

Minutes of the Illinois Yearly Meeting

146th Annual Sessions

Sixth Month, 17-21, 2020, Virtual Gathering via Video Conference

MINUTES OF THE FIRST SESSION, Fourth Day, Sixth Month 17, 2020

Minute 1 The 146th Annual Sessions of Illinois Yearly Meeting (ILYM) opened with 8 minutes and 46 seconds of silence in remembrance of the 8 minutes and 46 seconds that a Minneapolis police officer knelt on the neck of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, resulting in his death. This and other recent murders of Black Americans have sparked a new movement to protest the long history of racial injustice in our country.

Minute 2 Presiding Clerk Marcia Nelson welcomed everyone present to the Annual Sessions of Illinois Yearly Meeting, being held for the first time via video conference due to precautions necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Marcia outlined the proceedings of the virtual annual sessions. In addition to business sessions, there will be children's programs, social time, workshops, speakers, worship, and worship sharing, and even dancing, all in a virtual format.

Minute 3 Presiding Clerk Marcia Nelson introduced herself, Recording Clerk Sarah Pavlovic, Reading Clerk Chris Jocius, and Assistant Clerk nominee Kent Busse.

Minute 4 Marcia Nelson welcomed visitors and newcomers to ILYM, including Pamela Moseley (Northside); Pamela Calvert (Northside); Helen Haug (Northside); Allison Kirkegaard (Claremont MM, Pacific YM); Beth Kelly (Brooklyn MM, NYYM); Benigno Sanchez-Eppler (North-Hampton MM, NEYM); Allie Boyaris (Urbana-Champaign); Daniel Lakemacher (Urbana-Champaign); "Michael" Cunningham (Lake Forest); Dreiske Arnold (Lake Forest); Graeme Cunningham (Lake Forest); Sally Weaver Sommer, representative from FGC (Broadmead MM, LEYM); Erica Dix (Northside); Maryalice Larson (Duneland); Adrian Nelson joining from Tacoma, Washington (Northside); Tom Jacobs from Arcadia, Florida.

Minute 5 The Clerk brought to our attention the Zoom video conference guidance that Administrative Coordinator Wil Brant has compiled to explain Zoom procedures. It is titled "Instructions and Pointers for On-line 2020 ILYM Annual Sessions" and may be found on the ILYM website. In order to accomplish business in a shorter-than-usual time frame, committee and representative reports that do not have action items but need to be accepted will appear on a "unity agenda," to be accepted as a group. Those in attendance are urged to read these reports, available in the advance documents, in order to be prepared to consider them as a group. Friends are reminded to raise hands and be mindful to speak no more than once to a concern.

Minute 6 The Presiding Clerk will be supported by the Clerk's Committee, which this year includes Wil Brant, Cathy Garra, David Shiner, and Gwen Weaver.

Minute 7 Marcia Nelson reminded us of this year's theme "How do we walk cheerfully over the earth answering that of God in ourselves and others?" and its resonance during this time of pandemic, protests, and the loss of beloved members of our yearly meeting community.

Reading Clerk Chris Jocius, with the assistance of Daniel Lakemacher, read a minute from Lake Forest Monthly Meeting inspired by the Black Lives Matter Movement and by the tragic murders of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd in recent weeks. The minute, available in the Annual Sessions supplementary documents, lifted up concerns and recommended actions that Friends can take to address racism and white privilege. Those present were invited to consider this statement as a seed for reflection as we engage with this year's theme.

Minute 8 Marcia Nelson asked whether there were Friends who felt led to use time during these sessions as an antiracism working group to propose a response or statement or plan of action from ILYM regarding racism and white privilege. More than a dozen people raised their hands to participate in a breakout session to undertake this work. There will be time on the agenda on Saturday to hear from the working group.

Minute 9 Marcia Nelson called attention to the description of the Epistle Committee on page 5 of the Advance Documents. The Nominating Committee has brought the names of Monica Tetzlaff, Chris Jocius, and Daniel Lakemacher to serve as this year's Epistle Committee. Approved.

Minute 10 Marcia Nelson referred participants to the description of the Exercises Committee in the Advance Documents and asked for volunteers to serve on this committee. Pam Kuhn volunteered. Other volunteers will be requested at the next business session.

Minute 11 Phyllis Reynolds, Clerk of the Ministry and Advancement Committee (M&A), described the Committee of Care. Friends may approach members of this committee if they would like to talk individually about concerns that arise during Annual Sessions. Members of the committee are Phyllis Reynolds, Heather Evert, Brad Laird, Bruce Kanarek and Mark McGinnis. They will display a "Cte. (for 'Committee') Of Care" designation on their Zoom screens. Committee members may be reached by phone between sessions. Their phone numbers were distributed by the Administrative Coordinator by email.

Minute 12 Phyllis Reynolds reminded those present of ILYM's Harassment and Abuse Policy. The policy is posted online in ILYM's Handbook. Friends currently serving on the Harassment Review Committee are Marcia Nelson (Presiding Clerk), Phyllis Reynolds (Clerk of Ministry and Advancement), Bruce Kanarek (member of Ministry and Advancement), Judy Wolicki (Field Secretary), and Mark McGinnis (member at large appointed by Presiding Clerk).

Minute 13 Bridget Rorem reported for Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee brought forward the following names for consideration:

Assistant Clerk: Kent Busse, to serve in both 2020 and 2021

Development Committee: Coco Colin, for a 3-year term (2023); Marcy Harman, for a 1-year term (2021)

Environmental Concerns Committee: Adrian Fisher, for a 3-year term (2023)

Ministry & Advancement Committee: Janice Domanik, for a 3-year term (2023); Steve Tamari, for a 2-year term (2022); Bruce Kanarek, extended to 2022

Personnel Committee: Colleen Reardon, for a 3-year term (2023), Colleen will serve as Clerk; Sharon Haworth, for a 3-year term (2023); Kate Gunnell, for a 3-year term (2023); Audrey French, for a 3-year term (2023)

For representative to Friends for LGBTQ Concerns: Jad Tamari, for a 3-year term (2023)
Clerk of Publications: Sean West for a 3-year term (2023)

Friends are invited to talk to the Nominating Committee if interested in serving as a representative of ILYM to Friends General Conference (FGC), Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) or American Friends Service Committee (AFSC).
Report accepted. The slate of nominees was approved.

Minute 14 Gwen Weaver reported for Naming Committee that Sharon Haworth has agreed to serve on Nominating Committee. Bridget Rorem has agreed to continue to serve on the committee and to continue to serve as the committee's clerk.

Minute 15 Judy Wolicki presented her final report as ILYM's Field Secretary. She continues to serve with joy. She shared that her cousin and her aunt both recently died of COVID-19, so that joy is mixed with grieving. She invited those in attendance to read her report in which she noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the world and our way of being in it.

What Judy is hearing right now is that things—including Quaker meetings—are re-opening a little bit, which is important. A “silver lining” in the past months has been that virtual meetings have allowed Friends from far away to attend worship and fellowship again. How can we keep that a part of our practice? However, the “not-so-silver lining” is that many Friends are not finding that the on-line resources satisfy their need for physical presence and community, and they are struggling with the loss of the spirit they experience in meetings.

Judy asked that we try to find ways to feed each person's spirit. She asked whether the idea of “listening to the same song” could possibly be a metaphor for how we are connected in worship, even when physically apart. Is there something about this metaphor that can help us find a way to reach out to Friends who are not finding online worship working for them? How can we all listen to the same song?

The number of miles Judy drove last year was ridiculously small compared to other recent years, yet Zoom videoconferencing allowed her to visit many more meetings. How do we keep this going?

Finally, Judy thanked Friends for all the ways they have supported, nurtured, guided, and trusted her and related that she expects to continue in joy.

Report accepted.

Minute 16 Phyllis Reynolds presented the Ministry and Advancement Report. The Committee proposes Bradley Laird, a member of South Bend Monthly Meeting, as the new Field Secretary. He will succeed Judy Wolicki, whose term ends at the close of the 2020 Annual Sessions. The committee expressed gratitude for Judy's service. They look forward to future opportunities. Report accepted.

Concerns were expressed about the financial terms of the Field Secretary position, given that the proposed ILYM budget currently shows a deficit. This will be addressed when the budget comes before us tomorrow. Friends voiced affirmation that the Field Secretary serves an important function for the yearly meeting and agreed that the appointment could proceed ahead of the budget discussion.

Appointment of Brad Laird to the position of Field Secretary was approved with one Friend standing aside.

Minute 17 The minutes were read back to the meeting and approved. The session closed with worship.

MINUTES OF THE SECOND SESSION, Fifth Day, Sixth Month 18, 2020

Minute 18 The second session of ILYM’s 146th Annual Sessions opened with centering worship.

Minute 19 Marcia Nelson welcomed those present and introduced herself as Presiding Clerk, Kent Busse as Assistant Clerk, and Sarah Pavlovic as Recording Clerk (See minutes 3 and 13 from the first session.). She invited introductions from visitors and first-time attenders, including Sarah Freeman-Woolpert, a representative from FCNL.

Minute 20 Marcia Nelson made announcements, reminding Friends of the Harassment and Abuse policy and committee (See Minute 11 from the first session), and the Committee of Care (See minute 12 from the first session). We were reminded of the Zoom video conference guidance document that can be found online. We were also reminded of the importance of reading advance documents, as certain reports will not be read to the business session, but will be considered for acceptance as a group during tomorrow’s business session. Please visit the Annual Sessions web page “Front Table” link for updated documents. Marcia Nelson also made the welcome announcement that the US Supreme Court had decided against the Trump Administration’s recent attempt to rescind the DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) program, which protects undocumented residents brought into America as children.

Minute 21 The contact person for ILYM’s newly-formed working group on racism and white privilege (See Minute 8) is Janice Domanik.

Minute 22 The Clerk reported that “Michael” Cunningham, Dreiske Arnold, and Dawn Crimson have agreed to join Pam Kuhn to form the Exercises Committee. Approved.

Minute 23 Co-treasurers Dawn Crimson and Val Lester presented the Treasurers’ Report. They shared financial reports updated to June 18, 2020. On the Statement of Fund Activity, they pointed out that we have received less income from individuals and from meetings compared to last year, but we have also spent less—with this year’s annual sessions costing less, some site expenses coming out of the Maintenance Reserve Fund, the Children’s Religious Education Coordinator position not filled, and some committees having spent less. Income and expenses are both down about \$40,000 compared with last year, so we are at about the same net income as last year. Additional contributions from monthly meetings are expected in the next few weeks, at which point we will be in better financial shape. The treasurers also shared the Balance Sheet for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020.

The Treasurers and Finance Committee continue to try to make financial information easy to understand. They are currently using new software to generate reports. Reports updated to the end of the fiscal year will be included in the minute book. Report accepted.

Minute 24 Ted Kuhn gave the Finance Committee Report. Continuing Committee approved registration for Annual Sessions to be on a pay-as-led basis (See Minute 6, Spring 2020 CC). This may not be a good year to evaluate how this is working, since this is not a typical year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but Finance Committee nevertheless welcomes suggestions for improving the process or registration forms for future years.

Friends Fiduciary has applied for a grant to develop ways to help clients collect donations online more efficiently. Finance Committee may want to participate in the coming year. This will be joint work with Development Committee.

Ted Kuhn presented the proposed ILYM Budget for 2020-21. Finance Committee is concerned

about the financial viability of ILYM at current expense levels. Due to the expectation that the economy will be in poor shape for the next year, they forecast that both meeting and individual donations will drop in the next year. If we have an in-person Annual Sessions in 2021, attendance may be down, which will affect income. This draft budget does not show expenses that would be incurred if we decide to approve a caretaker, estimated to be a net expense of about \$1000.

The first draft of the budget shows a significant deficit. Expenses are about the same in the proposed budget, but income is expected to be about \$24,000 lower, due in part to uncertainties around the pandemic.

The committee asked for guidance as to whether the yearly meeting should plan to run a deficit in a unique situation or if we should attempt to reduce spending. Our financial reserves do allow us to run a deficit budget, but we need to discern if that is what we want to do. Do we operate from an attitude of scarcity or do we trust that we can continue with an attitude of abundance?

This is the first reading of the budget. The Finance Committee will meet Friday 5 p.m to 6 p.m. This meeting is open to anyone who wishes to attend to further process ideas and concerns about next year's budget.

The Finance Committee Report, including the proposed 2020-21 budget, was accepted.

Minute 25 Peter Lasersohn reported on his communications with the University of Illinois Library regarding the ILYM Archives Agreement. Illinois Yearly Meeting and Blue River Quarterly Meeting signed a joint agreement with the University of Illinois in 1977, according to which records of both meetings were deposited on loan in the university library. When Peter contacted the library earlier this year to deposit recent records, the library staff indicated that they were now asking everyone to sign a new standard agreement that is inconsistent with ILYM's existing agreement. Copies of both agreements are appended to Peter's report.

Peter recommended that the yearly meeting appoint an ad hoc committee to negotiate a new agreement with the University of Illinois Library to bring to Annual Sessions for approval. Peter offered to serve on such a committee, and reported that Carol Neely of Urbana-Champaign Meeting and Brent Eckert, ILYM's Records Librarian, have also agreed to serve. Beth Carpenter offered to serve on the committee as well.

Those present approved the formation of an ad hoc committee, with membership of Peter Lasersohn, Carol Neely, Brent Eckert, and Beth Carpenter, to re-negotiate the agreement with the University of Illinois and/or to explore other options for archiving yearly meeting records.

Minute 26 The minutes from the second session were read and approved.

Minute 27 The Clerk announced online activities scheduled for later in the day: worship, a session to meet the caretaker candidate, and a selection of evening workshops. The session closed with waiting worship.

MINUTES OF THE THIRD SESSION, Sixth Day, Sixth Month 19, 2020

Minute 28 The third session of ILYM's 146th Annual Sessions opened with a reminder that today is Juneteenth, a day celebrated to remember June 19, 1865 as the day when enslaved people in Texas were notified of the Emancipation Proclamation, one of the last acts of emancipation of enslaved people in the United States. ILYM's working group on racism encourages us to learn more about Juneteenth and various organizations supporting the Movement for Black Lives. Friends then entered centering worship.

Minute 29 Presiding Clerk Marcia Nelson welcomed all those in attendance with words from the hymn “Lift Every Voice and Sing”. She introduced the clerks.

Minute 30 The Clerk announced that the anti-racism working group continues its work, with Janice Domanik as convener. We were advised that the website of the Smithsonian Museum for African American History has recommended resources. To learn more about the work of the anti-racism working group, about the finance committee meeting happening this afternoon, and to see minutes from recent sessions and additional documents, Friends are urged to check the virtual “Front Table” on the ILYM website.

Minute 31 Chris Goode presented the report from the Maintenance, Planning and Envisioning Committee (MP&E). As reported to the Spring 2020 Continuing Committee, members of MP&E have been in communication with Judy Reese, a Quaker woman who contacted ILYM in the fall of 2019 seeking a caretaker position in our area. On Thursday afternoon, interested Friends met with Judy via Zoom for an opportunity to meet her and ask questions.

The Maintenance, Planning, and Envisioning Committee believes strongly that a resident caretaker living on, or very near the site at McNabb, is essential for the care of our campus as we move into the future. It appears that Judy Reese has skills and experience that match our needs. The Committee has worked out proposed arrangements regarding what ILYM would offer Judy and what she would provide to ILYM in return, detailed in the MP&E Report.

Chris presented a summary of expected costs associated with the caretaker. The committee originally estimated the total costs for the year to be about \$2,500; however, some of these costs may already be in the budget, resulting in an addition to the budget likely to be closer to \$1,000.

Minute 32 Illinois Yearly Meeting approved the recommendation of the Maintenance, Planning, and Envisioning Committee to engage Judy Reese to become our property caretaker, under the care of that committee, with one Friend standing aside.

Minute 33 David Shiner brought to our attention that the Personnel Committee in their report to the Fall 2019 Continuing Committee pointed out the need for examination and discernment of our policy around employees. The Personnel Committee is charged to bring to Fall 2020 Continuing Committee a progress report on their discernment around these questions, including the question “Do ILYM’s stated personnel policies fit our current and evolving practices and aspirations?”

Minute 34 Marcia Nelson introduced the proposed unity agenda, which is described in the advance documents as a time-saving way to facilitate acceptance of reports that require no corporate action beyond acceptance. Approving this practice means the eleven committee or representative reports included in the unity agenda will not be presented individually, but will be accepted as a group. Approved.

Minute 35 Marcia Nelson, Kent Busse, and Sarah Pavlovic provided brief highlights of reports included in the unity agenda. Those present were invited to make a joyful noise recognizing the work of the committee members and representatives who had put time and energy into their work and into the preparation of these reports. The unity agenda was approved.

Minute 36 Marcia Nelson presented a summarized version of the report of the Faith and Practice Committee. The Faith and Practice Committee requested that it be laid down, effective upon the distribution of published copies of the book. Approved.

Minute 37 The Faith and Practice Committee report was accepted with thanks.

Minute 38 The minutes were read and approved. The session closed with worship.

MINUTES OF THE FOURTH SESSION, Seventh Day, Sixth Month 20, 2020

Minute 39 The fourth session of ILYM's 146th Annual Sessions opened with centering worship.

Minute 40 Clerk Marcia Nelson introduced the clerks and welcomed those in attendance, across communities and states.

Minute 41 Marcia Nelson made announcements regarding our online procedures, about the availability of the resources of the policy on Harassment and Abuse and its committee, and the Committee of Care. She also reminded those present of the availability of the most recent documents in the ILYM website "Front Table" folder.

Minute 42 Minutes 36 and 37 from the third session of business meeting were read and approved.

Minute 43 The report of the Development Committee was summarized, celebrated with joyful noise, and accepted.

Minute 44 Bridget Rorem on behalf of the Nominating Committee proposed additional names for approval:

Adrian Nelson as representative to Friends General Conference Central Committee

Fariba Murray as representative to the American Friends Service Committee Corporation
Board

Pam Kuhn as representative to Friends World Committee for Consultation

Approved.

Minute 45 Ted Kuhn presented a revised budget for 2020-21 based on deliberation at the Finance Committee meeting held yesterday afternoon. Nothing has been changed in expected income. Additional expenses were added to accommodate the engagement of a caretaker, as well as a small reduction reflecting expenses saved by having the caretaker do some maintenance work. Travel expenses and expenses for representatives were reduced since travel has been much curtailed during the pandemic. Committee expenses were amended to reflect what committees have been spending, with some amounts greater and some less than the first draft.

The revised budget includes a \$1,000 donation to a Black-led anti-racism organization as recommended by the working group on anti-racism, as a demonstration of our commitment to begin this work.

The proposed budget shows a deficit of \$18,550, intended to be a one-time deficit, necessitated by the pandemic and the economic difficulties that have resulted from it. Approved.

Minute 46 Janice Domanik reported for ILYM’s anti-racism working group. They shared words of commitment and intention from the Black Lives Matter website that informed their work together. The working group united in a sense of urgency around this issue and that the yearly meeting needs to commit to a focus on anti-racism work. Janice Domanik advised that the working group is open to those interested and willing to work.

Those present approved adopting the minute presented in the report of the working group, as a statement of the yearly meeting’s intention to further the work of undoing racism.
Approved.

Minute 47 Pam Kuhn presented the Handbook Committee Report outlining updates to Handbook. They proposed a description for a committee of oversight for the Administrative Coordinator. They expressed their willingness to work with other committees of oversight and the Personnel Committee to update descriptions of other committees of oversight. Approved.

Minute 48 The Handbook Committee made specific recommendations to organize and clarify the section on “Specific Practices, Procedures, and Policies.” They recommend adding to the Handbook information about the Safe Congregation Policy, including where to find the complete policy document, to replace the “Guidelines for Youth Volunteers or Youth Leaders,” which will be removed. They recommended adding a description of the Employee Manual and where it can be found. They recommended adding the Records Retention Procedure and Policy adopted in 2016 and updated in 2019. Approved.

Minute 49 The Handbook Committee recommended updating the section on Annual Sessions planning to reflect revisions made in 2019. Approved.

Minute 50 The wording for the updates referenced in Minutes 47-49 may be found in the Handbook Committee Report. The report was accepted.

Minute 51 Marcia Nelson proposed October 3, 2020 as the date for Fall Continuing Committee, with two options for its location and format: Plan A is to meet at the Illinois Yearly Meeting meetinghouse, hosted by Clear Creek Monthly Meeting, contingent on public health conditions; Plan B is to conduct the meeting virtually. A suggestion was made to explore the possibility of having a meeting that includes virtual participation in addition to in-person. Approved.

Minute 52 The proposed date for 2021 Annual Sessions is June 16-20, 2021. Chicago schools will still be in session at that time. More discernment will be undertaken and the dates will be presented for approval at Fall 2020 Continuing Committee.

Minute 53 The minutes from the fourth session were read back and approved. The session closed with worship.

MINUTES OF THE FIFTH SESSION, First Day, Sixth Month 21, 2020

Minute 54 The fifth session of ILYM’s 146th Annual Sessions opened with centering worship.

Minute 55 Friends were welcomed to the yearly meeting's final sessions. Bobby Trice, representative from FCNL (Friends Meeting Washington, Baltimore YM) introduced himself.

Minute 56 Monica Tetzlaff, Charlotta Koppanyi, Bobbi Trist, and Hannah Laird read outgoing Epistles from the Children's Sessions. We heard epistles from the pre-school, primary, intermediate, and middle school groups. Monica and Charlotta thanked all the teachers and high school assistants who helped make virtual children's sessions possible. Epistles from the Children's Sessions were accepted.

Minute 57 On behalf of the Epistle Committee, Daniel Lakemacher read this year's ILYM Epistle, which will be sent to other yearly meetings. Approved.

Minute 58 Dawn Crimson, representing the Exercises Committee, read this year's Exercises. Accepted.

Minute 59 Illinois Yearly Meeting extended our gratitude to Judy Wolicki who has served as our Field Secretary for the past nine years. During that time she has driven thousands of miles each year to meetings, worship groups and other gatherings, offering programs, resources, care and encouragement, and connection among individuals and meetings. We have been blessed by her friendship, by her calm and reassuring presence, by her deep listening, by her loving care for us all, and by the joy she embodies as she urges us to find joy in our own lives. Approved.

Minute 60 Illinois Yearly Meeting gave thanks to outgoing members of committees for their service to the yearly meeting, and also to those who continue to serve or have recently agreed to serve the yearly meeting in a variety of ways. Approved.

Minute 61 Illinois Yearly Meeting thanked all those who gave time and effort to adapting ILYM's 2020 Annual Sessions to a virtual format, including the members of the Planning Coordinators Group, and all who brought technological expertise to making the 2020 Annual Sessions a pioneering effort in community. Approved.

Minute 62 Clerk Marcia Nelson reminded Friends of the Annual Sessions evaluation form available on the website. A planning session for 2021 and Meeting for Worship will follow this business session.

Minute 63 Marcia Nelson reminded Friends that Fall Continuing Committee is planned for October 3, 2020 at the ILYM meetinghouse at McNabb, whether in person, virtually, or a combination of the two. The dates for the 2021 Annual Sessions are still under deliberation, and will be announced at Fall Continuing Committee.

Minute 64 Youth Coordinator Liam Gardner reported for the High School Friends. Instead of having virtual sessions during this week of ILYM sessions, High School Friends committed to continuing their ongoing online gatherings on 2nd and 4th Saturdays where they have played games, participated in Quaker trivia sessions, and donned orange clothing to make a statement opposing racial injustice, among other activities. During the virtual Annual Sessions, several High School Friends helped with the Children's Sessions. Liam has contact information for rising high school students who will be invited to join the ongoing online sessions. Accepted.

Minute 65 The minutes of the fifth session were read and approved.

Minute 66 The 146th Annual Sessions of Illinois Yearly Meeting—the first ILYM Annual Sessions to be held by video conference—closed with worship.