

Blue River Quarterly
Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business
East Bay Camp, Hudson IL
April 18, 2026

Attendance: Dawn Crimson (clerk), Dale Gardner (recording), Margie Haworth (treasurer), Peter Lasersohn, Beth Carpenter, Sandy Matsuda, David Wixon, Nancy, Grayce Haworth, Steve Tamari, Bobbi Trist, Erin Taylor, Heather Evert, Mark McGinnis, Bridget Rorem, Mary Cunningham, Anna Watson, Fariba Murray, Anya Gardner

Opening worship

Treasurer's Report: See report below. Accepted.

Gaza Family Support: Steve Tamari brought us a concern about a family in danger in Gaza and hope to create an organization to support them. The plan would be to find persistent donors or new people to engage in donation campaigns.

<https://chuffed.org/project/143963-help-support-halas-family-in-gaza>

Meeting agrees to send \$1000 to help this family.

Meeting expressed thanks to Steve Tamari for bringing us this concern.

Friends express sorrow for the departure of the Tamari family from ILYM and BRQ. Several Friends recounted appreciative memories of all four of them participating in Quaker events and offering friendship, witness and wisdom to the Meeting

State of Society reports

Bloomington-Normal: See report below.

Burlington IA: See report below.

Clear Creek: See report below.

Columbia MO: See report below.

Southern Illinois: See rough draft below.

Springfield IL: No report. UCFM will send a delegation to worship with them April 26.

St. Louis: No report yet. One meeting for worship had 64 people. There is Quaker education through book discussions. The meeting fundraises at Sunday potlucks. The meetinghouse needs repairs, some of which still need to be completed. Meeting formerly hosted some homeless and some currently attend.

Urbana-Champaign: See report below.

Announcements:

Peter Lasersohn announced that Among Friends is striving to restart publication and encourages all kinds of contributions. Send contributions to Peter.

Anna Watson announced that ILYM is seeking babysitters for Annual Sessions.

Discussions

Brainstorming about how to get more kids involved. Suggestion to reach out to Choz and Jasmine as well as outreach to clerks about families with kids. Maybe we can find a way to employ social media to engage younger generations.

Spring Meeting: April 9-11, 2027 proposed. April 16-18 second choice. [*East Bay scheduled 4/9-11/27*]

TREASURER'S REPORT TO BLUE RIVER QUARTERLY MEETING
18-Apr-26

Balance on Hand September 19, 2025: \$ 9,822.81

DEBITS

9/22/2025	ILYM - HS Bunkhouse	1000.00
9/22/2025	Middle East Children's Alliance	1000.00
9/22/2025	AFSC - Gaza Emergency Relief	1000.00
9/24/2025	Camp DuBois - Fall '25	4885.00
9/24/2025	Camp DuBois - Fall '26 deposit	565.00
2/3/2026	East Bay Camp - Spring '26 deposit	1250.00
	TOTAL DEBITS	9,700.00

CREDITS

9/22/2025	Fall '25 Fees & Donations	2,264.00
9/22/2025	Fall '25 Fees & Donations	2,489.00
9/29/2025	Fall '25 Fees & Donations	350.00
9/30/2025	Interest	4.44
10/31/2025	Interest	3.10
11/28/2025	Interest	2.49
12/31/2025	Interest	2.93
4/2/2002	Donation	200.00
1/30/2026	Interest	2.67
2/27/2026	Interest	2.20
3/31/2026	Interest	2.30
4/15/2026	Donation	338.00
	TOTAL CREDITS	5,661.13

Balance on Hand April 18, 2026: \$5,783.94

Sep '25 - Apr '26 Meeting Contributions:	Rec contribution: \$8/resident adult member
4/2/2026 Columbia	\$200
4/15/2026 Bloomington-Normal	\$88
4/15/2026 Clear Creek ('25 donation)	\$250

Proceeds from sale of books:

Sep '25 - April '26	\$0.00
Accumulated Total	\$136.72

Bloomington-Normal Friends Meeting

Friends in Bloomington-Normal Monthly Meeting feel the inspiration of the Spirit in our worship. A wider variety of voices have offered up messages. During the last year, having more visitors has brought our meeting new life and vibrancy.

We have been giving loving support and funds to help two families with emergency needs. Our close-knit community of Friends has plenty of support, love and Light to share with more new Seekers. We have recognized that we could be doing more to bear witness as a group in the Bloomington-Normal area and to be easier to find.

One area of fruitful outreach has been the local Advocacy Team working with Friends Committee on National Legislation. The group is growing connections to other local faith communities and sharing our values with legislators.

The Women's Meeting for Eating is a joyful fellowship that meets monthly, sharing both food and the sustenance of friendship.

Our First Day School energizes the Meeting. All generations in the Meeting explored Quaker history with the stories in the book Quakers on the Move. Children are showing commitment to the gathering and the current lessons focused on stewardship and sustainability from Quaker Earthcare Witness Earthcare for Children. Discussions around seeds and growth parallel our Meeting's growth in the Spirit. The enthusiasm of the youth is inspiring to the adults of the Meeting. We are contemplating how to go forth with First Day School when some young Friends reach high-school age.

Some Bloomington-Normal and Clear Creek attenders had deeper discussions about faith and Quaker practices in a Q101 class led by Yearly Meeting co-Field Secretary Marcia Nelson. We look forward to further learning about history and further spiritual nurture in the upcoming Q102 class with Marcia.

2026 State of Society for The Burlington Worship Group

The Burlington Worship Group has been meeting for over ten years. During the pandemic, we continued to gather via Zoom, and in the past year two attenders became members of Clear Creek, our monthly meeting. Once a month, Friends from surrounding areas join us for worship, often followed by a potluck meal. We are considering adding a time of singing prior to worship. We have also seen an increase in attendance.

We are grateful for the steady sense of community that has developed among us and for the ways in which new attenders have enriched our worship. At the same time, we continue to seek ways to deepen our spiritual life together.

2026 Clear Creek State of Society
Approved March 15, 2026

Clear Creek is a small, tight-knit community. Since most of us live at a distance from the meetinghouse, we tend to arrive early for worship in order to have time to visit then continue that activity over sack lunches after worship. In this way, we keep up with what is going on in each other's lives – the joys and the concerns – and support each other in any way we can, whether that is through hugs, listening, food or Light-holding. We know we can count on each other for spiritual support.

As is our custom, Clear Creek Friends begin their State of Society reporting year with our Easter gathering. In 2025, we welcomed Friends and friends from several other meetings and worship groups including a number of children who enjoyed an indoor egg hunt in the meetinghouse due to rainy weather outside. Our potluck, as always, provided an abundance of delicious food. This annual event typically marks our return to worship in the meetinghouse rather than Clear Creek House, a welcome sign of spring and a renewal of activity on the campus and a lift to our spirits.

We continue to see benefits from our March 2025 retreat, "An Introduction to Quaker Meditation," which was led by Marcia Nelson. One of the participants has become a frequent attender at worship. Several area residents who saw the newspaper advertisement about the retreat but who were unable to attend have also visited us, and we have had other visitors as well including two who now attend worship regularly. Among these other visitors were a couple walking across the country via the American Discovery Trail and a couple traveling around the US and Canada in a travel trailer. Visitors always add to our depth of worship and we are grateful for those who keep coming back, becoming part of our community. Two of our attenders participated in the Quaker 101 sessions led by Marcia and hosted by Bloomington Normal Friends. We appreciate BN letting our Friends "crash" these sessions.

We have had an increase in membership as well. With the laying down of Spoon River Quaker Meeting, three of their members transferred to Clear Creek. In addition, two long-time attenders of the Burlington Worship Group (under the care of Clear Creek) applied for membership and were welcomed to our meeting.

Illness and injury have plagued our numbers this year. Rose Dennis Johnson was injured at work in August and continues recovering at home. Both Marydale Stewart and Rachel Mershon fell in the winter and are currently in rehabilitation facilities in Spring Valley and Peru, respectively. We hope they will eventually be able to return to their homes and join us for worship. While there is not much we have been able to do for these Friends, we have visited when we can and continue holding all of them and their families in the Light.

June brought us Illinois Yearly Meeting annual sessions, marking the 150th anniversary of ILYM. It was glorious to see so many Friends come to campus, many of whom we had not seen in several years. Clear Creek was well represented in the program, with Zach Schobernd performing during the

Wednesday evening concert, and several Clear Creek members and attenders sharing their experiences of growing up in ILYM as part of the Thursday evening program. This year's Plummer Lecture was given by Beth Schobernd Carpenter and we were glad to be able to support her spiritually as she created her talk. The Saturday afternoon birthday party, planned by Clear Creek Friends Diane Dennis and Rose Johnson, featured horse and buggy rides made possible by our own Dick Ashdown.

Also at annual sessions, the body approved the replacement of the aging dining hall/Jr. Yearly Meetinghouse/bunkhouse with a new structure. While we will be sad to see this old building go, we are excited to see a new one coming. The yearly meeting's commitment to a new building represents its faith in our future. It will not only serve to house the high school program during annual sessions but will also be available for use as housing for retreats, meetings and other campus events. We were pleased to be able to provide financial support for this project.

In July, we hosted the wedding of Claire Gunnell Goode and Jay Farris. Claire had grown up in Clear Creek Meeting and we were pleased to provide clearness for the couple and have the wedding in the meetinghouse. The wedding was followed by a dinner under the maple trees and dancing on the lawn.

Although it will occur after this report is approved, we are excited to be hosting the ILYM Clerks and Continuing Committee Representatives Retreat, "Nurturing Our Meetings," which will be held on March 28. It promises to be a valuable opportunity for meetings to connect and share ideas. This will be the first use of the campus this year and will usher in a new season of events, bringing much appreciated activity and guests to us.

This winter's weather has been hard on attendance. We have had to cancel worship no less than four times due to cold and snow which makes travel for many of us unwise. We are looking forward to the return of spring, and to the return of activities to the yearly meeting campus.

Columbia Friends Meeting 2026 State of Society

Our meeting's worship sees a constant core of attenders both in person and on Zoom for our hybrid meeting. We also have a steady influx of visitors, many of whom are first time attenders. At times, we experience gathered meetings which nourish our spirit. We also have a culture where people feel comfortable and supported sharing their struggles and concerns during worship and at the rise of meeting. Our children join us for the last few minutes of worship and are invited to share what they have learned in first day school. This brings us all joy as their messages can be spirit led and inspiring. We have an active Meeting for Learning program that has led study sessions on Quaker worship and books of various religious traditions. Our midweek meeting on Zoom has kept us connected to Friends who have moved away, as well as to our ILYM field secretaries. An Earth Care Witness member also regularly hosts an outdoor meditation, which is joined by people from Show Me Dharma and the Unitarian Universalists.

Our current location gives us visibility and a space for children to play and gardens to grow. Twelve of our households are close enough to walk to meeting, all of which helps to support our sustainability testimony and helps to build our community. We have members who feel led to take action for justice through providing meals for unhoused people; we encourage people to voice their concerns to their political representatives; we continue to hold a small monthly peace vigil; and individuals participate in larger organizations and demonstrations for social justice.

We lost one of our elder and beloved members of meeting at age 94. This year also saw us welcoming one new member, and we look forward to their marriage under the care of meeting. Many of our younger families and attenders share deep friendships and support one another through difficult times. They have built a strong community and help to maintain the large vegetable garden, and enjoy many activities together, including pizza and movie nights at the meetinghouse. Meeting has also formed strong ties to the family who lives in and cares for our meetinghouse, as they sojourn with us from Myanmar. We look forward to the spirit working to guide us with hope and strength to meet the challenges of the year ahead.

Southern Illinois Quaker Meeting

In preparing this State of Society, SIQM reflected on the queries in Illinois Yearly Meeting's book of Faith and Practice and reread our submission from last year. We find ourselves in much the same place as a year ago. We are still small but maintain a faithful corps of people who attend regularly and have a number of others who attend as they can. There is a deep bond among those who attend, either as members or as long-time attenders. We are often only five or six, but occasionally are around ten. We frequently come to a gathered silence, being in community enriching the sense of the presence of Spirit. Vocal ministry is only occasional but often feels as though a given message touches a questioning or concern of another person present. Even when our hour of worship includes no vocal ministry, we share at the end thoughts and experiences of the silence that did not quite become a fully formed message to be delivered as ministry. This draws us closer and allows the community to offer reflection and acceptance of what is shared.

We also draw closer as a community through the sharing of potluck meals once a month and gatherings for "Life of the Meeting" potlucks at one or another of our homes. The latter allows us to come together with those we have come to call the "Quaker adjacent"—spouses and partners of people in the Meeting who do not attend themselves and those whose schedules may not allow them to regularly attend Meeting for Worship. They too are part of our Friends community. Several from our small meeting attend the Quarterly and Annual Sessions, and return to us, sharing richer Spirit. The visits from the Field Secretaries also connect us to the wider body of Friends.

Like many, we are troubled and vigilant about the many injustices and threats to those in our community, in our country, and in the world, whose lives are made more precarious and uncertain by policies and actions of our government. We act according to our individual leadings to support those most harmed and to help change the course we are on as a nation. These disturbances that reach so deeply into the fabric of our society compel us to act as we can. We hold those harmed, and try to hold those inflicting harm, in the Light and struggle to find the ways we can most effectively make a difference. The chaos in world and social order makes our presence in silence and community a respite, reflection and inspiration, from which we hope to go forward to effect change in whatever small or large way we can. It is meaningful and exhausting work, and we are glad to be together in Spirit.

Urbana-Champaign Friends Meeting State of Society Report

Urbana-Champaign Friends Meeting is satisfied with our worship and community this past year. As some of our older members surrender duties, newer, younger ones step up. We miss our Friend Sten Johansen, who died 6/30/2025. We've welcomed several new attenders recently, including young adults. Worship is usually deep and enriching, with a variety of Friends moved to speak most First Days. Meetings for business progress with laboring together and harmony. Children nurture the community as they share their joyful energy.

The meeting engages in pleasing community activities among ourselves. We have several formal and informal groups that break bread together; we craft; we walk our parks together; we study the Bible; we sing before worship; we help each other with appointments, rides, moves, and more. After worship, conversations linger, and we often have organized times of spiritual sharing or learning about activist causes. So we grow and support each other.

Meeting continues to be active in the world at large. Recent activism has included help for a new winter homeless shelter, and assistance for urban farming and provisioning the hungry. Meeting strives to reduce our carbon footprint with renovations, and works to improve the ecological vitality of our property. Members attend or organize a variety of political protests as we work for a better world. We are all deeply concerned about our foreign-born neighbors. As a meeting, we have contributed to helping with some of their medical bills. Some Friends have also provided additional support for immigrants. In other matters, some continue our work with detainees and their families, including occasional singing at the nearby jail.

We look forward and pray for another year of growth, stronger connections, and improving circumstances.