

**Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association  
Warren Wilson College, Swannanoa, North Carolina  
49th Annual Meeting, Sixth Month 13-16, 2019**

**Thursday, June 13**

**49-01 Opening Worship**

Friends gathered for the 49<sup>th</sup> annual gathering of SAYMA beginning with an extended period of worship, and this reading:

*It can be hot and messy when we do not manage conflict well. When we are challenged, it is essential that we stay in relationship with one another while seeking the way forward and resolving individual differences. Love still abides in and with us. We can, in all humility, love one another even when there are painful differences.*

*We unite in encouraging each of us to stay in relationship, to hear one another, and to move forward with love and respect. Our Yearly Meeting is a spiritual community; with God's help, we can transform these struggles into something new—strong, penetrating and effective to address all matters before us, including our concerns with racism.*

*Our decision-making is a spiritual process that calls us to hold our meetings for business in a spirit of worship, seeking and being open to the leadings of the Spirit. We know that together in waiting worship and with Divine assistance many things are possible; we will be astonished at what unfolds. It takes all of us: we who pray, we who listen, we who heal, we who witness for peace and justice, and we who have voice and vision are needed now. Now is a time for us to join together, humbly finding our way, sharing kindness, and uniting as a community in Spirit-led witness.*

(Excerpt of a letter from six living former clerks of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, April 2019)

**49-02 Introductions of Visitors**

Barbara Esther, Clerk, welcomed everyone and asked visitors to introduce themselves. Visitors present were: Avis Wanda of Abington Meeting, Jacqueline Stillwell - general secretary of Right Sharing of World Resources (RSWR), Lori Sinitzky – spiritual deepening fellow of FGC, and Greg Fuquay from Alabama. Kendra Bradley from Quaker House introduced herself upon arrival later in the meeting.

**49-03 Roll Call [Attachment A: Attendance]**

Meeting attendees were asked to stand as their meeting was called by the recording clerk. Twelve of the twenty-four meetings and worship groups were represented. One Friend reported that Piedmont Friends Fellowship and Yearly Meeting, Intermountain Yearly Meeting, and Philadelphia Yearly Meeting were sending light and love to SAYMA's yearly gathering.

**49-04 Agenda Review**

The clerk reviewed the agenda. It was accepted with the exception of the Right Sharing of World Resources (RSWR) and the Quaker Voluntary Service (QVS) reports being scheduled for a later business session.

#### **49-05 Reminders to Friends [Attachment B]**

The clerk read the Reminders to Friends as we work through our meeting for worship for the conduct of business whether with informational reports or difficult issues.

#### **49-06 Inquiry regarding any sections of the Guide to Our Faith and Practice in need of review**

The clerk asked Friends if any monthly meetings had brought minutes asking for review of Faith and Practice sections. There were no reports of needed reviews.

#### **49-07 Selection of Epistle Committee**

The clerk stated that the epistle was the report of what happens during the yearly meeting. It would be disseminated to other Quaker organizations. She asked for Friends who were both experienced at writing the epistle and people new to the process. Gita Larson from Asheville Friends Meeting, Wood Bouldin from Greenbrier Valley Worship Group and Pat Gailey from Berea Friends Meeting volunteered to write the epistle.

#### **49-08 Report from the Administrative Assistant, Susan Phelan (Huntsville Area FM)**

Susan gave an oral report. She stated that the census forms have been simplified and the directories are being updated this summer. She said she was awed and humbled by the work that Friends do to keep the yearly meeting organization running. She announced that printed epistles, committee reports, reports from Wider Quaker Organizations and state of the meeting reports were available for Friends to read in the meeting room and downstairs near the registration tables.

#### **49-09 Treasurer's Report, Carol Lamm (Berea FM) [Attachment C: Treasurer's Report]**

Carol Lamm's attached report covers the time period of October 2018 to May 2019. She thanked Roger Wise, the former treasurer, Charles Schade, the Finance Committee clerk, and Autumn Woodward, the SAYF administrative assistant, for their quality work and help.

Carol gave an overview of SAYMA's finances and infrastructure. She explained that the contributions line includes the remaining funds from the Boone Monthly Meeting which had been laid down. That money has been put in a set-aside account, per representative meeting approval, for future potential revival of Boone Monthly Meeting within specific time frames. The money market account has done well for SAYMA, Carol reported, already making the money that had been budgeted for the entire year.

Regarding assessments, eleven monthly meetings have reported on whether they would be following the new policy. Four reported they would follow their own calculations, and seven said they would be following the new policy. Insurance cost has decreased, because of the central office now being listed as Huntsville, Alabama. The publications line item was much less because no newsletter was printed.

Carol reviewed the special funds under SAYMA, which are funds set-aside for a particular purpose. The spiritual development fund was used for a few different purposes including sending the SAYMA clerk to a Pendle Hill clerking workshop and sending a group of college students to an FCNL weekend.

One Friend asked where the new assessment policy could be found and Carol said it was posted on the website. Another Friend thanked Carol and Susan for using their skill set in the service of SAYMA, and their help with getting Quaker events started.

#### **49-10 Committee Reports [Attachment D]**

##### **Nominating Committee, Kendall Ivie (West Knoxville FM)**

Kendall gave the initial Nominating Committee report. He displayed the positions that are currently open. Some critical positions open are the assistant clerk and the assistant treasurer. Both are four-year commitments with the first year as assistant, then two years in the positions of clerk and treasurer, respectively, and finally the last year as an assistant again. Most of the SAYMA committees had open positions.

Sharon Smith stated that SAYMA Uplifting Racial Justice Committee wanted to nominate her as clerk and wondered about that approval. The SAYMA clerk commented that the position of clerk of SAYMA-URJ Committee was still being considered by the Nominating Committee and that this issue would come up in a nominating report for approval in one of the following meetings for business. The clerk encouraged Friends to consider whether SAYMA URJ Committee could act with more autonomy because of its particular vision and mission. Friends noted that the relationship of SAYMA-URJ to the yearly meeting is important to consider.

##### **Naming Committee, Patti Hughes (Asheville FM)**

Patti said they had tried to fill the open slots in the Nominating Committee, but that they were unable to do so as yet. She said the current Nominating Committee was comprised of Friends who were white and over 60, and that they are striving to diversify that committee.

#### **49-11 Wider Quaker Organization Reports [Attachment E]**

##### **Friends Committee of North Carolina Legislation (FCNCL), Christine Ashley**

Christine Ashley from FCNCL and Piedmont Yearly Meeting reported that Friends could check out their website, fcnc.org. They will have a Sept. 20 lobby day to advocate with North Carolina legislators on Quaker principles.

##### **Friends General Conference (FGC), Lori Sinitzky [Attachment E: Wider Quaker Organization Reports]**

Lori Sinitzky reported on FGC. She stated that after stabilizing the finances within FGC, they were turning their attention to ongoing programs. She was not able to show a video during her presentation because of technology problems, but the video can be seen at [www.fgcquaker.org/deepen/vibrant-journeys-of-faith](http://www.fgcquaker.org/deepen/vibrant-journeys-of-faith).

One Friend asked if they had worked on how to handle racial conflicts in yearly and monthly meetings. Lori replied that they were still working on that issue. The finance committee chair mentioned the struggle of SAYMA to decide how much to contribute to groups such as FGC and asked about feedback about what a “fair share” would be. Lori said she would pass the question on to appropriate individuals at FGC.

#### **49-12 Report on Quaker Clerking Workshop**

Ministry and Nurture worked to plan a workshop convened by Arthur Larrabee. The workshop, "Friends Decision Making and Clerking: Serving the Community with Joy and Confidence, coordinated by Ministry and Nurture," took place on April 5-6 at the West Knoxville Friend Meeting House. One Friend said they saw wonderful clerking modeled, as Arthur Larrabee was responsive, competent, and within the Spirit.

#### **49-13 Announcements**

Following the announcements listed below, Friends adjourned with a short period of worship.

- The Friends Committee on National Legislation sent Advocacy Team Trainer Sarah Freeman-Woolpert to SAYMA gathering. Friends were invited to meet with her with questions on how to be involved with FCNL.
- Friends were invited to a meeting with SAYMA's FCNL representatives to discuss how to stop wars before they happen.
- Friends were invited to meet with the Ad-Hoc Wider Quaker Organization Disbursement Committee to discuss proposals.
- The Meeting for Remembrance was scheduled for Friday evening.
- The Finance Committee was meeting at the rise of meeting.
- An ongoing Healing and Listening Space was taking place at the pavilion.

#### **Friday, June 14**

#### **49-14 Opening Worship**

The meeting began with a period of worship.

The clerk then read the following:

"A group of teenagers decided not to stand by and watch as the United Methodist Church voted in favor of anti-LGBT measures.

*The confirmation class of 2019 was all set to finally become full members of their church -- the First United Methodist Church in Omaha, Nebraska -- after a year of learning about their faith and exploring their beliefs.*

*But when it came time to join, the group decided against it.*

*"We want to be clear that, while we love our congregation, we believe that the United Methodist policies on LGBTQ clergy and same sex marriage are immoral," the group wrote in a statement. "We are concerned that if we join at this time, we will be sending a message that we approve of this decision."*

*The teens object to a February vote that reinforced the church's stance against ordaining gay clergy and performing same-sex weddings. Delegates of the denomination's General Conference voted 438-384 in favor of the policies following several days of dramatic testimony and prayer." (CNN)*

#### **49-15 Welcome & Introductions of Visitors**

Visitors speaking included Hilary Burgin from Quaker Voluntary Service; Kate Monahan from Friends Fiduciary; Windy Cooler and Erik Hanson from Baltimore Yearly Meeting; Jerry Knutson with a traveling minute from Orlando Monthly Meeting; Lori Sinitzky from FGC; and Cherie Faircloth and Tom Retsa from Rabun County, Georgia (who are unaffiliated with a Quaker yearly meeting but are interested in starting a worship group) all introduced themselves.

#### **49-16 Roll Call [Attachment A: Attendance]**

Seventeen of twenty-four meetings and worship groups were represented.

#### **49-17 Agenda Review**

The clerk had been asked to move the Nominating Committee report and the SAYMA URJ report to Saturday. A Friend from New York wanted to be present for the SAYMA- URJ discussion but was not arriving until Friday night. The report from the Friends Fiduciary was also moved to Saturday.

#### **49-18 Reminders to Friends [Attachment B]**

The clerk repeated the Reminders to Friends.

#### **49-19 Committee Reports**

##### **Finance Committee, Charles Schade (Charleston FM) - First reading of the proposed 2019-2020 budget [Attachment F: Finance Committee Report]**

Charles Schade gave the Finance Committee report.-He reported that the Finance Committee had a very active year. He stated that they had three action items for meeting approval; the budget would be presented later for approval.

The Finance Committee, after having completed development of financial policies and procedures covering all of SAYMA's operations including Yearly Meeting and SAYF, set aside funds for a financial review. There was a question about how the Finance Committee would decide on the contract for the financial review. Charles stated that it would probably be a bid process.

##### **49-19-01 Friends approved budgeting \$2,500 for fiscal review of SAYMA's finances.**

One Friend asked about prioritizing a minority to receive the fiscal review contract. The SAYMA treasurer stated that Friends who knew of minority accountants or others who may be interested in this contract should contact her. SAYMA clerk stated that Friends could suggest to the Finance Committee that such a policy be adopted.

While developing the FY 2020 budget, Finance Committee received a request from a SAYMA representative to the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) to accumulate funds to support delegate travel to the FWCC international meeting in Durban, South Africa in 2024.

After the FWCC discontinued Triennial meetings, SAYMA had laid down the FWCC Delegate Travel set-aside fund.

**49-19-02 Friends approved reestablishing the FWCC Delegate Travel Set-aside Fund to support one or more SAYMA delegates' attendance at FWCC international meetings.**

Consideration of the proposed minute on the SAYF set-aside fund was postponed to allow the Finance Committee to fine-tune its proposal and bring it back later. Charles presented the FY 2020 proposed budget which is attached. A surplus is expected, instead of the previously calculated deficit.

**Ad Hoc WQO Funding Committee, Geeta McGahey (CeloFM) [Attachment G]**

Geeta presented the proposal of the committee. She announced that there would be a meeting at 4 pm for people to bring concerns with the proposal of the Ad Hoc WQO Funding Committee, instead of voicing them during meeting for business. She said the committee would then review the proposals and bring them back to the next business session for approval.

**49-20 Wider Quaker Organization Reports [Attachment E]**

**Right Sharing of World Resources, Jacqueline Stillwell**

Jacqueline Stillwell gave the RSWR report. She talked about the work of RSWR being transformational. The organization itself is very stable. Even with a small staff they have been able to touch thousands of lives through grants. This past year 1,000 women were involved in 39 RSWR-funded projects in developing countries.

**Quaker Voluntary Service, Hilary Burgin**

Friends are asked to read the attached report. We anticipated with great interest the panel of participants in QVS in the plenary on Friday night.

**Announcements**

- The FCNL representatives invited people to come speak of Quaker coordinated action asking their Senators to approve a bill blocking any funds to support military action against Iran.

Friends concluded the business session with a brief period of worship.

**Saturday, June 15, 2019**

**49-21 Opening Worship**

We began our session with a period of worship in expectant waiting, remembering Friends no longer among us.

Several Friends were remembered in Worship for Remembrance last evening. The clerk read the names of those Friends who died recently and whose lives spoke boldly to many of us: James Richard Hipkins, Alan Scott Robinson, Paul Joseph Watson, Rommie Barrus, Perry Treadwell,

and Bill Jenkins. Friends were then invited to name anyone whose life was influential as a pattern for us today, calling forth our Quaker forebears.

#### **49-22 Welcome & Introductions of Visitors**

Angela Hopkins from the Friends Center for Racial Justice introduced herself. She plans to work with SAYMA-URJ Committee during the weekend.

#### **49-23 Roll Call [Attachment A]**

Eighteen of twenty-four meetings and worship groups were represented.

#### **49-24 Friends reviewed the agenda**

The agenda was accepted as written.

#### **49-25 Reminders to Friends [Attachment B]**

The clerk reread the reminders to Friends.

#### **49-26 Ad Hoc Committee for Dismantling White Supremacy**

The clerk appointed an ad hoc committee to support SAYMA URJ. This committee will provide logistical and technical support to SAYMA URJ for projects at their direction. The members are Kit Potter, Shannon Roberts Smith, and Gita Larson.

#### **49-27 Proposed Dates for Representative Meeting**

Proposed dates for representative meetings were September 21, 2019 and March 14, 2020. The Yearly Meeting will take place in June. One Friend pointed out that the celebration of Quaker House's 50th anniversary was taking place on September 21. The date for fall representative meeting was changed to September 14, 2019.

#### **49-28 Ad Hoc WQO Funding Committee, Geeta McGahey (Celo FM) [Attachment G]**

The committee proposed that the ad hoc Committee on Allocations to WQOs be made a permanent SAYMA committee, to consist of four to six members and a clerk, all to be brought for approval from the Nominating Committee. These members should not be part of a WQO.

The committee would then recommend donation levels to Finance Committee. She presented a proposed charge and membership.

#### **49-28-01 Friends approved the creation of a permanent Committee on Allocations to WQOs, with the proposed charge.**

Geeta presented criteria for considering contributions to WQOs and the percentages each organizations would receive from the funding set aside.

#### **49-28-02 Friends approved the proposed criteria for consideration of contributions to WQOs and the percentages of how much to give to each.**

#### **49-29 Wider Quaker Organization Reports [Attachment E] Friends Fiduciary, Kate Monahan**

Kate Monahan from Friends Fiduciary explained that Friends Fiduciary was a Quaker nonprofit organization that provides investment management services to Quaker organizations.

One Friend asked why Friends Fiduciary doesn't work with individual Quakers since that would build up their organization. Kate replied that in order to do that they would have to change the structure of the organization, but that they are constantly talking about how to better serve Quakers.

#### **Quaker House, Kindra Bradley**

Kindra Bradley from Quaker House gave the attached report. She invited Friends to the 50-year anniversary of Quaker House on September 21, 2019. She spoke of the GI Rights hotline which people in the military can call from around the world. They also have a counseling program with a licensed counselor to serve military families with such issues as PTSD and sexual assault.

Quaker House is completely funded by Quaker groups such as yearly meetings and Quaker individuals. One Friend mentioned that she had been asked to be on her county draft board. She invited Friends to staff their draft boards.

#### **American Friends Service Committee, Anyango Reggy**

Anyango Reggy from the south region gave the report. For the first time AFSC's general secretary is a Friend of color. Anyango spoke of all the work they were doing in the south, including youth leadership and work in prisons. She mentioned that AFSC sometimes gets criticized for not being Quaker enough, but that someone like her who is not Quaker was attracted to AFSC because of its Quaker values.

#### **49-30 Nominating Committee, Kendall Ivey (West Knoxville) [Attachment D: Committee Reports]**

Kendall gave the first Nominating Committee recommendations. The full slate of positions that was approved is attached. There was a suggestion by Nominating Committee to appoint Deni Elliott as an extra FCNL representative. They stated that she would be willing to find her own funding. Friends expressed concern with this suggestion, stating that it did not feel in right order for a representative to have to seek her own funds. There were suggestions that FCNL, which wanted representatives from more SAYMA states, might be willing to fund her position, or that if FCNL were unable to do so that SAYMA should fund her as another representative.

The Nominating Committee brought Sharon Smith forward as the clerk of SAYMA-URJ. They stated that they spent a great amount of time discerning this issue. They read a letter from the Quakers for Racial Equality of Atlanta Friends Meeting that supported Sharon Smith as the new clerk of SAYMA-URJ. SAYMA-URJ interim clerk and participants in a discussion had also approved of Sharon to serve as the new clerk of the committee. Some Friends spoke emotionally of wounds suffered from Sharon while others advocated for giving her the opportunity to be clerk. A few Friends gave sayings that spoke to them regarding trust and support.



John Adams, the interim clerk of SAYMA URJ who was stepping down, spoke of how he had been told all his life how he should respond to the way he and his ancestors had been victimized. He said he supported Sharon's nomination because of logic, since she had been co-clerk and had done a monumental amount of work for the committee. He said he went on a walk looking for someone else to lead the committee, but he kept running into Sharon. He said he would never judge how someone else who has been victimized responded to that victimization.

A Friend of color responded to one comment that URJ Committee operates independently from SAYMA. She said it was important that SAYMA stay connected to URJ because to act otherwise would indicate SAYMA's refusal to support racial justice work. She encouraged Friends to closely examine how they were thinking and speaking since some things that were said reflected white supremacy and racism.

The clerk stepped down and spoke of her concern that there needed to be a strong committee for Sharon to lead, and that they should table the nomination of clerk until they made sure there was a strong committee. Friends agreed to revisit the issue the following meeting for business.

Kendall went over the numerous open positions, including a clerk of yearly planning meeting, JYM clerk and member, and additional members of SAYMA URJ.

**49-30-01 Friends approved the slate of positions that were presented by Nominating Committee and agreed to postpone the consideration of Sharon Smith as SAYMA-URJ clerk.**

## **Sunday, June 16**

### **49-31 Opening Worship**

**Friends began the final session of SAYMA #49 with a period of worship**

Reading:

*We recognize the seriousness of what we are facing. We are struggling against hatred, greed, deceit, fear — an age-old pattern of separation from Love and Truth, not individual bad actors but deeply entrenched systems that destroy community and life. We are offering holy resistance to Empire by generally refusing to continue with business as usual. We are listening for God's leading for what specific acts of non-participation and visible witness to carry forth.*

*The challenge is daunting and the risks are enormous. It often feels like anything we can do in grappling with climate catastrophe is too little and too late. And yet we live in possibility.*

*We undertake this journey in hope and faith in the living God at the heart of all.*  
(NEYM Prophetic Climate Action Working Group, Epistle from their August 2018 encampment)

### **49-32 Welcome & Introductions of Visitors**

Sarah Freeman-Woolpert from FCNL doing Advocacy Teams Training introduced herself.

#### **49-33 Roll Call [Attachment A: Attendance]**

Twenty of twenty-four meetings and worship groups were represented. We regret that Sewanee Worship Group has been laid down, and that no Friends from Birmingham Friends Meeting, Foxfire Friends Meeting, nor Oxford Friends Meeting were able to attend our yearly meeting sessions.

#### **49-34 Agenda Review**

The clerk reviewed the agenda. It was accepted.

#### **49-35 Reminders to Friends [Attachment B]**

The clerk read the reminders to Friends, also projecting it for Friends to read.

#### **49-36 Comments from Sharon Star Smith**

Sharon said she had said some things about the clerk of SAYMA Ministry and Nurture regarding comments they had made about her. She said she was mistaken about who the clerk was, so she issued an apology for speaking about the wrong person.

#### **49-37 Committee Reports**

##### **SAYMA-URJ, John Adams (Atlanta FM) [Attachment D]**

Outgoing interim clerk John Adams was not present because of his celebration of Father's Day. SAYMA clerk read his report. It is attached.

The SAYMA clerk stated that there wasn't time to fully discuss the action items in the report. They were being presented and there would be discussion at a later time. One Friend said they were uncomfortable that the member of SAYMA-URJ who was present did not give the report since this reflected white supremacy practice of overlooking people of color. The clerk explained that, unbeknownst to her beforehand, John had left early because of planned Father's Day celebrations. Because the replacement clerk was not yet approved, she, SAYMA clerk, had decided to simply read the report.

Sharon said she could answer any questions. She said they, those participating in the May phone conference, were all in agreement about the Reparations Fund and there had been discussion about funds not being spent in the fiscal cycle being put in the Reparations Fund. In his report, John Adams having resigned from the position of interim clerk, said he hoped Sharon Smith would be successful in taking the work forward as clerk.

##### **Final Nominating Committee Report, Kendall Ivie (WKFM) [Attachment D]**

Kendall read the final Nominating Committee report with proposals for Friends serving in new positions. One visiting Friend questioned whether Sharon Smith was ready to clerk a yearly meeting committee based on her observation of Sharon's behavior the previous afternoon when Sharon would not allow a planned and accepted workshop to be presented, based on Sharon's indigenous clan elder status, which she said required her approval of the presentation. She refused to grant approval when asked whether she would allow the workshop to take place. Sharon stated that her chosen status was as a Friend at Large.

**49-37-01 Friends approved the slate of positions that was presented by Nominating Committee, including Sharon Smith as clerk of SAYMA-URJ. The question of an additional representative to FCNL will be discussed at the fall representative meeting.**

**Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) Support Committee, Jennifer Dickie (Atlanta FM)  
[Attachment D]**

Jennifer gave the attached JYM Support Committee report.

**49-38 Epistles [Attachment H]**

**Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF)**

One of the SAYF Nurturers spoke of the various activities in which the teens had participated during the year at six retreats and two nurturing gatherings. Three of the Nurturers who were graduating reviewed the retreats during the year and read haikus for each one as well. They talked about how important SAYF was to their lives and encouraged adults to become involved.

**Junior Yearly Meeting (YM)**

The older children and adults who were involved with JYM introduced themselves. They said they tried to be more intergenerational this year and spent more time with the younger children in PlayCare as well as with the adults. They wrote three queries: 1. What does it mean to act boldly? 2. What is hard about being brave? 3. Why is it important to be brave and still act boldly?

The younger children traveled in front of the adults in a boat, because you “have to be brave to get in a boat.” They sang a song, “We are hollow bamboo, open up your heart and let your light shine through.” The Playcare director, Laura MacNorlin (Atlanta FM), reported on all the activities in which children participated.

**Young Adult Friends (YAF)**

Two YAFs gave their report. During SAYMA, they led worship sharing, learned about the YAF scholarship fund, and are working on a YAF outreach program. They participated in the SAYF fishbowl and in the Intergenerational Games in order to have time with the JYMers.

**Epistle Committee [Attachment H]**

Wood Bouldin from the epistle committee read the attached adult epistle. Friends made some small edits, and a Friend thanked the committee for stating that racism was an issue.

**49-39 Committee Reports**

**Ministry and Nurture - State of the Yearly Meeting, Ron McDonald (Memphis FM)  
[Attachment I]**

Ron gave the report for Ministry and Nurture, including the State of the Yearly Meeting. Both are attached. Friends requested that this report and the monthly meetings’ state of the meeting reports be posted on the website. The SAYMA administrative assistant will do this.

**Naming Committee, Patti Hughes (Asheville FM)**

Patti proposed Annie Black (Cookeville FM) as clerk of Nominating Committee for one year, Kendall Ivie (West Knoxville FM) as a member of Nominating for two more years, and Adrian Mehr (Memphis FM) as a member for one year.

**49-39-01 Friends approved the proposed members and clerk of Nominating Committee.**

**Finance Committee – Budget Revisions, Charles Schade (Charleston FM) [Attachment F]**

Charles gave the report on the budget. A new computer was budgeted, and extra funding for FWCC travel was also budgeted. Additional money was also budgeted toward the cost of travel to South Africa in 2024 for SAYMA’s FWCC representatives along with assistance toward the travel costs of third-world delegates. Additional money, \$500 each, was budgeted for FGC and FWCC. The suggested increases equaled \$7,600; around \$11,000 surplus was carried over from this year. One Friend expressed concern that the budget was approved at representative meeting instead of at yearly meeting, and that air travel expenses were being increased noting concern regarding climate degradation.

**49-39-02 Friends approved the increases listed in the budget. Dennis Gregg (Crossville FM) asked to be recorded as standing aside on the increased amounts.**

Charles said they would start using the term “donor restricted funds,” since the term used previously was racially charged.

**Earthcare Action Committee, Roy Taylor (Macon WG)**

Roy reported that there had been a suggestion to lay this committee down because of the lack of support from SAYMA. He reminded Friends that all other work would be worthless if there continued to be a lack of care for Mother Earth. Friends spoke of their support for the committee and stated that they did not want it laid down. Three people expressed interest in serving on it. Kendall Ivie clerk of Nominating Committee asked those Friends to speak to him so that they could move forward on filling the committee vacancies to be approved at representative meeting.

**49-40 Registrar’s Report, Karen Wise (Charleston FM) [Attachment J]**

Karen gave the report. It is attached.

**49-41 Reports Received but not Presented [Attachment K]**

Friends are encouraged to read the additional reports that were received but not presented at Yearly Meeting.

**49-42 Minute of Thanks to Warren Wilson College**

**49-42-01 Friends wish to thank Warren Wilson College for their willingness to host our yearly meeting on its beautiful campus. Friends appreciated the food and the various locations for fellowship.**

**49-42-02 Minutes of Thanks to Friends**

**Friends wish to thank our administrative assistant and the yearly meeting planning committee as well as the many visitors such as Avis Wanda McClinton, Angela Hopkins from the Friends Center for Racial Justice in Ithaca, NY and WQOs representatives who enriched our meetings and supported our process in a caring and uplifting manner.**

**Closing Worship**

Friends ended the yearly meeting sessions with closing worship.

---

Barbara Esther, Clerk  
(archive copies signed)

---

Beth Myers, Recording Clerk  
(archive copies signed)

**Attachments:**

Attachment A: Attendance (printed copies only)  
Attachment B: Reminder to Friends  
Attachment C: Treasurer's Report  
Attachment D: Committee Reports  
Attachment E: Wider Quaker Organization (WQO) Reports  
Attachment F: Finance Committee Report  
Attachment G: Ad Hoc WQO Funding Committee  
Attachment H: Epistle  
Attachment I: Ministry and Nurture Report & State of the Yearly Meeting  
Attachment J: Registrar's Report  
Attachment K : Reports Received but not Presented

**Attachment A: Attendance**

Printed copies only







## **Attachment B: Reminders to Friends**

Reminders as we work through our meeting for worship for the conduct of business whether with informational reports or difficult issues:

- ◇ **Wait to be recognized** by the clerk before speaking.
  - Introduce yourself by name and meeting.
  - Address remarks to the clerk.
  - After speaking, release what you've said.
  - Address reports to the representative body.
  - Participate with a clerking consciousness.
  - Respect the responsibility of the clerk to guide us in our decision-making.
  
- ◇ **Listen with tenderness** to each other.
  - Allow some time to reflect when you hear something you don't agree with or don't understand.
  - Consider an attitude of curiosity instead of judgement.
  - Be present and hold each other in the Light.
  
- ◇ **Take responsibility for your own state of mind.**
  - As needed:
    - Return to worship or ask the clerk to allow us to recenter
    - Return to worship as a community.
    - Take a walk to restore calm in yourself.
    - Take a ten minute break to regroup - walk with Spirit, without talking.
  
- ◇ **Suspend an item of business** if we are unable to go beyond disagreement.
  
- ◇ **Be willing to let go** of the idea of finishing an item of business if we aren't ready to see way forward.
  - Acknowledge** the opportunity we have to do the work of the Spirit in community.
  - Be ready to be surprised** by a leading of Spirit that is revealed.

**Finding, listening to that of God in each other is more important than completing the agenda.**



## Treasurer's Report for Yearly Meeting 2019, as of May 31

SAYMA's fiscal year runs from October 1 through September 30. So far, Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19) has been a routine year, with no big surprises. As of May 31, we are 2/3 of the way into the year, so 67% is a good number to keep in mind for income and expenses that are spread throughout the year.

There are three attached reports:

- SAYMA Balance Sheet, As of 9/30/2018 and As of 5/31/2019. (Balance)
- SAYMA General Fund Budget Report, FY19 October – May. (Budget)
- SAYMA Funds Report, October 2018 – May 2019. (Funds)

All three reports have row numbers for reference.

### FY19 Performance as of May 31:

- **Assessments**, the primary source of income for ongoing work, were a little low, at 63% of budget.
- **Operating expenses** were only 55% of budget.
- **Wider Quaker Organization contributions** totaling \$6,000 were made in May.
- **YM receipts** were approaching \$29,000, while Yearly Meeting (YM) expenses were less than \$1,000.

### Balance Sheet Highlights:

- **SAYF checking account** is now on the balance sheet (Balance, row 4). The same amount appears in the Equity section of the balance sheet as the SAYF set-aside fund (Balance, row 25). SAYF is part of SAYMA. These additions to the balance sheet do not change the relationship between SAYF and SAYMA; rather, the new rows make the financial relationship visible.
- **Other cash accounts** (Balance, rows 5-9) were high at May 31 due to YM receipts. These balances will decline as YM expenses are paid.
- **Remaining Undesignated Equity** (Balance, row 37), represents money that SAYMA has accumulated over decades but has not committed to a specific purpose. It is a resource for hard times and also for new opportunities. Like the cash accounts, this row was high at May 31 due to YM receipts and will decline as YM expenses are paid. By the end of the fiscal year, look for it to be back in the \$17,000 range, where it stood at the end of F18.

### Budget Report Highlights:

- **Assessments** (Budget, row 7). So far, the YM 2018 changes in assessment policy have not resulted in a large change in assessment income. Four of the 11 monthly meetings that responded to a fall 2018 information request from the finance committee indicated that they would continue to use their own method of calculating the assessment, as they had done in the past. The other seven monthly meetings intended to follow the new policy, with varying predictions about whether this would raise or lower their assessment payments.

- **Boone Monthly Meeting** funds were recovered and placed in a set-aside fund (Budget, rows 8 and 30). Details appear in March 2019 Rep Meeting minutes.
- **Insurance expense** (Budget, row 16) is above budget by \$600, but this is temporary. We are due to get a refund of \$1,200. When we updated SAYMA's address with GuideOne (from Decatur, Georgia to Huntsville, Alabama), SAYMA's insurance rate dropped by \$600/year.
- **Operating Expenses** (Budget, rows 15-28) are below budget primarily because of the following lines:
  - **Personnel** (Budget, row 18). The biggest difference is due to a budgeting issue: payroll withholding and FICA were double counted in the budget. Also, the SAYF AA took some unpaid maternity leave in addition to six weeks of paid leave. Congratulations, Autumn!
  - **Newsletter** (Budget, row 22). \$1,200 was budgeted in hopes that the newsletter would be revived, but that has not happened.
  - **SAYMA Committees** (Budget, row 25). Total committee expenses have been very low, only \$90 out of the budgeted \$2,000.

#### **Funds Report Highlights:**

- **URJ Funds.** SAYMA has two funds to support URJ work: a donor-restricted fund and a SAYMA-designated fund. SAYMA policy is to spend donor-restricted funds before SAYMA-designated funds for the same purpose, so the expense of a March meeting space rental (Funds, row 18) was charged to the URJ donor-restricted fund. As of May 31, the donor-restricted fund had a balance of \$2,009. The URJ SAYMA-designated fund balance remained at \$16,000.
- **Boone MM Fund.** As explained above in Budget Report Highlights, this is a new fund.
- **FWCC 3<sup>rd</sup> World Delegate Fund** began the year with \$1,600 and ended with \$0. The funds were disbursed to FWCC to support the attendance of Latin American Friends at the spring Section of the Americas meeting in Kansas City.
- **SAYF Fund** had income from donations and from fees for weekend retreats. Most of SAYF's expenses were related to the retreats. The SAYMA General Fund budget includes \$2,000 for SAYF that has not yet been paid.
- **Spiritual Development Fund**, under the care of the Ministry and Nurture Committee, paid 40% of the cost of a clerking workshop in April. Registration fees paid for the balance (Funds, rows 13 and 26). This fund also made a \$1,000 grant to support the participation of Warren Wilson College students in FCNL's spring lobby weekend, and it paid the tuition of the SAYMA clerk for a Pendle Hill clerking workshop.
- **Other funds.** No activity to date.

---

#### **Treasurer contact information**

**Reimbursements:** Individual Friends, meetings, and committees with requests for payment for budgeted expenses should send the request with appropriate documentation to Carol Lamm. E-mail is preferred (saymatreasurer@gmail.com) with documentation in electronic form (pdf or jpg). Friends may also submit expenses via postal mail to 110 Hanson Street, Berea, KY 40403.

**Payments:** Please send assessment and other payments to SAYMA Administrative Assistant Susan Phelan, 1702 Pratt Avenue, Huntsville, AL 35801.

<b>SAYMA Balance Sheet</b>							
				<b>As of 9/30/2018</b>		<b>As of 5/31/2019</b>	
1							
2							
3	<b>Assets</b>						
4		Checking - SAYF - First Bank		4,399		4,142	
5		Financial Services - Pay Pal				2,545	
6		Checking - Bank Am		12,492		39,364	
7		Checking - Suntrust		5,485		0	
8		Money Mkt Acct		32,577		32,974	
9		Checking - PNC Bank		<u>22,284</u>		<u>25,946</u>	
10	<b>Total Assets</b>				<b><u>77,237</u></b>		<b><u>104,972</u></b>
11							
12	<b>Total Liabilities</b>				<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>
13							
14	<b>Equity</b>						
15	<b>Donor-Restricted Funds</b>						
16		URJ Donor-Restricted Fund		<u>2,271</u>		<u>2,009</u>	
17	<b>Total Donor-Restricted Funds</b>				2,271		2,009
18							
19	<b>Funds Designated by SAYMA</b>						
20		Reserves <sup>1</sup>		17,949		18,806	
21		Set-aside Funds					
22		Fund - Boone MM in trust		0		2,677	
23		Fund - FWCC 3rd World Deleg		1,600		0	
24		Fund - Released Friend		10,165		10,165	
25		Fund - SAYF		4,399		4,142	
26		Fund - Spiritual Development		3,730		1,455	
27		Fund - Uplifting Racial Justice		16,000		16,000	
28		Fund - YAF Scholarship		1,365		1,365	
29		Fund - Youth Enrichment		2,696		2,696	
30		<b>Total Set-aside Funds</b>		<u>39,955</u>		<u>38,500</u>	
31							
32	<b>Total Funds Designated by SAYMA</b>				57,904		57,306
33							
34	<b>Remaining Undesignated Equity</b>				<u>17,062</u>		45,657
35	<b>Total Equity</b>				<u>77,237</u>		<u>104,972</u>
36							
37	<b>Total Liabilities and Equity</b>				<b><u>77,237</u></b>		<b><u>104,972</u></b>
<sup>1</sup> Reserves are set at 40% of FY Operating Expenses. This excludes Yearly Meeting expenses, transfers to set-aside funds and WQO donations. Tapping this account would indicate a distressed financial condition.							

1	<b>SAYMA General Fund Budget Report</b>				
2	<b>FY 19 October - May</b>		<b>Budget FY 19</b>	<b>Oct - May</b>	
3		<b>Actual FY 18</b>	<b>Per RM 3/19</b>	<b>8 Months (67%)</b>	
4		10/1/17 -	10/1/18 -	10/1/18 -	%
5		9/30/18	9/30/19	5/31/19	to-date
6	<b>Income</b>				
7	Assessments	\$ 48,829	\$ 52,563	\$ 33,268	63%
8	Contributions – General (\$50) + Boone (\$2677)	1,040	1,810	2,727	151%
9	Interest - Money Mkt	454	420	398	95%
10	Publication Sales	59	47	80	170%
11	YM Income	45,201	55,900	28,667	51%
12	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 95,583</b>	<b>\$ 110,740</b>	<b>\$ 65,140</b>	<b>59%</b>
13					
14	<b>Expenses</b>				
15	SAYMA Operations				
16	Liability Insurance	\$ 1,593	\$ 1,504	\$ 2,105	140%
17	Office Admin	5,234	3,435	2,306	67%
18	Personnel	29,972	30,876	16,304	53%
19	Publications Expenses				
20	Pub Exp - Directory			18	
21	Pub Exp - Faith & Practice			350	
22	Pub Exp - Newsletter		1,200	-	0%
23	Pub Exp - Web & Hosting Srvc		200	-	0%
24	SAYF Operational Transfers	2,000	2,000	-	0%
25	SAYMA Committees	1,023	2,000	90	5%
26	Travel Reimbursements				
27	Travel - Rep Meetings	73	500	-	0%
28	Travel - WQO Delegates	5,032	4,800	4,363	91%
29	Set-aside Fund Annual Allotments				
30	Boone MM Fund			2,677	
31	FWCC 3rd World Delg Annl Exp	-			
32	Released Friend Annl Exp	-			
33	Spiritual Development Fund	1,500	500	500	100%
34	Uplifting Racial Justice Fund	16,000			
35	YAF Scholarships Annl Exp				
36	Youth Enrichment Fund Annl Exp				
37	Transfer to (from) Reserve	(434)		857	
38	Yearly Meeting	44,714	58,637	974	2%
39	Quaker Membership Orgs Annual Contribns				
40	FGC	300	750	750	100%
41	FWCC	300	750	750	100%
42	Other WQO Annual Contributions	3,600	4,500	4,500	100%
43	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 110,907</b>	<b>\$ 111,652</b>	<b>\$ 36,544</b>	<b>33%</b>
44					
45	<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$ (15,324)</b>	<b>\$ (912)</b>	<b>\$ 28,596</b>	

1	<b>SAYMA Funds Report</b>												
2	<b>October 2018 - May 2019</b>												
3	<b>Funds Designated by SAYMA</b>												
4													
		URJ Donor-Restricted	Reserves	Boone MM	FWCC 3rd World Delegate	Released Friend	SAYF	Spiritual Dev't	URJ	YAF Sch'ship	Youth Enrich't		Total
5	Beginning Balance, 10/1/18	2,271	17,949	-	1,600	10,165	4,399	3,730	16,000	1,365	2,696		60,175
6	Transfer In from General Fund		857	2,677				500					4,034
7	Income												-
8	SAYF												-
9	Retreat Fees						3,555						3,555
10	Donations						800						800
11	Other						40						40
12	Spiritual Development												-
13	Clerking workshop registrations							1,960					1,960
14	<b>Total Income</b>	-	857	2,677	-	-	4,395	2,460	-	-	-		10,389
15													-
16	Expense												-
17	URJ Donor-Restricted Fund												-
18	March meeting space rental	262											262
19	FWCC 3rd World Delegate Fund												-
20	FWCC Section of the Americas meeting				1,600								1,600
21	SAYF Fund												-
22	Retreat Expenses						3,321						3,321
23	Training						630						630
24	Website, postage, supplies, copies						700						700
25	Spiritual Development Fund												-
26	Clerking workshop - A. Larrabee costs							3,280					3,280
27	FCNL trip for Warren Wilson students							1,000					1,000
28	Pendle Hill workshop - SAYMA clerk							455					455
29	<b>Total Expense</b>	262	-	-	1,600	-	4,652	4,735	-	-	-		11,249
30													-
31	<b>Net Change</b>	(262)	857	2,677	(1,600)	-	(257)	(2,275)	-	-	-		(860)
32													-
33	<b>Ending Balance, 5/31/19</b>	2,009	18,806	2,677	-	10,165	4,142	1,455	16,000	1,365	2,696		59,315

SAYMA Balance Sheet							
		As of 9/30/2018			As of 5/31/2019		
1							
2							
3	<b>Assets</b>						
4	Checking - SAYF - First Bank		4,399			4,142	
5	Financial Services - Pay Pal					2,545	
6	Checking - Bank Am		12,492			39,364	
7	Checking - Suntrust		5,485			0	
8	Money Mkt Acct		32,577			32,974	
9	Checking - PNC Bank		<u>22,284</u>			<u>25,946</u>	
10	<b>Total Assets</b>				<b><u>77,237</u></b>		<b><u>104,972</u></b>
11							
12	<b>Total Liabilities</b>				<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>
13							
14	<b>Equity</b>						
15	<b>Donor-Restricted Funds</b>						
16	URJ Donor-Restricted Fund		<u>2,271</u>			<u>2,009</u>	
17	<b>Total Donor-Restricted Funds</b>				2,271		2,009
18							
19	<b>Funds Designated by SAYMA</b>						
20	Reserves <sup>1</sup>		17,949			18,806	
21	Set-aside Funds						
22	Fund - Boone MM in trust		0			2,677	
23	Fund - FWCC 3rd World Deleg		1,600			0	
24	Fund - Released Friend		10,165			10,165	
25	Fund - SAYF		4,399			4,142	
26	Fund - Spiritual Development		3,730			1,455	
27	Fund - Uplifting Racial Justice		16,000			16,000	
28	Fund - YAF Scholarship		1,365			1,365	
29	Fund - Youth Enrichment		2,696			2,696	
30	<b>Total Set-aside Funds</b>		<u>39,955</u>			<u>38,500</u>	
31							
32	<b>Total Funds Designated by SAYMA</b>				57,904		57,306
33							
34	<b>Remaining Undesignated Equity</b>				<u>17,062</u>		45,657
35	<b>Total Equity</b>				<u>77,237</u>		<u>104,972</u>
36							
37	<b>Total Liabilities and Equity</b>				<b><u>77,237</u></b>		<b><u>104,972</u></b>
	<sup>1</sup> Reserves are set at 40% of FY Operating Expenses. This excludes Yearly Meeting expenses, transfers to set-aside funds and WQO donations. Tapping this account would indicate a distressed financial condition.						



Report from SAYMA URJ Committee:  
SAYMA-URJ Meeting Notes: 5.10.19

Present: John Adams (Atlanta) Sharon Smith (Asheville) Tanya Rodriguez (Asheville) Tribal Raine (Columbia)

### **Silent Worship**

1. Proposed: SAYMA-URJ needs a clerk!

Sharon "Star" Smith accepted the role of clerk of SAYMA-URJ. Sharon agreed to support the mission and goals and move the work of SAYMA URJ forward. Approved.

2. Proposed: That SAYMA-URJ send the clerk to the Quaker supported, Center for Racial Justice in Ithaca , New York for five days, to observe, look for ways to collaborate and report. Approved.

3. Discussed: That SAYMA-URJ create a Reparations Fund by soliciting contributions and grants, to be administered by SAYMA-URJ.

4. Discussed: that the SAYMA-URJ budget become a line item in SAYMA's budget, and that any funds not spent on SAYMA-URJ business by the end of each fiscal cycle be transferred into the Reparations Fund.

Note : Clarity was requested about the balance of URJ funds by Sharon .

As the interim clerk of SAYMA URJ , I have continued to witness the need for this work. I however, do not have the capacity to take on the work at this time. I have to be better at saying no when I need to. I hope that the work will continue and is supported by SAYMA. I am resigning from the role of interim clerk and hope that Sharon is successful in the work that is interconnected with her ministry.

John Adams

Here is the Nominating Committee Report for Saturday and Sunday.

On Saturday the following were approved:

Positions for SAYMA 2019-2020 Approved Saturday	Current Term	Meeting	State	Notes
<b>OFFICERS</b>				
Annika Peacock Assist Treasurer	2019-2020	Asheville	NC	
Missy Ivie Archivist	2019-2021	West Knoxville	TN	
<b>STANDING COMMITTEES</b>				
<u>Finance Committee</u>				
Charles Schade clerk	2019-2020	Charleston	WV	
Jackson Napier member	2019-2021	Berea	KY	
<u>Personnel Committee</u>				
Melissa Preast member	2019-2021	West Knoxville	TN	
<u>SAYF Steering</u>				
Aaron Ruscetta member	2019-2020	Atlanta	GA	
<u>JYM Support</u>				
Kellie Divis member	2019-2021	Macon WG	GA	
<u>Yearly Meeting Planning Committee</u>				
Rose Black Co-registrar	2019-2021	Cookeville	TN	
Judy Geary Bookstore	2019-2021	Boone	NC	
Laura Seeger Worship Coordinator	2019-2021	Chattanooga	TN	
<u>Earthcare Action Network</u>				
Deni Elliott member	2019-2021	Charleston	WV	
Pat Williams member	2019-2021	Atlanta	GA	
<u>Outreach</u>				
Wood Bouldin Clerk	2019-2021	Greenbriar Valley	WV	
Hank Fay member	2019-2021	Berea	KY	
Steve Woodall member	2019-2021			

<u>Operational</u>	<u>Handbook</u>				
Kendall	Ivie	Clerk	2019-2021	West Knoxville	TN
Roy	Taylor	member	2019-2021	Atlanta	GA
<u>SAYF</u>	<u>Support</u>				
Wren	Hendrickson	member	2019-2021	Asheville	NC
<u>Representatives</u>	<u>to Wider</u>	<u>Quaker</u>	<u>Organizations</u>		
Taylor	Brelsford	AFSC Corp	2019-2022	West Knoxville	TN
Annika	Peacock	AFSC Corp	2019-2021	Asheville	NC
Jane	Hiles	FCNL	2019-2022	Birmingham	AL
Kit	Potter	FGC	2019-2021	Nashville	TN
Bob	McGahey	Q Earth Witness	2019-2020	Celo	NC
Hank	Fay	Quaker House	2019-2022	Berea	KY



Colors:            None: no change            New            Continuing            Open            Problem

Other action:

										I cannot remember if approved, Annie remembers that she was.
Deni	Elliott	Extra FCNL	Interim	Charleston	WV					

Sharon Smith was discussed for Clerk of SAYMA-URJ. No action taken.

On Sunday the following were approved:

Positions for SAYMA 2019-2020 Approved Sunday			Current Term	Meeting	State	Notes
<u>Finance</u>	<u>Committee</u>					
Karen	Morris	member	2019-2021	Atlanta	GA	
<u>WQO</u>	<u>Allocations</u>					
Geeta	McGahey	member	2019-2020	Celo Greenbrier	NC	1yr start up
Wood	Bouldin	member	2019-2020	Valley	WV	1yr start up
<u>JYM</u>	<u>Support</u>					
Jennifer	Dickie	member	2019-2020	Atlanta	GA	One year transition
<u>Yearly</u>	<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Planning</u>	<u>Committee</u>			
Dennis	Gregg	Clerk	2019-2020	Crossville	TN	
<u>SAYF</u>	<u>Support</u>					
Elaine	Meyer-Lee	member	2019-2021	Atlanta	GA	
<u>Representatives</u>	<u>to Wider</u>	<u>Quaker</u>	<u>Organizations</u>			
Kate	Anthony	FLGBTQC	2019-2022	Chattanooga	TN	
Bonnie	Isaacs	Wm Penn House	2019-2022	Charleston	WV	
SAYMA-URJ						
Sharon	Smith	Clerk	2019-2021	Friend at Large		

Kendall Ivie

Clerk Nominating Committee

# JUNIOR YEARLY MEETING COMMITTEE REPORT, JUNE 2019

itted enni er i ie ler

## Childcare programs at SAYMA

hild re t A MA ntin es in ith three tiers ni r e rl Meeting serving s h l  
ged hildren t l re serving res h l hildren t nd sitting r hildren  
nder t e rs ge

en ilies ith hildren nder e rs h ve registered this e r sever l h re  
ret rning r the se nd ti e nd tle stt ne ilies re ttending this e r r the irst  
ti e ni r e rl Meeting h s hildren registered nd l re h s hildren registered  
nd sitting ill e ered t hildren

r serv ti n is th t hild re t A MA h s lti le sitive t es  
t ll s rents nd g rdi ns t e erien e A MA d lt r gr ing  
t re tes ni e e rl eeting e erien e r hildren thr gh n rt ring nd l  
t er l e r rents nd g rdi ns t sh re in er renting nit nd  
t eng ge n d lts t A MA in the li e ng Friends thr gh v l nteer  
rt nities

hese t es re the dire t res lt the h rd r the **coordinators** r hildren s  
r gr ing livi h l le M nd r M rlin l re nd **assistant**  
**coordinators** M is ise M nd essi n egen rter l re nd Ari r nd  
li ile h sh red the se nd ssist nt l re siti n

hese t es re s rted thr gh the r **volunteers** nd **parents** h sh re their  
ti e ith r ng Friends t A MA inding rt nities r s irit l gr th nd nne ti n  
in ne s es t A MA

hese t es re enri hed the Ms rt ittee nd the A MA l nning  
ittee n A g st l re rdin tr r M rlin s s rted in ttending  
r sh in e r t ell se  
e nderst nd it ilding in hild re le dershi is t ntin e t dee en r  
res r es r r ing ith hildren nd rents t A MA r is itted t nne ting  
er r ess nd s irit lit n t nl thr gh the hildren s r gr ing t ls thr gh  
re ting s rt net r r er rents nd g rdi ns nd ntin ed tre ht  
M nthl Meetings n the Ms rt ittee re ended nd the A MA l nning  
ittee r ved e nding l re d lts ervisi n dding se nd ssist nt  
siti n his ll s the te regivers t e re le i le ith the tivit nd l ti n  
the hildren in their re

e ntin e t elieve th t hild re t A MA re tes rt nities th t n rt re the s irit l  
lie hildren nd d lts th t ill in entivi e ilies nd ther Friends t ntin e t ttend s  
their hildren gr

**Friends Committee on National Legislation  
Representatives' Report to SAYMA  
June 2019**

In November 2018, all four of SAYMA's representatives to FCNL attended and participated in the annual meeting and Quaker Public Policy Institute. This was a milestone meeting as 2018 marked 75 years of continuous Quaker witness and advocacy on Capitol Hill.

To see highlights from the 2018 annual meeting, visit this page:

<https://www.fcnl.org/updates/prophetic-persistent-powerful-annual-meeting-2018-1756>

At our business meeting, we approved legislative priorities for the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress. This process began in our monthly meetings one year ago, and lays the path for FCNL's professional staff and volunteer activists through the current session of Congress. These priorities can be found online here: <https://www.fcnl.org/documents/775>

We are grateful for the SAYMA meetings that participated this Spring to update *The World We Seek: Statement of Legislative Policy*. The FCNL Policy Committee is reading the contributions and will present recommendations to the FCNL General Committee (of which your Representatives are members) for approval this November.

**Repealing the 2001 AUMF**

One important contribution that every SAYMA Friend can make to the peacemaking work of FCNL is to contact their Representative and ask him or her to co-sponsor Rep. Barbara Lee's bill to repeal the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force, H.R. 1271. The AUMF gives the President unilateral power to engage our forces overseas without the constitutionally-mandated oversight of Congress. The AUMF has enabled a cycle of endless wars since 2001. Rep. Lee's H.R. 1271 would return war powers to Congressional oversight.

We are making progress on this. The House appropriations committee has just added the The Authorization for Use of Military Force Repeal bill (H.R. 1274) to the Defense Appropriations Act. We expect that the Defense Appropriations Act will be voted on by the entire House by mid-June, so our Representatives need to hear from us now.

**FCNL Achievements**

*Climate/environment:* FCNL has been working in a bipartisan manner for years to foster an awareness that climate change is real and results from human action. Staffers report increased acknowledgement of this reality from Republican legislators and increased interest in looking at something along the lines of a carbon tax.

### *Immigration & Outreach to Young Adult Friends*

Over 500 young Friends and Friends-of-Friends participated in Spring Lobby Weekend. They lobbied for increased oversight of immigration enforcement, for reduced funding for border militarization and detention, for increased support for detention reforms, and for a path to citizenship for Dreamers.

### *Peacebuilding*

The Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act, which had been passed by both houses in the waning days of the 115th Congress, was signed into law in January. This new law is the culmination of years of work by FCNL to make available the funding and diplomatic structures for resolving tensions that could lead to civil war or genocide.

Following up on this success, the Global Fragility Act has passed the House and is currently in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Passage of the bill would mean that the State Department would develop strategies for preventing conflict in fragile states and provide critical funds to reduce violence. This bill would strengthen our capacity to address the root causes of violence.

### **Notes from a new representative**

Bill Reynolds writes, "I attended a meeting with a long-time staffer regarding his lobby work. I was extremely well impressed with the depth and extent of the staffer's knowledge/expertise regarding the nuts and bolts and detailed history about the issue he works on. I realized that his work is fully at a professional level as well as infused with and based in Quaker values and process. All that was a revelation to me since I had never before been in a conversation with a full-time staffer."

Please see the attached letter to yearly meetings from Briget Moix, the clerk of FCNL's General Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Deni Elliott, Lewisburg, WV  
Jane Hiles, Birmingham, AL  
Bill Reynolds, Chattanooga, TN  
Charlie Wilton, Berea, KY



Friends Committee on  
National Legislation  
A Quaker Lobby in the Public Interest

## 2019 Report to Yearly Meetings

“When courageous action is required, God calls on ordinary people to accomplish the extraordinary.” Amelia Kagan, FCNL Legislative Director for Domestic Policy, addressing the 2018 FCNL Annual Meeting

Dear Friends,

As Quakers, our faith and practice convince us to work for the peaceful, just, equitable, and sustainable world we seek. We are ordinary people called to accomplish the extraordinary. Founded in 1943 in Richmond, Indiana, FCNL has been bringing the concerns, experiences, and testimonies of Friends to bear on policy decisions in the nation’s capital for over 75 years. This work continues with your support and engagement, and with the ever-present grounding of Spirit.

Friends, in the last year your advocacy and financial contributions have helped ensure food is not taken away from families struggling with hunger, push to end the disastrous Saudi-led war in Yemen, prevent genocide and atrocities across the globe, and reform our criminal justice system.

### Setting the Legislative Priorities for the 116th Congress

One of the distinctive features of the Friends Committee on National Legislation is our practice of asking Quakers around the country to help shape our collective work. Every two years, FCNL asks Friends and their meetings, churches, and worship groups to discern *which public policy issues they feel are most pressing for the next Congress*.

The core question as part of this process is, where is the Spirit leading us? How are Friends called to influence government today? Friends discernment is the foundation for the lobbying priorities that FCNL establishes for each congress. We were heartened to see robust participation by Quakers across the country in this process in 2018 (an increase of 20% from 2016). The legislative priorities recommended by Friends were approved by FCNL’s General Committee on December 1, 2018 and are included in this report.

Attachment E: Wider Quaker Organization Reports



## **Prophetic. Persistent. Powerful. Update on Annual Meeting 2018.**

FCNL's Quaker Public Policy Institute and Lobby Day drew 400 people to Washington, DC to lobby to protect SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). Attendees went on 193 lobby visits representing 45 states with 39 different Members of Congress. One third of the participants were first time attenders.

More than 300 people stayed for FCNL's Annual Meeting which celebrated FCNL's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, affirmed the direction of the Forward Plan as outlined by staff, and conducted the business of the organization. FCNL awarded the Edward R. Snyder Award for National Legislative Leadership in Advancing Disarmament and Building Peace to Rep. Ro Khanna (CA-17) for his steadfast work to prevent war with North Korea, to end U.S. support for the Saudi-led war in Yemen, and to strengthen U.S. diplomacy abroad.

## **We Get Heard by Listening – The Growth of Advocacy Teams**

FCNL's Advocacy Team network is made up of more than 1,500 Quakers and friends from across the country who use their power as constituents to make change in Washington, D.C. Our success comes from our commitment to building relationships with Congress grounded in mutual respect and listening. 2018 brought tremendous growth in this program, as we launched 26 new Advocacy Teams. FCNL currently supports 113 teams around the country, an increase of 30% from just a year ago. In 2019 new Advocacy Teams are forming. To see current locations, visit [fcnl.org/advocacyteams](http://fcnl.org/advocacyteams).

One of the greatest values in the community-building work done by FCNL's Advocacy Teams is that we are making a conscious decision to stay focused on a single topic for a long time, even when it's out of the headlines. This relationship-based approach to constituent advocacy has a unique value in a noisy time. We find that our steady, focused, and calm approach makes a difference when it comes to influencing policymakers. For members of Congress, meeting with us is a more pleasant experience than being yelled at in a town hall meeting.

## **The Critical Role of Young Adult Friends**

FCNL is committed to growing our lobbying power both here on Capitol Hill and across the country.

Central to all that we do is FCNL's recruiting and training of young adults across the country to be advocates for peace, justice, and a sustainable planet. Eighteen Advocacy Corps organizers – who work part-time in their home congressional districts -- lobbied on police demilitarization in 2018-19. Five summer Interns, 10 full year Program Assistants, and 450+ participants in the 2018 annual Spring Lobby Weekend...young adults are taking the lead — and pressing Congress to pass key legislation.

For more than a decade, Spring Lobby Weekend has been a cornerstone of FCNL's commitment to training new generations of advocates for peace and justice. In March 2019, more than 500 young advocates gathered in Washington, DC to learn, build community, and lobby Congress on the immigration crisis. Visit [fcnl.org/youngadults](http://fcnl.org/youngadults) to learn more about these opportunities.

In the year ahead, please join Friends in your community, and in Washington DC as we work for a world free of war and the threat of war, a society with equity and justice for all, a community where every person's potential may be fulfilled, and an earth restored.

With gratitude for your partnership,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bridget Moix". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bridget Moix  
Baltimore Yearly Meeting  
Clerk, FCNL General Committee

## Attachment E: Wider Quaker Organization Reports

### Right Sharing of World Resources (RSWR)

SAYMA REPORT June 2019

I contacted RSWR to advise that I have been elected as the SAYMA RSWR representative and what can we do to support RSWR. The response, I received is that they are VERY busy and to contact them at a later time which I did. It was suggest that I read the newsletter and check out the website.

*God calls us to the right sharing of world resources, from the burdens of materialism and poverty into the abundance of God's love, to work for equity through partnership with our sisters and brothers throughout the world*

In a nutshell, what RSWR does is help primarily women in third world nations to start and operate businesses that empower their families and communities to sustain themselves.

I started researching what is done to strengthen our local communities utilizing the principles of RSWR. The local farmers are often completing with the cooperate businesses even when the qualities of their products is better.

I found the Waste Not/Want Not Gleaning Project where local farmers donate excess produce which are distributed to low income people for donations. This not only benefits seniors and low income folks but it actually brings attention and generates more sales for the local farmers at Farmer's Markets, ad infinitum.

[Waste Not/Want Not Gleaning Project](#) ·

Thank you for participating in our Waste Not/Want Not Gleaning project!

This project was initiated by [Greenbrier County Health Alliance](#) in partnership with [Swift Level Fine Meats](#), [Sprouting Farms](#), [Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation](#) & [Sunset-Berry Farm & Produce](#).

We are breaking new ground with this one and appreciate your support to make it a HUGE success for years to come that other communities can model.

BUT, we actually are seeking donations of extra garden goodies. This new project has 2 important features, which will create sustainability for our local food system and provide support to Greenbrier County Seniors & low income. First, we will accept fruits & vegetables from farmers and anyone who has extra garden goodies. We will offer these fruits & vegetables for sale to the community every Sunday at Swift Level Fine Meats 11am-4pm and the farmer/gardner who donated is welcome to keep any funds generated from their product when requested. Then, on Monday, we will gift any unsold product to Greenbrier County seniors via Greenbrier County Committee on Aging

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED - Bonijean Isaacs**

Attachment E: Wider Quaker Organization Reports



## QUAKER VOLUNTARY SERVICE

### QVS Report to SAYMA Annual Sessions

#### Program Overview

QVS serves as an incubator for social justice activists grounded in Spirit. In each of our five program cities, we bring 6-8 young adults together in intentional community. We match them and their vocational leadings with professional positions at service and change organizations, and provide them with tools to discern and bring forth their gifts throughout the year. We amplify the impact of our program by both investing young adults' skills and passions into existing community-led work, and expanding the capacity of community-based non-profits.

Our multi-city program involves direct partnership with 17 different Quaker meetings and churches who support the local QVS house under their care. Our partnerships spread across the spectrum of Friends - including evangelical, semi-programmed, and unprogrammed meetings - allowing us to expose young adults to the diversity and richness of our Quaker tradition. The intergenerational and cross-branch relationships between Fellows and local Friends deepen the community's corporate spiritual experience and collective practice of the Quaker faith, including growing in the ability to welcome and engage young adults and other newcomers.

#### QVS Updates

In December 2018, Hilary Burgin began as the new Executive Director of QVS. She previously served as the QVS Boston City Coordinator. Hilary lives in Boston, MA, and is a lifelong Friend from New England Yearly Meeting.

This year QVS celebrates its 10th anniversary since Friends first convened to ask whether a national Quaker based service program should exist. QVS is now in its 7th program year. Over the last decade QVS has expanded to five cities **Atlanta, Boston, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, and Portland, OR.** and grown the annual fellowship cohort to 36 young adults.

In just seven years, we have over 130 alumni who have gone on to continue their work for social justice and to play key leadership roles in many Quaker organizations and meetings, infusing our Religious Society and the wider world with new life and vision. QVS alumni bring organizational savvy, skills in conflict transformation, spiritual discernment, equity, and community building, as well as a deep commitment and passion for the Quaker Way. These young adults are already envisioning and creating a more dynamic and vital Religious Society of Friends, and we believe QVS will continue to empower and support many more young people, calling forth the best of our tradition.

In February 2019, QVS convened our first ever Alumni Reunion offering reflection, retreat, and visioning for the future of QVS for more than 45 alumni and numerous board members and supporters. At this time, QVS is actively discerning how to best equip our young adult Fellows beyond the 11 month fellowship

*To learn more about and stay connected with our national network of programs, contact Claire Hannapel: [claire\\_quakervoluntaryservice.org](mailto:claire_quakervoluntaryservice.org) or - - .*

year. We are considering what resources, tools, connections, and opportunities we can provide to young adults so they feel empowered to discern and live into their gifts and callings.

Some recent updates to our program include:

Appointing a new Director of Program, Mike Huber, in January 2018. In this role, Mike supervises our five City Coordinators, and oversees and supports our partnerships with Local Friends.

Formalizing some key policies on equity and inclusion to better reflect our values as a Quaker organization. These policies include more financial support for Fellows of color and Fellows from lower-income backgrounds. You can read our 2018-19 Equity Initiatives here:

[www.quakervoluntaryservice.org/equity](http://www.quakervoluntaryservice.org/equity)

Hiring two recent alumni. enaida Peterson joined our team as Recruitment Coordinator after participating in the Boston program. enaida, who now enthusiastically identifies as Quaker, helps build relationships with college/universities and represent QVS at yearly meeting Sessions and other Quaker gatherings. Claire Hannapel, a recent alumna of our Atlanta program, joined our team to support development and outreach efforts. Claire grew up Quaker in the Durham Friends community in North Carolina, and worships with Atlanta Friends.

Last summer, we launched our public phase of the **Rooted, Grounded, Growing Campaign, a 2.2M outreach and fundraising campaign for QVS**. Our major goals and priorities of the campaign are to increase the level of awareness of QVS within the wider Quaker community, expand and deepen annual support for QVS, fund a series of “Program Empowerment Projects,” and seed an endowment.

Many see QVS as a re-emergence of the same idealism, energy, and vision that drew them to Friends and a life of service. Building on this legacy, QVS is well positioned to enter into conversations about planned gifts, despite being such a young organization. Through Endowed Fellowships (outright and deferred), an individual donor, church, or community can provide full or partial funding for a QVS Fellowship.

In the next year, we are looking to broaden our base of support and involve 50 new annual donors in our work. We encourage you to become a part of our QVS network. Will you pledge your support as an annual donor or monthly sustainer?

With over 1.5M in pledges and gifts already, we are on track for concluding the campaign in July 2020. Visit our campaign website for updates, and to learn how you can plug into our work!

<http://www.quakervoluntaryservice.org/campaign>.

*Love our work? Hoping to join the team?* We have a position open for our Atlanta Coordinator beginning in July. You can read more here: <https://www.quakervoluntaryservice.org/employment-at-qvs/>

---

This report may be reproduced and circulated.

*To learn more about our national network of programs, contact Claire Hannapel:*  
[claire@quakervoluntaryservice.org](mailto:claire@quakervoluntaryservice.org) or - - .



*Conscientious Peacemaking for 50 Years!*

June 2018 – June 2019

Dear Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association,

Many of you are familiar with the work of Quaker House and financially support our continued efforts. Thank you! The results of your support and our efforts together are significant and life changing.

### **Counseling/Support to Service Members and Their Families and Education**

**GI Rights Hotline (Worldwide):** Steve and Lenore, our two counselors to the GI Rights Network, each have 18 years of experience taking calls from *anywhere service members are stationed in the world*. As we continue in unabated war and conflict since 2001, calls to the Hotline have been increasing, including calls for help with discharge as conscientious objectors. In 2018, Steve and Lenore answered an average of **260 calls/month**. When they have permission from the service members they help, their moving and courageous stories of moral conviction, often in tragic circumstances, are shared in our newsletters. I have been serving as co-chair to this nationwide network during the past year and helped organize the conference of the hotline counselors and agency partners in May. Steve and Lenore did an amazing job leading several of the workshops training other counselors.

**Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Moral Injury Counseling (North Carolina):** We continue our one-on-one mental health counseling program at Quaker House with Joanna, a licensed clinical social worker. She works with members of the military, veterans, and their families, and we rely on donations to continue providing this important service free of charge. Working one day a week, Joanna has spent **2,159 hours with clients** over the past five years. We receive referrals from the GI Rights Hotline, community organizations, and from Ft. Bragg victim advocates. Quaker House has participated, by invitation, in several mental health and victim advocate summits on Ft. Bragg.

**Moral Injury Education (Publications, Presentations, Care, and Advocacy):** Quaker House continues to provide educational presentations on moral injury and insights into methods that help with its healing. On August 3, 2018, Joanna and I spoke about moral injury in the military as the closing plenary speakers at the summer conference of the NC Foundation for Alcohol and Drug Studies. Approximately 250 mental health providers were in attendance.

### **National and Local Advocacy for a More Peaceful World**

**Advocacy Team (Federal Level):** In conjunction with Fayetteville Friends Meeting, Quaker House established an Advocacy Team as part of the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) network. Quaker House is particularly invested in the national legislative focus for the Advocacy Teams

this year which is focused on repealing of the Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) of 2001 and 2002. The AUMF went into effect after 9/11 and transferred war-making decisions from the debate and vote of Congress to the discretion of the President as part of the unending “War on Terror.” The Team is off to a solid start, and we are particularly pleased that the members include both Quaker Friends and friends from the wider Fayetteville community.

**Commission Watch (National Advocacy):** In February 2018, I attended the first public listening session of the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service and, since then, have been sharing information about the activities of this Commission. This Commission is preparing to make recommendations to Congress about updating the Selective Service System (and, therefore, the impacts on conscientious objectors and on potential future drafts), encouraging public service, including military service, and possibly implementing a mandatory service requirement for all young adults in the US. In February and April 2019, I attended, and commented during, the hearings in Washington DC. Please see our current newsletter for my report on the Selective Service hearings. The video clip of my remarks during the April hearing is also up on our web site. The official federal register comment period closed in 2018. However, you can still submit unofficial comments through the Commission’s web site at [inspire2serve.gov](http://inspire2serve.gov) under the “Share Your Thoughts” tab or by emailing [info@inspire2serve.gov](mailto:info@inspire2serve.gov). You must put Docket No. 05-2018-01 in the subject line of your email.

**Conscientious Objection (Education, Worldwide Assistance):** Quaker House continues to conduct workshops geared toward youth, parents, and meetings about understanding conscientious objection. Our book on understanding and discussing conscientious objection continues to sell throughout the United States and England and we send out our PowerPoint slide via email to whomever requests it. As noted at the beginning of this report, our GI Rights Hotline counselors are frequently involved in assisting service members who are seeking discharge from the military as conscientious objectors. On May 22, after 16 long months, they received the joyous news that one of these discharges was finally approved. They had supported this young officer throughout that ordeal.

**Quaker House’s 50th Anniversary in 2019!** This work began in 1969 when a young soldier named Dean Holland asked for help with his conscientious objector application. We are excited to commemorate this important landmark in our history with a special event in Fayetteville on the afternoon of Saturday, September 21, 2019. You are invited and we hope you can attend. We will have special speakers who received help in the past from Quaker House at critical times in their lives and view our two videos documenting our history and our work. Please watch for more information regarding distribution of the videos, both as DVDs and in segments on various social media platforms.

We look forward to spending this time with you at your annual sessions and to continuing to work together towards peace and healing in the coming year!

Kindra Bradley

223 Hillside Ave, Fayetteville, NC 28301 (910) 323-3912

Email: [qpr@quaker.org](mailto:qpr@quaker.org) Web Site: [quakerhouse.org](http://quakerhouse.org) Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram

***Our quarterly newsletter has both paper and electronic formats.  
Let me know if you would like to be on the mailing list for either one, or both!***

## Attachment E: Wider Quaker Organization Reports

### AFSC Report

#### SAYMA 2019

The Annual Meeting of the Corporation AFSC April 11, 12, 13, 2019 at the Friend's Center in Philadelphia.

Attending AFSC general Board and Corporation meeting was inspiring and informative. AFSC Representatives were encouraged and strengthened in Faith and action while meeting the folks doing the work of AFSC on the ground. Interacting with Quakers from all over the Americas is also energizing and enjoyable.

The results of the Strategic plan survey were shared, resulting in programming on Global warming, and putting off implication of a new plan for the present.

Many changes in personnel , both workers and administration will bring challenges to AFSC. May we all hold them in prayer and Light.

The information session with the director of FCNL and AFSC Washington office helped to understand what each organization does, and how we can support each other. Its important for to understand the AFSC doesn't go into communities to fix things. We partner with communities to identify needs and enable and support the communities in solving their own problems.

Governance is working with issues on sustainability, inclusion, how decision making is made and implemented .

The burning issues were the Migrant situation at the Mexican/USA border via Plenary 1: Speaker Pedro Rios, "Love Knows No Borders," and the Palestinian Crisis via Plenary 2: Speaker Marc Lamont Hill "Working Across Borders for a Just Future."

The Racial Justice folks were also there along with SAYMA URJ with POC working separately and together with ALLIES. Friday, there were three separate dinners. There was the Corporation dinner, the TWC dinner for Quakers of Color and a dinner for Allies engaged in Racial Equality Work.

There were five workshops – *Healing Justice* with facilitator Lewis Webb, *Decolonizing the Future* with facilitator Nia Eubanks-Dixon *The Great March of Return and Working for Justice* with Facilitators; Jehad Abusaliam and Jennifer Bing, *The Beyond the Action: Organizing for Migrant Justice* with facilitators Kristin Krumpf and Pedro Rios, Advocacy arising from community needs with facilitators Aura Kenegis, Peniel Ibe, and Diane Randall.

*Healing Justice* was an interactive workshop which demonstrated the time line from slavery, reconstruction, Jim Crow and the modern era of mass incarceration. It demonstrated how the agenda stays the same regardless of the era. Africans were brought to the colonies as slaves for economic reasons. They had no human rights. Families were



separated. They were denied education. They were kept in line by slave patrols, overseers. Reconstruction came along, thus they were made into sharecroppers but kept in debt thus unable to move forward. Groups like the Klu Klux Klan kept them in line. The Police enforced the Jim Crow Laws which kept blacks separate while denying basic civil rights. The agenda is currently enforced through mass incarceration. Once a person becomes a convicted Felon, they are denied the right to vote, access to public housing, mobility, and even family rights

The Annual Meeting conclude with a timeline sheet, marking when we first stated advocacy work and what was happening during that time and where we are at now.

***Respectfully Submitted BONNIE JEAN ISAACS, ROBYN JOSEPHS, Annika Schauer***

## Attachment F: Finance Committee Report

### Finance Committee Report Yearly Meeting 2019

Since last Yearly Meeting, the committee has met three times, developing the budget for FY 2020 and carrying out other responsibilities stated in *Faith and Practice* and the Handbook. This report presents work completed during the year and recommendations for Yearly Meeting consideration, including the budget.

#### Completed work

##### The Committee

- Worked with the ad hoc Wider Quaker Organizations Funding Committee to bring recommendations of funding allocations for WQOs that SAYMA supports to Representative Meeting.
- Reviewed cash handling procedures at Yearly Meeting with the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee (YMPC) and implemented revised procedures at this yearly meeting to improve documentation and accountability.
- Assisted SAYMA in recovering the funds of the former Boone Monthly Meeting from the State of North Carolina, establishing a set-aside fund to hold them in trust in case the meeting is re-established.
- Implemented the changes in assessments proposed by the Ad Hoc Assessment Committee, including necessary changes in SAYMA census questions to support the assessment.
- Reviewed employee and tax records, and ensured that SAYMA keeps files of required documentation for tax purposes.
- Examined alternatives for investing SAYMA's savings in view of recently-changing interest rates and agreed to re-examine the matter annually.
- Supported the YMPC in developing a budget for Yearly Meeting 2019
- Considered alternative strategies for completing the planned review of SAYMA financial practices. These include hiring a consultant using a request for proposals and exchange of review services with another nonprofit organization such as a comparable-sized yearly meeting.

#### Recommendations for Yearly Meeting consideration

Finance Committee reports the following items that it has completed since Representative Meeting.

1. Following up on minute 48-12-01, and having completed development of financial policies and procedures covering all of SAYMA's operations including Yearly Meeting, SAYF, Set-aside funds, and core functions, the committee is now prepared to obtain outside review of finances as approved last year. ***Finance Committee recommends budgeting \$2,500 for this purpose in Fiscal Year 2020.***

2. FWCC Delegate Travel set-aside fund. While developing the FY 2020 budget, Finance Committee received a request from a SAYMA representative to the Friends World Committee for Consultation to accumulate funds to support delegate travel to the FWCC international meeting in Durban, South Africa in 2024. After the FWCC discontinued Triennial meetings, SAYMA laid down the FWCC Delegate Travel set-aside fund. Finance Committee's proposed budget includes the requested amount. This implies re-establishing set-aside fund, with a new purpose.

***Finance Committee recommends reestablishing the FWCC Delegate Travels set-aside fund with the revised purpose described below:***

“The *purpose* of the FWCC Delegate Travel set-aside fund is to support one or more SAYMA delegates' attendance at FWCC international meetings.

The *stewards* of the fund (who authorize expenditures) are the appointed SAYMA FWCC delegates.”

Under SAYMA's contributions policy, re-establishing this fund will also make it possible for individuals to contribute to support this activity, just as they can now contribute to support other set-aside funds such as Uplifting Racial Justice.

3. SAYF set-aside fund. To enable SAYMA to receive earmarked contributions for the SAYF program and to account for periodic SAYMA contributions to SAYF, the Treasurer has set up accounts that mirror other SAYMA set-aside funds as described in SAYMA's contributions policy. However, the set-aside fund has never been explicitly defined. ***The Finance Committee recommends the following purpose for the SAYF set-aside fund:***

“The *purpose* of the SAYF set-aside fund is to support the activities of SAYMA youth participating in the Southern Appalachian Young Friends program.

The *stewards* of this fund are the SAYF administrative assistant or the SAYF Steering Committee.”

4. FY 2020 Budget. We present the attached FY2020 budget for consideration.

Please review the financial statements prepared by the Treasurer for a more complete picture of our situation.

## Second Finance Committee Report

### SAYMA Yearly Meeting 16 June, 2019

The Finance Committee met at noon on June 15 and considered the 2019 proposed budget in light of the expected surplus. We had asked Friends to come forward with requests for funding of one time activities and suggestions for changes in the original budget. *Finance Committee recommends adoption of the budget as presented on Friday June 14, with the following changes:*

Budget item	Increase (Decrease)	New Budget	Rationale
Office supplies & misc	1,500	2,000	Windows laptop and software for SAYMA Administrative Assistant
Travel WQO delegates	2,700	7,500	Anticipated increase in travel to WQO meetings, including an FWCC Americas meeting in Mexico
FWCC Conference set-aside	1,200	1,800	Prior estimate would not result in adequate accumulation by 2024
FWCC 3 <sup>rd</sup> World Delegate set-aside	1,200	1,800	SAYMA traditionally matches payment for its own delegates with contribution for 3 <sup>rd</sup> world
FGC contribution	500	1,250	Attempting to bring SAYMA contributions closer to fair share of services provided to Yearly Meetings
FWCC contribution	500	1,250	Same as above
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>7,600</b>	<b>112,170</b>	

These changes would result in a deficit of \$6,055 as compared to a surplus of \$1,545. In this revision and the original budget there are a total of \$4,000 in one-time expenditures. Thus the deficit in 2021 would be less than in 2020 even if the remainder of the budget changes above were continued. Financial results in 2020 will help determine whether it would be prudent to continue, increase, or reduce these discretionary amounts. SAYMA's undesignated equity on the balance sheet will increase to about \$28,000 by the end of this fiscal year; this proposal would reduce it to \$22,000 by the end of FY 2020, and to less than \$20,000 the following year.

A Friend made us aware that the Contributions policy adopted last year contains a racially offensive term. We will use the wording "Donor restricted fund" to describe those portions of set aside funds that came from direct contributions rather than SAYMA allocations, and make this editorial change in the policy before submitting it to the Handbook. This makes no substantive change to the policy, and brings wording in line with standard accounting terminology.

**SAYMA FY 2020 Budget**  
**Approved June 16, 2019**

		FY18 Actual	FY19 Budget (v. 1.2, Mar RM)	FY 19 Projected	FY 2020 Approved 6/16/19
1					
2					
3	<b>Income</b>				
4	Assessments	48,829	52,562	52,145	50,425
25	Contributions – General	1,040	1,810	1,810	1,500
26	Interest - Money Mkt	454	420	590	700
27	<i>Publication Sales</i>	59	47	250	50
30	<i>YM Income</i>	45,201	55,900	52,900	52,900
34	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>95,583</b>	<b>110,739</b>	<b>107,695</b>	<b>105,575</b>
35					
36	<b>Expenses</b>				
37	<b>SAYMA Operations</b>	<b>42,928</b>	<b>44,516</b>	<b>35,106</b>	<b>43,520</b>
38	Liability Insurance	1,593	1,504	923	850
39	<i>Office Admin</i>	5,234	3,435	3,783	5,295
49	<i>Personnel</i>	29,972	30,876	23,499	25,705
53	<i>Publications Expenses</i>	-	1,400	157	270
58	<i>SAYMA Committees</i>	1,023	2,000	200	3,800
69	<i>Travel Reimbursements</i>	5,105	5,300	6,545	7,600
72	<i>Set-aside Fund Annual Allotments</i>	19,500	2,500	2,500	8,600
73	FWCC 3rd World Delg Annl Exp	-	-	-	1,800
74	FWCC Conference Annl Exp	-	-	-	1,800
75	Released Friend Annl Exp	-	-	-	-
76	SAYF Operational Transfers	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
77	Spiritual Development Annl Exp	1,500	500	500	3,000
78	Uplifting Racial Justice Annl Exp	16,000	-	-	-
79	YAF Scholarships Annl Exp	-	-	-	-
80	Youth Enrichment Fund Annl Exp	-	-	-	-
81	<i>Yearly Meeting</i>	44,714	58,637	51,450	52,900
93	<i>Quaker Membership Orgs Annual Contribns</i>	600	1,500	1,500	2,500
94	WQO - FGC	300	750	750	1,250
95	WQO - FWCC - Direct Contrbn	300	750	750	1,250
96	<i>Other WQO Annual Contribns</i>	3,600	4,500	4,500	4,650
97	WQO - AFSC	300	450	450	280
98	WQO - BQEF	300	180	180	280
99	WQO - FCNL	300	450	450	466
100	WQO - Friends for LGBTQ Concerns	300	45	45	190
101	WQO - Friends Journal	300	45	45	370
102	WQO - Friends Peace Teams	300	405	405	466
103	WQO - Quaker Earthcare Witness	300	630	630	695
104	WQO - Quaker House	450	630	630	695
105	WQO - Quaker Volunteer Service	450	630	630	696
106	WQO - Right Sharing of World Resources	300	630	630	466
107	WQO - Wm Penn House	300	405	405	46
108	Adjustment to Reserves	(434)	-	857	(540)
109	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>110,908</b>	<b>111,653</b>	<b>95,913</b>	<b>111,630</b>
110					
111	<b>Surplus (deficit)</b>	<b>(15,325)</b>	<b>(914)</b>	<b>11,782</b>	<b>(6,055)</b>
112	YM Net:	487	(2,737)	1,450	-

## **Ad hoc Committee on Allocations to Wider Quaker Organization Funding - YM 2019 Sessions**

The ad hoc Committee on WQO funding met twice since Representative Meeting. Present were Christine Repoley, Wood Bouldin, and Geeta McGahey. Carol Lamm, treasurer, was in attendance at the first meeting to help clarify the concerns brought up at Rep meeting. Charles Wilton was unable to be in attendance because of a communication glitch by the clerk

### **The ad hoc Committee on Allocations to WQOs proposes that SAYMA make it a standing committee.**

#### Part 1. Rationale

- a. The ad hoc committee was created in response to two long time concerns of the Finance Committee: first, that it was not appropriate for Finance to propose specific allocations to WQOs; second, that allocations were being made with little specific information or system.
- b. If YMs or Rep Meetings are responsibly to perform this part of the annual budgeting process, there needs to be a regular and representative way, i.e. a committee, to collect applicable information and present a discussible allocation proposal to Friends.
- c. Such a committee should not be appointed by the SAYMA clerk but formed in the regular way through Nomination and YM approval.

#### Part 2. Committee Structure

- a. A committee of 4 to 6 persons with staggered 2 year, or better, 3 year terms.
- b. No WQO reps on the committee.
- c. Committee members to choose their clerk.
- d. For the sake of continuity, transition to standing committee should include members of the ad hoc committee willing to continue.
- e.

#### Part 3. Charge

- a. Gather information from reports to YM by WQO reps, from reps directly, by investigation by committee members and as volunteered by interested Friends.
- b. Apply this information through approved criteria and procedures to produce an annual WQO allocation proposal for YM.
- c. Maintain an up to date file of WQO reps and their reports.
- d. Review procedures and criteria and propose changes, as needed, to YM.
- e. Review suggested additions or deletions from the list of WQOs and report back to YM.

**Proposal of Revised Criteria and 2020 Budget allotments.**

Although this is a small sum of money, the Finance Committee needs a way to distribute it, because in general Friends agree with not dispersing the money evenly and Finance Committee does not believe that discernment of amounts is their task, only the total amount. At the April Meeting relying on our listening at Rep meeting we came up with a revision creating only four criteria.

**Revised Criteria**

- 1 How important is this organization in serving as the face of Quakers?**
- 2. How are the YM and Members of MM involved in the organization’s work?**
- 3. What is the degree to which the work of the organization fit within a social issue important to SAYMA?**
- 4. What is the impact of our contribution aided by review of the financial statements?**

We divided the funds trying to maximize SAYMA’s impact with its small donations. All of the groups serve Quakers well. We reviewed the organizations using the criteria and came to consensus about the attached proposal. Each and every organization helps weave the fabric of Quaker service and outreach. We understand that full agreement may be difficult, but that by enlarging the committee we can have more voices at the table.

	TOTAL-2019 Approved by Rep Meeting	Percentage of funds	adhoc Comm proposal 2020	Percentage of funds
AFSC	340	8%	255	6%
Bolivian Quaker Ed	127	3%	255	6%
FCNL	425	10%	425	10%
Friends Peace Team	425	10%	425	10%
FLGBTQ	127	3%	255	6%
Friends Journal	340	8%	255	6%
QEW	638	15%	635	15%
Quaker House	638	15%	635	15%
QVS	638	15%	635	15%
RSWR	425	10%	425	10%
William Penn	127	3%	50	1%
	4250	100%	4250	100%

Respectfully submitted,

Geeta Jyothi McGahey, clerk

## **Attachment H**

### The Epistle

Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association

June 13-16, 2019

Warren Wilson College, Swannanoa, NC

Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA) gathered for our yearly meeting at Warren Wilson College for a weekend of worship, business, socializing, and relaxation. The theme of yearly meeting was, “Seek the Light-Act Boldly.” Since we are struggling with many changes, both Light and boldness are much needed.

Thursday evening, Friend “Brother John” Adams related the story of his life as a native person of color in Tuskegee, Alabama. Friends were inspired as he explained the impact of his adoptive parents and the community’s struggle against white supremacy. We were intrigued at the twists and turns of the story as he searched for his birth parents and connected with his Lakota heritage. He also shared how his path led to his involvement in the Atlanta Friends Meeting, SAYMA, and wider Quaker organizations.

Thursday and Friday afternoons provided 21 workshops on various topics of current interest and included some intergenerational events. Presentations came from visitors as well as SAYMA folks. In response to suggestions from last year’s evaluations, Friday afternoon included a “Play Boldly, Rest Boldly” period, with various activities offered for those who were interested.

On Friday, we were delighted by a panel discussion by past and present fellows, founder, nurturers, and other adult supporters of Quaker Voluntary Service. QVS is a home-grown ministry through which young adults, across the country, are given opportunities for self-exploration and development through community service. The maturity and wisdom that these young people displayed gave us confidence that Quaker values and faith are being passed on and embodied in vibrant useful lives.

Much time, of course, was spent on business. Important aspects of this labor were updates in operational processes. We heard about a new system of reports from the treasurer and finance committee that were comprehensive and very understandable. These reports confirmed we are in good shape financially. A thoughtful process for allocation of funds for Wider Quaker Organizations (WQO’s) was adopted.

We heard reports from SAYMA’s committees and WQO’s. One especially compelling report was from Right Sharing of World Resources, which reported that in the past year, one thousand women were involved in 39 projects worldwide.

Guests included Angela Hopkins, Director, Friends Center for Racial Justice, Ithaca (NY), New York Yearly Meeting,; Anyango Reggy, Associate Regional Director, South Region, American Friends Service Committee, Atlanta, GA; Lori Sinitzky, Friends General Conference, Philadelphia, PA.; Sarah Freeman-Woolpert, Friends Committee on National Legislation; Hilary



Burgin, Quaker Voluntary Service; Quaker House. We noted with gratitude that the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Quaker House will be celebrated in the fall.

At the end of yearly meeting, we enthusiastically accepted reports from Young Adult Friends (YAF) and Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM). Younger children had their own yearly meeting, and spent time in educational activities, constructive play, and other activities.

Friends participated in worship at the start of meetings for business, in groups early and late, for men and for women, and in worship sharing.

Community building included activities throughout the weekend such as conversations at Chat and Chew, intergenerational games, intergenerational talent show, and folk dancing. In the fishbowl, teens and adults exchanged and responded to questions. In worship sharing led by young adult friends, YAFs and adults sought Light on a deep-delving query: “How do you balance boldness and sensitivity in dealing with sensitive issues?” What a needed query for our moment!

The clerk offered a set of guides for our business sessions, which reminded us to use our better practices of listening and self-care. These reminders were very useful throughout the weekend, as we were aware of tension and uncertainty around questions of leadership and function of the SAYMA-URJ (Uplifting Racial Justice) committee. Over the past 3 years, this committee has been in a developmental phase. Questions of leadership have been difficult to resolve. SAYMA as well as URJ are in a steep learning curve as we address our understanding about our own racism and find way forward to develop leadership in URJ and racial awareness among all of SAYMA. While we are deeply invested in support for becoming anti-racist in our practices, we are aware how far we have to go, and how much we want to continue to integrate what we learn together in our regular practice and community life.

## **SAYMA Ministry & Nurture Annual Report 2019**

Ron McDonald, Clerk

M&N seeks to...

- receive and respond to emotional, relational, and pastoral needs of monthly meetings
- receive and respond to requests for funds from the Spiritual Development Fund
- provide for training as meetings and SAYMA need it
- provide queries and receive and collate State of the Meeting Reports
- provide oversight of the Released Friend Fund.

Spiritual Development Fund:

- We approved grants of \$500 for Hazel and Lisa Rose to FGC. They reported being inspired by a “wonderful experience.” We felt the return for the grant was excellent.
- We approved a \$455 grant for the SAYMA Clerk to attend a clerking workshop.
- We approved a \$1000 grant to Warren Wilson College to support FCNL work of student Bobbie Trice, who organized a number of students for lobbying training and experiences in D.C. Afterwards, we received a warm thank you and glowing reports. We agreed that this was money well spent.
- We approved a grant of \$600 to provide training and networking for Lora NcNorlin and the Toddler program of JYM.
- We approved a grant for \$70 for Robyn Joseph to participate in a Duke University class on non-profit advocacy.
- We used \$1330 to help provide a SAYMA-wide workshop entitled “Quaker Process and Clerking: Serving the Community with Joy and Confidence” with Art Larrabee, at West Knoxville Meetinghouse in early April. We agreed that the workshop was excellent and attendance was good.
- The ending balance in the SDF is \$1455.

State of the Meeting Queries were distributed and reports were collected, read, and summarized in a State of SAYMA Report.

Ron McDonald, M&N Clerk

Attachment I: Ministry & Nurture Report

## 2019 State of SAYMA Report

### Ministry & Nurture Committee

There are some common themes that stand out in State of the Meeting reports, which we are grateful for and inspired by. There are 20 Monthly Meetings and five worship groups in SAYMA. We have 14 reports (none from worship groups), which form the foundation for this report. We encourage all monthly meetings and worship groups to submit State of the Meeting reports. Through these reports we share in each other's joys and sorrows and deepen connections within our community.

Many meetings dealt with meetinghouse renovations and repairs, causing inconvenience and budgetary challenges. Yet meetings also reported opportunities, even blessings, that arose from renovations, including more community outreach. Foremost among them was that many meetings reported viewing the misfortune in a metaphorical way. "Making interior repairs necessitated by the unstable foundation. There is a metaphor here about the life of meetings." One meeting mused that a "stable foundation" is as essential for community life as it is for a sanctuary building.

Central in SAYMA business these last years has been questions and insights about racial justice, and this focus has found its way into almost all SAYMA monthly meetings, fostering "challenging conversations," particularly around words like "racist" and "white supremacy." Meetings that seemed to converse most effectively on racial justice matters reported those conversations included "gentle corrective guidance," listening "with heightened sensitivity," and seeking genuine "understanding." One quote that stands out (but is reflective of other meetings' concerns) is that "SAYMA may have outrun its Light," which we understand to mean that some SAYMA decisions might have been more reactionary than worshipful.

Meetings that expressed the most positive affirmations of their community life emphasized an openness to new people, a welcoming atmosphere, hopefulness, being seekers, and mutual support. All meetings suffered losses and difficulties. There were conflicts in some meetings that so frustrated some Friends that they resigned leadership positions or left their meeting. Nonetheless, there were reports of finding new ways, new strengths, and new leaders.

What does it mean to "hold ourselves in the Light?" As we've reflected on this we wonder if God is leading us deeper into confusion in order to awaken us to newness. We sense that worship is central to this awakening, and although most meetings report depth in worship, there were mentions of "staidness" and interrupting conflicts. We wondered if meetings need Meetings for Worship with Attention to Conflict?

A Friend suggested listening to Centering Prayer (from the Catholic contemplative traditions) for insight into the integration of worship and action. Centering Prayer seeks to be simple: intend to be with God and consent to God's presence and action within. When distracted, use sacred words to aid in returning to intention and consent. Fruits of the discipline are simplicity, silence, and service. Applied to our worship we might seek silence in order to nurture our intention to be with God and discern God's will, then be obedient to the call for spoken ministry. One Friend said, "Silence is a pathway to spoken ministry." Another added this phrase, "Expectant waiting."

Rising above the celebrations and difficulties was this affirmation of what it means to be a Friend: "Let me live in a house on the road and be a friend to [humankind]."

## Asheville Friends Meeting

### 2018 State of the Meeting Report

As the year 2018 came to a close, our meeting was in a place of guarded hopefulness. The past few years have been troubled as we have dealt with difficult issues and have wrestled with what it means to be a community. We have struggled to communicate thoughtfully and we have lost some of our resiliency. Our dream of being a welcoming, inclusive, and spirit-led meeting is still alive though, and inspires us to dig deep and work hard. We have a long way to go on our journey as a meeting.

It is clear that we need to resume racial justice training so we can develop skills to recognize and confront racism in ourselves and in our community. We need to deepen our understanding of institutional systemic racism and white supremacy and share this reality with our older children in meeting so they are well informed as they become teens and young adults. The ongoing challenge to those of us who are white is to be aware of our white privilege. We will not be able to respond in love and compassion to the needs of friends of color until we focus on our own understanding of how we cause hurt.

In an attempt to work on this issue, our Racial Justice Committee presented several forums using the book, Becoming An Anti-Racist Church by Joseph Barndt. We looked at how our own practices are rooted in racism and how we can try to overcome this in our meeting. More discussion is needed as we get into the last part of the book. Our challenge is to increase participation in these discussions so we can develop a shared understanding of what racial justice means today.

When discussing racial justice issues we feel the tension between the testimony of integrity and the the testimony of community. We want to speak our truth with courage and conviction while remaining respectful and open to the truth of others. A case in point is over the use of the term "white supremacy" to describe our role in maintaining racism. Members feel strongly about the use of this term and at times we forget that these are beloved (F)friends with whom we disagree. We have realized that we need to use tenderness with those among us who struggle or do not struggle with our racism. We need to encourage each other to be open to the new ideas today's racial justice work requires. To do this we will need to build trust in each other, so we can share and confront our personal truths. At this time, we do not all have that trust, but we are working to rebuild it.

In this time of increasing nationalism in our country, some immigrants experience increasing prejudice but none more than those who are here without documents. Asheville Friends Meeting partnered with CIMA (Compa eros Inmigrantes de las Monta as en Acci n), the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Asheville (the hosting Congregation) and other faith communities to offer sanctuary to some who are at risk of summary deportation. We have minuted our support as well as offered financial support and endless hours of volunteer companionship.

Another area of concern expressed by many in Meeting is our need for right relationship with Indigenous peoples. A member of Meeting went to the Pendle Hill workshop on this issue and is helping Peace and Earth develop education for our meeting and the wider community about the role of Quakers in the boarding school movement and our presence on Cherokee land.

Our Peace and Earth and Racial Justice Committees continue to shepherd our outreach to Quaker and other organizations. Once again, we were able to dedicate a third of our budget to the important work being done in the broader community. Throughout the year, we collected food for MANNA food bank, toiletries for A HOPE Hospitality House for the homeless, and snacks and hygiene products for a Little Free Food Pantry. We also supported some walkers in the local CROP Walk to end hunger in our community.

Our community becomes stronger when we can help each other in times of need. Several families in Meeting have been in transition this past year and we did what we could to support them as they faced the joys and challenges that surround transition. Improved communication within Meeting, thanks in part to our Communications Committee, helped us be more responsive as need arises. Still, we could be more supportive of each other.

The number of children in Meeting continues to grow. Our meeting has a vibrant First Day School with weekly attendance of between 10-20 children. We currently don't have a youth group, but plan to begin one again next year. While we don't have any teens active with Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF), we enjoyed hosting their retreats. Our Junior Business Meetings were productive and gave voice to the needs and desires of our meeting's children. In June we welcomed the birth of Essence Villatoro-Weir-Grant. She is a third-generation Asheville Friend and a precious addition to our meeting family.

In 2018, our First Day School (FDS) invited Meeting members and attenders to share their heartfelt connections with favorite Bible stories, we examined ways children and teens can speak up when something seems wrong and needs changing, and we began a new exploration of the testimonies. Programming has been challenging with a large spread in ages within our FDS and uncertain attendance each week. We have recognized the need to provide some deeper-level instruction with our older children.

Our multigenerational events co-led by the Religious Education and the Spiritual Enrichment Committees continue to bring adults and children together. In the beginning of the year, we had the largest Secret Pal exchange since the beginning of this popular program. In the spring, our Youth Celebration gave everyone a chance to learn more about our children and celebrate their role in our meeting. In the winter we began a new Simple Christmas tradition where all ages came together to decorate cookies, make bird treats, and enjoy a wide range of crafts.

Our hearts were saddened in 2018 by the passing of our dear Friend, Alan Robinson, a former clerk of the Meeting. He was a man of many talents and lived a rich life that many of us knew nothing about. He gave a lot of himself to the meeting and we miss him.

Toward the end of the year we came together as a community with a meeting-wide retreat led by Debra Shaw. We explored what it means to be a compassionate Quaker. Participants shared deeply and envisioned ways to be in relationship with others within our meeting community and in the broader community.

Our year ended with our eyes focused on the future. Our Business Meeting approved the formation of a Long-Range Planning and Visioning Committee that will gather the many voices of meeting into a cohesive plan for the future. We will begin by envisioning what we want for our meeting. From there, we can put in place the things we need. We have a lot of work ahead of us as we become the meeting we want to be. We need more involvement on Meeting committees so the work is spread out among more people. We need to strengthen our spiritual muscles for sitting with unsafe feelings and being uncomfortable, and we need to be patient with each other as we move into the new year.

## Atlanta Friends Meeting 2018 State of the Meeting Report

This year, SAYMA Ministry and Worship has asked us to consider the queries about our dream for our faith community and how we are living into that dream in our life together.

Seventy-five years ago a group of Friends and seekers first gathered in Atlanta to seek the Light. Coming together in a time of war and racial segregation, they sought to create a small island of holy silence and to live faithfully into the world. Early on, Atlanta Friends envisioned a spiritual community where people of all races could worship together. We articulated a vision that we could balance being a school for nonviolent revolutionaries as well as a center for contemplation.

Our meetings for worship are well attended. Visitors from the community and from afar join us regularly to experience Quaker worship. When we moved to the “new” meetinghouse we made a conscious choice to be visible and this visibility has invited many inquirers. We continue to struggle with how best to welcome newcomers and invite them to share in our community life. Our new brochure and Care and Counsel’s newcomer’s table are being well used and provide a focus for inquiries.

The many young Friends and their families who actively participate in our life together bless us. Our nursery is often filled to capacity. Fifteen regular teachers and many regular doorkeepers support the first day program for young Friends. The careful preparation and planning by the Religious Education Committee has created a consistent programming that welcomes the Spirit of all young Friends.

These young Friends are a vital part of our meeting. They join us in the first fifteen minutes of worship. Occasionally, the whispers in meeting provide the source of ministry and levity. The return of the young Friends at the end of the worship period creates a different energy.

The Atlanta teen group has been active with Southern Appalachian Young Friends, attending regular retreats and providing leadership. These teens are impressive, a source of creativity, spiritual vitality and contribute greatly to our meeting.

We are in our seventh year hosting a cohort of Quaker Voluntary Service Fellows. These young adults have enriched us. Many members of the meeting are active supporting their spiritual and material needs. The local support committee operates under the care of the meeting.

The vision of racial justice and of racial equality continues to be the central animating concern for many of our members. Drawings on our testimony of equality changes are pursued at the personal, institutional and societal level. Quakers for Racial Equality and the Committee for Undoing Racism in Atlanta Friends Meeting offer ongoing education and awareness to the meeting though



literature tables, listening ear, workshops, forums and sharing resources. These Friends are under the weight of a concern to expand active participation by more members and attenders in the work of eradicating institutional racism. A new book discussion group and new affinity groups have formed to support Friends with new concerns.

Green Friends have maintained an active network and meet monthly to consider visions of a Green future. We receive regular ministry on the care of the Earth. Green Friends have held forums, hosted educational videos, and highlighted the linkages between racism, global inequality and the climate.

Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Concerns raised the concern that meeting insure that genderqueer/non-binary people knew they were welcomed at our meeting. Small transflags were made available for nametags. In collaboration with Administration Committee, signage for restrooms was developed and approved by meeting: "Atlanta Friends Meeting welcomes everyone to use the restroom that most closely reflects their gender identity."

Some in our meeting question whether we do enough for women's rights and ask us to consider doing more.

Members of our community have worked to prepare revisions to queries being proposed to SAYMA Faith and Practice.

Our meeting continues to grow. We welcomed seven new members by application, and four new members by transfer. Four young Friends joined us by birth. Eight of our members have transferred out joining meetings from Ireland to Hawaii. We have held one marriage under the care of meeting and held one memorial service for long-time member Perry Treadwell.

In 2018 we recorded six Friends with leading for ministry. We supported these Friends through appointed anchoring committees.

The Macon Worship group continues under our tender care. We rejoice with them on the growth of their group. They recently began meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> first day in a space rented from a downtown Unitarian Church.

Care and Counsel committee continues to provide structure to our pastoral responsibilities. We are now contacting newcomers who sign the guest book with follow-up emails. Using online apps we have become better at coordinating meal assistance for those with health issues and those with new babies. We have provided financial assistance to members and attenders who need short term support. To fulfill our mission of holding our members and attenders under our care, the two Care Quilts have been provided to seven individuals in the last year to feel close during times of illness.

For many years we have been blessed by individuals gifted in service who have fulfilled paid staff roles in the meeting. Both our Friend in Residence and Office Manager are moving on to new opportunities. This is a time of transition as we seek how best to meet the challenges of today.

The creative tensions we continue to feel in the meeting are a sign of spiritual vitality. New concerns and the animation of long-standing concerns provide a source of vitality, stretching the edges of growth.

## **Berea Friends Meeting 2019 State of the Meeting Report**

Berea Friends Meeting continues to be a spiritually healthy and dynamic community of seekers. We regularly welcome three to six children, eight to ten teens, and between twenty to thirty adults at Meeting for Worship. Visitors often join us. We have frequent First Hour discussion sessions that are well attended and which provide fertile soil in preparation for Worship. Our Meetings for Business in the Spirit of Worship are normally attended by at least ten people. This year we welcomed one Friend's transfer of membership into the Meeting. We united in mourning the passing of one member of the meeting.

This year has seen a great deal of activity at Berea Friends Meeting, with broad participation in committee work, changes in our physical space, incredible commitment of time, energy and emotional support to each other as individuals, and attention being given to efforts in the wider community and the world. We also have broad participation in work for SAYMA, and collaborating with Friends in other Kentucky meetings.

Our teens continue to be nourished by participation in the Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) program. We have a relatively large group of teens at present, and the children's program has also enjoyed growth this year; the entire meeting benefits from the energy and enthusiasms of our young Friends. We continue to discern the ways in which attenders of all ages may be encouraged to interact, learn, support and be supported with regular intergenerational activities and projects.

In spring we completed major Meetinghouse renovations, with the addition of an elevator at the front of the building. Although we enjoy a fair degree of financial stability, this was a costly project that involved major gifts, commitments of increased contributions, loans from Friends and doubling our monthly mortgage payment. The elevator makes the Meetinghouse more accessible and usable not only for our own purposes, but also as a resource to the wider community. The Meetinghouse is increasingly becoming a valued space for groups, organizations, family gatherings, weddings etc. Berea is lacking in affordable, flexible, welcoming spaces and we are glad that the wider community can enjoy the use of our building.

The spiritual life of the meeting is rich, with deep discernment on the intersections of individual promptings and spirit-led action by the meeting as a corporate body. We struggle and strive to strike a healthy balance between the inward spiritual life and its outward manifestations in the world. We encourage each other to attend to our inner promptings, to speak what is in our hearts, and to actively listen as we discern our spiritual path. Where conflict has arisen, we have relied on our process, and our goodwill, to guide us through the turbulence.

This year we have been led to be particularly active locally. Our Peace and Social Concerns and Outreach Committees again co-sponsored information tables at a series of live music events that take place in Berea over the summer. BFM was the only local faith organization to participate in Berea's first PRIDE parade. We committed to the inaugural season of Berea's new Room in the Inn efforts, with members and attenders serving in many capacities including: serving on the organizational board, volunteering at the check-in location, preparing, sharing and hosting meals, donating materials, providing extra meetinghouse cleaning, and serving as "Innkeepers" once per week over the winter months to provide a shelter option for our local homeless population.

Racism has been, and continues to be, a major focus of our attention. As a meeting we engaged in a year-long shared reading and discussion of the book "Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship". It was a valuable endeavor providing openings on how we, as a meeting and as individuals, can improve how we think about racism and white supremacy in relation to Quakerism. We continue to open the use of our meeting space to a local group

called “First Thursday Club” which meets monthly and aims to create conversation and share learning on racial justice issues and dismantling white supremacy; many from our meeting are also attenders with this group. As individuals and as a meeting body, we continue to grapple with understanding our own complicity in racist systems and institutions, and many of us are actively leaning into challenging conversations about what dismantling white supremacy looks like in our monthly and yearly meetings.

We actively nurture a meeting culture that provides gentle correction and guidance, and we continue to value many long-cherished aspects of our Meeting — the opportunity to worship in a space where mind and body can be still, a home in which we can experience our Quaker identity, and a safe and welcoming spiritual community committed to listening, discerning, and seeking unity. We walk together on a path illumined by The Light, supporting and nurturing each other on our journey. We strive to share the value of spiritual listening among ourselves, and with the wider community, and to serve as examples by living what we believe.

Birmingham Friends Meeting  
STATE OF THE MEETING REPORT  
March 2019

Birmingham Friends began the past year with ambitious and energetic ideas for both inreach and outreach. Our hope was to strengthen our Meeting and to invite new seekers to join us to create a larger, more active, more diverse and more visible Quaker Meeting. We were energized by the vision of media-savvy members and the inspiration of young attenders, for whom we are very grateful. In the course of the year we accomplished some of our plans and had to abandon others as needs within our Meeting became great and required steadfast attention.

Birmingham Friends are committed to creating a Meeting and a society based on racial equity. We have worked toward this goal, both individually and as a meeting, in many ways for years. Last spring many of us attended an introductory workshop conducted by Ron Chisholm, one of the founders of The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, based in New Orleans. A committee formed to bring the full 3-day weekend workshop to Birmingham last fall, and BFM was one of the faith communities represented on that committee as well as a major contributor. The filled-to-capacity workshop was a life-changing experience. We wholeheartedly encourage SAYMA to allow SAYMA URJ to bring this workshop to our yearly meeting. It will teach us things we need to know.

In addition, members of the Birmingham Meeting donated \$1,000 to send a young woman to FCNL's Spring Lobby Weekend to share her personal experience of the harm being done by the Trump administration's anti-immigration policies.

In the midst of this excitement, we learned that our Clerk, Mark Gooch, was experiencing serious health problems. Two surgeries followed a delayed diagnosis, and Mark has been unable to attend Meeting for the balance of the year. The Meeting has felt his absence and has struggled to find ways to express our love and concern that are actually helpful. Our clerk of Ministry & Nurture performed the Clerk of Meeting duties through 31 December 2018. Mark's absence led us to reflect on how close our community has grown and how much we feel the absence of a Friend.

We also discovered that our Meetinghouse required foundation repairs totaling \$20,000. Getting that work done in good order was a testimony to the faithfulness and patience of House and Grounds Clerk Peter Furst. The repairs also led us to debate at length our commitment to this property. We held a Threshing Session around whether we were comfortable making that large an additional investment in a very old house, when we might purchase a newer property needing fewer critical repairs. The unity of the Meeting around the idea of keeping and repairing our present Meetinghouse was a welcome reaffirmation. Although we decided not to make a change, the discussion was important. We now feel confident about making interior repairs necessitated by the unstable foundation. There is a metaphor here about the life of meetings.

Long-anticipated plans for a clerking workshop and a Creative Listening series last year were postponed due to the other challenges our Meeting faced, but we are now on track to “shore up our foundations” with these inreach and outreach activities in the coming months.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jane Hiles  
For Birmingham Friends Meeting

## State of the Meeting--2018.

As we have since last year, we continue to meet at the Brevard Elks Club Wellness Center where we have been very satisfied. It's rather isolated locale enhances the silence of Meeting.

In last year's report we spoke about the "core of regular attenders" which elevated the spiritual quality of our Meeting. We are a small Meeting and each attender's contribution to the spiritual quality of the Meeting is noticeable. The most significant event from last year was when two of our core attenders got word that they had lost their job and would have to move on. This married couple were warm intelligent, loving, and deeply spiritual. Their contribution to the life of Meeting was incalculable. Losing them struck our Meeting a heavy blow. But then, lo and behold, the couple's economics was transformed, and they were able to move back to town and rejoin us at Meeting. We were overjoyed to be able to welcome them back.

Our long time treasurer had to step down and another regular attender volunteered to take up the post.

Adult Forum continues to be a vital function; we had fourteen attenders at a recent "meeting for eating".

And so, those of us who attend continue to derive great spiritual support from our silent worship.

Richard Zelman clerk, emeritus.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard Zelman". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Celo Friends Meeting State-of-the-Meeting Report  
March, 2019

During these challenging times both here and abroad, Celo Friends Meeting remains a supportive faith community and a great blessing. Worshiping together, we find hope, faith, understanding, and the energy to meet the world's challenges, along with our own, with love and Light. New attenders are bringing fresh insights and energy to our Meeting and our elders continue to provide the wisdom of experience.

The Adult Religious Education Committee has again contributed a great deal to the spiritual growth of members and attenders. Early in the year 2018, the committee completed the educational series titled *Deepening Our Spiritual Life by Understanding Our Quaker Roots*. Programs included sharing our own spiritual journeys, certain aspects of vocal ministry, and our relationship with scripture. Joyce Johnson led the final program by providing a history of Celo Friends Meeting, enlivened by her own commentary and that of others. Beginning in the fall, the committee organized programs on Simplicity and Peace as part of the winter-long series on the Quaker Testimonies, which continues into 2019. As a basis for learning about the testimonies, the committee distributed copies of *Living the Quaker Way* by Philip Gulley, which Friends universally enjoyed and found useful.

We are blessed with generous Friends who contribute their time and talents to the Meeting. In August, Jenifer Morgan read from her memoir *A Full Life*, which provides a great deal of historical insight into the early years of the Celo Friends Meeting and the Celo Community. After a long hiatus, the CFM Newsletter is being regularly composed and distributed. It includes much besides a calendar of events, including very popular "spotlights" on individual attenders and members, which are helping us know one another. Friends "let their lives speak" through participation in numerous efforts in the wider community. Several of our members continue to take a big part in the Feed-A-Child program, providing weekly assistance to more than 370 food-insecure children in Yancey County. Friends also have been active in organizations helping immigrants. Following a Friend's leading, the Meeting offered support for the highly successful World Peace Games, enabling a local fifth grade class to simulate problem solving on a global scale. A number of other community programs and organizations receive ongoing financial contributions from the Meeting.

In April, Geeta McGahey reported on her recent experiences as an FWCC traveling minister. Geeta's leading is to join with Quaker congregations, programmed and un-programmed, liberal and conservative, in the belief that "with the grounding of early Friends, hearts will be transformed to care more about creation, to care more about the poor threatened by climate disruption, to care more about each other, and to care more about the stranger."

Thanks to the dedication of our Margithaus Committee, we were able to replace the old floor in the fellowship building. At the instigation of the Buildings and Grounds committee, many Friends enjoyed participating in two workdays to keep the meetinghouse grounds and buildings fit and beautiful. We completed the project to beautify the area around the concrete foundation for the old meetinghouse. Rocks and native plantings surrounding the foundation and a stone bench facing the old fireplace, hearth, and chimney make an inviting place to gather and to



reflect on Friends who formed the foundation of our Meeting and to enjoy the peaceful atmosphere of the grounds and the surrounding mountains.

In other committee news, First Day School continues to provide our children and those visiting with meaningful programming during the Meeting for Worship. First Day School often meets outside and consists of nature walks, virtues studies, arts and crafts, and Godly Play stories. For their always-highly-anticipated Christmas program, FDS presented *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. Ten children took roles, and the preschoolers made a perfect appearance as the people from Whoville. Though we don't currently have a strong teenage presence in the Meeting, we are happy to support SAYF and will host a retreat at the Arthur Morgan School in the early spring.

The Nominating Committee began codifying the work of all committees by soliciting "job descriptions" for each one, which helped all in the meeting to be re-introduced to the tasks and roles that make it possible to enjoy our Meeting. Using the spirit-led process described by the Strawberry Creek Meeting, we have identified a new co-clerk for the coming year and anticipate engaging more members and attenders in the work of the Meeting.

The newly-named "End-of-Life" committee has been exploring ways to engage Friends in making their final wishes known. Based on the groundwork laid by Ernest and Jenifer Morgan over the years, the committee will provide forms for Friends to use to record their family contact information and final wishes, along with information on services that are available locally. The committee will also help facilitate burial in the Celo Community cemetery or elsewhere.

We lost two members of our meeting community during 2018. Dot Barrus passed away in May, and Eda Smith passed away in September. We celebrated their long lives with memorial meetings filled with stories and songs and memories.

Our members and attenders cherish the Meeting for Worship, cherish the silence, and cherish the movement of the spirit. We are, as always, grateful to be part of a vibrant and active Meeting where we are all growing and learning together in the Light.

State of The Meeting Report for 2018  
Chattanooga Friends Meeting

Dear Friends,

2018 was a year of continued growth, both physically and spiritually, for Chattanooga Friends Meeting (CFM). Our programmatic offerings provide multiple opportunities for exploration and discussion of topics both secular and spiritual above and beyond the richness of our Meetings for Worship. We have had a wealth of visitors in 2018 as well as multiple new regular attenders with whom to share our Quaker experience. And joyously, we have also added three new Members to CFM this past year!

Our many committees have worked hard to add to the fabric of life at CFM. Among many other endeavors;

- Our Library Committee completed their efforts to reorganize and recatalogue our entire library.
- Our Property Oversight Committee has helped usher in the 21st century with the new additions of both Wifi and A/C in the Meetinghouse.
- Our Outreach Committee has instigated a few 'Friendly Friday' events which have offered informal evening gatherings for people both in the Meeting and outside of it. There was also the initiation of Sunday evening Meeting for Worship in the living room of new Members across town.
- Our Peace & Social Justice Committee (P&SJ) keeps CFM up to date with happenings in the local community as well as in wider Quaker organizations. A letter to the local newspaper and multiple letter-writing efforts have happened under their watch as well as the crafting of a minute on 'Patriarchy and Violence Against Women' which was approved by CFM and sent onto SAYMA Yearly Meeting for their consideration. One member of this committee was an active participant in the Poor People's Campaign and gave a presentation to CFM on her experiences and also crafted an article for our newsletter 'Why we do what we do' - suggested reading for any Friend! Also, our Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) representative (FCNL is a sub-committee of P&SJ in our Meeting) oversaw an involved process of discussions on FCNL's legislative priorities - the results of which were sent to FCNL.
- Our Ministry & Oversight Committee (M&O) presented CFM with an active and broad selection of 2nd hours. From enjoyable 5th Sunday social outings to soul-searching presentations, these events keep us bonded and thinking. For the 3rd year now we had both a Spring and Fall Worship Sharing; one centered around issues of the environment and the other asking 'what does holding in The Light mean to you...?'. Members and attenders of CFM have given presentations on topics as varied as Spiritual Journeys, a trip to the Middle East, and the history of our very own Memorial Garden. Visiting presenters have offered us insights on our local Community Kitchen, on the workings of a local group advocating for Chattanooga's Latino Community, and the practicalities of wills, powers of attorney and advanced directives. We even had an afternoon of deep discussion with Jon Saderholm, Clerk of SAYMA.

- M&O also oversaw a process of reading, discussing and assessing SAYMA's proposed slate of new queries for Faith and Practice. There was also, in conjunction with Finance Committee, a deep rumination on the process of SAYMA assessments. The results of both these processes were shared with SAYMA.
- M&O has also spent good portions of 2018 addressing 2 long-standing unresolved issues at CFM; firstly, the establishment of a process for communicating with Members with whom we have lost contact and, if need be, resolving the status of their Membership, and secondly, resolving the status of the Sewanee Worship Group which has been under the care of CFM, but with whom we have not had a functioning relationship with for decades.

The end result of all this work is a Meeting that is a 'breathing document'. We are a Meeting that strives to offer rich and varied interactions for all its attenders, to provide a space that is safe and open to everyone, a place where folks can dig and delve and soar to heights either on their own or communally (but preferably both...!). We enjoy the presence of the patter of young shoes on our floorboards accompanied by the giggles or coos of an increasing gaggle of children. We are stirred by the sound vocal ministry that arises from our benches. And, of course, we marvel at the beauty and mystery of Silence.

In Peace and Love,

Ken Herrin, Clerk  
Chattanooga Friends Meeting

## CHARLESTON FRIENDS MEETING

### 2018 State of the Meeting Report

*How has the Spirit fared with us this year?*

It's an exciting time for Charleston Friends Meeting. Change is in the air. Blessed with a steady core of long-term members, we had become pretty set in our ways. The challenges of aging as well as departures of Friends from our community left us with fewer in attendance at Meeting for Worship and such small numbers at Meeting for Business that we've had to postpone it occasionally. Many young Friends sought opportunities in other states and countries; some older Friends left to be nearer their families. Yet we persisted, waiting in the Light and pursuing social ministries as we have been able. Meeting for Worship has remained a place of quiet refuge, refreshment, and challenge.

How fortunate we were when several young Friends arrived and became a part of our community! Of course, they immediately questioned some of the assumptions under which we had operated all these years, giving us insight about why our Meeting might only be attractive to older Friends like us, and not younger seekers looking for a spiritual home.

As in past years, Charleston Meeting has held weekly worship in space owned by a local religious-based housing support organization. We have acted on social concerns, engaged with and supported our yearly meeting and wider Quaker organizations, invigorated meeting vital functions, pursued religious education, and built our community.

We work on social concerns corporately through pooled contributions, provision of meals at local shelters, and providing donations of luggage and personal care items to children in foster care. We provide a contribution to Mission Meals, offering free meals benefiting homeless people through an historically Black church. Meeting supports the West Virginia activities of the American Friends Service Committee financially and as an advisory committee to help the programs succeed. This year we also participated in the priority-setting process of the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) more extensively than in prior years, sending representatives to the FCNL Public Policy Institute from Charleston and the Greenbrier Valley Worship Group.

Our yearly meeting, the Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA) has offered numerous opportunities to interact with, serve, and appreciate the wider Quaker community. In 2018, we: commented on proposed queries for Faith and Practice; researched investment policies of Friends Fiduciary Corporation in response to a draft minute from another monthly meeting; responded to an inquiry about the changed assessment policy (and changed our payment schedule); considered and responded to a proposal for a "counterpoint" committee to the Uplifting Racial Justice committee; increased our attendance at Yearly Meeting, with most attendees serving in appointed YM positions, volunteering at YM sessions, or both; and offered feedback about special interest group meetings held at yearly meeting.

We took important steps strengthening our meeting's core institutional functions. We culled and reorganized our library, sending many unused books to other homes, including those of SAYMA Friends. We continued to work on outreach strategies with added insight from new attenders on how to improve our "Welcome mat" for visitors and change our public face. We revised and

clarified guidelines for worship sharing, which we continue to hold on fifth Sundays. New faces joined our positions of responsibility. We visited and received visitors from Greenbrier Valley worship group (under our care) and participated in a successful annual, statewide Friends gathering, which 33 Friends from small Meetings across West Virginia attended.

Bible study every two weeks in Friends' homes completed the Gospel of Luke and began reading the prophet Amos, leading to reflection on the nature of group versus individual responsibility. In second hour discussions, we are completing reading *Mothers of Feminism*.

In addition to Meeting for Worship and intentional religious education, we also build community through social activities such as: a Quaker book club which attracts many non-Quaker participants, ladies night out meals; providing financial and spiritual support for Friends going to SAYMA; and ministering to Friends with illness and disability.

*In response to queries that we received from SAYMA's Ministry and Nurture Committee:*

1. *How has Charleston Friends Meeting lived up to its dream of how it could be as a faith community?*

This query is challenging to Charleston Friends in part because we have not heretofore tried to reach an explicit corporate expression of what our faith community should or could be. Thinking about all the meeting *should do* led a Friend to comment, "*The query about responsibility really asks if CFM has done all it should about the issues in the other 3 queries and so is the most important of all.*"

The query inspired another Friend to respond, in part, "*I wonder what CFM's dream is, of how it could be as a faith community. That would be worth discussing, maybe. For myself, I dream of greater spiritual depth and communion, more tuning in to Spirit together, more spiritual connection with other groups of Friends including from the other branches of Quakerism, and other faith communities in the area...*"

Charleston Friends feel that the underlying concern of this query, describing a vision of a well-ordered faith community, is the responsibility of monthly meetings, and we will endeavor to pursue it in the coming year, as way opens.

2. *How have we dealt lovingly with conflicts between members of our community or between ourselves and others?*

Charleston has been blessed with little internal conflict, but this may be a consequence of its previously uniform composition of older Quakers coming mostly from the unprogrammed tradition. This apparent uniformity may cause discomfort among some Friends when specific topics such as climate change, race relations, and Christianity come up. Just as SAYMA has expressed the desire to listen to Friends of color and provide what they need to feel welcomed in the Yearly Meeting, so Charleston will need to be sure it listens to Friends with differing opinions to provide a safe place for sharing. Perhaps that will help us gain understanding from those with whom we disagree.

Recent events have strained our relationship with SAYMA. Some Charleston Friends believe SAYMA may have outrun its Light on more than one occasion, particularly related to worldly concerns. We remain concerned about inconsistent treatment of minutes and other communications from monthly meetings. A Friend summarized her feelings on the

relationship with SAYMA as, *“It’s like family - we get aggravated with them at times, and have to let time, love, and Light work their magic to heal us.”*

Referring specifically to the issue of racial justice, where there has been unity on goals but strong disagreement about how to make progress, the same Friend added, *“Speaking for myself, my frustration with SAYMA was not that racism should be ignored, but the way in which SAYMA chose to handle it. They quickly rushed to make decisions that were in my opinion not in the Quaker manner of seasoning and asking for clarification on how our resources would be used. Also, I do not buy into the theory that all white people are inherently racist, and I do not feel the need to be ‘educated’ on this.”*

Another Friend was encouraged by SAYMA’s efforts, but mindful of the difference between process and goals: *“I support anti-racism work. I thought it was really cool when I found out SAYMA was working on figuring out what their institutional racism and personal racism was and trying to correct it. I also acknowledge how the language being used in this process can feel really off putting.”*

### 3. *How has our meeting responded to institutional racism?*

On this point, a Friend noted, *“It strikes me that CFM has felt burdened by YM’s insistence that we attend to this issue...”* Indeed, it was very difficult for Charleston to relate meaningfully to structural questions clearly intended for actual institutions, as opposed to a small monthly meeting of Friends. While recognizing that unconscious racism is present nearly everywhere, we fail to see that we can constructively engage with questions related to the distribution of power within our small and rather informal meeting. For, as one Friend said *“It’s not ‘making the world a better place;’ it’s ‘knowing, loving, and doing the Truth’ which is the best of all possible worlds.”*

We believe it is more profitable to spend our time; working to reverse social policies that may spring from racism such as mass incarceration; supporting a welcoming community for refugees and immigrants; promoting activities through AFSC in Charleston and southern West Virginia that empower people of color and work to reduce the violence that confronts them; contributing individually to improved race relations through professional work and community service; and education and reflection through events related to Martin Luther King Day and worship in an historical Black church. The words of one Friend resonate with many of us *“I relate to the issue on a personal level, through friendships and trying to think through how to be more open and helpful.”*

Many years ago, a Friend quoted Sam Walter Foss in vocal ministry during Meeting for Worship: *“...Let me live in a house by the side of the road and be a friend to man.”* In these contentious times, that’s a worthy calling.

Approved at Meeting For Business  
3 March 2019

Attachment I: State of the Yearly Meeting

Columbia (SC) Friends Meeting  
State of the Meeting Report, Fourth month 2019

1. Columbia Friends dream of a focus maintained on finding the spirit of the divine within ourselves and each other. Yet, we are not always a cooperative community. We strive to maintain an oasis of peace, calm and justice in the wider community. Advertising this is challenging, as our presence is little known. While satisfied with our meetings for worship, held weekly with like minded people, we are concerned for the sustainability of a smaller and aging community. Having accomplished our long held dream of our own meeting space for worship, there is some sense of a lack of direction and momentum for the next phase. While we strive to make the space available to sympathetic groups, at nominal cost for expenses, there must be other opportunities for outreach and support to the wider community.
2. Challenging conversations are always that; we strive to present views in a non-threatening fashion despite our emotional attachment to a particular point of view, and remain present to that of God in the other. Issues can be divisive, but we as a people struggle not to be divided as a community. Working towards unity we hope not to make others uncomfortable with our statements, rather we wish them to be delivered and received in a spirit of love. There seems to be an agreed element of trust within our community, yet concern for our unity and willingness to share and shoulder hardship.
3. Members of our meeting have responded with care and compassion to assist on an individual level those affected by institutional racism (and other -isms). Friends support the Alternatives to Violence Project, as well as issues surrounding immigration and refugees. We on occasion provide direct support to those in need, but lack the coordinated resources to respond more fully. We do trust our fellow seekers in the meeting, perhaps a bit slowly. Seeing to grow is challenging as our worship conventions can be intimidating at first, and we do not do well at providing a road map to worship in silent expectation. The chance to directly experience God is terrifying to some.

Our meeting does not reach agreement and unity quickly, many times perceived to be a lack of regular participation as well as poor communication of a decision. We struggle to accept the sense of the meeting when we are not present. There is varying perception of the Quaker Way. Individual actions, though taken out of love for the community, have lead to distress.

## Cookeville's State of the Meeting 2018

1. What is our dream that our faith community could be? How has the meeting lived up to that dream or fallen short of the dream?

We are small and struggling but we are still here supporting each other. We have fallen short of our dream of enough growth to reach a critical mass. We have a vision of being joined by young families and TTU students who need quiet space disconnected from technology. We wish for a more "evangelical" energy in our group. We feel quite staid in our faith and sense a lack of enthusiasm among us. We do have bursts of energy to get important work done and we feel supported in our individual leadings.

2. How do we distinguish between safety and comfort when engaging in challenging conversations within our community?

Our group is almost too homogenous to have challenging conversations. We feel safe to share our truths in our Meeting and have grown vastly together over the years but we miss our attenders with wide-ranging knowledge of other religions and ways of seeing. We strive to be open to people who think differently than we do while providing a safe space for conversations without confrontation as we seek truth together. Let us listen more with heightened sensitivity.

3. How do we care and respond to those who have been hurt by institutional racism in the society and in your own meeting and other experiences of inequality among us? Do we respond with love and compassion? Do you trust others in your meeting in order to share your truth and our places of pain?

We continue to raise our awareness of institutional racism and constantly occurring micro aggressions. We must listen and be present for people who have been hurt by racism. Our intention is to get out of our comfort zone and seek out the diversity that exists in our community. We wish to be among those with a rainbow of skin tones and a variety of points of view.

4. Are we living up to our responsibilities? Do we say "yes" when we can and "no" when we need to?

We attempt to live up to our responsibilities but we are acutely aware of our limitations and know ourselves well enough to know when to say no-maybe too often. We are generous with our limited resources but could do a better job of outreach to the wider community.



**Greenville Monthly Meeting (GMM), Greenville, South Carolina**  
**State of the Meeting: January 1, 2018-December 31, 2018**

**Preface**

Our Meeting has grown in the life of the Spirit during the past year. We continue on our journey to hear and understand what the Spirit intends for us as a Meeting, not as disconnected individuals.

In compiling this State of the Meeting Report, we felt led to select several queries that are already contained within SAYMA's *Guide to Faith and Practice* instead of using the ones that were sent to us. The queries we selected are appended at the end of this report.

**The State of Our Meeting**

We believe that the Spirit has been evident in almost all aspects of the life of our Meeting. This has given us opportunities to share our faith and learn from each other.

We attempt to embrace a *reconciling spirit*. By that we mean an ongoing attempt to bring individuals back together—to achieve unity by giving ourselves to something greater (the Spirit) and by relinquishing mistaken willfulness.

We seek to maintain an assumption regarding the generosity of the Spirit—that people wish to know and are open to the truth.

To these ends, we have tried to be more open to the Spirit during Meeting for Business—an example of which can be seen in our decision to use alternative queries for this State of the Meeting Report.

In trying to meet the challenges that have arisen, we have not only learned how to listen to the Spirit, but also how to hear the Spirit in each other. We continue to grow in this respect.

We still struggle with knowing how and when to express our disagreement over what another Friend says. We seem to be fragile in this regard—in both our expression of—and ability to receive—such disagreement.

In our quest to know the will of the Spirit, we have sought greater understanding through Bible readings, Pendle Hill pamphlets, and occasional Friday night discussions of these and other materials.

We want to be faithful to what God wishes/wants us to do, not necessarily faithful to what our particular predetermined dream or vision of the Meeting might be. We need to

have Clearness over our spiritual concerns first—not a specific political or social agenda. We seek clarity through inner silence, not outer demands.

We seek to know the Spirit in other ways as well. Some of us are active with the Palmetto Friends Gathering (PFG), some with SAYMA, some with FGC. We welcome visitors to participate and to share. One of our members fields telephone calls from inquirers. We take turns reaching out to members/attenders who have been absent—and to those who have attended our Meeting for the first time.

We know that we have to be ready to say what seems right to us—and to be prepared to be confronted with the possibility of the fallibility of our opinion. As in this and all other things, we place our trust in the Spirit.

### **Animating Queries**

1. Do you welcome diversity in an understanding and reconciling spirit, and make use of it for the enrichment of the meeting?
2. Are you sensitive to the spiritual and temporal needs of those making up the meeting community?
3. Do you make use of the Bible, the writings of Friends, and other inspirational literature, being open to new light from wherever it may come?
4. Are you alert to the subtle as well as obvious injustices which may exist in your social and economic life?
5. Do you center your life in the awareness of the presence of God so that all things take their rightful place?
6. Do you strive to tell the truth at all times?
7. Are you sensitive to the spiritual and temporal needs of those making up the meeting community? Are you alert to the subtle as well as obvious injustices which may exist in your social and economic life? Do you seek to explore the roots of your unspoken assumptions about individuals or groups of people that may be the source of hurt and pain to others?
8. Do you live in the virtue of that life and power which takes away the occasion for all war? In your work for peace, are you nourished by peace within yourself? Where there is hatred, division, and strife, do you seek to be tools of reconciliation?

Huntsville Area Friends Meeting  
State of the Meeting Report  
March 2019

This past year has been one of significant upheaval for our small Meeting. Two members of our community passed away, long-time HAFM member, Anita Anderson, as well as John Shea, the father of Charlotte Shea, a long time attender. John himself was an occasional attender as well as a friend to our Meeting. A Meeting for Worship in Memorial was held for Anita Anderson and attended both by members and friends of our HAFM community as well as by Anita's family and friends.

In the late Spring of 2018, Holy Cross St. Christopher Episcopal Church, where we share worship space, suffered serious wind, water, and storm damage. Our meeting, as well as the Episcopal and the 7th Day Adventist congregations with whom we share space, were displaced. Over the summer we held Meeting for Worship on the University of Alabama Huntsville campus or in member's and attender's homes. This time was enjoyable as we had the opportunity to worship in novel spaces, but it was also sometimes unsettling. Not all of our Meeting locations were easily accessible for everyone in our community. We also felt that moving locations made it difficult for some visitors to find us or feel comfortable joining us.

In the fall of 2018, we rejoined the Holy Cross St. Christopher congregation, who had accepted the hospitality of our next door neighbors, Lakeside United Methodist Church. Lakeside offered the use of their annex building to both of our groups on Sundays. This use was given as a gift. As both of our groups have settled in though and found this space comfortable, we are preparing to offer a monthly donation to Lakeside Methodist in contribution to the upkeep of their space. The annex space is used by the Methodists for other purposes during the week, so Friends have little to none of our physical belongings with us. At this time, we are unsure of the status of the Holy Cross St. Christopher church building and whether or not we will at some point return to worship in that location.

As we have begun to settle into a comfortable and regular Meeting location at the Lakeside Methodist Annex, we are seeing that our attendance numbers are unusually low. We are hopeful that as we continue to meet in the same location our attendance will move back up to a larger number, allowing for wider fellowship and less strain as we seek to support our faith community as we have done in past years with committee work, attendance at SAYMA gatherings, and participation in local faith organizations such as the Interfaith Mission Service.

One benefit to moving our Meeting space is that regular attenders and members have grown closer. Meeting in each others homes allowed us to share interests and learn more about each other's lives outside of Meeting. Friends gathered together to kayak during the Summer. In the Winter, we gathered in a friend's home at Christmas for fun and fellowship. We also gathered with our friends from Holy Cross St. Christopher for carol singing. Recently when members have been hospitalised, some among our group visited and helped out with pet sitting and other needs.

In this past year, our Meeting has had many opportunities to help others. We wrote letters of support and made a donation to Voices From the Border in order to help young people caught up in immigration difficulties. In the summer, several of our group attended a local rally for immigration reform at Big Springs Park.

Here in our local community, in the Spring a member of our Meeting participated in “Interfaith Conversation on Women and Spirituality”, a panel and community conversation featuring women of diverse spiritual backgrounds. Later, in the Fall, Friends attended a candlelight vigil at Temple B’nai Sholom to honor the victims of the shooting in Pittsburg. During the Winter we felt a concern for the homeless as temperatures dropped. We made donations at that time to two organizations that offer help to the homeless locally, Rose of Sharon and the Grateful Life Church. In the early Spring, some of us attended an open house, Meet Your Muslim Neighbor, event at our local mosque.

Although Friends are for now meeting minimalistically on several levels, our financial and spiritual support from Friends who aren’t worshipping weekly with us continues to grow. This increase in resources has enabled HAFM to resume supporting efforts and programs both locally and through Wider Quaker Organizations. This support also positions us to move into a more permanent meeting space, whenever and wherever we are led.

## State of Nashville Friends Meeting, 2018

The new year began on a note of intentional introspection, as Nashville Friends Meeting engaged in a series of listening sessions that began in 2017. Initiated primarily by the leading of member Mary Linda McKinney, these gatherings sought to hold all aspects of Meeting life in the Light, in the possibility that Way would open for us as a community in unexpected ways. In 2017, we grieved those we had lost, as many members and attenders had moved away in the last several years for various reasons. In 2018, we built on that foundation by examining our committee structures and how work is divided among us. In the end, truthfully, not much changed in a visible way, as several ideas were not deemed viable by the body of the Meeting. But the process was a valuable opportunity to reflect on who we are and how we are changing as time marches on.

2018 also contained a note of grief, as we mourned the passing and celebrated the life of Maaret Houghton, one of our longest attending members in Nashville.

For a second year, we did not receive any requests for membership. We said farewell to Lissa West, who moved to be with family in Florida. She will be missed. Christina VanRegenmorter laid down her membership as she felt led to explore the next steps of her spiritual journey. We are deeply grateful for her many contributions over the years.

However, 2018 was not solely a year of loss. Our Meeting continued to follow our leadings and serve in many ways throughout the year.

Several years ago, we began to provide opportunities for spiritual deepening and nourishment beyond our weekly meeting for worship. These have continued as intended, and many members and attenders have expressed their gratitude. A handful of Spiritual Deepening groups still meet for discussion and fellowship. We hold a weekly Meeting for Worship on Thursday mornings for those who cannot attend on Sundays or prefer a small group. We continue to hold Meetings for Healing on a quarterly basis, in which anyone can come and receive prayers and hands on healing. And we have a prayer committee which prays daily for anyone in the community asking for any concern to be held in the Light.

We have also continued to use the Meeting House as a place of welcome engagement with the greater community. About twenty people gathered as part of a lively interfaith conversation with the Atlantic Institute, a Turkish American organization. Our Alternatives to Violence Project committee hosted several events that infused the Meeting with new energy. Nadine Hoover, Val Liveoak and Kathy Railsback came to Nashville and shared their wisdom and experience. Nadine acted as lead facilitator of a Basic Level AVP workshop and was joined by Kathy as lead facilitators of a Trauma Resiliency Advanced workshop. On the heels of this, the Meeting hosted a Friends Peace Teams (FPT) face-to-face with attenders from all over the world, and a Peace Quest one day workshop in which Val Liveoak was the keynote speaker. She shared her experience with FPT since its beginning in 1993. The Meeting especially thanks Jack Willis and Tim Shaw for their tireless efforts in coordinating these special events and ensuring their success. In addition to these larger AVP gatherings in the Spring of 2018, our local AVP facilitators

offered additional workshops in 2018 and continued their work in local schools and in the women's jail. Our Meeting also continued to be home base for the Middle Tennessee Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) advocacy group which remained quite active until October. At that time the advocacy group was put 'on hold' waiting for additional interest and support from the larger community.

We hosted a meeting of Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF). Twenty-two SAYFers gathered here for a weekend along with five adults. After many years of leadership in the SAYF program, Mary Linda McKinney and Mark Wutka have laid down that Ministry. Nashville Friends express gratitude for their faithful service but we are struggling to find active adult leadership for SAYF within our meeting.

Our First Day School program reflected the Meeting as a whole in some ways, as the only two remaining members of the committee sought to provide a high level of care to our young attenders without burning themselves out. The First Day School took on several projects throughout the year. They reimagined the downstairs meeting space and made several aesthetic changes. They coordinated a service project focused on immigration, and provided support to the Nashville International Center for Empowerment (NICE), a refugee resettlement organization. Two of the First Day School children delivered donations of household items to the NICE offices in early February.

We were pleased to bring a worship group in Clarksville under our care this year. Ruth Graham and her husband, recently relocated from Illinois, hold worship in their home on first Sundays of the month. Ruth wrote us a very seasoned and spiritually grounded letter requesting that we support this. The Meeting gladly approved having them under our care.

In the last several months, we have contemplated SAYMA's queries as a meeting. We are including our reflections on those queries below.

*Query: What is our dream that our faith community could be? How has the meeting lived up to that dream or fallen short of the dream?* Friends held up a vision of a meeting that was welcoming, inclusive, and actively engaged in the care of its members and of the broader community. Many of us feel that we have sometimes succumbed to the distractions and individualism of modern society in ways that detract from those goals. Nashville Friends' participation in the Alternatives to Violence Program (AVP) was held up as an example of community engagement. However, Friends noted that this is an activity of individual Friends sponsored and supported by the meeting rather than an activity of the meeting as a body. We hold up and celebrate the contributions and engagement of these Friends, but we note that the meeting has fallen short of its vision and of its past levels of engagement.

*Query: How do we distinguish between safety and comfort when engaging in challenging conversations within our community?* The distinction between safety and comfort requires deep discernment and a commitment to Integrity. As with much else, Nashville Friends report mixed results. Discomfort can cover a wide range of circumstances, from mere cultural irritation to the early warning signs of real danger. Where interactions within the community have

raised real concerns, Nashville Friends have sought to be forthright in addressing issues while trying to hold all parties in the Light. Other times, members of our community have had difficulty getting past perceptions of criticism or worse in discussions of the pain and challenges experienced by others of different backgrounds.

*How do we care and respond to those who have been hurt by institutional racism in the society and in your own meeting and other experiences of inequality among us? Do we respond with love and compassion? Do you trust others in your meeting in order to share your truth and our places of pain?* We note the absence of regular attendance by Friends of color in Nashville, though we were blessed last year by the presence of a family from Kenya for several weeks. We continue to struggle in trying to discern the boundaries between our own cultural comfort zones and Quaker essentials in everything from habits of dress and speech to the conduct of worship. There have on occasion been hurt feelings on the part of some Friends when others have not shared the same leadings. Our meeting has been enriched by members and attenders who have experienced discrimination or other societal hurts and who do take the risk of sharing their experiences openly.

*Are we living up to our responsibilities? Do we say “yes” when we can and “no” when we need to?* The past decade has seen a notable loss of our meeting’s seasoned leaders. While some of this loss is a natural result of death, debility, and other life transitions, there are unmistakable signs that many of our leaders have experienced levels of burnout that have led to prolonged absences from the meeting. Although we can see clearly that this pattern cannot be sustained, we have had difficulty reversing it. There is real concern that new potential leaders will be reluctant to step up when they see successions of meeting clerks, treasurers, and others take extended leaves of absence after serving the meeting. Helping our leadership attain a degree of balance that allows them to experience service to the meeting as a source, rather than a drain, of spiritual energy is an increasingly crucial challenge for Nashville Friends.

## **Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting State of the Meeting Report March 3, 2019**

In the past year we have enjoyed a continuing deep silence in our First Day worship together. Verbal ministry, if it comes, usually occurs near the end of worship. Our Afterword usually has some verbal ministry which often carries the weight of being Spirit-led. Our Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business shows benefits of our continuing work to deepen our Quaker procedure as Spirit-led. Our community life is an ongoing rich experience of mutual caring, learning together more about Quaker procedure, our involvement in social oppressions, and our life experiences. We are grateful to discover from newly arrived attenders and members that ours is a very welcoming Meeting. In the disruptive challenges we have faced in the past year, we are finding a deepening trust in a Light-led life together as the Abiding Spirit holds us together in unity, beneath our differences about how to be, and what to do.

Our Meeting faced significant challenges in 2018: physical, political, and personal. We resolved some, continue working through others, suffered from many, and found strength in most. The most obvious physical challenge was the flooding of Flat Creek and the Swannanoa River, destroying a chunk of our parking lot along with plantings, gardens, and walkways. We were fortunate that the water did not enter the building but we had a lot of work to do to make it usable. We worked with the local Greenway Commission to donate some of our property to Black Mountain with the agreement that the city would do the reconstruction of the river bank that Flat Creek destroyed. We still have to decide what steps we should take to protect our building from any future flooding that may rise to a higher level in the future. We came together around this issue and strengthened our faith and our community but have more work to find unity as we go forward.

The second most obvious physical challenge has been the crowding in our Meetinghouse and our parking lot as our Meeting attracts new Members and attenders, a challenge complicated by the loss of some of our parking from the floods as well as greater anticipated loss during months of staging for heavy equipment during the reconstruction of the bank of Flat Creek. We found more space inside by creative rearrangement of chairs but continue to look for structural solutions to make us a more welcoming community. We will shortly consider a reordered Sunday morning schedule experiment to see if we can make it more feasible for young families to attend regularly.

A third physical challenge we are facing is the difficulty that many in our aging community have hearing in our Meeting room. The Building Committee is researching solutions at this time and we hope to take steps to improve the situation shortly.

The Meeting was deeply affected in the past year by conflicts about our relation to SAYMA's search for unity on issues raised by their Uplifting Racial Justice Committee. It is beyond the scope of this report to express our struggle to understand how our Meeting's discernment relates to the Yearly Meeting's decision making. Our Clerk of the Meeting and the Clerk of our ministry and Counsel Committee were both so overburdened they withdrew from their positions. We opened our hearts to both; one has returned to full membership and regular attendance, and we anticipate the other will follow soon. The issue of racism and white privilege, however, is one we



have taken seriously and wrestled with. We have held forums, workshops, and supported individuals' leadings to contribute through other organizations in the local, regional, national and international arena. A related issue that has been raised, male dominance in our Meeting and in the Society of Friends on a larger scale, is yet to be addressed.

Finally, we are aware of, but have failed to solve, the problem of too few Members and attenders doing too many of the necessary chores to keep the Meeting running. We are grateful, however, that we are the kind of Meeting that looks at this kind of problem directly.

Counterpoised in contrast to, or perhaps as a result of, these challenges are a number of Meeting qualities that all members of our community appreciate:

- Quality and depth of sharing
- Feeling of community, connection with others
- Women's dinners
- Support for spirit-led civic and political action
- Diversity (our Meeting is not diverse enough)
- Working with immigrant community
- Forgiveness of disruptive individuals
- High value on honesty and authenticity
- Listening with respect

To put some flesh on the bare bones of this list, two examples will suffice. The first, the women's dinners, is an example of our spiritual self-care; the second, the Immigrant Support Committee, is an example of spirit-led civic action.

1. Attendance at our **Women's Dinners** has increased from 8 or 9 to often 20 or more, sharing both a meal and our rich experiences, leadings, readings, and reflections around issues that arise out of our Quaker faith. From early consideration of the lives of Quaker women involved in women's rights we moved to presentations by members sharing reflections on their leadings and work on such contemporary issues as peace and justice in the Middle East. Plans are underway for a diverse set of continuing programs at gatherings in 2019.
2. The **Immigrant Support Committee** reaches out to immigrants and their families in our local area. By initially offering an English class at a local nonprofit, we became acquainted with many immigrants and they developed a sense of trust with us. Over time we began to offer assistance in many areas: legal aid and immigrant rights, transportation and appointments, applying for assistance obtaining food and clothing, locating jobs, finding housing, dealing with law enforcement, obtaining energy assistance and home insulation, organizing Christmas presents for children, and applying for preschool, summer camp, and college scholarships. On a wider scale, we coordinate with the work of the local Sanctuary movement and the work of the American Friends Service Committee.

In short, we have deepened our commitment to our faith and our community through honest dialogue about the challenges we faced. We have been blest with enough financial and spiritual resources to address problems that might otherwise have torn a community apart. We face the future with optimism and strength.

## WEST KNOXVILLE FRIENDS MEETING

### 2018 State of the Meeting Report

The West Knoxville Friends Meeting (WKFM) remains an active and vibrant and Friends community with fulfilling worship and loving fellowship. In 2018, we acted to improve in diversity, outreach, and social witness.

Part of what WKFM would like to become is a more diverse community. Because we lack true diversity, within our community, we have sought to both educate ourselves about racism in general and institutional racism in our society in specific including our role in the problem. Over the year, many F/friends have attended several race-themed book discussions, FGC e-Retreats on White Supremacy and interfaith conversations on race at multiple locations including the Beck Cultural Exchange Center - an African-American history center in East Knoxville. The WKFM community's effort remains an ongoing need. Our 2018 in-lieu of taxes donation was sent to Beck Cultural Exchange Center.

Another part of the meeting's interest this past year was to raise our profile within the wider community. Near the end of the year, an ad-hoc banner committee introduced banners to be used in various peace marches and other events throughout the Knoxville community. In September, we started also started holding a monthly midweek meeting in North Knoxville in a Presbyterian Church as a form of outreach on our part. In addition, as another form of outreach, at the request of SAYMA's Outreach Committee, WKFM is also having another monthly mid-week introductory worship at the Meeting House for a year's time. We recognize that the need for our outreach to be stronger.

Several years ago, three active members, moved away and two active members of our community died. The remaining members of our community have worked to fill in the gaps, joined by several new regular attenders. In 2018, when two major positions came open in Meeting for Business, new volunteers stepped forward. There were no deaths this past year, and in December two members transferred to our community. In short, the meeting is growing again, but the number of people willing to serve in leadership positions has lowered somewhat.

Individual community members have their own interests and ministries. The meeting came together however we came together and continued our work on homelessness through Family Promise and on climate change through Tennessee Interfaith Power and Light. We also continued to support Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) by offering the use of our meetinghouse to the SAYF Steering Committee and Nurturing Committee.

Finally, as in previous years, WKFM devoted approximately one-half its yearly budget to supporting both Wider Quaker organizations and other local area organizations. We also supported the greater community by making our meeting house available to outside groups.

**Attachment J.**

**Registrar's Report 2019**

<b>Category</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
Registered	249	220
Cancellations	14	4
Attended	235	216
JYM	24	21
SAYF	33	32
YAF	16	11
First Time Attenders	60 (15 children)	40 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 22 adults,</li><li>• 2 YAF,</li><li>• 8 SAYF,</li><li>• 6 JYM, 2</li><li>• WQO</li></ul>
Scholarship Fund Donations	\$1,468	\$1232.50
Late Fees	\$1,050	Not calculated
Scholarships granted	\$1,342	To date - \$1,270
Fee waivers (Staff, FANs, guests)	\$4,630	\$3,855

Submitted by Karen Wise, Registrar

**Friends Committee on National Legislation  
Representatives' Report to SAYMA  
June 2019**

In November 2018, all four of SAYMA's representatives to FCNL attended and participated in the annual meeting and Quaker Public Policy Institute. This was a milestone meeting as 2018 marked 75 years of continuous Quaker witness and advocacy on Capitol Hill.

To see highlights from the 2018 annual meeting, visit this page:

<https://www.fcnl.org/updates/prophetic-persistent-powerful-annual-meeting-2018-1756>

At our business meeting, we approved legislative priorities for the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress. This process began in our monthly meetings one year ago, and lays the path for FCNL's professional staff and volunteer activists through the current session of Congress. These priorities can be found online here: <https://www.fcnl.org/documents/775>

We are grateful for the SAYMA meetings that participated this Spring to update *The World We Seek: Statement of Legislative Policy*. The FCNL Policy Committee is reading the contributions and will present recommendations to the FCNL General Committee (of which your Representatives are members) for approval this November.

**Repealing the 2001 AUMF**

One important contribution that every SAYMA Friend can make to the peacemaking work of FCNL is to contact their Representative and ask him or her to co-sponsor Rep. Barbara Lee's bill to repeal the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force, H.R. 1271. The AUMF gives the President unilateral power to engage our forces overseas without the constitutionally-mandated oversight of Congress. The AUMF has enabled a cycle of endless wars since 2001. Rep. Lee's H.R. 1271 would return war powers to Congressional oversight.

We are making progress on this. The House appropriations committee has just added the The Authorization for Use of Military Force Repeal bill (H.R. 1274) to the Defense Appropriations Act. We expect that the Defense Appropriations Act will be voted on by the entire House by mid-June, so our Representatives need to hear from us now.

**FCNL Achievements**

*Climate/environment:* FCNL has been working in a bipartisan manner for years to foster an awareness that climate change is real and results from human action. Staffers report increased acknowledgement of this reality from Republican legislators and increased interest in looking at something along the lines of a carbon tax.

### *Immigration & Outreach to Young Adult Friends*

Over 500 young Friends and Friends-of-Friends participated in Spring Lobby Weekend. They lobbied for increased oversight of immigration enforcement, for reduced funding for border militarization and detention, for increased support for detention reforms, and for a path to citizenship for Dreamers.

### *Peacebuilding*

The Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act, which had been passed by both houses in the waning days of the 115th Congress, was signed into law in January. This new law is the culmination of years of work by FCNL to make available the funding and diplomatic structures for resolving tensions that could lead to civil war or genocide.

Following up on this success, the Global Fragility Act has passed the House and is currently in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Passage of the bill would mean that the State Department would develop strategies for preventing conflict in fragile states and provide critical funds to reduce violence. This bill would strengthen our capacity to address the root causes of violence.

### **Notes from a new representative**

Bill Reynolds writes, "I attended a meeting with a long-time staffer regarding his lobby work. I was extremely well impressed with the depth and extent of the staffer's knowledge/expertise regarding the nuts and bolts and detailed history about the issue he works on. I realized that his work is fully at a professional level as well as infused with and based in Quaker values and process. All that was a revelation to me since I had never before been in a conversation with a full-time staffer."

Please see the attached letter to yearly meetings from Briget Moix, the clerk of FCNL's General Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Deni Elliott, Lewisburg, WV  
Jane Hiles, Birmingham, AL  
Bill Reynolds, Chattanooga, TN  
Charlie Wilton, Berea, KY



Friends Committee on  
National Legislation  
A Quaker Lobby in the Public Interest

## 2019 Report to Yearly Meetings

“When courageous action is required, God calls on ordinary people to accomplish the extraordinary.” Amelia Kagan, FCNL Legislative Director for Domestic Policy, addressing the 2018 FCNL Annual Meeting

Dear Friends,

As Quakers, our faith and practice convince us to work for the peaceful, just, equitable, and sustainable world we seek. We are ordinary people called to accomplish the extraordinary. Founded in 1943 in Richmond, Indiana, FCNL has been bringing the concerns, experiences, and testimonies of Friends to bear on policy decisions in the nation’s capital for over 75 years. This work continues with your support and engagement, and with the ever-present grounding of Spirit.

Friends, in the last year your advocacy and financial contributions have helped ensure food is not taken away from families struggling with hunger, push to end the disastrous Saudi-led war in Yemen, prevent genocide and atrocities across the globe, and reform our criminal justice system.

### Setting the Legislative Priorities for the 116th Congress

One of the distinctive features of the Friends Committee on National Legislation is our practice of asking Quakers around the country to help shape our collective work. Every two years, FCNL asks Friends and their meetings, churches, and worship groups to discern *which public policy issues they feel are most pressing for the next Congress*.

The core question as part of this process is, where is the Spirit leading us? How are Friends called to influence government today? Friends discernment is the foundation for the lobbying priorities that FCNL establishes for each congress. We were heartened to see robust participation by Quakers across the country in this process in 2018 (an increase of 20% from 2016). The legislative priorities recommended by Friends were approved by FCNL’s General Committee on December 1, 2018 and are included in this report.

## **Prophetic. Persistent. Powerful. Update on Annual Meeting 2018.**

FCNL's Quaker Public Policy Institute and Lobby Day drew 400 people to Washington, DC to lobby to protect SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). Attendees went on 193 lobby visits representing 45 states with 39 different Members of Congress. One third of the participants were first time attenders.

More than 300 people stayed for FCNL's Annual Meeting which celebrated FCNL's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, affirmed the direction of the Forward Plan as outlined by staff, and conducted the business of the organization. FCNL awarded the Edward R. Snyder Award for National Legislative Leadership in Advancing Disarmament and Building Peace to Rep. Ro Khanna (CA-17) for his steadfast work to prevent war with North Korea, to end U.S. support for the Saudi-led war in Yemen, and to strengthen U.S. diplomacy abroad.

## **We Get Heard by Listening – The Growth of Advocacy Teams**

FCNL's Advocacy Team network is made up of more than 1,500 Quakers and friends from across the country who use their power as constituents to make change in Washington, D.C. Our success comes from our commitment to building relationships with Congress grounded in mutual respect and listening. 2018 brought tremendous growth in this program, as we launched 26 new Advocacy Teams. FCNL currently supports 113 teams around the country, an increase of 30% from just a year ago. In 2019 new Advocacy Teams are forming. To see current locations, visit [fcnl.org/advocacyteams](http://fcnl.org/advocacyteams).

One of the greatest values in the community-building work done by FCNL's Advocacy Teams is that we are making a conscious decision to stay focused on a single topic for a long time, even when it's out of the headlines. This relationship-based approach to constituent advocacy has a unique value in a noisy time. We find that our steady, focused, and calm approach makes a difference when it comes to influencing policymakers. For members of Congress, meeting with us is a more pleasant experience than being yelled at in a town hall meeting.

## **The Critical Role of Young Adult Friends**

FCNL is committed to growing our lobbying power both here on Capitol Hill and across the country.



Central to all that we do is FCNL's recruiting and training of young adults across the country to be advocates for peace, justice, and a sustainable planet. Eighteen Advocacy Corps organizers – who work part-time in their home congressional districts -- lobbied on police demilitarization in 2018-19. Five summer Interns, 10 full year Program Assistants, and 450+ participants in the 2018 annual Spring Lobby Weekend...young adults are taking the lead — and pressing Congress to pass key legislation.

For more than a decade, Spring Lobby Weekend has been a cornerstone of FCNL's commitment to training new generations of advocates for peace and justice. In March 2019, more than 500 young advocates gathered in Washington, DC to learn, build community, and lobby Congress on the immigration crisis. Visit [fcnl.org/youngadults](http://fcnl.org/youngadults) to learn more about these opportunities.

In the year ahead, please join Friends in your community, and in Washington DC as we work for a world free of war and the threat of war, a society with equity and justice for all, a community where every person's potential may be fulfilled, and an earth restored.

With gratitude for your partnership,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bridget Moix". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bridget Moix  
Baltimore Yearly Meeting  
Clerk, FCNL General Committee

## **FWCC Report for SAYMA Yearly Meeting 2019**

Two SAYMA representatives to FWCC, Beth Myers and Geeta McGahey, attended the Section of the Americas in March of this year. There are four autonomous FWCC sections serving the areas of Africa, the Americas, Asia and the West Pacific, and Europe and the Middle East. FWCC's World Office is in London.

The Section of the Americas that SAYMA belongs to stretches from the Arctic to the Andes. There were Friends in attendance at the Sectional Meeting from all over the U.S. and such countries as Canada, Mexico, Columbia, Guatemala, and Jamaica. The theme was Come and See, and all sessions were in Spanish and English. Geeta and Beth participated in worship sharing groups, meetings for business, morning worship, and a meeting of our U.S. southeastern region. Beth was nominated and approved as the regional coordinator of the southeast region.

There are many differences in the way Friends worship all over the Americas. Every morning at the Sectional meeting, there was semi-programmed worship with speakers from the Evangelical Friends and Friends United Meeting. All the singing was led by a Friend from COAL (Committee of Latin American Friends) in Spanish. There was an underlying question throughout the weekend of what binds us all together? One Quaker stood up and declared that if nothing else, we all call ourselves Friends.

During the meetings for business, Friends spent time recognizing the work of the translators in the sessions, reviewing finances, and blessing the upcoming traveling ministers. Geeta was part of the first group of traveling ministers for FWCC. Monthly meetings in SAYMA are invited to consider bringing a traveling minister to their community. Friends approved a new development position in FWCC to assist with bringing in more funding.

FWCC is an important organization for all Quakers, as it gives Friends from all types of worship and geographical socioeconomic backgrounds the opportunity to consult and worship together. The other thing that may bind Quakers at FWCC together is their interest in not dictating the correct way to be a Quaker, but to share and appreciate the many-splendored thing that is Quakerism in the world.

Attachment K: Reports Received but not Presented

## SAYMA Outreach Committee Report to YM 19

The SAYMA Outreach Committee has continued, since last YM, to meet bi-weekly through internet video conferencing. We have collected and developed materials directed toward active outreach. We alerted SAYMA to an on-line course in early Quaker history which, among other things, offered insights into the evangelical fervor of early Friends. We have begun discussions with a few monthly meetings and worship groups and hope to be offering our materials through discussion with more meetings during the coming year. We are offering two workshops at YM 19. We are still seeking a YAF member for the Committee.

For the SAYMA Outreach Committee by Wood Bouldin, Clerk

## Friends Peace Teams

### Annual Report

Friends Peace Teams (FPT) has had a year of many changes and concerns. They continue to have 3 major programs: Africa Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI), Peacebuilding *en Las Américas* (PLA) and Asia West Pacific (AWP). The original initiative coordinators were individuals who had their peace ministries recognized by the FPT council. In 1998 David Zarembka organized an exploratory team to Central East Africa and as a result began the African Great Lakes Initiative. In 2002 Val Liveoak organized an exploratory team to Colombia, South America. She was invited by the Mennonite Peace and Justice Group called Justapaz. Nadine Hoover brought her work in Indonesia to Friends' Peace Teams in 2007. It has since expanded. These three viewed their work as ministries but David Zarembka has left FPT and both Val Liveoak and Nadine Hoover have retired. They have been replaced by individuals hired by the initiatives' work groups: David Bucura for AGLI, Kins Aparece for AWP, and Mònica Maher for PLA.

FPT work is grounded in worship and Quaker practice. And now the FPT has had to adapt its structure to accommodate the working groups having employees, rather than serving as support groups to ministries. There has been much work on documenting procedures such as how making agreements with local providers should be done; what the length of terms for positions of responsibility are; should FPT add new regions and programs and how would that be decided. Much of the work of the Council has been involved in these issues.

There have been unexpected expenses. For example, Nadine Hoover of AWP became extremely ill when she was in Nepal for a workshop. All her expenses in the hospital had to be paid as she received care. She had to be flown back home to up-state New York. Fortunately, there were many donations to help cover the cost.

The Council spent much time in the monthly Zoom conferences discussing fund raising. I participated in most of those. I was unable to attend the annual face to face gathering, but according to the agenda fund raising was a major focus. There was strong hope that new donors could be identified and that monthly and yearly meetings would increase their donations.

Jack Willis of Nashville meeting, while not a representative, continues to be active with the council and has been editor of the excellent newsletter. I am at the end of my term as representative. FPT needs a strong and active representative who is able to use technology and has an interest in developing organizations. It also needs to be someone who has time during the day to participate in council meetings. I hope to talk with the nominating committee during yearly meeting to express this need.

Sallie Prugh,

Attachment K: Reports Received but not Presented

## Report of the SAYMA Web Manager

June 2019

As I reported last year, I have been examining social media platforms beyond Facebook to see what might be suitable for our outreach needs. I have created an Instagram account (sayma\_friends) and am currently evaluating how well it works for us. If you have any opinions, please direct them to the web manager.

Committee clerks, please let me know if you would like space on sayma.org to help publish news and information on whatever work you are doing.

Meeting clerks and SAYMA Reps, or anyone else who spots something incorrect or out of date: please help me keep your meeting's information current on the sayma.org website.

Comments or questions welcomed.

Charlie Wilton (Berea)

SAYMA web manager

[web@sayma.org](mailto:web@sayma.org)

Attachment K: Reports Received but not Presented

## **SAYF Report to SAYMA June 2019**

Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) held 6 retreats during the past year. We have averaged 23 Young Friends (YF) per retreat with 53 different teens coming to at least one retreat during the past year. Some Young Friends attended all 6 retreats and others attended only one. Details of each retreat are summarized below.

SAYF also held two joint Nurturing and Steering Committee retreats, in August, 2018 at Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting and in February, 2019 at West Knoxville Friends Meeting. Currently there are 16 SAYFers acting as Nurturers.

Most retreats were hosted at Meetinghouses, but we also gathered at Arthur Morgan School in Celo, NC. We are deeply appreciative to Friends for allowing us to use their facilities. Also, we are thankful to Durham and Atlanta Friends Meetings, whose generous donations have helped support scholarships for SAYF, and contributed to nourishing the program.

At the August, 2018 Nurturing Retreat the nurturers formed a committee oriented around service, and discussed holding racism and environmental workshops. In the coming months they demonstrated excellent follow through on these plans. They organized and held a retreat in January 2019 focused on systemic racial injustice, titled "Present To Our Privilege". In addition, nurturers have arranged to host George Lakey for an Earth Quaker Action Training in Atlanta in September for the upcoming retreat cycle. Other retreats in the past year have been rich with art and spirituality, cooking, identity and autumnal sculpture, and service and gardening.

SAYF had 14 new young friends join the program this year.

SAYF welcomed new Steering Committee members this year, Sue Abbate of Charlotte; Jennifer Dickie of Atlanta; Jon Saderholm of Berea; and Paul Laudeman of West Knoxville. They brought excellent energy to their work. Aaron Ruscetta of Atlanta and Mari Ohta of Celo contributed extra time and effort, each leading two retreats and providing solidity during the transition of the Steering Committee during this retreat season, and are much appreciated.

SAYF also recognizes with love the tremendous dedication, work, care and energy given to the program over many years on the SAYF Steering Committee by Jennifer Chapman of Durham; Mary Linda McKinney and Mark Wutka of Nashville; and Wren Hendrickson of Asheville, and celebrates their contribution as they retired this SAYF program year, joined in 2019 by Mari's retirement.

We continue to actively and vigorously request more adult support from SAYMA meetings, particularly FANs who are willing to travel and help with retreats.

## **SAYF Retreats:**

- 1. Atlanta Meetinghouse Retreat, NC** **Sept. 7-9, 2018**  
Theme: The Nature of Spirituality + Hugging Trees in the Light  
Number of Young Friends: 25  
Number of full-time FANs:\* 4 + 1 FANIT\*\*  
*Activities included: Service Project : Farm work with Concrete Jungle (Sat. AM) // Spiritual sunset hike & circle, Mount Arabia National Heritage site, (Sat. PM)*
- (\*FAN -Friendly Adult Nurturer/\*\*FANIT - Friendly Adult Nurturer in Training/\*\*FAD - Friendly Adult Driver)
- 2. Nashville Meetinghouse Retreat** **October 12-14, 2018**  
Theme: Identity and Orientation  
Number of Young Friends: 22  
Number of full-time FANs: 5  
*Activities included: Cheekwood Sculpture Trail to visit the James Turrell installation "Blue Peshier" where we worshiped together; Retired biology teacher Wesley Roberts led us in a discussion about identity and orientation.*
- 3. Asheville Meetinghouse Retreat** **November 9-11, 2018**  
Theme: Gratitude  
Number of Young Friends: 14  
Number of full-time FANs: 8  
*Activities included: Asheville Botanical Gardens; Multi-part art project designed to build trust and community.*
- 4. Atlanta Meetinghouse Retreat** **January 18-20, 2019**  
Theme: Being Present to our Privilege  
Number of Young Friends: 27  
Number of FANs: 4 + 2 FANIT/s + 2 FADs\*\*\*  
*Activities included: Racism Awareness workshop "Being Present to Our Privilege" ( 5 hrs Saturday); 3 Facilitators*
- 5. Arthur Morgan School, Celo, NC Retreat** **March 22-24, 2019**  
Theme: Finding Your Roots  
Number of Young Friends: 28  
Number of full time FANs:  
5 + 3 Parents/FANITs/  
*Activities included: A hike to Strawberry Field; EarthCare Witness workshop*
- 6. Berea Meetinghouse Retreat** **April 26-28, 2019**  
Theme: Art and Spirituality  
Number of Young Friends: 23  
Number of full time FANs: 4  
*Activities included: Workshops on singing/dancing, painting, and clay sculpture.*

## **Nurturing/Steering Committees Retreats**

### **1. Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting**

**August 10-12, 2018**

Number of Nurturing Committee Members: 12

Number of Steering Committee Members: 6

### **2. West Knoxville Friends Meeting**

**Feb 22-24, 2019**

Number of Nurturing Committee Members: 11

Number of Steering Committee Members: 5 + 2 SAYF Support Committee Members

## **Young Friend Queries**

1. How can we create peace in a hostile world?
2. How do you stand firmly against inequality? How do you peacefully challenge problematic social norms?
3. How do you create and nurture community?
4. How do you practice good social work while nurturing your well being and what avenues exist between those?
5. What do you do that harms/affects the environment and how can you better such impact
6. In what ways do you use your voices and express your perspectives?
7. How do we support people's identity and growth?
8. When do you reevaluate your perspective?
9. How do you remain grounded in a materialistic society?
10. How do you reconcile simplicity and self expression?
11. How do you apply Quaker values to your social media presence?
12. How does your energy change as you enter adulthood?
13. What is the light? Where do you find that in your life?
14. How do you identify as quaker and how do you explain that to your peers?
15. To whom do you extend your compassion?



William Penn House is a Quaker center for hospitality, education, and activism on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC.

The William Penn House is a short distance from the Capitol Building with the Congressional and Senate building on either side with the FCNL building across the street from the Senate building.

It is also a few blocks from the Folger Shakespeare Theatre and around the block from the Library of Congress for someone who wants to be a tourist. I have met the most interesting visitors at William Penn House. They were not always Quakers but they were working to promote Quaker values and social causes.

Although I am no longer the William Penn House Representative, I did stay at the William Penn House in November of 2018 for a FCNL event and I stayed at the William Penn House in April of 2019 when the AFSC gathering ended and it more financially practical to take the bus from Philadelphia to Washington D.C. and the train from Washington D.C. home to White Sulphur Springs, WV.

The train schedule was so that I would not be able to get back home until Wednesday following the AFSC. I was able to take the issues that we covered at the AFSC meetings and get it into the hands of those who might be able to do some good..

The William Penn House is still active in community improvement projects including community gardens and youth mentoring programs. There is also a summer intern program for college students to participate in setting up educational programs, activism and community improvement programs.

Respectfully Submitted

Bonijean Isaacs – SAYMA/Greenbrier Valley Worship Group/ Charleston WV Meeting

Attachment K: Reports Received but not Presented

## **2019 State of SAYMA Report**

### Ministry & Nurture Committee

There are some common themes that stand out in State of the Meeting reports, which we are grateful for and inspired by. There are 20 Monthly Meetings and five worship groups in SAYMA. We have 14 reports (none from worship groups), which form the foundation for this report. We encourage all monthly meetings and worship groups to submit State of the Meeting reports. Through these reports we share in each other's joys and sorrows and deepen connections within our community.

Many meetings dealt with meetinghouse renovations and repairs, causing inconvenience and budgetary challenges. Yet meetings also reported opportunities, even blessings, that arose from renovations, including more community outreach. Foremost among them was that many meetings reported viewing the misfortune in a metaphorical way. "Making interior repairs necessitated by the unstable foundation. There is a metaphor here about the life of meetings." One meeting mused that a "stable foundation" is as essential for community life as it is for a sanctuary building.

Central in SAYMA business these last years has been questions and insights about racial justice, and this focus has found its way into almost all SAYMA monthly meetings, fostering "challenging conversations," particularly around words like "racist" and "white supremacy." Meetings that seemed to converse most effectively on racial justice matters reported those conversations included "gentle corrective guidance," listening "with heightened sensitivity," and seeking genuine "understanding." One quote that stands out (but is reflective of other meetings' concerns) is that "SAYMA may have outrun its Light," which we understand to mean that some SAYMA decisions might have been more reactionary than worshipful.

Meetings that expressed the most positive affirmations of their community life emphasized an openness to new people, a welcoming atmosphere, hopefulness, being seekers, and mutual support. All meetings suffered losses and difficulties. There were conflicts in some meetings that so frustrated some Friends that they resigned leadership positions or left their meeting. Nonetheless, there were reports of finding new ways, new strengths, and new leaders.

What does it mean to "hold ourselves in the Light?" As we've reflected on this we wonder if God is leading us deeper into confusion in order to awaken us to newness. We sense that worship is central to this awakening, and although most meetings report depth in worship, there were mentions of "staidness" and interrupting conflicts. We wondered if meetings need Meetings for Worship with Attention to Conflict?

A Friend suggested listening to Centering Prayer (from the Catholic contemplative traditions) for insight into the integration of worship and action. Centering Prayer seeks to be simple: intend to be with God and consent to God's presence and action within. When distracted, use sacred words to aid in returning to intention and consent. Fruits of the discipline are simplicity, silence, and service. Applied to our worship we might seek silence in order to nurture our intention to be with God and discern God's will, then be obedient to the call for spoken ministry. One Friend said, "Silence is a pathway to spoken ministry." Another added this phrase, "Expectant waiting."

Rising above the celebrations and difficulties was this affirmation of what it means to be a Friend: "Let me live in a house on the road and be a friend to [humankind]."

Ron

## Asheville Friends Meeting 2018 State of the Meeting Report

As the year 2018 came to a close, our meeting was in a place of guarded hopefulness. The past few years have been troubled as we have dealt with difficult issues and have wrestled with what it means to be a community. We have struggled to communicate thoughtfully and we have lost some of our resiliency. Our dream of being a welcoming, inclusive, and spirit-led meeting is still alive though, and inspires us to dig deep and work hard. We have a long way to go on our journey as a meeting.

It is clear that we need to resume racial justice training so we can develop skills to recognize and confront racism in ourselves and in our community. We need to deepen our understanding of institutional systemic racism and white supremacy and share this reality with our older children in meeting so they are well informed as they become teens and young adults. The ongoing challenge to those of us who are white is to be aware of our white privilege. We will not be able to respond in love and compassion to the needs of friends of color until we focus on our own understanding of how we cause hurt.

In an attempt to work on this issue, our Racial Justice Committee presented several forums using the book, Becoming An Anti-Racist Church by Joseph Barndt. We looked at how our own practices are rooted in racism and how we can try to overcome this in our meeting. More discussion is needed as we get into the last part of the book. Our challenge is to increase participation in these discussions so we can develop a shared understanding of what racial justice means today.

When discussing racial justice issues we feel the tension between the testimony of integrity and the the testimony of community. We want to speak our truth with courage and conviction while remaining respectful and open to the truth of others. A case in point is over the use of the term "white supremacy" to describe our role in maintaining racism. Members feel strongly about the use of this term and at times we forget that these are beloved (F)friends with whom we disagree. We have realized that we need to use tenderness with those among us who struggle or do not struggle with our racism. We need to encourage each other to be open to the new ideas today's racial justice work requires. To do this we will need to build trust in each other, so we can share and confront our personal truths. At this time, we do not all have that trust, but we are working to rebuild it.

In this time of increasing nationalism in our country, some immigrants experience increasing prejudice but none more than those who are here without documents. Asheville Friends Meeting partnered with CIMA (Compa eros Inmigrantes de las Monta as en Acci n), the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Asheville (the hosting Congregation) and other faith communities to offer sanctuary to some who are at risk of summary deportation. We have minuted our support as well as offered financial support and endless hours of volunteer companionship.

Another area of concern expressed by many in Meeting is our need for right relationship with Indigenous peoples. A member of Meeting went to the Pendle Hill workshop on this issue and is helping Peace and Earth develop education for our meeting and the wider community about the role of Quakers in the boarding school movement and our presence on Cherokee land.

Our Peace and Earth and Racial Justice Committees continue to shepherd our outreach to Quaker and other organizations. Once again, we were able to dedicate a third of our budget to the important work being done in the broader community. Throughout the year, we collected food for MANNA food bank, toiletries for A HOPE Hospitality House for the homeless, and snacks and hygiene products for a Little Free Food Pantry. We also supported some walkers in the local CROP Walk to end hunger in our community.

Our community becomes stronger when we can help each other in times of need. Several families in Meeting have been in transition this past year and we did what we could to support them as they faced the joys and challenges that surround transition. Improved communication within Meeting, thanks in part to our Communications Committee, helped us be more responsive as need arises. Still, we could be more supportive of each other.

The number of children in Meeting continues to grow. Our meeting has a vibrant First Day School with weekly attendance of between 10-20 children. We currently don't have a youth group, but plan to begin one again next year. While we don't have any teens active with Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF), we enjoyed hosting their retreats. Our Junior Business Meetings were productive and gave voice to the needs and desires of our meeting's children. In June we welcomed the birth of Essence Villatoro-Weir-Grant. She is a third-generation Asheville Friend and a precious addition to our meeting family.

In 2018, our First Day School (FDS) invited Meeting members and attenders to share their heartfelt connections with favorite Bible stories, we examined ways children and teens can speak up when something seems wrong and needs changing, and we began a new exploration of the testimonies. Programming has been challenging with a large spread in ages within our FDS and uncertain attendance each week. We have recognized the need to provide some deeper-level instruction with our older children.

Our multigenerational events co-led by the Religious Education and the Spiritual Enrichment Committees continue to bring adults and children together. In the beginning of the year, we had the largest Secret Pal exchange since the beginning of this popular program. In the spring, our Youth Celebration gave everyone a chance to learn more about our children and celebrate their role in our meeting. In the winter we began a new Simple Christmas tradition where all ages came together to decorate cookies, make bird treats, and enjoy a wide range of crafts.

Our hearts were saddened in 2018 by the passing of our dear Friend, Alan Robinson, a former clerk of the Meeting. He was a man of many talents and lived a rich life that many of us knew nothing about. He gave a lot of himself to the meeting and we miss him.

Toward the end of the year we came together as a community with a meeting-wide retreat led by Debra Shaw. We explored what it means to be a compassionate Quaker. Participants shared deeply and envisioned ways to be in relationship with others within our meeting community and in the broader community.

Our year ended with our eyes focused on the future. Our Business Meeting approved the formation of a Long-Range Planning and Visioning Committee that will gather the many voices of meeting into a cohesive plan for the future. We will begin by envisioning what we want for our meeting. From there, we can put in place the things we need. We have a lot of work ahead of us as we become the meeting we want to be. We need more involvement on Meeting committees so the work is spread out among more people. We need to strengthen our spiritual muscles for sitting with unsafe feelings and being uncomfortable, and we need to be patient with each other as we move into the new year.

## Atlanta Friends Meeting 2018 State of the Meeting Report

This year, SAYMA Ministry and Worship has asked us to consider the queries about our dream for our faith community and how we are living into that dream in our life together.

Seventy-five years ago a group of Friends and seekers first gathered in Atlanta to seek the Light. Coming together in a time of war and racial segregation, they sought to create a small island of holy silence and to live faithfully into the world. Early on, Atlanta Friends envisioned a spiritual community where people of all races could worship together. We articulated a vision that we could balance being a school for nonviolent revolutionaries as well as a center for contemplation.

Our meetings for worship are well attended. Visitors from the community and from afar join us regularly to experience Quaker worship. When we moved to the “new” meetinghouse we made a conscious choice to be visible and this visibility has invited many inquirers. We continue to struggle with how best to welcome newcomers and invite them to share in our community life. Our new brochure and Care and Counsel’s newcomer’s table are being well used and provide a focus for inquiries.

The many young Friends and their families who actively participate in our life together bless us. Our nursery is often filled to capacity. Fifteen regular teachers and many regular doorkeepers support the first day program for young Friends. The careful preparation and planning by the Religious Education Committee has created a consistent programming that welcomes the Spirit of all young Friends.

These young Friends are a vital part of our meeting. They join us in the first fifteen minutes of worship. Occasionally, the whispers in meeting provide the source of ministry and levity. The return of the young Friends at the end of the worship period creates a different energy.

The Atlanta teen group has been active with Southern Appalachian Young Friends, attending regular retreats and providing leadership. These teens are impressive, a source of creativity, spiritual vitality and contribute greatly to our meeting.

We are in our seventh year hosting a cohort of Quaker Voluntary Service Fellows. These young adults have enriched us. Many members of the meeting are active supporting their spiritual and material needs. The local support committee operates under the care of the meeting.

The vision of racial justice and of racial equality continues to be the central animating concern for many of our members. Drawings on our testimony of equality changes are pursued at the personal, institutional and societal level. Quakers for Racial Equality and the Committee for Undoing Racism in Atlanta Friends Meeting offer ongoing education and awareness to the meeting though

literature tables, listening ear, workshops, forums and sharing resources. These Friends are under the weight of a concern to expand active participation by more members and attenders in the work of eradicating institutional racism. A new book discussion group and new affinity groups have formed to support Friends with new concerns.

Green Friends have maintained an active network and meet monthly to consider visions of a Green future. We receive regular ministry on the care of the Earth. Green Friends have held forums, hosted educational videos, and highlighted the linkages between racism, global inequality and the climate.

Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Concerns raised the concern that meeting insure that genderqueer/non-binary people knew they were welcomed at our meeting. Small transflags were made available for nametags. In collaboration with Administration Committee, signage for restrooms was developed and approved by meeting: "Atlanta Friends Meeting welcomes everyone to use the restroom that most closely reflects their gender identity."

Some in our meeting question whether we do enough for women's rights and ask us to consider doing more.

Members of our community have worked to prepare revisions to queries being proposed to SAYMA Faith and Practice.

Our meeting continues to grow. We welcomed seven new members by application, and four new members by transfer. Four young Friends joined us by birth. Eight of our members have transferred out joining meetings from Ireland to Hawaii. We have held one marriage under the care of meeting and held one memorial service for long-time member Perry Treadwell.

In 2018 we recorded six Friends with leading for ministry. We supported these Friends through appointed anchoring committees.

The Macon Worship group continues under our tender care. We rejoice with them on the growth of their group. They recently began meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> first day in a space rented from a downtown Unitarian Church.

Care and Counsel committee continues to provide structure to our pastoral responsibilities. We are now contacting newcomers who sign the guest book with follow-up emails. Using online apps we have become better at coordinating meal assistance for those with health issues and those with new babies. We have provided financial assistance to members and attenders who need short term support. To fulfill our mission of holding our members and attenders under our care, the two Care Quilts have been provided to seven individuals in the last year to feel close during times of illness.



For many years we have been blessed by individuals gifted in service who have fulfilled paid staff roles in the meeting. Both our Friend in Residence and Office Manager are moving on to new opportunities. This is a time of transition as we seek how best to meet the challenges of today.

The creative tensions we continue to feel in the meeting are a sign of spiritual vitality. New concerns and the animation of long-standing concerns provide a source of vitality, stretching the edges of growth.

## **Berea Friends Meeting 2019 State of the Meeting Report**

Berea Friends Meeting continues to be a spiritually healthy and dynamic community of seekers. We regularly welcome three to six children, eight to ten teens, and between twenty to thirty adults at Meeting for Worship. Visitors often join us. We have frequent First Hour discussion sessions that are well attended and which provide fertile soil in preparation for Worship. Our Meetings for Business in the Spirit of Worship are normally attended by at least ten people. This year we welcomed one Friend's transfer of membership into the Meeting. We united in mourning the passing of one member of the meeting.

This year has seen a great deal of activity at Berea Friends Meeting, with broad participation in committee work, changes in our physical space, incredible commitment of time, energy and emotional support to each other as individuals, and attention being given to efforts in the wider community and the world. We also have broad participation in work for SAYMA, and collaborating with Friends in other Kentucky meetings.

Our teens continue to be nourished by participation in the Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) program. We have a relatively large group of teens at present, and the children's program has also enjoyed growth this year; the entire meeting benefits from the energy and enthusiasms of our young Friends. We continue to discern the ways in which attenders of all ages may be encouraged to interact, learn, support and be supported with regular intergenerational activities and projects.

In spring we completed major Meetinghouse renovations, with the addition of an elevator at the front of the building. Although we enjoy a fair degree of financial stability, this was a costly project that involved major gifts, commitments of increased contributions, loans from Friends and doubling our monthly mortgage payment. The elevator makes the Meetinghouse more accessible and usable not only for our own purposes, but also as a resource to the wider community. The Meetinghouse is increasingly becoming a valued space for groups, organizations, family gatherings, weddings etc. Berea is lacking in affordable, flexible, welcoming spaces and we are glad that the wider community can enjoy the use of our building.

The spiritual life of the meeting is rich, with deep discernment on the intersections of individual promptings and spirit-led action by the meeting as a corporate body. We struggle and strive to strike a healthy balance between the inward spiritual life and its outward manifestations in the world. We encourage each other to attend to our inner promptings, to speak what is in our hearts, and to actively listen as we discern our spiritual path. Where conflict has arisen, we have relied on our process, and our goodwill, to guide us through the turbulence.

This year we have been led to be particularly active locally. Our Peace and Social Concerns and Outreach Committees again co-sponsored information tables at a series of live music events that take place in Berea over the summer. BFM was the only local faith organization to participate in Berea's first PRIDE parade. We committed to the inaugural season of Berea's new Room in the Inn efforts, with members and attenders serving in many capacities including: serving on the organizational board, volunteering at the check-in location, preparing, sharing and hosting meals, donating materials, providing extra meetinghouse cleaning, and serving as "Innkeepers" once per week over the winter months to provide a shelter option for our local homeless population.

Racism has been, and continues to be, a major focus of our attention. As a meeting we engaged in a year-long shared reading and discussion of the book "Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship". It was a valuable endeavor providing openings on how we, as a meeting and as individuals, can improve how we think about racism and white supremacy in relation to Quakerism. We continue to open the use of our meeting space to a local group

called “First Thursday Club” which meets monthly and aims to create conversation and share learning on racial justice issues and dismantling white supremacy; many from our meeting are also attenders with this group. As individuals and as a meeting body, we continue to grapple with understanding our own complicity in racist systems and institutions, and many of us are actively leaning into challenging conversations about what dismantling white supremacy looks like in our monthly and yearly meetings.

We actively nurture a meeting culture that provides gentle correction and guidance, and we continue to value many long-cherished aspects of our Meeting — the opportunity to worship in a space where mind and body can be still, a home in which we can experience our Quaker identity, and a safe and welcoming spiritual community committed to listening, discerning, and seeking unity. We walk together on a path illumined by The Light, supporting and nurturing each other on our journey. We strive to share the value of spiritual listening among ourselves, and with the wider community, and to serve as examples by living what we believe.

Birmingham Friends Meeting  
STATE OF THE MEETING REPORT  
March 2019

Birmingham Friends began the past year with ambitious and energetic ideas for both inreach and outreach. Our hope was to strengthen our Meeting and to invite new seekers to join us to create a larger, more active, more diverse and more visible Quaker Meeting. We were energized by the vision of media-savvy members and the inspiration of young attenders, for whom we are very grateful. In the course of the year we accomplished some of our plans and had to abandon others as needs within our Meeting became great and required steadfast attention.

Birmingham Friends are committed to creating a Meeting and a society based on racial equity. We have worked toward this goal, both individually and as a meeting, in many ways for years. Last spring many of us attended an introductory workshop conducted by Ron Chisholm, one of the founders of The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, based in New Orleans. A committee formed to bring the full 3-day weekend workshop to Birmingham last fall, and BFM was one of the faith communities represented on that committee as well as a major contributor. The filled-to-capacity workshop was a life-changing experience. We wholeheartedly encourage SAYMA to allow SAYMA URJ to bring this workshop to our yearly meeting. It will teach us things we need to know.

In addition, members of the Birmingham Meeting donated \$1,000 to send a young woman to FCNL's Spring Lobby Weekend to share her personal experience of the harm being done by the Trump administration's anti-immigration policies.

In the midst of this excitement, we learned that our Clerk, Mark Gooch, was experiencing serious health problems. Two surgeries followed a delayed diagnosis, and Mark has been unable to attend Meeting for the balance of the year. The Meeting has felt his absence and has struggled to find ways to express our love and concern that are actually helpful. Our clerk of Ministry & Nurture performed the Clerk of Meeting duties through 31 December 2018. Mark's absence led us to reflect on how close our community has grown and how much we feel the absence of a Friend.

We also discovered that our Meetinghouse required foundation repairs totaling \$20,000. Getting that work done in good order was a testimony to the faithfulness and patience of House and Grounds Clerk Peter Furst. The repairs also led us to debate at length our commitment to this property. We held a Threshing Session around whether we were comfortable making that large an additional investment in a very old house, when we might purchase a newer property needing fewer critical repairs. The unity of the Meeting around the idea of keeping and repairing our present Meetinghouse was a welcome reaffirmation. Although we decided not to make a change, the discussion was important. We now feel confident about making interior repairs necessitated by the unstable foundation. There is a metaphor here about the life of meetings.

Long-anticipated plans for a clerking workshop and a Creative Listening series last year were postponed due to the other challenges our Meeting faced, but we are now on track to “shore up our foundations” with these inreach and outreach activities in the coming months.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jane Hiles  
For Birmingham Friends Meeting

## State of the Meeting--2018.

As we have since last year, we continue to meet at the Brevard Elks Club Wellness Center where we have been very satisfied. It's rather isolated locale enhances the silence of Meeting.

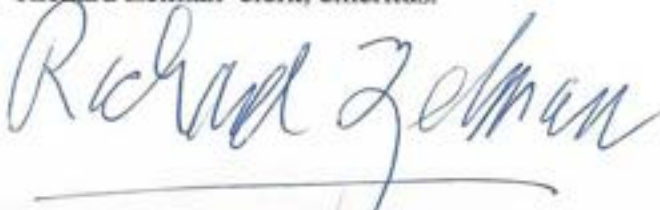
In last year's report we spoke about the "core of regular attenders" which elevated the spiritual quality of our Meeting. We are a small Meeting and each attender's contribution to the spiritual quality of the Meeting is noticeable. The most significant event from last year was when two of our core attenders got word that they had lost their job and would have to move on. This married couple were warm intelligent, loving, and deeply spiritual. Their contribution to the life of Meeting was incalculable. Losing them struck our Meeting a heavy blow. But then, lo and behold, the couple's economics was transformed, and they were able to move back to town and rejoin us at Meeting. We were overjoyed to be able to welcome them back.

Our long time treasurer had to step down and another regular attender volunteered to take up the post.

Adult Forum continues to be a vital function; we had fourteen attenders at a recent "meeting for eating".

And so, those of us who attend continue to derive great spiritual support from our silent worship.

Richard Zelman clerk, emeritus.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard Zelman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. Below the signature is a horizontal line.

Celo Friends Meeting State-of-the-Meeting Report  
March, 2019

During these challenging times both here and abroad, Celo Friends Meeting remains a supportive faith community and a great blessing. Worshiping together, we find hope, faith, understanding, and the energy to meet the world's challenges, along with our own, with love and Light. New attenders are bringing fresh insights and energy to our Meeting and our elders continue to provide the wisdom of experience.

The Adult Religious Education Committee has again contributed a great deal to the spiritual growth of members and attenders. Early in the year 2018, the committee completed the educational series titled *Deepening Our Spiritual Life by Understanding Our Quaker Roots*. Programs included sharing our own spiritual journeys, certain aspects of vocal ministry, and our relationship with scripture. Joyce Johnson led the final program by providing a history of Celo Friends Meeting, enlivened by her own commentary and that of others. Beginning in the fall, the committee organized programs on Simplicity and Peace as part of the winter-long series on the Quaker Testimonies, which continues into 2019. As a basis for learning about the testimonies, the committee distributed copies of *Living the Quaker Way* by Philip Gulley, which Friends universally enjoyed and found useful.

We are blessed with generous Friends who contribute their time and talents to the Meeting. In August, Jenifer Morgan read from her memoir *A Full Life*, which provides a great deal of historical insight into the early years of the Celo Friends Meeting and the Celo Community. After a long hiatus, the CFM Newsletter is being regularly composed and distributed. It includes much besides a calendar of events, including very popular "spotlights" on individual attenders and members, which are helping us know one another. Friends "let their lives speak" through participation in numerous efforts in the wider community. Several of our members continue to take a big part in the Feed-A-Child program, providing weekly assistance to more than 370 food-insecure children in Yancey County. Friends also have been active in organizations helping immigrants. Following a Friend's leading, the Meeting offered support for the highly successful World Peace Games, enabling a local fifth grade class to simulate problem solving on a global scale. A number of other community programs and organizations receive ongoing financial contributions from the Meeting.

In April, Geeta McGahey reported on her recent experiences as an FWCC traveling minister. Geeta's leading is to join with Quaker congregations, programmed and un-programmed, liberal and conservative, in the belief that "with the grounding of early Friends, hearts will be transformed to care more about creation, to care more about the poor threatened by climate disruption, to care more about each other, and to care more about the stranger."

Thanks to the dedication of our Margithaus Committee, we were able to replace the old floor in the fellowship building. At the instigation of the Buildings and Grounds committee, many Friends enjoyed participating in two workdays to keep the meetinghouse grounds and buildings fit and beautiful. We completed the project to beautify the area around the concrete foundation for the old meetinghouse. Rocks and native plantings surrounding the foundation and a stone bench facing the old fireplace, hearth, and chimney make an inviting place to gather and to

reflect on Friends who formed the foundation of our Meeting and to enjoy the peaceful atmosphere of the grounds and the surrounding mountains.

In other committee news, First Day School continues to provide our children and those visiting with meaningful programming during the Meeting for Worship. First Day School often meets outside and consists of nature walks, virtues studies, arts and crafts, and Godly Play stories. For their always-highly-anticipated Christmas program, FDS presented *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. Ten children took roles, and the preschoolers made a perfect appearance as the people from Whoville. Though we don't currently have a strong teenage presence in the Meeting, we are happy to support SAYF and will host a retreat at the Arthur Morgan School in the early spring.

The Nominating Committee began codifying the work of all committees by soliciting "job descriptions" for each one, which helped all in the meeting to be re-introduced to the tasks and roles that make it possible to enjoy our Meeting. Using the spirit-led process described by the Strawberry Creek Meeting, we have identified a new co-clerk for the coming year and anticipate engaging more members and attenders in the work of the Meeting.

The newly-named "End-of-Life" committee has been exploring ways to engage Friends in making their final wishes known. Based on the groundwork laid by Ernest and Jenifer Morgan over the years, the committee will provide forms for Friends to use to record their family contact information and final wishes, along with information on services that are available locally. The committee will also help facilitate burial in the Celo Community cemetery or elsewhere.

We lost two members of our meeting community during 2018. Dot Barrus passed away in May, and Eda Smith passed away in September. We celebrated their long lives with memorial meetings filled with stories and songs and memories.

Our members and attenders cherish the Meeting for Worship, cherish the silence, and cherish the movement of the spirit. We are, as always, grateful to be part of a vibrant and active Meeting where we are all growing and learning together in the Light.



State of The Meeting Report for 2018  
Chattanooga Friends Meeting

Dear Friends,

2018 was a year of continued growth, both physically and spiritually, for Chattanooga Friends Meeting (CFM). Our programmatic offerings provide multiple opportunities for exploration and discussion of topics both secular and spiritual above and beyond the richness of our Meetings for Worship. We have had a wealth of visitors in 2018 as well as multiple new regular attenders with whom to share our Quaker experience. And joyously, we have also added three new Members to CFM this past year!

Our many committees have worked hard to add to the fabric of life at CFM. Among many other endeavors;

- Our Library Committee completed their efforts to reorganize and recatalogue our entire library.
- Our Property Oversight Committee has helped usher in the 21st century with the new additions of both Wifi and A/C in the Meetinghouse.
- Our Outreach Committee has instigated a few 'Friendly Friday' events which have offered informal evening gatherings for people both in the Meeting and outside of it. There was also the initiation of Sunday evening Meeting for Worship in the living room of new Members across town.
- Our Peace & Social Justice Committee (P&SJ) keeps CFM up to date with happenings in the local community as well as in wider Quaker organizations. A letter to the local newspaper and multiple letter-writing efforts have happened under their watch as well as the crafting of a minute on 'Patriarchy and Violence Against Women' which was approved by CFM and sent onto SAYMA Yearly Meeting for their consideration. One member of this committee was an active participant in the Poor People's Campaign and gave a presentation to CFM on her experiences and also crafted an article for our newsletter 'Why we do what we do' - suggested reading for any Friend! Also, our Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) representative (FCNL is a sub-committee of P&SJ in our Meeting) oversaw an involved process of discussions on FCNL's legislative priorities - the results of which were sent to FCNL.
- Our Ministry & Oversight Committee (M&O) presented CFM with an active and broad selection of 2nd hours. From enjoyable 5th Sunday social outings to soul-searching presentations, these events keep us bonded and thinking. For the 3rd year now we had both a Spring and Fall Worship Sharing; one centered around issues of the environment and the other asking 'what does holding in The Light mean to you...?'. Members and attenders of CFM have given presentations on topics as varied as Spiritual Journeys, a trip to the Middle East, and the history of our very own Memorial Garden. Visiting presenters have offered us insights on our local Community Kitchen, on the workings of a local group advocating for Chattanooga's Latino Community, and the practicalities of wills, powers of attorney and advanced directives. We even had an afternoon of deep discussion with Jon Saderholm, Clerk of SAYMA.

Attachment I: State of the Yearly Meeting

- M&O also oversaw a process of reading, discussing and assessing SAYMA's proposed slate of new queries for Faith and Practice. There was also, in conjunction with Finance Committee, a deep rumination on the process of SAYMA assessments. The results of both these processes were shared with SAYMA.
- M&O has also spent good portions of 2018 addressing 2 long-standing unresolved issues at CFM; firstly, the establishment of a process for communicating with Members with whom we have lost contact and, if need be, resolving the status of their Membership, and secondly, resolving the status of the Sewanee Worship Group which has been under the care of CFM, but with whom we have not had a functioning relationship with for decades.

The end result of all this work is a Meeting that is a 'breathing document'. We are a Meeting that strives to offer rich and varied interactions for all its attenders, to provide a space that is safe and open to everyone, a place where folks can dig and delve and soar to heights either on their own or communally (but preferably both...!). We enjoy the presence of the patter of young shoes on our floorboards accompanied by the giggles or coos of an increasing gaggle of children. We are stirred by the sound vocal ministry that arises from our benches. And, of course, we marvel at the beauty and mystery of Silence.

In Peace and Love,

Ken Herrin, Clerk  
Chattanooga Friends Meeting

# CHARLESTON FRIENDS MEETING

## 2018 State of the Meeting Report

*How has the Spirit fared with us this year?*

It's an exciting time for Charleston Friends Meeting. Change is in the air. Blessed with a steady core of long-term members, we had become pretty set in our ways. The challenges of aging as well as departures of Friends from our community left us with fewer in attendance at Meeting for Worship and such small numbers at Meeting for Business that we've had to postpone it occasionally. Many young Friends sought opportunities in other states and countries; some older Friends left to be nearer their families. Yet we persisted, waiting in the Light and pursuing social ministries as we have been able. Meeting for Worship has remained a place of quiet refuge, refreshment, and challenge.

How fortunate we were when several young Friends arrived and became a part of our community! Of course, they immediately questioned some of the assumptions under which we had operated all these years, giving us insight about why our Meeting might only be attractive to older Friends like us, and not younger seekers looking for a spiritual home.

As in past years, Charleston Meeting has held weekly worship in space owned by a local religious-based housing support organization. We have acted on social concerns, engaged with and supported our yearly meeting and wider Quaker organizations, invigorated meeting vital functions, pursued religious education, and built our community.

We work on social concerns corporately through pooled contributions, provision of meals at local shelters, and providing donations of luggage and personal care items to children in foster care. We provide a contribution to Mission Meals, offering free meals benefiting homeless people through an historically Black church. Meeting supports the West Virginia activities of the American Friends Service Committee financially and as an advisory committee to help the programs succeed. This year we also participated in the priority-setting process of the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) more extensively than in prior years, sending representatives to the FCNL Public Policy Institute from Charleston and the Greenbrier Valley Worship Group.

Our yearly meeting, the Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA) has offered numerous opportunities to interact with, serve, and appreciate the wider Quaker community. In 2018, we: commented on proposed queries for Faith and Practice; researched investment policies of Friends Fiduciary Corporation in response to a draft minute from another monthly meeting; responded to an inquiry about the changed assessment policy (and changed our payment schedule); considered and responded to a proposal for a "counterpoint" committee to the Uplifting Racial Justice committee; increased our attendance at Yearly Meeting, with most attendees serving in appointed YM positions, volunteering at YM sessions, or both; and offered feedback about special interest group meetings held at yearly meeting.

We took important steps strengthening our meeting's core institutional functions. We culled and reorganized our library, sending many unused books to other homes, including those of SAYMA Friends. We continued to work on outreach strategies with added insight from new attenders on how to improve our "Welcome mat" for visitors and change our public face. We revised and

clarified guidelines for worship sharing, which we continue to hold on fifth Sundays. New faces joined our positions of responsibility. We visited and received visitors from Greenbrier Valley worship group (under our care) and participated in a successful annual, statewide Friends gathering, which 33 Friends from small Meetings across West Virginia attended.

Bible study every two weeks in Friends' homes completed the Gospel of Luke and began reading the prophet Amos, leading to reflection on the nature of group versus individual responsibility. In second hour discussions, we are completing reading *Mothers of Feminism*.

In addition to Meeting for Worship and intentional religious education, we also build community through social activities such as: a Quaker book club which attracts many non-Quaker participants, ladies night out meals; providing financial and spiritual support for Friends going to SAYMA; and ministering to Friends with illness and disability.

*In response to queries that we received from SAYMA's Ministry and Nurture Committee:*

1. *How has Charleston Friends Meeting lived up to its dream of how it could be as a faith community?*

This query is challenging to Charleston Friends in part because we have not heretofore tried to reach an explicit corporate expression of what our faith community should or could be. Thinking about all the meeting *should do* led a Friend to comment, "*The query about responsibility really asks if CFM has done all it should about the issues in the other 3 queries and so is the most important of all.*"

The query inspired another Friend to respond, in part, "*I wonder what CFM's dream is, of how it could be as a faith community. That would be worth discussing, maybe. For myself, I dream of greater spiritual depth and communion, more tuning in to Spirit together, more spiritual connection with other groups of Friends including from the other branches of Quakerism, and other faith communities in the area...*"

Charleston Friends feel that the underlying concern of this query, describing a vision of a well-ordered faith community, is the responsibility of monthly meetings, and we will endeavor to pursue it in the coming year, as way opens.

2. *How have we dealt lovingly with conflicts between members of our community or between ourselves and others?*

Charleston has been blessed with little internal conflict, but this may be a consequence of its previously uniform composition of older Quakers coming mostly from the unprogrammed tradition. This apparent uniformity may cause discomfort among some Friends when specific topics such as climate change, race relations, and Christianity come up. Just as SAYMA has expressed the desire to listen to Friends of color and provide what they need to feel welcomed in the Yearly Meeting, so Charleston will need to be sure it listens to Friends with differing opinions to provide a safe place for sharing. Perhaps that will help us gain understanding from those with whom we disagree.

Recent events have strained our relationship with SAYMA. Some Charleston Friends believe SAYMA may have outrun its Light on more than one occasion, particularly related to worldly concerns. We remain concerned about inconsistent treatment of minutes and other communications from monthly meetings. A Friend summarized her feelings on the

relationship with SAYMA as, *“It’s like family - we get aggravated with them at times, and have to let time, love, and Light work their magic to heal us.”*

Referring specifically to the issue of racial justice, where there has been unity on goals but strong disagreement about how to make progress, the same Friend added, *“Speaking for myself, my frustration with SAYMA was not that racism should be ignored, but the way in which SAYMA chose to handle it. They quickly rushed to make decisions that were in my opinion not in the Quaker manner of seasoning and asking for clarification on how our resources would be used. Also, I do not buy into the theory that all white people are inherently racist, and I do not feel the need to be ‘educated’ on this.”*

Another Friend was encouraged by SAYMA’s efforts, but mindful of the difference between process and goals: *“I support anti-racism work. I thought it was really cool when I found out SAYMA was working on figuring out what their institutional racism and personal racism was and trying to correct it. I also acknowledge how the language being used in this process can feel really off putting.”*

### 3. *How has our meeting responded to institutional racism?*

On this point, a Friend noted, *“It strikes me that CFM has felt burdened by YM’s insistence that we attend to this issue...”* Indeed, it was very difficult for Charleston to relate meaningfully to structural questions clearly intended for actual institutions, as opposed to a small monthly meeting of Friends. While recognizing that unconscious racism is present nearly everywhere, we fail to see that we can constructively engage with questions related to the distribution of power within our small and rather informal meeting. For, as one Friend said *“It’s not ‘making the world a better place;’ it’s ‘knowing, loving, and doing the Truth’ which is the best of all possible worlds.”*

We believe it is more profitable to spend our time; working to reverse social policies that may spring from racism such as mass incarceration; supporting a welcoming community for refugees and immigrants; promoting activities through AFSC in Charleston and southern West Virginia that empower people of color and work to reduce the violence that confronts them; contributing individually to improved race relations through professional work and community service; and education and reflection through events related to Martin Luther King Day and worship in an historical Black church. The words of one Friend resonate with many of us *“I relate to the issue on a personal level, through friendships and trying to think through how to be more open and helpful.”*

Many years ago, a Friend quoted Sam Walter Foss in vocal ministry during Meeting for Worship: *“...Let me live in a house by the side of the road and be a friend to man.”* In these contentious times, that’s a worthy calling.

Approved at Meeting For Business  
3 March 2019

Attachment I: State of the Yearly Meeting

Columbia (SC) Friends Meeting  
State of the Meeting Report, Fourth month 2019

1. Columbia Friends dream of a focus maintained on finding the spirit of the divine within ourselves and each other. Yet, we are not always a cooperative community. We strive to maintain an oasis of peace, calm and justice in the wider community. Advertising this is challenging, as our presence is little known. While satisfied with our meetings for worship, held weekly with like minded people, we are concerned for the sustainability of a smaller and aging community. Having accomplished our long held dream of our own meeting space for worship, there is some sense of a lack of direction and momentum for the next phase. While we strive to make the space available to sympathetic groups, at nominal cost for expenses, there must be other opportunities for outreach and support to the wider community.
2. Challenging conversations are always that; we strive to present views in a non-threatening fashion despite our emotional attachment to a particular point of view, and remain present to that of God in the other. Issues can be divisive, but we as a people struggle not to be divided as a community. Working towards unity we hope not to make others uncomfortable with our statements, rather we wish them to be delivered and received in a spirit of love. There seems to be an agreed element of trust within our community, yet concern for our unity and willingness to share and shoulder hardship.
3. Members of our meeting have responded with care and compassion to assist on an individual level those affected by institutional racism (and other -isms). Friends support the Alternatives to Violence Project, as well as issues surrounding immigration and refugees. We on occasion provide direct support to those in need, but lack the coordinated resources to respond more fully. We do trust our fellow seekers in the meeting, perhaps a bit slowly. Seeing to grow is challenging as our worship conventions can be intimidating at first, and we do not do well at providing a road map to worship in silent expectation. The chance to directly experience God is terrifying to some.

Our meeting does not reach agreement and unity quickly, many times perceived to be a lack of regular participation as well as poor communication of a decision. We struggle to accept the sense of the meeting when we are not present. There is varying perception of the Quaker Way. Individual actions, though taken out of love for the community, have lead to distress.

## Cookeville's State of the Meeting 2018

1. What is our dream that our faith community could be? How has the meeting lived up to that dream or fallen short of the dream?

We are small and struggling but we are still here supporting each other. We have fallen short of our dream of enough growth to reach a critical mass. We have a vision of being joined by young families and TTU students who need quiet space disconnected from technology. We wish for a more "evangelical" energy in our group. We feel quite staid in our faith and sense a lack of enthusiasm among us. We do have bursts of energy to get important work done and we feel supported in our individual leadings.

2. How do we distinguish between safety and comfort when engaging in challenging conversations within our community?

Our group is almost too homogenous to have challenging conversations. We feel safe to share our truths in our Meeting and have grown vastly together over the years but we miss our attenders with wide-ranging knowledge of other religions and ways of seeing. We strive to be open to people who think differently than we do while providing a safe space for conversations without confrontation as we seek truth together. Let us listen more with heightened sensitivity.

3. How do we care and respond to those who have been hurt by institutional racism in the society and in your own meeting and other experiences of inequality among us? Do we respond with love and compassion? Do you trust others in your meeting in order to share your truth and our places of pain?

We continue to raise our awareness of institutional racism and constantly occurring micro aggressions. We must listen and be present for people who have been hurt by racism. Our intention is to get out of our comfort zone and seek out the diversity that exists in our community. We wish to be among those with a rainbow of skin tones and a variety of points of view.

4. Are we living up to our responsibilities? Do we say "yes" when we can and "no" when we need to?

We attempt to live up to our responsibilities but we are acutely aware of our limitations and know ourselves well enough to know when to say no-maybe too often. We are generous with our limited resources but could do a better job of outreach to the wider community.

**Greenville Monthly Meeting (GMM), Greenville, South Carolina**  
**State of the Meeting: January 1, 2018-December 31, 2018**

**Preface**

Our Meeting has grown in the life of the Spirit during the past year. We continue on our journey to hear and understand what the Spirit intends for us as a Meeting, not as disconnected individuals.

In compiling this State of the Meeting Report, we felt led to select several queries that are already contained within SAYMA's *Guide to Faith and Practice* instead of using the ones that were sent to us. The queries we selected are appended at the end of this report.

**The State of Our Meeting**

We believe that the Spirit has been evident in almost all aspects of the life of our Meeting. This has given us opportunities to share our faith and learn from each other.

We attempt to embrace a *reconciling spirit*. By that we mean an ongoing attempt to bring individuals back together—to achieve unity by giving ourselves to something greater (the Spirit) and by relinquishing mistaken willfulness.

We seek to maintain an assumption regarding the generosity of the Spirit—that people wish to know and are open to the truth.

To these ends, we have tried to be more open to the Spirit during Meeting for Business—an example of which can be seen in our decision to use alternative queries for this State of the Meeting Report.

In trying to meet the challenges that have arisen, we have not only learned how to listen to the Spirit, but also how to hear the Spirit in each other. We continue to grow in this respect.

We still struggle with knowing how and when to express our disagreement over what another Friend says. We seem to be fragile in this regard—in both our expression of—and ability to receive—such disagreement.

In our quest to know the will of the Spirit, we have sought greater understanding through Bible readings, Pendle Hill pamphlets, and occasional Friday night discussions of these and other materials.

We want to be faithful to what God wishes/wants us to do, not necessarily faithful to what our particular predetermined dream or vision of the Meeting might be. We need to



have Clearness over our spiritual concerns first—not a specific political or social agenda. We seek clarity through inner silence, not outer demands.

We seek to know the Spirit in other ways as well. Some of us are active with the Palmetto Friends Gathering (PFG), some with SAYMA, some with FGC. We welcome visitors to participate and to share. One of our members fields telephone calls from inquirers. We take turns reaching out to members/attenders who have been absent—and to those who have attended our Meeting for the first time.

We know that we have to be ready to say what seems right to us—and to be prepared to be confronted with the possibility of the fallibility of our opinion. As in this and all other things, we place our trust in the Spirit.

### **Animating Queries**

1. Do you welcome diversity in an understanding and reconciling spirit, and make use of it for the enrichment of the meeting?
2. Are you sensitive to the spiritual and temporal needs of those making up the meeting community?
3. Do you make use of the Bible, the writings of Friends, and other inspirational literature, being open to new light from wherever it may come?
4. Are you alert to the subtle as well as obvious injustices which may exist in your social and economic life?
5. Do you center your life in the awareness of the presence of God so that all things take their rightful place?
6. Do you strive to tell the truth at all times?
7. Are you sensitive to the spiritual and temporal needs of those making up the meeting community? Are you alert to the subtle as well as obvious injustices which may exist in your social and economic life? Do you seek to explore the roots of your unspoken assumptions about individuals or groups of people that may be the source of hurt and pain to others?
8. Do you live in the virtue of that life and power which takes away the occasion for all war? In your work for peace, are you nourished by peace within yourself? Where there is hatred, division, and strife, do you seek to be tools of reconciliation?

Huntsville Area Friends Meeting  
State of the Meeting Report  
March 2019

This past year has been one of significant upheaval for our small Meeting. Two members of our community passed away, long-time HAFM member, Anita Anderson, as well as John Shea, the father of Charlotte Shea, a long time attender. John himself was an occasional attender as well as a friend to our Meeting. A Meeting for Worship in Memorial was held for Anita Anderson and attended both by members and friends of our HAFM community as well as by Anita's family and friends.

In the late Spring of 2018, Holy Cross St. Christopher Episcopal Church, where we share worship space, suffered serious wind, water, and storm damage. Our meeting, as well as the Episcopal and the 7th Day Adventist congregations with whom we share space, were displaced. Over the summer we held Meeting for Worship on the University of Alabama Huntsville campus or in member's and attender's homes. This time was enjoyable as we had the opportunity to worship in novel spaces, but it was also sometimes unsettling. Not all of our Meeting locations were easily accessible for everyone in our community. We also felt that moving locations made it difficult for some visitors to find us or feel comfortable joining us.

In the fall of 2018, we rejoined the Holy Cross St. Christopher congregation, who had accepted the hospitality of our next door neighbors, Lakeside United Methodist Church. Lakeside offered the use of their annex building to both of our groups on Sundays. This use was given as a gift. As both of our groups have settled in though and found this space comfortable, we are preparing to offer a monthly donation to Lakeside Methodist in contribution to the upkeep of their space. The annex space is used by the Methodists for other purposes during the week, so Friends have little to none of our physical belongings with us. At this time, we are unsure of the status of the Holy Cross St. Christopher church building and whether or not we will at some point return to worship in that location.

As we have begun to settle into a comfortable and regular Meeting location at the Lakeside Methodist Annex, we are seeing that our attendance numbers are unusually low. We are hopeful that as we continue to meet in the same location our attendance will move back up to a larger number, allowing for wider fellowship and less strain as we seek to support our faith community as we have done in past years with committee work, attendance at SAYMA gatherings, and participation in local faith organizations such as the Interfaith Mission Service.

One benefit to moving our Meeting space is that regular attenders and members have grown closer. Meeting in each others homes allowed us to share interests and learn more about each other's lives outside of Meeting. Friends gathered together to kayak during the Summer. In the Winter, we gathered in a friend's home at Christmas for fun and fellowship. We also gathered with our friends from Holy Cross St. Christopher for carol singing. Recently when members have been hospitalised, some among our group visited and helped out with pet sitting and other needs.

In this past year, our Meeting has had many opportunities to help others. We wrote letters of support and made a donation to Voices From the Border in order to help young people caught up in immigration difficulties. In the summer, several of our group attended a local rally for immigration reform at Big Springs Park.

Here in our local community, in the Spring a member of our Meeting participated in “Interfaith Conversation on Women and Spirituality”, a panel and community conversation featuring women of diverse spiritual backgrounds. Later, in the Fall, Friends attended a candlelight vigil at Temple B’nai Sholom to honor the victims of the shooting in Pittsburg. During the Winter we felt a concern for the homeless as temperatures dropped. We made donations at that time to two organizations that offer help to the homeless locally, Rose of Sharon and the Grateful Life Church. In the early Spring, some of us attended an open house, Meet Your Muslim Neighbor, event at our local mosque.

Although Friends are for now meeting minimalistically on several levels, our financial and spiritual support from Friends who aren’t worshipping weekly with us continues to grow. This increase in resources has enabled HAFM to resume supporting efforts and programs both locally and through Wider Quaker Organizations. This support also positions us to move into a more permanent meeting space, whenever and wherever we are led.

## State of Nashville Friends Meeting, 2018

The new year began on a note of intentional introspection, as Nashville Friends Meeting engaged in a series of listening sessions that began in 2017. Initiated primarily by the leading of member Mary Linda McKinney, these gatherings sought to hold all aspects of Meeting life in the Light, in the possibility that Way would open for us as a community in unexpected ways. In 2017, we grieved those we had lost, as many members and attenders had moved away in the last several years for various reasons. In 2018, we built on that foundation by examining our committee structures and how work is divided among us. In the end, truthfully, not much changed in a visible way, as several ideas were not deemed viable by the body of the Meeting. But the process was a valuable opportunity to reflect on who we are and how we are changing as time marches on.

2018 also contained a note of grief, as we mourned the passing and celebrated the life of Maaret Houghton, one of our longest attending members in Nashville.

For a second year, we did not receive any requests for membership. We said farewell to Lissa West, who moved to be with family in Florida. She will be missed. Christina VanRegenmorter laid down her membership as she felt led to explore the next steps of her spiritual journey. We are deeply grateful for her many contributions over the years.

However, 2018 was not solely a year of loss. Our Meeting continued to follow our leadings and serve in many ways throughout the year.

Several years ago, we began to provide opportunities for spiritual deepening and nourishment beyond our weekly meeting for worship. These have continued as intended, and many members and attenders have expressed their gratitude. A handful of Spiritual Deepening groups still meet for discussion and fellowship. We hold a weekly Meeting for Worship on Thursday mornings for those who cannot attend on Sundays or prefer a small group. We continue to hold Meetings for Healing on a quarterly basis, in which anyone can come and receive prayers and hands on healing. And we have a prayer committee which prays daily for anyone in the community asking for any concern to be held in the Light.

We have also continued to use the Meeting House as a place of welcome engagement with the greater community. About twenty people gathered as part of a lively interfaith conversation with the Atlantic Institute, a Turkish American organization. Our Alternatives to Violence Project committee hosted several events that infused the Meeting with new energy. Nadine Hoover, Val Liveoak and Kathy Railsback came to Nashville and shared their wisdom and experience. Nadine acted as lead facilitator of a Basic Level AVP workshop and was joined by Kathy as lead facilitators of a Trauma Resiliency Advanced workshop. On the heels of this, the Meeting hosted a Friends Peace Teams (FPT) face-to-face with attenders from all over the world, and a Peace Quest one day workshop in which Val Liveoak was the keynote speaker. She shared her experience with FPT since its beginning in 1993. The Meeting especially thanks Jack Willis and Tim Shaw for their tireless efforts in coordinating these special events and ensuring their success. In addition to these larger AVP gatherings in the Spring of 2018, our local AVP facilitators

offered additional workshops in 2018 and continued their work in local schools and in the women's jail. Our Meeting also continued to be home base for the Middle Tennessee Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) advocacy group which remained quite active until October. At that time the advocacy group was put 'on hold' waiting for additional interest and support from the larger community.

We hosted a meeting of Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF). Twenty-two SAYFers gathered here for a weekend along with five adults. After many years of leadership in the SAYF program, Mary Linda McKinney and Mark Wutka have laid down that Ministry. Nashville Friends express gratitude for their faithful service but we are struggling to find active adult leadership for SAYF within our meeting.

Our First Day School program reflected the Meeting as a whole in some ways, as the only two remaining members of the committee sought to provide a high level of care to our young attenders without burning themselves out. The First Day School took on several projects throughout the year. They reimagined the downstairs meeting space and made several aesthetic changes. They coordinated a service project focused on immigration, and provided support to the Nashville International Center for Empowerment (NICE), a refugee resettlement organization. Two of the First Day School children delivered donations of household items to the NICE offices in early February.

We were pleased to bring a worship group in Clarksville under our care this year. Ruth Graham and her husband, recently relocated from Illinois, hold worship in their home on first Sundays of the month. Ruth wrote us a very seasoned and spiritually grounded letter requesting that we support this. The Meeting gladly approved having them under our care.

In the last several months, we have contemplated SAYMA's queries as a meeting. We are including our reflections on those queries below.

*Query: What is our dream that our faith community could be? How has the meeting lived up to that dream or fallen short of the dream?* Friends held up a vision of a meeting that was welcoming, inclusive, and actively engaged in the care of its members and of the broader community. Many of us feel that we have sometimes succumbed to the distractions and individualism of modern society in ways that detract from those goals. Nashville Friends' participation in the Alternatives to Violence Program (AVP) was held up as an example of community engagement. However, Friends noted that this is an activity of individual Friends sponsored and supported by the meeting rather than an activity of the meeting as a body. We hold up and celebrate the contributions and engagement of these Friends, but we note that the meeting has fallen short of its vision and of its past levels of engagement.

*Query: How do we distinguish between safety and comfort when engaging in challenging conversations within our community?* The distinction between safety and comfort requires deep discernment and a commitment to Integrity. As with much else, Nashville Friends report mixed results. Discomfort can cover a wide range of circumstances, from mere cultural irritation to the early warning signs of real danger. Where interactions within the community have

raised real concerns, Nashville Friends have sought to be forthright in addressing issues while trying to hold all parties in the Light. Other times, members of our community have had difficulty getting past perceptions of criticism or worse in discussions of the pain and challenges experienced by others of different backgrounds.

*How do we care and respond to those who have been hurt by institutional racism in the society and in your own meeting and other experiences of inequality among us? Do we respond with love and compassion? Do you trust others in your meeting in order to share your truth and our places of pain?* We note the absence of regular attendance by Friends of color in Nashville, though we were blessed last year by the presence of a family from Kenya for several weeks. We continue to struggle in trying to discern the boundaries between our own cultural comfort zones and Quaker essentials in everything from habits of dress and speech to the conduct of worship. There have on occasion been hurt feelings on the part of some Friends when others have not shared the same leadings. Our meeting has been enriched by members and attenders who have experienced discrimination or other societal hurts and who do take the risk of sharing their experiences openly.

*Are we living up to our responsibilities? Do we say “yes” when we can and “no” when we need to?* The past decade has seen a notable loss of our meeting’s seasoned leaders. While some of this loss is a natural result of death, debility, and other life transitions, there are unmistakable signs that many of our leaders have experienced levels of burnout that have led to prolonged absences from the meeting. Although we can see clearly that this pattern cannot be sustained, we have had difficulty reversing it. There is real concern that new potential leaders will be reluctant to step up when they see successions of meeting clerks, treasurers, and others take extended leaves of absence after serving the meeting. Helping our leadership attain a degree of balance that allows them to experience service to the meeting as a source, rather than a drain, of spiritual energy is an increasingly crucial challenge for Nashville Friends.

## **Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting State of the Meeting Report March 3, 2019**

In the past year we have enjoyed a continuing deep silence in our First Day worship together. Verbal ministry, if it comes, usually occurs near the end of worship. Our Afterword usually has some verbal ministry which often carries the weight of being Spirit-led. Our Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business shows benefits of our continuing work to deepen our Quaker procedure as Spirit-led. Our community life is an ongoing rich experience of mutual caring, learning together more about Quaker procedure, our involvement in social oppressions, and our life experiences. We are grateful to discover from newly arrived attenders and members that ours is a very welcoming Meeting. In the disruptive challenges we have faced in the past year, we are finding a deepening trust in a Light-led life together as the Abiding Spirit holds us together in unity, beneath our differences about how to be, and what to do.

Our Meeting faced significant challenges in 2018: physical, political, and personal. We resolved some, continue working through others, suffered from many, and found strength in most. The most obvious physical challenge was the flooding of Flat Creek and the Swannanoa River, destroying a chunk of our parking lot along with plantings, gardens, and walkways. We were fortunate that the water did not enter the building but we had a lot of work to do to make it usable. We worked with the local Greenway Commission to donate some of our property to Black Mountain with the agreement that the city would do the reconstruction of the river bank that Flat Creek destroyed. We still have to decide what steps we should take to protect our building from any future flooding that may rise to a higher level in the future. We came together around this issue and strengthened our faith and our community but have more work to find unity as we go forward.

The second most obvious physical challenge has been the crowding in our Meetinghouse and our parking lot as our Meeting attracts new Members and attenders, a challenge complicated by the loss of some of our parking from the floods as well as greater anticipated loss during months of staging for heavy equipment during the reconstruction of the bank of Flat Creek. We found more space inside by creative rearrangement of chairs but continue to look for structural solutions to make us a more welcoming community. We will shortly consider a reordered Sunday morning schedule experiment to see if we can make it more feasible for young families to attend regularly.

A third physical challenge we are facing is the difficulty that many in our aging community have hearing in our Meeting room. The Building Committee is researching solutions at this time and we hope to take steps to improve the situation shortly.

The Meeting was deeply affected in the past year by conflicts about our relation to SAYMA's search for unity on issues raised by their Uplifting Racial Justice Committee. It is beyond the scope of this report to express our struggle to understand how our Meeting's discernment relates to the Yearly Meeting's decision making. Our Clerk of the Meeting and the Clerk of our ministry and Counsel Committee were both so overburdened they withdrew from their positions. We opened our hearts to both; one has returned to full membership and regular attendance, and we anticipate the other will follow soon. The issue of racism and white privilege, however, is one we

have taken seriously and wrestled with. We have held forums, workshops, and supported individuals' leadings to contribute through other organizations in the local, regional, national and international arena. A related issue that has been raised, male dominance in our Meeting and in the Society of Friends on a larger scale, is yet to be addressed.

Finally, we are aware of, but have failed to solve, the problem of too few Members and attenders doing too many of the necessary chores to keep the Meeting running. We are grateful, however, that we are the kind of Meeting that looks at this kind of problem directly.

Counterpoised in contrast to, or perhaps as a result of, these challenges are a number of Meeting qualities that all members of our community appreciate:

- Quality and depth of sharing
- Feeling of community, connection with others
- Women's dinners
- Support for spirit-led civic and political action
- Diversity (our Meeting is not diverse enough)
- Working with immigrant community
- Forgiveness of disruptive individuals
- High value on honesty and authenticity
- Listening with respect

To put some flesh on the bare bones of this list, two examples will suffice. The first, the women's dinners, is an example of our spiritual self-care; the second, the Immigrant Support Committee, is an example of spirit-led civic action.

1. Attendance at our **Women's Dinners** has increased from 8 or 9 to often 20 or more, sharing both a meal and our rich experiences, leadings, readings, and reflections around issues that arise out of our Quaker faith. From early consideration of the lives of Quaker women involved in women's rights we moved to presentations by members sharing reflections on their leadings and work on such contemporary issues as peace and justice in the Middle East. Plans are underway for a diverse set of continuing programs at gatherings in 2019.
2. The **Immigrant Support Committee** reaches out to immigrants and their families in our local area. By initially offering an English class at a local nonprofit, we became acquainted with many immigrants and they developed a sense of trust with us. Over time we began to offer assistance in many areas: legal aid and immigrant rights, transportation and appointments, applying for assistance obtaining food and clothing, locating jobs, finding housing, dealing with law enforcement, obtaining energy assistance and home insulation, organizing Christmas presents for children, and applying for preschool, summer camp, and college scholarships. On a wider scale, we coordinate with the work of the local Sanctuary movement and the work of the American Friends Service Committee.



In short, we have deepened our commitment to our faith and our community through honest dialogue about the challenges we faced. We have been blest with enough financial and spiritual resources to address problems that might otherwise have torn a community apart. We face the future with optimism and strength.

## **WEST KNOXVILLE FRIENDS MEETING**

### 2018 State of the Meeting Report

The West Knoxville Friends Meeting (WKFM) remains an active and vibrant and Friends community with fulfilling worship and loving fellowship. In 2018, we acted to improve in diversity, outreach, and social witness.

Part of what WKFM would like to become is a more diverse community. Because we lack true diversity, within our community, we have sought to both educate ourselves about racism in general and institutional racism in our society in specific including our role in the problem. Over the year, many F/friends have attended several race-themed book discussions, FGC e-Retreats on White Supremacy and interfaith conversations on race at multiple locations including the Beck Cultural Exchange Center - an African-American history center in East Knoxville. The WKFM community's effort remains an ongoing need. Our 2018 in-lieu of taxes donation was sent to Beck Cultural Exchange Center.

Another part of the meeting's interest this past year was to raise our profile within the wider community. Near the end of the year, an ad-hoc banner committee introduced banners to be used in various peace marches and other events throughout the Knoxville community. In September, we started also started holding a monthly midweek meeting in North Knoxville in a Presbyterian Church as a form of outreach on our part. In addition, as another form of outreach, at the request of SAYMA's Outreach Committee, WKFM is also having another monthly mid-week introductory worship at the Meeting House for a year's time. We recognize that the need for our outreach to be stronger.

Several years ago, three active members, moved away and two active members of our community died. The remaining members of our community have worked to fill in the gaps, joined by several new regular attenders. In 2018, when two major positions came open in Meeting for Business, new volunteers stepped forward. There were no deaths this past year, and in December two members transferred to our community. In short, the meeting is growing again, but the number of people willing to serve in leadership positions has lowered somewhat.

Individual community members have their own interests and ministries. The meeting came together however we came together and continued our work on homelessness through Family Promise and on climate change through Tennessee Interfaith Power and Light. We also continued to support Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) by offering the use of our meetinghouse to the SAYF Steering Committee and Nurturing Committee.

Finally, as in previous years, WKFM devoted approximately one-half its yearly budget to supporting both Wider Quaker organizations and other local area organizations. We also supported the greater community by making our meeting house available to outside groups.