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The *Ann Arbor Friends Meeting Newsletter* is published monthly by the Ann Arbor Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends.

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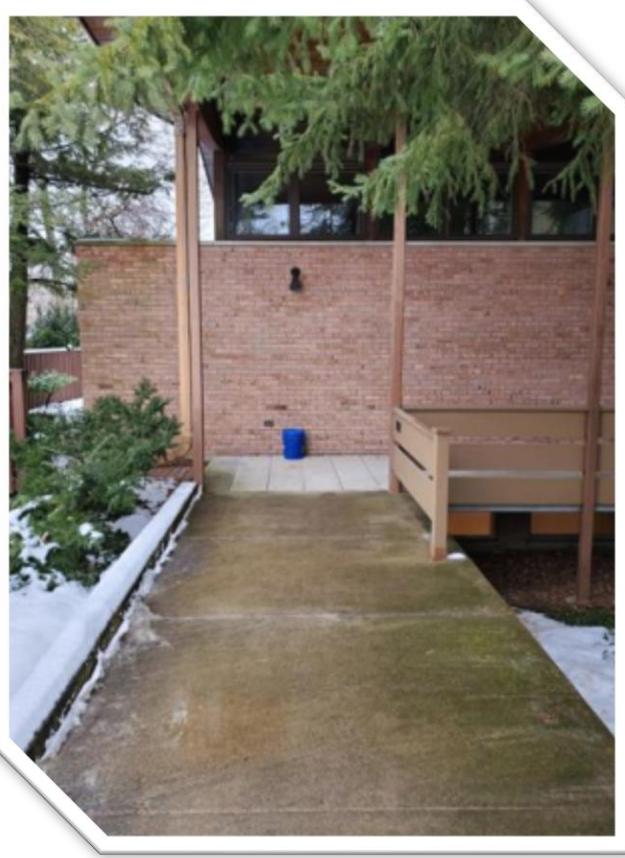
Photo of YAF's courtesy of Naomi Gilbert

To subscribe to the newsletter and weekly handout, email Eric Wozniak at [publications@annarborfriends.org](mailto:publications@annarborfriends.org).

Please send any entries for the newsletter to Eric at least one week before the end of the month.

Photos by Eric Wozniak unless otherwise noted.

**DONATIONS (Tax Deductible):** Ann Arbor Friends Meeting relies on donations from members and attenders to cover over 60% of its budget. You can contribute by check via U.S. mail: c/o Treasurer, Ann Arbor Friends Meeting, 1420 Hill St., Ann Arbor, MI 48104. You can also contribute cash or checks in the Contributions Box (on wall next to Meetingroom door) and online at the Meeting's website at: <https://annarborfriends.org/wp/donate/>.



## February Meeting for Worship schedule:

- February 1, 8:
  - The 9:30 a.m. Meeting for Worship will be **screen-free**.
  - The 11:00 Meeting for Worship will be **blended** (both in-person and on Zoom).
- February 15:
  - The 9:30 a.m. Meeting for Worship will be blended.
  - The 11:00 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business will be blended.
- February 22:
  - The 9:30 a.m. Meeting for Worship will be screen-free.
  - The 11:00 Meeting for Worship will be blended.

# AAFM Event Calendar

\* = See Meeting announcement for details

For all Meetings for Worship, including Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, the Zoom link is: <https://tinyurl.com/AAFM-Zoom> (Zoom Meeting ID 818 7021 4329) (\* = See announcement).

<b>Sunday, February 1</b>	10:30	Common Fellowship Time	
9:00	Singing; Meeting Room *	11:00	Meeting for Worship — Blended
9:30	Meeting for Worship — Screen-free	6:00	YAF Dinner
10:15	First Day School		<b>Monday, February 9</b>
10:30	Common Fellowship Time	7:30	Peace & Social Justice; Zoom
10:35	Property Committee; Corner Room		<b>Tuesday, February 10</b>
11:00	Meeting for Worship — Blended	6:00	Clearness Committee; Corner Room
11:00	CCF Meeting; QH Living Room		<b>Thursday, February 12</b>
	<b>Monday, February 2</b>	7:00	Membership & Outreach; Zoom
6:30	Final Affairs Committee; Naomi G's House		<b>Sunday, February 15</b>
	<b>Wednesday, February 4</b>	9:30	Meeting for Worship — Blended
7:00	What Does it Mean to be Quaker? Corner Room & Zoom *	10:15	First Day School
7:30	Quaker House Committee; Zoom	10:30	Refreshments
	<b>Thursday, February 5</b>	11:00	Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business — Blended
6:00	M&C Committee; Zoom		<b>Wednesday, February 18</b>
	<b>Saturday, Feburary 7</b>	7:00	What Does it Mean to be Quaker? Corner Room and Zoom *
2:00	Earthcare Committee; Corner Room & Zoom <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8585173612">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8585173612</a> Passcode: earthcare		<b>Thursday, February 19</b>
3:00	Quaker Death Education; Fellowship Room *	7:30	Indigenous Action Group; Zoom
	<b>Sunday, February 8</b>		<b>Sunday, February 22</b>
9:00	Singing; Meeting Room *	9:30	Meeting for Worship (Screen-free)
9:30	Meeting for Worship — Screen-free	10:15	First Day School
10:15	First Day School	10:30	Common Time
10:30	Finance Committee; Corner Room & Zoom	10:45	CCF Parents' Meeting; Corner Room
		11:00	Meeting for Worship (Blended)
	<b>Thursday, February 26</b>		
		10:00	FCNL Washtenaw Advocacy Team; Chelsea Library

## MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Message from FDS/CCF: Important First Day School Change:

Starting on February 1st, First Day School will be held from 10:15-11:00

See below for more detail:

- **9:30-9:45** Children who arrive with families for the early meeting will attend the first 15 minutes of the meeting
- **9:45-10:15** Children will be escorted downstairs and will engage in some quiet play until First Day School starts.
- **10:15** Any families planning to attend the later meeting should enter using the back door to minimize distractions during the meeting in progress, and drop their children off at First Day School. These families are invited to participate in quiet fellowship until the common time begins
- **10:30-11:00** Common time
- **11:00** Children whose parents are attending the 11:00 meeting will be walked upstairs to join their parents for a quiet 15 minutes
- **11:15** Children will be escorted downstairs and will engage in some quiet play until meeting has risen.

### Seeking Substitute(s) for Meeting Worker, April to July

The Personnel Committee is seeking one or more Friends to take up some of Luiza's work when she is on parental leave, from mid- to early April to mid- to late July.

Volunteers and/or paid hourly workers (\$20 per hour). Estimated 4–8 hours a week, most of which can be done from home.

Could be one person or several, splitting by time (e.g., one day a week or one week) or by dividing tasks, which include:

- Answering emails or delegating emails to appropriate person;
- Making reservations for Meeting functions and renters;
- Answering phone and replying to voice messages (can be done from elsewhere).
- Providing a detailed daily work log listing issues that need to be resolved after Meeting Worker returns to work.

Training will be provided.

Questions? Ask Luiza ([office@annarborfriends.org](mailto:office@annarborfriends.org))

To apply, please email [personnel@annarborfriends.org](mailto:personnel@annarborfriends.org)

### Singing

**February 1, 8; 9:00 a.m. | Meeting Room**

Singing around the Meeting room piano with Peggy and Thomas. 9:00 – 9:30. Bring instruments and play along!

## What Does it Mean to be Quaker?

Wednesdays, **February 4, 18**; 7:00 p.m. | Corner Room and on Zoom <https://tinyurl.com/AAFM-Zoom>

This is an open discussion for both new and old members to learn and discern together on issues about how Quakerism impacts our spiritual practices and the way we live our lives. For new people, this is a place to ask questions about things that are not immediately obvious about our spiritual community. For other members, it's a place to explore something which has been on your mind or heart, where you wonder how other Friends might help you see clearer.

**The Indigenous Action Group** will meet Thursday, **February 19**, at 7:30 pm via Zoom:

Meeting for Worship link <https://tinyurl.com/AAFM-Zoom>

## Friends Committee on National Legislation's Washtenaw Advocacy Team

**February 26**, 10:00–12:00 | Chelsea Library

Join the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) Advocacy Team when we meet every month on the fourth Thursday from 10:00 a.m.–noon. Because we have both Ann Arbor and Chelsea members, we toggle between the two locations for meetings. Our purpose is to build relationships with our members of US Congress, and to support bills promoting matters of peace and justice. Sometimes we meet with the staff of our Senators and Representative; more often we make phone calls, or write letters to the members or to newspaper editors. We are amply supported by the large, expert staff in the Washington DC office of FCNL and by other Advocacy Teams in Michigan.

Our elected officials need constituents who will encourage, teach, appreciate, and hold them accountable to work for the common good. Governed by members of the Religious Society of Friends, FCNL acts in faith to create a world free from war, a society with equity and justice for all, a community where every person's potential may be fulfilled and an earth restored. One current issue is urging congressional members to oppose the transfer of more weapons of war and military support to Israel.

Questions? Contact John Gourlay ([john@weathervanefarm.net](mailto:john@weathervanefarm.net)) or Nancy Taylor ([netaylor@comcast.net](mailto:netaylor@comcast.net)).

**Quaker Death Education**, a series of events focused on the practical matters surrounding death and dying, will start in February. This series is being hosted by Final Affairs, under the care of Ministry and Counsel.

These events will be facilitated by Robin and Kate. Robin is an End-of-Life Doula and NEDA-Proficient professional, as well as the President and Co-Founder of the Evergreen End of Life Foundation of Michigan. She has given numerous presentations on end-of-life topics, including legacy projects, the role of an End-of-Life Doula, advance care directives, and other aspects of death and dying. Kate has a long interest in death and dying and experience as a Funeral Services Representative.

All events will be hosted from **3pm–5pm** in the Fellowship Room.

**February 7th** - End of Life Basics 101 - an introduction to the vocabulary and subjects

**April 11th** - Quaker Death Cafe - a chance to talk about death and dying with other quakers

**June 6th / July 11th** - My Five Wishes - understanding and filling out key paperwork

Date TBD - Focus on Considerations for Parents

**August 1st** - Funeral / planning for after your own death - leaving a simple legacy for loved ones

**October 3rd** - Life after Death - taking care of things after someone else dies

**December 5th** - Quaker Death Cafe 2 - a chance to revisit how we feel about death and dying

## AMONG FRIENDS

### Final Friday Luncheon

Susan Hartman and Lillie and Neil Shadle are hosting this gathering, on Friday, February 27, again at the Shadle's. Please join us anytime between 11:00 and 2:00, for a simple meal and good conversation.

**For this meeting, if you have a favorite poem, bring it along.** Address: 5341 McAuley Drive, Apt. 302, Ypsilanti. This is St. Joseph's Village, a retirement center on the Trinity Health campus. Finding it can be difficult, so keep your GPS handy.

**Newer Friends**, feel free to check out the [New Quaker Hub](#), a section of the Friends General Conference website geared toward new Friends.

**How Does the Bible Speak to Us?** Join a small group of Friends who meet weekly for about 45 minutes. We use the [Friendly Bible Study](#) method which is a uniquely Quaker approach to reading the Bible. We are currently working our way through the gospel of Luke. We meet via the AAFM worship link <https://tinyurl.com/AAFM-Zoom> on **Thursdays at 9:30 a.m.** All are welcome to join. If questions, please contact Bill ([billriccobono@gmail.com](mailto:billriccobono@gmail.com)) or Naomi ([naomig@umich.edu](mailto:naomig@umich.edu))

## SPECIAL MESSAGES

# Navigating Anew (Steampunk Quaker style)



Susan Loucks

This was a imaginary gauge to check on the appropriateness of a particular leading created for the Quaker Fair at LEYM 2023 Annual Meeting



If only we  
had one of  
these!



LOL Courtesy of John Deikis

### **Meeting Worker's Office Hours and Office E-mail**

Last fall, I changed the office's hours (which had been 10am-1pm for many years) by 30 minutes in order to accommodate my teaching schedule, as I needed to leave the office at 12:30pm. Since graduating, I am able to resume the previous schedule, which I will do beginning in February. During this transition, I will try to be flexible and continue answering the phone if anyone calls between 9:30am-10am. Additionally, I would like to ask Friends to please e-mail me at [office@annarborfriends.org](mailto:office@annarborfriends.org), instead of my personal e-mail address, for any non-urgent office business. Just remember to type "office" instead of "luiza" when you mean to reach the Meeting worker! —Thank you, Luiza

### **Young Adult Friends (YAF) Dinners**

Young Adult Friends (YAFs) are loosely defined as those between the ages of 18 and 35ish. The YAF dinners program began at AAFM in 2022 under the care of M&O and is ongoing. Dinners are not the only YAF activities in the Meeting, many activities are organized by the younger Friends themselves, but the dinners are something that the older Friends do to welcome and nurture our younger Friends.

The goals of the program are:

- To welcome YAFs to AAFM by inviting them into our homes.
- To provide a nurturing space for YAFs to gather and talk together and with older Friends.
- To provide an opportunity for social, spiritual, and physical nurturing around a communal home cooked meal.

Dinners are held on the second Sunday of each month (except August) at 6 pm. Hosting is rotated around a group of volunteer older Friends with one additional older Friend assisting in home. The intention is to enable as many Friends in the Meeting as possible to have the opportunity to participate in assisting.

The host usually provides a main dish while many other Friends in the Meeting contribute side dishes and desserts. Typically, the older Friends eat with the YAFs but then withdraw, both to give the younger Friends time to talk amongst themselves, and for individual YAFs a chance to talk confidentially with an older Friend if they wish. Each dinner may have its own character reflecting those hosting and participating.

An older Friend (currently Naomi Gilbert) serves as coordinator of the program seeking volunteers to host, assist, and contribute food. The YAF coordinator (currently Lily Wiest) handles publicity.

During 2025 we had an average of 10 YAFs attending with a range of 3-19. Attendance at the January dinner this year was 17. Next month we are trying something new as we were invited to hold the dinner in Quaker House, integrating the YAFs with house residents.

The YAF dinner program is growing and is reflected in the number of younger Friends attending Sunday morning worship and business meetings. We are always seeking more volunteers either to host, assist in home or to contribute food. Although we strive to provide a home-cooked meal, many of the side dishes do not require cooking and would be easy to contribute.

If anyone is interested in participating in any way, please contact Naomi ([naomig@umich.edu](mailto:naomig@umich.edu)). We are especially looking for more food contributors so that it's not the same faithful few each month.



January 2026 YAF Dinner photo courtesy of Naomi Gilbert

**The American Friends Service Committee** asks you to write your Representative and ask them to cosponsor H.R.3565, the [Block the Bombs Act](#). By introducing this bill, Members of Congress are proactively trying to block the Trump administration from delivering major US weapons to Israel. If enacted into law, this bill would block the following weapons to Israel: BLU-109 bunker busting bombs, MK80 series bombs, GBU-39 small diameter bomb variants, Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAMs), SPICE gliding bomb assemblies, 120mm tank ammunition, and 155mm artillery ammunition, including white phosphorus munitions.

**Ann Arbor Friends Meeting**, along with the American Friends Service Committee and a number of other Meetings, is a member of the Apartheid-Free Communities organization. Here are some valuable resources that were shared at the Apartheid-Free Communities Quaker Affinity Group Meeting in June: [Introductory Materials for Apartheid-Free Communities](#). And here is the [Quakers Apartheid-Free Communities webpage](#).

## LARGER CIRCLES OF FRIENDS

### A call for action on Myanmar on the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of military Coup

On 1 February this year it will be five years since the military junta in Myanmar staged a violent coup overthrowing the democratically elected Government. During that time, the country's people have endured an ongoing war, a major earthquake, withdrawal of international aid, and many humanitarian concerns.

Quakers across Asia and the West Pacific are marking this anniversary by many Friends volunteering for and planning a Month of Action for Myanmar – with already over 100 Quakers from 19 countries pledging to participate.

The Month of Action will include raising awareness of the atrocities occurring in Myanmar since the coup, and the need for multilateral and humanitarian action.

Quakers (also known as the Religious Society of Friends) are also calling for stronger sanctions against the military junta and the companies that are supporting them. Apple, Youtube (owned by Google), and LinkedIn (owned by Microsoft) were [reported by some NGOs](#) as hosting Burmese military company Mytel Apps and channels, despite the company being sanctioned by the US government.

On Sunday, Quakers will begin in the manner of Friends with an online mostly silent worship meeting. “Brutal military repression cannot be normalised” said John Henderson, Clerk of the Yangon Quaker meeting. “The junta are seeking legitimacy with their sham elections, but instead we need to be listening to the people’s true desires for the military to step aside.”

Friends across Asia West Pacific also note comments made by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, Tom Andrews, who said this week “Illegitimate elections yield illegitimate results.”

Within their own communities, Quakers are also learning more about the practical needs of Burmese people. The participants in the Month of Action intend to support local Burmese businesses, make

themselves available to teach English classes, and learn and understand more about the dynamics that are keeping the corrupt regime operating.

"Peace is possible," John Henderson concluded. "It starts with each of us, and can happen through genuine international cooperation."

For more see <https://www.myanmarmatters.info>

Join the [Myanmar Month of Action. Click here.](#)

**Nontheist Friends Network** Creative Conversations. Please join us on Thursday, **February 5** at 2PM EST for our next conversation. Howard Grace will be the presenter and will be talking about "The Heart of Our Shared Humanity." He will show the trailer for his documentary, "The Hardest Bridge," about reconciliation in Northern Ireland. We look forward to a lively conversation and hope that you will come and add your voice. You may join the conversation by clicking on this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84812726990?pwd=QugCR6EyQVDI0XkyWQMyP1uxrsZdRr.1>

Meeting ID: 848 1272 6990

Passcode: 357556

## AFSC Action Hour for Palestine

Via Zoom; **Every Friday at 12:00 p.m.**

Join AFSC staff every Friday at 12:00 p.m. to hear updates from Gaza. Then, take action with us as we contact our elected officials and call for humanitarian access to Gaza. Our elected officials need to keep hearing from us. [Register here.](#)

## Meeting for Worship with Attention to Peace in Palestine & Israel

Via Zoom; Every **Thursday**, 5:30 p.m.

Join the AFSC to pray for peace in Israel & Palestine. [Register here!](#)

## Finding the Shining Center: upcoming online WFCRP conference

Zoom | **February 6–8**

I invite you to consider participating in the annual conference of the Washington Friends Conference on Religion and Psychology. We will consider what both Quakerism and Jungian Psychology have to say about facing the Shadow in order to come into more conscious relationship with the Inner Light that can guide our lives. I will share some key dreams and experiences from my own life, teach the basics of Focusing (a practice of attending to the felt sense inside your body) and use both Focusing and active imagination to help participants explore one of your own dreams to find the wisdom and guidance of the Shining Center within you. This annual conference is a rich opportunity for learning, guided meditations, sharing with others in pairs, small groups, and interest groups. We will find the Shining Center in worship together.

The cost of this weekend is an incredible bargain compared to other weekend online conferences, and it provides more opportunities for interaction and connection with others and with our inner experience. For more information and a link to register, see below. I look forward to a powerfully illuminating and nurturing weekend online together. (The Registration page says that the deadline is Jan

22, but they will continue to accept registrations after that.) Registration is online, at <https://www.wfcrp.org/>.

**Also upcoming:** a Tuesday evening online Focusing on Dreams course, which meets from Tuesday, March 10 through Tuesday, April 14, from 7 to 9 pm Eastern time. There is a sliding scale fee, and you can also apply for financial assistance, if needed. For more information about the online Dreams course, go here: <https://pendlehill.org/calendar/focusing-on-dreams/2026-03-10/>

For information, write to [registrars@wfcrp.com](mailto:registrars@wfcrp.com).

**“Playing in the Light”—February 13-15, 2026**, the Quaker Hill Conference Center in Richmond, Indiana is hosting a Godly Play/Faith & Play training workshop, "Playing in the Light."

More than a workshop on storytelling or focused only on a particular curriculum, "Playing in the Light" is an opportunity to gather in community and consider how we approach spiritual formation and support for families in our meetings and churches. In addition to demonstrations and practice with Godly Play and Faith & Play stories, the weekend includes presentations/discussions on the spirituality of children, creating spaces that nurture spirit-led learning, adapting Godly Play for Friends, and supporting children and their families in community.

This experiential approach has tools that can be used with other resources, and Friends are also finding ways that the stories can anchor intergenerational worship. Those who have previously attended a training will find they go deeper in their practice. And for some, the weekend is a personal spiritual retreat more than preparation for service to a religious education program. It is a weekend full of stories and welcoming all of us into a bigger story of faith in community. [Flyer is available here.](#)

## SAVE the DATE: LEYM Annual Sessions in Ashland Ohio

**June 18-21, 2026**

The 2026 Annual Meeting will be held June 18-21 at Ashland University in Ohio. Our theme: "Finding Hope, Joy and Courage in Community." Our plenary speaker will be Joe Volk, and our bible study leader will be Doug Gwyn.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

**Pendle Hill calendar** of events and educational offerings - <https://pendlehill.org/calendar/> - including **February 2 @ 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm EST**, a hybrid Black History Month First Monday lecture, "Racing the Spirit: A Journey at the Intersection of Self and Spirituality", by Dr. Rodney Glasgow.

**Interfaith Fund for Immigrant Justice (IFIJ)**, a newly formed local collaboration, is raising funds for the [Michigan Immigrant Rights Center](#). MIRC provides free legal services to immigrants--a growing and evermore urgent need. Our kickoff fundraising event is on **Wednesday, February 11, 7pm**, at Genesis, 2309 Packard St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104.

**Share the Love:** Washtenaw Witness at North Lake Detention Center, Valentine's Day – Saturday, February 14, Noon – 3 PM

**MIRA** (Movement for Immigrant Rights Action) and other Washtenaw County immigrant justice allies are organizing a special Valentine's Day witnessing at the ICE North Lake Detention Facility in Baldwin, Michigan. Let's show up to "Share the Love" with all impacted by ICE's horrific assault on our values, our traditions, and our people. Here are [Witnessing FAQs](#).

**In these times**, we need music to encourage each other to stay strong, build community, and act for justice. Come to the next Resistance Songs Sing-Along on **Sunday, February 15**, from 3:00 to 5:00 pm. We'll be at the [Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth, 704 Airport Blvd., Suite 1, Ann Arbor](#). Everyone's welcome to sing along, lead a song, or just clap! Bring songs to share, instruments, and your energy! Kel Anders from AAFM is available to answer questions.

**Voters Not Politicians'** Voters Ed Fund is helping voters get civically engaged for the 2026 midterm elections through the [My City Votes](#) Program. Are you...

- Passionate about civic education, especially at the local level?
- Interested in researching city charters and local government policies?
- Looking to lead a volunteer team in one of our My City Votes cities (Benton Harbor, Flint, Saginaw, Muskegon Heights, Oak Park, Pontiac, Warren, or Ypsilanti)?

They are looking for volunteers to join our Volunteer Leadership sub-committee and Research sub-committee. Leadership volunteers will help guide them on what type of civic engagement programming is best for the city. Research volunteers will help develop educational materials including print materials and workshops surrounding municipal government to reach voters in low propensity voting communities. Through local community engagement, they want to expand voter knowledge beyond just election preparedness to include understanding and engaging their local governments, including grassroots lobbying, participatory budgeting, and local ballot initiatives.

[Please sign up here to sign up to be a My City Votes volunteer researcher, presenter, or volunteer team leader!](#) If you have any additional questions, please reach out to me at [alyson@votersnotpoliticians.com](mailto:alyson@votersnotpoliticians.com).