

Illinois Yearly Meeting

Spring Continuing Committee

Third Month 1, 2025
Urbana-Champaign Meeting, Urbana, IL

Advance Documents

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Spring Continuing Committee

Third Month 1, 2025

Urbana-Champaign Meeting
1904 E. Main St, Urbana, IL 61802

9:30 a.m.: Fellowship with coffee and snacks will be ready.

10:00 a.m.: Settling into Worship to seek Divine Guidance for business at hand will begin at.

Lunch will be provided by our hosts, Urbana-Champaign Meeting. There will be a basket for contributions to cover the modest costs of the meal.

Conclusion: The meeting usually concludes between 4:00 and 5:00 p.m.

Continuing Committee is open to all who have concern about the work of ILYM. Each person's presence (whether delegated or not) will enrich the meeting's deliberations.

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Illinois Yearly Meeting

5615 S. Woodlawn Ave.
Chicago, IL 60637-1622

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Treasurers Report

Illinois Yearly Meeting – Income Statement
For fiscal year ending June 30, 2025 as of February 5, 2025

Account	1 General Operating	2 Unrestrd Reserves	5 FWCC World Mtgs	6 Maint. Reserve	8 Property Impr.	Total
Income						
Support from Meetings	32,278.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	32,278.50
Support from Individuals	19,277.20	20,000.00	0.00	0.00	500.00	39,777.20
Interest & Investment Income	7,273.86	0.00	0.00	0.00	724.57	7,998.43
Other Income	5.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.00
Total Income	58,834.56	20,000.00	0.00	0.00	1,224.57	80,059.13
Gross Income	58,834.56	20,000.00	0.00	0.00	1,224.57	80,059.13
Operating Expenses						
1 Personnel & Office						
1A Employee Direct-Indirect Expenses	32,204.58	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	32,204.58
1B Staff Travel	2,494.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,494.00
1C Office Expenses	745.95	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	745.95
Total 1 Personnel & Office	35,444.53	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	35,444.53
2 YM Travel Support						
2A ILYM Reps Travel	4,417.90	0.00	468.64	0.00	0.00	4,886.54
ILYM Committee Travel	469.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	469.25
Total 2 YM Travel Support	4,887.15	0.00	468.64	0.00	0.00	5,355.79
3 Site & Property Expenses						
Annual services-Property Taxes	1,187.11	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,187.11
Mowing, Tree Trimming	3,960.00	0.00	0.00	10,700.00	0.00	14,660.00
Repairs & Maintenance	934.38	0.00	0.00	6,785.00	0.00	7,719.38
Urgent Maintenance	0.00	0.00	0.00	(12,476.55)	0.00	(12,476.55)
Utilities	1,258.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,258.34
Total 3 Site & Property Expens	7,339.83	0.00	0.00	5,008.45	0.00	12,348.28
5 Committee Expenses						
Committees-General	16.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	16.90
Development Committee	518.82	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	518.82
Publications & Distribution Committee	1,341.12	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,341.12
YO Committee	(325.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(325.00)
Total 5 Committee Expenses	1,551.84	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,551.84
6 Support to Others	15,500.00	0.00	531.36	0.00	0.00	16,031.36
Total Operating Expenses	64,723.35	0.00	1,000.00	5,008.45	0.00	70,731.80
Operating Income	(5,888.79)	20,000.00	(1,000.00)	(5,008.45)	1,224.57	9,327.33
Transfers						
Transfers - Budgeted						
Transfers - FWCC World Mtgs	(1,000.00)	0.00	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Transfers - Maint Reserve	(15,850.00)	0.00	0.00	15,850.00	0.00	0.00
Total Transfers - Budgeted	(16,850.00)	0.00	1,000.00	15,850.00	0.00	0.00
Total Transfers	(16,850.00)	0.00	1,000.00	15,850.00	0.00	0.00
Net Income	(22,738.79)	20,000.00	0.00	10,841.55	1,224.57	9,327.33

Illinois Yearly Meeting - Balance Sheet as of February 5, 2025

Account	Feb 5, 2025	Feb 5, 2024
Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents		
Checking Account	109,180.82	82,500.14
Friends Fiduciary-Temp. Restricted Property Impr. ILYM3	38,033.82	35,414.69
Friends Fiduciary-Unrestricted Designated ILYM5	578,870.79	537,184.40
Total Cash and Cash Equivalents	726,085.43	655,099.23
Current Assets		
Accounts Receivable	0.00	13,681.25
Total Current Assets	0.00	13,681.25
Total Assets	726,085.43	668,780.48
Liabilities and Equity		
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	19,617.00	5,052.30
Payroll Taxes	(36.66)	0.00
Total Current Liabilities	19,580.34	5,052.30
Total Liabilities	19,580.34	5,052.30
Equity		
Current Year Earnings	9,327.33	290,712.08
Unrestricted Undesignated		
1 General Operating	60,000.00	60,000.00
Total Unrestricted Undesignated	60,000.00	60,000.00
Unrestricted Designated		
2 Unrestricted Reserves	433,771.27	115,358.82
3 Campus Accessibility	1,300.00	1,300.00
4 Payroll Reserve	37,800.00	36,625.00
5 FWCC World Mtgs.	1,000.00	8,000.00
6 Maint. Reserve	118,568.22	111,068.22
Total Unrestricted Designated	592,439.49	272,352.04
Temporarily Restricted		
8 Property Impr.	44,738.27	40,664.06
Total Temporarily Restricted	44,738.27	40,664.06
Total Equity	706,505.09	663,728.18
Total Liabilities and Equity	726,085.43	668,780.48

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Co-Field Secretary's Report

The Co-Field Secretaries curtailed in-person visitation during the depths of winter, but have a schedule for visiting downstate as spring makes longer distance travel easier. Friends with whom we have visited regularly express gratitude for our presence that manifests care from ILYM.

Many Friends are experiencing strong feelings, including fear, in assessing and responding to the current political climate in the country. The rapidity of announced changes is bewildering; in the words of the poet William Butler Yeats, "Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world." At the time this report was filed in early February, at least one meeting was considering a minute of support for the five Quaker meetings on the East Coast that have sued the Department of Homeland Security on the grounds that unfettered access to houses of worship for the purposes of arresting immigrants violated Friends' religious freedom. Other meetings are discerning their own stands. This situation is fluid and subject to rapid change.

Meetings are working on their States of Society, and we look forward to hearing from them in their own words how the Spirit fares among them. Friends are reminded these will be available to all at Annual Sessions.

Meetings have taken to heart questions sent to them about enhancing the experience of Annual Session 2025. We appreciate the way in which this outreach to them promotes a feeling of mutual connection.

We have heard concerns expressed about attaining more visibility in local communities. The present political conditions of the country may offer monthly meetings the opportunity to be more vocal about Friends' testimonies and how our practices can play a part in community coalitions and activities.

Most monthly meetings can point to signs of vitality: new attenders, interest in introductory Quaker instruction, children's programs. It is advisable for all monthly meetings to become better acquainted with features of the life cycle of meetings, in order to replace worry with knowledge. Emily Provance, who visited ILYM during Annual Sessions 2024, has done extensive work on this subject. Provance's meeting, New York Yearly Meeting, offers resources at neym.org/life-cycle-meetings.

Some reflections and queries:

Is your meeting's energy waxing, waning, or steady?

Depending on your answer to the previous query, what does faithfulness look like for your meeting?

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Development Committee Report

The final financial report for the 2023-24 fiscal year (7/1/2023 through 6/30/2024) indicated that the individual contributions needed to balance the budget for that fiscal year have been raised. The Development Committee is appreciative of these extra contributions and their role in making certain necessary items in the yearly meeting budget possible.

The Development Committee's annual appeal letter for fiscal year 2024-2025 has been sent to members and monthly meetings. Unfortunately, the Committee did not get that letter sent as early as originally intended. The committee will again try to get this year's appeal letter delivered in 8th or 9th Month.

The 2024 annual appeal letter included a summary of the 2024-25 fiscal year budget. Also included was information about the amounts held in the various reserve funds and simple descriptions of the procedures used for authorizing expenditures of these funds. This was done with the support and cooperation of the Finance Committee. Discussions with Finance will continue in order to determine if this information is useful and whether it should become a regular part of the annual appeal letter. [Addendum: At the recent meeting of the Finance Committee on 1/25/2025 there was support for continuing to include something similar to the second page of the 2023-24 appeal letter in future appeal letters. It was felt that this was an excellent way to ensure that all yearly meeting members were fully informed about important financial matters.]

The Support section of the ILYM web site gets reviewed each year so that the information stays current, correct, and always available to yearly meeting members. Suggestions of additions and ideas for improvement are always welcome. Note that individuals can print their own copies of this information as a brochure.

Cathy Garra, Alex Lippitt, Peter Poshepny, and Frank Young, Clerk
Prepared 1/24/2025 – addendum in note 3 added 1-25-2025

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Finance Committee Report

The Treasurer's report let us understand that income and expenses are coming in as expected. We identified risks to exceed budget (personnel, travel, insurance) and are comfortable that we have the funds to cover. With positions fully staffed, we do not expect to have a surplus to transfer to Unrestricted Reserves. We are grateful to the Stewards for their work identifying a new insurance provider/policy.

Finance agrees providing financial information in the annual appeal letter from Development is helpful; we will add this item to our fall meeting to provide appropriate information.

Finance seasoned a draft minute clarifying the Property Improvement Fund, in preparation for approval at Annual Sessions. The proposed minute is below.

Finance would like to better support Monthly Meeting Treasurers and Finance Committees. We discussed holding a workshop, either during sessions or after. We believe that the committee will learn much from our monthly meetings as well.

We are grateful to the Nominating Committee for their work and hope that Friends will consider supporting the yearly meeting by joining the Finance Committee.

Our next meeting is to prepare the ILYM proposed 25/26 budget to be presented at Annual Sessions; currently scheduled Monday 4/28 5:15-7:15pm by Zoom (holding 4/30 at the same time, in case we need it). Finance asks Friends & Committees to submit any requests to Ted by mid April so that it may be included.

Proposed minute to clarify Property Improvement Fund (for approval at Annual Sessions)

The Property Improvement Fund is a Donor Restricted Fund to be used for significant improvements to the ILYM Campus in McNabb, including new buildings and existing buildings. It is not intended to be used for maintenance of the existing campus. Any use of this fund should be approved at Annual Sessions (requests should be brought by Maintenance, Planning & Envisioning Committee. This fund is intended to improve the facilities to better serve ILYM needs.

The project priorities come from ILYM with input from MP&E Committee. Donors wishing to underwrite any specific project should work through the Development Committee.

Valerie Lester for Finance

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Handbook Report

Immediate changes to the Handbook based on approved minutes from Annual Sessions, 2024

In the Reading Clerk description: The Reading Clerk is an ex officio member of the Epistle Committee, with the option of declining membership.

In the Epistle Committee description: The Reading Clerk is an ex officio member of the Epistle Committee, with the option of declining membership.

Drafts for consideration at the Annual Sessions 2025

Peace Resources Committee from Fall 2023 Continuing Committee, Minute 16

Also see Handbook Committee report to the Fall Continuing Committee for drafts of the following:

- Epistles from youth: children, middle schoolers and teens.
- Adult Young Friends Epistle.
- Committee Clerk and Committee Conveners description

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Maintenance, Planning and Envisioning Committee & Stewards Report

The committee members are Carol Bartles, Mark Robinson, Marie White, Dennis McQueen, Margie Haworth, Christina Schulz, Noel Pavlovic, Sam Davis, Diane Clark Dennis, Dick Ashdown, and the Stewards: Chip Rorem, Grayce Haworth, Beth Carpenter, and Chris Goode.

Meeting: We met on Monday, January 27th with Grayce, Beth, Chip, Noel, Mark, Marie, Margie, Christina, and Chris in attendance.

Insurance: We were notified by Church Mutual, our insurance provider, that they will not be renewing our policy when it comes due in March. We have reached out to an insurance broker in order to find a new company for our property and liability insurance.

Firearms Prohibition: The Property Use Ad-Hoc Committee that gave its final report at last year's Annual Sessions stated that firearms should be prohibited on our campus and in our buildings. In order to officially enforce it, signs approved by the state need to be posted on the grounds and buildings. These signs need to be of a certain size and depict a gun in a circle border with a diagonal line through it. We should consider whether or not we wish to post these signs on our property, perhaps at Annual Sessions.

Caretaker Updates: We have a local caretaker helping to keep an eye on our buildings in our absence. She is Shirley Maubach, a farmer from Henry who is also Dick Ashdown's long-time secretary. We have revised our list of tasks in a letter of agreement to accommodate about one hour per week of her time, which may vary from week to week to total about 52 hours per year. She will work as an independent contractor for us, at least for now, as we see how this works this year. She visits the site usually weekly, keeps the radios running, and has made minor repairs to door latches etc. and alerted us to other concerns.

Spring Workday: Will be on Saturday May 3 from ~9am to ~5pm with a potluck lunch. Possible tasks for Workday should be sent to Marie White who will be collecting them.

Maintenance Items: Electrical work at the campground has been completed, and new electrical work for additional circuits to improve the meetinghouse (MH) basement and extending service to the northeast corner of the meetingroom to help support our online broadcast control station will be added soon. We are working on methods, and soliciting prices to improve the air conditioning at the Clear Creek House (CCH), which will replace the 28 year-old condenser, and may include other work, perhaps replacing the air handler/furnace, possibly improving ductwork or fans to help push the cool air to the second floor, or adding window, or other types of A/C there, and hope to have that in place prior to Annual Sessions. Our caretaker, Shirley, had the lumber pile which was exposed under the open portion of the wind damaged barn lean-to roof moved to the other side of the space to protect it from weather. We need to get a contractor to make some minor roof, eave, soffit and siding repairs at MH and CCH. We are hoping the raccoons will stay away this spring.

Next Year's Maintenance Projects: May include completing the repair and repainting of the meetinghouse windows, painting the meetinghouse interior, more insulation at the Clear Creek House attic. The HS bunkhouse and the Accessibility working groups of our committee will be meeting this spring to research and determine if there will be any actions ready for discussion at Annual Sessions around these projects.

Children's Playground Equipment: Chris Goode tried to get an email discussion going among adults interested in this issue, but with only a little success. Dale Gardner, clerk of the Children's Religious Education Committee organized a Zoom meeting on January 25 of at least seven of the interested children to relay their ideas about the play area, which are quite well considered. They told Chris that, besides the swing set being, old, unsafe, splintery, and moving around too much, that there are not enough swings, or other activities. They do not much like the teeter-totter, but they would like more climbing things like ropes, ladders, monkey bars and rock walls, and slides are good. There could be more kinds of swings and the equipment should be really well-anchored to the ground, and the older kid stuff should be a bit separated from younger kid stuff so that each group can be together and watch each other, but not have accidents bumping into each other. They thought that there should be smaller things for smaller kids and larger things for larger kids. Maybe there should be a tether ball pole, or a gaga ball pit, or gymnastic bars, or a basketball hoop somewhere. They thought that grass might be a fine base surface, rubber mulch might be okay too, but not wood chips because they get in your eyes. In our MP&E meeting we discussed the difference in home backyard equipment and commercial equipment which is much sturdier, longer lasting, and much more expensive. We also talked about possibly wanting a good base surface though that needs to be 9 to 12" thick to be effective. We would like to replace the existing swing/slide set with some new equipment this spring before Annual Sessions, but we might not be able to do everything all at once and should try to create a plan that we can add things to over a few years. We will try to form a team to work this up, perhaps including landscape architecture advice, and a contractor will be required to make sure that the installation and anchorage are well constructed.

Respectfully Submitted: Christopher Goode, MP&E Clerk and Steward

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Ministry and Advancement Committee Report

The Ministry and Advancement Committee has met almost every month since the Annual Sessions. We provided a workshop led by Co-Field Secretary Marcia Nelson in the fall and will have had a second workshop opportunity in late February before Spring Continuing Committee. We continue to make visits to monthly meetings and listen to where they are. We assist meetings as requested and that assistance can be with individuals within a meeting or providing a presence during meetings for worship or during business meetings for worship. As always we are willing to assist meetings when they request it. The committee members have held a variety of ILYM members in the Light as we heard there was a need.

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Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee brings forward the name of Marie White to be the Assistant Recording Clerk for Illinois Yearly Meeting through Annual Sessions 2025 (June 2025) and requests that this action be approved so that she can commence functioning in this Spring Continuing Committee session today. This appointment is followed by two years as recording clerk and a final year as assistant recording clerk to her successor.

The Nominating Committee is already conducting conversations with the yearly meeting committees that look to us for personnel. We are not merely plugging holes as appointments expire in June. We are carefully considering assignments where term limits are in place to stimulate freshness and creativity, and also assignments where continuity of experienced personnel contributes to consistent performance over time.

Committee service by people throughout the yearly meeting sustains the continued functioning and progress of our organization. It also enriches the lives of the people who experience the larger picture of Quaker dedication across diverse settings in a large geographic area.

We invite all people in the yearly meeting to discuss with us where they enjoy participating. (Find phone numbers in the Meeting directory.) Please share with us what you would like the yearly meeting to be doing and how you can help that to happen. It will be a rewarding experience.

Kent Busse (clerk), Julia Pantoga, Lilith Swygert, Brad Laird

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Peace Resources Committee Report

We continue to meet once a month on Zoom. The PRC has been involved with peace and justice projects during the year:

- We continue to host a Palestinian/Israeli Meeting for Healing once a month. Attendance has decreased dramatically.
- We are continuing to draft a new description of our committee for the Handbook to meet the needs of our changing world. We are also discussing a possible name change.
- Due to the change in Administration in Washington, D.C; we are exploring appropriate ways to respond.

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Personnel Committee Report

The Personnel Committee reported at Fall 2024 Continuing Committee that its overall focus this year is to continue to ensure our practices and policies remain consistent with state and federal guidelines and are aligned with the priorities and vision of Illinois Yearly Meeting.

We have continued work consistent with this focus. Once the Children's Religious Education Committee and Youth Oversight Committee put forth their respective recommendations for new staff, the Personnel Committee worked with them to ensure these new staff had completed background checks and state mandated reporter training. At its January 2025 meeting, the Personnel Committee, which includes the Clerks of YO and CREC, considered recommendations and shared insights for supporting these new staff.

We also considered the role of the new caretaker and determined that position, as it is currently envisioned, can be considered as an independent contractor

Certificates of training for these new staff as well as staff who worked with children and youth last year have been uploaded into the Personnel Committee files in Box.

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Publications and Technology Committee Report

Members: Dawn Crimson (clerk), Lily Swygert, Nathan Lasersohn, Ted Kuhn (ex officio *Among Friends* editor), Wil Brant (ex officio Administrative Coordinator)

The committee met on January 27. Future topics in FY26 include a possible change of ILYM web hosting providers and evaluating feedback about Annual Sessions technology support. The 2025 hybrid sessions will be improved with fiber internet, electrical outlets to relocate the audio/video control desk to the back of the meeting room, and a screen projection on the dais to display the remote participants.

There have been sufficient writing submissions to produce an issue of *Among Friends* this spring.

Friends are reminded that the Administrative Coordinator can create hosted Zoom meetings for ILYM meetings and programs. Please send your request 1 week in advance if possible. To schedule a meeting, send a date and time request to Wil Brant at admincoor@ilym.org. With confirmation of the scheduling you will get the meeting ID and passcode to share with attendees. You will also get a host key code and instructions, which will be only for the person hosting/facilitating the meeting. The host key code allows you to claim the host function of the meeting without needing to log into the Zoom account.

Dawn Crimson, clerk

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Racial Equity and Education Committee Report

The Racial Equity and Education Committee (REEC) continued offering Anti-Racism Cafe events the 15th of every month on Zoom. We have shifted away from the more open-ended format that inspired the “cafe” title, and we now have an announced topic with a guest speaker, video, or article that is the focus of discussion. The topics in recent months reflect our intention to educate Friends about how Quaker participation in colonization, in both the past and present, contradicts our testimonies. We watched a lecture by Tom Kunesh who has written about decolonizing the peace testimony in October, followed by a presentation from those researching Quaker involvement in Indigenous assimilation camps (boarding schools) in November. To help us examine how knowledge can lead to action, in December we invited Friends from Baltimore Yearly Meeting to share about their community’s journey to begin making reparations for the harms caused to Indigenous peoples by their forebears by financially supporting a Pawnee Language program. Then in January, we heard from a Palestinian from Gaza urging us to realize that regardless of a ceasefire the demand of Palestinians is for equal human rights, something impossible under the system of expanding settler colonialism and Israeli apartheid that we fund through our tax payments.

Our work of education and action toward equity weaves together past and present as we submit the following draft version of an apology and land acknowledgment for reflection and spiritual guidance. Additionally, we will bring suggestions in June for how the yearly meeting can continue to live out the commitment we made at the last Annual Sessions to divest from those profiting from militarism and support an end to Israel’s occupation.

Draft Apology and Land Acknowledgment

As the Illinois Yearly Meeting (ILYM) of the Religious Society of Friends, we are making use of land benefits that exist at the expense of Indigenous societies previously established in this region. These lands were shared and stewarded by myriad Indigenous Peoples within a relational framework, and we do not accept efforts to justify the process of dispossession and genocide by which the land is now claimed as either private or public property.

Our yearly meeting specifically pursued an administrative role within so-called “Indian Affairs” agencies of the United States government. This involvement is described as follows within a draft of ILYM’s history:

In general, Quaker administrators adopted an assimilationist policy, and regarded Natives’ adherence to traditional ways of life as dooming them to eventual extinction. Quaker agents made concerted efforts to promote the use of European-American agricultural techniques and European-American-style housing—efforts which were often unsuccessful but still contributed to the destruction of Native cultures. They supported the division of reservation land into individually owned plots. They encouraged the placement of Native children in boarding schools where they were discouraged from using their own languages, and encouraged to adopt as much European-American culture as possible. (Lasersohn, p. 86)

We acknowledge that these harms have not ended, but that they continue in the ongoing structure of colonialism in which we are still participating. We realize that this acknowledgment does not absolve us of the need to deconstruct the romanticisms of Quaker good intentions and the continuing harms resulting from forced removal, assimilation, and extractive industry, all of which threaten the vast numbers of Indigenous Peoples residing within the multi-state region of ILYM. We aspire to understand and be accountable for Quaker involvement in the genocide of Indigenous Peoples and seek way forward in making reparations.

Although incomplete, our research indicates that our yearly meeting covers a geographic area home to the following peoples. Let us remember that we occupy their homeland and that this land was taken by force:

Anishinaabe, Bodwéwadmí (Potawatomi), Chickasaw, Hoocąk (Ho-Chunk), Kiikaapoi (Kickapoo), Kaskaskia, Meškwahki·aša·hina (Fox), Mascouten, Menominee, Myaamia, Niúachi, Očhéthi Šakówiŋ, oθaakiiwaki·hina·ki (Sauk), ᄎᄎᄎᄎ ᄋᄋᄋᄋ ᄌᄌᄌᄌ ᄎᄎᄎᄎ ᄎᄎᄎᄎ (Osage), Odawa, O-ga-xpa Ma-zhoⁿ (O-ga-xpa) (Quapaw), Peoria, Peankashaw, Wea

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Annual Session Planning Groups

Chicago North: Food

Everything is in order with the plans for food at our annual sessions. Janice Domanik, coordinator

Chicago South: Site

All positions for Site have been filled. Following are the Site Coordinators:

Overall Coordinator/Advance Preparation: Chris Goode – Downers Grove

Site Preparation Coordinator: Brandon Harrington – 57th Street

Food Service during Site Preparation: Bridget & Chip Rorem – 57th Street

Purchasing Coordinator: Kate Gunnell and Chris Goode – Downers Grove

Housekeeping Coordinator: Sarah Pavlovic – Duneland

Clean-up Coordinator: Brad Laird - Duneland

As we are the Planning Group with the smallest ILYM attendance, we look forward to folks from all over the yearly meeting coming to join in helping, especially with Site Prep on Saturday, June 14 to Wednesday, June 18, and with cleanup in the afternoon of the last day of Annual Sessions, Sunday, June 22. Please plan to come help where you can. We have more fun than work, and you get to do it with some really great folks! Please contact us to let us know.

BRQ: Program Planning for 150th Anniversary Celebration

As announced in the fall:

Theme: “Honoring the Past, Living the Present, Envisioning the Future”

Evening Programs:

Wednesday: a variety of musical groups including a sing-along;

Thursday: a panel discussion from Friends who have grown up within IL Yearly Meeting; Friday: square dancing;

Saturday: a presentation by Tomm Hamm

Sunday’s Plummer Lecturer will be Beth Carpenter.

Change to the usual program: An added bonus will be the 150th birthday party on Saturday afternoon.

Saturday afternoon schedule:

- planning groups after lunch (1:15-1:45),
- party from 2-4:30
- variety show at 4:45.

Workshops and worship sharing will only occur on Thursday and Friday to allow time for the party on Saturday. Worship sharing queries will be focused on the future of ILYM.

We are gathering digital and physical photos from yearly meeting through the last 150 years. Please send photos to Sharon Haworth at 605 W Washington St, Urbana, IL 61801 or sharonhaworth@gmail.com.

All coordinator positions have been filled.

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Ad Hoc Committee on Discerning the Future ILYM

The Ad Hoc Committee on Discerning the Future of Illinois Yearly Meeting was approved at the 2024 Annual Sessions. The approved minute (#43) charged the committee with “engaging in outreach to ILYM monthly meetings, worship groups and individuals; conducting additional research as needed; reporting on its progress at Continuing Committee during the 2024–2025 year; and bringing proposals concerning the future of ILYM to annual sessions in 2025.”

As the committee stated in its report to Continuing Committee in October 2024, we had shifted our focus from considering the annual sessions alone to attending to ILYM’s constituent meetings, since the sustainability of the yearly meeting depends on the strength of our local meetings. At Fall CC we offered examples of possible ILYM endeavors aimed at such strengthening, then asked for feedback. We received valuable input from those present, after which we consulted with the Field Secretaries and the Clerk of Ministry & Advancement about the issue. We are now in the process of taking all of that input into consideration as we plan how to go about doing this. While we expect to present proposals regarding that plan at this year’s annual sessions, the project we are developing will take longer than the projected year (2024-2025) stipulated in Minute #43. We now expect to complete our work by the 2026 annual sessions, at which time we will request to be laid down. In the interim, we ask Nominating Committee to identify one or two young adult Friends to join our committee and to present their names at this year’s annual sessions.

Our focus on strengthening local meetings does not mean that we have discarded our original charge to tend to the sustainability of ILYM, or the additional charge to make recommendations concerning the bequest of Chris Jocius, who intended it for that purpose. It means, rather, that imagining and working toward a sustainable ILYM is a more complex and multi-faceted task than was originally thought.

The viability of Annual Sessions continues to be an important focus for our committee. We have spent much of our recent attention on the upcoming 150th anniversary celebration, realizing that this event provides an excellent opportunity to increase attendance at Annual Sessions across all demographics. Success in that endeavor should support the sustainability of ILYM, since Friends who have a direct

experience of ILYM through participation at the annual sessions are more likely to be invested in the yearly meeting than those who have not. Accordingly, we asked each meeting to make space in their business agendas to consider what would encourage members and attenders to attend this year's event. We are grateful that most considered the question at length and sent us their responses, and that others plan to do so in the near future. While the timing of this effort did not allow us to receive and process all responses by the deadline for submitting this report, we expect to be in a position to offer an account of our plans at Spring CC.

The ad hoc committee (Beth Carpenter, Chris Goode, Bruce Kanarek, Colleen Reardon, David Shiner)

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Quaker Earthcare Witness

Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW) has been very active since I last reported as your current representative from ILYM to QEW's steering committee. The fall gathering in October 2024 in Albuquerque considered the theme "Water is Life" with presenters who shared local actions and perspectives on the intersection of water issues and social justice.

Also at the fall gathering, a new focus for QEW was outlined—a focus on how Quakers can have a leading presence in climate action. A first project is a collaboration with Friends World Committee on Consultation (FWCC) to create an online map where meetings and Friends organizations can input environmental actions they are taking, whether it is installing solar panels, planting native species, doing some kind of carbon offsets, advocacy work—there are many possibilities. The idea behind this is to strengthen the network of Friends taking action by providing a way for them to connect. Further work to develop the map will require additional funding—of around \$100,000—something to keep in mind if you are considering ways to respond to concerns about the impacts of our changing climate.

QEW now regularly hosts a book club, a weekly fellowship hour, a monthly worship sharing, and has recently organized speakers on a variety of environmental topics—everything from how to view the increasing use of artificial intelligence to how QEW and Friends Committee on National Legislation can cooperate to advocate for Congress to retain the energy tax credits in the Inflation Reduction Act. Look for information about all of these on QEW's website: quakerearthcare.org.

Sarah Pavlovic, ILYM Rep to QEW

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