

2023-2024 Annual Report of the Peace and Social Concerns Meeting, Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative)

Our committee met most months, with the first decision being to whom should we donate \$1100 which the yearly meeting budget allocates to us. After several months' discussion we decided that the Gaza relief efforts of the American Friends Service Committee(AFSC) were our choice, given the dire needs there.

In hopes of increasing donations to AFSC's work in Gaza (which began in 1948) we set up a challenge situation whereby monthly meeting donations would be matched up to \$100 per monthly meeting. This approach worked, as all 10 of our monthly meetings donated at least \$100. Several monthly meetings donated \$500 and one \$1000 for Gaza relief work. AFSC provides the most relief in Gaza of any non-governmental organization. The remaining \$100 we decided to donate to the Iowa Peace Network for their efforts to stop the activation of the Selective Service system (the draft) which the US House of Representatives recently passed.

At each meeting we also asked those attending what peace or other social concerns efforts they were involved in at the monthly meeting level. Consequently we learned of work in immigration, Native American issues, lobbying Congress and the President, defending democracy, enabling wells and improved sanitary facilities in Africa, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Braver Angels, and other American Friends Service Committee work.

The clerk asked for assistance in the form of a co-clerk, and that request was fulfilled by Russ Leckband. We agreed that the co-clerks would take turns presiding, with the other being the recording clerk. Jon Krieg, American Friends Service Committee staff in Des Moines, also pitched in and took minutes at Mid-Year Meeting when Russ was busy with hosting duties.

We are inspired and feel supported by all the peace and social concerns efforts at the monthly meeting level. We also appreciate those who represent our yearly meeting working with AFSC, FCNL, Friends Peace Teams and other Friends social concerns efforts.

We will be seeking guidance from the Holy Spirit and Friends as to what direction our work should take in the coming year. If you have any suggestions or questions, please contact one of us or anyone on IYMC Peace and Social Concerns Committee.

Russ Leckband and Jon Shafer, co-clerks