

First Friends Meeting
State of the Meeting Report
2024

This year has been one of change at First Friends Meeting. We began with a new committee structure, moving from 13 standing committees, plus Ministry and Counsel, to 6 standing committees. That reduced 92 committee positions to 54. We combined committees with like-minded work:

- Music and Pulpit committees are now joined and called Worship Committee;
- Scholarship and Christian Education merged, creating the Spiritual Transformation Committee;
- Enablement joined with Peace and Social Concerns under the original moniker Peace and Social Concerns.
- Our Nominating, Finance, and House and Grounds Committees remained the same, and Personnel rolled up under Ministry and Counsel.

Very soon in the new year, our beloved Music Minister, Monica Citty-Hix, retired. Jean Christy, a faithful choir member, joined forces with our Pastor, Lia Scholl, to keep the music ministry and choir active. They selected music, coordinated with accompanists, and encouraged some of our musical members to share their talents with the meeting. The newly-formed Worship Committee is heading up the ongoing search for our new Minister of Music and Worship Arts. In August, we called a former attender of FFM, Marshall Pugh, to be an interim choir director.

This year has seen some growth in attendance, with visitors who have been returning regularly. Since many of those new attenders have children and youth, we called a coordinator for our Tweens and Young Teens, Abby Gordon. She has been doing an excellent job creating programming and helping our young Friends know how much we care about them.

We created new programs, including a book group (the Society of Friendly Readers), and a Listening Group which picks out an album monthly and talks about the music and the impact the musicians have made. We also started a Tweens and Young Teens Godly Play hour twice monthly, which supplements our regular programming for younger children.

Ministry and Counsel has done a lot of discernment about the recording and supporting of ministers. We adopted a process, and then recorded our first minister since the Yearly Meeting Reorganization. We recorded Wess Daniels and had a wonderful worship service with Wess' friends and family present. Ashley Wilcox brought the message.

We also rejoiced with our Presiding Clerk Emily Riley as she and her sweetie, Michael Adams, were married under the care of the Meeting.

Finally, we've been spending a lot of time discerning about renovating our kitchen. We've had several monthly meetings and even one threshing session. We made a decision to use 90 percent of a bequest to pay for the kitchen renovations. We are looking forward to construction beginning in 2025. The other 10 percent is to be given to our community. The Meeting will continue to discern on how those monies will be shared with our community.