

19309 Greenfield Rd.
Detroit MI 48235

detroitfriendsmeeting.org

Fourth Month 2026

Detroit Friends Meeting Newsletter



Calendar

April

5 th	10:30 am	Meeting for Worship
12 th	10:30 am	Meeting for Worship Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
18 th	10:00 am	Workday at the Meetinghouse
19 th	10:30 am	Meeting for Worship
	11:45 am	Potluck
26 th	10:30 am	Meeting for Worship

May

2 nd		LEYM Spiritual Formation Retreat at DFM
3 rd	10:30 am	Meeting for Worship
	11:45 am	Potluck
	1:30 – 4:00 pm	Workshop with Michael Wajda Exploring the “Secret Power” Among Us
9 th	10:00 am	Workday at the Meetinghouse
10 th	10:30 am	Meeting for Worship
	11:45 am	Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
17 th	10:30 am	Meeting for Worship
24 th	10:30 am	Meeting for Worship
31 st	10:30 am	Meeting for Worship

Minutes of Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

Fourth Month

The hybrid meeting in person and using the Zoom platform opened in waiting worship at 11:55 am with 16 adults in attendance. The third and fourth queries on Meeting Community (20 and 21) in the Lake Erie Yearly Meeting's (LEYM) "Advices & Queries" (2012) were read and considered. They read: "Are love and unity maintained among us? Do we foster knowing one another in "that which is eternal"? How do we come to clearness in dealing with troublesome differences between us, living our faith and acting in love? Do we listen to the Spirit which can draw us together in humility and mutual trust?" and "Do we uphold Friends in their efforts to develop stable and loving relationships? In what ways does the Meeting assist couples and families to communicate, grow together, and rear children in a loving and spiritually nurturing environment?". One thing about this meeting is that we hold each other up, especially when there is conflict. Conflict is seen as an opportunity to grow together and it's done in a spirit of love. It's not clear what supporting couples and families would look like and we have not really had an opportunity to do so. However, our Ministry & Counsel committee is active and addresses issues when they arise. We are concerned for each other. Right now we don't have small children in the meeting, but if this changes we will be able to deal with families in a supportive way. We have a strong core of individuals who are able to support families with children.

Technology Committee Report

Joel Ottenbreit reported.

The newly formed Technology Committee has begun its work and has been active in addressing the technological needs of the Meeting. The committee, consisting of six members, has already held two meetings focused on identifying and responding to critical needs in our current technology infrastructure.

Through these initial gatherings, the committee has sought to ground its work in the shared understanding that technology should support and not distract from the life of the Meeting, while also ensuring that our systems are stable, secure, and accessible to those who serve the Meeting.

Two areas of immediate attention have emerged.

First, the committee has developed a working draft document outlining the duties and responsibilities of the Technology Committee. In the past, technology within the Meeting has often been handled on an as-needed basis without clear definition of roles related to setup, maintenance, and content. A working-draft document seeks to bring clarity to these

responsibilities and to define how the Technology Committee will support other committees in their work.

Second, the committee has identified a significant vulnerability in how passwords are currently managed. Access to important systems is distributed among individuals, creating a risk to continuity and security. In response, the committee is investigating the use of a free password management tool, including Bitwarden, to securely store usernames and passwords in a centralized location.

The committee asks for the Meeting's permission for Mike Thompson, a member of the committee, to establish and configure this tool. The committee will also designate three to four individuals who will have shared access to this system, ensuring that responsibility is distributed and that no single individual holds sole access to critical information.

Looking ahead, the committee's next steps will focus on discerning and recommending a technology platform that will support the Meeting as an effective nonprofit organization. This includes establishing professional business email accounts and creating a shared cloud-based system for storing and archiving important documents.

In addition, the committee will explore options for free or reduced-cost web hosting services, with the goal of potentially reducing current expenses by approximately \$500 or more, thereby easing the financial demands on the Meeting.

The committee remains committed to moving forward thoughtfully, bringing forward recommendations as they are seasoned, and seeking the guidance of the Meeting in all significant decisions.

Technology Committee Minute for Approval

Friends approve that Michael Thompson establish and review Bitwarden and other password managers and create an account to securely store usernames and passwords for the Meeting, with access to be shared among a small group designated by the Technology Committee in cooperation with the clerks of the meeting.

The minute was approved.

Nominating Committee Report

Sharon Ottenbreit submitted a report.

There are several updates and recommendations to report on from the Nominating Committee.

- The committee is seeking approval to have Joel Gugnitz as convener of the Outreach Committee.
- The Quaker History and Theology Working Group will remain inactive until a convener comes forward to lead this group's work. Members and attenders who

have volunteered to be part of this working group have been notified of this latest development.

- Committee conveners have been notified about new members or any changes to the individuals on their committees through email.
- Positions holders and committee members' names will be posted in the meetinghouse.
- Please contact members of the Nominating Committee (Sharon Ottenbreit, Chuck Thompson, or Mark Michener) if you are interested in becoming part of a committee. It is not too late to join! Thank you to those that have volunteered to share their time and gifts with the meeting.

Development Committee Report

Sharon Ottenbreit submitted a report.

Letters sent out to individuals and monthly meetings that donated years ago have successfully raised additional contributions for our building fund.

Letters given to two Home Depot stores near members' homes have honored requests for contributing building materials, specifically insulation. It is a unique way in which the Development Committee and the Property Committee are seeking alternatives to reduce additional costs for the building's expenses. Similar letters will be provided for other members and attenders willing to help secure additional building materials for the other projects to reduce costs.

We received a letter from Quakers out East who plan to make another donation to the fundraising campaign in honor of two former Detroit Friends, Margaret and Leslie Walden. Those donors asked if we had a library or reading room that could be named in their honor and inquired how much we would want to name it in their memory. The committee's response expressed a deep appreciation of their continued commitment to help support our meeting's efforts in Detroit. Then we explained that when we started our capital campaign efforts, our committee had discussions about the idea of "naming rights" as part of the campaign. We understood that this is a method often used to encourage support of a project in a nonprofit world. This naming convention is not often used in Quaker meetinghouse settings, based on a fundamental belief that all donations, large and small, have an equal impact on the life of the meeting or the project. After much discernment, our committee decided to adhere to this principle, so there are no "naming opportunities" as part of this effort, even though this may limit our fundraising capabilities. We included a personal note expressing that Margaret and Leslie were an important part of Detroit Friends Meeting and that, while we miss their love and energy in our meeting, their spirit continues to have an impact. We

offered to share their intentions to honor them by making note of this kind gesture in our newsletter and of course letting the family know.

Last month, we received \$3,900 from outside contributions, \$5,235 from members and attenders, and \$500 in rent for a total monthly income of \$9,635. The building fund balance at the end of Third Month is \$800,112.

Property Committee Report

Dave Goeddeke reported for the committee.

The newly named Property Committee includes Dave Goeddeke as convenor, Peter Dale, Cathy Clifford, Bernie Miller and Eleanor Carey. Committee activities are currently limited to scheduled workdays; however, we have found an experienced drywall repairman to fix the ceiling and wall damage in the restrooms for a reasonable price. This work will be performed sometime this month and we should have an opportunity to finish painting those areas before the LEYM retreat activities on May 2nd and 3rd.

If special arrangements for the LEYM sessions are required please advise the convener and these can be included in our workday on April 18th (one week later than usual), or during the week prior to May 2nd. We need to install more insulation in the attics and are also planning to make some outdoor improvements including new plantings and security fence construction at the back of the building and parking area.

We will also begin cleaning out the vacant area on the south side of the building in preparation for renovation of the space for a prospective tenant. This is a long-term project and may require some professional assistance to complete electrical and other skilled trade installations.

Our solar energy system is fully functional and our interconnection agreement with DTE Energy allows us to return electricity to the grid for credit against our utility costs. As soon as heating season is over, we should generate more electricity than we use since we won't be running our HVAC every day, but usually only on First Days.

A workday is scheduled for April 18th and on the second Saturday of each month for the foreseeable future to continue our building improvements.

Treasurers' Report

Peter Dale reported.

Treasurer Peter Dale reported on the meeting's income and expenses for Third Month. He first presented the Comerica Bank statement for the month, then the balance sheet generated by Aplos showing the meeting's financial state at the end of the month. The meeting's books are balanced, though they do show the meeting has loan obligations. He then followed with a detailed report of the Year-To-Date General Fund.

Ministry & Counsel Committee Report

Ellen Barnes reported for the committee.

The Ministry and Counsel Committee had a discussion on the process for handling pastoral care within the meeting, and developed the following statement:

The Ministry and Counsel Committee believes that pastor care, when needed, is critical to the spiritual health of the meeting, and it is the responsibility of the Ministry and Counsel Committee to make it happen. However, we are not omniscient, so that we ask that any member or attender who either needs help or is aware of another who needs it, to please notify a member of the Ministry and Counsel Committee.

LEYM Representative Report

Erika Smith reported.

The LEYM Annual Meeting was on Saturday, Third Month 28th and was hosted by the Red Cedar Friends Meeting in Lansing.

There will be a simple meal offering of beans and rice this summer. Friends will be invited to choose no more than three options from a limited selection and to participate in a discussion about food and hunger at a designated table in the cafeteria.

The Fall Youth Retreat will be on Tenth Month 2-4 at the Kirkmont Center in Zanesville, Ohio.

The Advancement & Outreach Committee (Susan Hartman) is looking for a large paper map of LEYM with the placement of our Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups. It was on display several years ago and they would like to use it again.

Monthly Meetings are asked to submit a two minute video or slideshow to Susan Hartman via email in any format before Fifth Month, 25. She will accept anything, even still photos. Peter and Bryant will collect materials to send.

Joe Mills of Kalamazoo Monthly Meeting is interested in an update on the financial needs of DFM and wants someone to contact him with the info.

DFM is hosting the LEYM Spiritual Formation Retreat on Saturday, Fifth Month 2.

The Nominating Committee is struggling to fill roles in the Clerk/Assistant Clerk 4-year rotation. Please forward the names of people with gifts to the Nominating Committee (Mary Igoe Myers and Clemence Mershon).

LEYM attenders who need financial aid should contact Jayson Smith, the Registrar.

The Publication and Archives Committee (Jeff Cooper) are looking for a new copy editor. Volunteers are also needed to attend the LEYM workshops and write summaries for the Annual Record.

Monthly Meeting statistical reports are due on Sixth Month 1.

The Ministry & Nurture Committee has hosted four Clerks chats and three chats with committee conveners.

Responses to the LEYM Queries will be published in the Springs Bulletin and the 2026 Annual Records.

State of the Meeting Reports are due on Fifth Month, 15.

Tom Kangas from North Columbus Monthly Meeting is asking for advice and input on revisions on the LEYM anti-harassment policy.

LEYM is looking for a location for the 2027 Representatives Meeting, preferably in northern Ohio. There was some discussion about DFM hosting the 2027 Representatives Meeting, in light of the support we have received from member meetings for our meetinghouse.

The State of the Meeting report will be included in the Fourth Month Newsletter and will be presented for approval at the Fifth Month Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business.

There was a reminder that Detroit Friends Meeting is going to celebrate its 100th anniversary in Eighth Month. The Outreach Committee will start working on appropriate centennial celebrations.

State of the Meeting Report

Friends reflected with gratitude on the reopening of our renovated Meetinghouse. Having a usable and welcoming space has renewed our ability to gather, worship, and connect with one another. The journey of relocation and renovation has been long and at times burdensome, yet many Friends shared that this process has deepened our trust in the Quaker way of discernment and in the guidance of the Light within the Meeting.

While the renovation has brought new energy, it has also been a source of strain for some members and attenders over the past several years. As this chapter draws to a close, Friends expressed relief and hope that the Meeting can now turn its attention more fully toward spiritual growth, community life, and service.

Friends reflected on the character of our worship. The Meeting continues to seek a healthy balance between silence and vocal ministry. There is a growing sense that Friends are listening deeply for the Spirit and allowing space for messages to arise. At the same time, Friends noted that there are no women members of the finance committees or women treasurers, and that the voice of women is heard only rarely in vocal ministry. This remains something we hold in thoughtful reflection.

The Meeting has been enriched by the ability to gather both in-person and online for worship. The use of Zoom has allowed Friends who cannot travel to remain connected. Friends are continuing to reflect on how technology can be used thoughtfully so that those joining remotely feel fully included while still honoring the traditions of Quaker worship.

Friends spoke of the grounding and spiritual depth that comes from gathering together physically, even as online worship offers meaningful connection. The Meeting continues to explore ways of strengthening the sense of unity between those present in the room and those joining from afar. Some Friends suggested exploring additional ways of enriching worship, including opportunities for afterthoughts during the joys and sorrows time, or occasionally experimenting with alternative formats such as a walking Meeting for Worship.

Friends also reflected on the life of the Meeting beyond worship. There is a shared desire to welcome greater participation across generations, particularly the presence of young children and families. Friends will continue to explore ways to make the Meeting a welcoming spiritual home for people of all ages.

The Meeting also expressed a desire to deepen relationships with the surrounding neighborhood so that those who live nearby may come to know who we are. Building connections with other faith communities and organizations in the area may offer opportunities for mutual understanding and cooperation.

Friends expressed gratitude for the dedication of those serving on committees and in positions of responsibility within the Meeting. Much work has been carried forward this year, and the committee structure has helped distribute responsibilities in ways that allow many to contribute to the life of the Meeting. Friends also celebrated signs of renewal and growth within the Meeting. New relationships are forming, and several new attenders and members have stepped forward to serve on committees, bringing fresh energy to the work of the community.

There was particular appreciation for the generosity of two members who provided substantial loans during the relocation process. Friends feel a strong responsibility to repay these loans and restore those members financially as soon as possible.

Friends expressed a deep sense of grace present within the Meeting community. One Friend spoke movingly of the grace that is felt within the Meeting. Others shared hope that this spirit of openness, listening, and care will continue to guide the Meeting as it moves into its next chapter. Friends remain committed to nurturing a community grounded in worship, attentive to the Inner Light, and open to the continuing guidance of the Spirit.

While we continue to face challenges and questions, we remain thankful for the spirit of care, patience, and listening that holds us together. We move forward trusting that the Light will guide our Meeting as we seek to live faithfully in the year ahead.

Fifth Month Queries

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting Queries

Meeting Community

“Our life is love, and peace, and tenderness; and bearing one with another, and forgiving one another, and not laying accusations against another; but praying one for another, and helping one another up with a tender hand.”

Isaac Pennington, 1667, **Letters**, ed. John Barclay

22. “Do we support Friends as they meet life’s challenges such as birth, illness, marriage, divorce, old age, and death? Are we able to ask for support during difficult periods? Can we approach old age with acceptance and anticipation, discerning the right time to relinquish long-term responsibilities? Do we arrange the practical matters (regarding possessions location of documents, burial, etc.) that will arise when we die so that our families and Meeting are not unduly burdened? Are we comfortable with the relationships we will leave behind when we depart?”