoats. The liturgy of the Lamb, by contrast, is about love and reconciliation.

#### 4. Social Order

Revelation 7. Image of the multitude in verse 9. "After a period of worship, I looked and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from all peoples, tribes, languages, in white robes standing before the throne of the Lamb with palm branches in their hands." They have been crushed by empire, their robes washed in the blood of the Lamb, now being cared for by God. Prophetic literature urged care for the poor, the alien, at margins.

Acts 2. On the Day of Pentecost there was a great diversity of people in Jerusalem, all baptized by the Holy Spirit and able to understand one another despite their various native languages. Acts 10. Peter's vision and command from God not to call profane what God calls sacred, which opened the church to Gentiles. Revelation 9's multitude from every tribe and language, unified around the Lamb.

### **Saturday, June 3, 2017**

#### **GPYM 17-23 Breakfast, Bible Study and Worship**

Following breakfast prepared by Heartland Friends, Michael Barrett led us in Bible study. We then transitioned into our Memorial Service led by Dean Young, remembering Friends who passed away this past year. (See appendix) Dean reminded us that we may be small in number, but not in spirit.

#### **GPYM 17-24 Attention to Business – Session IV**

Evaluation forms were passed out for Friends to complete before they leave.

#### **GPYM 17-25 Statistics Report**

Paul Mallonee presented the Statisticians report which shows that we have grown about 1% overall.

## **GPYM 17-26 Lubbock Friends of Christ Quaker Meeting, Membership**

### **Approval**

Cliff Loesch reported for Ministry & Counsel that communications have been going on with Lubbock Friends during these sessions and it is recommended that Lubbock Friends of Christ Quaker Meeting become a full member of GPYM. This was heartily approved!

## **GPYM 17-27 Operating Budget Proposal for 2018**

Connie Adams & Steve McConnell presented the budget proposal for next year. Expenses outlined included a few increases, one being web development to try and do on-line registration among other things. They also propose adding back gifts to AFSC & FCNL after not doing so for a few years. Annual gifts from monthly meetings were discussed. Individual meetings each decide what they can give and what the Spirit may lead them to contribute. Beth Green-Nagle expressed deep appreciation for the care provided for the children and teens which donations help fund these activities. Many thanks were expressed to the finance committee for a clear report and the budget was approved.

## **GPYM 17-28 Home Missions Budget Proposal for 2018**

Dorlan Bales presented the Home Missions budget proposal. These are exciting times and new energy is happening. This is new process with a learning curve. A communications budget of \$2,000 was proposed for quarterly newsletters and social media needs, with paid consulting expertise to help as needed. A travelling ministry budget of \$2,500 was proposed. This amount proposed would cover regional gatherings and events. They are thinking ahead in planning an event in the fall of 2018 to gather Friends from all the yearly meeting for a broad interest subject. The report and budget were approved.

## **GPYM 17-29 Presentation by Children and Youth**

The pre-school and elementary age children came to share what they have been doing this weekend. They have been learning about the SPICES under the direction of Andrea & Dave Suttle. The youth epistle was presented by Jocelyn Mallonee, Joseph Nagle & Isaac Jake. (See appendix)

### **GPYM 17-30 Nominating Committee – Agency representative nominations**

Angela Brown brought forth the following nominations: to AFSC – Dean Young, and to Quaker Earthcare Witness - John Wine. These were both approved.

### **GPYM 17-31 Invitation to Hominy Friends Meeting for 2018**

Dorlan Bales shared an invitation from Hominy Friends Meeting to host GPYM next year, from May 31 – June 3, 2018, in Hominy, Oklahoma. Eden Grace will be our speaker. This was approved.

LaVonna Loesch shared what workshops for the afternoon were available: FCNL Advocacy Team Panel at 1:30, facilitated by Connie Adams, Dorlan Bales, Susie Ternes and Luke Ternes; Visitation – Deepening Relationships & Making New Friends at 2:45 – facilitated by Laura Dungan and Cliff Loesch; and a Welcome and Celebration of New Monthly Meetings.

Some extracts that were gathered over the past few days were shared. (See appendix.)

### **GPYM 17-32 Greetings to Friends not with us this year**

The clerk gathered names of Friends to send greetings to those who were unable to attend this year: Selma Mesner, Carole Revard, Lynn Zeleski, Marjorie Van Buren, Sarah Jack, Timber White, Don Reeves, Betty Jake & Amelia, Shelli Kadel, Frankie Sue Johnson & LaHunta Thompson, Dorothy Manzer, Faith Kelley, Micah & George Bales, Parker & Chelsea Jackson-Loesch, Brent & Senja Collins, Aryana Jake, Allison and Derek Mammedaty, George McConnell, Sonia Tuma, Rich Maciejewski, Mariah Bradley, Linda Coates, Jean Eden, Lorene Ludy, Dorothy Day, previous keynote speakers Jan Wood, Noah Merrill, Mary Lord, Arthur Larrabee, Sue Regan, Rocky Mountain Yearly Meeting, Mary Heathman - RMYM clerk, and Colin Saxton.

### **GPYM 17-33 Reading of Epistle**

The Epistle was read by Sue Wine (See appendix) and it was approved with great appreciation.

### **GPYM 17-34 Closing Thoughts from the Clerk**

LaVonna Loesch, presiding clerk, shared some closing thoughts. We started grounded and it's carried her through the consideration of change and what that looks like. Change is not always comfortable, but being grounded helps us get through the discomfort. The easy way out is always preferred. To labor to do the hard thing and wait and take the time to relate with each other in a grounded space makes it easier. It provides balance and something that is best for all of us. Give God all the glory and honor for this happening. As we move forward together this next year, remember this grounded place. Move ahead from this teachable space. Lean into the stability of this sacred grounded feeling and do the hard things well. Treasure and hold carefully who we are as we move forward.

### **Afternoon workshops**

#### **GPYM 17-35 FCNL Advocacy Team Panel**

Dorlan Bales, Connie Adams and Susie and Luke Ternes held a panel discussion, starting with sharing a video from FCNL about advocating with members of Congress. Wendell Hendricks, a member of Heartland Friends Meeting, felt Heartland should get involved as a group with something outside their walls. After consideration of various topics, they decided to contact FCNL. An introductory meeting of at least 15 people was needed for FCNL to come out and do a presentation about training to be an advocate. About 35 people ended up coming, 1/3 of them being non-Friends, and 11 signed up for more training which was then done via conference calls.

They learned to tell a brief 90-second story to quickly build a relationship with the representative they want to bring their message to. This year FCNL is focusing on Pentagon spending, so all the advocacy teams around the country are working on this issue currently. There are 50 teams across the country focused on this topic and there are 20 more teams in training.

FCNL has a list of all the representatives and who to contact in each district. The Heartland team has had first visits with all of their representatives' offices and they have impressed our elected officials with the amount of respect they show when they come to lobby. Writing letters to the editor is another way to advocate, along with personal phone calls and emails. FCNL.org has many resources as well.

### **GPYM 17-36 Visitation – Deepening Relationships & Making New Friends**

Cliff Loesch shared about a book he's been reading, "Younger Next Year", which is about taking better care of yourself so you'll be around to enjoy life longer in retirement. The book explains that we are pack animals who were created to live in community, and you can't isolate yourself the last 1/3 of your life. Everybody wants to feel like they are noticed and loved. There is something powerful about connections.

Laura Dungan shared that when doing visitation, it's important to focus on being connected. You need to be present with yourself before you can be present for others. There are two pieces to listening: hearing what they are saying and listening for what is being said. You need to listen with empathy (place yourself in their situation) and non-judgment. If we're too harsh on ourselves, we can be too harsh on others. You need to be willing to tell the truth and share experiences and entrust others to their inner teacher. Showing up and being attentive are key. A handout with guidelines was reviewed and some discussion time followed.

### **GPYM 17-37 Welcome & Celebrating New Monthly Meetings**

Friends gathered to celebrate the two new monthly meetings that have joined GPYM: Topeka Monthly Meeting of Friends and Lubbock Friends of Christ Quaker Meeting. David Nagle read minutes that were prepared, welcoming them to the yearly meeting, and then Friends were invited to sign each Certificate of Welcome and greet members of the new meetings. (See appendix for minutes)

### **GPYM 17-38 Stories to Song Youth Presentation**

Following some fellowship with our new members, Friends gathered again to hear the "Stories to Song" the youth had been working on with Aaron Fowler during the sessions. Isaac Jake, Joseph Nagle and Jocelyn Mallonee interviewed Dean and Angela Young about their lives together and composed a song, "Live in the Light" that described their journey. (See appendix for lyrics) Dean recalled that their first date was May 2, 1969 at 4:30pm. They were in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

Friends then had a supper break with a special cake for dessert commemorating the addition of the two new monthly meetings. Following supper, some jazz and hymns were shared, accompanied by Cliff Loesch (upright bass), Aaron Fowler (guitar), Joseph Nagle (saxophone) and Jocelyn Mallonee (flute).

### **GPYM 17-39 Evening workshop with Wess Daniels**

#### ***The Multitude Today: Renewing Community, Building from Strength and Difference***

Wess asked us to think about what we have done this weekend and what lenses we have used. We've welcomed new members, so where is the Spirit leading us? We broke off into small discussion groups which Jason Minnix, traveling elder for Wess helped facilitate. We were asked to discuss what it means to belong and whether a new community might accept us. He posed the query: Who are the people we've been keeping out that we should let in? God has already put them in our story.

After a period of open worship, we were reminded that God loves us from all nations and we must carry that forward to build the multitude. Was the multitude just those who had resisted the empire or was it everyone? We have to do something every day to keep our hearts open. If we know what our center is, we don't need to set boundaries. Wess also shared his website: [GatheringinLight.com](http://GatheringinLight.com) to obtain more information if we wish. Friends were then at liberty for the evening.

### **Sunday, June 4**

LaVonna Loesch led us in a worship sharing exercise. She first asked us to complete the following statement: "Out of Love, I am willing to..." Friends then compiled a list that included: be patient, hear beyond words, forgive, be wrong, speak up, change my behavior, be quiet and stop talking, love myself, try new things, fail, sacrifice, lose, suffer and accept help. LaVonna reminded us that we are a different yearly meeting than we were 4 days ago. How do we settle in to our new identity?

We then made a list completing the statement: “We are...” The list included: accountants, teachers, farmers, social workers, florists, doctors, artists, grant writers, musicians, volunteers, organizers, Osage, professors, lawyers, seekers, finders, special needs, activists, Christians, ministers, Buddhists, mentors & interns, gay, retired, and agents of God. This is what the multitude looks like.

What can we do as a yearly meeting to support each other? Our strengths as Quakers is in our differences. GPYM is building the Godly Community.

Friends were then invited to join Heartland Friends in their Sunday morning meeting for worship gathering. Following a meaningful worship time, we were then invited to join together for lunch together one more time before travelling home.

### **GPYM 17-40 FUM Triennial representatives**

During our lunch fellowship Nominating clerk Angela Brown brought the recommendation that both David Nagle and Beth Green-Nagle be our GPYM representatives to the upcoming Friends United Meeting Triennial in July. This was approved.

Our time was brought to an end and Friends left with full hearts looking forward to our next gathering together.

### **GPYM Continuing Committee Minutes - Fall 2016**

Sept 24, 2016, Heartland Friends Meeting

M1 – Roll call of members present: LaVonna Loesch, Dorlan Bales, David Nagle, Angela Brown, Steve McConnell, Laura Dungan, Connie Adams, Paul Mallonee, Cheryl Mallonee, Cliff Loesch.

M2- After a period of open worship, Laura Dungan opened our time together by gathering us in a circle. We reviewed minute GPYM09-59 from the 2009 GPYM sessions about how the yearly meeting was in a stagnant state and may be on its last legs. She asked us to discuss whether we think we’re growing or not. A timeline of yearly meeting sessions from 2010 to present was on the wall, resembling the crown and trunk of a tree, showing where each session was held and who the keynote speaker was. Friends were asked to write on sticky notes highlights from each monthly meeting from the past few years to represent the leaves on the tree. There have been gatherings in Nebraska,



Oklahoma and Kansas, and many new activities at each of the monthly meetings.

How have things changed over the past seven years? We are moving forward so things are not stagnant. Steve McConnell pointed out that tradition is not business as usual. Growth is happening in GPYM.

M2 – Presiding Clerk LaVonna Loesch reminded us that appointments for the next year are due Jan. 1, 2017, so committees can function as soon as possible with new members. She also shared some travel plans, including visits to Hominy and Council House in October. We also need to keep in contact with Lubbock and Topeka Friends. If anyone has a desire to go to either of these meetings, please be encouraged to go.

M3- We did a review of this past June's yearly meeting sessions. LaVonna shared some evaluation forms that were completed. The young people being involved and their song with Carol Revard was a highlight. The workshops were amazing. John Muhanji was a vibrant addition to the sessions. Friendly Bible study was enjoyed by many. We appreciated the presence of Mary Heathman, Clerk of Rocky Mountain Yearly Meeting. Mary Lord was a meaningful keynote speaker. She brought powerful and well thought out messages. We were able to see the modeling of a traveling elder, Georgia Fuller, who was with Mary.

Committee meetings were fun, and there were joint meetings between Finance and Home Missions Committees. Monthly meetings made several new appointments to committees for 2016, including young adults. Do we need to allow more time for committee meetings to bring new members up to speed? Angela Brown and Steve McConnell's new clerkships of Nominating and Finance were exciting to see. Finance and Home Missions fundraising ideas may need to be further discussed, perhaps by a new sub-committee.

GPYM sessions speakers for the next two years are lined up: C. Wess Daniels in 2017 and Eden Grace in 2018. We need to start considering who we want to invite for the 2019 sessions. John Calvi, a Quaker healer who works with trauma was suggested. David Nagle expressed his concern for having Native American speakers in the future. LaVonna will reach out John Calvi for 2019. It was also suggested that we contact AFSC to see about Native American

resources for speakers or workshops. Laura Dungan will do this. Howard Macy's name was suggested as a possible speaker.

Dorlan suggested that we have more time for yearly meeting sessions. There doesn't seem to be enough time to get everything done that we want. Possibly extend into Sunday, as moving earlier than Thursday may be a challenge for working families. There's value in staying to worship with the host meeting. Community building, service projects, and physical activity of some sort would be helpful. It was approved to extend our yearly meeting sessions into Sunday.

M4 - The three speakers for Friends United Meeting triennial next year, hosted by GPYM in Wichita, will be Miriam Khamadi Were who is a Kenyan public health advocate, academic, and recipient of the first Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize; C. Wess Daniels who is the director of Friends Center at Guilford College; and Jan Wood who is a former pastor, teacher, administrator, and gifted minister.

M5 - Looking ahead to 2017 GPYM sessions, we need to have good leadership in place for Young Friends and children. We don't want to be scrambling at the last minute. First we'll see if the leadership from last year would be willing to do it again this year. Since Heartland is hosting, Connie Adams will talk to Friends School to see if use of their facility may be available during sessions. Dorlan Bales will check with Dean Young about youth leadership.

M6 -Dorlan shared about home missions. The committee is prospering and growing. Young adults are being active and helpful. Michelle and Michael Barrett are taking the lead in organizing a Wichita event sometime in November, doing something "outside the Quaker Oats box". They are talking to three or four people about sharing their own stories on the theme of reaching out. They will encourage Friends to invite others to come participate in conversations that are meaningful but not 'churchy'. The Home Missions Committee wants every monthly meeting to be represented and contributing to its work.

David Nagle asked if Council House was being considered by the Home Missions Committee. He has been visiting Council House Friends, and the committee appreciates David's care for that meeting. The committee seeks more understanding about Council House's current needs as it discerns how GPYM can be helpful.

M7 - Revitalization and Leadership Development – How are we moving ahead as Laura is scaling back her time on the initiative? Committees and monthly meetings are asked to step up their work of building community within GPYM. What is the transition going to look like between now and January 2017? Home Missions will be handling a lot of this. We want to continue the momentum and move forward. There are more resources available in the budget to do the work, rather than pay Laura's salary.

Laura talked about technology and the need to be better connected with each other. Wifi is not available at most locations around the yearly meeting. More availability to communicate beyond us needs to be cultivated. Children and youth are the future and they are on social media such as Snapchat. Should an LED projector be supplied by the yearly meeting to help with communication/presentations at the Oklahoma meetings?

Laura would like to have a very small focused piece to work on, but she's not sure what that might be. Maybe a \$5,000 piece, whatever that looks like, possibly organizing visitations. We need to be aware of what each monthly meeting needs, look after each other, and foster relationships with the new meetings that are interested in joining GPYM.

Nebraska's fall gathering focus is "In these times, a closer look at race and privilege". Laura Dungan and Aaron Fowler will provide story, song, and reflections. Hominy's fall gathering will focus on music and fellowship. Both gatherings are set for October 22.

M8 – There being no further business, the Continuing Committee adjourned until our next meeting in the spring of 2017.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cheryl Mallonee, GPYM Recording Clerk

### **GPYM Continuing Committee Minutes – Spring 2017**

April 1, 2017

Friends gathered in worship at 11:00 a.m. then moved to continue with business.

M 1 -Friends went around the table and checked in. Present were: Dorlan Bales, Paul Mallonee, Cheryl Mallonee, David Nagle, Cliff Loesch, Steve McConnell, Connie Adams, Angela Brown and LaVonna Loesch.

M 2- The minutes from the fall committee meeting were reviewed and approved with minor corrections.

M 3- A communication from Lynn Van Buren, Clerk of Topeka Friends Meeting, applying for membership to GPYM, was shared. This was heartily approved! It is suggested that a couple members from Ministry and Counsel go to Topeka to officially welcome them to GPYM. We should also schedule a time during yearly meeting sessions to welcome and celebrate their joining us. Possibly a cake or certificate/minute can be prepared to present to them. A group photo and signed minute of welcome were also suggested. It was suggested that Topeka Friends wear bright colored lanyards so Friends know to make them feel welcome.

Lubbock Friends of Christ Quaker Meeting is another meeting considering membership. Kathryn Damiano and Dorlan Bales will be making a visit in May to see what their status is concerning membership. A brief letter of introduction about the history of their meetings would be helpful. Statistics need to be gathered as well.

Monthly meetings' monetary responsibility to help support the yearly meeting was also discussed. It is suggested they contribute as they feel led. They should be invited appoint members to serve on all committees if they feel so led. Angela Brown suggested we build a timeline or template for future requests from monthly meetings that may want to join will so this process can go more smoothly.

M 4 – FUM Triennial – Cliff Loesch reported that plans are coming along well. Colin Saxton will speak during the Sunday Morning service. A carry Inn meal for 200+ people is being planned for Sunday as well. A welcome gift to attendees is being worked on by many volunteers. They are making quilt block mug rugs in a Kansas Sunflower theme. A quilt theme is being incorporated to the plans as well. Cliff is looking into Chamber of Commerce items of local attractions to have available in their welcome packets. Wichita Friends School is going to be involved with the children's program too. A service project component is also being developed. There will be a knitting group making hats

for the homeless as one of the projects. Sandwich Saturdays for the homeless is another project where sack lunches will be assembled on Friday to be distributed on Saturday. Gardening projects at community garden or Wichita Friends School are also being planned. Quaker outreach in the community is being planned. All of the sessions will be in the Fine Arts building of Friends University and some in the business offices too. Youth and children's programming will be at UFM.

M 5 – The deadline for submitting State of Society, Agency and Committee reports to LaVonna is May 15. The link to register for yearly meeting sessions is on the GPYM website and info is also on the GPYM and UFM Facebook pages. Clerks of committees need to communicate with new and existing appointments to your committees about upcoming sessions.

M 6 -- We have six monthly meetings plus Lubbock involved with GPYM. LaVonna would like to write 'Grace to You' minutes to each of these monthly meetings to send love and encouragement. We divided up into teams to write a minute to each meeting. These will be enclosed with the minutes.

M 7 -Dorlan shared about the Home Missions Committee. Financing and budgeting have been a topic of conversation and that has been productive. They met on March 11 and are adjusting to doing the work themselves, rather than rely on Laura Dungan's work as a staff person. They celebrated Lubbock and Topeka in their journeys to join GPYM. Laura shared a report of what visitation has been done on behalf of the Revitalization and Leadership Development Initiative. The question was raised if these efforts are to grow our meetings within or to outreach to new meetings. Some of both, with reaching out to new meetings at first, but as we gather them in, focus on growing membership within. People can entrust their ideas to GPYM and that is a wonderful thing. A budget was submitted today for Home Missions. Discussion followed concerning the distribution change between Kickapoo and Quivering Arrow Camp. Funds are being added to the communications line item to help with electronic communication expenses. Facebook and Instagram are the way things are learned about more and more. Our website could use some updating. The budget was approved.

M 8 – Friends from Heartland gave an update for GPYM preparations. The menu has been planned and registration forms are available. Some kitchen

volunteers may need to be lined up. Youth and children's programming location is still being discussed.

M 9 – Theme and speaker – C. Wess Daniels, Standing with the Lamb...Resisting Evil. Wess is the Director of Friends Center at Guilford College.

M 10 -Young Friends Ministry and Childcare. Dorlan checked with Dean Young and he does not feel let to lead the whole youth program, but may be willing to assist with one or two others. Leadership is needed for Youth, Elementary children and childcare. Suggested names Liz Wine, Andrea Suttle, Monica Warnken, Aaron Fowler, Wes Miller, Lynn Craig Sangals (crafts), Ken Jack and Dean Young. Connie agreed to contact Andrea and Liz to see if they would be willing to help. Cheryl Mallonee will contact Ken Jack.

LaVonna will arrange the agenda for the meetings, Bible study time and workshops.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Mallonee, Recording Clerk

## Appendices

### Celebration and Welcome document – Topeka Friends

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#### Great Plains Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends 110<sup>th</sup> Annual Sessions, June 1-4, 2017

*Friends of Great Plains Yearly Meeting have long enjoyed contacts with Topeka Friends. In recent years there has been increasing fellowship as each group has reached out to other. Great Plains Yearly Meeting Friends rejoiced upon learning of the decision by Topeka Friends to pursue closer ties. We are humbled and blessed by this desire for mutual fellowship. Acting on our behalf, the Continuing Committee earlier this spring accepted the proposal from Topeka Friends Meeting to join our Yearly Meeting. Today we are delighted to affirm this action. Great Plains Yearly Meeting Friends extend our warmest welcome to Topeka Friends. As we worship together we fully expect our faith in the Divine to grow, thus enabling us to reach out in love, as we work together for a better world.*

*With joy, celebration and deep friendship we set our hands, affirming the work of the Spirit in bringing us together.*

**Celebration and Welcome document – Lubbock Friends of Christ Quaker Meeting**

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**Great Plains Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends  
110<sup>th</sup> Annual Sessions, June 1-4, 2017**

*Friends of Great Plains Yearly Meeting have long enjoyed contacts with Lubbock Friends of Christ Quaker Meeting. In recent years there has been increasing fellowship as each group has reached out to the other. Great Plains Yearly Meeting Friends rejoice that Lubbock Friends of Christ feel confident that God has led them to seek affiliation with us. We are humbled and blessed by this desire for mutual fellowship. On Ministry and Counsel's recommendation we gladly accept the proposal from Lubbock Friends of Christ Quaker Meeting to join our Yearly Meeting. Today we are delighted to affirm this action. Great Plains Yearly Meeting Friends extend our warmest welcome to Lubbock Friends of Christ Quaker Meeting. As we worship together we fully expect our faith in the Divine to grow, thus enabling us to reach out in love, as we work together for a better world.*

*With joy, celebration and deep friendship we set our hands, affirming the work of the Spirit in bringing us together.*



**PRESS RELEASE – New GPYM Member Meetings**

**GREAT PLAINS YEARLY MEETING EXPANDING**

June 8, 2017

For immediate release

Contact: LaVonna Loesch, lavonna.loesch@gmail.com, 316-680-9992

Two new Friends (Quaker) Meetings joined Great Plains Yearly Meeting during its annual Yearly Meeting held June 1-4 in Wichita, Kansas.

Topeka (Kansas) Friends Meeting (Quaker) and Lubbock (Texas) Friends of Christ Quaker Meeting joined Meetings (churches) from Kansas, Oklahoma and Nebraska in the regional group.

“We are celebrating these Meetings joining with us and are so thankful for God’s work here in our region,” said LaVonna Loesch, Clerk of Great Plains Yearly Meeting.

The theme of the Yearly Meeting was “Unifying our Community with Courage and Love to Move Forward Together” was held at Heartland Friends Meeting in Wichita.

Guest speaker for the gathering was C. Wess Daniels, Director of Friends Center and Quaker Studies at Guilford College in North Carolina, who spoke on an alternative view of the book Revelation.

Other workshops discussed sharing our message of peace with elected officials, and ways to communicate openly and honestly with others.

Great Plains Yearly Meeting includes Central City Monthly Meeting of Friends (Central City, Nebraska), Heartland Friends Meeting (Wichita, Kansas), Hominy Friends Meeting (Hominy, Oklahoma), Lubbock Friends of Christ Quaker Meeting (Lubbock, Texas), Topeka Friends Meeting (Quaker) (Topeka, Kansas) and University Friends Meeting (Wichita, Kansas).

Next year’s session will be held in Hominy, Oklahoma from May 31<sup>st</sup> to June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018.

-End-

## **American Friends Service Committee Report**

### **AFSC Report to GPYM Sessions 2017**

Participating in the AFSC Corporation Meeting and Centennial Celebration, April 20-22, was a deeply moving and challenging experience. In many ways the AFSC continues to be a prophetic voice among Friends and the wider society.

It was joyful to re-connect with a number of Friends with whom I had had little or no contact since my nine year involvement with FWCC (as a representative from Ohio Y.M.) and FCNL (on behalf of Hominy Friends) in the 70's and early 80's. Just as joyful was the opportunity to connect faces with names which have become familiar in recent years. Corporation meetings and meetings for worship were blessings as I sensed the power of the Lord covering us with the Spirit.

Keynote speakers spoke authoritatively and eloquently and inspired us to not rest upon the laurels of our incredible past, but rather to push forward towards our goal of making this world a better place by pursuing justice, equity, and peace. It was especially humbling to listen to Oscar Arias address us Saturday night. A fellow Nobel Peace Prize recipient (AFSC and FSC jointly received this award on behalf of Friends in 1947), Arias is a former President of Costa Rica. Naturally my thoughts were drawn to Friends in Monteverde and elsewhere in that country without an army.

Friday featured "academic" presentations by individuals and panels as part of the centennial observance. These covered major issues we find ourselves confronting today. Though styled as "academic presentations," these sessions rose above that important threshold, revealing passion, dedication, inspiration and commitment. While the sessions I attended were informative, more importantly they were undergirded by a sense of hope based on the conviction that we can make a difference. Spiritual grounding for our social justice efforts was a major theme of the weekend.

Saturday featured the usual workshops designed to acquaint Board members and others with the varied programs of the AFSC. Most of these were effective and informative, though I had the impression at times that at least some Friends

knew much more about some of the issues than did the presenting staff members. Every reference to issues of Palestinian justice and other issues in Israel and Palestine drew my mind to Max Carter, who does so much to educate Friends and others about these. I still regret that it did not work out for him to hold public meetings in Tulsa and OKC in conjunction with his visit to Hominy for the 2015 Oklahoma All-Friends Gathering. Friends and the general public desperately need greater insight into the dynamics at play in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

It is my hope that Friends will avail themselves of the materials on the AFSC display table and that we as GPYM will continue to support the work of the AFSC financially and in other meaningful ways.

David E. Nagle, At-Large AFSC Corporation Member

### **AFSC Midwest letter to Friends 2017**

To All Friends in the Midwest

From Brant Rosen, Regional Director, AFSC Midwest Region

Summer's greetings to Friends from the Midwest Region of the American Friends Service Committee. Please know we're with you in spirit as you gather to pray, reflect and act for greater peace and justice in your communities, across the country and around the world.

It's been said (perhaps by a Friend?) that for any problem, community is the answer. You may find that helpfully simple or overly simplistic, but there's truth in it. As I reflect on the past year – a deeply divided country and the election of a divisive president; the continued assaults on people of color, native peoples, immigrants, women and many other marginalized groups; a steady parade of violence near and far, and in so many forms – it feels overwhelming.

And yet, from the prairies of North Dakota to the streets of Chicago, from the farm fields of Iowa to the community gardens of St. Louis and beyond, people are coming together to resist and to dream. Acting in community, drawing strength from each other and our deepest values, we the people are striving for a world that truly does recognize “that of God in everyone.”

Birthered by Friends 100 years ago, AFSC has been, is, and will continue to be an important part of this creative community. Working in tandem with Friends and others who share our imperfect witness to equity and inclusion, we serve and act in sometimes quiet, sometimes bold, always nonviolent ways.

Here's what our Midwest community looked like over the past year: In St. Louis, a remarkable young Quaker named Chloe Jackson is working with AFSC's Youth Undoing Institutional Racism (YUIR) program to tend a garden in an urban "food desert," connecting with other youth and bringing fresh vegetables to neighbors. Joshua Saleem, AFSC Program Director, adds: As far as Quaker involvement, the first thing that comes to mind is our Program Committee. Kelly Bono, a member of the St. Louis Friends Meeting whom I met on my first trip to the Meeting in 2012, has been involved from the beginning. She is currently co clerk of the PC and has been instrumental in bringing more local Quakers to the table.

In the past, the Meeting has supported us by providing space for the AFSC Freedom School, space for guests to stay when in town for AFSC related work and space for AFSC events like Palestinian journalist Mohammed Omer's visit in December.

In the future, we're planning an Undoing Racism workshop co-sponsored by the Meeting's Michael Brown Working Group and Peace and Social Justice Committee. We're also looking at how members of the Meeting can be more involved with the Peer Mediation work that we're doing in schools.

This spring, young people at Earlham College in Indiana partnered with AFSC staff to support AFSC's work in St. Louis and learn more about that city's unique civil rights history.

In Indiana, Chicago and across the nation, AFSC's Communities Against Islamophobia (CAI) campaign has led bystander trainings and challenged the dominant narrative that equates Islam with violence and terror. It's also looked at policing and police budgets and helped people re-think what really leads to community safety. We encourage you to be in touch with Mary Zerkel (MZerkel@afsc.org) in our Chicago office to host a CAI training in your community.

True community means defending those at risk within it. In Iowa, AFSC has dramatically increased its support of immigrants who face discrimination and the ever-present fear of detention and deportation. Our staff leads a statewide Sanctuary coalition, urging communities of faith, including many Friends, to protect those who courageously stand for justice.

We're working on "Welcoming" resolutions at the city and county levels to resist the often heavy-handed oppression of federal authorities. Our low-cost immigration legal services program provides a key service for immigrants and refugees alike, again strengthening families and communities.

Sometimes, creating community means bridging wide gaps. In Michigan, AFSC's Good Neighbor Project continues to connect people serving long prison sentences with co-mentors on the outside, including Friends. As one prisoner writes, "I have grown in this project because I feel like a member of the community. It is hard to be alone in here. I have benefited tremendously by having a mentor in my life."

Our Michigan program also provides invaluable parole readiness workshops and responds to literally thousands of prisoner correspondence each year; the ultimate goal is reducing the number of people in prison.

In Ohio, AFSC is relentlessly pursuing the empanelment of a state commission which would bolster the rights and opportunities of African refugees. "I strongly believe that we are all called to extend hospitality to refugees, to lift up their voices and stories, and to build bridges of friendship that would eliminate xenophobia once and for all in this country," says Migwe Kimemia, who directs AFSC's work in Dayton.

In the Twin Cities, along with AFSC Freedom Schools and YUIR work, staff and interns are promoting restorative justice in schools and shining a bright light on a troubling federal program called "Countering Violent Extremism." Intern Sara Osman, a Somali Muslim youth, says, "We see ourselves as part of the greater Twin Cities community, but we are constantly being rejected."

Friends are playing important roles in supporting the No Way to Treat a Child campaign, a joint effort of AFSC and Defense for Children International-Palestine. Its goal is to end the Israeli military's abusive detention of Palestinian children. NWTC chapters are opening across the country, and Friends have been active in signing petitions and encouraging federal lawmakers to speak up for the human rights of Palestinian children.

I'm very sorry to report that budget cuts have weakened AFSC's presence in several communities. In Northeast Ohio, we've had to say good-bye to long-time staffer Greg Coleridge and Leah Davis. Later this year, we'll bid farewell to retiring staffers Darlene Gramigna in Chicago and Ira Harritt in Kansas City. Between them, these four have given over 100 years of creative service in pursuit of peace and justice. They have nurtured strong communities which are all the more resilient for their work.

This movement to build, strengthen and protect community – on our block and around the world – is bigger than anyone can imagine. It's stronger than any president's small-minded budget proposals and mean-spirited policies. As AFSC embarks with Friends and allies on our next 100 years of peace-making, may our faith and spirits be bolstered by the most powerful weapon of all: love.

Thanks again for your steadfast support of AFSC, both as individuals and monthly and yearly meetings. Thanks to the many Friends who give so generously of their time to serve on AFSC's governance bodies, including the Midwest Executive Committee.

As always, please feel free to contact me directly with any questions, concerns and ideas. My e-mail is BRosen@afsc.org; I'm on Twitter @RabbiBrant; and I often answer the AFSC Chicago phone at 312-427-2533.

### **FWCC, Section of the Americas Report**

#### 2017 Section Meeting Report to Great Plains Yearly Meeting

The 2017 meeting of Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas was held March 23-26, 2017 at the Stony Point Center in Stony Point, NY. Carl Magruder from Pacific YM, Kirenia Criado from Cuba YM, and Jonathan Vogel-Borne from New England YM shared vocal ministry on the theme of "Vivir la paz / Living Peace. Kirenia's spoke on the parable of the talents, providing us with a new reading in which the servant "refuses to follow a logic of exploitation, creates a peaceful resistance of not doing" and thus demonstrates a form of resistance to Empire, represented by the Master in the parable. The "lazy" servant is the voice of the Light revealing God to be the true Master.

During the section meeting, we blessed and commissioned with the laying on of hands the inaugural class of the FWCC-SOA Traveling Ministry Corps. This is a group of seven travelling ministers including three Bolivians and four North Americans from a broad range of backgrounds and Quaker traditions. These volunteers will travel throughout the Section, visiting across Yearly Meetings and other divisions among Quakers. Friends can apply to become a travelling minister under the auspices of FWCC. Meetings can request a visitor from the Corps to speak or facilitate a workshop. For more information, go to <http://fwccamericas.org/visitation/traveling-ministry.shtml>

I continue to serve as an interpreter and translator for FWCC-SOA as part of the Bilingual Communications Resource Group. I am pleased to report that much greater parity between English and Spanish has been achieved, with Spanish and English speaking co-recording clerks and minutes published in both languages in parallel columns. I am also part of the Naming Committee that selects the Section of the Americas Nominating Committee. In addition, I led a workshop with Cristela Martinez from El Salvador YM. During the workshop, participants were divided into groups of three with one primarily Spanish speaker, one primarily English speaker, and one bilingual person. The groups were given sets of questions in English and Spanish to promote a discussion that would help them break down language barriers, learn about their meetings and churches as well as their worship experiences, and get to know one another more deeply. It was a delight to facilitate this workshop with Cristela and watch the participants converse in both languages, teach each other, and deepen connections.

October 1 is World Quaker Day. I encourage GPYM Friends to participate by organizing an event about Quaker history in their Meetings and sending a photo to the FWCC office. Our Latin American Friends are enthusiastic participants in this event!

Please consider sending a contribution to FWCC, Section of the Americas, to support the important work happening across Friends branches that is sponsored by FWCC.

Respectfully submitted by, Beth Green-Nagle

Hominy Friends Meeting

### **Friends United Meeting report**

#### **Friends United Meeting—Annual Report**

On behalf of the Friends United Meeting General Board, staff and global community, I want to thank you Friends for your partnership in our shared work and for the generous support that enables FUM to minister all over the world. It has been a great year of growth, connection building and transformational ministry—made possible because of you! Colin Saxton

Here are a few highlights from Eden Grace, Global Ministries Director:

After several years of discernment, planning, searching and praying, we purchased a new facility to house FUM's growing ministry in Belize. The new Belize City Friends Center provides 8,800 square feet of interior space for classrooms, offices, worship, community-based ministries, and staff housing. Renovations are progressing well, and the school moved into the new location just before Easter break. The 2017 Summer Mission Project is focused on raising the funds to complete the first phase of renovations.

As part of the expanding work in Belize, FUM has called Oscar Siema Mmbali as Belize Friends pastoral minister. Oscar is a Kenyan Friend with extensive experience in church planting, pastoral ministry and cross-cultural living. He plans to begin his work in Belize on August 1<sup>st</sup>.

After 14 years of faithful service, Joyce Ajlouny is leaving Ramallah Friends School to take up the position of General Secretary of the American Friends Service Committee. We hope to be able to announce the appointment of a new Head of RFS very soon. We also anticipate adding an Advancement Coordinator to help build an increasingly sustainable endowment fund for both scholarships and operational expenses. This new staff we work primarily with RFS alumni and Palestinian supporters of the school.

Friends Theological College is in the final stages of its accreditation process with the Association for Theological Education in Africa, and is expecting the site visit in September 2017.

The solar power array at Friends Theological College was commissioned in June 2016 and functioned for about three months before a small fire in the battery house brought the system off-line. It was discovered that a vendor had supplied a counterfeit part, and after careful evaluation of the entire system by a new technician, the damage was repaired and the system was brought back on line in March 2017.

Three years after handing the management of Kaimosi Hospital over to the National Council of Churches of Kenya, FUM has completed its "due diligence" by signing a winding-up audit. The funds that were contributed during a Harambee in 2011 have now been invested in a new water system for the hospital.



The General Board approved the creation of a half-time North American Ministries Coordinator position to help strengthen FUM's ministry among its North American membership. A search process will begin as soon as funding has been secured.

We continue to search for Friends who are led to serve as long-term field staff. Opportunities are available in Belize, Ramallah and Kenya. Please encourage those who might be feeling a holy nudge, to contact Eden Grace for counsel and discernment.

Other highlights are offered by Dan Kasztelan, Communications Director for FUM:

As the FUM Communications Department has implemented the redesign of *Quaker Life* over the past year, we've come to better understand some of the ways in which the new version of *Quaker Life* is not like the old version. Previous versions of *Quaker Life* emphasized news and teaching important to existing members of Friends United Meeting, but the publication offered limited information for those unfamiliar with FUM -- and therefore could not be used as an outreach tool. The "old" *Quaker Life* also had a limited appeal to a Millennial and Generation X audience -- an audience with a great desire for conversational relationship, and a low tolerance for "being taught".

When we reviewed the steadily declining subscription figures for *Quaker Life*, and the unmet need for a publication that could draw newcomers into the faith of Friends, we decided to try to save *Quaker Life* by radically altering its identity. Our decision was to create a publication that could be easily passed from one hand to another: among Friends; to those who wished to explore Quaker spirituality; and those with an interest in the Quaker way. With these readers, we are sharing stories of how Friends actually live their lives, rather than explanations about what Friends believe.

We are glad to report that over the past year, we have finally stopped the long trend of decreasing individual subscriptions to *Quaker Life*. In this past year, the number of individual subscriptions to *Quaker Life* ticked upwards by single digits. Single digits may seem small, but in the past five years, individual subscriptions to *Quaker Life* have fallen by triple digits from year to year.

As we recreate *Quaker Life*, we recognize that FUM news—from North America and around the globe—is of crucial importance to those who are already members of Friends United Meeting. To meet that need, we have increased the quantity of FUM news included in the *Connections* bulletin insert. In essence, where we used to have one publication issued every two months for the purpose of providing news and teaching to those already involved with FUM, we have now created two publications: *Connections*, offered monthly, and *Quaker Life*, offered quarterly.

In order to increase the news that we are able to distribute, we took an existing communications vehicle, the *Connections* bulletin insert, and gave it a larger mission. Whereas, pre-November-2016, this four-page, black and white publication focused on only one or two areas, it has now been expanded to a four- to eight-page color publication that carries as much news as we can fit.

Since bringing on Julie Rudd in November as part-time *Web Assistant*, both *Connections* and the *eNews* get better and better: these publications are now more consistent, with space for substantive content, and therefore are of service to an ever-larger spectrum of our audience.

We are also including some limited advertising in *Connections*, which not only helps pay for *Connections*' color and greater number of pages, but also provides a service to the Friends community by publicizing job openings and rapidly approaching Quaker events.

Friends United Press has published several books over the past year, including a reprint of Elton Trueblood's *The People Called Quakers* and a third edition of Thomas Kelly's *The Eternal Promise* (with significant corrections), as well as Colin Saxton's study guide for the same. We have reissued our two popular introductory pamphlets: *You are Welcome Among Friends* and *The Christian Faith of Friends*. We expect to publish one more title before the end of the calendar year.

On May 15 of this year, Kristna Evans began working part-time in the recently created position of *Friends United Press Managing Editor*. We are excited about the increased energy this will allow us to bring to the Press, and to the online bookstore that we are creating.

We look forward to communicating with our creators more regularly, and working with them on marketing efforts to expand the reach of our

publications. We also anticipate that Kristna will build relationships that will allow us to find and distribute or publish curriculum materials for all ages.

Within the next year, we look forward to launching our new book catalog and the Friends United Meeting online bookstore. Both the catalog and bookstore will carry all our current FUP publications. They will also carry a broad range of titles on Christian faith, Quaker practice, ministry and leadership, spirituality, and other subjects that will be useful to those charged by their Monthly Meetings and Yearly Meetings to undertake religious education for youth and adults.

We have already put a great deal of effort toward this project, and are excited that Kristna will be able to lead it toward its completion. Finally, I will highlight a few more areas of growth and change in FUM:

We recently launched a new partnership with Everence that will provide stewardship resources, planned giving options and grant possibilities to local meetings and churches. We see this as a benefit for the entire FUM community as it is expressed on a local meeting, yearly meeting and FUM level. We will work especially hard to collaborate with Yearly Meeting schedules and needs. Most exciting for us, Everence recently hired Kelly Kellum, former clerk of FUM, as the staff person to be the primary contact for the Friends community.

FUM concludes its first major fundraising campaign in 30 years this summer, successfully meeting our \$3,000,000 goal. Thanks to the many, many Friends who made gifts and pledges in support of the Energize, Equip and Connect Campaign! We are so grateful for each of you!

The 2017 FUM Triennial is being held in Wichita Kansas, July 12 -16. It will be a wonderful week of worship, fellowship, service and spiritual renewal. Please join us! You can register by going to the FUM website at <http://www.friendsunitedmeeting.org/>

in the coming weeks. I have loved serving the global community of FUM and appreciate the personal kindness and support Friends have given me and the essential partnership you each play in continuing Christ's work in the world through Friends.

Peace and joy to you! Colin Saxton, FUM General Secretary

## Stories to Song lyrics, "Live in the Light"

Live in the Light  
GPYM High School youth  
© June 2017

He lay on the blanket staring at clouds, pondering the shapes in the sky  
Mom by his side, he asks her in wonder, how do the clouds above fly?  
She looks to the sky, clouds filter the light, feeling the soft wind blow  
Laughing she answers, my beautiful child, only the Spirit knows

Chorus  
Love/LIGHT it is shining  
It always points the way  
So Walk in the light, Live in the light  
Answer the call everyday

Love like the light shining through trees, fills the morning air  
Surrounding them both from above warming their face and hair.  
The dew in morning it brings new life as the new light starts to grows  
Inspiring wonder in the little boys mind, only the Spirit knows.

Chorus  
Love/LIGHT it is shining  
It always points the way  
So Walk in the light, Live in the light  
Answer the call everyday

Shadows grow longer as the sun begins to set beneath the changing sky.  
Harsh light is softened as the world spins around to this day we say good-by  
This light interacts with everything from clouds to trees to me  
When we sit in the light we are transformed into what we are meant to be.

Chorus  
Love/LIGHT it is shining  
It always points the way  
So Walk in the light, Live in the light  
Answer the call everyday

## Epistle

*“Open my eyes, illumine me. . .”*

words & music by Clara H. Scott  
*Worship in Song*, 1996

Greetings to Friends in all places!

Friends in the Midwest traveled past amber waves of ripening wheat to join in community for the 110<sup>th</sup> session of Great Plains Yearly Meeting (formerly Nebraska Yearly Meeting). Convening on a sunny Kansas plain just west of Wichita, Kansas at the Heartland Friends Meetinghouse, Friends brought greetings from Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, North Carolina, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Texas and Iowa, coming with open eyes and hearts to join in fellowship these first four days of June, 2017.

As the weekend progressed, more Friends arrived, bringing our attendance to over 50, including about a dozen young Friends who played together with sun, wind and water, with older children touring the Recycling Center in Wichita. Godly Play and Faith & Play, along with music and songwriting were part of our young Friends' experience.

Adult Friends met in worship and discussion with C. Wess Daniels, Director of Friends Center and Quaker Studies at Guilford College, exploring the baffling Book of Revelation and identifying and contrasting the Religion of the Empire with the Religion of the slain Lamb. Our discussion included an understanding of Revelation in the context of the first century Roman world. We discussed how small minority faith communities today survive and resist the Religion of Empire and how we apply these concepts to our daily lives. The Religion of Empire is based on winning at all costs, while the Religion of the slain Lamb honors loss and sacrifice. During the meetings, Friends wrestled with the idea that we are both complicit with the Religion of Empire and are likewise victims of the same. We believe that it is God's plan to liberate us from this enslavement.

The presiding clerk opened the Meeting for Business with a participatory grounding exercise. Traveling minutes and reports from various Quaker agencies and committees were received and it was noted that Great Plains Yearly Meeting is hosting the Friends United Meeting Triennial in July at Friends University in Wichita.

Great Plains Yearly Meeting joyfully welcomed Topeka Friends Monthly Meeting and Lubbock Friends of Christ Quaker Meeting as new full members of Great Plains Yearly Meeting. We also expressed appreciation to Laura Dungan, released friend for her commitment to and work on the Revitalization & Leadership Development Initiative. Michael Barrett led “Jazz Bible study” on Friday and Saturday mornings. Afternoons included workshops and a tour of the Wichita Friends School which is adjacent to Heartland Friends Meeting.

Throughout the sessions, Friends enjoyed pleasant early summer weather and nourishing food from recipes in the FUM publication, *Plain & Plenty, a Quaker Cookbook*. Friends are blessed to be a part of the Yearly Meeting experience as we meet new Friends, renew friendships, share joys and losses and prepare to carry this experience of Blessed Community back to our daily lives and home meetings.

Submitted in the Light and Spirit of Christ that nourishes us all.

LaVonna Loesch

Great Plains Yearly Meeting

Presiding Clerk

*Authored by: Sue Wine & Beth Green Nagle*

### **GPYM Youth Epistle 2017**

The youth this year engaged in three different things.

First, we talked about the Quaker testimonies, otherwise known as the SPICES. We went over each testimony in detail, then we discussed who would best represent each testimony.

We also wrote a “Story to Song” with Aaron Fowler. We interviewed Dean and Angela Young, then used the information from the interview to write a song about their lives together.

Lastly, we went to the recycle center with the younger kids. Beth McDonald gave us a tour of the facility, and we sorted the recycling that we brought in.

Isaac Jake

Jocelyn Mallonee

Joseph Nagle

## **Home Missions Report**

### Home Missions Committee Report to Great Plains Yearly Meeting June 2017

2016-2017 has been a year of growth for Great Plains Yearly Meeting and the Home Missions Committee. We are delighted that Topeka Friends Meeting has affiliated with GPYM, and that Lubbock Friends of Christ are in a process of discernment about formal affiliation.

Young adult leaders such as Angela Jake Brown, Michelle Barrett, and Molly Loesch have stepped forward to accept positions of leadership in GPYM. Michelle offered community cooking classes and helped University Friends give birth to Wichita Family Promise. Thirteen congregations shelter working homeless families four times a year for a week at a time. Heartland Friends has also initiated a new ministry by creating a Wichita Advocacy Team trained and supported by the Friends Committee on National Legislation. It has visited the local offices of Representative Estes and Senators Moran and Roberts to talk about the need to restrain spending by the yet-to-be-audited Department of Defense.

There has been growth in the number of people who are supporting for Home Missions work. Beginning at last year's GPYM sessions, 15 people have made a gift or pledge to the 2017 budget, with five giving monthly. The Home Missions Committee's \$7,000 goal for individual giving to its 2017 budget has been met, thanks to the vision and generosity of. GPYM Friends.

Regional encouragement has continued to grow, utilizing state-level gatherings to bring Friends together. Last fall Nebraska Friends from Central City Meeting and Omaha joined with Lincoln Friends for an event that explored the topic of race and privilege. Kansas Friends from University and Heartland met to learn more about the art of eldering, and gathered a second time to hear three "Talk-IES" (Talk – Intellectual, Emotional & Spiritual), short presentations on a variety of themes.

Oklahoma Friends met at Hominy for a time of singing and listening to instrumentalists praise God. Eight meetings took part, representing Great Plains, Mid-America, and South Central yearly meetings.

Plans for next year call for an emphasis on training a group of willing Friends to travel in the ministry, strengthening GPYM affiliate meetings and reaching out to others who may be interested in affiliation. There is also a need for more regular communication within GPYM if we are to encourage one another and strengthen meetings' sense of being gathered in God's love. Please contact a HMC member if you have an interest in becoming involved in some part of Home Missions work.

Dorlan Bales, Presiding Clerk, Home Missions Committee

## **State of Society Reports from GPYM's Member Meetings**

### **Central City Meeting - State of Society Report**

Central City Friends Meeting  
State of Society – May 2017

Central City Friends continue to meet monthly, usually on the third Sunday. We have a faithful core of a half dozen, and have had a new regular attender.

We helped plan and attended the Nebraska Quaker Fall Gathering in Lincoln in October. It was well attended and the topic of white privilege was timely and eye-opening.

In order to increase our visibility we placed ads in area newspapers in November following the election.

“Feeling uneasy about the direction our country seems to be taking following the election. Please join us this Sunday, November 20, 1:30 p.m., Central City Monthly Meeting (Quakers). We are an inclusive meeting, welcoming all who come and providing a safe space in which to share concerns. Please contact Lynn at 402-705-1003 with questions.”

This brought one visitor so not a roaring success but perhaps raised our profile a little.

Though we sponsor few events, our members are very active in our communities and other organizations.

We are holding Lynn Zeleski in the light as she battles kidney cancer. We are looking forward to her return to meeting in the summer.

We are celebrating with Rich Maciejewski on his 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ordination as a Catholic priest. Rich's ministry has touched many lives and we are very thankful that he shares part of his time with us.



Our state, nation and world face many challenges and we continue to share our small light in central Nebraska.

### **Hominy Friends Meeting - State of Society Report**

Hominy Monthly Meeting State of Society Report

*And what does the LORD require of you?*

*To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” Micah 6:8*

As the conditions in our state, nation and the world around us grow more desperate, the prophetic words of Micah seem ever more challenging. We sometimes feel so small, so inadequate to tasks to which we are called. Yet as we meet each week to worship in Spirit and in Truth, we find ourselves refreshed and reassured. There is One, even Christ Jesus, who can speak to our conditions.

Though our numbers have too often been small, we are encouraged by the greater number of people involved, the willingness of individuals to step forward when need arises, and the continued commitment of a core group. Although other churches in Hominy have cancelled meetings due to weather or other problems, Hominy Friends have had our doors open every First-day. We have also been encouraged by occasional visiting Friends. We gladly welcomed visitors from Stillwater, OK, Friends Meeting, Norman Friends Meeting, and Kiamichi Friends Worship Group. We were delighted to enjoy fellowship with these same Friends and others from Kickapoo Friends Center and elsewhere at the 2016 Oklahoma All-Friends Gathering which we joyfully hosted in Tenth Month.

Only two of our youth attended Quivering Arrow Camp in Sixth Month, but our van proved essential in helping transport the campers and staff to events. By the end of the week it was also in the best mechanical condition it has seen in years. We hope more Hominy campers will be involved this coming summer.

In addition to hosting the Oklahoma All-Friends Gatherings, highlights have included a 4-day VBS in Seventh Month, our “Christmas Eve” celebration, our Wild Onion Dinner in Third Month, “Easter” Sunday worship, egg hunt, and dinner in Fourth Month, and Mothers’ Day cookout in Fifth Month. Many of us are also quite involved in the Osage In-lon-schka dances in the three districts each Sixth Month.

Until our Wild Onion Dinner we continued to struggle financially as we recovered from major expenditures caring for the Meetinghouse. We are

encouraged to again be able to focus more on responding to the needs of our community, GPYM, FUM, and the wider world.

We are beginning to move forward on a major project, a new expanded and revised edition of our cookbook, “Hominy Friends Meeting Favorite Recipes” for which we will need to raise funds to cover publishing costs.

We are also encouraged by the participation of families in our meeting activities, the prospect of new members, and emerging leadership. We pray that we can deepen our faith, find strength and inspiration, and grow stronger as we worship together. May our common commitment to Christ bring us joy, undergird our fellowship, and lead us to be patterns and examples in all that we do.

On behalf of Hominy Monthly Meeting  
Carole Revard, Presiding Clerk

### **Heartland Friends Meeting - State of Society Report**

Heartland Friends Meeting  
State of Society, Fifth Month, 2017

*As we open ourselves to become the channel of God’s healing grace we shall find that healing is given to those who pray as well as those for whom we are praying.* Jack Dobbs, 1984, Quaker Faith and Practice/Personal Journey, 21.73

As a Meeting we are working to make our presence known and to inform our community that we offer respite from the noisy world, quiet reflection, time for active listening to God, and encouragement to be faithful to God’s call as individuals and as a group. We have welcomed three new members – Aaron Beach, Laura Dungan and Ellen House. We are enjoying an increase in attenders and visitors.

Heartland Friends members were challenged in 2016 by member Wendell Hendricks to reach out as a Meeting and risk being visibly and publicly Quaker. While individual members of Heartland are actively involved with peace and social justice efforts on the local and state levels, we had not found a significant ‘activist’ presence as a Meeting. Wendell’s challenge led us to have a discernment group last summer and fall, gathering information and exploring ways that our Meeting might be more active in our community. We want the world to say, “Wow, the Quakers are doing this!”

Our discernment led us to form a Friends Committee on National Legislation “Advocacy Team.” In March, Heartland hosted FCNL lobbyist Jim Cason for an evening introductory workshop attended by 35 Wichita and Hutchinson area individuals from a variety of faith backgrounds. Eleven attendees from that evening made commitments to form a Wichita Advocacy Team and have begun relationship-building processes with our members of Congress and their staffs. Seven Heartland members/attenders are on the team, and our Meeting is being enriched by their experiences lobbying for a reduction in Pentagon spending.

Our Advocacy Team is especially dear to us because Wendell, who challenged us be more, died this past February. Like others who have passed through Heartland, his integrity and love are ever present when we gather.

During adult education hour, we have become great fans of *QuakerSpeak*. The videos deepen our Quaker understanding and stimulate lively discussions. We devoted time to queries and presentations on healing through faith, prayer, and divine/holistic presence. We also shared how we imagine our own deaths. A special adult education hour was presented by Susie Ternes and her children Luke, Riley and Sophie, who told us about their family’s ministry to a Congolese refugee family in Wichita.

Maintaining our building and grounds provides opportunities, yet challenges us. On work days young and old weed, trim, oil woodwork and wax floors which helps us build community. A special project this year has been the terracing of our west Meetinghouse grounds to create a memorial garden. With landscaping complete, we look forward to designing a way to memorialize Friends. We were recipients of two special trees – an elm sapling descended from the William Penn Treaty Tree in Philadelphia and a Weeping Japanese Maple planted in memory of Wendell Hendricks.

As we grow, our attention to community becomes more important. We are building community by listening to each other and showing our love for one another even when we don't agree. Because we truly believe that God is love and that love is our central theme, then our collective Heartland challenge is to manifest that love to each other and to the world. We recognize that we have not arrived. Together, we are on a journey.

On behalf of Heartland Friends Meeting,  
Angela Young, Presiding Clerk

## **Lubbock Friends of Christ Quaker Meeting – State of Society Report**

Lubbock Friends of Christ Quaker Meeting  
Fifth Month 2017

*How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity! (Psalm 133:1, NIV)*

Lubbock Friends of Christ Quaker Meeting is so very grateful to have been lovingly welcomed into the Great Plains Yearly Meeting community. We feel like we have found an extended spiritual family. We have been touched by GPYM's expressions of care for us: a minute of blessing from the Continuing Committee; a warm letter from Hominy Friends; a personal visit from Dorlan Bales and Kathryn Damiano; and a card to a Friend who had to leave last year's annual sessions early. We are indeed richly blessed.

Participation in Lubbock Friends of Christ remains steady at four individuals. We meet as regularly as possible for Friendly Bible Study and unprogrammed worship on Sunday afternoons. We recently finished the Book of Acts and have begun to study Isaiah. Last fall, we spent a Saturday morning packing boxes for the local food bank, and we hope to adopt this as a regular service project if way opens. In February, we received a visit from traveling Friend David Eley, who has been a treasured friend of our meeting for many years.

We discovered that we have grown in our ability to trust one another enough to be open and vulnerable about our personal struggles. Several Friends encountered difficult challenges this year, during which the meeting provided loving support and friendship. One Friend characterized the meeting as an "anchor" during times of trial.

We are thankful for our clarity of purpose and for the overall sense of optimism in the meeting. May we be ever more faithful to the Spirit of Christ that works within us and among us.

*Approved May 7, 2017*

## **University Friends Meeting - State of Society Report**

### State of Society University Friends Meeting May 2017

During the past year, members of University Friends Meeting have enjoyed connecting with one another, reaching out to the community and world, and enriching each other spiritually. In society with one another, we enjoyed activities such as monthly ladies lunches, yoga classes, movie nights and board game nights. We came together in friendship for several special occasions, holding a family Christmas party, and a Consecration Sunday Thanksgiving meal which featured nice Thanksgiving tiles and stands for each attendee. We had a nice Easter breakfast. At "Friendly Evenings" once or twice a month, we shared meals, sang songs and discussed themes such as the Quaker testimonies. We participated in work days, helping to maintain the meetinghouse. We had lots of fun at an All Church Bowling event.

In a newly adopted local needs mission, University Friends provides meals and overnight hospitality to homeless families four weeks per year. This service is provided in association with a new organization called Family Promise of Greater Wichita. Our weeks to host families are coordinated on a rotating basis with twelve other congregations of various denominations who are doing the same thing. Additionally, nearly a dozen other churches provide support by supplying food and volunteers. Crossroads Friends Church works closely with us when it is our turn. Family Promise of Greater Wichita provides transportation, a house where people can stay during the day, and case management to help them get back on their feet. University has a committed group of volunteers who are excited about this ministry. Family Promise provides a way for us to work together to do some good in the world, to use our building to serve needy people, and to provide some tangible service in concert with other churches in the Wichita area.

UFM hosted the annual Mid America Yearly Meeting Children's Ministry Conference. We were pleased to welcome the Friends University Singing Quakers for Heritage Sunday. The group practiced at the meetinghouse, shared music during worship and shared a picnic meal. Our meetinghouse is also home to a Boy Scout troop, All Nations Fellowship, and Cornerstone, Friends University's Christian fellowship group. We also provide rehearsal space for Shakespeare in the Park.

A weekly Women's Friendly Bible Studies program has been initiated by LaVonna Loesch. This group meets in the pastor's home. Virtually everyone in our congregation has had their picture taken for a new pictorial directory – spearheaded by Beth McDonald.

A Talk-IES program, which is a GPYM area event, has commenced at UFM. The “IES” of Talk-IES stands for **I**ntellectual, **E**motional, and **S**piritual topics.

Looking forward, we have continued with our discernment process with a special emphasis and focus upon growing our church membership and improving our ongoing balance of income and giving versus expenses of church operations. Our discernment continues to focus upon our meeting's wants, needs and goals. We look forward to the fruits this process will bear in the coming year.

### **Wichita Friends School Annual Report to GPYM**

May 15, 2017

To our dear Friends of Great Plains Yearly Meeting,

It is with a thankful heart and great joy that I share the journey this past year at Wichita Friends School. Let's start at the beginning at University Friends Meeting in 1988 where three mothers of young children envisioned a Friends education for their children. Incorporation papers were submitted to the State of Kansas and Wichita Friends School with the stated purpose “to provide quality education in a context of Quaker values for elementary education” was birthed. Donna Martin Bales, Lynnette Krieger and Pamela Chambers are the signatures found on this document.

This past July, the Head of School moved suddenly to California due to family needs. With school starting in just three weeks the Board of Trustees began the search for a new Head of School. An amazing miracle of God's hand unfolded as within two weeks Pam Chambers learned of the opening, interviewed, and accepted the position as Head of School, moving from Colorado back to Kansas just in time for school to start. Pam brings a rich Quaker background, strong administrative skills from years as a hospital administrator and a deep love and passion for Wichita Friends School children and families.

Connecting with the larger Friends School community has included having the Clerk and Head of School attend Friends Council on Education conferences and visit a variety of Friends School around the Philadelphia area. Pam and I came back with a renewed vision of how critical a Quaker education is for our world. Now, more than ever we need to train and raise up a generation that actively seeks peace and justice. In April the Head of School for Lower School and retired Development Director from Westtown School, a prestigious Quaker school outside of Philadelphia, spent two days at WFS. They both shared that immediately upon entering WFS they could sense the spirit of the SPICES with the welcoming entrance and connection of the atrium with the outdoors. Children were engaged in learning and discovery was happening in each classroom.

As you settle into worship in the meeting room at Heartland Friends, so have the children sat in these same benches listening and waiting during our weekly worship with the loving guidance of Connie Adams. As you enjoy the beauty of nature surrounding Heartland Friends Meeting during GPYM session, know that the kdg and 1<sup>st</sup> graders together have explored every inch of ‘the pond’ and discovered nature, critters and a love and respect for God’s earth. Heartland Friends and WFS share a deep partnership in nurturing “that of God in each one.”

The mission of Wichita Friends School continues to provide a high quality academic experience within a supportive learning environment that reflects the Quaker values of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, and stewardship (SPICES). Recently a grandmother stopped Pam to express her deep gratitude for the spirit of love and acceptance that covers her granddaughter at Wichita Friends School. A new 1<sup>st</sup> grader that hated going to school is seen skipping into WFS in the morning. When asked how his second week was going he cheerfully responded “I have had the most excellent day! By living the SPICES, children and their family’s lives are being changed. Wichita Friends School continues to seek to ways to be actively involved in home missions both in the neighborhood and for the wider Wichita community as we seek to train and teach Quaker values.

Wichita Friends School has touched lives for nearly 30 years. Former students have come back to be on staff, some have enrolled their children and many participate in Wichita Friends school events. Even the original visionaries have returned full circle and are actively and daily engaged in the vision and mission of WFS.

Thank you GPYM Friends for your continued partnership in providing the needed financial support. Come on over for a visit while you are across

‘the pond’. As Jim Perkins has frequently noted, a hug from one of the children will make your day!

Blessings,

Lynnette Krieger-Zook

Clerk, Wichita Friends School Board of Trustees

### **Treasurer’s Report, June 2017**

We have now fully transitioned from a May 1 – April 30 fiscal year to aligning our fiscal accounting with the calendar year.

During 2016, 4 of our 5 member monthly meetings gave a total of \$4,308 for our annual operations. Because our actual expenses were lower than what we budgeted, 2016 ended \$1,600 in the black. We had budgeted \$2,400 to support traveling in the ministry to Quaker agency meetings, but only spent \$395. (FWCC Section of the Americas paid for Beth’s travel.) Other operating expense categories include:

- gifts to FUM, FWCC, QEW and RSWR (\$810)
- fees for GPYM, Hominy and Council House domain names (\$20/ea)
- a web page hosting fee (\$382 every 2 years)
- a required update to Quickbooks (for Windows compatibility)
- printing and mailing of our Minutes (\$408)
- our non-profit registration fee (\$26)
- child care for Continuing Committee meetings (as needed - \$0)
- Friends travel to agencies: AFSC, FCNL, FUM, FWCC Section of the Americas, QEW (\$2,400 budgeted for all)
- Travel “savings” assistance accounts for the Triennial and the World Gathering (\$700)

2017 to-date:

- Pledges from monthly meetings: Central City: \$500 (paid), Council House: \$50, Heartland: \$1,800 (paid), Hominy: \$500, UFM: \$1,600 (paying monthly) = \$4,300 in annual operating support.
- We have mailed our operating account gifts to FUM, FWCC, QEW and RSWR – totaling \$810.
- Of \$2,400 allocated to support Friends agency meeting travel, we have spent \$1,033 (FWCC Section of the Americas).
- We paid our \$23 non-profit registration fee. (Nebraska)



- We renewed our biennial web page contract with IX Web Hosting for \$383 and our domain name annual fee for \$20.

--Connie Adams, Treasurer

## Balance Sheet

	A	B	C	D	E
1	<b>GPYM Balance Sheet</b>				<b>29-May-2017</b>
2	<b>ASSETS</b>				
3	<b>Current Assets</b>				
4	<b>Checking/Savings</b>				
5				<b>GPYM Operating</b>	23,468.53
6				<b>Home Missions</b>	24,206.20
7				<b>Savings-Credit Union Membership</b>	5.00
8				<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	47,679.73
9	<b>Other Current Assets</b>				
10				<b>FUM Triennial Travel Fund</b>	-1,005.70
11				<b>FWCC WorldGathAsst Travel Fund</b>	-400.00
12				<b>FWCC WorldGathReps Travel Fund</b>	-2,250.00
13				<b>Retained Earnings from Farm</b>	-16,387.69
14				<b>Student Loan Fund</b>	-5,624.87
15				<b>Webb Fund</b>	-11,406.65
16				<b>Total Other Current Assets</b>	-37,074.91
17				<b>Total Current Assets</b>	10,604.82
18	<b>Fixed Assets</b>				
19				<b>Stevens Farm Property Valuation</b>	266,650.00
20				<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	266,650.00
21	<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>				<b>277,254.82</b>
22	<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>				
23	<b>Equity</b>				
24				<b>Opening Balance Equity</b>	266,650.00
25				<b>Net Income</b>	10,604.82
26				<b>Total Equity</b>	277,254.82
27	<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>				<b>277,254.82</b>

## 2017 to-date Budget Report

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Great Plains Yearly Meeting of Friends					
2	Operating Budget Report, 29-May-2017					
3					2017 to date Income / Expense	Approved Budget
4	Income					
5	Annual Yearly Meeting Income					
6			Gifts from Individuals at YM		693.50	700.00
7			Meals		1,196.00	1,300.00
8			Registrations		732.50	1,200.00
9			Webb Fund transfer from equity		0.00	0.00
10		Total Annual Yearly Meeting Income			2,622.00	3,200.00
11	General Operating Income					
12			Gifts from Monthly Meetings		3,070.00	4,350.00
13		Total General Operating Income			3,070.00	4,350.00
14	Total Income				5,692.00	7,550.00
15	Expense					
16	Annual Yearly Meeting Expense					
17			Meal Cost		0.00	1,300.00
18			YM Sessions-Speaker/Elder		673.20	1,500.00
19			YM Sessions Supplies		0.00	20.00
20			Young Friend Ministry/ChildCare		0.00	1,550.00
21		Total Annual Yearly Meeting Expense			673.20	4,370.00
22	General Operating Expenses					
23			Bank & Accounting Costs		0.00	0.00
24			Non-Profit Registration Fee		23.00	23.00
25			Web Home Page Fees		402.75	60.00
26			YM Minutes Copying/Printing		0.00	450.00
27			Young Friend Care - CC Meetings		0.00	90.00
28		Total General Operating Expenses			425.75	623.00



	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	<b>Great Plains Yearly Meeting of Friends</b>					
2	<b>Operating Budget Report, 29-May-2017</b>					
3					<b>2017 to date Income / Expense</b>	<b>Approved Budget</b>
29				Gifts to Quaker Agencies		
30				Friends United Meeting	560.00	560.00
31				FWCC Section of the Americas	100.00	100.00
32				Quaker Earthcare Witness	50.00	50.00
33				Right Sharing of WorldResources	100.00	100.00
34				Total Gifts to Quaker Agencies	810.00	810.00
35				Traveling in Ministry-Agencies		
36				Consultation-YM Clerks	0.00	0.00
37				Quaker Agency Meetings		
38				Agency Travel Total	0.00	2,400.00
39				American Friends Service Cmte	0.00	0.00
40				Friends Cmte - Natl Legislation	0.00	0.00
41				FUM General Board	0.00	0.00
42				FWCC Section of the Americas	1,032.60	0.00
43				Quaker Earthcare Witness	0.00	0.00
44				Total Quaker Agency Meetings	1,032.60	2,400.00
45				Travel Savings Accounts		
46				FUM Triennial	0.00	300.00
47				FWCC World Gathering Asst Fund	0.00	100.00
48				FWCC World Gathering Reps	0.00	300.00
49				Total Travel Savings Accounts	0.00	700.00
50				Total Traveling in Ministry-Agencies	1,032.60	3,100.00
51				<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>2,941.55</b>	<b>8,903.00</b>
52				<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	<b>2,750.45</b>	<b>(1,353.00)</b>

## 2018 Budget Proposal

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	<b>Great Plains Yearly Meeting of Friends</b>					
2	<b>2018 Budget Proposal</b>					
3					<b>2017 Budget</b>	<b>2018 Budget Proposal</b>
4	<b>Income</b>					
5	Annual Yearly Meeting Income					
6			Gifts from Individuals at YM		700.00	700.00
7			Meals		1,300.00	1,300.00
8			Registrations		1,200.00	1,200.00
9			Webb Fund transfer from equity		-	-
10	Total Annual Yearly Meeting Income				3,200.00	3,200.00
11	General Operating Income					
12			Gifts from Individuals			1,600.00
13			Gifts from Monthly Meetings			
14			Central City Friends		500.00	500.00
15			Council House Friends		50.00	50.00
16			Heartland Friends		1,700.00	1,800.00
17			Hominy Friends		500.00	500.00
18			Topeka Friends			
19			University Friends		1,600.00	1,600.00
20	Total General Operating Income				4,350.00	6,050.00
21	<b>Total Income</b>				<b>7,550.00</b>	<b>9,250.00</b>
22	<b>Expense</b>					
23	Annual Yearly Meeting Expense					
24			Meal Cost		1,300.00	1,300.00
25			YM Sessions-Speaker/Elder		1,500.00	1,500.00
26			YM Sessions Supplies		20.00	25.00
27			Young Friend Ministry/ChildCare		1,550.00	1,550.00
28	Total Annual Yearly Meeting Expense				4,370.00	4,375.00
29	General Operating Expenses					
30			Bank & Accounting Costs		-	-
31			Non-Profit Registration Fee		23.00	-
32			Web Domain Names		60.00	60.00
33			GPYM Web Site Devel			200.00
34			YM Minutes Copying/Printing		450.00	450.00
35			Young Friend Care - CC Meetings		90.00	90.00
36	Total General Operating Expenses				623.00	800.00



	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	<b>Great Plains Yearly Meeting of Friends</b>					
2	<b>2018 Budget Proposal</b>					
3					<b>2017 Budget</b>	<b>2018 Budget Proposal</b>
37	Gifts to Quaker Agencies					
38			AFSC			50.00
39			FCNL			50.00
40			Friends United Meeting		560.00	560.00
41			FWCC Section of the Americas		100.00	100.00
42			Quaker Earthcare Witness		50.00	50.00
43			Right Sharing of WorldResources		100.00	100.00
44	Total Gifts to Quaker Agencies				810.00	910.00
45	Traveling in Ministry-Agencies					
46			Quaker Agency Meetings			
47			Agency Travel Total		2,400.00	2,400.00
48			American Friends Service Cmte		-	-
49			Friends Cmte - Natl Legislation		-	-
50			FUM General Board		-	-
51			FWCC Section of the Americas		-	-
52			Quaker Earthcare Witness		-	-
53			Total Quaker Agency Meetings		2,400.00	2,400.00
54			Travel Savings Accounts			
55			FUM Triennial		300.00	300.00
56			FWCC World Gathering Asst Fund		100.00	100.00
57			FWCC World Gathering Reps		300.00	300.00
58			Total Travel Savings Accounts		700.00	700.00
59	Total Traveling in Ministry-Agencies				3,100.00	3,100.00
60	<b>Total Expense</b>				<b>8,903.00</b>	<b>9,185.00</b>
61			<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>		<b>(1,353.00)</b>	<b>65.00</b>

## 2017 Home Missions 2047 budget report & 2018 budget proposal

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	<b>Great Plains Yearly Meeting of Friends</b>								
2	<b>Home Missions 2017 Budget Report and 2018 Proposed Budget</b>								
3							<b>Inc/Exp Jan - Dec 2017</b>	<b>2017 Approved Budget</b>	<b>2018 Proposed Budget</b>
4	<b>Home Missions Income/Expense</b>								
5	<b>Home Missions Income</b>								
6	<b>Home Missions Income</b>								
7	<b>Farm Income</b>						0.00	9,180.00	9,000.00
8	<b>Gifts to Home Missions</b>						54.50	400.00	400.00
9	<b>Revital/Leadership Devel Designated Gifts</b>						7,562.05	7,070.00	5,000.00
10	<b>Total Home Missions Income</b>						7,616.55	16,650.00	14,400.00
11	<b>Total Home Missions Income</b>						7,616.55	16,650.00	14,400.00
12	<b>Home Missions Expense</b>								
13	<b>Home Missions Annual Expenses</b>								
14	<b>Farm Property Taxes</b>						3,700.46	3,800.00	-4,000.00
15	<b>Support to Home Missions Agencies</b>								
16	<b>Kickapoo Friends (MAYM)</b>						300.00	300.00	-300.00
17	<b>Quivering Arrow Camp</b>						900.00	900.00	-900.00
18	<b>Wichita Friends School</b>						1,400.00	1,400.00	-1,400.00
19	<b>Total Support to Home Missions Agencies</b>						2,600.00	2,600.00	(2,600.00)
20	<b>Total Home Missions Annual Expenses</b>						6,300.46	6,400.00	(6,600.00)
21	<b>Revit/Leadership Devel Expenses</b>								
22	<b>Communications</b>						0.00	2,000.00	-2,000.00
23	<b>Postage</b>						0.00	100.00	-100.00
24	<b>Regional Gatherings/Events</b>						0.00	500.00	-2,500.00
25	<b>Traveling in Ministry</b>						0.00	2,500.00	-2,500.00
26	<b>Total Revit/Leadership Devel Expenses</b>						0.00	5,100.00	-7,100.00
27	<b>Total Home Missions Expense</b>						6,300.46	11,500.00	(13,700.00)
28	<b>Net Home Missions Income</b>						1,316.09	5,150.00	700.00
29	<b>Net Income</b>						<b>1,316.09</b>	<b>5,150.00</b>	<b>700.00</b>



# GPYM Statistics

Statistics Prepared for GPYM 2017 Sessions									
	Central City	Council House	Heartland	Hominy	Lubbock	Topeka	University	Total	
Members last Year	36	5	32	58	4	15	403	553	
Number of additions	0	0	3	0	0	2	2	7	
Births	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Requests	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Number of losses	0	0	1	0	0	0	10	11	
Deaths	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	
Requests	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Active Adult Members	5	2	19	20	3	15	117	181	
Active Associate Members (youth)	3	0	2	16	5	0	103	129	
Total active adults and youth	8	2	21	36	8	15	220	310	
Inactive and or non-resident adults	31	3	8	0	0	0	168	210	
Inactive and or non-resident associates	4	0	5	0	0	0	0	9	
Total inactive or non-resident members	35	3	13	22	6	0	168	247	
Grand total	43	5	34	58	14	15	388	557	
Attenders	1		8	1			7		
Average monthly attendance	8		80	84		52	348		
Date Monthly Meeting is Held	3rd First Day		2nd First Day	1st First Day			3rd First Day		
Presiding Clerk	Lynn Zeleski	Frankie Sue Johnson	Angela Young	Carol Revard	Sara Scribner (acting clerk)	Lynn Van Buren	B.J. Mills		
Recorded Ministers	Philip Mesner		Dorlan Bales	David E. Nagle			Donna Bales		
	Delano Cunningham						Arthur Binford		
							Sheli Kadel		
							David Kingrey		
							Cliff Loesch		
							B.J Mills		
							Caro Mulikin		
							David Wolfe		

## **Nominating Committee Report**

GPYM clerks and others willing to serve from the end of these sessions to the close of the 2018 sessions are as follows:

LaVonna Loesch, Presiding Clerk  
Dorlan Bales, Assistant Clerk  
Cheryl Mallonee, Recording Clerk  
Connie Adams, Treasurer  
Paul Mallonee, Statistician  
Steve McConnell, Resident Agent required by Nebraska for its corporations

Others who have agreed to serve on the Continuing Committee through 2018 sessions are:

Cliff Loesch, Clerk of Ministry and Counsel  
Steve McConnell, Clerk of the Finance Committee  
Dorlan Bales, Clerk of Home Missions Committee  
Angela Brown, Clerk of the Nominating Committee  
David Nagle, at large member

### **Trustees**

Cliff Loesch, David Nagle, 2018  
Steve McConnell, 2019  
Cheryl Mallonee, Angela Brown, 2020

### **2017 Minutes Publication Committee**

Editor/Publisher – Connie Adams  
Proof readers – Dorlan Bales, LaVonna Loesch, David Nagle  
Printing/Distribution – Connie Adams, Cliff Loesch

### **Representatives to the 2017 Friends United Meeting Triennial**

Beth Green-Nagle, David Nagle

### **Representative to the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)**

Dean Young, 2019

### **Representative to the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)**

Dorlan Bales, alternate



Representative to the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC)  
Beth Green-Nagle, 2019

Representative to Friends United Meeting (FUM)  
Cliff Loesch, 2019

Representative to Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW)  
John Wine, 2019

## **Members: Ministry & Counsel and Standing Committees**

*Serving the Calendar Year Feb. – Jan.*

### **Ministry & Counsel**

\*Cliff Loesch, clerk, UFM – crloesch@sbcglobal.net

\*Dorlan Bales, HFMM – dorlan@cox.net

Patriz Holding, HMM (2017 & 18) - Box 1272 Pawhuska, OK 74056, 918-604-1028

<Cheryl Mallonee, UFM (2017 & 18) – cemallonee@gmail.com

\*David Nagle, HMM – davnagle@juno.com 918-885-2714

Rhonda Newby, UFM (2016 & 17) – rhondajeannewby@cox.net

<James Perkins, HFMM (2017 – *one yr. term only*) – jrperkins@sktc.net

<Lynn Zeleski, CCMM (2017 & 18) – auntlynnz@gmail.com

*\*Recorded Ministers*

### **Finance Committee**

Steve McConnell, clerk, CCMM (2016 & 17) – veggieduderanch@yahoo.com

Connie Adams, Treasurer (ex-officio), HFMM – adamsr@appstate.edu

Randy Cook, UFM (2016 & 17) – bamankufan@cox.net

<Aaron Fowler, HFMM (2017 & 18) – aaron@aaronfowler.org

<Paul Mallonee, UFM (2017 & 18) – pizzaguy@sprintmail.com

<David Nagle, HMM (2017 & 18) – davnagle@juno.com 918-885-2714

Carole Revard, HMM (2016 & 17) – carolerevard@aol.com 918-639-2153

### **Nominating Committee**

Angela Jake Brown, clerk, HMM (2016 & 17) – aajake277@gmail.com

<Lisa McConnell, CCMM (2017 & 18) – lpeach\_2001@yahoo.com

Molly Loesch, UFM (2016 & 17) – mollybloesch@gmail.com

<Greg Newby, UFM (2017 & 18) – gregnewby@cox.net

### **Home Missions Committee**

<Dorlan Bales, clerk, HFMM (2017 & 18) – dorlan@cox.net

Connie Adams, Treasurer (ex-officio) HFMM – adamsr@appstate.edu

<Michelle Barrett, UFM (2017 & 18) – mab010888@gmail.com

Amelia Jake, HMM (2016 & 17) – 410 Russel Rd, Indian Village, Hominy OK 74035

<Beth Green-Nagle, HM (2017 & 18) - nagle@nsuok.edu  
Patty Savely, UFM (2016 & 17) – pattysavely@gmail.com  
Laura Dungan, HFMM (ex-officio, expire June 2017) –  
creativechangeconsulting@gmail.com  
LaVonna Loesch, UFM (ex-officio) – lavonna.loesch@gmail.com

Key for Monthly Meeting Representation

CCMM – *Central City Monthly Meeting*

CHMM – *Council House Monthly Meeting*

HFMM – *Heartland Friends Monthly Meeting*

HMM – *Hominy Monthly Meeting*

UFM – *University Friends Meeting*

“<” denotes a new appointment, serving two years (2017 & 18)

All Recorded Ministers are welcome and encouraged to join Ministry & Counsel when they meet.

## **Friends Remembered at GPYM Memorial Service 2017**

### **GPYM Memorial Service** June 2016 through June 2017

#### **Central City Friends**

Pam Mesner	01/27/2017
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#### **Heartland Friends**

Wendell Hendricks	02/09/2017
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#### **Hominy Friends**

Gunther Lee Dailey	01/04/2016
James Walter Fields	02/27/2016

#### **Topeka Friends**

Joseph D. Sargent	02/29/2016
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#### **University Friends**

Doris Francis	04/15/2013
Julia Sales	07/30/2016
Eugene Swanson	10/13/2016
James Pierce	09/17/2016
Jim Pitts	12/12/2016
Faye McCreery	01/27/2017
Gloria Hankins	03/13/2017

## Extracts 2017

- I was so excited in Finance Committee this afternoon and I can't believe that sentence came out of my mouth! -- LaVonna Loesch
- Lubbock Friends Meeting? Ooooh! Gotta put that on my list. – LaVonna Loesch
- I had not met either boy before but when I saw them I knew who they were because they look so much like their father did when he was their age. – John Wine regarding Dustin & Jason (kitchen helpers)
- Wess Daniels: I might use the Bible a little bit. David Nagle: Use it to the max!
- During a children's worship Faith & Play story about the Quaker SPICES, “We have spices all around us, and what is in the center?” “Us!” “And God!”
- Noticing that we were behind schedule for the Friday morning reports agenda: LaVonna: Ok, I've learned to give my husband a time limit. Cliff: at the end of his 2<sup>nd</sup> report) Clerk, do I have any time left? LaVonna: No.

## **Great Plains Yearly Meeting Handbook**

### **How We Work Together**

First Edition 2009, Revised 2012, 2014

### **Overview**

Great Plains Yearly Meeting is made up of five monthly meetings: Hominy Friends and Council House Friends in northeastern Oklahoma, Heartland Friends and University Friends in Wichita, Kansas, and Central City Friends in south central Nebraska.

Great Plains Yearly Meeting has a rich history, having celebrated its centennial in 2008. Known as Nebraska Yearly Meeting until 2001, GPYM is part of Friends United Meeting (FUM). GPYM is theologically diverse, as demonstrated by each congregation's relationships with other Friends networks. Heartland and Central City are directly affiliated with Friends General Conference. University Friends belongs to Evangelical Friends Church Mid-America, as did Council House Friends for many years. Hominy Friends are in regular communication with Ohio Yearly Meeting (Conservative) and Kickapoo Friends Center. Some Friends from Heartland and University Friends attend gatherings of the Missouri Valley Friends Conference.

University Friends Church has graciously agreed to be a consistent point of contact with GPYM for individuals and groups outside the yearly meeting.

### **Committees**

#### ***Continuing Committee***

This committee is the official and legal voice of GPYM between annual sessions, making decisions that cannot wait to be considered by the entire body during the first weekend in June. GPYM's presiding and recording clerks, the treasurer, and the clerks of Ministry and Counsel, Nominating Committee, Home Missions Committee and Finance Committee are ex-officio members. One or two other members may be recommended by the Nominating Committee to create better gender, Monthly Meeting representation and

geographic balance. Typically, the presiding clerk asks the Continuing Committee to meet during the fall at the site of the next yearly meeting sessions to settle on a theme, an invited speaker, and leaders for children's and youth programs for those sessions. One or more additional meetings are also held by conference call.

### ***Ministry and Counsel***

Ministry and Counsel is concerned with worship, outreach, visitation among monthly meetings, pastoral care, and general spiritual health of the monthly meetings and GPYM as a whole. The group meets before the opening yearly meeting session and at least once during the sessions, presenting a report of its work and recommendations to the entire body. Ministry and Counsel helps identify the theme for GPYM sessions, provides leadership for the annual GPYM memorial meeting for worship, and may prepare queries for monthly meetings to use as they write their annual State of Society reports.

It is the responsibility of Ministry and Counsel to nurture those of all ages who are tender in the Spirit, recognize gifts in public ministry, and recommend that members exhibiting these gifts be recorded by GPYM as recommendations are brought forward by local meetings. Ministry and Counsel considers requests by local meetings to join GPYM and offers counsel if laying down an existing meeting is contemplated.

Each local meeting appoints two members by January 31 each year for two 12-month terms of service beginning February 1 and sends those names to the Presiding Clerk. Terms of the two appointees are staggered to promote continuity. Recorded ministers and the GPYM Presiding Clerk are ex-officio members. Ministry and Counsel names its own clerk during yearly meeting sessions to serve from the end of that session to the end of next year's annual gathering.

### ***Nominating Committee***

This committee is charged with prayerfully discerning gifts within the body and asking individuals who are members of GPYM meetings if they are willing to serve for one year as presiding and assistant presiding clerks, recording

clerk(s), treasurer and assistant treasurer, minutes publisher, statistician, resident agent/custodian, and trustees.

It recommends representatives to other Quaker bodies for 3-year terms: American Friends Service Committee Corporation (4), Friends Committee on National Legislation (5), Friends United Meeting General Board (2 + alternate), Friends World Committee for Consultation (4) Quaker Earthcare Witness (1 + alternate) Wichita Friends School Board (2), and William Penn House (1).

Each local meeting appoints two members by January 31 each year for two 12-month terms of service beginning February 1 and sends those names to the Presiding Clerk. Terms of the two appointees are staggered to promote continuity. Local meetings are asked to name people who are not members of the Finance Committee or Home Missions Committee and to consider service opportunities for younger Friends. The Nominating Committee names its own clerk during yearly meeting sessions to serve from the end of that session to the end of next year's annual gathering, and meets before the opening yearly meeting session to begin its work.

### ***Finance Committee***

Members work with the treasurer to prepare an annual budget and present it for approval to GPYM. The Finance Committee considers requests for unbudgeted expenditures, usually by distance communication, and makes recommendations to the Continuing Committee. It also provides for an annual review of GPYM's financial accounting.

Each local meeting appoints two members by January 31 each year for two 12-month terms of service beginning February 1 and sends those names to the Presiding Clerk. Terms of the two appointees are staggered to promote continuity. Local meetings are asked to name people who are not members of the Nominating Committee or Home Missions Committee and to consider service opportunities for younger Friends. The Finance Committee names its own clerk during yearly meeting sessions to serve from the end of that session to the end of next year's annual gathering, and meets before the opening yearly meeting session each year to begin its work.



### ***Home Missions Committee***

During the 2014 GPYM sessions, the existing Anchor Committee created in 2012 was laid down in favor of a more permanent committee that will give energy to the new Leadership and Revitalization Initiative, using funds generated from the GPYM farm property and additional gifts from meetings and individuals. The Continuing Committee initially named the Home Missions Committee's members, acting on behalf of GPYM.

Each local meeting appoints two members by January 31 each year for two 12-month terms of service beginning February 1 and sends those names to the Presiding Clerk. Terms of the two appointees are staggered to promote continuity. Local meetings are asked to name people who are not members of the Nominating Committee or Finance Committee and to consider service opportunities for younger Friends. The Home Missions Committee names its own clerk during yearly meeting sessions to serve from the end of that session to the end of next year's annual gathering, and meets before the opening yearly meeting session each year to begin its work.

### ***Trustees***

Trustees are stewards of GPYM's physical assets and have legal responsibility for them. The six trustees are proposed by the GPYM Nominating Committee and serve three year terms. Trustees work closely with a manager to see that GPYM's farm property is rented and yields a fair income each year.

### ***Business and Program Committee***

The local meeting scheduled to host the next annual gathering of GPYM appoints three to five people who work with Continuing Committee to prepare an agenda for the sessions, arrange for resource people, and oversee local arrangements. Names are presented before the close of GPYM sessions.

### ***Extracts and Epistle***

During the opening session the presiding clerk asks Friends assembled who would serve GPYM by writing a general epistle (letter) to other Friends yearly

meetings around the world, a message God would have our yearly meeting share. Two or three people are appointed to write the epistle, which is read and approved before the close of the sessions.

Two other Friends are asked to collect extracts, singular sayings both edifying and humorous, spoken during the course of the sessions. These sayings are included as part of the published minutes.

### ***Website/communications working group***

Great Plains Yearly Meeting has created a website to improve internal and external communications. An ad-hoc working group has been overseeing this project.

### ***Yearly Meeting Leadership***

#### ***Presiding Clerk and Assistant Presiding Clerk***

During GPYM sessions the presiding clerk creates the agenda for business sessions, introduces each item, and listens as various Friends speak to it. When the clerk senses that there is unity, he or she voices the “sense of the meeting” for the body’s consideration. If there is unity, the decision is written by the recording clerk for inclusion in the official minutes. If there is not unity and those who are not satisfied with the proposed minute do not feel able to “stand aside,” there is further consideration of the matter. Sometimes the clerk may call for a time of worship before inviting further comment and/or carry the item of business over to be considered at a later meeting.

During the months between sessions, the presiding clerk prepares an agenda for Continuing Committee meetings and receives items of concern from the yearly meeting’s leaders, from Friends agencies, and from others, referring items to others as appropriate. The clerk manifests a deep concern for the yearly meeting’s faithfulness and health, and communicates with GPYM leaders to encourage them in their Christian service, seeking to understand their joys and struggles.

The assistant presiding clerk assists the clerk during the sessions and between sessions, and presides in the absence of the clerk.

### ***Recording Clerk(s)***

The recording clerk creates a written record of all decisions and other pertinent information during sessions and Continuing Committee meetings, and works with the GPYM minutes publisher to see that minutes of annual sessions are distributed.

### ***Minutes Publisher***

Working closely with the recording clerk(s), the minutes publisher will see that a final version of the minutes, with reports, epistle, and contact information for local meetings and session attendees is made available electronically and in print to GPYM members and Friends organizations who request a copy.

### ***Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer***

The treasurer receives funds and disburses them in accordance with the GPYM budget, consulting with the clerk of the Finance Committee, the presiding clerk, and the Continuing Committee as appropriate. The treasurer will keep accurate records and prepare an annual report that reflects the status of each budget category and the overall assets and liabilities of GPYM.

The treasurer, consulting with the clerk of the Finance Committee, will invest income greater than budgeted spending with Friends fiduciary agencies or other socially responsible managers. The treasurer will also work with the person who reviews GPYM's financial records as directed by the Finance Committee.

### ***Statistician***

The statistician shall collect calendar year statistics from local meetings, including a report of additions and losses to the rolls of members and attendees, the average number of people who gather for worship, names of those deceased

since the GPYM sessions, recorded ministers, and number of copies of the annual minutes requested.

### ***Resident Agent and Custodian***

GPYM's incorporation as a nonprofit group is with the State of Nebraska. All official communication from Nebraska officials and some other legal correspondence is received by the resident agent and custodian, who responds after consulting with the appropriate GPYM leadership.

### **Location of Yearly Meeting Sessions**

The ordinary rotation of annual sessions is, Hominy Friends (2015), University Friends (2016), and Heartland Friends (2017). Friends United Meeting Triennial Sessions will be held at Friends University, Wichita Kansas, in 2017.

### **Monthly Meeting Responsibilities**

- Appoint two members to serve on the Nominating, Home Missions, and Finance Committees and Ministry and Counsel by January 31 each year for two 12-month terms of service beginning February 1 and send those names to the GPYM Presiding Clerk. Ideally, terms of each pair of appointees are staggered to promote continuity.
- Bring a State of Society report reflecting the meeting's spiritual condition to be shared with the rest of GPYM at the beginning of each annual assembly.
- Submit a calendar year statistical report, including names of Friends departed since last sessions to be remembered during the memorial service. A memorial minute is encouraged for those who attended yearly meeting sessions or played key roles in the life of the local meeting.
- Include Great Plains Yearly Meeting in the monthly meeting budget.
- Host yearly meeting sessions periodically, if able.
- Recommend members for recording as ministers of the Gospel.

### **Budget and Special Funds**

Great Plains Yearly Meeting has three separate financial accounts: an operating account, a home missions account, and a student loan fund.

### ***Operating Account***

Income for this account comes from contributions from local meetings and individuals, plus registration for yearly meeting sessions. Expenses include yearly meeting sessions/printing minutes, travel funds that help send GPYM representatives to meetings of Friends agencies, and an enabling fund.

### ***Home Missions Account***

GPYM was given farmland by the Stevens family from 1922-32, with the stipulation that income from the property be used for mission work "within the limits of the Yearly Meeting," with "special attention given to gathering the scattered membership and to the establishment of meetings". Most income to the home missions account comes from renting the land, with additional money coming from local meetings, individuals, and the GPYM operating account.

Since 2013, most of the expenditures of farm income have been dedicated to a new Leadership and Revitalization Project/Initiative focused within GPYM and facilitated by a released Friend. It was initially overseen by a temporary Anchor Committee. In 2014 GPYM created a new standing Home Missions Committee in its place to continue the initiative.

In the past, GPYM has used farm income to make financial contributions to Quaker agencies to support their work within the central plains states. Recently, despite the personal support of many GPYM Friends for those agencies, GPYM made a decision to reduce or eliminate those gifts in order to invest in the encouragement of new life and growth in GPYM's local meetings, including our young adult leaders. These funds have also been used to invite unaffiliated meetings and worship groups to join GPYM, all with the intention of revitalizing GPYM and honoring the wishes of the Stevens family.

### ***Student Loan Fund***

This revolving loan account established by designated contributions offers low interest loans to Friends pursuing higher education. Loans are approved by an

ad hoc committee that includes the treasurer(s), clerk of the finance committee, and the presiding clerk. Loans paid back to the fund, with interest, become available to new borrowers.

### **Recording of Ministers**

Great Plains Yearly Meeting has not recorded many ministers in recent years. When it has, the procedure has varied. More discussion is needed by GPYM Ministry and Counsel to clarify the process. Until there is more clarity, local meetings that recognize a member who has experienced a call by God to public ministry and demonstrated ministry gifts that build up the congregation are asked to talk with the Clerk of GPYM Ministry and Counsel.

## **Directory of GPYM Monthly Meetings**

Central City Monthly Meeting  
403B Ave., Central City NE 68826  
Mail to: 1400 N 38th St, Lincoln, NE 68503  
Clerk: Lynn Zeleski  
Ministers: Delano Cunningham and Philip Mesner

Council House Monthly Meeting  
22601 S. 680 Rd, Wyandotte, OK 74370  
Mail: c/o Frankie Sue Johnson, Clerk  
<http://www.councilhousefriends.org/>  
Clerk: Frankie Sue Johnson

Heartland Friends Monthly Meeting  
14505 W. Sandwedge Circle, Wichita, KS 67235  
<http://heartlandfriendsmeeting.org>  
Clerk: Angela Young  
Minister: Dorlan Bales

Hominy Monthly Meeting  
510 Friends Road, Hominy, OK 74035  
<http://www.hominyfriends.org>  
Clerk: Carole Revard  
Minister: David Nagle

Lubbock Friends of Christ Quaker Meeting  
Grace Presbyterian Church, 4820 19th Street, Lubbock, TX 79407  
Mail to: 2813 23rd Street, Lubbock TX 79410  
[www.lubbockfriendsofchrist.org](http://www.lubbockfriendsofchrist.org)  
Acting Clerk: Sara Scribner

Topeka Friends Monthly Meeting  
603 SW 8th Street, Topeka, KS 66603  
<http://topekaquakers.org>  
Clerk: Lynn Van Buren

University Friends Meeting  
1840 W. University Ave., Wichita, KS 67213  
316-262-0471 <http://universityfriends.quaker.org>  
Clerk: B. J. Mills  
Ministers: Shelli Kadel, Dave Kingrey, Cliff Loesch, B.J. Mills,  
Carol Mullikin, J.M. Pitts, David Wolfe