

History of Illinois Yearly Meeting

Unapproved draft for ILYM Faith and Practice. Version: 6/15/2018

Please see the questions for feedback to the Faith and Practice Committee at the end.

1833–1875: Before the Yearly Meeting was Formed

The roots of Illinois Yearly Meeting may be traced to the 1830s, when Hicksite Quaker farmers settled along Clear Creek, near what is now McNabb, Illinois. At that time, this was a frontier area, ceded to the U.S. by the Peoria Nation in 1818 and Kickapoo in 1819, but just outside the disputed region over which the U.S. had recently fought the Sauk and other nations in the Black Hawk War. European-American settlement of the McNabb area began in the 1820s, with the first Quakers arriving about 1833; most of them came from eastern Ohio and western Pennsylvania.

A notable early member of the Clear Creek community was Benjamin Lundy. He had been touring the United States, speaking against slavery and publishing the abolitionist newspaper *The Genius of Universal Emancipation* since 1821. After fellow abolitionist publisher Elijah Lovejoy was killed by a pro-slavery mob in Alton, Illinois in 1837, Lundy resolved to move to Illinois. His own belongings were destroyed by a mob in Philadelphia before he arrived at Clear Creek in 1838, joining his son and daughter who were already there. Unfortunately, he fell ill and died just a few months after arriving; his grave is in the Clear Creek Cemetery.

By 1841 the community had grown enough to request formal establishment of a monthly meeting. The nearest established Hicksite meeting was Honey Creek Monthly Meeting, located more than 150 miles to the southeast near Terre Haute, Indiana; so the request was made there. Abel Mills describes the journey, made on horseback in midwinter by his father Joseph Mills:

Father started alone. He rode the horse “Dave,” one of the two that brother Henry drove to Illinois, a horse well built and with fine spirit. He moved in a canter under the saddle, which was not a hard gait on the rider. On the way, father fell into company with a stranger who was also on horseback. They arrived at the edge of an eight-mile prairie without a dwelling thereon. The day was very cold, which made it necessary for the travelers to ride lively. They passed over the eight miles in forty-five minutes. The stranger’s ears were frozen. Father was favored to continue his journey to the end in safety. He attended the meeting at which there was a committee appointed in accordance with the request sent, Father returning safely.

Honey Creek Monthly Meeting responded favorably to the request, forwarding it to Blue River Quarterly Meeting, which approved the establishment of Clear Creek Monthly Meeting in Eleventh Month 1841. Clear Creek Meeting thus became part of Blue River Quarterly Meeting and Indiana Yearly Meeting (now known as Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting).

Blue River Quarterly Meeting had itself been established in 1819 and originally consisted of meetings in southern Indiana. At the time Clear Creek Monthly Meeting was set up, it included just Honey Creek Monthly Meeting and Blue River Monthly Meeting, near Salem, Indiana, together with two smaller meetings under their care: Union Meeting, near what is now West York, Illinois, and Highland Creek Meeting, near Salem but on the opposite side from Blue

River Meeting. The addition of Clear Creek Meeting represented a major expansion and shift to the west in the area covered by the quarterly meeting.

Clear Creek's location far to the west of other monthly meetings led it to serve as an anchor point for other Quaker settlements, as these were formed across Illinois. In Fulton County, Friends had settled near what is now Ipava as early as 1829 — even before Clear Creek — and were granted monthly meeting status as Plainfield Monthly Meeting in 1848. Unfortunately, this group experienced repeated internal conflicts, detailed in the journal of James Bellangee; it lasted as a monthly meeting for only five years, after which it was placed under the care of Clear Creek Monthly Meeting. Indulged meetings — what we would now call worship groups — were formed under the care of Clear Creek Monthly Meeting in Tazewell and Whiteside Counties in the mid-1840s, in Benjaminville (now known as Bentown) just east of Bloomington in 1858, and at alternating locations in Seneca and Rutland starting 1872.

The meeting in Tazewell County lasted only a few years, but several of the other meetings grew, and new meetings continued to be established. Benjaminville was granted monthly meeting status in 1867. The meeting in Whiteside County went through a period of inactivity, but was later revived and set off as East Jordan Monthly Meeting in 1872. Friends were among the original residents of the town Hoopston in the early 1870s, and organized a meeting there under the care of Benjaminville Monthly Meeting.

In the meantime, some of the older meetings to the east began to wane. Union Meeting went through several cycles of inactivity and revival before finally being laid down in 1856. Its parent meeting, Honey Creek, was in clear decline by the 1870s. The original meeting at Blue River was inactive by about 1867; Blue River Monthly Meeting continued officially to exist, but really consisted just of Highland Creek Preparative Meeting. Blue River Quarterly Meeting now lay predominately in Illinois.

Further to the west, Quakers were also settling in Iowa. By the mid-1850s, there were enough Friends in Henry County to request establishment of a monthly meeting. But with no quarterly meeting nearby, and even Blue River Quarterly Meeting too far away to attend, they decided to apply instead to the quarterly meeting most of them had belonged to before coming to Iowa: Fairfax Quarterly Meeting of Baltimore Yearly Meeting. Fairfax approved the request, establishing Prairie Grove Monthly Meeting in 1856.

Wapsinonoc Meeting, at West Liberty, was organized soon afterwards and granted monthly meeting status in 1862. With two monthly meetings in Iowa, it became practical for Iowa Friends to have their own quarterly meeting. Prairie Grove Quarterly Meeting was established as part of Baltimore Yearly Meeting in 1863.

The establishment of Prairie Grove Quarterly Meeting caused open friction between Indiana and Baltimore Yearly Meetings. The usual practice to that point had been for new meetings on the western frontier to become part of the westernmost yearly meeting, which would have placed the Iowa meetings in Indiana Yearly Meeting. Indiana sent a letter of complaint to Baltimore, which responded with a report outlining the circumstances which had led to its action. The original minute establishing Indiana Yearly Meeting had described it as “for the states of Indiana, Illinois, and the western part of Ohio,” a description repeated in Indiana's own discipline. Baltimore therefore regarded Iowa as outside Indiana Yearly Meeting's territory. Precedents were pointed out of meetings in Canada and South Carolina which were part of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, even though it was not the closest. Moreover, a pair of Baltimore

Friends had attended two sessions of Blue River Quarterly Meeting, and found it in weak condition, and not open the addition of new meetings in Iowa.

Prairie Grove Quarterly Meeting thus continued as part of Baltimore Yearly Meeting. A third monthly meeting was established at Marietta in 1869, and a meeting at Highland Township in Johnson County was organized under the care of Wapsinonoc Monthly Meeting in 1868.

The Iowa meetings were pioneers of activist Quakerism, thanks in part to the influence of Joseph and Ruth Dugdale, who arrived in the neighborhood of Prairie Grove Monthly Meeting in 1862. The Dugdales were potentially divisive figures — they had been leaders of the Progressive Friends movement and had played a central role in precipitating schisms in both Indiana and Philadelphia Yearly Meetings, with Joseph serving as first clerk of the separatist Pennsylvania Yearly Meeting. But Friends at Prairie Grove accepted them as members and ministers without apparent controversy. The Dugdales were charismatic opponents of the Quietism which had dominated Quakerism for decades, and leaders in the movements for peace, the abolition of slavery, women's suffrage, and Native American rights. It was probably due to their leadership that Prairie Grove Quarterly Meeting proposed to Baltimore Yearly Meeting in 1869 that women's and men's meetings for business have completely equal disciplinary authority — a proposal which was adopted the following year.

The location of Prairie Grove Quarterly Meeting nearly 800 miles from Baltimore presented an obvious obstacle to Friends who wanted to attend yearly meeting. Even in Blue River Quarterly Meeting, distance was a problem: Indiana Yearly Meeting was held alternately at Richmond, Indiana and Waynesville, Ohio, both a long way from Clear Creek and the other Illinois meetings. Abel Mills describes his father's early attempt to attend yearly meeting, traveling down the Illinois River to the Mississippi, down the Mississippi to the Ohio, up the Ohio to the Little Miami, and up the Little Miami to Waynesville:

The Ohio River was very low. His way was by Cincinnati. They were many times delayed by sandbars. Leaving Cincinnati, he went up the Little Miami bottom, I think, by stage. He reached Corwin, less than a mile from the meeting-house, with a steep hill to climb. He arrived as the last session of the Yearly Meeting closed. This experience was an exceeding trial to father. The delay on the boat was the cause. The round trip was six or seven hundred miles.

By the 1870s, with two quarterly meetings and multiple monthly meetings well established in Illinois and Iowa, it became practical to contemplate starting a new yearly meeting, to be held at a location close enough to make attendance more practical. Blue River and Prairie Grove Quarterly Meetings joined together in proposing such a meeting in 1873, to be called Illinois Yearly Meeting and held at Clear Creek. Indiana and Baltimore Yearly Meetings appointed committees which visited the area and returned a favorable report; both yearly meetings minuted their concurrence with the proposal in 1874. A large new meetinghouse was built about a mile and half east of the original Clear Creek meetinghouse, and Illinois Yearly Meeting held its opening session there the 13th of Ninth Month, 1875.

1875–1890: The New Yearly Meeting

At the time of its establishment, Illinois Yearly Meeting, like most Friends meetings, consisted of three separately sitting bodies: a men's meeting for business, a women's meeting for

business, and a meeting of ministers and elders. The men's and women's meetings met concurrently over a four-day period, on opposite sides of the meetinghouse; sliding dividers were shut to create separate rooms. Occasionally the dividers were opened for joint sessions when reports or other business required the attention of both sexes. The meeting for ministers and elders was held two days prior to the main sessions, with a public meeting for worship on the intervening day.

Between sessions of the yearly meeting, any pressing business was handled by the Representative Committee, consisting of three men Friends and three women Friends appointed by each quarterly meeting, plus 21 Friends of each sex appointed directly by the yearly meeting.

Closely associated with the yearly meeting was the Illinois First Day School Association, which was established at the same time to coordinate religious education efforts. This was nominally an independent organization, but held its sessions in the yearly meeting house in conjunction with the yearly meeting, and published its minutes in the yearly meeting minute books.

Attendance at the yearly meeting was open to all Friends. Each quarterly meeting appointed official representatives, who were responsible for nominating the yearly meeting clerks. The representatives gathered after the first day of business each year, and returned a nomination the next day; clerks took office immediately after the nominations were approved on the second day of business.

During its 1875 session, the yearly meeting appointed a treasurer, trustees to oversee property, and several committees: a finance committee, which had responsibility for nominating the treasurer and reviewing the books; a "revising" committee to publish the minutes; men's and women's epistles committees to write letters to other yearly meetings; men's and women's exercises committees to produce summary reports of the yearly meeting sessions; an education committee; a committee on Indian affairs; and a committee to certify attendance for Friends attending under minute, or who had received reduced railroad fares to attend the sessions.

A large portion of yearly meeting business each year was taken up with the consideration of queries. Monthly meetings were expected to produce written responses to a specific set of queries about their spiritual and practical conditions every year. These responses were considered in depth at the quarterly meetings, which used them to formulate their own responses. These in turn were considered by the yearly meeting, often over the course of multiple sittings, as it formulated its own responses.

Yearly meeting sessions were well-attended. In 1879, many more people were present than the meetinghouse could accommodate, even though it had seats for eight to nine hundred.

Indeed, Quakerism was growing all across the territory covered by Illinois Yearly Meeting and further west. Indulged meetings were organized at Peoria, Illinois; Winfield, Iowa; and Bureau County, Illinois. The meeting at Blue River was revived after its deteriorating meetinghouse was remodeled. The meeting at Hoopston, known as Richland Meeting, grew to the point of achieving monthly meeting status in 1885.

In Chicago, a group known as Central Meeting had been informally organized as early as 1864. Independent rather than specifically Hicksite, it included Friends of all branches who for a variety of reasons did not attend the more evangelical Chicago Meeting which formed part of Western Yearly Meeting. After Illinois Yearly Meeting was established, they sought affiliation, and became part of Blue River Quarterly and Illinois Yearly Meeting in 1879.

Far to the west, Friends who had worked at the Santee Sioux reservation under President Grant's "Quaker Policy" remained in Nebraska after their work was finished, settling near the town of Genoa and starting a meeting there; Genoa Monthly Meeting was established as part of Prairie Grove Quarterly and Illinois Yearly Meeting in 1877. A second Nebraska meeting was added at Lincoln in 1888, after a committee from the yearly meeting visited Friends in the city. Lincoln and Genoa meetings joined together to form Nebraska Half Yearly Meeting — the equivalent of a quarterly meeting — as part of Illinois Yearly Meeting in 1889.

There were exceptions to this pattern of growth: Honey Creek Meeting closed in 1879, and the Seneca/Rutland Meeting in 1883. But overall, the initial period of Illinois Yearly Meeting's existence was one which Friends would later look back on as vibrant. The yearly meeting now covered an enormous area stretching from Salem, Indiana in the southeast to Genoa, Nebraska in the northwest: a distance of 645 miles.

The prevailing religious stance in Illinois Yearly Meeting during this period appears to have been a simple, undocinaire Christianity, with a heavy emphasis on "practical righteousness" — doing good in the world. A statement published with the 1885 minutes typifies this attitude: "We have no doctrinal creed; our religion is simple and practical, based upon love to God, which is evinced by loving all of our fellow beings."

Efforts to improve society were a central concern of the yearly meeting, and the importance of coordinating such work was stressed especially by Jonathan Plummer, who served as clerk of the men's meeting through its first nine years. Following Plummer's suggestion in 1878, Illinois Yearly Meeting invited the other six Hicksite yearly meetings to hold a "general conference" at least once every five years, in order to "co-operate in labor, and increase our influence upon the various questions involving our testimonies." This proposal met with some initial hesitation from other yearly meetings, who were concerned that the conference would serve as some sort of disciplinary authority above the yearly meeting level. These concerns were allayed after Illinois Yearly Meeting issued a clarification that the conference was not intended to "consider in any way matters affecting the doctrinal or disciplinary views of the Society, or interfere with the internal affairs of the Yearly Meetings, but to work solely in humanitarian fields, aiming by union to develop greater strength and efficiency in dealing with questions affecting public morality, and in obtaining recognition for the principles advocated by the Society, so far as they affect the public policy, as in the treatment of Indians and other oppressed peoples; the substitution of arbitration for war in the settlement of national differences, etc." A preliminary meeting was held in 1881, and the conference was formally organized the following year as the Friends Union for Philanthropic Labor. This organization formed the nucleus for the more broadly focused Friends General Conference established in 1900 — now one of the main umbrella organizations for North American Quakerism.

In 1886, Illinois Yearly Meeting organized all of its own work on social issues under a single Committee for Philanthropic Labor, divided into several departments dealing with different concerns:

The Indian Affairs Department worked toward the enforcement of treaty rights and general welfare of Native American peoples. Annual reports by Isaiah Lightner of Genoa Meeting, who had served for years as U.S. Agent to the Santee Sioux, made clear the extreme difficulties faced by Native peoples. He and other Friends believed that their interests would best be served by assimilating to European-American society, and actively worked to that end — an approach which most Friends now regret deeply.

The Prison Affairs Department regularly surveyed conditions at prisons across the area of the yearly meeting, and advocated for humane policies.

The Education Department, added in 1890, served initially to advocate compulsory education, but quickly also took on the task of encouraging educational policies and curricula which favored peace, accurate information about health, and other concerns of Friends.

As the name of the Peace and Arbitration Department suggests, it was believed that international peace could be maintained by creating institutions for the arbitration of disputes among nations. The committee promoted this idea to the U.S. and other governments, and worked against mandatory military training for youth.

The Corrupt Literature and Social Impurity Department, though oddly titled from a modern perspective, dealt with matters which are still familiar and relevant, working against sexual exploitation, promoting a single standard of sexual morality for men and women, and discouraging sensationalistic and prurient news reporting.

The Department of Gambling and Kindred Vices worked to discourage gambling. Finally, the Temperance Department encouraged sobriety, and worked toward eliminating the use of alcoholic beverages. Friends were acutely aware of the destructive effects of alcoholism, with many of them regarding the campaign against it as the primary moral imperative of the time, comparable to the campaign against slavery which they had engaged in just a few years earlier.

A major improvement to the yearly meeting campus was made in 1885, with the construction of a dining hall. By serving meals on site, the yearly meeting could more practically hold morning and afternoon sessions on the same day.

Starting in 1890, the yearly meeting appointed a Nominating Committee, which proposed names for meeting positions and committees. Prior to this, nominations appear to have been made from the floor of the business meeting. The Nominating Committee did not nominate the yearly meeting clerk (who continued to be nominated by the quarterly meeting representatives) or treasurer (who continued to be nominated by the Finance Committee).

In 1887, a significant change in practice was adopted: the men's and women's business meetings were combined, and all business was conducted in joint session from that point forward. (Occasional separate meetings "for the consideration of such topics as could best be discussed in such manner" continued to be held, but were not treated as official business sessions of the yearly meeting.) Although it is tempting to regard this change as a step towards full equality of the sexes, it is instructive to note that the yearly meeting immediately fell into a regular pattern of appointing a man as clerk and a woman as assistant clerk — a pattern it repeated for 41 years, until Luella Flitcraft was appointed as first female clerk of the joint meeting in 1928.

1891–1941: Modernization and Numerical Decline

As Illinois Yearly Meeting approached the 20th century, it was looking toward continued growth and expansion. A committee was appointed in 1896 to explore the possibility of starting new Quaker settlements in the far west. Over the course of three years, the committee visited and reported on several sites in Utah, Idaho, Oregon, New Mexico, and west Texas. But far from expanding, the yearly meeting was actually entering a long period of contraction and loss of numerical strength.

The small meetings in Fulton County and Bureau County both fell inactive in the 1890s as their participants aged or moved away. East Jordan Monthly Meeting appears to have fallen apart over internal differences; it was laid down in 1894. The revived meeting at Blue River lasted only to 1897. Richland Meeting laid itself down in 1906. Benjaminville was inactive after 1918.

New meetings were briefly formed in Nebraska, at Garrison under the care of Genoa Monthly Meeting and at Bennett under the care of Lincoln; but both were gone by 1904. Lincoln Meeting itself was only irregularly held after 1906, and was officially laid down in 1912. With just one of its meetings left, Nebraska Half-Yearly was discontinued at the same time, and Genoa Meeting was re-attached to Prairie Grove Quarterly.

But Prairie Grove Quarterly was also declining. Highland Meeting had been laid down in 1896. Marietta, Wapsinonoc and Genoa Meetings were mostly inactive after 1919, with Wapsinonoc officially laid down two years later, followed by Prairie Grove Monthly Meeting in 1930. Prairie Grove Quarterly Meeting remained officially on the Illinois Yearly Meeting calendar, but consisted entirely of inactive meetings; there is no indication that actual sessions were held later than 1929.

In 1930, Illinois Yearly Meeting consisted for practical purposes of just three meetings: Clear Creek near McNabb, Central Meeting in Chicago, and Highland Creek near Salem — and Highland Creek was holding meetings for worship only irregularly. In the 1890s, the yearly meeting had peaked at more than 1200 members, and its constituent meetings reported an average combined weekly attendance reaching over 500. The reports for 1927 and 1928 show a membership of 490 and an average combined weekly attendance of just 38 people for the entire yearly meeting.

The reasons for this decline are open to debate, but perhaps one factor was changing demographics in U.S. society more generally. With the exception of Central Meeting in Chicago, all the meetings in Illinois Yearly Meeting were located in rural areas or small towns. The United States was undergoing rapid urbanization, and many of the younger members of these rural meetings were leaving farm life for greater educational and professional opportunities in the cities. The outflux of Friends from the old meeting neighborhoods is evident in residency statistics: In 1898, less than 28% of the yearly meeting membership was listed as “non-resident.” By 1923 this figure had doubled to nearly 56%.

The yearly meeting might have maintained better numerical strength if it had added new meetings in urban areas. In fact, several new meetings were organized in cities and college towns in the region during this era, but on an independent basis, rather than in affiliation with Illinois Yearly Meeting. As in other parts of the country, most of these new meetings included a mixture of Friends from Hicksite and Orthodox backgrounds, along with a high proportion of newcomers to Quakerism. The sentiment was strong that the schisms which had divided the Society of Friends in the 19th century were no longer relevant, and new meetings often wanted to avoid taking sides in them. But joining a yearly meeting necessarily involved choosing a side, so many new meetings elected to remain independent. The Friends Fellowship Council (FFC) was established in 1933, in large part to support and recognize such meetings.

In Madison, Wisconsin, a meeting was informally organized in 1920, affiliating with the FFC as a monthly meeting in 1937. In Urbana-Champaign, Friends began meeting for worship near the University of Illinois campus starting about 1930. This group fell inactive after only two or three years, but was restarted in 1938, affiliating with the FFC as a monthly meeting in 1940.

St. Louis Meeting was organized in 1935, joining the FFC in 1941. All these meetings later affiliated with Illinois Yearly Meeting, but had substantial histories as independent meetings before they did so.

The Hicksite origins of Illinois Yearly Meeting may have discouraged these meetings from affiliation, but ILYM had in fact made some efforts toward reconciling the separated branches of Friends. It sent an epistle to the Orthodox branch of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting as early as 1883, and one to London Yearly Meeting in 1905. Both letters appear to have been warmly received, though Philadelphia Yearly Meeting did not elect to read theirs on the floor of the meeting, as it did with other epistles.

In the Hyde Park neighborhood near the University of Chicago campus, a group of mostly Orthodox Friends began meeting for worship about 1921. This group showed special interest in reconciliation, and invited Central Meeting to join with them in forming a new monthly meeting. Central Meeting accepted the invitation, and the two groups merged together as Fifty-Seventh Street Monthly Meeting in 1931. Fifty-Seventh Street Meeting affiliated simultaneously with Illinois Yearly Meeting and with Western Yearly Meeting — one of the first dually affiliated meetings anywhere.

Central Meeting had traditionally hosted one of the four annual sessions of Blue River Quarterly Meeting. Fifty-Seventh Street Meeting now took on this responsibility — but was also responsible for hosting one of the four sessions of Chicago Quarterly Meeting of Western Yearly Meeting. This dual responsibility presented an opportunity for further reconciliation, and in 1939, the two quarterly meetings began holding one session per year together.

The first several decades of the twentieth century were a time not just of reconciliation among Friends, but also of changes and modernization in Quaker practice, and Illinois Yearly Meeting was no exception. At the turn of the century, meeting discipline — though markedly relaxed compared to a hundred years earlier — still called for the appointment of overseers whose responsibility was to initiate disownment proceedings against Friends who were guilty of unrepentant immorality or rule violations. Regular queries, to which meetings were expected to provide written answers, included questions about how members dressed, and whether their personal finances were in order. Meetinghouses included a ministers' gallery, and meetings officially recognized specific individuals as ministers or elders. "Plain speech," using the pronoun *thee* and its related forms, was still widely used. All this disappeared over the course of a few decades.

Even at the beginning of this period, it was becoming rare for meetings in ILYM to record a Friend as a minister. As early as 1912, the ILYM Ministers and Elders Meeting considered changing its name to Ministry and Counsel and involving more young people — a change which finally took place in 1926 in anticipation of ILYM's adoption of the new "Uniform Discipline" of Friends General Conference. This discipline brought an official end to the recording of ministers and elders and replaced the ministers and elders meetings at all levels with ministry and counsel committees. The facing benches in the yearly meeting house were taken down, and the risers covered over with a platform in 1930.

Initially, the members of the monthly meeting ministry and counsel committees also constituted the quarterly and yearly meeting ministry and counsel committees; but this proved problematic, and in 1935, the yearly meeting began appointing the members of its ministry and counsel committee directly. Under the new discipline the role of overseers was reconceptualized

to coordinating pastoral care. Disownments — already rare by the turn of the century — virtually ceased.

In 1907, ILYM reduced the frequency with which meetings were expected to produce written answers to the queries. Queries were still to be read in meeting and answered orally according to the old schedule, but simply as a meeting-internal exercise rather than as a report. The 1927 discipline included lengthy queries and continued to call for written answers, but Illinois Yearly Meeting moved entirely to unminuted oral responses in 1928. In 1936, consideration of queries during the ILYM business sessions was discontinued entirely. However, the new discipline had also replaced the old queries for the ministers and elders meetings with free-form reports from the ministry and counsel committees. These reports were read aloud in the ILYM Ministry and Counsel Committee meeting (held at the annual sessions), which was now opened to all Friends. These reports thus came to function as general State of Society reports, and effectively replaced the old queries as the yearly meeting's primary method for receiving information about the condition of its constituent meetings.

The yearly meeting's approach to social and political issues also continued to evolve. The Committee for Philanthropic Labor added a Department on Prevention of Cruelty to Children and Animals in 1898, spurred in part by concerns over vivisection. Beginning about 1902, the Education Department expanded its purview to include work towards women's suffrage and equal rights. Concern over the rights of African Americans grew steadily, especially after a white riot destroyed an African-American neighborhood in Springfield in 1908; a Department on the Interests of Colored People was added shortly afterwards. Labor issues also received increasing attention, with a Department of Industrial Conditions added in 1916. The departmental structure was reorganized in 1919 to match that of the corresponding committee of Friends General Conference, and the Committee for Philanthropic Labor as a whole was renamed the Social Service Committee in 1933, again following FGC. Some additional adjustments in the naming and focus of the departments were made later; but in 1941, the whole departmental structure was discontinued, and the Social Service Committee began to function as a single, unified organization.

In 1906, the yearly meeting established a committee “for the advancement of Friends principles” — understood primarily as promoting vitality and life in ILYM constituent meetings. In 1912, the opportunity presented itself of hiring a “field secretary” jointly with Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting (still known at that time as Indiana Yearly Meeting), for the purpose of “holding conferences, starting study circles and awakening interest among the younger people in the mission of their society.” The field secretary position later received extensive support and involvement from Friends General Conference in addition to the two yearly meetings. ILYM discontinued its field secretary program in 1950, but revived it in 1991. Since then, the position of field secretary has been an ILYM-internal position.

In 1919 the Representative Committee (corresponding to our current Continuing Committee) was renamed the Executive Committee. A year later it was reorganized so that all of its members were appointed directly by the yearly meeting, rather than some by the yearly and some by the quarterly meetings as before. The requirement that it include equal numbers of both sexes was also dropped. In 1923, the yearly meeting began appointing a “minute clerk” — what we would now call a recording clerk. Previously, the recording of minutes had been the responsibility of the clerk.

This era also saw changes in the way religious education was handled, and in the children's activities at the yearly meeting sessions. The yearly meeting had taken financial

responsibility for the Illinois First Day School Association in 1887. In 1912, the Association asked to become an auxiliary organization of the yearly meeting, and in 1917 laid itself down completely; its responsibilities passed to the First Day School Committee of the yearly meeting. The First Day School Committee was renamed the Religious School Committee in 1935, and then the Religious Education Committee in 1938. There was a modest children's program at the annual sessions starting in 1888; by 1927 there was a full-scale "Junior Yearly Meeting" with clerks, minutes, and epistles.

1942–1975: Re-expansion and reconfiguration

A most dramatic event occurred when requests were heard [in late 1942] from two meetings to affiliate with Blue River Quarterly and Illinois Yearly Meetings. These requests from Peoria and Oak Park literally overwhelmed Friends. Expressions of pleasure and appreciation were followed by a long and deep silence, then comments took a humorous turn and someone said "We have just witnessed the birth of twins in the Society, and an even greater miracle, the twins were born more than a hundred miles apart."

ILYM Advancement Committee Report, 1943

The addition of Peoria and Oak Park Meetings to Illinois Yearly Meeting marked the end of ILYM's long period of numerical decline, and the beginning of a new era of expansion and rejuvenation. In the space of a few years, Illinois Yearly Meeting returned from the brink of extinction to become a large and robust organization, as new meetings were formed and existing independent meetings sought affiliation. By 1975, ILYM was sizeable enough that a portion of it was set off as a new, separate yearly meeting.

The previously independent monthly meetings in Madison, St. Louis, and Urbana-Champaign affiliated with ILYM in 1944, 1946, and 1952, respectively. Milwaukee Meeting affiliated as it reached monthly meeting status in 1950, previously having been a preparative meeting under the care of Evanston Monthly Meeting (which at that point was not itself yet part of ILYM). Church Street Meeting in Minneapolis — later renamed Twin Cities Meeting — affiliated with ILYM as a monthly meeting in 1956; up to that point it had been a preparative meeting under the care of the Minneapolis Monthly Meeting, part of Iowa Yearly Meeting. Downers Grove Meeting was established as a preparative meeting under the care of Fifty-Seventh Street in 1951, and set off as a monthly meeting in 1956.

Penn Valley Meeting in Kansas City was briefly part of ILYM as a preparative meeting under the care of Fifty-Seventh Street, 1944–1946. Rockford Meeting was informally organized about 1951 and formally established as a preparative meeting under the care of Fifty-Seventh Street a year later. In 1956, a preparative meeting was established in Bloomington-Normal under the care of Urbana-Champaign Monthly Meeting.

The revitalized yearly meeting expanded its activities, often in cooperation with Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting. Already in 1939, the two yearly meetings had begun to operate Camp Ill-Ind-O, an annual one-week youth leadership camp, at facilities owned by the Orthodox Indiana Yearly Meeting. This continued with some interruptions through 1952. "Vacation Friends Schools" were also held at several locations in the areas covered by ILYM and OVYM. The two yearly meetings published a joint newsletter, *Friends Here and There* from 1942 to 1952; the ILYM publication *Among Friends* was produced starting 1953.

There was some contraction in this period as well. Highland Creek Meeting continued to struggle, and was mostly inactive by the late 1940s. Occasional meetings were held as late as 1953, but in 1955 Blue River Quarterly Meeting minuted its concurrence with a recommendation not to attempt to revive the meeting — leaving Blue River Quarterly in the ironic position of not including any meetings near the Blue River. By 1953, Oak Park Meeting found itself so small that it requested to be a preparative meeting under the care of Fifty-Seventh Street; it returned to monthly meeting status in 1971.

But the overall trend in Illinois Yearly Meeting was one of rapid expansion. It soon became practical to have two quarterly meetings again, and in 1952, the northern part of the yearly meeting was organized into Fox Valley Quarterly Meeting, with the southern part remaining as Blue River Quarterly Meeting. Fox Valley Quarterly included Fifty-Seventh Street Meeting, and therefore took over Blue River Quarterly's previous pattern of holding one session each year jointly with Chicago Quarterly Meeting of Western Yearly Meeting; this increased to two sessions in 1956.

As yearly meeting sessions became more heavily attended, the facilities required updating. In 1949, a basement was excavated under the west side of the meetinghouse for a new kitchen and dining room. The old dining hall was converted to dormitory and educational space as the "Junior Yearly Meeting House."

Traditionally, members of Clear Creek Meeting had provided accommodation in their own homes for practically all Friends attending the yearly meeting sessions; but this became impractical, and many Friends began to camp on the yearly meeting grounds, or sleep in cots in the meetinghouse. It was clear that the existing facilities were inadequate, and Illinois Yearly Meeting moved its 1958 and 1959 sessions to Camp Wakanda, near Middleton, Wisconsin. In 1960 a dormitory was built next to the meetinghouse, allowing the yearly meeting to return to the McNabb campus. A lot across the road from the meetinghouse was purchased for use as a campground in 1969, and a showerhouse erected in 1975.

Beginning in 1960, the annual sessions included a lecture named in honor of Jonathan Plummer.

Also in 1960, the ILYM meetings in Wisconsin and Minnesota were organized into Northern Half-Yearly Meeting, the equivalent of a quarterly meeting. This left Fox Valley Quarterly as consisting just of Downers Grove and Fifty-Seventh Street Monthly Meetings, with Oak Park and Rockford Preparative Meetings — all of which were dually affiliated with Western Yearly Meeting. Fox Valley Quarterly began to hold all of its sessions jointly with Chicago Quarterly Meeting of Western Yearly Meeting; a single set of officers served both quarterly meetings.

In 1962, Lake Forest Monthly Meeting, which had been organized ten years earlier as an independent meeting, requested affiliation with ILYM on the condition that it not be required to join either Chicago-area quarterly meeting until such time as they unite. Although the two quarterlies were meeting jointly, they had not formally merged; so Lake Forest was accorded direct affiliation with Illinois Yearly Meeting — the first monthly meeting to affiliate with the yearly meeting without belonging to one of its quarterly meetings.

The two quarterly meetings did finally combine to form Metropolitan Chicago General Meeting (MCGM) in 1970. But since MCGM included meetings which were not affiliated with both Illinois Yearly Meeting and Western Yearly Meeting, it did not fully function as a quarterly

meeting of either yearly meeting. Rather, it met “for sharing, worship and concerns, with a de-emphasizing of business, except as the business of Friends is their concern with the social health of the World.”

Rockford Meeting shrank to the point of being laid down in 1961. But a preparative meeting was established in nearby Beloit under the care of Madison Monthly Meeting just two years later. In 1966 this meeting moved to Rockford and was renamed Rockford-Beloit Preparative Meeting. It was set off as Rock Valley Monthly Meeting in 1968. Peoria Meeting likewise began to struggle. But a worship group was organized in nearby Galesburg in 1968. The two groups merged as Peoria-Galesburg Monthly Meeting in 1969.

The Viet Nam era saw a flurry of new meetings. After a few years of informal organization, Decatur and Columbia Meetings were established as monthly meetings in 1967, and Northside Meeting in 1970. Springfield Meeting passed through a year as a preparative meeting under the care of Decatur before establishment as a monthly meeting in 1971. DeKalb Meeting likewise spent three years as a preparative meeting under the care of Downers Grove before reaching monthly meeting status in 1973. Friends Hill Monthly Meeting, in Quincy, was established in 1973, Thorn Creek Monthly Meeting in 1974, and Oshkosh Monthly Meeting in 1975. Preparative or allowed meetings were also formed in Duluth; Carbondale; Eau Claire; Lebanon, Illinois; on the campus of St. Louis University; Wausau; and Green Bay. Evanston Monthly Meeting, which had been in existence since 1936 as part of Western Yearly Meeting, joined ILYM as a dual affiliate in 1972.

Northern Half-Yearly Meeting now included a large number of meetings across a broad region. Many of them were small and distant from the McNabb campus where ILYM held its sessions. Twin Cities Meeting withdrew from ILYM in 1971 in order to pursue the idea of organizing a new yearly meeting to serve the Wisconsin-Minnesota area. This idea gained the support of other meetings; and in 1975, with the cooperation of ILYM, Northern Half-Yearly Meeting separated and reorganized itself as Northern Yearly Meeting. Rock Valley Meeting elected to remain in ILYM rather than Northern, while Milwaukee and Oshkosh Meetings affiliated dually with both yearly meetings.

All through the period of 1942–1975, much of the yearly meeting’s attention was taken up with responding to war. During World War II, the yearly meeting maintained a Civilian Public Service Committee, to support Friends engaged in alternative service. As in previous wars, some Friends did feel called to join the military; in 1942, ILYM sent a letter to all its members “serving in whatever service of conscience and country to which they feel called,” whether in the military or as conscientious objectors, expressing its love, understanding, and unbroken fellowship. Later, as the Cold War was underway, reducing the threat of nuclear weapons became a central concern; the yearly meeting minuted its opposition to “the development, testing, and use of weapons of nuclear, chemical, or biological warfare.” During the Viet Nam war, ILYM made a point of sending humanitarian supplies to all sides in the conflict, and many of its local meetings provided draft counseling and engaged in public protest.

Many ILYM Friends were also involved in the Civil Rights movement during this period, and efforts to oppose racism more generally. During World War II, the ILYM Social Service Committee was especially concerned with the prejudice faced by Americans of Japanese descent. As ILYM expanded into Wisconsin and Minnesota, Native American concerns also claimed the meeting’s attention to an extent not seen since the 19th century.

The final years of this era were also marked by greater awareness of, and sensitivity to, issues pertaining to sexuality and gender identity. Workshops on sexual roles, mores and relationships were held at the annual sessions in 1970 and 1971, setting a process into motion which resulted in a 1974 ILYM minute opposing discrimination against homosexuals; stating that relationships should be judged on the degree to which they contribute to the growth of love, rather than on the basis of conventionality; and calling on Friends to examine their assumptions about sexuality.

This era saw several organizational changes in the yearly meeting. The Social Service Committee was renamed the Peace and Service Committee in 1944. In 1962, the Ministry and Counsel, Religious Education, Finance, and Peace and Service Committees were eliminated; their interests were represented instead by designated members of the Executive Committee. In 1965, a major reorganization was adopted and outlined in the first ILYM Handbook: The Executive Committee was replaced by the Continuing Committee, with members appointed by the monthly meetings rather than the yearly meeting, together with the clerks of standing committees, and the clerk of the yearly meeting. The monthly meeting representatives also constituted the Nominating Committee. A Special Concerns Committee was established to handle the business of the former Ministry and Counsel, Religious Education, Finance, and Peace and Service Committees. These committees were gradually re-established over the next several years, as more Friends were added to each area of concern. The Maintenance and Planning Committee was established in 1975, combining the work of a Custodial Committee established in 1965 and a Long Range Site Planning Committee set up in 1973.

A trend which had begun earlier, but noticeably accelerated in this period, was a reduction in the role of quarterly meetings. Traditionally, these had formed a systematic intervening level between the monthly meetings and the yearly meeting; but over time, most of the functions of quarterly meetings were taken over either by the yearly meeting or by the monthly meetings. From 1930 to 1952, Illinois Yearly Meeting was effectively co-extensive with Blue River Quarterly Meeting, and it became natural to think of the yearly meeting more as an association of monthly meetings than an association of quarterly meetings. The move from query responses to State of Society reports in 1936 had the effect that monthly meetings, not the quarterly meeting, were now reporting on their condition to the yearly meeting. In 1963, the yearly meeting began requesting funds directly from the monthly meetings, rather than the quarterly meetings. The 1965 establishment of the Continuing Committee, with members appointed by the monthly meetings, rather than the quarterly meetings as in the old Representative Committee, reinforced the idea that monthly meetings were the immediate constituent bodies of the yearly meeting. As the monthly meeting representatives were assigned the role of the Nominating Committee, they were also given responsibility for nominating the yearly meeting clerk — which had formerly been the sole official responsibility of the quarterly meeting representatives. The merger of Fox Valley Quarterly Meeting into Metropolitan Chicago General Meeting in 1970 effectively put the Chicago-area meetings in to the position of affiliating with ILYM directly, rather than through a quarterly meeting. In 1971, it was the yearly meeting, not Blue River Quarterly Meeting, that approved the establishment of Springfield Monthly Meeting — even though Springfield was to be part of Blue River, and the establishment of monthly meetings was a traditional function of quarterly meetings. Subsequent monthly meetings have all been established by minute of the yearly meeting. When Northern Half-Yearly

Meeting separated from ILYM to become Northern Yearly Meeting in 1975, Blue River Quarterly Meeting was left as the only quarterly meeting in Illinois Yearly Meeting.

1976–2018: Recent developments

Since 1976, the size and geographic extent of Illinois Yearly Meeting has remained roughly the same, but its component meetings have experienced varying degrees of growth and contraction, and new meetings have affiliated. Carbondale Meeting, later renamed Southern Illinois Quaker Meeting, was large enough to reach monthly meeting status in 1977. Bloomington-Normal Meeting went through at least two cycles of falling inactive and being restarted before reaching monthly meeting status in 1982. McHenry County Meeting, later renamed Upper Fox Valley Quaker Meeting, affiliated with ILYM in 1978 after eight years of independent existence. Duneland Meeting in Valparaiso was informally organized in 1976 and established as a monthly meeting in 1980. South Bend Meeting affiliated in 1992 after 14 years as an independent worship group.

The 1980s saw a flurry of new worship groups: Freeport, Kankakee, Sunrise (in Springfield, Missouri), Plumbottom (in Willow Springs, Missouri), Elgin, Macomb, Lake Geneva, Wabash Valley (in Terre Haute), and Charleston. Several of these participated in the life of Illinois Yearly Meeting without ever formally affiliating. Most of them were short-lived, but Macomb Worship Group was later revived and continues under the care of Clear Creek Monthly Meeting. Sunrise Worship Group ended its participation in ILYM when it was established as a preparative meeting as part of South Central Yearly Meeting in 1989.

Divisions in Bloomington-Normal and Rock Valley Meetings led to the formation of Heartland and Hill Street Worship Groups in the 1990s; these were both laid down in the early 2000s. More recently, worship groups have been established in Elkhart under the care of South Bend Monthly Meeting; St. Charles under the care of Upper Fox Valley; and Burlington, Iowa under the care of Clear Creek. Burlington is not far from the location of the old Prairie Grove Meeting; the worship group there re-establishes an ILYM presence in Iowa after an absence of more than 80 years.

Springfield Monthly Meeting shrank to the point of being laid down in 1993. A worship group was restarted in Springfield a couple years later under the care of Decatur Monthly Meeting, but Decatur Meeting itself grew gradually weaker; its monthly meeting was laid down in 2004. Decatur Friends continued as a worship group under the care of Clear Creek Monthly Meeting, but this too was laid down in 2009. Springfield Worship Group was also placed under the care of Clear Creek when Decatur Monthly Meeting was laid down, but changed to Urbana-Champaign in 2009. Thorn Creek Monthly Meeting was laid down in 2002, and DeKalb Monthly Meeting in 2007.

Issues of reproduction, sexuality and gender have been a recurrent and sometimes divisive concern throughout this period. Friends labored for several years over the question of abortion, finally uniting on a minute supporting abortion rights in 1992. Beginning in the 1980s, several monthly meetings in ILYM began taking same-sex marriages under their care. A 1980 proposal to send an official ILYM representative to Friends for Lesbian and Gay Concerns (FLGC, now FLGBTQC) was not approved until 1992. A 1995 minute from FLGC urged meeting support for the legalization of same-sex marriage, but ILYM did not come to unity on this issue. Although no minute was adopted, Friends Hill Monthly Meeting was uncomfortable

with the degree of support for same-sex marriage clearly present in the yearly meeting, and withdrew from ILYM in 1997, citing this, and a perceived anti-Christian attitude among ILYM Friends, as reasons. Divisions persisted even after the withdrawal of Friends Hill Meeting, and as of this writing, ILYM has not reached full unity on certain sexuality and gender issues.

Several changes in ILYM's committees and organizational structure have taken place. In 1976, the meetings in ILYM were divided into three "planning groups" with rotating responsibilities for planning the yearly meeting gathering. The Peace and Service Committee was laid down in 1982, as Friends felt it was redundant with corresponding monthly meeting committees. The same year, the Advancement Committee and the Ministry and Counsel Committee were merged to form the Ministry and Advancement Committee. The Handbook Committee was set up in 1983, and the Youth Oversight Committee in 1984. In 1985, a Nominating Committee separate from the monthly meeting representatives was re-established; the members of the Nominating Committee were proposed by a separate Naming Committee starting 1996. An ad hoc Environmental Concerns Committee was set up in 1987, and made a standing committee three years later. The Peace Resources Committee was established in 2002, along with the Development Committee.

In 1989, the yearly meeting set up a Peace Tax Fund, into which Friends could redirect a portion of their federal income taxes, if conscience did not permit them to help pay for war. Deposits not seized by the government are donated to charitable causes. In 1995, the yearly meeting established the Quaker Volunteer Service, Witness and Training Committee, to coordinate and promote volunteer service opportunities, such as the work camps which in an earlier era had been organized by the American Friends Service Committee. This committee lasted until 2010, at which time it was noted that many of its goals had been met with the establishment of national organizations for coordinating such service.

In 1991, a system was adopted according to which the yearly meeting clerk is expected to first serve a year as assistant clerk, then two years as clerk, followed again by a year as assistant clerk. The yearly meeting approved hiring a paid Administrative Coordinator in 2000, a Youth Coordinator in 2007, and Children's Religious Education Coordinator in 2016. Now with multiple paid staff positions, the yearly meeting established a Personnel Committee in 2009. In 2004, Illinois Yearly Meeting was incorporated; previously it had been legally organized as a trust. The role of the trustees was taken over by the stewards after the trust was dissolved two years later.

This era has also seen substantial changes to the ILYM campus. In 2000, the yearly meeting acquired a one-acre plot of land to the immediate west of the meetinghouse. The next year, an ad hoc Site Envisioning and Building Committee was set up, and began developing plans for new buildings, guided by a vision of expanded ILYM facilities as a "Peace House on the Prairie" — a regional peacemaking and retreat center. In 2005, in order to make room for planned new buildings, the dormitory was dismantled and Junior Yearly Meeting House was moved across the road to the campground. Materials from the dormitory were reused to construct a set of cabins, also on the campground. However, the plans for new buildings were suddenly altered in 2009, when the opportunity presented itself for ILYM to buy the existing house, outbuildings and lot just west of the meetinghouse. The house was renamed the Clear Creek House of Illinois Yearly Meeting, and renovated to provide additional dormitory space, as well as much-needed winter meeting space and kitchen facilities for Clear Creek Meeting.

Sources for Quotes

- p. 1, “Father started alone...”: ‘Autobiography of Abel Mills’, *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* vol. 19, no.1–2, pp. 110–111 (1926).
- p. 3, “The Ohio River was very low...”: ‘Autobiography of Abel Mills’, *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* vol. 19, no.1–2, pp. 115–116 (1926).
- p. 5, “We have no doctrinal creed...”: *Minutes and Accompanying Documents of Illinois Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends, Held at Clear Creek, Putnam Co., Ill., Ninth Month, 1885*, p. 81.
- p. 5, “consider in any way matters affecting the doctrinal or disciplinary views...”: *Friends Intelligencer* vol. 36, no. 33, p. 514.
- p. 6, “for the consideration of such topics ...”: *Minutes and Accompanying Documents of Illinois Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends, Held at Clear Creek, Putnam County, Illinois, Ninth Month, 1890*, p. 36.
- p. 10, “A most dramatic event occurred...”: *The Minutes and Accompanying Documents, Illinois Yearly Meeting, Religious Society of Friends, Held in the Meeting House Near McNabb, Illinois, August 12 to 15, 1943*, p. 10.
- p. 12, “for sharing, worship and concerns, with a de-emphasizing of business...”: *The Minutes and Accompanying Documents, Illinois Yearly Meeting, Religious Society of Friends, 1970, August 19 to 23, Sessions in the Meetinghouse Near McNabb, Illinois*, p. 3.
- p. 12, “serving in whatever service of conscience and country to which they feel called”: *The Minutes and Accompanying Documents, Illinois Yearly Meeting, Religious Society of Friends, Held in the Meeting House Near McNabb, Illinois, August 13 to 16, 1942*, p. 5.
- p. 12, “the development, testing, and use of weapons of nuclear, chemical, or biological warfare”: *The Minutes and Accompanying Documents, Illinois Yearly Meeting, Religious Society of Friends, 1959, August 26 to 30, Sessions at YMCA Camp Wakanda on Lake Mendota’s Northwest Shore near Middleton, Wisconsin*, p. 5.

Please provide feedback to the Faith and Practice Committee on this document!

1. Is this text too long or too detailed for inclusion in Faith and Practice? What would you regard as the ideal length for a Faith and Practice section on the history of ILYM? (*Note: If substantial portions of this text are cut, a longer version would be preserved, with the idea that it could be published in some other outlet — possibly a booklet commemorating the 150th anniversary of ILYM in 2025.*)
2. If it needs to be cut, which parts are most important to keep and which parts can be omitted? If desired, rate the importance of the following topics on a 1 to 5 scale (1 = OK to omit completely, 2 = keep some material but substantially reduce the level of detail, 3 = keep at more-or-less the same level of detail, 4 = keep all material, expand somewhat if possible, 5 = more detail definitely needed), or simply give comments to express your views:
 - a. Prominent individuals: Benjamin Lundy, Joseph and Ruth Dugdale, Jonathan Plummer, Isaiah Lightner, Luella Flitcraft, etc.
 - b. Personal anecdotes: Joseph Mills' midwinter ride to Honey Creek; his long river journey to yearly meeting, only to arrive as it was ending.
 - c. Monthly meetings which were once part of ILYM: names, locations, dates of existence, etc.
 - d. Monthly meetings which are still part of ILYM: names, locations, dates when they were organized or affiliated with ILYM, etc.
 - e. Worship groups, preparative meetings, etc. which were once part of ILYM.
 - f. Worship groups, preparative meetings, etc., which are still part of ILYM.
 - g. Yearly meeting committees: name, purpose, dates of existence, etc.
 - h. Changes to ILYM campus: Construction of dining hall, dormitory, cabins; purchase of Clear Creek House; etc.
 - i. Social witness of ILYM: issues addressed by the old Philanthropic Labor Committee, modern anti-war efforts, etc.
 - j. Changes in yearly meeting process and procedure: Merging the men's and women's business meetings, changing from queries to State of Society Reports, ending the recording of ministers, decreased role for quarterly meetings, changes in how the clerk is nominated, etc.
 - k. Religious education and children's programs: Illinois First Day School Association, Junior Yearly Meeting, etc.
 - l. Changing demographics and culture of ILYM: Investigation of possible settlement sites in the far west, role of urbanization in early 20th-century numerical decline, shift away from "plain speech," etc.

- m. Intermeeting relations: Conflict between Indiana and Baltimore Yearly Meetings over the establishment of Prairie Grove Quarterly Meeting, efforts at reconciliation between Hicksite and Orthodox Friends, joint programs with Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting, etc.
 - n. Sexuality and gender issues: 1974 minute, sending a representative to FLG(BTQ)C, same-sex marriage, etc.
 - o. Divisions in ILYM and its meetings: Withdrawal of Friends Hill (Quincy) Meeting from ILYM, separation of Heartland and Hill Street Worship Groups from Bloomington-Normal and Rock Valley Monthly Meetings, etc.
3. Does the text describe recent events fairly and appropriately? What changes should be made in how recent ILYM history is portrayed?
 4. What other recommendations do you have?

Please send responses to Peter Lasersohn (peter.lasersohn@gmail.com), or to any member of the Faith and Practice Committee: Janice Domanik (jdomanik@comcast.net), Sarah Pavlovic (npavlo130@comcast.net), Colleen Reardon (colrea@sbcglobal.net), or David Shiner (cunegonde@prodigy.net). Thank you!

This document is available online at <http://ilym.org/drupal/FaithandPractice>.