

**Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association,
51st Annual Meeting Hybrid Setting,
Sixth Month, 16-19, 2022**

Friday, June 17 (Session I)

51-01 Opening Worship

Friends met virtually and gratefully in person, for the 51st annual gathering of SAYMA beginning with an extended period of worship.

51-02 Clerk's Letter to SAYMA Body, June 2022 [Attachment A: Clerk's Letter]

Greetings Friends! We are gathering again at Warren Wilson College for the first time in three long years. We are not yet in the post-Covid era, so we will broadcast much of our annual gathering virtually. Even so, we have had strong registration for in-person attendees. The hard-working Yearly Meeting Planning Committee deserves a huge thank you for their faithful and productive efforts.

We have labored long and hard for the last several years, trying to reach a still-elusive unity around how we fulfill our stated commitment as a body to racial justice. The goal remains a firm one, deep in the hearts and wills of many SAYMA folk. Our issues have been around how to achieve it, especially how it finds a structural home within SAYMA. These issues are thorny and sensitive, and we still need to address them.

After a series of spring representative meetings for discernment, the body directed the clerk's committee to fashion a proposal for how we might observe a sabbatical year from representative meetings, resuming our business again at SAYMA Gathering 2023. You will see from that proposal that we are not proposing a year to simply walk away and hide from our labors. But we will not attempt to do business for a year. We are encouraging periodic regional gatherings, "quarters" for fellowship and consideration of matters on the hearts of those meetings. Some of us are concerned about integrating our various rules and procedures to reduce contradictions. The focal point of our sabbatical year is a carefully designed series of racial justice trainings presented by Shannon Smith and Sharon Star Smith, which will be offered to SAYMA officers, committee clerks, and monthly meetings over the course of the year. We encourage all Friends who are so led to join this significant work in overcoming habits of mind, word, and deed which keep racism entrenched in our broken and divided country.

With all of these significant labors, I know several Friends who say they just need time for rest and quiet meditation. It's a matter of listening to the Inner Ruler for each of us. Above all, we need to prepare ourselves over the year to re-engage in business in a spirit of deep worship, mutual respect, and tolerance of our differences.

Our opening evening will be a chance to warmly greet one another and renew old friendships, an extended chat and chew across the mountains and generations. Plenaries will address our racial justice focus of the last several years, both in terms of structural violence and the particular needs of our yearly meeting. We will offer the usual fare of workshops, opportunities for worship and memorializing Friends we have lost in the last couple of years, and dining together at long last under the care of the excellent kitchen and farm staff of one of the most locally-sourced college dining services in the country. Let us welcome one another, inviting Spirit to weave itself into all of our interactions, small and large. May we support each other in laying the foundation for a year of renewal, prayerfully setting deep intention, with Spirit's guidance. One day, those around us may once again observe, See how they love one another. And respect, trust and honor, as well.

Robert McGahey, Outgoing SAYMA Presiding Clerk

51-03 Introductions of Visitors

Robert McGahey, SAYMA Clerk, welcomed everyone and asked visitors to introduce themselves. Visitors present were: Jim Cason, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Wayne Finegar from Quaker House, and Avis Wanda McClinton, Abington Monthly Meeting.

51-04 Roll Call [Attachment B: Attendance Roster]

Meeting attendees were asked to raise their hand or stand as their meeting was called by the clerk. Eighteen of the twenty-four meetings and worship groups were represented.

51-05 Call for Guide to Our Faith and Practice Review

The clerk asked Friends if any monthly meetings had brought minutes asking for review of the Guide to Our Faith and Practice sections. No minutes were presented. A Friend stated there are items that need to be added.

51-05-01 Minute: The Clerk of SAYMA acknowledged a Friend's concern about a need for an addition to the Guide to Our Faith and Practice. Friends were invited to consider serving on a review working group. Please provide names to the Clerk, as led.

Friends approved.

51-06 Agenda Review [Attachment C: Agenda]

The agenda was reviewed and modified each session as needed. A list of the agenda items for each day are listed in Attachment C.

51-07 Naming Committee Report - Melissa Preast, West Knoxville MM

Naming Committee Report: The naming committee met four times as a group for discussion and discernment during May and June. We talked to many Friends and we sent personal requests to all monthly meetings. The response from monthly meetings was minimal, but we hold out hope that Friends are still considering how and where to offer their gifts.

We received two nominations with a few more Friends to be contacted before and during Yearly Meeting Sessions and Retreat.

Returning: SAYMA Nominating 2021-2023 – Julia Ewen (Atlanta)

New: SAYMA Nominating 2022-2024 – Pat Gailey (Berea)

New: SAYMA Nominating 2022-2024 - Morgan Murray (Asheville)

Need to be filled:

_____, _____, Clerk - _____

All meetings are encouraged to provide a Nominating Representative, particularly large meetings.

Submitted by the Naming Committee
Morgan Murray, Kit Potter, and Melissa Preast

The naming committee notes that there are insufficient names to recommend a clerk for Nominating at this time. Friends expressed concerns on the nomination of the Friend from Berea, this nomination will be saved for discernment and held over until the next session. Friends noted that the Friend from Asheville was on the Naming Committee and recommended for the nominating committee. Naming clarified that the Friend was not involved in their nomination therefore Friends agreed this was not a conflict of interest. Friends will sit with the names and consider additional names.

51-08 Nominating: First Reading - Chuck Jones, Chattanooga MM. [Attachment D: Nominating Draft, List of Names for Consideration]

Friends were asked to sit with the names which will be revisited at a later session.

51-09 Epistle Committee Naming by the Clerk

The clerk brought forward the names of Friends who will serve on the Epistle Committee. They are Star Smith, Paul Cuffee WG; Jackson Napier, Berea MM; and Carol Nickle, West Knoxville MM.

Friends approved.

**51-10 Treasurer's Report by Kendal Ivie, Interim Treasurer, West Knoxville MM.
[Attachment E: Treasurer's Report]**

The report was presented.

Friends requested clarification about the two checking accounts being used and the social responsibility of using PNC Bank. Bank of America is our primary account, however there is not a branch where our Administrative Assistant, who handles deposits, lives so an account with PNC was opened. Finance will consider a recommendation on a way forward.

Ministry & Nurture Committee Clerk clarified that discernment continues on the use of the YAF funds donated through the Kenworthy donation.

Friends accepted the report.

51-11 Finance Report, Geeta McGahey, Interim Clerk, Celo MM. [Attachment F: Finance Report]

The report was presented.

The first reading of the budget was presented for discernment. Friends were invited to discuss the budget at a designated meeting in the afternoon. Accepted items from that meeting would be brought to the next session for approval.

51-11-02 Minute: Friends approve the cost of a bookkeeper or service as a personnel expense for \$3,600. A job description will be developed and sent to the Personnel Committee for posting.

Friends approved.

The finance report, without the budget, was accepted.

End of session.

Saturday, June 18 (Session II)

51-12 Opening Worship

51-13 Welcome

Robert McGahey, SAYMA Clerk, welcomed everyone.

51-14 Second reading of Naming Committee Report by Melissa Preast, West Knoxville MM.

With the addition of two nominations and due consideration, all nominations from the naming committee, as listed, were approved. The committee should consider whether one newly named Friend should serve a shortened term so turnover is more even and retains some continuity between future committees. Discernment on the clerk for nominating continued and a recommendation will be brought to Session III.

SAYMA Nominating Committee

SAYMA Nominating 2022-2024 – Annie Black (Cookeville)

SAYMA Nominating 2021-2023 – Julia Ewen (Atlanta)

SAYMA Nominating 2022-2024 – Pat Gailey (Berea)

SAYMA Nominating 2022-2024 - Morgan Murray (Asheville)

SAYMA Nominating 2022-2024 - Chuck Jones (Chattanooga)

SAYMA Nominating 2022-2024 - Mark Gooch (Birmingham)

51-15 Second reading of Nominating Committee Report by Chuck Jones, Chattanooga MM. [Attachment G: Nominees List for Open Positions - Approved]

The nominating report was updated and reviewed. All nominations were approved as presented and are listed on the attachment, however it is noted there was not unity on the following three positions but the sense of the meeting was to approve the nominations:

Co-Clerks Daryl Bergquist (Birmingham MM) and Margaret Farmer (Asheville MM): Free Polazzo (Atlanta MM) stood aside.

Assistant Treasurer Caty McAfee (Chattanooga): Star Smith (Paul Cuffee WG) stood aside.

Finance Member Geeta McGahey (Celo): Star Smith (Paul Cuffee WG), stood aside.

51-16 Racial Justice Training Proposal [Attachment H: Racial Justice Training Proposal]

The SAYMA Clerk asked Shannon Roberts Smith and Star Smith to present their racial justice training proposal. This proposal was an outcome of the Clerk’s Advisory Committee. Shannon and Star presented the attached training proposal and answered questions about logistics.

Funding is “pay as led” with \$200 as the recommended amount for the training cycle.

The facilitators are available for questions either by email or in person.

51-17 Second Reading of the Budget by Geeta McGahey, Interim Finance Clerk, Celo MM. [See Attachment I: Budget for 2023 from the Finance Committee]

The budget was presented for continuing discernment.

Session ended

Sunday, June 18 (Session II)

51-18 Opening Worship

51-19 Welcoming and Acknowledging Visitors

The clerk opened the session and acknowledged Angela Hopkins visiting from Friends Center for Racial Justice, Ithaca, NY.

51-20 Ministry and Nurture Committee Report by Annie Black, Cookeville MM. [Attachment J: State of the Monthly Meetings, Attachment K: Response to the Atlanta Minute on Reparative Justice, Attachment L: State of the Yearly Meeting]

State of the Monthly Meetings, Response to the Atlanta Minute on Reparative Justice, and State of the Yearly Meeting reports were presented and all reports were accepted.

51-21 Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) Steering Committee Report by Jennifer Dickie, Clerk, Atlanta MM [Attachment M: SAYF Steering Committee Report]

The report was presented and accepted.

51-22 SAYF Nurturing Committee Report, Henry Schneider, Chapel Hill MM [Attachment O: SAYF Nurturing Committee Report]

The report was presented and accepted.

51-23 Naming Committee Update, Melissa Preast, West Knoxville MM

The naming committee concludes its work by asking Annie Black to convene the nominating committee. The nominating committee will determine among them who will act as clerk.

SAYMA Nominating Committee

Clerk of Nominating 2022-2024 – Annie Black, convening
SAYMA Nominating 2021-2023 – Julia Ewen (Atlanta)
SAYMA Nominating 2022-2024 – Pat Gailey (Berea)
SAYMA Nominating 2022-2024 - Morgan Murray (Asheville)
SAYMA Nominating 2022-202 - Mark Gooch (Birmingham)
SAYMA Nominating 2022-2024 - Chuck Jones (Chattanooga)

Friends accepted all the nominations to the Nominating Committee as listed.

51-24 Faith and Practice Review Ad Hoc Committee

The clerk appointed wood bouldin, Star Smith, and Melissa Preast to review the Faith and Practice as an ad hoc committee. (Note that this is an ad hoc review committee, not a revision committee.)

Friends accepted.

51-25 Junior Yearly Meeting Report Laura Lane, Clerk, Asheville Monthly Meeting. [Attachment O: Junior Yearly Meeting Report]

The report was presented and accepted.

51-26 SAYMA Racial Justice Training Program - Request for Support, Shannon Roberts Smith, Berea MM

Friends had the opportunity to ask questions about the Racial Justice Training Program, developed in collaboration with Friends Center for Racial Justice, the presentation is listed as Attachment I of this document. FCRJ affirmed their commitment to support SAYMA in this training. Strong support was expressed for participation. Friends were invited to collaborate and provide feedback during the program. Representatives are asked to take information about the program to their meetings and the facilitators are asked to send a letter to Monthly Meeting Clerks with information about attending.

The SAYMA clerk strongly encourages Friends and Monthly Meetings to participate in the Racial Justice Training Program to be presented by Star Smith and Shannon Roberts Smith.

Friends approved this narrative minute.

51-27 Finance: final budget request for approval. Geeta McGahey, Interim Finance Clerk, Celo MM [Attachment is listed earlier as Attachment F: Budget]

51-05-03 Minute: The interim finance clerk asked for approval of the budget as presented.

Friends approved.

After listening to the deeply held feelings of those in attendance, the finance committee recommends that the treasurer be instructed to release the Uplifting Racial Justice (URJ) Donor Restricted Funds in accordance with the Recommendations for Administration of SAYMA URJ Funds.

A testing of the minute resulted in Friends approval with wood bouldin, Representative from Charleston Monthly Meeting, standing in the way and Chuck Jones, Chattanooga Monthly Meeting, standing aside.

The SAYMA clerk recognized the Friend standing in the way however, affirmed a sense of the meeting to release the funds.

51-05-04 Minute: The Finance Clerk asks for approval for the treasurer to release the Uplifting Racial Justice (URJ) Donor Restricted Funds in accordance with the Recommendations for Administration of SAYMA URJ Funds.

Friends Approved

During the Open Finance Meeting, held on Friday (June 17), there was strong support for adding a budget line of \$10,000 for URJ to continue its work. The finance committee's understanding is that this is for the URJ set-aside fund. When asking for approval during this session, there were Representatives and individuals who expressed support and some who stood in the way. A sense of the meeting was not achieved.

51-28 Presentation of Epistles [Attachment P: SAYMA Epistle]

The SAYMA epistle was read and gratefully accepted.

Junior Yearly Meeting presented their epistle through nonverbal storytelling. We were able to see what they learned, how they worked in community, and their expression of gratitude. Friends gratefully accept their epistle.

51-29 Representative Meeting

Fall Representatives meeting is scheduled for Oct 29, 2023. Where and how is to be determined.

51-30 Registrar's Report [Attachment Q: Registrar's Report]

Friends attended YM 51 both in-person and virtually with 182 Friends total. Thank you to the faithful volunteers who made virtual options possible by sharing their electronic communication gifts. Thank you to the West Knoxville Monthly Meeting for providing use of the Owl electronic projection device.

51-31 Closing worship

Robert McGahey
Clerk

(archive copies signed)

Melissa Preast
Recording Clerk

(archive copies signed)

Attachments:

- A. Clerk's Letter**
- B. Attendance Roster**
- C. Agenda**
- D. Nominations Draft Names for Consideration– Initial First Reading**
- E. Treasurer's Report**
- F. Finance Report**
- G. Nominations for Open Positions - Approved**
- H. Racial Justice Training Proposal**
- I. Budget for 2023 from the Finance Committee**
- J. State of the Monthly Meetings**
- K. Ministry & Nurture Response to the Atlanta Monthly Meeting Minute on Reparative Justice**
- L. State of the Yearly Meeting**
- M. SAYF Steering Committee Report**
- N. SAYF Support Committee Report**
- O. Junior Yearly Meeting Report**
- P. SAYMA Epistle**
- Q. Registrar's Report**

Attachment A.

Clerk's Letter For SAYMA Yearly Meeting 51

Greetings Friends! We are gathering again at Warren Wilson College for the first time in three long years. We are not yet in the post-Covid era, so we will broadcast much of our annual gathering virtually. Even so, we have had strong registration for in-person attendees. The hard-working Yearly Meeting Planning Committee deserves a huge thank you for their faithful and productive efforts.

We have labored long and hard for the last several years, trying to reach a still-elusive unity around how we fulfill our stated commitment as a body to racial justice. The goal remains a firm one, deep in the hearts and wills of many SAYMA folk. Our issues have been around how to achieve it, especially how it finds a structural home within SAYMA. These issues are thorny and sensitive, and we still need to address them.

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Robert McGahey, Outgoing SAYMA Presiding Clerk

Attachment B. Attendance Roster

List of attendees in archived print copy only.

Attachment C.

SAYMA 51 Agendas

Friday, June 17, 8:30-10:45 am as published in the Program

Greetings, intro's and roll call; clerk's remarks
Agenda Review
Naming Committee Report
Nominating: first reading (out of worship)
Treasurer's Report
Finance: Budget first reading
Plan for an interim year from Clerk's Committee: initial discussion
Announcements

Saturday, June 18 – as actually happened

Opening Worship, Welcome
Naming: second reading
Nominating: second reading
Racial Justice Training Proposal
Finance: budget second reading

Sunday, June 19 – as actually happened

Opening worship, welcoming, acknowledging visitors
Ministry and Nurture Report: reading of state of the meeting reports and response to Atlanta minute
SAYF Steering Committee Report
SAYF Nurturing Committee Report
Naming Committee final reading
Appointment of Ad Hoc Committee to review Faith and Practice
Junior Yearly Meeting Report
SAYMA Racial Justice Training Program request for support
Finance: final budget request for approval
Presentation of epistles
Representative Meeting date announced
Registrar's Report

Attachment D.

Nominees List Draft of Names for Consideration for YM 51

SAYMA Presiding Co-Clerks – Daryl Bergquist (Birmingham) Margaret Farmer (Asheville) -2022-2024

Recording Clerk – Blake Burr (Memphis).

Treasurer – Kendall Ivie (WKFM)

Finance Clerk – Karen Morris (Atlanta)

Finance Member – Steve Olshewsky (Berea)

Finance Member – Anne Williams (WKFM)

SAYF Steering Member And Clerk– Jennifer Dickie

SAYF Steering Member – Kelly Askins (Memphis)

SAYF Support Committee Member - Aaron Ruscetta (Atlanta)

P&SC Clerk – Hank Fay (Berea)

Handbook Clerk – Wood Bouldin (Charleston)

AFSC Rep – Taylor Brelsford (WKFM)

FCNL Rep – Jane Hiles (Birmingham)

FCNL Rep – Susan Penn (Memphis)

SAYMA Yearly Meeting Planning Committee (YMPC)

Jennifer Dickie (Atlanta)

Laura Lane (Asheville) and JYM Clerk

Hank Fey (Berea)

Steve Livingston (Asheville)

Earth Justice Cmte (2022-2023)

Charlie Wilton (Berea)

Steve Livingston (Asheville)

Rylin Hansen (Asheville)

Asst. Treasurer – Caty McAfee (Chattanooga)

Finance Member – Geeta McGahey (Celo)

FWCC Representative - Greta McGahey (Celo)

Attachment E.

Treasurer's Report to Yearly Meeting
June 2022

SAYMA's fiscal year is October – September, so the attached reports are as of May 31, 2022 and represent about 2/3 of the year.

General items of note for this fiscal year:

- I was appointed as Acting Treasurer in December 2020 after the previous Treasurer resigned. I have agreed to become Treasurer if brought forward by Nominating and approved by the Yearly Meeting.
- Assessments of \$31,564 are running at 62% of budget yet we are at 67% of the year. I expect by the end of the fiscal year we will be near the budgeted amount of \$50,992.
- All contributions to Wider Quaker Organizations have been made.
- We received \$25,000 from the Kenworthy Charitable Trust to use to support Young Adult Friends. This has been put into the Donor Restricted Fund: Kenworthy Charitable Trust.
- I have not included a fund report. The only fund activity YTD was the donation from the Kenworthy Charitable Trust, the YAF Scholarship had an expense of \$550 and SAYF went from about \$7,850 to \$6,800.

Descriptions of following reports

Balance Sheet YTD Comparison

This comparative balance sheet shows SAYMA's assets, liabilities, and equity for 5/31/22 and 9/30/21.

Report items of note:

- I expect that by 9/30/22 the Undesignated Equity to be about \$31,000.
- The Reserves line is to be about 40% of SAYMA's budget excluding the YM Gathering. For FY 2023 we will keep it as \$18,208 which is the same as it has been since FY 2020.

Budget Overview w/o YM

This report compares actual income and expenses to the FY 2022 Budget. For simplicity this report excludes SAYF and Yearly Meeting Gathering.

Income and Expense Report

This report shows income and expenses this fiscal year to date. It includes Yearly Meeting Gathering and SAYF.

Kendall Ivie, Acting Treasurer

SAYMA
Balance Sheet YTD Comparison
As of May 31, 2022

	May 31, 22	Sep 30, 21
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Checking/Savings		
Checking - BankAm	41,330.24	15,219.87
Checking - PNC	29,603.20	37,392.52
Money Mkt - Self Help	33,463.36	33,463.36
SAYF Checking - First Bank	6,849.37	7,849.42
Total Checking/Savings	111,246.17	93,925.17
TOTAL ASSETS	111,246.17	93,925.17
LIABILITIES & EQUITY		
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Payroll taxes payable		
AL payroll taxes due	59.00	80.04
Federal PR taxes due	933.85	1,303.06
NC payroll taxes due	2.00	12.00
Total Payroll taxes payable	994.85	1,395.10
Total Liabilities	994.85	1,395.10
Equity		
Donor-Restricted Funds		
Kenworthy Charitable Trust	25,000.00	0.00
FWCC 3rd World Delegates	1,150.00	1,150.00
FWCC SAYMA Intl Delegates	1,100.00	1,100.00
URJ Fund	869.30	869.30
Total Donor-Restricted Funds	28,119.30	3,119.30
Funds Designated by SAYMA		
Reserves	18,208.00	18,208.00
Set-Aside Funds		
Fund - Boone MM in Trust	2,677.00	2,677.00
Fund - FWCC 3rd World Delegates	3,600.00	3,600.00
Fund - FWCC SAYMA Intl Delegate	3,600.00	3,600.00
Fund - Released Friend	10,165.00	10,165.00
Fund - SAYF	6,821.01	7,849.42
Fund - Spiritual Development	2,746.80	2,746.80
Fund - Uplifting Racial Justice	622.22	622.22
Fund - YAF Scholarship	814.75	1,364.75
Fund - Youth Enrichment	2,696.00	2,696.00
Total Set-Aside Funds	33,742.78	35,321.19
Total Funds Designated by SAYMA	51,950.78	53,529.19
Undesignated Equity	30,181.24	35,881.58
Total Equity	110,251.32	92,530.07
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	111,246.17	93,925.17

SAYMA
 Budget Overview w/o YM
 October 2021 through May 2022

	<u>Oct 21 - May 22</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>% of Budget</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
Contributions to SAYMA			
Contribu General Fund	0.00	1,500.00	0.0%
Total Contributions to SAYMA	<u>0.00</u>	<u>1,500.00</u>	<u>0.0%</u>
Assessments			
Assessments - Other	0.00	50,992.00	0.0%
Total Assessments	<u>31,564.00</u>	<u>50,992.00</u>	<u>61.9%</u>
Interest - Money Mkt	0.00	100.00	0.0%
Publication Sales			
Pub Sales - F&P	152.50		
Publication Sales - Other	0.00	100.00	0.0%
Total Publication Sales	<u>152.50</u>	<u>100.00</u>	<u>152.5%</u>
Total Income	31,716.50	52,692.00	60.19%
Expense			
SAYMA Operations			
Banking Costs	90.00		
Liability Insurance	801.00	900.00	89.0%
Office Admin			
Office - Duplication	0.00	250.00	0.0%
Office - Guilford Archiving	150.00	150.00	100.0%
Office - Officer Expense	0.00	150.00	0.0%
Office - Phone ISP	924.63	820.00	112.76%
Office - Postage	0.00	160.00	0.0%
Office - Supplies, Equip, Misc	0.00	400.00	0.0%
Office - Volunteer Bkgrnd Chks	145.50	250.00	58.2%
Travel - Office Staff	0.00	1,800.00	0.0%
Total Office Admin	<u>1,220.13</u>	<u>3,980.00</u>	<u>30.66%</u>
Personnel			
Payroll Service Expenses	366.24		
Payroll Taxes - SAYMA share	1,290.63		
Salaries - gross	16,871.07		
Personnel - Other	0.00	28,000.00	0.0%
Total Personnel	<u>18,527.94</u>	<u>28,000.00</u>	<u>66.17%</u>
Publication Expenses			
Pub Exp - Faith & Practice	120.00	100.00	120.0%
Pub Exp - Web & Hosting Svcs	0.00	2,600.00	0.0%
Total Publication Expenses	<u>120.00</u>	<u>2,700.00</u>	<u>4.44%</u>
SAYMA Committees			

	<u>Oct 21 - May 22</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>% of Budget</u>
Cmte Exp - Contingency Pool	0.00	1,000.00	0.0%
Cmte Exp - Outreach	0.00	2,000.00	0.0%
Cmte Exp - YM Planning	0.00	200.00	0.0%
Total SAYMA Committees	<u>0.00</u>	<u>3,200.00</u>	<u>0.0%</u>
Travel Reimbursements			
Travel - Rep Meetings	0.00	100.00	0.0%
Travel - WQO Delegates	0.00	5,000.00	0.0%
Total Travel Reimbursements	<u>0.00</u>	<u>5,100.00</u>	<u>0.0%</u>
Total SAYMA Operations	<u>20,759.07</u>	<u>43,880.00</u>	<u>47.31%</u>
Set-aside Fund Annl Allotments			
Total Set-aside Fund Annl Allotments	0.00		
WQO Annual Contributions			
WQOs - Membership			
WQO - FGC	1,250.00	1,250.00	100.0%
WQO - FWCC	1,250.00	1,250.00	100.0%
Total WQOs - Membership	<u>2,500.00</u>	<u>2,500.00</u>	<u>100.0%</u>
WQOs - Other			
WQO - AFSC	524.66		
WQO - BQEF	262.89		
WQO - FCNL	787.56		
WQO - FLGBTQ	262.89		
WQO - Friends Journal	524.66		
WQO - Friends Peace Teams	262.89		
WQO - Quaker Earthcare Witne	787.56		
WQO - Quaker House	787.56		
WQO - Quaker Volunteer Servi	524.66		
WQO - Right Sharing World Re	524.66		
WQOs - Other - Other	0.00	5,250.00	0.0%
Total WQOs - Other	<u>5,249.99</u>	<u>5,250.00</u>	<u>100.0%</u>
Total WQO Annual Contributions	<u>7,749.99</u>	<u>7,750.00</u>	<u>100.0%</u>
Total Expense	<u>28,509.06</u>	<u>51,630.00</u>	<u>55.22%</u>
Net Ordinary Income	<u>3,207.44</u>	<u>1,062.00</u>	<u>302.02%</u>
Net Income	<u><u>3,207.44</u></u>	<u><u>1,062.00</u></u>	<u><u>302.02%</u></u>

SAYMA
Income and Expense
October 2021 through May 2022

	Oct '21 - May 22
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
Contributions to SAYMA	
Contrib to Kenworthy YAF Schola	25,000.00
Contribu SAYF	300.00
Total Contributions to SAYMA	25,300.00
Assessments	
Asheville	2,512.50
Atlanta	7,125.00
Berea	2,756.25
Birmingham	1,050.00
Celo	2,475.00
Charleston	375.00
Chattanooga	1,320.00
Columbia	3,000.00
Greenville	862.50
Huntsville	840.00
Memphis	2,250.00
Nashville	1,625.00
Swannanoa Valley	2,729.00
West Knoxville	2,643.75
Total Assessments	31,564.00
Interest - Bank	0.98
Publication Sales	
Pub Sales - F&P	152.50
Total Publication Sales	152.50
Retreat fees	1,685.00
Yearly Meeting Income	
YM Registration Receipts	1,230.00
YM Scholarship Contributions	15.00
Total Yearly Meeting Income	1,245.00
Total Income	59,947.48
Expense	
YAF Grant	550.00
SAYF Retreat Expenses	2,297.98
SAYMA Operations	
Banking Costs	90.00
Liability Insurance	801.00
Office Admin	
Office - Duplication	218.54

	<u>Oct '21 - May 22</u>
Office - Guilford Archiving	150.00
Office - Phone ISP	1,062.54
Office - Postage	300.00
Office - Supplies, Equip, Misc	31.60
Office - Volunteer Bkgrnd Chks	145.50
Total Office Admin	<u>1,908.18</u>
Personnel	
Payroll Service Expenses	437.09
Payroll Taxes - SAYMA share	1,290.63
Salaries - gross	16,871.07
Total Personnel	<u>18,598.79</u>
Publication Expenses	
Pub Exp - Faith & Practice	230.29
Total Publication Expenses	<u>230.29</u>
Total SAYMA Operations	<u>21,628.26</u>
WQO Annual Contributions	
WQOs - Membership	
WQO - FGC	1,250.00
WQO - FWCC	1,250.00
Total WQOs - Membership	<u>2,500.00</u>
WQOs - Other	
WQO - AFSC	524.66
WQO - BQEF	262.89
WQO - FCNL	787.56
WQO - FLGBTQ	262.89
WQO - Friends Journal	524.66
WQO - Friends Peace Teams	262.89
WQO - Quaker Earthcare Witness	787.56
WQO - Quaker House	787.56
WQO - Quaker Volunteer Service	524.66
WQO - Right Sharing World Res	524.66
Total WQOs - Other	<u>5,249.99</u>
Total WQO Annual Contributions	<u>7,749.99</u>
Yearly Meeting Expenses	
Facilities & Services Exp	
YM Accommodations & Meals	10,000.00
Total Facilities & Services Exp	<u>10,000.00</u>
Total Yearly Meeting Expenses	<u>10,000.00</u>
Total Expense	<u>42,226.23</u>
Net Ordinary Income	<u>17,721.25</u>
Net Income	<u><u>17,721.25</u></u>

Attachment F.

Finance Committee Report Yearly Meeting Sessions June 2022

Committee: Geeta McGahey, interim clerk, Kendall Ivie, treasurer, Karen Morris, Caty McAfee, Steve Olshewsky (sitting in awaiting nomination approval)

The Finance Committee recognizes that SAYMA has looked long and hard for a treasurer. Kendall Ivie agreed to his nomination as treasurer, hoping that he will have a bookkeeper. In 2020, Finance received approval from the YM to write a job description for a bookkeeper position. With the expectation that a job description and candidate search from a diverse group will be successful in FY 2023 we added 3600 for a bookkeeper. If approved, Kendall Ivie and Steve Oshensky will write a job description which can be revised at YM 2023. Other members of the committee will help the personnel committee look for candidates, first hoping to find someone from an affiliated meeting and then will look for other diverse candidates.

The Finance Committee labored long and hard over the budget. Since we won't be meeting together as a yearly meeting for a year, we think it prudent to be transparent about potential expenses since there will be no opportunity for a budget revision. We thank Atlanta for the proposal to return excess undesignated funds to MM and we will address it as part of our in person finance committee meeting on Friday at 3:15 PM. The committee has chosen to use part of this money to cover, if needed, our budgeted expenses for next year.

I will share a few highlights and then Kendall will review the budget and take questions. All comments will be listed and discussed at the Friday 3:15 committee meeting.

Under expenses, there is a 10% increase for personnel, to cover SS index and Cost of Living percentage increases. We put \$5,000 under the Committee Contingency Pool to cover expenses that could come up from committees in the next year that weren't anticipated and could possibly be used to help cover the cost of trainings..

We increased WQO delegate expenses back to only \$500 less than the pre-covid budget, since travel is starting again and travel costs are higher. . We Increased WQO donations because of current need. The \$6000 is still less than the 2013 donations of \$9350. The FWCC third world delegate and world conference expenses were increased in preparation for the world gathering in South Africa in 2024 and to make up for no funds set aside last year. There has been no unity within the yearly meeting in funding the URJ set aside fund or the URJ committee line so these were left zero. We don't feel that we have clearness from the YM about releasing the URJ donor restricted and set aside funds.

The proposed budget has a deficit of \$22,000. We cannot sustain this type of deficit for more than one year. Our assessment income is higher than this time last year, although the total assessment income will be lower next year because of one MM leaving SAYMA and some other meetings giving less. The amount is 4500 lower than '22 reflecting this and other uncertainties. Undesignated Funds drop to about \$13,000.

I enjoy serving on the Finance Committee and I hope that Karen Morris will be approved as our new clerk, as we continue to hold the yearly meeting in the Light.

Attachment G.

Nominees List for YM 51 – all names approved as listed June 19, 2022

SAYMA Presiding Co-Clerks – Daryl Bergquist (Birmingham) Margaret Farmer (Asheville) -2022-2024

Recording Clerk – Blake Burr (Memphis)

Treasurer 2022-2023 – Kendall Ivie (WKFM)

Finance Clerk – Karen Morris (Atlanta)

Finance Member – Steve Olshewsky (Berea)

Finance Member – Anne Williams (WKFM)

SAYF Steering Member And Clerk– Jennifer Dickie

SAYF Steering Member – Kelly Askins (Memphis)

SAYF Support Committee Member - Aaron Ruscetta (Atlanta)

P&SC Clerk – Hank Fay (Berea)

Handbook Clerk – Wood Bouldin (Charleston)

AFSC Rep – Taylor Brelsford (WKFM)

FCNL Rep – Jane Hiles (Birmingham)

FCNL Rep – Susan Penn (Memphis)

SAYMA Yearly Meeting Planning Committee (YMPC)

Jennifer Dickie, Clerk (Atlanta)

Laura Lane (Asheville) Apr and JYM Clerk

Hank Fey (Berea)

Karen Morris (Atlanta)

Steve Livingston (Asheville)

Earth Justice Cmte (2022-2023)

Steve Livingston, Clerk (Asheville)

Charlie Wilton (Berea)

Rylin Hansen (Asheville)

Asst. Treasurer 2022-2023 – Caty McAfee (Chattanooga)

Finance Member – Geeta McGahey (Celo)

FWCC Representative - Geeta McGahey (Celo)

Attachment H.

SAYMA RACIAL JUSTICE PROGRAM

2022-24

FORMAL WORKSHOP/TRAINING

Understanding Racism/White Supremacy:

What it IS, How it WORKS, and What Friends
Can DO About it

“Consciousness plus commitment
equals change.”

This is the message of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW), a grassroots organization working to secure human rights for farmworkers.

GOALS

- To test whether foundational Quaker social change values and practices can be useful methods for dismantling systems of oppression which Friends have historically perpetuated and continue to benefit from.
- To train as many SAYMA Friends in systemic racial analysis, aka Critical Race Theory (CRT), as efficiently as possible.
- To organize as many SAYMA Friends into ongoing anti-racist worship/support groups as possible, in order to facilitate the process of consciousness raising and necessary structural change that will enable SAYMA to co-create an anti-racist faith community that is adequately prepared to welcome diverse peoples of color and families.

WORKSHOP PROGRAM OUTLINE

Module #1 What Is Racism/White Supremacy?

- defining terms and concepts
- historical analysis
- power dynamics
- socialization/racialization
- Internalized Oppression

WORKSHOP PROGRAM OUTLINE

Module #2 How to Do Your Own Anti-racism Audit

We will be using the *Continuum on Becoming an Anti-racist Multicultural Church* in “*Becoming An Anti-Racist Church: Journeying Toward Wholeness*”, by Joseph Barndt, one of the founding members of the people’s Institute and crossroads Ministry, as a guide.

WORKSHOP PROGRAM OUTLINE

Module #3 Where Quaker Social Change Theory Meets Anti-Racist Praxis

What IS Quaker Social Change Theory? Continuing revelations, Spiritual leadings, calls to ministry, Spirit led activism, speaking truth to power, grass roots organizing, passive resistance, civil disobedience, coalition building, offering sanctuary, technical and financial assistance, when asked, letting your life speak, living your convictions, standing alone with integrity, when necessary, but preferably, with the endorsement and support of one's spiritual community.

What is anti-racist praxis? In this segment will look at how change actually happens, strategies and processes, as developed by critical race theorists, anti-racism organizers and trainers, from The People's Institute, Crossroads Ministry, Roots of Justice, Center for the Study of White American Culture (CSWAC), historical Quaker slavery Abolitionists, such as Benjamin Lay, Anthony Benezet, John Woolman, and contemporary Quaker social change organizers and activists, such as Parker Palmer, George Lakey, Bayard Rustin and Frances Crowe.

PROGRAM CENTERPIECES

SMALL GROUPS

- Affinity/accountability
- Community building / spiritual deepening work
- Worship sharing
- Assigned readings and/or videos
- Journaling
- Meeting monthly online

FORMAL WORKSHOP / TRAINING

- Participation in small groups is prerequisite
- Divided into 3 or 4 modules
- Can be in-person or online
- First cohort will be offered to SAYMA positions of responsibility and MM Clerks, then will roll out to all of SAYMA

MEET YOUR FACILITATION TEAM

Sharon “Star” Smith

Sharon “Star” Smith is a lifelong Spirit-led social change activist/organizer for Human Rights and Racial Justice. A birthright Friend of color, she identifies as an Indigenous (Saponi/ Powhatan/ Mohawk) woman with Black and European ancestry. After her Witness to Quaker racism in Sandwich Monthly Meeting/NEYM, 2005/7, Star was called to carry a ministry of racial justice among Friends at Pendle Hill, thereby continuing the work her mother started in NEYM.

Star is uniquely qualified to do this work, with an extensive background in Quaker Spirit-led activism, and an M.Ed. in Multicultural Education. She began studying Quaker organizing and systemic racism as an AFSC intern, under Frances Crowe, in NEYM in the early 1980s. Since then, she has continually studied and trained. Star has worked with, Beyond Diversity 101, Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP), the Peoples Institute for Survival and Beyond, Center for the Study of White American Culture (CSWAC), and Roots of Justice. She is a member in good standing of the Anti-racism Alliance, an association of systemic racism analysts and trainers.

MEET YOUR FACILITATION TEAM

Shannon Roberts Smith

Degree in Political Theory, Philosophy and Comparative Development from Trent University in Ontario

Trained facilitator with Berea College's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion "IDEA Circle"

Trained in the Alluvial Collective's "Welcome Table" strategy for difficult community conversations

Acting Clerk of SAYMA's ad hoc Racial Justice Working Group

Active community organizer and shit disturber since the age of 16

MEET YOUR FACILITATION TEAM

Angela Hopkins & FCRJ

Holding the FOC small group(s)/affinity work

Collaborating on all aspects of the program

Born in Ohio and raised in the Missionary Baptist church, Angela became a Friend in Nzoia, Kenya, where she met Priscilla Makino, pastor of a meeting there. The two traveled extensively in ministry throughout Africa and the US. Through a journey of discernment, she returned to join the Friends in the US, where she was released to found the Friends Center for Racial Justice in Ithaca for Friends everywhere.

Attachment I.

	A	B	C	D	G	I	J	N	O
			FY20 Approved 6/16/19	FY20 Actual	FY21 Budget Approved 9/2020	FY21 Actual	FY22 Budget Approved 1.1	FY22 YTD 5/31/22 Actual	FY23 Budget Approved 6/19/22 1.1
1	1	SAYMA FY 2023 Budget V1.1							
2	2								
3	3	Income	\$105,575	\$51,059	\$91,944	\$48,916	\$98,042	\$31,717	\$93,417
4	4	Adjustments to Income							
5	5	Assessments	\$50,425	\$49,173	\$44,894	\$43,498	\$50,992	\$31,564	\$46,467
26	26	Contributions – General	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,000	\$1,500		\$1,500
27	27	Interest - CD	\$0						
28	28	Interest - Money Mkt	\$700	\$321	\$100	\$14	\$100		\$100
29	29	Publication Sales	\$50	\$65	\$100	\$0	\$100	\$153	\$0
32	32	YM Income	\$52,900	\$0	\$45,350	\$4,404	\$45,350		\$45,350
33	33	YM Adjustments to Income	\$0						
34	34	YM Bookstore Inc	\$1,300		1,300		1,300		1,300
35	35	YM Receipts	\$49,400		42,850	\$4,274	42,850		42,850
36	36	YM Scholarship Contrib	\$2,200		1,200	\$130	1,200		1,200
37									
38	37	Expenses	\$112,170	\$50,999	\$91,728	\$43,743	\$97,480	\$28,509	\$116,090
39	38	Adjustments to Expenses	\$0						
40	39	SAYMA Operations	\$43,520	\$36,295	\$34,878	\$28,233	\$43,880	\$20,759	\$53,940
41	40	Liability Insurance	\$850	\$816	\$850	\$728	\$900	\$801	\$900
42	41	Office Admin	\$5,295	\$1,829	\$3,110	\$1,104	\$3,980	\$1,310	\$2,980
43	42	Banking Fees		\$21		\$90		\$90	
44	43	Office - Duplication	\$225	\$0	\$250	\$0	\$250		\$250
45	44	Office - Guilford Archiving	\$150	\$0	\$150	\$0	\$150	\$150	\$150
46	45	Office - Supplies, Equip, Misc	\$2,000	\$642	\$400	\$89	\$400		\$400
47	46	Office - Officer Exp	\$150	\$22	\$150	\$0	\$150		\$150
48	47	Office - Phone, Zoom	\$600	\$585	\$600	\$848	\$820	\$925	\$820
49	48	Office - Postage	\$170	\$60	\$160	\$0	\$160		\$160
50	49	Office - Volunteer Bkgrd Chks	\$200	\$248	\$200	\$77	\$250	\$146	\$250
51	50	Travel - Office Staff	\$1,800	\$253	\$1,200	\$0	\$1,800		\$800
52	51	Personnel	\$25,705	\$26,689	\$26,098	\$26,176	\$28,000	\$18,528	\$30,760
53	52	Payroll Costs	\$625	\$628		\$628		\$366	\$960
54	53	Salaries Exp	\$23,300	\$22,975		\$23,733		\$16,871	\$27,900
55	54	Tax Payments	\$1,780	\$3,086		\$1,815		\$1,291	\$1,900
56		Bookkeeping							\$3,600
57	55	Publications Expenses	\$270	\$342	\$220	\$0	\$2,700	\$120	\$500
58	56	Pub Exp - Directory							
59	57	Pub Exp - Faith & Practice			\$100		\$100	\$120	\$0
60	58	Pub Exp - Newsletter							
61	59	Pub Exp - Web & Hosting Srvc	\$270	\$342	\$120	\$0	\$2,600		\$500
62	60	SAYMA Committees	\$3,800	\$2,500	\$0	\$0	\$3,200	\$0	\$5,200
63	61	Cmte Exp – Contingency Pool	\$500				\$1,000		\$5,000
64	62	Cmte Exp - Faith & Practice Rvsn	\$100				\$0		\$0
65	63	Cmte Exp - Finance	\$2,500	\$2,500			\$0		\$0
66	64	Cmte Exp - Ministry & Nurture	\$500						
68	66	Cmte Exp - Outreach	\$0				\$2,000		\$0
69	67	Cmte Exp - Peace & Social Concerns					\$0		\$0
70	68	Cmte Exp - SAYMA Earthcare Action							
71	69	Cmte Exp - Uplifting Racial Justice				\$0			\$0
72	70	Cmte Exp - WQO Allotments							
73		Cmte Exp - Operational Handbook					\$0		\$0
74		Cmte Exp - JYM Support							
75		Cmte Exp - Personnel							
76		Cmte Exp - SAYF Support							
77		Cmte Exp - URJ Support							
78	71	Cmte Exp - Yearly Meeting Planning	\$200				\$200		\$200
79	72	Travel Reimbursements	\$7,600	\$4,119	\$3,850	\$225	\$5,100	\$0	\$7,000
80	73	Travel - Rep Meetings	\$100		\$100		\$100		\$0
81	74	Travel - WQO Delegates	\$7,500	\$4,119	\$3,750	\$225	\$5,000		\$7,000
82	75	Set-aside Fund Annual Allotments	\$8,600	\$7,350	\$4,350	\$4,100	\$0	\$0	\$7,800
83	76	Boone MM In Trust							
84	77	FWCC 3rd World Delg Annl Exp	\$1,800	\$1,800	\$1,800	\$1,800	\$0		\$3,000
85	78	FWCC Conference Annl Exp	\$1,800	\$1,800	\$1,800	\$1,800	\$0		\$1,800
86	79	Released Friend Annl Exp							

	A	B	C	D	G	I	J	N	O
87	80	SAYF Annl Exp (formerly "SAYF Operational	\$2,000	\$750	\$750	\$500	\$0		\$3,000
88	81	Spiritual Development Annl Exp	\$3,000	\$3,000					
89	82	Uplifting Racial Justice Annl Exp			\$0		\$0		\$0
90	83	YAF Scholarships Annl Exp							
91	84	Youth Enrichment Fund Annl Exp							
92	85	Yearly Meeting	\$52,900	\$250	\$45,350	\$4,257	\$45,850	\$0	\$45,850
93	86	Facilities & Services Exp	\$44,150	\$0	\$35,800	\$2,796	\$36,300		\$36,300
94	87	YM Accommodations & Meals	\$41,750		\$34,200		\$34,200		\$34,200
95	88	PayPal Fees			\$0		\$0		\$0
96	89	YM Honoraria	\$500		\$0		\$500		\$500
97	90	YM Services	\$1,500		\$1,200	\$2,796	\$1,200		\$1,200
98	91	YM Supplies	\$400		\$400		\$400		\$400
99	92	Junior Yearly Meeting Exp	\$5,700	\$250	\$6,500	\$1,461	\$6,500		\$6,500
100	93	JYM Asst Coordinator	\$1,600		\$2,400	\$875	\$2,400		\$2,400
101	94	JYM Coordinator	\$3,600	\$250	\$3,600	\$400	\$3,600		\$3,600
102	95	JYM Supplies, Sitters, Misc	\$500		\$500	\$186	\$500		\$500
103	96	YM Bookstore Exp	\$1,300		\$1,300		\$1,300		\$1,300
104	97	YM Print Post Phone & Misc	\$1,750		\$1,750		\$1,750		\$1,750
105	98	Quaker Membership Orgs Annual Contribns	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
106	99	WQO - FGC	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$1,250
107	100	WQO - FWCC - Direct Contrbn	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$1,250
108	101	Other WQO Annual Contribns	\$4,650	\$4,604	\$4,650	\$4,653	\$5,250	\$5,250	\$6,000
120	113								
121	114	Net(Surplus/Deficit) before Reserve Change:	-\$6,595	\$60	\$216	\$5,173	\$562	\$3,207	-\$22,673
122	115	Yearly Gathering Net:	\$0	-\$250	\$0	\$147	-\$500		-\$500
123	116								
124	117	Reserve Change:	-\$540	-\$598					
125	118	Net(Surplus/Deficit) with Reserve Change	-\$7,135	-\$538	\$216	\$5,173	\$562	\$3,207	-\$22,673
128									
129		Reserve		\$18,208		\$18,208	\$18,208	\$18,208	\$18,208
130		Undesignated Funds		\$30,754		\$35,927	\$31,317	\$39,135	\$13,255
132									
133		File: FY23 Budget - V1.1							

Attachment J.

State of SAYMA Monthly Meetings Report 2021

Our Monthly Meetings that are bonded together to create the Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA) resonate with a strength and resilience that is remarkable. All have wrestled with major changes over the last few years in how we worship together and care for each other in community in the face of an ongoing pandemic. Our sense of ourselves as communities of faith has morphed and changed during the last year. Some of us are trying new ways of being together and finding different paths to Worship and fellowship. There is truly an amazing well of creativity in evidence.

Some Monthly Meetings lost members due to death, relocation, or inability or lack of comfort in using Zoom, and Brevard Monthly Meeting was laid down. Other meetings saw an increase in attenders and seekers. A few of the smaller meetings successfully combined worship with worship sharing. Using Zoom permitted extra meetings during the week for worship for some and enabled Monthly Meetings to enrich the relationships with the Worship Groups under their care.

We recognize the losses and the things we could have done better. First Day Schools and youth programs suffered, although not everywhere. While Meetings missed the presence of children, there were avenues created by some to encourage their presence, e.g., hiking, grounds work outside the meetinghouse, intergenerational activities both on Zoom and in person, and even their involvement in discerning their own COVID safety. Yet Spirit suffuses our determination to do better for and with each other and to give our younger members and attenders the support they deserve and need. There is sorrow and great beauty in finding the balance during this continuing struggle.

All our meetings are engaged in seeking to understand, dismantle and reckon with racial injustice as it occurs today within ourselves and in our wider communities. This is acknowledged as a lifelong commitment. Though we stumble and make mistakes there is determination to witness, listen, and be accountable for the long haul. This work appears quite varied and individual to each Meeting, and it is a strong leading for all of us. Meetings also engaged in increased ministry within and/or increased activism in their local communities as well as in the wider Quaker community. One Meeting used its meetinghouse for immigrants under the care of a couple from that Meeting.

Several Monthly Meetings led their State of the Meeting discernments with the queries that Ministry and Nurture provided for them. Most seemed to find the queries useful and found a variety of methods to incorporate their results. Meetings expressed dissatisfaction, sadness, and frustration about ongoing conflict within SAYMA. We were saddened that Swannanoa Valley Monthly Meeting left SAYMA. These feelings did not overcome the well-being of most of our Monthly Meetings. Despite how hard it has been living through this pandemic with the current state of political and social unrest, overall there was a positive sense of the spiritual health of the Meetings.

Submitted by SAYMA Ministry and Nurture Committee, May 14, 2022

Asheville Friends Meeting State of the Meeting - 2021

It is impossible to reflect back on 2021 without viewing the year through the lens of the pandemic with its traumas and opportunities. The year began with the shock of the violent assault on the Capital. Over the past year our country experienced progressive polarization as our interpretation of the significance of January 6 steadily emerged. Improved COVID-19 incidence and deaths were followed by new variants that brought new challenges. Business and government attempts to implement mandates of public health measures resulted in endless litigation up to the Supreme Court. Police violence against people of color and violence in general continued unabated. Our city and county have provided enticements and accommodations for an enormous new Raytheon plant producing jet fighter engines despite protests and other pushbacks.

Many of us felt relief at finally receiving our initial two vaccinations by spring. In our sense of safety many of us were hopeful that we would soon experience some degree of normalcy. Through the spring as vaccination rates steadily increased, infection rates were improving. Many of us were wanting to again experience in-person Meeting for Worship. We proceeded with a plan in June for a hybrid model of virtual and meeting outdoors on the lawn and eventually masked on the meeting house porch. Our attendance of members and visitors grew steadily. In September we allowed people to meet inside the meeting house, but most were more comfortable meeting on the porch or remaining virtual.

Our families have been handling the stress of isolation, illness, caregiving, and recovery. Some of our children were suffering from Zoom fatigue. Some of the kids and the adults do not feel that they learn or communicate well on Zoom. First Day virtual check-ins which had been occurring since March 2020, have allowed for some pain and frustration to be talked about. Statements such as “everyone’s bandwidth is so limited” and “not much flexibility to bounce” revealed the fragility of some of our families and children now. We have made mistakes in addressing the space for First Day attendees, our children, safety concerns of members being in close proximity to unvaccinated children, and making sure our young parents had their spiritual needs met. We eventually offered in-person First Day School, with some children not vaccinated, in the back of the meeting

house. This allowed the children to be free to make noise and to better social distance from meetings on the front porch. Getting this right has been very humbling. As a Friend pointed out: being in a relationship, in part, is always facing the possibility of being wrong.

Our meeting has continued to have only a small amount of vocal ministry during our Meetings for Worship. We have found stronger vocal ministry sharing Joys and Concerns, which has provided many of us with a sense of connection and fed our hunger for community. Our Meetings for Worship With Attention to Business have been well attended and have felt productive.

We have gained some new active regular attendees. A returning member transferred back from a nearby meeting. We gained another member who was raised in our meeting and now in his 20's accepted our invitation to join our meeting. We unexpectedly lost a beloved member, Pat Campbell, former Clerk of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting, and our clerk of Finance. Pat's tribute was brought to SAYMA remembrances. In September we held a memorial for the mother of a meeting member on the front porch and this felt like a Spirit-led event. One of our elderly attenders died in September, but we only recently held a memorial for her.

We have continued to have several unfilled committee positions, committees that do not meet, and committees without clerks. Some members have stepped back to take care of themselves. In some of our committees that continued to meet, it has felt less imperative to get things done. There seems to be less focus on accomplishments. Ironically committees have accomplished a great deal. There seems to be more focus on relationships and successful interactions. It has been a good year for some of us in terms of community.

We have continued to work on racial justice in our meeting and our community. Our meeting has been fortunate to have gained a person of color who is a local racial justice activist. She has become a regular attendee of our Meeting for Worship and joined our racial justice book group. She has brought to us many ideas to mobilize and support the Black community in Asheville. The book group read *My Grandmother's Hands* by Resmaa Menakem. We are learning more about seeking awareness of our bodies being settled and when we are triggered. We can use this in our antiracism work. As one Friend remarked, we are wrestling with racism and not each other. We are realizing that there is a wide

range of how people feel safe, which it turns out is a pretty wide space. We are learning to trust each other's decisions and what they know about their capacity. We need to step away from judgment, which then leads us to a possibility of understanding. The Atlanta racial justice work brought to us during the virtual SAYMA Annual Meeting was very helpful and inspiring for many of us.

In an effort to address our relationship with Native Americans and with consultation from Cherokee historian Watson Harlan we reflected, discerned and wrote our Land Acknowledgement (LA). In it, we acknowledge with respect the Cherokee and all Indigenous Peoples who have cared for the land. We recognize this statement as a first step to listen & learn from them and we affirm our work together to ensure a strong relationship. We accept responsibility to commit our efforts and resources to the health and priorities of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) and all the varied Indigenous Peoples who live in and around the land on which we are situated. We're grateful to have read our LA at an EBCI Tribal Council meeting where it was accepted after a couple of comments.

In following up on our commitment, we collected donations to cosponsor UNCA Cherokee speakers. Annette Saunooke Clapsaddle, author of the novel, *Even As We Breathe* is the first enrolled member of the EBCI to publish a novel. Clint Carroll is an ethnobotanist from Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma who works on issues of land conservation and the perpetuation of land-based knowledge and ways of life. Our donations exceeded the needed funding so the excess provided gifts to 2 Cherokee UNCA graduates. We planned and promoted two second-hour virtual programs which attracted several Quaker Meetings and other Faith Groups. Dr. Ben Steere, Anthropology professor at Western Carolina University presented "The Cherokee Ancestral Land" and Cherokee historian, Watson Harlan presented "Cherokee Spiritual, Religious and Cultural Practices." We look forward to continued collaboration with our Indigenous neighbors.

We began our year with our outreach budget at a lower level than we desired. Our Peace and Earth Committee struggled to decide how to disburse the greatly reduced outreach funds. They came up with a solution that did not eliminate any of the local organizations or Quaker organizations that had struggled through the pandemic. By the end of the year, we brought in enough contributions to restore our outreach to our original levels. Our Communications Committee has kept us informed and connected through our weekly online Digest. Early in the year our

website was hacked. Through the skill and diligence of our Communications Committee all was restored. We formed a new Ad Hoc committee to create our Meeting Handbook and to organize our meeting house files. Our House and Grounds committee organized installation of new windows for the entire meeting house, stripping and painting an upstairs First Day room, and addressed termite treatment.

We have been able to continue our intergenerational activities such as Secret Pals and Simple Christmas craft making via Zoom. These meeting traditions brought us together at a much needed time. In another virtual meeting we held a very funny Nativity play and sang Christmas carols which was a joy for us. In February our youth organized and held a nonperishable food collection and raised money for food pantries in our area. We continued to write cards and visit Friends, but again in this second year of the pandemic, we have painfully missed opportunities.

In December we held a farewell party for a much loved member of our community who was moving to the West Coast to be closer to her family. We were masked and socially distanced on the meeting house lawn. One friend remarked how surprised and joyful it was to realize after several minutes of conversation, just who she was talking to, the mask and the new hairstyle having made that a challenge. The year has been very hard, but Spirit seems to have given us gifts of being surprised by joy along the way.

STATE OF THE MEETING REPORT FOR 2021

Atlanta Friends Meeting

Lissa Place, Clerk

approved at Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business on March 20, 2022

If we thought 2020 was a year like no other, 2021 was a year that felt like it went on longer than any of us expected. With the pandemic raging through the country for most of the year, we have learned to function in a new way. We are holding the Meeting, and ourselves in the light as we consider a future that is different, but still maintains our core beliefs as Quakers.

We have worked hard to support one another through this troubling time and have done our best to remain a vibrant community despite these circumstances. Although we were weary from the pandemic and all the changes it has brought to our lives, we continued to be there for one another. We have reached out to members and attenders in need and when needed, we have provided financial assistance.

We have become more adept at technology this year, providing hybrid worship as well as many workshops via Zoom to continue our work in activism as well as grow as a Meeting. The decision to reopen for in person worship came from Ministry and Worship, Care and Counsel, and other committees. Ultimately, it was Ministry and Worship who brought the recommendation for a hybrid worship to Business Meeting, recommending separate zoom and in person meetings except for 3rd First Day. Ministry and Worship struggled deeply to come up with a plan that would meet the needs of our community. We learned that friends have different understandings of safety – what is safe? One friend made a distinction between connection and presence, zoom provided the richness of the connection, seeing each other's faces, but being in physical proximity in the meetinghouse provided a deeper sense of presence.

The Working Group on the Use of the Meetinghouse, the group charged with determining COVID safety measures for the Meetinghouse, planned how to create hybrid worship. They learned from a survey that Friends were interested in continuing a Zoom option even when we returned to in person worship. They charged Administration committee to develop appropriate technology to allow this to happen, thanks to the expertise of Aaron Ruscetta. The committee developed a protocol for safe attendance, and a protocol for what to do if one of our members tested positive for COVID after attending the meetinghouse.

We were all set to start, until the CDC changed its guidance in the face of the Delta variant surge, and the Working Group recommended postponing the reopening. Instead, we held a listening session on August 1 to share our thinking, and to hear the concerns from the community. Members shared very different opinions of what was appropriate and safe, as well as very real mental health needs in the second year of the pandemic. It became clear that the cost of not opening was greater than the cost of opening. Because of feedback it had heard about concerns that the Meeting would split into one Zoom and one In Person Meeting, Ministry and Worship changed its recommendation. Because our Meeting treasures community, Ministry and Worship proposed reopening on Aug 29 as a hybrid meeting for a one month trial period. When we started in person First Day Meetings, we laid down the midweek worships on Monday and Thursday, retaining an in person Wednesday morning meeting.

The hybrid meeting format has been very successful. We were surprised at how easy it was to set up and were able to use mostly donated materials to start our hybrid experiment. We approved Ministry and Worship's recommendation to extend our hybrid experiment until June of 2022. Our meeting for Worship now has a "tech table" where someone makes sure the Zoom screen functions properly. Our technology team is now working to make the sound in Meeting more easily heard on Zoom.

The Working Group on the Use of the Meetinghouse continues to monitor both the pandemic in the face of the Omicron surge, and changes in CDC recommendations, making changes such as providing N95 masks.

So many of the things we did in 2021 had to be done with the pandemic in mind, but despite that, we functioned relatively normally. Throughout the Meeting, all committees made the decision to meet in person or by Zoom, depending on the needs of its members. We have had hybrid Meeting for Business since September, and some committees have been using this hybrid option all year. Zoom continues to provide blessings as it welcomes Friends from far away, as well as Friends who are unable to get to Meeting under these, or in some cases, any circumstances.

Ministry and Worship found ways to provide opportunities to introduce and nurture our spirituality. In January, Ministry and Worship held a forum on Queries as a Quaker Spiritual Practice using zoom breakout rooms for worship sharing and reflection. Later Ministry and Worship held a forum on spiritual nurture groups, introducing the meeting to these practices and inviting those interested to join an existing group. In October, we held a forum on membership, exploring what draws us to meeting, hearing what membership means to two friends, and describing the process of membership. Our Adult First Day class continues to meet weekly and each month a Friend shares their spiritual journey.

Last year, Ministry and Worship began work exploring our understanding of reparations and right relations. We have been gratified with how this work connects with others in meeting, which led to the formation of The Ad Hoc Reparations and Right Relations group, started by Ministry and Worship with representatives from Friends of Color, Quakers for Racial Equality, and the Committee Undoing Racism in Atlanta Friends Meeting. We have developed our understanding of this concern through a series of online educational forums with expert guest speakers. The first forum focused on historical foundations and the second on réparations efforts by a wide variety of groups. Atlanta Meeting has now approved a minute on Reparative Justice and Reconciliation, which is on the AFM website and has been sent to all the Meetings in SAYMA. We look forward to hearing how it is received by other members of SAYMA.

In this time of loss and isolation, treasured Friends important to the life of the meeting have died since our last report. We treasure the memories and witness of Tom Kenworthy (12/28/20), Suzan Kenworthy (9/6/2021), Gene Singletary (2/1/2021), Freer Jarvis (4/25/2021), Renda McCaughan (7/26/2021), Rick Martinson (2/8/2021), and Robert (Bob) Westervelt (10/2021). Due to Covid, only one Memorial Service was coordinated by Care and Counsel in 2021.

We welcomed one new member and have held the ministries of four members in the Meeting's care. They have asked for their ministries to be taken under the care of the meeting and anchored in our spiritual accountability practices. This comes from an understanding that Atlanta Meeting recognizes that all Friends are called to minister to each other and to the world. In southern Georgia, Macon Worship Group continues under our care. Holding virtual Meetings for Worship of a small group has created challenges, but Friends remain faithful.

For our youngest Friends, First Day School has continued throughout the year. Teens and Young Adult Friends have been meeting separately for zoom calls. In-Person Class was held from 10-11am from August to December. Families were encouraged to join the first 15 minutes of worship (on Zoom or In Person) as has been the practice in our Meeting. Themes and lessons included Trusting and Listening for God, Becoming Community, and From Darkness to Light. Teachers' lesson plans were focused on the Old Testament this year. In the Spring, a dozen families participated in zoom calls, averaging four families a call, and several families participated in the SAYMA Play care Junior

Virtual Spring and Yearly Meeting sessions. In the fall, several families attended in person. Twenty-Five children, ages two to late teens came in person, with an average of five families per week.

Religious education outlined guidelines used for childcare and First Day School [FDS] activities this fall, at the time when most children were not eligible for the Covid-19 vaccination. All children ages 2-11 were required to wear masks while in the meetinghouse and also while using the AFM playground, which they did successfully.

Adults in contact with children as teachers, doorkeepers, or childcare volunteers were fully vaccinated, and wore masks. Adults in the First Day School classrooms and nursery maintained a physical distance as is reasonable for the care of children. The AFM nursery was open weekly, and childcare was provided for committee meetings as well as Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, though few used the nursery. In zoom class and in person, children and families were gathered and centered in worshipful learning. Youth shared joyfully of their lives and connection to one another. Children made bouquets of flowers to give to adults during fellowship after meeting, and a service learning project of making wreaths for AFM community in exchange for donations and pledge of food donations to Casa Alterna guests at AFM.

Our quest for racial justice continued this year, as several groups in the Meeting were involved in this work. Quakers for Racial Equality (QRE) had a robust year. Monthly Zoom meetings became opportunities for having speakers from across the country to address topics in the areas of reparative justice, state and national issues, as well as support for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. The Meeting enjoyed guest speakers from the Black Quaker Project, Housing Justice in Decatur/Dekalb, and Stolen Wealth Returns, an organization that paid off student loans for Black social justice organizers. We utilized experts from inside our community for talks on Racial Disparities in Women's Health, Educating Students about Systemic Racism: Truth Telling in Schools, Climate Change: Environmental Justice with Green Friends and QRE, and Asylum Seekers and Migrants in a Era of Mass Detention: A Georgia Perspective. We also learned about Voting Rights and its effect on Voter Suppression, and are preparing AFM to write a land acknowledgement to the Indigenous People who used to live where our building now stands.

In addition to all those programs, QRE staffed a weekly "Virtual Literature Table" as well as a monthly "Listening Ear," for concerns around racism. QRE also wrote two public statements and used them to educate and advocate for others on these issues. One of these statements was to support schools that are teaching about systemic racism, and the second one was to stand with Asian Americans, as there has been so much violence directed toward them. Links to these documents are at the end of this report.

QRE also collaborated with members of Social Concerns, Friends of Color, Ministry and Worship, and Committee on Undoing Racism in Atlanta Friends Meeting on drafting two Minutes related to anti-racism that were approved by the whole Meeting. One was a minute on Reparative Justice and Reconciliation, and the other was a Minute on Hatred, Racist Violence, and Domestic Terrorism. Links to these Minutes are also at the end of this report.

Committee for Undoing Racism in Atlanta Friends Meeting (CURAFM) was also very active this year. CURAFM focused its work on the Ad Hoc Anti-Racist Policies and Procedures Group. This Ad Hoc group was formed to write policies and Procedures to proactively address institutional racism in Atlanta Friends Meeting. We decided that the work of this Ad Hoc committee encompassed the goals of CURAFM, so we used our energy to organize the work for the Ad Hoc Group, rather than focusing on additional committee work. The Ad Hoc group was formed in late 2020 with representatives from Friends of Color, Care and Counsel, Religious Education, Social Concerns, Quakers for Racial Equality and Administration Committee. One of the representatives was also on Ministry and

Worship. Our first task was to review all policies in existence related to discrimination or anti-racism from our Meeting and some from other Meetings. We determined that there was no policy for adequately handling racist incidents between individuals at the Meeting, and so we set out to write one. With this goal in mind, we spent 8 months drafting a document which was then distributed to the wider community, including Friends of Color, for feedback. We want to be sure that we have accurately placed the needs of the person who was harmed by the racism in the center of the policy. The ad hoc committee looks forward to using the feedback to rewrite parts of the draft and will bring the final document to Business Meeting in 2022.

CURAFM also led Let's Talk About Race, a monthly forum to discuss race and racism that continued through 2021. They are now using Ibram Kendi's book, [How to Be An Anti-Racist](#) as a guide and source of prompts for their discussions. They plan to pick a book with a different perspective to follow once this one is completed.

In 2021, Casa Alterna welcomed 360 asylum-seeking guests into the meetinghouse! Here, guests were welcomed as friends and provided with simple but gracious acts of hospitality including meals, clothing, a hot shower, a warm bed, and a listening ear. This ministry is under the care of the Meeting and is stewarded by its Friend-in-Residence, Anton Flores-Maisonet. The ministry also has 501c3 non-profit status as Casa Alterna.

Scores of volunteers, both directly affiliated with the Meeting and beyond, offered accompaniment to people from over 50 different countries both at the Atlanta airport and at other major hubs of transportation. This work of welcome this past year involved over 30 members and attenders of the Meeting in both direct and indirect acts of service and solidarity. Additionally, for the past two months students from the Friends School of Atlanta have provided us with a weekly supply of sack lunches for our airport companions.

Thousands of asylum seekers have been assisted this past year at the airport with the 360 guests who stayed at the meetinghouse being the remnant who needed typically one night's lodging while awaiting their plane, bus, or ride to take them to their new home in the United States.

Social Concerns Committee was involved in many capacities this year. This committee includes several groups, such as QRE and Casa Alterna, as well as Green Friends, Women's Justice, and Alternatives to Violence Program. Here are brief reports from some of the other groups involved in the Social Concerns Committee.

Our Alternatives to Violence Program led a zoom workshop in LaGrange, Georgia, and is planning an advanced workshop there in January of 2022.

The Restorative Justice Committee works closely with the Restorative Justice Group of Georgia. RJGG had several educational programs this year in addition to working with Dekalb County officials to help establish restorative court and school programs.

The Banner Committee for Social Concerns made several professionally looking nonpartisan banners they used to encourage people in low voting and often low income areas around Atlanta to vote in the 2021 senatorial run off in January, as well as other elections. They also made a banner announcing the new solar panels that will be installed in the Meetinghouse.

The Green Friends group has been strong throughout the pandemic, both in spirit and in numbers. In addition to helping with the meetinghouse solar panel project, Green Friends sponsored several virtual forums, such as "Drawdown Georgia", which identifies ways to decrease the state's greenhouse gas emissions. The group's members also continue to work closely with Citizens' Climate Lobby.

In the area of Women's Justice, Social Concerns presented a letter requesting support for Women and Children to Business Meeting. This letter was distributed to the wider community to gain awareness of the worldwide strife that Women and Children face at this time.

Another group that worked beyond the walls of our meeting in 2021 was the Atlanta Advocacy Team of the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL). That group continued to focus this year on lobbying our Georgia members of Congress to support repeal of the 2002 Iraq AUMF (Authorization for the Use of Military Force). They were energized when our Congressional members all became co-sponsors and the House of Representatives passed the repeal. Next year they will lobby to end the U.S. involvement in the Saudi War against Yemen.

The Team grew stronger in several ways and is now a dedicated group of 15. They expanded their media presence, with postings on social media, a press release, a feature story and by developing a list of newspapers in major Georgia cities. They even had a team member write a song, "Get it to the Floor!" which they sent to both senators. FCNL loved this creative approach and opened the national TEAM SUMMIT with the song! Three hundred activists around the country from 127 Teams in 47 states were inspired by this song. We continue to lobby to shift foreign policy in the direction of greater reluctance to get involved in endless conflict.

Our Quaker Voluntary Service group had a good 2021. This is the 10th year of AFM's service as host meeting for a Quaker Voluntary Service (QVS) cohort. The Local Support Committee (LSC) is charged with helping QVS and the local Coordinator. The committee has progressed into active engagement in a set of queries focused on equity, and is committed to explore these conversations more deeply over time. Some important topics have been in consideration of race (implications of Whiteness), class (affordability of site placements and diversifying options), and gender (use pronouns).

The current residence of the Fellows continues to be in the Grant Park neighborhood. Meals and house maintenance are mainstays of support from the LSC, as is actively considering other opportunities to connect, build relationships, and provide essential QVS programming content. This year has included an increase in hybrid (virtual and in-person) occasions.

Nominating Committee worked hard to get back on its feet in 2021. With multiple changes in leadership, the committee struggled to get traction, but still got their work done with the committed work of many strong committee members as well as a past Nominating Committee Clerk's help. They look forward to a more stable 2022.

Our building received a lot of work in 2021. The shingles on the Meetinghouse roof were all replaced with new shingles in May, due in part to the planned solar panel array installation. The project, initially proposed by Green Friends, was approved by the Meeting, and installation is expected to begin as soon as possible. Other completed Meetinghouse projects included repainting of parts of the building, pressure washing of sidewalks around the building; playground mulch spreading. We also installed new metal furniture for the rear patio and the back door areas to allow for more outdoor seating.

Our Young Friends Program Coordinator (YFPC) since 2009, left their position this summer. An ad hoc group was formed to review both the current YFPC job description and the current YFPC Support Committee description before a new person is hired. We would like for that person to do more work with 3rd through 8th graders, in addition to SAYF .

Renters, including a school, gradually returned to the Meetinghouse in 2021. Our Friend-in-Residence agreed at the request of the Administration Committee to serve a 3rd year through July 2022.

The Landscaping Committee continued to work with others on the lower area pathway behind the playground to inhibit invasive plant growth, create a walkway and meditation area, and spread more mulch.

Friends continued to enjoy the Ferguson Cabins, a property in Northern Georgia, with record use again in 2021. The committee conducted regular maintenance and improvements to the property. The cabins committee asked the Meeting to support them in a legal issue related to a proposed commercial development of the property adjacent to the cabin. Meeting for Business approved signing onto this case to support our neighbors around the lake. The committee has been working with others in the Meeting to address legal issues and will continue to report to Business Meeting as there are developments. The Committee is looking into having an internet calendar set up so Friends can view Cabins availability with actual scheduling continuing to be made by contacting the scheduler.

Our community has survived and thrived in 2021. We have worked hard to keep our spirits up, and we have asked ourselves, how do we remain vital, faithful, and prophetic in these times? Even so, we are eager to resume Friendly Eights and Welcome Dinners, as well as coffee hour and potlucks. We can only hope that 2022 will bring these things.

Links:

Quakers for Racial Equality Statements:

Supporting Schools Teaching about Systemic Racism (7/14/21)

http://atlantaquakers.org/_site_pdf_docs/QRE-SupportingSchoolsTeachingRacism-20210714.pdf

Standing with Asian Americans (3/26 2021)

http://atlantaquakers.org/_site_pdf_docs/QRE_Stand_With_Asian_Americans_3.pdf

Atlanta Friends Meeting 2021 Minutes Related to Anti-Racism

Minute on Reparative Justice and Reconciliation (Minute 8/15/2021:03)

http://atlantaquakers.org/_site_pdf_docs/Minute_on_Reparative_Justice-20210815.pdf

Minute on Hatred, Racist Violence, and Domestic Terrorism (2/21/2021-01)

http://atlantaquakers.org/_site_pdf_docs/Minute_on_Racist_Hatred_&_Violence-20210221.pdf

Berea Friends Meeting

2021 State of the Meeting Report

This is the third report composed in unprecedented times, meeting the changing nature of the pandemic by adopting hybrid meeting and structured in-person gathering practices. Despite the continuing challenges that this presents to our community there is much to share about the preceding year.

Berea Friends Meeting continues to strive to be a spiritually healthy and dynamic community of seekers. 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.

Our meeting is answering the call to become an anti-racist faith community in multiple ways. We don't shy away from the topic, which can be challenging because there are some among us who don't feel safe to be present in discussion although they have strong feelings, and we have some Friends who speak softly and others with strong voices. To support our process, we host regular book readings on the topic, and we remain an integral part of the "First Thursday Club," which meets monthly and aims to create conversation and share learning on racial justice issues and dismantling white supremacy. While we are still struggling with how to help the Yearly Meeting with their relationship with people of color, we have been a constant supporter of SAYMA URJ.

As the pandemic continued into its second year our Meeting practices evolved, following CDC guidance and the changing nature of the COVID virus. This fall we began welcoming renters into our spaces again. With enhanced internet connection and wireless networking, we enabled Friends to join us virtually by connecting to the internet via laptop and web camera. Although two Friends encourage us to enhance our technological support to a more advanced level, the Meeting has remained ambivalent, balancing cost with benefit because we anticipate the pandemic will pass and only one or two Friends regularly attend meetings virtually. Understandably, our youth program has languished a bit — now welcoming two to three children and three or fewer teens with some weeks of no attendance. Our adult participation has also dwindled somewhat — regularly welcoming between ten and twenty adults at Meeting for Worship, some of whom attend virtually. Visitors still join us, however, with some who might become regular attenders. Interestingly, more Berea College students have been visiting repeatedly. We continue to host hybrid 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 in a hybrid format by at least ten people. Sharing circle after Meeting for Worship has remained an important moment each week.

Like other Meetings in SAYMA, the pandemic has highlighted cracks in our community and areas where our practices need to be improved. As we have witnessed conflict in our community, we are realizing that social media, email, and virtual meetings drastically limit the nature and depth of communication that can be experienced. We are realizing that deep communication requires physical presence and informal interaction. Being in the presence of someone enables us to perceive all the diverse ways they communicate aside from language and facial expression providing the opportunity to understand the true meaning of their message. Without this, we are left to asynchronously read between the lines of an email or look at a little rectangle of each other's faces on a computer screen

Our conflicts have also caused us to realize that we don't have a communal way to deal with conflict. We realize need to come to unity about basic concepts including what it means to be "safe" when difficult issues are discussed, what full participation means, and the definition of unity in a Meeting for Business. We responded with some nascent efforts to understand how we should deal with conflict, hosting a first hour discussion watching videos about conflict transformation produced by New York Yearly Meeting. We have only begun this work, however, and need to invest more energy and creativity in it for our Meeting to heal and move to more healthy communal practice.

While our Youth Committee is still fledgling and struggles to be active, our teen group has remained active in SAYF, hosting a retreat last fall and attending others in person. Two of our Young Adult Friends have joined the SAYF Steering Committee, enabled to bridge geographical distance by virtual meeting technology. We continue to strive to envision a community in which participants of all ages may be encouraged to interact, learn, support and be supported with regular intergenerational activities and projects.

Although we've run the gamut of stresses a community can have this year, we realize that our community is resilient with different people supporting others in different ways at different times, highlighting our connections. Our virtual meetings have demonstrated the diversity of our community, enabling Friends to attend even though they are in different places.

We strive to 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.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon Saderholm – clerk, Berea Friends Meeting

State of the Meeting Report Birmingham Friends Meeting 2021

Birmingham Friends Meeting devoted a second hour to discuss the state of our meeting, structured around the queries provided by SAYMA. These queries were:

1. How have we actively listened for that of God in others as we contend with vulnerability, hurt, anger, and new ideas?
2. If a method of communication we have been using has not worked, what other ways have we tried?
3. How have we wrestled with the possibility that we are wrong? How have we allowed the space that Spirit needs to show us new possibilities?
4. How did we make room for humanity and life circumstances in our expectations of each other? How have we respected each of our lived experiences?

Listening for that of God in Others

“Tenderness” emerged as a clear theme in describing how we actively listen for God in each other. The overall sense of the meeting was a deep appreciation for the love and support that characterizes our interactions with each other. Our meeting was described as “unified,” not in the sense of consensus, but in how we listen to differences of opinion and maintain respect for one another. Our second hours often involved intense discussions as we have grappled with issues such as racism and reparations, indigenous rights, prison reform, transgender legislation, and a particular focus on climate change in our Peace and Justice second hours.

We also discussed three books this year: Pema Chodron’s *Welcoming the Unwelcome*, Sara Rudin’s *The Gospel, A New Translation*, and Thomas Kelly’s *Testament of Devotion*. These are typically spirited discussions where we debate both the author’s ideas and each other’s. We do not always agree, but we are a unified group. We discussed this in contrast to the uncertainties in the world today with the pandemic, political unrest at home and abroad, and the disorder in SAYMA itself.

Communication

Throughout the year, we have discussed the challenges of meeting over zoom during the pandemic. In many ways it has been an unexpected blessing. We have elder Friends who have not been able to attend due to health issues and our meeting has been enriched by their experience and wisdom. We have long-term Friends who have moved away and their presence has provided a strong base of stability. We have had more younger attenders bringing new ideas and fresh perspectives. Our meeting has been strengthened in significant ways this past year, due to the pandemic.

Our meeting has also struggled with communicating virtually. Many have described “zoom fatigue,” this past year. The fatigue is not solely about our meeting, but the cumulative

effects over the past two years of social distancing with our jobs, our extended families, and our friends.

Being with everyone at the same time in meeting has affected our individual relationships with each other. What might seem like casual conversation over snacks between worship and second hour is a powerful means to strengthen connections with individuals. Small issues can be resolved and miscommunications can be sorted before they turn into problems. Communicating with one person can be reassuring, but always communicating with an entire group can be overwhelming. We have needed to rely on e-mail more and similar zoom-like issues of everyone communicating with everyone at the same time have ensued. We have had concerns that our Quaker process has been weakened with how the pandemic has affected the way we communicate with each other.

We have addressed this in several ways this year. One way has been to bring elements of worship sharing into all forms of meeting. We have been working on raising hands before we speak, allowing all who wish to speak once before speaking again, and pausing after each person speaks. This has definitely helped, but the formality can dampen the enthusiasm that comes with spontaneity and is not a perfect solution. We have also modified our Outreach Committee to an In-Reach/Outreach committee where ways have been sought to create opportunities for us to connect with each other outside of meeting for worship and second hour. A small support group was formed for a member in a particularly difficult profession during the pandemic. One of us also leads a Social Justice book club which is attended by both those who are Quaker and those who are not. We have also had several second hours on Quaker basics. The primary reason was to explain Quakerism to our new attenders, but these discussions have also helped to reinforce for all of us who we are and why we choose to worship the way we do.

Being Wrong/New Opportunities and Lived-In Experiences of Others

Our discussion combined the last two related queries and included several sharing experiences of being in the wrong over the past year. Being wrong included lack of information, misinformation, and not understanding the perspectives of others. One person shared difficulties in agreeing to serve in a position of responsibility that required learning of much new information. Another described giving advice that one didn't follow altogether oneself. One shared this wisdom, "the purpose of words is to go beyond what words can utter," reminding us that words are always limited in conveying what is in our hearts, at our center, and our intentions.

With respect to the lived-in experiences of others, one described that it was both painful and enlightening to realize that one's own experience is not the whole experience. Another brought up that over the course of the year, we have had several new people come to meeting, become very involved, then disappear, and asked, "what are we missing, what don't we understand, what opportunities have we lost?"

We are living in a time of such rapid change. Like everyone else, those in our meeting have lost loved ones to covid, have been ill ourselves, or have feared contracting the virus. We are coping with deep social and political divisions at home and as we share this report, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the consequences of which, we cannot predict. Our meeting is struggling, but we are strong, and we are grateful to have one another.

Celo Friends State of the Meeting Report 2021

Approved on February 27, 2022

Twenty twenty-one was a challenging year for our faith community. We needed to attend carefully to each other and to be gentle as we grappled with how and where to meet. We held special called meetings both in person and on Zoom. We had subcommittee meetings both in person and on Zoom to work on our COVID policies for moving into the meeting house as well as our corporate response to the racial and reparative justice work that has been brought to us through SAYMA and fostered by our newly formed Racial Equity Committee. Listening deeply to each other is a strength of our meeting. We were able to agree on the OWL technology to bring our on-line and in-person worship together on 1/1/22. We also came to unity that we could have our Christmas carol sing this year. Joyfully, it turned into an outside event at the fire circle.

The nominating committee completed a big project this year. All job/committee descriptions are now complete and are on the website. When we started this project there was only one job/committee description—Ministry and Care. Now there are 19, and some already need updating! Our purpose was to clarify what committees do and for the descriptions to help with the flow of questions, concerns, and discernment. Once again, the Strawberry Creek process helped us to be open to the Spirit and led us to find the right Friend to fill each position. The work of the Nominating Committee highlighted the importance of a functional website, which was subsequently created by a member of the meeting. Now all meeting documents are available at Celofriends.org.

We have been hampered in our abilities to corporately mourn those we have lost this year, who include: Alice Johnson, wife of our co-clerk David Johnson; Robert Johnson; Liz Golibart; Denny Fernald, former co-clerk; Janet Ester, mother to Joanna Flynn; Herbie Walters; and Jim Klein, husband of Rio Alden. Watching as some of them declined, we began grieving before their deaths. Memorial services took place at times of COVID lacunas. The service for Herbie Walters, our RSVP creator and activist, will occur this May with worship and joyous dancing. Our worship around a blazing fire in the Celo cemetery on the Day of the Dead was especially poignant. We remembered those known only to God buried in the unmarked graves up the hill, shared stories, laughter, and tears, and admired the extension to the beautiful stone memorial wall.

The End-of-Life Committee updated the pre-arrangement and burial forms and encouraged us to keep them current. The committee also worked with Ministry and Care to create a death and dying liaison job description.

During 2021 many Friends gathered outside the meetinghouse for Meeting for Worship and via Zoom. A major challenge became how to link the two meetings using our limited technology. As the year progressed, our Ministry and Care and Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business meetings were dominated by COVID protocol discussions as we prepared to begin meeting in the meetinghouse. An ad hoc committee labored over whether we should insist on vaccinations and made recommendations to Ministry and Care and then to Meeting for Business. The issue of community was ever present—some thinking safety was the most important part of community and some thinking that compassion was more important. Throughout this struggle, we listened deeply to each other over six months or so. Through our Quaker process we found ways to respect each other's needs, offering three settings for worship. We made our meetinghouse as safe as possible during a pandemic with HEPA filters, social distancing, medical grade masks, and statements of "Respect and Responsibility." Some could continue to worship via Zoom, and some could continue to worship outside—weather permitting.

We remain saddened that we have not been able to resume our weekly potlucks or meet the needs of many of our young adult friends and families with children, who have not attended Meeting for Worship during the pandemic. We reflected on how we can be better fellow-travelers in their spiritual lives. Our children came for some outdoor walks for a few months, but then First Day School took a hiatus due to not having enough volunteers, the families being overwhelmed by the pandemic, and the clerk's mother dying. We welcomed the birth of August Rose Ramos. We were heartened by the return of Camp Celo campers, who sang and worshiped outdoors prior to our Meeting for Worship.

Our Welcoming Committee adapted to the challenge of having three different meeting sites, and continues to connect people with the meeting and provide newcomers with materials. They educate people on our safety protocols and support us in singing outside.

Our Racial Equity Committee (REC) worked toward increasing understanding of the racial injustices in our society and among ourselves. They offered a book study of *White Supremacy and Me* by Layla Saad. Adult Religious Education (ARE), focused on the theme "Who Is My Neighbor?" including panels on "White Supremacy and White Privilege," "The Color of Law-- Segregation by Design," "Documentation Issues for our Spanish-Speaking Neighbors," and "Creating Community with Our Neighbors." This fall we had three study groups meeting monthly, consisting of thirty Friends total, to discuss *Hope and Witness in Dangerous Times* by J. Brent Bill, who will meet with us in early 2022 over Zoom. These small groups gave us the opportunity to share together in a relaxed setting, while providing a crucible in which we could examine what strengthens our faith and what is ours to do both individually and corporately.

Several members of our meeting served in positions of responsibility with SAYMA. We remain grateful for their remaining faithful to their roles despite the confrontational nature of sessions in 2021. We created an ad hoc committee to focus on our relationship with SAYMA. We sought to address how to actively listen to that of God in others as we contended with the hurts, opportunities, and challenges in order to be faithful to our inner Light.

We were concerned about the path away from its Quaker roots that Guilford College was taking. An ad hoc committee wrote a minute of support for continuing Guilford's Quaker paradigm, and we donated funds to help this respected educational institution survive.

During this time we have continued supporting both Quaker and local organizations and have a fund to help our neighbors who have been burdened by COVID or other challenges. Despite Covid restrictions we had two well attended work days caring for our beautiful buildings and grounds. The Buildings and Grounds Committee also facilitated new drywall and paint inside the meetinghouse and staining the exterior of Margithaus.

We accept both that our rich and vibrant pre-COVID meeting community is disrupted and fractured and that our transcendent love for each other keeps us trying to strengthen our connections. The technology that we have had to learn has allowed us to welcome old, new, and distant friends into our circle. We have adapted, listened, cried, laughed, and deeply cared for each other this year. We long for the day when we can have more of us together under one roof and have the joy of again breaking bread together.

Charleston Friends Meeting 2021 State of Meeting Report

Charleston Friends Meeting had an interesting 2021: painful, distressing, uplifting, insightful, strengthening – interesting. Meeting online has continued to work well for many of us, which is fortunate especially since we have lost our long-time meeting place. We've been joined for worship by Friends from other SAYMA and WV meetings; persons interested in learning about Quakerism have come to meetings for worship and members of the Greenbrier Valley Worship Group are regularly in attendance as well.

Meeting virtually has also worked well for our regular Wednesday evening Second Hour meetings. There has usually been good attendance and active participation for our discussions of the Pendle Hill pamphlet *Members One of Another*, the quasi-autobiography of Peace Pilgrim, and our on-going reading in the Gospel of John. The dialogue around these texts steadily encouraged growth of both our awareness of differences in each other's perspectives and in our sense of community in spiritual discernment.

Charleston Friends Meeting and SAYMA have been sadly reduced in energy, activity and spirit by the removal of several active Friends who have relocated to be near family. The loss to Charleston Friends Meeting and SAYMA will be equally a gain for other meetings. Charleston Friends Meeting lost to death a beloved long-time member who was memorialized in a Friends service, the first we have had in decades. In addition, one member moved away for a spell of time and was taken under the gracious care of West Knoxville Friends Meeting. Fall did bring the addition via zoom of a Friend who has become an active regular attender.

Charleston Friends Meeting worked with a historically African American United Methodist Church to prepare and provide a Super Bowl Dinner for a men's shelter. We also prepared and served a Christmas season breakfast for a women's and family shelter. Individual members have been involved in a number of local service activities including animal welfare and adoption, helping people with their income taxes and delivering greeting cards and gifts to nursing home residents and staff.

During the year we had speakers on various topics such as: the WV Poor Peoples Campaign; WV Council of Churches and WV activity through AFSC. In addition, the American Rosie Movement, which draws on the contributions of female labor during World War II and founded to honor and promote our ability to get things done when we pull together, provided a presentation which included, via zooming, an original Rosie, who was also a Quaker. She spoke not only of her involvement during the war but also her continued appreciation of that very camaraderie.

In October Avis Wanda McClinton, an African American Quaker from Philadelphia, gave us the most powerful meeting of the year. She recreated for us the scene and backgrounding on enslavement she had worked up for the first release, in her own backyard, of information developed by Haverford College archivists on 339 manumissions made by Quaker enslavers in the Philadelphia area. This program was followed up at one of our Second Hours in December with a presentation, open to members of all SAYMA's meetings, by the researchers on their work and ways their computerized database might be used. Avis Wanda's involvement with this project is but one aspect of her divinely inspired mission to gain historical recognition within and beyond the community of Friends for the humanity and inhumane sufferings of enslaved persons both those anonymously buried in Quaker graveyards and now 339 individuals with individual names. Confrontation with the human cost of enslavement and enslaving has

demanded from Charleston Friends a deep working of our thought and emotional responses that are transforming our grasp on the problem of racism and its interconnections with the past and present of our society. We look forward to helping her seek further information once the pandemic is more under control for her to travel.

Since 2016, in the context of establishing SAYMA URJ, an increasing clear divergence of commitments or priorities among Friends has fractured SAYMA. About half of Charleston Friends Meeting members have little sense of connection with SAYMA and have long been exhausted with the incessant and apparently pointless bickering and exchange of accusations. Among those who have been engaged with SAYMA, some have disengaged in frustration and some in sadness due to lack of Spirit-led worship, while others stubbornly continue with rapidly decreasing hope of any solution. While we're not quite there yet, the question increasingly seems to be, will Charleston Friends Meeting leave SAYMA or will SAYMA lay itself down first?

Charleston Friends Meeting has certainly done its due diligence with hours of serious reflection and minutes on SAYMA's difficulties. Throughout this work Charleston Friends Meeting has held consistently to its understanding of standards of institutional process and integrity compatible with the ethical/spiritual foundations of Friends religious experience and belief. While there can be no doubt that we could and should have done much better, our efforts in this regard have taught us much about the difficulties of the Quaker way and brought members of Charleston Friends Meeting and the Greenbrier Valley Worship Group into closer spiritual communion and appreciation of how we can pull together.

The Fall Gathering of WV Friends in 2021, like 2020, was again virtual, but still well enjoyed by those who were able to attend. Charleston Friends Meeting and the Greenbrier Valley Worship Group picked up the reins for 2022, and it is not unrealistic to hope that the last weekend in September will see us together face to, perhaps socially distanced, face in the same spaces. It's wondrous to think that Spirit may have to rediscover Quakers not digitized but fleshed.

CHATTANOOGA FRIENDS MEETING

STATE OF MEETING REPORT 2021 DRAFT

2021 continued to be a difficult year for us and everyone as the coronavirus pandemic dragged on longer than anyone would have predicted. It tried our patience, challenged us, and in some ways inspired us to do better. Along with the struggles, were gifts and gratefulness for the steadfastness of the Meeting as a spiritual home in difficult times. We had started having hybrid Meetings early in 2020, with people present in person and on the computer screen, and continued them through 2021, gradually improving our technology for it. We learned to believe in and trust in the Divine Presence even when we are gathered on-line. Over time our balance gradually shifted from being mostly on screen to mostly in person and attendance gradually grew, but we have not returned to our pre-pandemic level of attendance or energy. After a long time of having no children present, late in the year some of our children started coming back, but by the end of the year we had yet to establish regular programming for them.

Our committees suffered with lack of organization and participation and everyone being tired of Zoom meetings. Our Peace & Social Justice Committee and Anti-Racism Working Group met through the end of the summer 2021 and then with loss of people and energy have not met since. While they were meeting, they did a lot of good work: They worked with groups in the community and continued to keep the Meeting aware of peace and justice and environmental events. They made sure Quakers were represented at the Interfaith Justice Roundtable and the Ed Johnson Memorial dedication. The AntiRacism Working Group held a threshing session for discernment of how we participate in systemic racism and white privilege and how we can move forward in anti-racism. Out of that they conceptualized how to progress in terms of objectives and strategies. Much of the Meeting was involved in two sessions of in-depth discussion of the Pendle Hill pamphlet "Race, Systemic Violence, and Retrospective Justice." Our Advocacy Team was active throughout the year, attending the FCNL Advocacy Trainings and group phone calls and doing lobbying work.

Ministry and Oversight committee continued to work hard at considering the health of the meeting and its individuals and providing an active second hour and community building program that adapted to the varying circumstances. Early on, we held some virtual potlucks over Zoom. When weather was conducive, we had outdoor brown bag picnics and by fall we had indoor brown bag shared lunches. We planned a variety of social events, some well attended and some not. We instituted a series of second hours featuring discussion of QuakerSpeaks videos on a particular topic, which could be viewed on Zoom via screen sharing and in person. A couple of our regular attenders presented an interesting and well attended second hour on Spiral Dynamics. In December, we gathered to sing Christmas carols together. It felt wonderful to be doing something like this as a real-life community. Our long time Meeting House resident left and we were able to find a new one. Tim is the brother of one of our regular attenders and has become active in our Meeting. It is a gift to have a resident who also participates. Tim cooked an Italian meal for an in-person lunch for us, which was a time of great warmth and connection. Our Property Oversight committee continued its watchful maintenance of our house and grounds and was able to hold an in-person workday in the fall, another community building event.

Up to the time of the pandemic, our Meeting had been active and vital and growing. We had even started considering whether in the future we might want some way of expanding our worship space and our parking space. Since then, not only has attendance been down, but we have lost some members.

Two of our long-standing members withdrew their membership, feeling that the Meeting was no longer serving their needs. One member moved and transferred her membership. Lorraine Larson (wife of Tom Zavala), who was not a member but a long-time fellow traveler passed away in November. We have had a number of new attenders, some of whom have “stuck” and some not, but through the time of the pandemic we have welcomed no new members. Other noteworthy events in the life of the Meeting included that we celebrated the wedding of a daughter of long-time members, Chuck Jones and Carla Askonas, and also noted the death of Chuck’s father with a well attended reception. Long time member Laura Seeger’s son was married in the spring; some of our members attending a wedding shower for him and his wife.

In this time while physical proximity remains difficult, our other forms of communication become increasingly important. We spend more time checking in with each other after Meeting. We keep our email list and our Facebook.com page more active. We send out announcements each week of the Zoom and in-person worship, with thoughtful queries, advices, or inspirational quotations. Our hard-working newsletter editor (who is also our Treasurer!), Diane McCluskey, puts out a wonderful newsletter each month, which contains not only minutes and information, but poetry, spirituality, education, photography, and more. We hope that all this has kept us as a positive spiritual force in people’s lives. Becky Ingle as the Outreach/Inreach committee all by herself, has undertaken a ministry of reaching out to visitors and to people we haven’t seen for a while, which is much appreciated.

Despite the challenges, the health and spirit of the Meeting remains very good. All of us are grateful that it has continued to be here and be supportive through these times. People feel nourished by being in our community. Some of our newer attenders have found it to be recharging spiritually and warm emotionally. Chattanooga Friends continues to be Spirit led and important in all our lives.

Columbia Friends Meeting
State of the Meeting 2022

1. How have we actively listened for that of God in others as we contend with vulnerability, hurt, anger, and new ideas?

When issues arise that cause anger and hurt or discomfort, we need to see and feel the Meeting as a whole, as a community, and keep the larger picture in mind. If we get angry with one another, it's like the right hand getting angry at the left, when both are part of the same body, and the hands should be trying to comfort one another. We get caught up in whatever is going on in our own minds, with past experiences keeping us from connecting with each other; but if we care deeply, about each other and the Meeting, somehow the communication will happen.

We have essentially three choices when we're faced with difficulties in the Meeting: people feeling aggrieved can walk out, and simply not participate any longer; one party to a dispute can surrender and step aside, while perhaps still feeling hurt; or we can keep at it, listen to one another, try to solve the matter and seek agreement. In the past, Friends have left the Meeting over disputes. But that doesn't really solve anything. Staying without resolving a problem also doesn't always work in the long run. We need to engage and stay with it. That's what love is about. Practically speaking, it might also help to develop and practice specific problem-solving skills.

"Listening for that of God" is the key. Even if it's frustrating, even if we don't really understand the position of another, we need to listen actively, with compassion and kindness on both sides, to see other people's feelings, and identify with them, even if it means endless meetings. We are bound to each other because of our commitment to be a part of something larger than ourselves, and to Quaker values and testimonies we so deeply appreciate and want both to embody and to spread more widely. We don't know the power we possess, especially if we are able to let go of our own feelings and invite in that of God to help us.

2. If a method of communication we have been using has not worked, what other ways have we tried?

The pandemic has caused some members and attenders to stop coming to Meeting for Worship, possibly because they're unable to take advantage of or are not interested in virtual attendance. For many Friends, it's very difficult to worship and communicate without direct contact. But on the other hand, virtual connections have allowed some of us to participate even if we're geographically distant, or physically vulnerable, which is highly valuable and appreciated.

One way to communicate differently is to reframe what we're doing. The Hiroshima committee has moved from doing vigils, which attracted a limited number of people, into the peace pole movement to communicate the importance of peace with the wider community; it's more visual, more aesthetically appealing and reaches a larger group to get the message over of not having war. And in that same way, for example, even without talking explicitly about the Savannah River Project and Westinghouse at the dedication of the Peace Pole, our message was able to be expressed by other means. If one method of communication is offensive to some then other ways can be found that are perhaps even more powerful but not offensive to those who are a part of your community. You can do the loving thing while appearing to sacrifice some of your goals but the result may allow your goals to be accomplished. Another instance is that there are Friends who don't attend Meeting for Worship, but work in the garden or on the grounds, gathering and communicating in that way.

We need to consider and create new ways of communicating, such as telephone networks or conference calls, to reach out to those we've lost touch with. We also need to keep in mind what it is we want to communicate. Talking directly, whether in person or less directly, lets people open up, connect - to express and feel how important the larger reality is in their lives. We appreciate when people are willing to be honest and share their vulnerability. What we communicate is the community.

3. How have we wrestled with the possibility that we are wrong? How have we allowed the space that Spirit needs to show us new possibilities?

Individual Friends each have their own approach to dealing with the concept of possibly being wrong. But there was agreement that taking the position that someone is wrong or right is a non-starter in reaching unity, and is not in harmony with our testimony that there is that of God in everyone. We need not to determine whether one side or the other is right, but to allow the space to find a new creative resolution, taking the time to come up with a whole new idea, a different way. For that to happen, though, everyone needs to be open to alternatives, and, most especially, Friends need to be encouraged to attend Meeting for Business, as that is where Quakers make decisions. People have to be there to make their feelings known, and help decide.

4. How did we make room for humanity and life circumstances in our expectations of each other? How have we respected each of our lived experiences?

We need to be getting at the idea of respecting the perspective of others. We assume that we do, but if we don't make sure all people have the opportunity to explain their position, it may not be possible. When there is disagreement, each person involved needs to have a full opportunity to explain it. Sometimes the influence of the group can solve a problem that individual Friends have; sometimes just letting time work can resolve things.

Such practices as worship sharing, where Friends are encouraged to speak out, can allow us to understand how others feel about specific topics. The book group, and even the pot luck lunches have served similar functions: we can learn others' life experience and backgrounds, have empathy, look at things from others' perspective. A book club-like approach to disagreement resolution was proposed, using readings and discussion to go more deeply into an issue.

Cookeville Monthly Meeting State of the Meeting report 2022

We have been meeting on Zoom for almost two years now, with only two in person Meetings for Worship this last year. Despite this reality we have adapted. Communication and worship are different, but in some ways have actually improved. We have been in a "jubilee" type of situation for these two years. Our positions of responsibility are not officially filled, but our attenders and members have still been doing what needs to be done. We do not officially conduct meetings for business, but we move forward together. Most Sundays we have combined unprogrammed worship with worship sharing and that format has worked well for us. We are learning to hold a sacred space together online, although the lack of physical interaction in person has left an empty space that virtual meetings cannot fill. One benefit that we have enjoyed is participating in worship with other SAYMA Monthly Meetings without leaving our homes. Most of us were able to celebrate the life of Hector Black in person with friends, family, and Quakers from other Meetings. That experience brought us some needed closeness and gratitude for our community. We feel that our communication with each other is good, but acknowledge and mourn the lack of interaction with others. Meeting space and time still reminds us to see that of God in all of us and in the world as a whole. It enables us to remember to love and truly see one another.

Huntsville Area Friends Meeting
2021 State of the Meeting Report

The year 2021 continued to be a virtual year for the Huntsville Area Friends Meeting (HAFM). The meeting does not have a current physical meeting location and our pre-pandemic location would not allow for any physical distancing. Our group has met on Zoom and evolved our communications to remain enjoined and further and share our leadings. We remain a small meeting, but the ease of virtual attendance has stabilized the meeting where Friends are scattered about the area and keeps most of the meeting able to chime in on a regular basis. We no longer have Friends driving long distances or having to miss attendance as often. This has allowed Huntsville Friends to come closer together, and that this has allowed new people to find us and come as they can.

On the other hand, it has been more difficult to schedule robust second hours, and some of our worship time has been spent socializing more, a form of worship itself. The meeting did have a get together last year at a member's home in the country. The stark contrast of being together with robust fellowship and intensity of worship were keenly felt. With the health and distance of members, HAFM is waiting until the pandemic silences before moving towards returning to in person worship.

Some Friends have been very involved in the SAYMA issues, but most are not as they are new to us or have not attended any SAYMA events. Friends are concerned about SAYMA, but have not spent much time discussing in depth or trying to minute our responses to the situation. Our small meeting is a mix of those who have already been representatives, those who currently are, and new attenders that are still acclimating to the meeting.

HAFM Book group delved into Layla Saad's book, *Me and White Supremacy*. The group spent most of the year on the book and went into deep places of sharing and vulnerability. The group shared other references and occasionally to the rest of the group on racial justice. What do I lift up in my own self to be a better person and combat racism? One member shared that the "book *pressed me into reviewing some important decisions in my life through her (Saad) lens and seeing the racism buried deep. At the same time, I celebrated other examples of my "waking up" in college to the systemic racism that surrounded me and the decision that I made after my sophomore year to contribute to educational justice by participating in the first-ever integrated Head Start program in Berkeley County, SC--working as a teacher's aid alongside a Black teacher. I could point out other examples of the importance that racial justice, living out right relationships with people of color in my life--not in an effort to convince you or anyone else. However, I do need to wrap words around my concern to "let my life speak" in the service of racial justice.*" The group shared items from QuakerSpeak, links provided by FCNL, articles from the SAYMA book study group and more. Much more to learn for all; their efforts does not wipe away white privilege, but attempted to shine a light that future work still needs to be planned for and worked on.

Part of HAFM's evolution in communication this past year was in the use of Slack. On the HAFM Slack page we have channels for events, joys and concerns, queries, SAYMA, the book study group and more. The rollout has had mixed success. Some members have had issues connecting to it or how to use it, but often we have little flurries of passed around information that have been worthwhile. The meeting still sends most important announcements out by email as not all members follow Slack on a regular basis. We hope to improve our communications with Slack and other sources as email strings in the past did not always work and information would get buried and might be missed. The additional tool aides the clerk and active members posting information without passing emails about. We also hope with Slack that F/friends would experience a sense of community there, since it allows for public and private conversation as well as convenient photo and link sharing. Members like it a lot especially for the ability to communicate and share joys and concerns amongst our private group since some aren't on Facebook or other social media. We will continue to work with Slack and other communication methods to keep the meeting linked as we continue in a virtual environment.

Members are involved in various outreach and community events. In 2021 (and that are on-going): We have a Meeting's representative to the Interfaith Mission Service (IMS), who participated in the IMS Racial Equity Committee's planning and carrying out of the "See Something: Say Something" training for Leadership Council & Officers' training, co-led by one of the founders of Black Lives Matter. Also, they have served on the City of Huntsville's Advisory Council during the transformation of the City's Office of Multi-Cultural Affairs into the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and continue to serve through the implementation of the City's deeper effort toward realizing diversity. HAFM was presented with the "Marilyn Mabry Racial Harmony Award" this year and in acceptance our member discerned and presented, "The shared task for *all* of us gathered here and across the world is to *unlearn* racism, to see and to hear 'that of God' in one another, as say Quakers, and, thus, to move toward *real* racial justice--and harmony. Thanks to Interfaith Mission Service for encouraging the Huntsville Area Friends Meeting and all affiliated faith communities in our journeys to become the *beloved community*."

Five HAFM members/attenders continue to be involved in political advocacy through the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) as part of the FCNL Huntsville Advocacy Team (HAT). They met regularly with "friends of Friends" to lobby their Congressmembers on the issues of restoring Congressional authority over military action. One also was/is a part of FCNL's Advocacy Corps and involved other members of HAT in lobbying or environmental justice. She also worked with community members on Alabama's 2021 voting redistricting efforts.

Though we are in a static virtual state for meeting. We have been able to share our leadings, discernments and hope for future revelations. The meeting is small and close knit, but willing to reach out to the community to lend a hand and help where we feel led to be a part of it. We hope that we can lean on each other to learn, grow and offer help to others and make our time in 2022 and beyond of value and sustaining to the world around us.

Memphis Friends Meeting – State of the Meeting report for 2021

How fares the Spirit amongst you?

Every person we know is carrying something heavy. We notice how tired everyone is, but we endure, adjust and change, finding creative ways to stay connected. Our Quaker Friends are still there, but they feel far away. It is meeting in person that works the muscle of community. None of us are dancing now, but we aren't standing still either. In spite of the foggy scrim between us, Quaker Friends and Quaker process have helped us. Throughout this second difficult year of the pandemic shutdown we have found the strength to carry on most of our normal activities on our Zoom platform.

Staying faithful: We held ten racial justice movie nights to discuss economic, environmental, medical, and restorative justice as well as Black history. Our twice-monthly meetings for learning focused on a range of topics with nine presented by guest speakers from local activists groups and several dedicated to Quaker testimonies and practice. We tried to continue our First Day School Zoom sessions, but laid that effort down early in the year due to spotty attendance.

Other Worship opportunities: We continued noon-time daily worship on Zoom as well as intermittent backyard worship outside the meetinghouse on Saturdays so non-Zoomers could stay in touch. We were able to hold Candlelight Worship in person twice last summer. In August we experimented with hybrid worship: 6--9 Friends at the meetinghouse sharing one computer on a turntable and the rest joining on Zoom. When COVID numbers rose, we resumed Zoom-only worship, and our Protocol ad hoc committee developed a set of metrics to let us know when it was safe to hold hybrid worship. That happened briefly at the end of November, but when the year closed we were back to Zoom only.

Memphis connections: We joined when and how it was safe to do so with the wider Memphis Community – Mid-South Pride, Water Protectors on the River for Sunrise Prayers, the family memorial celebration for Jere Gilley. We held a vigil on the meetinghouse lawn for Pervis Payne, then on death row here in Tennessee. In addition, small groups of us went on hikes, helped Friends move house, and stopped by the homes of Friends to say hello from the car or to drop off items for the children.

Wider Quaker World: Virtual presentations allowed us to connect more closely with the Wider Quaker World – Yearly Meeting, FGC, QEW, FWCC and FCNL events. One Friend attended a virtual clerking workshop offered by Pendle Hill.

Stewardship: We kept up with lawn mowing and held a workday outside in August. Friends checked on the meetinghouse from time to time and our housekeeper cleaned every month. In November we installed two air-filtering machines in the meeting room. During this pandemic year we focused our charitable contributions on food and housing insecurity in Memphis while continuing support of Wider Quaker Organizations.

Good-byes and Welcomes: Two Friends died during the year: Jere Gilley and Mike Parnell. Two Friends moved out of town: Jackie Schroeder and Kathy Greene. A baby was born: Ziggy Oliver Choi. He and his Mom, Faith, have joined us on Zoom and several visitors have begun joining us regularly for worship.

(This report was seasoned in two Meetings for Learning and two Meetings for Business. It was approved in Business Meeting on March 13, 2022.)

**Addendum to 2021 State of the Memphis Meeting
Responses to SAYMA M&N Queries in Worship Sharing February 20, 2022**

1. How have we actively listened for that of God in others as we contend with vulnerability, hurt, anger, and new ideas?
2. If a method of communication we've been using has not worked, what other ways have we tried?
3. How have we wrestled with the possibility that we are wrong? How have we allowed the space that Spirit needs to show us new possibilities?
4. How did we make room for humanity and life circumstances in our expectations of each other? How have we respected each of our lived experiences?

(Each paragraph represents one Friend's response to one or more of these queries. It is a faithful record of all the sentiments that were shared, but it is not a unity statement by the meeting as a whole.)

"I rely on Quaker process when we season concerns and have learned not to expect instantaneous unity. Do the words "right" and "wrong" have a place in spiritual discernment? Each of us will have a different view arising from our different experiences. By accepting that our own view is limited, we can be open to hearing others. We don't decide who is right and who is wrong, but simply listen in the same open spirit we trust others to listen to us. That is what allows the Light to break in."

"These queries ask us to change. Maybe it was wrong for our committee on racial justice to table SAYMA conflict to focus on our meeting's pain and what racial justice requires. I hoped that our movie nights might lead to persuasion, not preaching. Working with other groups, I am learning to change my ways of communicating in adversarial political advocacy. We need better ways to communicate in SAYMA, too. We seem to be in a liminal space without certainty or control, but it's a teachable space."

"I am trying to digest these queries. Quaker process counsels patience where societal pressures call for quick action. That puts us in an awkward situation, but feeling awkward is okay with me; it puts me in a liminal space."

"We are in an undertow; with the pandemic and the conflict in SAYMA none of us are the same as we were two years ago. We change all the time and suffering is resistance to change. The world is changing, moving so fast, how do we slow down? We have choices, but how much control? What do we have control over and what don't we?"

"Not communicating is usually not the problem as much as what we are communicating. Mere complaints, amplified by harsh criticism, worsens problems, e.g., What is wrong with you? Criticism sets up defensiveness. then contempt. We need gestures of repair – a kind of time out. At best this breaks up impasses. But I have lost hope about the conflict in SAYMA. We can't seem to break out of the cycle."

"I find these queries less directive, more introspective. They lead me to a reflection on self. We need to see the light in each of us; our filters distort our view of others. We need to ask what is not as important to us as we once thought? I hope to be more honest, transparent, humble, and respectful."

State of the Meeting Report for 2021

Nashville Friends Meeting

Approved 2/20/22

Last year, Nashville Friends Meeting (“NFM”) opened its State of the Meeting Report by observing that the preceding year had been marked by three defining challenges: first, adjusting and responding to the coronavirus pandemic; second, bringing the Meeting into alignment with our commitment to social and racial justice; and, third, finding our Meeting’s place in an increasingly fractured and secular world. Each of these challenges continued in 2021. NFM, however, has strived to use the resilience, flexibility, and openness we learned from the challenges of 2020 to build the foundation for growth in the Spirit in 2021. Sometimes, we have failed. Other times, our members’ and attenders’ efforts truly have brought us closer to being the Meeting that we want to be and that we feel like our community needs.

When 2021 began, NFM was still holding meeting for worship remotely. However, as widespread vaccination made it more feasible to meet face to face, NFM, like many churches and organizations, faced difficult choices about how to proceed. We elected to begin holding hybrid meetings for worship, through which Friends worshiping in the Meeting House and Friends worshiping remotely have been able to join together in a single congregation. While the technical side of that structure has presented occasional challenges, it has, for the most part, been a great success, allowing the Meeting to share worship in ways that neither purely in-person worship nor purely remote worship would allow. The remote option has allowed us to worship with Friends who are no longer in the Nashville area, Friends with health or transportation challenges, and Friends with coronavirus concerns, broadening our spiritual community. The in-person option has allowed us to reach the depth of connection that many Friends find difficult to attain when not physically near to each other.

The rise of hybrid worship has been a testament to the way that pandemic-era challenges also provided opportunities for the Meeting to reconsider its practices and move forward. Nevertheless, we continue to feel grief about the ways that the pandemic has harmed and limited us, such as its interference in the work that our Alternatives to Violence Project (“AVP”) group has historically done with incarcerated individuals.

Another area of change has been with regard to NFM’s charitable giving. NFM has long provided monetary support to organizations, both local and non-local, as well as Quaker and non-Quaker, that do work consistent with our values. Too often, however, that giving failed to reflect the full range of our moral commitments, particularly with regard to antiracism and related concerns. In 2021, NFM’s Peace and Justice Committee oversaw a considered and spiritually guided process of rectifying that problem, and NFM has revised its giving accordingly.

The issue of racial justice, of course, unavoidably brings up the topic of the ongoing

conflicts within SAYMA. The queries circulated by SAYMA in advance of the State of the Meeting process appear largely to draw their inspiration from that series of difficulties, and NFM has considered and discussed those queries with both SAYMA and NFM in mind. Each Meeting's experience of the disagreements within SAYMA has been different. For NFM, however, the defining feature of our reaction has not been outrage or optimism, but rather vexation, leading ultimately to a hopeful disinterest. NFM's experience has been that tackling issues of racial justice, particularly as a mostly white congregation in the American south, has required trust, patience, a sense of shared purpose, and a capacity for acting out of grace rather than judgment when Friends have made mistakes. We often have not seen those necessary prerequisites among SAYMA at large. Instead, NFM has elected mostly to address these issues ourselves, in the spirit of communion and solidarity that comes more easily to a smaller monthly meeting.

Our work in terms of racial justice is still far from over, and we still have much to do in terms of decolonizing and indigenizing our discourses and ways of relating to each other, as well as simply combating our own ignorance and limited perspective. We continue to be a relatively homogenous meeting, not only racially but also in terms of class, cultural background, educational attainment, and even personality. We recognize that there is a persistent risk that we will approach issues of diversity and racial justice in a manner driven not by our moral or spiritual commitments, but by our selfish desires to ameliorate our own guilt and discomfort. When we follow those self-centered impulses, we not only harm ourselves spiritually but we reduce those outside of our community to props in our own narratives—an unacceptable form of objectification and dehumanization that cannot be redeemed merely by our faith in our own good intentions. We hope to continue to grow around these issues, giving them and each other the attention and presence they require.

Another persistent failure has been our struggle to make the meeting a supportive and welcoming community for families with children. While we were worshiping only remotely, this problem went totally unaddressed. Since we have resumed meeting in person, however, we have seen a return of our difficulties in providing childcare and children's education in a way that does not rely excessively on a few Friends who, in turn, find their own spiritual connection with the Meeting hindered by the responsibility. Covid and lack of vaccination for young children present a particularly difficult hurdle. In 2021, we formed an ad hoc committee to consider possible solutions to these issues, including by, as necessary, devoting some of our budget to paid care. We are hopeful that we will make progress on this problem in 2022.

We have also had some difficulties with aspects of pastoral care. Pastoral care is built on an ancient model of social and spiritual support, and we have provided such care to many in our meeting. It is not always easy, however, to adapt the methods of pastoral care to modern times, in which people are inundated with messages and demands on their attention. Even before the pandemic, NFM struggled to find the appropriate balance between providing support and not

being overbearing or overtaxing. Now, we have lost touch with many people, and our hesitation has made it difficult to reforge those bonds. As this problem has worsened, it has overwhelmed us and we have neglected some of the pastoral work we would like to have performed.

Despite these challenges, NFM is, for the most part, a strong community that finds itself in a mostly healthy place. We have maintained our emphasis on growing together in the Spirit as a religious community, not merely a group of generally like-minded people. Most especially, our Spiritual Deepening groups and prayer committee met monthly and provided a good, solid foundation that has spiritually benefitted the Meeting. The trust we have built helps us in ways big and small, whether in supporting our discussions of difficult topics or allowing us to trust individual committees, such as the House & Grounds and Peace & Justice Committees, to pursue their responsibilities and missions without unnecessary micromanagement. We have also welcomed many new attenders, although our lack of a thriving children's program may have led some to look elsewhere.

Our hope is that, in 2022, we will continue to grow in the ways we have grown, while also addressing many of the faults we have so far been unable to effectively remedy. As the last few years have shown, however, the challenges that we end up facing are not always those that we expect. Because we cannot know what the future holds, no discrete policy or step can take the place of simply being a strong, supportive, resilient, and flexible Quaker Meeting in a way that prepares us for whatever we will face. As always, we become that kind of community by looking to the sacredness in ourselves and in all people.

West Knoxville Friends Meeting
State of the Monthly Meeting for 2021
Approved: 4/3/2022

A theme this year was growth – we worked to grow within ourselves and as a Meeting. As a whole, the Meeting worked extremely hard this year to stay faithful to Spirit. We fostered new attenders, cared for the Meeting House, provided opportunity for Friends with various challenges to attend, moved toward updating our Statement of Practice, and incorporated eldering and other religious education topics. Especially appreciated was the increase of children who participated in Meeting for Worship and outside house and grounds activities. However, we lost a few Friends along the way, some due to death and others who moved away or went to other spiritual practices. The remembrance gathering for Lee Hoefler in May was a time for Friends from near and far to gather together and hold her Spirit and her family in the Light. This was the biggest gathering at WKFM for 2021, with nearly 100 Friends and visitors in attendance.

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to be felt in 2021. We developed a way to return to in-person meetings in the Spring, only to have the local infection rate spike causing us to return to meeting primarily virtually by Summer. The electronic communications committee worked especially hard this year to keep us in community and Friends expressed gratitude for their gifts. Fortunately, we received a donation that allowed us to purchase a device called the Owl which allowed us to be “hybrid” combining virtual on-line meeting with-in person meeting. Our ties to Compassionate Ministries Uganda (CMU) were put on hold as they were unable to carry out their programs due to COVID, and difficulties with communication between our Meeting and CMU.

Many of us felt the loss of shared meals. Ministry and Nurture worked on addressing the loss of and then reintroduction of spontaneous spirit-led interactions that ordinarily would happen after rise of meeting and during potluck. While the efforts that made our virtual meetings possible were appreciated, the loss of personal contact was a common disappointment among Friends and for many the ability to connect with Spirit suffered in an electronic environment.

The Peace and Social Concerns Committee remained hard at work with the monthly letter writing group meeting virtually to respond to issues meeting supported and letting national and local elected officials know our expectations. They remain especially active in anti-nuclear weapons causes, caring for the environment, and racial justice concerns. Ministry and Nurture Committee spent time discerning the request by Friends to understand and engage in eldering which led to a second hour clerked by a Friend from Atlanta Monthly Meeting. Friends were grateful for the shared wisdom and expansion of the definition of eldering. We recognize that we must engage in continued discernment on what constitutes helpful eldering.

The Committee for Inter-Racial Wellbeing and Restorative Justice was formed, evolving from an ad hoc to a standing committee. We created this committee to develop an increasingly

inclusive, diverse, and loving Quaker community—one which welcomes Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color from our city and the surrounding areas. We are also working on acknowledging and addressing the historical racism within Quakerism. The committee pursued activities which raised individual and collective awareness of racial inequities of our Meeting and in society at large and increased awareness of the historical influence of racism and how this affects our feelings and reactions. We had second hours about institutional and structural racism and engaged in worship sharing to better understand each other's experiences. This remains a challenging topic for us.

Friends faced together the challenges and joys of aging and navigating health concerns. Our continued care for each other was evident by the feeling of belonging most Friends expressed during opportunities to share. The multiple ways we showed concern for each other felt just right. Despite our use of electronic communication, we did not lose touch with visiting friends, sending birthday wishes and notes of encouragement, holding loved ones in the Light, supporting local and national causes, letter writing on important issues, and participation in Meeting for Worship all continued to happen with vigor. We were pleasantly surprised with the success of Meeting despite the challenges of COVID.

The State of the Monthly Meeting queries from Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association Ministry and Nurture did not speak to all Friends. As with most complex questions, the responses were varied, without unity in any specific area. Some Friends thought we were overly focused on SAYMA this year, and we needed to focus more on our own Meeting. Requests for responses to SAYMA and other Monthly Meetings came with a sense of urgency that outstripped the pace desired by many Friends, while others felt we had been avoiding racial justice and other issues that were causing strain within our meeting and to a larger extent strain within SAYMA. Friends experienced a sense of loss and nostalgia for how things used to be done and apprehension about the future.

Friends felt there is opportunity and momentum toward becoming a more welcoming Spiritual home. Opportunities were offered to define Quaker process and consider what it means to be a Quaker through the facilitation of the Exploring Quakerism course, weekly morning worship with SAYMA, Thursday evening Worship, and other workshops and events in which Friends were encouraged to participate. The large project of updating the Statement of Practice involved many hours by all committees.

Although time together in the Meeting House was limited, it was still a place to gather and work on common goals. Generous members of the meeting helped to update the library, file books, and make it a welcoming space to meet and study. Being away allowed us to see the need for organization, repairs, and sprucing up. We participated in a Fall cleanup with leaf-raking, cleaning gutters, windows, and out of the way spaces that needed attention. Working together was a time of laughter and sense of caring for our meeting and outdoor space that was especially noticed with gratitude in this year of limited in person gatherings.

Attachment K.

Atlanta Friends Meeting (AFM) requested Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA) Ministry and Nurture (M&N) Committee consider all responses presented to their Minute on Reparative Justice and Reconciliation, presented to SAYMA November 8, 2021, with hope this Committee could come to unity on a Minute to be presented before the 2022 Session of Yearly Meeting (YM).

With joy and tenderness for all SAYMA Monthly Meetings who responded via their Spirit-led responses or Minutes, which exemplified much deliberation and care, SAYMA M&N Committee determined it could find unity as presented below.

There is unity among SAYMA of a deep gratitude and appreciation for the work of AFM as exemplified in their Minute. This Minute presented SAYMA a depth and breadth of education on the matters of Reparation and Reconciliation. SAYMA learned much and was challenged to continue learning both individually and as Monthly Meetings.

There is unity among SAYMA of the necessary and important work of reparations which still needs to be faced and addressed with diligence. There is acknowledgement that our need for doing this work of reparations is made more easily evident by the historical context provided in the Atlanta Minute and does indeed include the on-going history of which we ourselves are a part. There exists, too, awareness that ongoing anti-racist / racial equity work needs to continue both within the person and within the broader multi-level systems within our society. Already active in these matters are individuals, ad hoc committees, committees, and monthly meetings within SAYMA, all of which commit to continuing their own personal growth and to follow Spirit in ways to continue working for racial equity.

Just as Elijah received divinely provided sustenance when he tired of doing what the Lord had requested of him, a prophet, and ran away to save his life and became depressed (I Kings 19), may all of SAYMA be fed and sustained by the joy in doing the work of reparations, no matter the immediate outcome.

Submitted by SAYMA Ministry and Nurture Committee

June 15, 2022

Attachment L.

The State of SAYMA Yearly Meeting Report 2022 Yearly Meeting Annual Session and Retreat

Dear Friends, these words are the fruits of the Spirit. They are the product of the tender concern the Committee on Ministry and Nurture holds for the community that is SAYMA. They represent the product of many points of view but, more than that, are the truth as we are best able to express it.

Background:

This year we offer two reports from the Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA) Ministry and Nurture Committee on the state of SAYMA. These reports are The State of SAYMA Monthly Meetings Report and The State of SAYMA Yearly Meeting Report. In preparing The State of SAYMA Report last year, Ministry and Nurture Committee noticed the report rarely mentioned what was being experienced by those in attendance either at SAYMA's Annual Session or Representative Meetings. The Committee noted there seemed to exist a "disconnect" in reported states of the Monthly Meetings and the state of the Yearly Meeting and there was very little documentation of that disconnect.

The State of SAYMA Report, which we are now calling The State of SAYMA Monthly Meeting Reports, is a calendar year summary of the movement of Spirit within the Monthly Meetings comprising SAYMA, created with the hope of sharing among the Monthly Meetings that movement of Spirit as well as building community. Ministry and Nurture Committee provides queries to the Monthly Meetings for their use, should they be so led, in the crafting of their State of the Monthly Meeting Report. These reports have been of late not read aloud to those attending SAYMA's Meetings for Worship with Attention to Business at Annual Sessions but provided on a table for those who wished to read them there or online.

To bridge the earlier stated disconnect, Ministry and Nurture Committee is offering The State of SAYMA Yearly Meeting Report as an assessment of the internal state of SAYMA itself. In preparing this report, Ministry and Nurture Committee considers the year as encompassing Annual Session to Annual Session rather than the calendar year used for The State of the Monthly Meeting Reports.

We ask Friends consider adding to SAYMA Faith and Practice the new name for The State of the Monthly Meetings Report which covers the calendar year before Annual Session and the addition of The SAYMA Yearly Meeting Report which covers Annual Session to Annual Session.

In our discernment for the report below, Ministry and Nurture Committee used the State of the Monthly Meeting Reports, observations during Annual Session and Representative Meetings, as well as worship sharing on the queries provided to SAYMA Monthly Meetings.

The State of SAYMA Yearly Meeting Report June 2021 to June 2022

“O my friend! mind this precious truth ... the inward word of life, the inward voice of the Shepherd in the heart Distinguish between words without concerning the thing, and the thing itself within; and wait and labor, then to know, understand, and be guided by, the motives, leadings, drawings, teachings, quickenings etc., of the thing itself within.” Isaac Penington, Letter of 1673

Ministry and Nurture Committee senses within SAYMA deep sadness regarding the state of relationships between individual members, monthly meetings, and SAYMA as a whole. For years there has been conflict within SAYMA revolving around how we do anti-racism work. Much has happened over the course of time, some quite positive. Individuals and Monthly Meetings began an educational process and increased their understanding of the depth and breadth of systemic racism and white privilege. The process of that work within SAYMA itself, however, has not developed much beyond the initial hope and exploration of anti-racism work.

Scheduled meetings within SAYMA have lacked due attention to Quaker process, often devolving to discussion, argument, and a general state of disorder. This is not a reflection of any individual or group but reflects our Yearly Meeting as a body with shared responsibility for the actions that occurred. When focused on process rather than details, Friends were more tender and able to accomplish more.

In this past year, there was a general sense of frustration at the lack of perceived spiritual attention to the needs of our Yearly Meeting. Some questioned whether listening to Spirit was a priority in our Meetings for Worship with Attention to Business. Difficulty in accomplishing business caused decisions to be pushed outside group discernment. At times, there was a disconnect between what was agreed upon or documented during a Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business and actions taken after a Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. One result was that Friends and Monthly Meetings questioned whether SAYMA could conduct business at all until it resolved internal conflicts within itself, particularly over anti-racism, the status of the SAYMA Uplifting Racial Justice Committee, and how SAYMA practices spiritual discernment in general. Swannanoa Valley Monthly Meeting and some individual Friends made the decision to leave SAYMA, a decision that is never reached lightly. These departures left vacant places in our community, yet they remain a part of us. Challenges to filling essential positions within SAYMA continued this year and our ability to survive was called into question as an existential crisis.

Ministry and Nurture Committee realizes many Friends have experienced pain, expressed and unexpressed. This pain can happen when our own distress results in causing harm to others. One experiences hurt, regardless of the intent, based on perceptions and personal experiences. During Representative Meeting 148A in March, SAYMA participated in small worship-sharing groups with queries. This helped create a calmer environment in which Friends could focus and hear one another more clearly, allowing space for new voices to contribute to the conversation in the larger group. It is our hope that SAYMA will continue to engage in this kind of sharing.

There is a need for people to work together on many situations that harm all life on our planet. It is our prayer that as we deepen together spiritually, we will support and lift each other up, breathing new life into our Testimonies and our responses to the world's turmoil.

Dearly beloved Friends, these things we do not lay upon you as a rule or form to walk by, but that all, with the measure of light which is pure and holy, may be guided: as so in the light walking and abiding, these may be fulfilled in the Spirit, not in the letter, for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.

Letter from the Meeting of Elders at Balby, 1656

Submitted by SAYMA Ministry and Nurture Committee, June 15, 2022

Attachment M.

SAYF Steering Committee Report to SAYMA 2022

After a halting start to the 2021-22 SAYF retreats we made the challenging decision to meet in person starting in the fall of 2021. Young Friends, families and the community of Friendly Adult Nurturer [FANs] were overwhelmingly supportive. After surveys and feedback and parent meetings, Covid guidelines were established that made masking and vaccines mandatory for everyone. At the request of a young Friend who had graduated during the pandemic, SAYF welcomed Super Seniors to participate in retreats year, since they had missed a year of in person retreats. The first retreat held in October 2021 in Atlanta was a joyous reunion.

As we rolled into the spring and Covid-19 seemed to be edging toward endemic status we surveyed parents and FANs about moving to masking-optional retreats. Overwhelmingly the community agreed to this revision along with requiring all attendees to test negative for Covid-19 prior to arrival.

Throughout the pandemic we have kept our eye on our early 2020-21 commitment to build a more robust FAN base and update policies and procedures. This year saw the final revisions and implementation of our FAN training sessions. The 2 part virtual discussions focus on the philosophy, structure and function of the SAYF program, and the essentials of being a FAN, Answering questions like, "What happens at retreats?" and "What exactly do FANs do?" This year we held three [FAN] Trainings. We are grateful to Sig Christensen and Kathleen Mavournin, members of the SAYF Support Committee, for their work on the training documents and for facilitating these training sessions for our FANs.

Last year, for the first time, we included on the committee young adult Friends from outside the SAYMA region. This choice has continued to prove invaluable; Their wisdom and insight have supported the program and the young Friends throughout their tenure. While we wondered if this experiment of including distant Friends would become cumbersome once we were back to in person retreats we found, through our first **hybrid** SAYF Steering-Support and Nurturing committee meeting at West Knoxville Friends Meeting, that we could adapt to this model. Committee members who were concerned about gathering in person as well as those who reside outside the SYAMA region Zoomed in for worship and business. We accomplished much including a deep and fruitful worship sharing experience considering concerns about identity,

gender, and genering. We felt Spirit moving in the heartfelt sharing and desire to ensure all Friends felt included and respected in their identities. This worship sharing reverberated into an ongoing initiative to support the adult community of SAYF to learn more about gender identity so that they could better support the young Friends. It also inspired a long overdue review of the sleeping guidance that was couched in gender binary and hetero-normative language. The implementation of the revised sleeping guidelines language and a gender and identity workshop for adults will happen in the coming year.

In our ongoing work to strengthen our adult network the SAYF steering committee approved the proposal to offer stipends to several young adult Friends to help support SAYF at SAYMA. The stipends were intended to allow young adult Friends to travel or take time off work in order to join us at Warren Wilson College as lead FANs. The results of this decision are already felt in the joyful ways these YAFs have embraced the work of full time” FANning” at SAYMA.

The SAYF program is smaller as we move into a post-pandemic reality. We know that many families and young Friends have developed new First Day morning patterns, weekend activities and investment in communities outside of Friends. As many meetings are facing a post-isolation dearth of young people we encourage Friends to consider what outreach to families and teens could look like in your meetings. What do they need to feel safe and encouraged to return to in person meeting and programming? SAYF is only as strong as the Friends Meetings who support it. We value and appreciate your support and we deeply believe and hope that SAYF can reciprocate as you find ways to bring families and young people back into your worshiping lives.

Faithfully submitted:

Jennifer Dickie, Clerk, SAYF Steering Committee

Attachment N.

Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) Support Committee Report to SAYMA, June 2022

After a year of Virtual programming in 2021, we are thrilled to be back in person at Warren Wilson College for our programming this year. Due to anticipated lower numbers, we combined our JYM and Playcare programs into a single program for children ages 2-12. We also offered babysitting for children under 2 years of age.

We were happily surprised by strong attendance in the JYM/playcare program this year! Eleven families with children under 12 years registered this year. Many of the families have attended SAYMA and JYM/Playcare in the past, but 4 families were attending this year for the first time. There were 16 children (ages 3-11) registered for the JYM/Playcare program and babysitting was offered to 2 infants.

While we were so happy to have so many families this year, it also reinforced that we will return to having Playcare for children ages 2-5 and JYM for 6-11. It was challenging at times to meet the needs of such a wide range of kids with three staff members.

Childcare at SAYMA does many things:

- Allows parents and guardians to attend SAYMA adult programming
- Builds a community among our youngest friends through nurture and play
- Allows parents and guardians to share in a Quaker parenting community
- Engages other adults in SAYMA with our young friends through volunteer opportunities

Our staff this year included Laura MacNorlin (coordinator of the JYM/Playcare program), Kim Wagner and Asa Kramer-Dickie (assistant coordinators). We are also supported by the JYM support committee and volunteers and families from the broader SAYMA community.

The JYM support committee continued meeting through zoom this year, meeting monthly through the winter and twice a month in the spring.

We recognize that not all families were able to attend this year, especially amid COVID concerns and vaccines being unavailable for children under 5. We would love to see our JYM community grow and exist outside of the summer yearly meeting. We propose that we hold family retreats a few times a year, likely starting with weekends in Asheville and Atlanta. This will allow other families to connect to each other and continue our children's connections to each other throughout the year.

We continue to believe that childcare at SAYMA creates opportunities that nurture the spiritual life of children and adults that will encourage families and other Friends to continue to attend as their children grow.

Laura Lane (Asheville), clerk; Kim Saderholm (Berea); Laura MacNorlin (Atlanta)

Attachment O.

Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) Support Committee Report to SAYMA Submitted by Laura Lane, clerk June 2022

After a year of Virtual programming in 2021, we are thrilled to be back in person at Warren Wilson College for our programming this year. Due to anticipated lower numbers, we combined our JYM and Playcare programs into a single program for children ages 2-12. We also offered babysitting for children under 2 years of age.

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Laura Lane (Asheville), clerk
Kim Saderholm (Berea)
Laura MacNorlin (Atlanta)

Attachment P.

Epistle from Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association
June 16-19, 2022

The Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA) met at Warren Wilson College, Swannanoa, North Carolina, June 16-19, 2022. It felt good to be back in person this year after having to cancel because of COVID in 2020 and meeting virtually in 2021. We also appreciated participation of Jim Cason from the Friends Committee on National Legislation and Wayne Finegar from Quaker House. This year we had a hybrid gathering, with business sessions, plenaries, and some workshops conducted virtually. We are grateful for technology and the talent of Friends who arranged for and carried out the zoom portion.

We also express thanks to our Yearly Meeting Planning Committee (YMPC) and other Friends who worked hard over the past several months to make this gathering welcoming, enriching, and fulfilling. We felt held.

Our theme, “Seeking Spirit in Each Other” was evident in our time together. We met during amidst great upheaval due to the pandemic, systemic and institutionalized racism, climate crisis, and increasing inequality and division. Even as we had difficult discussions in meeting for worship with attention to business, we endeavored to find that of God in each other.

Max Parthas, of the Paul Coffey Abolitionist Center and the National Campaign Coordinator for the Abolish Slavery National Network, presented a powerful plenary message on modern day prison slavery and the need to remove the exception clause of the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution. He challenged us to “walk our talk”, and to return to our Quaker abolitionist roots.

We were blessed by the presence of Angela Hopkins from the Friends Center for Racial Justice, Ithaca, NY. She led us into deep conversation about how we are embodying what we say we believe in our own lives and in our Quaker faith community. Friends continued deep and meaningful conversation beyond the scheduled time well into the night.

Spirit was present among us. It led us through meetings for business, worship, small group worship sharing, meeting for remembrance, and manifested itself in the exuberance of our Junior Friends.

As a Yearly Meeting we have declared our commitment to become an actively anti-racist faith community that is welcoming to diverse peoples of color. SAYMA is engaging in a racial justice program during 2022-24 entitled, “Understanding Racism/White Supremacy: What It Is, How It Works, and What Friends Can DO About It.” We will seek to understand, dismantle, and reckon with racial injustice in ourselves and in our wider communities through a series of workshops, small support groups, intense reflection, and trainings.

Be the Change! The Time Is Now!

Robert McGahey, Clerk of SAYMA

Attachment Q.

Registrar's Report 2022

Category	2019	2021	2022
Registered In person	220		157
Registered Virtual		168	33
Attended	216	141 adults	182
JYM/Playcare	21	19	19
SAYF	32	8	22
YAF	11		25
Friends of Color			16
First Time Attenders	40 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 22 adults ● 2 YAF ● 8 SAYF ● 6 JYM ● 2 WQO 		38 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 16 Adults ● 7 YAF ● 5 SAYF ● 8 JYM ● 2 WQO
Scholarship Fund Donations	\$1,468		Total: \$1,216
Scholarships Granted	\$1,342		5 FoC: \$1,127 14 YAF: \$4,040 Other: \$1,500 Total \$6,667
Fees Waived (Staff, Guests, FANs)	\$4,630		10 Staff (5) & FANs (5): \$2,600 3 Guests: \$980 Total: \$3,580