

September 2016



## WESTERN WORK

A Christian Quaker Community where Faith  
Encounters Life

Since 1858



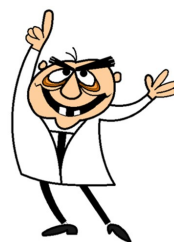
Yearly Meeting Flowers by Judy Smith, Plainfield Friends

### The Invisible Center

This past Friday, we had one whopper of a wind storm that passed through our grounds! It took out a huge hackberry tree that has stood for many years. It was full and beautiful, standing tall and providing shade. It *looked* beautiful, but looks can be deceiving. Five years ago, the tree was cabled together. As it turns out, it was weak and rotten.

When I was a little girl, I used to watch 'Captain Kangaroo'. I loved that show! Mr. Green Jeans, Grandfather Clock... such a great show for children. They ran a cartoon with Tom Terrific, and his arch-enemy Crabby Appleton whose motto was, "I'm rotten to the core!" This was Crabby Appleton's theme song:

My name is Crabby Appleton,  
and I am simply awful.  
It does my heart a lot of good  
to do a deed unlawful!  
I'm fond of gloom, impending doom,  
I think good deeds are sappy!  
I laugh with glee, it pleases me  
when everyone's unhappy.



Let's face it... there's a lot of gloom and doom, unhappiness, and absolute rot that masquerades as strength. Until a big wind blows through, it's hard to tell whether something is based on truth or falsehood. What is at the core of who we are?

Quoting Thomas Kelly, a 20<sup>th</sup> century Friend, in *A Testament of Devotion*, "If the Society of Friends has anything to say, it lies in this region primarily: Life is meant to be lived from a Center, a divine Center." The Quaker testimony of integrity might be compared to a circle, the definition of which is "a locus of points, each of which is equidistant from an invisible point—the center." For Friends, God is that invisible Center. The circle of one's life is to be organized around the will and nature of that Divine Presence: a will characterized by the desire for a restored harmony in creation; a nature defined by love. Quaker integrity is about *integrating* those values into one's life.

What defines who we are? What, who, is at our core? Are we easily broken, or can we withstand even the greatest storms? This is not a 'sappy' question... the invisible Center, the Divine Presence, the core of love, is rooted deeply, and is life-giving.

*Friend to Friend*, Aug. 31, 2016, Ruthie Tippin, pastor of Indianapolis First Friends

### Calendar

#### September

29 WYM Retreat Planning,  
Panera, Plainfield, 6:30pm

29 Scott Russell Sanders  
conversation, IFCL,  
Indianapolis First Friends,,  
7pm

#### October

#### 2 World Quaker Day

2 Orange County  
Fellowship, Beech Grove,  
6pm

2 Fairfield Friends 190th  
Celebration

4 Friends Apart. Home  
Brd, at FAH, 7pm

6 Sessions Program  
Committee, Kelly Rm, 1pm

6-8 FUM General Board,  
Richmond

9 Youth Invasion, Wabash

9 Northern Area, Kokomo  
First Frds, 6pm

11 Property Trustees,  
office, 9:30 am

13 Andrew at Triennial  
Planning Com.

## October, continued

15 Executive Com., Kelly Room, 9:30am

15 Quaker Haven Camp Board

15 Chicken/Beef Noodle Dinner, Kokomo First Friends, 4-7pm

16 Retired Minister Sunday

16 DAR rededication of Van Buren plaque, YM lawn, 3pm

27 Seasoned Frds, at Richards, Kokomo, 11:30am

28 Sundesmos, Office, 6pm

29 Training & Recording, Drake Rm, 1:30pm

## Save the Dates

Nov. 4-6 Fall Impact for Youth, Quaker Haven

Nov. 19 Administrative Council, Gray Meeting

Mar. 23-26, 2017 FWCC Sectional, Pittsburg, PA

April 28-May 1 **WYM Retreat** and **Pastors' Retreat**, Quaker Haven

July 12-16, 2017 FUM Triennial, Friends University, Wichita, KS

July 27-30, 2017 **Western Yearly Meeting Sessions**, Plainfield

## Monthly Meeting Notes



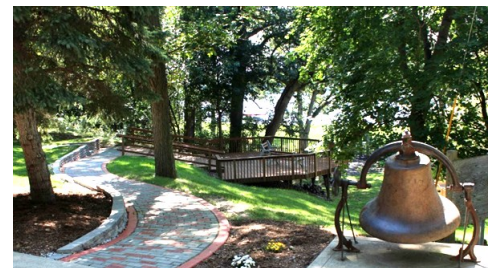
Summer fun and fund-raising at **Sandcreek-Azalia** on

Aug. 6. There was also craft/baked goods under the shelter and a band playing on the lawn.



Remember the Quilts from **Downers Grove** on stage at Yearly Meeting? Anthony, Sue, Gordon and Bruce rehung the Peaceable Kingdom quilts with some additional sound adsorbing cloth behind them. They hope this will resolve some acoustical problems in the fellowship room.

Downers' Grove Newsletter, 9 2016



As you walk down to the deck at **Quaker Haven Camp**, notice the new brick in the sidewalk thanking Pat Byers for his work as CE director.



**Board on Meeting Development and Nurture** has extended a helping hand to Meetings who apply for grants for specific projects. This summer they helped **Carmel Friends** complete the sign for their front lawn, and provided financial assistance to Valley Mills to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of their “new” identity. Recently MD&N increased the amount of scholarship available to use for spiritual retreats. Please feel free to apply for a grant. Talk with Brenda Rodeheffer, clerk, or go to the web site for more information.



Carmel Friends Meeting completed the renovation and improvement of their church sign with help from the MD&N Growth Grant Program.



When Valley Mills became a Monthly Meeting it was set off as “Beech Grove.” But there is another meeting named Beech Grove, south & west of Paoli in Orange County. In 1916, Beech Grove (in the southwest corner of Marion Co.) was renamed “Valley Mills,” which is what we know it as today. Valley Mills decided to celebrate the 100th anniversary of their new moniker at their annual Chicken Barbeque. An MD&N grant was used to get costumes.



**Indianapolis First Friends** is very excited to introduce **Ben Wertz** as their new youth leader. Ben grew up at First Friends and is the son of Chris and Vicki Wertz. Ben has a heart for young people and is very interested in working with youth. Please welcome Ben to this new role!



# Yearly Meeting State of Society Report

The Board on Christian Ministry and Evangelism would like to share the results of the State of Society.

We received State of Society reports from 25 of the 40 meetings that make up WYM. Three more than received last year. 23 were received two years ago.

18 of these 25 reports were received after the due date. The scheduling of the due date is something to look into by CM&E, the yearly meeting and monthly meetings. Due to the very lateness of some reports, only 20 reports were included.

The length of the reports varied from one paragraph to seven pages, most were one to two pages. 8 meetings responded in a numerated format following the State of Society queries they received. 17 meetings responded in a narrative format, some of them alluding to certain queries.

Of the 25 meetings that responded, there is a general sense of good spiritual health, even for the meetings who noted a decline in attendance.

Attendance decline seems to be more attributed to age and health than people deciding to attend worship elsewhere.

Unfortunately, the sense of the spiritual health of the 15 meetings who did not answer has not been recorded, these meetings mostly having an average attendance under 20.

Most meetings reported on some type of outreach or service to their surrounding community. Declining membership and the lack of children were concerns most often raised by meetings.

## Bloomingtondale

The Pastor provides scripture-based messages and prayers of Truth and Praise each Sunday at worship, with members rising during open worship to affirm the message.

They began "Walks with Friends," as a means of taking their faith to the community and beyond the church walls.

These are prayer walks through the streets of Bloomingtondale with prayers for individuals and households they pass, or the community at large.

## Carmel

Has a good participation by a high proportion of the church in attending the services, participation in Life Groups and Bible studies.

They began Life Groups and a Pastoral Care Team this year

They currently have no children attending, but finding ways to rebuild the demographic of young families will be a major focus in the upcoming year

## Coloma

Attendees are very faithful with a strong family-type bond of love and compassion for each other

Their hope for the future continues to be keeping the faith, continuing to provide a house of worship in the community, and helping everyone feel welcome and a part of the endeavor.

## Downers Grove

For some time, the meeting has had difficulty with conflict and hurt feelings among some of its members

A workshop was held and they came to view conflict among themselves as an opportunity for greater understanding, growth, and reconciliation.

One of the strengths of the meeting is the various groups that it offers to adult Friends for support and education

They continue to look for ways to serve children in the meeting. The Meeting is committing itself to two children's events during this year.

## Fairfield

The number of persons bringing messages is a reminder that the gifts of ministry are not confined to the co-pastors

Young Friends are blossoming with over a dozen youth participating in First Day school

They adopted a mission statement "Fairfield Friends Meeting is a diverse Quaker community that lives and shares the peace, love and light of God in the world"

## 57<sup>th</sup> Street

There is a continuing growth in the number and involvement of children and their parents in the life of meeting (one First Day had 19 children and 23 adults in attendance)

The upper elementary/middle school First Day School class' responses to State of Society queries served as a foundation for the SoS report

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#### 57<sup>th</sup> Street—continued

The Meeting does relatively little together as a meeting outside of Sundays and does not seem to have connection with the wider neighboring community or the wider world of Friends

#### First Friends of Kokomo

This has been a year of deepening knowledge of scripture  
Youth and younger families have assumed greater involvement and responsibility  
The greatest challenge is finding a way to increase membership

#### Hazel Dell

One way the presence of the Lord can be felt is through visits, prayers, cards, and calls.  
There is a sense of wonderful cooperation between churches of the community working together to help each other and those in need.

#### Indianapolis First

The leadings of the Holy Spirit are considered primary to the meeting  
The spiritual and physical well-being of the members and attenders of the meeting are a constant focus of various groups in the meeting  
Children and their families are involved in many aspects of meeting life  
They completed a Quaker affirmation class for young people

#### Mooreville

They are blessed with many individuals whose daily lives show evidence of being deeply rooted in Quaker testimonies  
Children read scripture during worship service  
Outreach presents the positive and life giving effects of God's love

#### New London

While there are concerns about attendance and financial obligations, overall health is good  
Children of all ages help with the offering, and teens help with "Centering Moments"  
Parsonage was renovated and made available for rental

#### New Salem

During times without pastoral leadership, members have been responsible for the messages for worship  
Two young members share violin music at special times

#### Noblesville

While losing members due to age and death, attendance is level due to new people attending  
The desire for younger adults and children has become more of a focus

#### Plainfield

The meeting is active and caring and enjoys gathering in Christian fellowship  
and regrets that worship attendance has diminished

#### Russiaville

An impressed need to care for those with limited mobility, resulted in funds being received in record time for a new lift/elevator system.  
During a pastoral sabbatical, members served in various capacities, including pulpit supply  
Young adults are active in the life and growth of the meeting and provide leadership skills.

#### Sandcreek-Azailla

Prayer and praise time has become a larger part of the worship  
They are trying to increase visibility and attendance  
Children are more involved in worship services  
A large parsonage renovation project has been done

#### Sheridan

As the meeting is getting older and smaller, wonders what the future holds  
They pray for the hurts in the community and one another

#### Tangier

Different members serve as worship leaders each month, with an outside speaker coming in  
It has a small membership with considerable health problems

#### West Union

They are a good group of caring people adjusting to health issue and relocation of some of its core members

#### West Newton

Has a core of members who lead meeting for worship on a rotating basis  
They have few youth on a regular basis due to sporadic attendance of families with children



# State of Society Report—continued

## Conclusions

There are many ways to assess the health of an organization. In terms of numbers, for most meetings, membership and attendance are stagnate or fluctuating within a few people. There are some meetings that are growing and some declining in numbers. But numbers may not truly reflect the spiritual state of a meeting.

In terms of looking at the fruit that meetings are producing—ministry and programs within itself and out in the surrounding community. We do see meetings engaging in a wide spectrum of meaningful, productive things. We see that when meetings have youth and young adults, there is an intentionality of having them be involved in the spiritual life of the meeting. We see that when meetings are having difficulties, they are seeking to address and resolve them rather than avoiding them.



So while the fruit on the tree may not be as large and plentiful as it might once have been. There is fruit, it is good, and it seems that we may well be on a trajectory for larger and more plentiful fruit.



**WYM/INYM USFW Fall Retreat** was led by Eden Grace. She led the group in identifying and talking about our gifts.



**Trees.** Jim Wilson of **Property Trustees** spoke with an arborist recently about our tree situation. The Arborist suggested planting burr oak and hickory trees in the Yearly Meeting yard to replace those we had to have removed. We invite you, if you wish, to donate trees.



**Torch Bearers for Indiana's 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.** Indiana is celebrating our 200<sup>th</sup> Birthday with a relay of torch-bearers Sept. 9-Oct. 15. Roleen Pickard and Peggy Hollingsworth sent me lists of people carrying the torch through their counties (or parts of their counties). Watch the papers and you may find more names. These Friends are included: Parke County- - Bruce Brown; Hendricks Co. – Lee Comer, Mary Lee Comer, Dara Smith (for the late Richard Givan), David Whicker, and Dick Whicker; Howard County – Peggy Hollingsworth, a relative of Glenn Kenworthy; Tipton Co – Allen Baird, Dale Salsbery; Miami Co.- John Norris; Wayne Co.- Frank Monroe (who used to work at FUM). For more information contact [INTorchbearers.com](http://INTorchbearers.com).

# News Around the Yearly Meeting

## Friends Disaster Service

The recent outbreak of tornados pointed our need to update our list of volunteers. We are looking for men and women who are able to spendtime and energy helping others. This commitment may be a for a few hours to a few days. Most of their expenses will be covered by Friends Disaster. We are desperate for volunteers. Friends Disaster Service does not function without volunteers. Please contact Lane Sims for more information or to sign up.



Carmel Friends Meeting is soon starting a school to teach English as a second language. That will be a good service to the community.

**Happy 190th Anniversary** Sunday, October 2 will be a day of celebrating at Fairfield Friends Meeting. On this day we will celebrate the 190th anniversary of the founding of Fairfield Friends Meeting. This is also World Quaker Day when Friends around the world will be united in faith and love. There will be a pitch-in meal at the rise of worship with drinks provided. Following the meal, we will have a musical program with a variety of musical offerings Please join us on Sunday, October 2 for a day of food, fellowship and music as we celebrate our Quaker heritage.  
*Fairfield Friend, Aug. 2016*



Plainfield Friends celebrated Quaker Days on September 17. After the parade, the Yearly Meeting lawn was filled with booths selling crafts and products. Some of the Quaker men grilled lamb burgers, hamburgers and pork chops.

**MOORESVILLE FRIENDS CHURCH**

**QUAKER BAZAAR**

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22

9:00 AM—2:00 PM @ FRIENDSHIP HOUSE

LUNCH SERVED 11:00 AM—1:00 PM

Sponsored by the White Lick USFW. All proceeds go to support the various missions of the United Society of Friends Women.



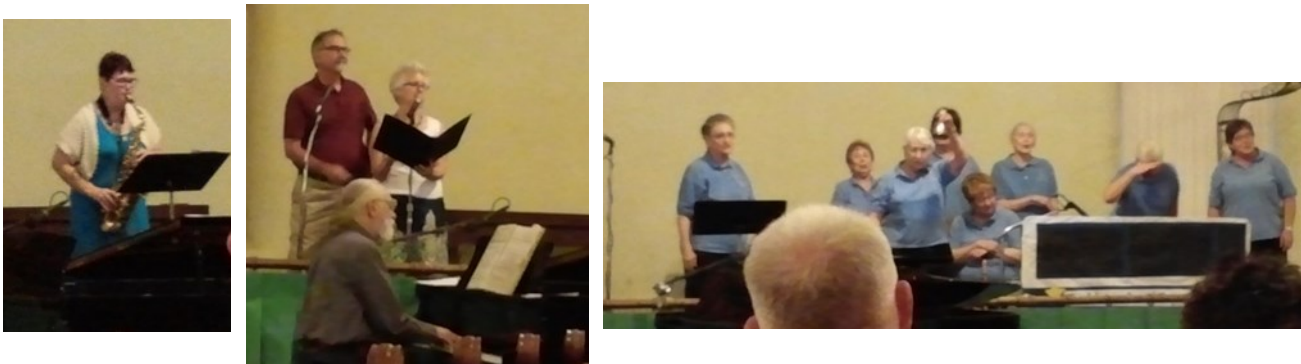
All are Welcome!

**First Friends Meeting of Kokomo** invites you to a Chicken or Beef and Noodle Dinner on Sat., Oct 15 from 4:00-7:00 pm. Meals include: Chicken or Beef and Noodles, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, Rolls, and drink, \$8.00. Desserts are \$1. Noodle Sundaes are \$4.00. Children ages 3-10 are \$3.50 and children under 3 yrs. are free. Dry noodles are sold by the pound and menu items are also available by the quart. Carry outs available.

First Friends Meeting is located at 1801 W. Zartman Rd. in Kokomo. Call the office with questions: [765-453-9490](tel:765-453-9490) Mon.-Fri. 9:00 am-1:00 pm.

**IFCL at First Friends Indianapolis**

Please join IFCL for a conversation on the topic of Islam and the refugee crisis, with Michael Birkel and Cole Varga. Michael Birkel is a Quaker author and Earlham School of Religion professor. Cole Varga is Executive Director of Exodus Refugee Immigration, Inc. The event is being held on Friday, October 14 at 7 PM in the Indianapolis First Friends meetinghouse. For more information contact IFCL clerk Bill Chapman - [317-255-4739](tel:317-255-4739).



“**Concert of Good Music**” was descriptive of the several groups that performed in the Yearly Meeting Room on Friday before Quaker Day. This was organized by **Pastoral Ministry Excellence**.



The **Corn Roast** is put on every year by the Howenstein’s of **Illinois Yearly Meeting**. It was a pretty drive to McHenry, Ill., and Pioneer Road, and the corn was excellent.

← Judy Wollecki is the Field Secretary of ILYM, and a member of 57th St. as are the Rorems, and others at this table(?) →





*Quaker Haven Camp, 2016*

*By Andrew Heald*



Campers at Sr. Hi. 1 (9<sup>th</sup>-HS Grads) begin to become comfortable around each other in chapel and during worship.

Campers surround an overcome student at Sr. Hi. 2 Camp (9<sup>th</sup>-HS Grads). They gathered and prayed for the camper, solely led by the Spirit to do so.



Danny Goff, an IYM Intern, gave the lessons during Beginner's Camp (K-2<sup>nd</sup>) to over 35 campers!

Over 130 campers (5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>) gather at the fire pit on the lakefront as Kevin Lipsey leads them in campfire song and dance.



Jr. Hi. Campers (7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>) are silly and dance during a morning chapel service.



Little Friends Campers (2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>) dancing and singing during a worship time.



**October 9th Wabash Friends Church 5-8pm**

**Ages: 7th-12th Grades Cost is free**

Come out for a great evening of Camp programming—speaking, music, game, and great food. Questions? Contact: Andrew at [Andrew.heald13@gmail.com](mailto:Andrew.heald13@gmail.com) or Pat at [pat@iym.org](mailto:pat@iym.org)



# WESTERN WORK

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## **Purpose**

*Seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Western Yearly Meeting equips Friends Meetings in the Gospel of Jesus Christ by exercising mutual care and extending cooperative ministries. Through various expressions of our Christian faith, we strive to inspire ministry and the release of gifts of leadership.*

## **Hearing Jesus**

When someone begins a sentence with “God told me to . . .” I get nervous. “God told me” has been the source of a lot of very bad things in our world. Sometimes it is just a harmless delusion, but sometimes it turns into a dangerous zeal that causes great harm.

However, if we take the claims of Jesus seriously, we discover that God still speaks to us through Jesus. In John 10 Jesus says “My sheep listen to my voice.” Just as sheep become familiar with the voice and calls of their shepherd, we can become familiar with the voice and calls of the Good Shepherd who tends his flock. The faith of Friends begins with the voice of Jesus.

George Fox wrote in his Journal, *And when all my hopes . . . were gone, so that I had nothing outwardly to help me, nor could I tell what to do; then, oh then I heard a voice which said, "There is one, even Jesus Christ, that can speak to thy condition": and when I heard it, my heart did leap for joy.*

Traditional Friends worship, gathering in quiet, is not a time of silence but rather a time of listening. We listen to our own voices, the voices of those around us, and the voice of our God who loves us and desires good for us.

I’ve never heard a divine voice call out to me like George Fox did, but I have heard the voice and call of Jesus in many other ways.

**Thee & Me**, Plainfield Friends Meeting, by Bill Clendineng, pastor

