

Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association
Warren Wilson College, Swannanoa, North Carolina
46th Annual Meeting, June 9 – 12, 2016

Thursday June 9, 2016

46-1 Opening Worship

We gathered for the 46th annual gathering of Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA) with an extended period of worship.

46-2 Welcoming and Reading (Attachment A: Readings)

The Clerk welcomed Friends to the 2016 Annual Sessions and introducing those at the front table: Jon Saderholm, assistant clerk (Berea), Rebecca Sullivan, recording clerk (Atlanta), and Larry Ingle, clerk (Chattanooga).

The Clerk opened with a reading from *Witness* by Whittaker Chambers.

46-3 Introductions/ Roll Call (Attachment B: Attendance)

The roll call of Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups was held. Friends were asked to stand or signal when the names of their meetings or worship groups were called.

Guests were invited to introduce themselves, and included:

Liz Dykes, Savannah Meeting, Southeastern Yearly Meeting & SAYMA Administrative Assistant
Vanessa Julye, Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting & Friends
General Conference visitor

Chuck Esser, Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
Avis Wanda McClinton, Upper Dublin Monthly Meeting, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

46-4 Review Agenda

46-4-01 On the recommendation of the Clerk, Friends approved the agenda with modification.

46-5 Appoint Epistle Committee

The Epistle Committee meets 2 or 3 times during the week to capture the essence of what happens throughout our time together.

46-05-01 Friends approved Bonnie Issacs (Greenbrier Valley WG), Bill Holland (Atlanta) and Sally Prugh (Columbia) to serve on the epistle committee during yearly meeting sessions 2016.

46-6 Appoint Naming Committee

The naming committee is responsible to appoint members to the nominating committee. Currently nominating has four members rotating off and one open position.

46-06-01 Friends approved Barbara Esther (Asheville), Annie Black (Cookeville), and Deni Elliot (Greenbrier Valley WG) to serve on naming committee during sessions 2016.

46-7 Administrative Assistant Report (Attachment C: Administrative Assistant report & Census)

Liz Dykes, Administrative Assistant, reminded us that she only works 53 hours per month. Liz will be retiring from her job with SAYMA in 782 days (July 31, 2018). She is not looking for more work unless we take some things away. The administrative assistant report lists tasks and jobs that have been changed or added in the last couple years.

Liz reported that the census as printed has every meeting but one and as of June 3 the census is correct as this meeting turned in their information and it has not changed.

46-07-01 Friends accepted the administrative assistant report.

46-8 Treasurer Report (Attachment D: Treasurer's Report)

Charles Schade, Treasurer, reported that SAYMA is having a successful financial year, however at Yearly Meeting it is hard to fully know the full picture as there are large operational costs that are paid in July. Our fiscal year runs through September 30. The reductions in project expenditures in this year's budget plus smaller-than-expected delegate travel expenses have reduced our deficit below planned level. This report covers operations and projects not Yearly Meeting Sessions finances.

SAYMA depends on assessments for its day-to-day operations and for its long term projects and Wider Quaker Organization (WQO) contributions. Assessment income is about what expected, but \$4,000 less than the same time last year.

Delegate travel expenses are difficult to estimate. They vary according to the number of travelers and the type and location of the meeting. Not all who represent SAYMA ask for reimbursement. The Treasurer is taking steps to improve our ability to anticipate travel expenses. This year, when the Treasurer sends WQO representatives information on reimbursement of expense, the Treasurer will also ask them to tell us if they intend to attend a meeting, and if so whether they anticipate requesting reimbursement, so that the budget at Fall Representative Meeting will be an estimate on travel expenses for the year.

SAYF is our largest program except for Yearly Meeting Sessions. SAYF gets additional financial and in-kind support from several monthly meetings. The Treasurer receives and reviews SAYF financial reports and they show a well-managed program that serves a lot of young Friends.

We have to address the long term funding issue soon. Regarding WQO contributions, here are some queries you may wish to consider:

1. We reduced Wider Quaker Organization donations (and special project contributions) this year. It had a salutary effect on our bottom line. But should contributions be the "go to" budget item when we are in fiscal difficulty? What does this say about Friends' level of commitment to these organizations and their goals?
2. We could increase donations in this fiscal year without exceeding the deficit level we originally projected because of reduced expenditures and better-than-anticipated revenue. Should we? What sort of discernment process should we undertake?
3. In the Treasurer's opinion, SAYMA discernment over contributions is minimal, and our contributions tend to be habitual, rather than thought out. Finance Committee appreciates the individuals who have contributed to discernment in this area, but efforts to engage in broader SAYMA community in discernment have been only marginally successful. How can SAYMA make the best choices with its contribution dollars, following Divine leadings?

Friends Comments to Treasurer Report:

Swannanoa Meeting has gone through a prolonged process of deciding where and how to donate to WQOs. Peace and Social concerns tried to reach out and call meeting members and attenders through private dialogue to get their thoughts and this allowed members to be more candid about their thoughts.

Another Friend asked if we had active representatives for each of our WQOs? The Treasurer replied that for each WQO that we are asked to send representatives to their annual Gathering, we a report from our representative this year.

Another Friend commented that we have a different status with Friends General Conference. We have elected to be a member, while all others we have decided to send representatives. FGC is only supported by Quakers while all others are support by all who want to donate.

Friends ask that each meeting set aside some time to discern how the meeting thinks SAYMA should contribute to WQOs, so that each Representative can bring that report to the September Representative Meeting.

46-08-01 Friends accept the treasurer's report.

SAYMA credit card: The treasurer brought a proposal for SAYMA to acquire a credit card. There are two major reasons the first is that SAYMA currently can make purchases two ways, cash or check, or a debit card from our checking account; neither of these have recourse on merchants if services are not given properly. The second reason is that debit accounts are less safe than credit cards. If someone is able to get access to our debit card and its password and pin the bank says it will cover us but the laws do not necessarily protect us. For SAYMA to get a credit card the bank needs a minute from our executive body (SAYMA business meeting) approving the idea.

46-08-02 SAYMA authorizes the Treasurer and Administrative Assistant to open a Bank of America Cash Rewards for Business Mastercard Account. The Treasurer and Administrative Assistant will be authorized card holders. The Mastercard may be used for expenses that SAYMA has authorized according to the current SAYMA budget. SAYMA will be responsible for timely payment of authorized amounts charges to these cards.

After we approved the minute a Friend asked why Bank of America and not a credit union? This is not upholding our values as banking with good practices. The Treasurer said that our savings are in a credit union although our checking account is in Bank of America because we are a multi-state organization. If Friends want to move to a credit union, it would make it much harder to pay our staff. Another Friend asked about if we need a credit limit on the card. The Treasurer believes a \$2000 limit would be fine for our account.

46-9 Friends General Conference – Wider Quaker Presentation (Attachment E: Wider Quaker Organization Reports)

Vanessa Julye joined us as the Friends General Conference (FGC) invited guest. She serves as one of the coordinators of Committee for Nurturing Ministries and is the Ministry on Racism Coordinator. The Committee for Nurturing Ministries is not about nurturing individual's ministries, instead they focus on Spiritual Deepening, Youth Work and Ministries on Racism. Ministry on Racism both to raises awareness on issue of racism within meetings and supports Friends of color in the Religious Society of Friends. Ministry on Racism holds two meetings a year for Friends of color, one before the Gathering for people of color and their families who are attending the Gathering, and one regional meeting in the fall. This coming year the regional meeting is going to start taking part before Yearly Meeting Sessions. Starting at South Central Yearly Meeting in 2017.

FGC has joined in partnership with the White Privilege Conference (WPC) by helping friends attend WPC. This year the WPC was in Philadelphia with an attendance of 2500 people with

about 500 being Friends or people who work for Friends organizations. It was very different this year with that many Quakers there. It was wonderful to have so many Friends there participating in the workshops. FGC will continue to support Friends to attend the WPC, both through a reduced fee and local home hospitality as well as a Quaker hospitality room so Friends can meet each other, have lunch or take a break from the conference. Near the end of the conference those in attendance take some time to talk about what and how people can take back what they have learned at the conference. Next years White Privilege Conference will take place in Kansas City, MO the last weekend of April. For more information about the WPC and FGC's partnership check out FGC's website [here](#).

46-10 Quaker Voluntary Service – Wider Quaker Presentation

Christina Repoley, Executive Director of Quaker Voluntary Service (QVS) and member of Atlanta Meeting, gave a brief history and some background on QVS and the first five years as an organization. QVS is based in Atlanta. QVS is yearlong fellowship program for young adults who live intentionally and work for social justice organizations while participating in spiritual formation and vocational discernment. QVS's first house started in 2012 under the care of Atlanta Meeting. In 2013, QVS opened houses in Portland and Philadelphia and in August 2015 their fourth house opened in Boston. Each program is under the care of a local meeting or group of meetings. In 2015 QVS also started the QVS Alumni Fellowship for those who have already done one year of service. The Alumni Fellows serve with Quaker organizations exclusively. Our Alumni have gone on to do lots of interesting things after their year of service: working for Quaker organizations, hired on my their fellowship site placement, graduate school work and other social justice work.

For the future we are anticipating opening another QVS house. In a couple weeks the board will meet to discern where the next location may be: Ann Arbor MI, Durham NC, Berkeley CA and Minneapolis/St. Paul to be opened in 2017. We have 45 alumni and we will add another 20 at the end of July. This August we are looking to accept 30 new fellows. QVS is still trying to learn more about the best ways to do recruitment as well as making it accessible to all who would like to participate. QVS is taking two concrete steps forward towards making the year of service financially accessible to those who want to participate as well as starting an exit stipend for whatever comes next.

To learn more about the application process is the QVS website:

www.quakervoluntaryservice.org/apply

Vanessa Julye from FGC who is the current supervisor of a Fellow in Philadelphia reminded us that QVS is a form of outreach. The three fellows at FGC were not Quakers when they started but are all now deeply involved in Quakerism.

46-11 Nominating Report (Attachment F: Nominating Committee Report)

Jan Goldthwait (Celo) reported that nominating is not yet ready to bring a report. Nominating has noted in some places that the Wider Quaker Organization allow for more representatives than SAYMA sends or appoints.

46-12 Web Manager Report (Attachment G: Committee Reports)

Charlie Wilton (Berea), Web Manager, gave a visual review of the website and how the web manager keeps our data up to date. Please send Charlie an email at web@sayma.org for meeting updates, including links to Facebook pages. SAYMA is currently working on creating a SAYMA Facebook page. The idea is to allow each meeting to have one person who can post on

the newsfeed. We have had some server issues this year so we are moving to a new server which is solar powered as well as being a zero carbon footprint facility.

46-13 Racial Justice Proposal

Steve Livingston (Asheville), SAYMA's representative from Asheville, presented the following minute from Asheville Meeting. Asheville Friends approved the proposal at Fifth Month Meeting for Business in Fifth Month.

Proposal that SAYMA create a Racial Justice Committee—or whatever they want to call it—charged with supporting SAYMA Friends of color, as a place they can bring their issues and concerns when they come up, as they inevitably must, in an effort to make SAYMA a safe and welcoming community for Friends of color. This committee would also be charged with educating the wider SAYMA community regarding issues of race and racism, compiling and disseminating resource materials, workshop presenters, anti-racism trainers, organizers and organizations, within our SAYMA region, and facilitate access to said resources among SAYMA Friends.

Comments from the floor:

Overall there was support for creating such a committee, however, some Friends wanted to make sure that we were spending some time reviewing the minute and figuring out what the Yearly Meeting needs in forming said committee. Friends were clear that this was not the same as Peace and Social concerns as Racial Justice is not just about what is happening outside of the yearly meeting but also what it happening inside our own body. The Racial Justice Committee would be a place for people of color to come to if they have concerns about something happening in the yearly meeting as well as a committee to support the developing resources for our monthly meetings.

This is a population that deserves to be heard, loved and fully included. Role of this committee is extremely important for the yearly meeting as a whole to educate and add resources to understand the issues of racism and the things white Europeans are doing to contribute to racism.

Friends brought up concerns that we need to make sure that we are doing outreach and working with our children and their diversity or lack thereof. This committee may help do outreach to people of color. We have this wonderful religion made up of great faith and practice and we keep it a secret. There is an opportunity for us to encourage people of color to join our Faith through this committee. Another Friend mentioned that we might want to set guidelines about the makeup of the committee as well as make sure we get input from our young adult friends.

Friends were concerned that at times we have seasoned a topic too much. Friends thought that we might make it an ad hoc committee so that it could start working and discerning what it was called to take part in. Another Friend mentioned that ad hoc did not prioritize the group enough to show that we as a body are committed to the work for the long hall. Also with seasoning it become easy to make too broad of a proposal that then doesn't allow the committee to do its work reasonably and then dies from over commitment. Friends mentioned that three different issues had been mentioned: race, outreach and youth. Yes they all merge and it is too broad.

46-13-01 The Yearly Meeting affirms the broad idea from Asheville Meeting to form a Racial Justice Committee and unites to form this committee by the end of the weekend. Rebecca Sullivan (Atlanta), Sharon Anise (West Knoxville) and Tim Lamb (Berea) will

convene a group of interested Friends to get together to present a report back by Saturday business meeting.

Friday June 10, 2016

46-14 Opening Worship

The Yearly Meeting business session resumed with a moment of silent expectant worship.

46-15 Welcoming and Reading (Attachment A: Readings)

The Clerk continued reading from *Witness* by Whitaker Chambers.

46-16 Introductions/ Roll Call (Attachment B: Attendance)

The roll call of Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups was held. Friends were asked to stand or signal when the names of their meetings or worship groups were called.

Guests were invited to introduce themselves, and included:

Shan Cretin, Santa Monica Meeting, Pacific Yearly Meeting, Sojourning at Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting & American Friends Service Committee General Secretary

Jacqueline Stillwell, Monadnock Meeting, New England Yearly Meeting & Right Sharing of World Resources General Secretary

Lori Fernald Khamala, Friendship Friends Meeting, North Carolina Yearly Meeting Conservative, Sojourning at Chapel Hill Monthly Meeting & American Friends Service Committee North Carolina Program Director

Lyn Newsom Co-Director of Quaker House in Fayetteville, NC

Steve Newsom Co-Director of Quaker House in Fayetteville, NC

46-17 Review Agenda

The Clerk read from Faith and Practice "To encourage openings to divine revelations and to promote the corporate nature of Friends' decision making, the Clerk of SAYMA shall inquire each year at the beginning of the first yearly meeting Session of Business if concerns have arisen among Friends regarding this Guide" (pg. 5). There were no concerns to bring to the body.

46-19 American Friends Service Committee – Wider Quaker Presentation (Attachment E: Wider Quaker Organization Reports)

Shan Cretin, Executive Secretary, reported on American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). The AFSC was founded in 1917 when the US decided to enter the Great War to end all wars. Friends gathered to realize there was a witness larger than any individual monthly or yearly meeting could carry out. In 1918, Henry Cadbury wrote letter to the Philadelphia *Public Ledger* about needing to have sympathy for the Germans as well. In 1920, the Service Committee decided that the prevention of war was important to keep the organization going. Today the two areas of focus are: to work among young people as the leaders for social justice and peace in the world, and to challenge and change the narrative about the power of force, war and militarism. Our country was founded on the force of violence and it is clear this is not the way we want to live our lives or will be able to end all wars. AFSC has started trying to identify what we can learn from the research about what the messages out there are that make us keep falling back on war and militarism, by focusing on the media. What the messages and frames are that we need to change? During the New Hampshire and Iowa primaries AFSC sent people to candidate forums to challenge all candidates to stand up against bed quotas in prisons and

militarism. Through this process they got lots of media attention as well as candidates to really research and learn about these important topics.

There are two important pieces of literature newly out that Shan pointed to: *Mix Messages*, which is about how each person can help AFSC change the narrative to counter violent extremism as well as the *Quaker Social Change Ministry Manual*, which AFSC is piloting to help meetings who are interested in Quaker Witness figure out how to do it.

Shan closed us with the Jewish phrase: You are not expected to finish in your lifetime, neither are you not allowed to not do your part.

46-20 Right Sharing of World Resources – Wider Quaker Presentation (Attachment E: Wider Quaker Organization Reports)

Jacqueline Stillwell, General Secretary, shared with us about the work of Right Sharing of World Resources (RSWR). RSWR is a Quaker micro-granting organization that started in 1967 at FWCC Consultation. Jacqueline read the mission of RSWR, “God calls us to right sharing of world resources, from the burdens of materialism and poverty into the abundance of God’s love, to work for equality through partnership with our sisters and brothers throughout the world.” RSWR supports generating income through micro-loans to women. One piece of the work is to empower women, family and communities in Kenya, Southern India and Sierra Leone by providing micro-grants to groups of women who then receive the grant and training from RSWR and other NGO’s on how to loan the money out to other women to help start businesses. As it is paid back it is then loaned to another women allowing that initial grant to support the community for years to come. RSWR reaches 800 women in each community each year. There is power in the gift of affirmation by being offered the money, which tells that women that her community sees her potential. As US Americans we need to understand the attitudes of colonization that are effecting how we share our resources and the planet together. It is about our human interactions as well as our reactions in kinship in all earth.

Communities are guided through the three step application process: 1) communities submit an application, 2) field representatives who live in each country go and visit to meet with the group of women to make sure they are ready to receive the money, and then 3) the Board reviews the applications to choose the communities who will get new grants that year.

46-21 Finance Committee (Attachment D: Committee Reports)

Lee Ann Swarm (West Knoxville) reported for the finance committee. Their major task this year was to review the assessment amount and find a way where the funds coming in would meet the costs of SAYMA. From reviewing trends they found that expenses have increased over the last ten years, while the assessment income has remained relatively flat.

Finance Committee Recommendations the following adjustments so that SAYMA can maintain a positive balance:

- 1. Increase the assessment rate by \$5.00 per member and active attender starting in FY 2017, with a further increase of \$10.00 per member and active attender in FY 2018. This staggered increase will allow us to see the impact of the initial increase on assessment revenues. The total increase after FY 2017 would be 20%, which is slightly less than the increase in the Consumer Price Index between 2005 and 2015. The assessment rates would then be:*

FY 2017: \$65

FY 2018: \$75

2. *Appoint an ad hoc committee to study the matter of how people are counted for the purpose of assessment*

Overall Friends agreed with the proposal and had a few comments about how funds may change in the future. First, Friends wondering if the committee had thought outside the box and not just kept our budget to the status quo while revising the assessment process. The committee had not, they had stuck with the status quo and were trying to just get us from continuing to need to pull from the reserves each year. Another Friend ask the Finance committee to review the idea that the assessment rate be linked to the cost of living increases, since the assessment rate had been the same for over ten years. Another Friend brought up that finances are an act of faith. How do we each give and how do we let our money represent us?

46-23-01 Friends approved the proposal of an increase in the assessment of \$5 in FY 2017 and an additional \$10 in FY 2018.

46-23-02 The Clerk will appoint an ad hoc committee to study the nature of how meetings count people for their assessment.

At Yearly Meeting we review the current proposed budget but it is not approved by the body. The budget is approved at Fall Representative Meeting. Friends reviewed the proposed budget.

Again Friends brought up that they hoped Monthly Meetings would spend some time talking about which and how much we should send to our Wider Quaker Organizations. How does our money show our witness? We have chosen to join FWCC and FGC as members what are we doing as members to show them that we care.

46-22 Handbook Report

Handbook committee had nothing to report this year.

46-23 Peace and Social Concerns Report (Attachment D: Committee Reports)

Bob Welsh (Swannanoa), convener of Peace and Social Concerns, reported that the main issue has been Palestine and Israel concern as the conflict continues to go on. There are two resource people who are available to lead discussions on Israel Palestine Chip Poston (Celo) and Steve Olshewsky (Berea). SAYMA is following the Quaker Palestine Israel Network and had at least three people attended the re-organizing meeting this past spring. Peace and Social Concerns only comes into action if meetings approach them with minutes of action. In May, FCNL came out with a newsletter about Gaza drinking water issue. Peace and Social Concerns brought forward a minute from Swannanoa Meeting as a first reading. (Attachment H: Swannanoa Minute)

Friends responses:

Friends had concerns that the minute was relatively one sided and wondered if FCNL had an action item for us to support. Is writing our senators the best way to make a difference. We were reminded that these letters are educational and allow our senators to learn about the issue more than take action. We never know which senator will find meaning in our letter and take action upon themselves to make a difference.

It is specifically an issue asking for Israel to take action and allow Gaza to deal with the issue because Israel is minimizing Gaza's access to electricity, which then leads to Gaza not being able to clean their water. This is not a temporary problem.

46-23-01 Friends approved returning to this minute tomorrow.

46-24 Continued Nominating Report (Attachment F: Nominating Committee Report)

Beth Myer (Berea), Co-Clerk of Nominating, reported that most positions are filled and the slate will be brought forward at Saturday's meeting. As of now we need a bookstore manager (serves on the YM planning committee as well), a YAF member for planning committee, a Newsletter editor, another person for the Outreach committee as well as YAF member, and representatives to AFSC, FGC and Quaker House. Committee Members at Sessions are Nancy Olsen (West Knoxville) and Jane Goldthwait (Celo).

46-25 Closing Worship

Friends closed with a moment of worship.

Saturday June 11, 2016

46-26 Opening Worship

The Yearly Meeting business session resumed with a moment of silent expectant worship.

46-27 Welcoming and Reading (Attachment A: Readings)

The Clerk continued reading from *Witness* by Whitaker Chambers.

46-28 Introductions/ Roll Call (Attachment B: Attendance)

The roll call of Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups was held. Friends were asked to stand or signal when the names of their meetings or worship groups were called.

Guests were invited to introduce themselves, and included:

Mavis Britwum, Friends Committee on National Legislation Program Assistant

46-29 Review Agenda

With revisions Friends approved the agenda.

46-30 Peace and Social Concerns Report 2nd Reading (Attachment G: Committee Reports)

Bob Walsh (Swannanoa) read the minute. (Attachment H: Swannanoa Minute)

Concerns arose about why the sale of goods from Israel to Gaza. The situation is trickier than just a basic economic transaction because Palestinians in Gaza are behind constrained to the Gaza Strip and do not have the resources to maintain or build their own water and electricity. Friends spent a long time talking about how much our government is sending to Israel and our need to support Gaza directly. This is currently an issue of human rights. Should the US be economically supporting Israel's unhuman actions towards Palestinians? One Friend even recommended that if the Israel's would not provide electricity and water to Gaza that the US pay for it, or even that the US deduct the cost of water and electricity that Gaza needs from its payments to Israel until Israel starts providing human amounts of water and electricity Gaza.

As the clerk tried to move us on without agreement another friend rose to remind us that as a yearly meeting we join with our monthly meetings to support them in their leadings. This minute is not a question about what is more or less important, it is a question of how we as a yearly meeting unite with a concern that has been brought to us year after year by the friends at Swannanoa Meeting who continue to follow their leading in staying abreast on the Palestine and Israel Conflict through education and awareness. Can our Yearly Meeting unite with a concern

that has been brought to us so that we can all become more aware of this topic and unit together to find what our monthly meetings can do around the Palestine and Israel conflict? Friends quickly found unity and approved the following minute.

46-30-01 Friends unite behind supporting our Friends in Swannanoa Meeting so that we can continue to be educated and more aware of the struggles of Palestinians and Israelis. Friends approved to take back the above minute to our meetings and see how our meetings are lead to respond. Friend Sharon Smith asked to be recorded as standing aside.

46-31 Racial Justice Committee Proposal Continued

Tim Lamm (Berea) presented the edited proposal on the creation of the Racial Justice Committee.

We want SAYMA to be a welcoming and safe place for people of color. Therefore, we propose SAYMA create a standing committee on Racial Justice to support SAYMA Friends of color, and provide education and resources to monthly meetings and the yearly meeting regarding issues of race and racism.

Examples:

- *Providing spaces for listening and talking about our experiences of race and racism*
- *Compiling and disseminating resource materials,*
- *Coordinating workshops and trainings*

We propose an ad hoc committee to address needs that arise for support and education. We also ask the ad hoc committee to develop the standing committee's charge and structure to be presented at Spring 2017 Representative Meeting. We expect the ad hoc committee to be drawn largely from Friends of color.

Friends asked for clarification about why the ad hoc and standing committee were both used in the proposal. To create a standing committee, we need to follow some procedural steps to get the committee description and procedures prepared so we are creating an ad hoc committee to both set up the procedures as well as act on any concerns that may arise for the standing committee before it is completely formed.

Friends had a couple concerns of the committee on Race however other friends spoke of the importance of the committee for all of us no matter our race.

46-31-01 Friends approved the proposal.

46-32 Finance -2nd Reading (Attachment G: Committee Reports)

Lea Ann Swarm (West Knoxville) presented a second reading of the budget for Friends to talk about any concerns. There were no concerns.

46-33 Nominating Report Continued (Attachment F: Nominating Committee Report)

Members of nominating committee are Bert Skellie (Atlanta), Ann Welsh (Swannanoa), Mark Gooch (Birmingham), Beth Meyers (Berea), Jane Goldthwait (Celo) and Nancy Olsen (West Knoxville). Beth Meyers presented the nominating slate.

46-33-01 Friends approved the nominated slate.

46-34 Ministry and Nurture (Attachment G: Committee Reports)

Laura Seeger (Chattanooga) reported for Ministry and Nurture. Ministry and Nurture is a small committee right now. Laura reminded us that Ministry and Nurture is mostly made up as representatives from each monthly meeting.

Laura reviewed a release friend guideline.

46-34-01 Friends approved the released friend proposal.

Laura read the State of SAYMA Report.

46-35 Faith and Practice Revision Committee Report (Attachment G: Committee Reports)

Free Polazzo (Atlanta) read the Faith and Practice Revision Report, which included a proposal on how to make changes to the guide as we go along.

Two Friends stated large concerns about continuous changing the Faith and Practice each year.

46-35-01 Friends approved to hold off final approval of this minute until the Fall 2017 Representative Meeting.

46-36 Closing Worship

Friends closed with a moment of silence.

Sunday June 12, 2016

46-37 Opening Worship

The Yearly Meeting business session resumed with a moment of silent expectant worship.

46-38 Welcoming and Reading (Attachment A: Readings)

The Clerk welcomed Friends to the closing Business Session. The Clerk also read the travel minute for Vanessa Julye who was visiting us this year as our plenary speaker.

46-39 Introductions/ Roll Call (Attachment B: Attendance)

The roll call of Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups was held. Friends were asked to stand or signal when the names of their meetings or worship groups were called.

46-40 Review Agenda

Friends accepted the agenda as amended.

46-41 Ecological Concerns Network Report (Attachment G: Committee Reports)

Bob McGahey (Celo), incoming clerk, read the Ecological Concerns Network report.

46-42 Reports from SAYMA's Representative to Wider Quaker Organizations (Attachment E: Wider Quaker Organizations Reports)

The Clerk introduced and thanked the yearly meetings representatives to Wider Quaker Organizations.

46-43 Ad Hoc Committees

Clerk announced the three Ad Hoc committees he appointed during the week of Sessions. If there are additional Friends interested in joining these ad hoc committees should contact the Clerk.

Committee on Counting Persons for Assessments

Brian Yaffe (Celo), clerk
Carol Lamm (Berea)
Wood Bouldin (Greenbrier Valley Worship Group)
Bill Holland (Atlanta)

Racial Justice Ad Hoc Committee

Folami Adams (Atlanta)
Diane Butler (Columbia)
[Others to be announced by incoming clerk]

Electronic communications to help facilitate electronic meetings

Charlie Wilton (Berea)
Robyn Josephs (Swannanoa)

46-42 Final Nominating Report (Attachment F: Nominating Committee Report)

Beth Myers (Berea), and Jane Goldthwait (Celo) reported additional names for the nominating report.

46-42-01 Friends approved the new slate.

46-43 Report from Naming Committee

Barbara Ester (Asheville) reported for the naming committee.

John Adams 16-18 Atlanta
Beth Meyers (clerk) 16-18 Berea/Lexington (OVYM)
Autumn Traynham 16-18 Berea
Wood Bouldin 16-18 Greenbrier Valley WG
Lisa Bennet 16-18 Memphis
Bert Skellie 15-17 Atlanta

46-43-01 Friends approved the slate.

46-44 Set dates and hosts for Representative Meetings

The Assistant Clerk reported on the dates of representative meeting for the coming year and the hopeful date for Sessions next year.

- Fall Rep Meeting – September 17th at Columbia, SC
- Spring Rep Meeting – March 18th at Birmingham, AL
- Proposed 2017 SAYMA Yearly Meeting – June 15th – June 18th at Warren Wilson College

46-45 Registrar's report (Attachment I: Registrars Report)

Lissa West (Cookeville) read the registrars report. We had a total of 246 people register, 18 under 11 years old, 34 in middle and high school and 8 Young Adult Friends.

46-46 Quaker House Reports

Lynn Newsome reported on Quaker Houses new program to support incarcerated Veterans and Friends took a picture to send to a Veteran Quaker House is currently supporting.

46-47 Reading of the Epistles (Attachment J: Epistle)

Bill Holland (Atlanta) started by reminding us that an epistle is “a letter of serious importance by an individual or group. A formal letter sent by each Yearly Meeting to “Friends everywhere’ that states the condition and experience of the yearly meeting.”

He then read the Yearly Meeting epistle.

Laura Kelly (Atlanta), Jacob Mixson (Columbia), Wynne Nuhfer (Atlanta), and Benjamin Chapman (Durham) read the Southern Appalachian Young Friends Epistle. SAYF has 14 graduates this year.

Kelsey McNicholas (Atlanta), JYM Co-Coordinator, reported for JYM on what they have done this week. Jennifer Dickie extended gratitude to Mary Janhtz (Atlanta) and Kelsey McNicholas as the co-coordinators this year. Mary’s two-year term is done so the committee is looking for a new coordinator for this coming year.

Autumn Trayham, YAF clerk, read the Young Adult Friends epistle.

46-48 Southern Appalachian Young Friends Steering Committee Report (Attachment G: Committee Reports)

Jonah McDonald (Atlanta), SAYF administrative assistant, reported for the Steering Committee. Jonah told us that we are needing new Friendly Adult Nurturers (FANs). Jonah announced that he has decided it is time for him to step aside as the SAYF administrator so the yearly meeting will be looking for a new SAYF administrative assistant this year.

46-49 Minute of Thanks

Friends are again grateful for our time together in the familiar and beautiful setting of Warren Wilson College and to its staff. We are nourished by the working farm that provides delicious food to the world’s best cafeteria. We are glad gather in a place that resonates so well with our values and was willing to express those values and support our group in being welcoming to Friends of all kinds no matter what the laws state.

46-50 Closing Worship

The 2016 sessions closed with our usual worship following our adjournment until next year. Friends closed with worship.

Respectfully submitted

Larry Ingle
Clerk
(Archive copies signed)

Rebecca Sullivan
Recording Clerk

Attachments:

- A: Readings
- B: Attendance (print copies only)
- C: Administrative Assistant’s Report & Census
- D: Treasurer’s Report
- E: Wider Quaker Organization Reports
- F: Nominating Committee Report

- G: Committee Reports
- H: Swannanoa Minute on Impending Crisis in Gaza
- I: Registrar’s Report
- J: Epistle
- K: State of the Meeting Reports

Attachment A: Readings

Thursday

At that point, I opened the *Journal* of George Fox, the founder of Quakerism. It was the first Quaker book that I had ever read. Three hundred years after it was written, Fox's *Journal* is still less a book than a voice for those to whom it speaks. It was a voice that spoke peculiarly, as Quakers say, "to my condition." It summoned me to a direct daily experience of God and told me that His revelation is continuous to those who seek to hear His voice in the silence of all distractions of this world. It summoned me to know the Inward Light, that of God within myself, as within all other men without exception. It enjoined on me a simplicity of the spirit whose first commandment is compassion, which is expressly commanded not to judge, and whose answer to the surging enmity of the world must be yea yea and nay nay "because more than this cometh of evil." In short, it summoned me to the most difficult of vocations—to be a Christian as in the first century.

The saints are invariably violent. They know what the age has forgotten in tis pews—that the spirit, it it truly stirs, never brings peace, but always brings a sword. Submission to the spirit may bring peace. But the spirit itself, aroused in man or nation, is a blade that exists to divide the trust from untruth, the living from the dead, the conformist from the Christian. George Fox, the man of peace, was also a man of force. "The man in the leather breeches" was a man of the people, of sheep herding and muddy fields, of lonely footpaths and hilltop vigils, of gross despairs and uncouth righteousness, of serene inspirations and dogged sufferings, of bloody beatings and stinking prisons. I knew him as if we had spoken face to face. Few who call themselves Quakers have added anything to what he had to say to me, thought I have sometimes thought that they might profitably listen for what he might have to say to them.

Whittaker Chambers, *Witness*, pp 483-484

Friday

I was in fact, though not yet in name, a Quaker. An inward experience itself, beyond any power of the mind, had reached me. For what had happened to me, Robert Barclay has given the expression that all Quakers know because it is final for all who have suffered it: "Of which I myself, in a part, am a true witness; who not by strength of arguments or by a particular disquisition of each doctrine, and convincement of my understanding thereby, cam to receive and bear witness to the Truth, but by being secretly reached by the life. For, when I came into the silent assemblies of God's people, I felt a secret power among them, which touched my heart; and, as I gave way unto it, I found the evil weakening in me and the good raised up...."

There was a little Quaker meeting—Pipe Creek Monthly Meeting of Friends—near Union Bridge, about twelve miles from where we were living in Maryland. One summer Sunday, when for some reason I was not working, I drove over to it with my little daughter. The meeting house stood, screened by trees and bushes, on a windswept hill. Beyond, lay the Maryland farms. Behind, lay the meeting's burial ground. Within, my daughter and I sat in silence with a small group of Friends. The longest strand of spider web that I have ever seen looped from the one wall of the meeting house to the other, and swayed gently in the breeze, for both doors were open, through which came in the continual singing of birds in the burial ground behind. There is a beautiful 17th-century Quaker phrase: "in the silence of the creature." In that silence I gave thanks to God that I had come home.

As we were driving back, I asked my daughter what she had been doing in the hour long silence. "I was watching the spider web," she said, suddenly laughing like an illumination. Then she asked me, curiously, what the others had been doing. "They were listening for the voice of

God,” I said. “Did they hear it?” she asked, after considering the point for a while. “No,” I said, I am afraid not that time.”

Whittaker Chambers, *Witness* pp 484-485

Saturday

Dear Friends,

Our member, Vanessa July ministers in the United States and internationally to help people understand the effects of racism, support people experiencing racism and heal its hurt.

The call to address racism among Quakers came to Vanessa over 12 years ago. Since that time, Vanessa works to build support systems for African American, Asian American, Caribbean American, Hispanic American, Indigenous American, Latino/Latina American Pacific Islander and other Friends who feel marginalized in our meetings because of their race. She also works with Friends of European descent to raise awareness of the concerns of these Friends. Vanessa calls us all to remember that we are one race and to unite in identifying and eliminating the beliefs and structures that divide us.

We stand with Vanessa as she carries the burdens of Friends of Color who experience racism in Quaker communities and beyond. She diligently works to educate and support Quakers and others through workshops, book readings, individual meetings and more. We have listened as Vanessa expressed new concerns and interests regarding incarcerated juveniles, low attendance of Friends of Color at national Quaker events, and a retreat for women and girls of color. We empathize with her desire to address the needs presented among these populations.

We are grateful for Vanessa’s service on CPMM’s Worship and Ministry Committee and as Co-Clerk of Undoing Racism Group, a Philadelphia Yearly Meeting committee. We encourage the extension of your ministry as Co-Clerk of Quakers United in Publishing. Appointed in May 2014, Vanessa is the first African American author to clerk the organization. We have heard her expressions of joy about this appointment and the opportunity to address a burden she carries for more authors, and particularly authors of color, to participate in QUIP.

We are grateful for the ministry carried by Vanessa Julye and we feel we are growing, sometimes slowly and painfully, in awareness of issues of race in our own meeting. Our meeting, like others, has been challenged by this ministry. We recognize that some in our Meeting remain uneasy with implying that we are not already welcoming or question the helpfulness of the term “People of Color.”

We rejoice in the progress we have observed in our Yearly Meeting. The newly formed Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Undoing Racism Group is just one example of the progress we have made and evidence of our need to continue to seek together.

We commend our friend Vanessa Julye to you. We ask you to open your hearts and listen deeply to the message she carries. We invite you to join with her in discerning how our Religious Society of Friends can be faithful in seeking wholeness for which we long.

/s/ Barry Scott, clerk
Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting of Friends
19 April 2015

Sunday

I will give you an answer: I was a witness. I do not mean a witness for the Government or against Alger Hiss and the others. Nor do I mean the short, squat, solitary figure, trudging through the impersonal halls of public buildings to testify before Congressional committees, grand juries, loyalty boards, courts of law. A man is not primarily a witness *against* something. That is only incidental to the fact that he is a witness *for* something. A witness, in the sense that I am using the word, is a man whose life and faith are so completely one that when the challenge comes to step out and testify for his faith, he does so, disregarding all risks, accepting all consequences.

Whittaker Chambers, *Witness* p 5

Attachment B: Attendance
(print copies only)

Attachment C: Administrative Assistant's Report and Census

My contract with SAYMA is for 53 hours a month, which works out to an average of 12.25 hours per week. For the first six or seven years I worked for SAYMA, I reported that I was being paid for more hours than there were SAYMA tasks to fill them. For the past two years, this has not been the case. Since I started work in December 2006, many of my tasks have converted from mailing to emailing, possibly making them more efficient, but I have absorbed a number of tasks that used to be handled by volunteers, and added some new tasks.

Tasks that were previously handled by volunteers include:

1. Printing and mailing the newsletter; maintaining the newsletter mailing list
2. Receiving and depositing checks
3. Soliciting and collecting hospitality needs for rep meetings
4. Soliciting and collecting committee & WQO reports for yearly meeting and rep meetings
5. Preparing special mailings for committees including ad hoc committees
6. Creating nametags, receipts, and other materials for YM sessions
7. (some years) serving as recording registrar for yearly meeting sessions

Tasks added include:

1. Collecting applications for JYM volunteers
2. Initiating and following up on background checks for JYM volunteers
3. Researching and preparing special reports for rep meeting
4. Managing electronic evaluation for YM
5. Setting up conference calls for committees

This is not an exhaustive list.

I have notified the clerk and the Personnel Committee that I plan to retire July 31, 2018. I am providing this list of tasks to remind SAYMA that the Personnel Committee and the yearly meeting will need to consider what they will need in an administrative assistant in two years. I am not complaining about the workload.

A draft of the 2016-2017 directory will be available near the registration table/reading table in lower Gladfelter. Please check your entries and make corrections as needed. Again this year, 7 of 21 meetings did not return updated rosters. Meetings that also did not update their directory listings last year will not be included in print copies of the directory.

On a happier note, the census attached to this report contains data from all but one meeting! The compiled census indicates almost no change in the size of SAYMA although there is some variation in individual meetings. Of interest is that overall, SAYMA meetings report that 15% of adult members are considered inactive. This might deserve attention.

In service,

Liz Dykes

2015 SAYMA Census--Reported June 2016

	Asheville	Athens	Atlanta	Berea	Birmingham	Boone	Bowling Green	Cato	Charleston	Chattanooga	Columbia	Cookeville	Crossville	Fourie	Greenville	Huntsville	Memphis	Nashville	Oxford	Swannanoa	Knoxville	
1 a. Recorded members																						
Adults	69	0	172	36	12	0	6	49	20	36	15	4	6	6	8	5	44	63	3	46	56	
under 18	19	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	1	0	3	1	
Subtotal: Members	88	0	172	39	12	0	6	50	20	36	15	4	6	6	8	5	52	64	3	49	57	
1 b. Attenders																						
Members of another SAYMA meeting	0	d/c	d/c	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Members in another Yearly Meeting	8	0	d/c	4	1	0	0	4	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	10	0	4	5	
Not members of RSOF	17	d/c	108	9	13	1	0	45	d/c	9	23	5	3	3	3	11	23	70	7	26	19	
under 18	19	5	65	8	2	0	0	17	0	0	7	0	0	0	2	5	11	24	0	15	3	
Subtotal: Attenders	44	12	173	21	16	3	0	67	2	11	32	5	3	3	6	16	36	104	7	45	27	
TOTAL: Individuals to report to SAYMA	132	12	345	60	28	3	6	117	22	47	47	9	9	9	14	21	87	168	10	94	84	1324
Adults considered inactive	5	0	31	18	0	0	2	17	d/c	16	7	0	1	3	4	0	24	24	0	14	29	195
Report to FWCC (Includes PM/WG attenders; NOT members of other YM's)	124	12	345	56	28	1	6	112	20	45	45	9	9	9	13	21	86	158	10	90	79	1278
Reported to FWCC last year	114	30	329	63	31	1	6	75	39	42	48	10	10	9	12	23	79	159	14	110	73	1277
Change	10	-18	16	-7	-3	0	0	37	-19	3	-3	-1	-1	0	1	-2	7	-1	-4	-20	6	1
Members who																						
Attend your meeting	39	n/a	d/c	21	12		5	23		19	7	4	5	3	4	3	20	39	3	31	22	
Attend Worship Group under the c	0	n/a	d/c	0	0		0	0		1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Attend another SAYMA Worship G	2	n/a	d/c	0	0		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Attend another SAYMA Meeting	0	n/a	d/c	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	2	1	
Attend in another Yearly Meeting	2	n/a	d/c	0	0		0	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	3	
Attend in another religious traditio	0	n/a	d/c	0	0		0	6	4	d/k	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	0	1	1	
Attend rarely/not at all/don't know	16	n/a	d/c	18	2		0	16	0	17	3	0	0	1	4	0	18	19	0	1	24	

Shaded meeting did not provide new data, 2014 data was used

2015 SAYMA Census--Reported June 2016

	Asheville	Athens	Atlanta	Berea	Birmingham	Boone	Brevard	Celo	Charleston	Chattanooga	Columbia	Cookeville	Crossville	Fourfire	Greenville	Huntsville	Memphis	Nashville	Oxford	Swannanoa	Knoxville	
2. Count of Events																						
a. Marriages/commitment ceremonies of members/attenders under care of meeting	0	0	3	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	0	0	0	0	1	0
b. Marriage/commitment ceremonies of members/attenders NOT under care of meeting	0	0	0	0	0		0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	1
c. Marriage/commitment ceremonies under care of meeting, non members/attenders	1	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	0	1	0	0	0	0
d. births/adoptions	3	0	3	0	0		0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	n/a	0	1	0	0	0	0
e. Deaths	1	0	3	0	0		0	0	0	1	1	1	2	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	4	1
f. transfers in	5	0	2	0	0		2	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	
g. transfers out/withdrawals	2	0	0	4	0		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	
h. new members	0	0	4	2	0		0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	3	
i. new attenders	3	6	d/c	5	3		2	20	3	4	1	1	0	1	1	0	6	10	1	9	8	
j. stopped attending	d/k	5	d/c	d/k	2		2	10	1	d/k	6	0	0	1	1	1	2	4	0	1	5	
3. Active Meeting Participation																						
Under 12 years old	10	5	37	4	2			14	0	0	3	0	0	0	2	3	7	19	0	13	1	
12-18 years old	0	0	28	7	0			3	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	1	5	0	2	2	
Young adults 19-35 years old	d/c	12	30		4			17	1	4	1	0	0	1	0	0	9	12	2	1	6	

Meeting does not distinguish between members and attenders

Shaded meeting did not provide new data, 2014 data was used

Attachment D: Treasurer's Report

Prepared May 28, 2016

This report consists of a summary of income and expenses to date for our current fiscal year, a balance sheet, and observations on historical patterns and trends. Our 2016 fiscal year budget runs from October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016.

1. The Budget vs. Actual report is Attachment 1. It shows SAYMA's budget as approved at Representative Meeting 135, with expenditures to date. Total expenses excluding yearly meeting and carried over amounts currently exceed revenue by \$1,434; if assessments are paid at the expected level, this deficit-to-date will probably be eliminated by year's end.
2. Receipts from assessments are approximately as budgeted. We are about 2/3 of the way through the fiscal year and have received 65% of expected assessments, almost \$3000 more than at this time last year. So far we have received assessments this fiscal year from 16 of our 21 monthly meetings. Assessments received to date are reported in Attachment 2.
3. We have paid all yearly meeting project expenses including contributions to wider Quaker organizations and transfers to set-aside funds. SAYF expects to use its full allocation. Committees are still spending relatively little.

Delegate expenses have been far less than expected because several large expenses anticipated this year were actually paid last year. In addition, there have been fewer requests for delegate expense reimbursement this year. Personnel expenses are under budget because the budget assumed a 1% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA). SAYMA uses the Social Security Administration COLA, which was zero because of low wage inflation in 2015. Printing expenses for yearly meeting materials and Southern Appalachian Friend have been higher than expected (We unintentionally omitted SAF from the current budget). The Guilford archiving expense reflects a lost check; it will be at its \$150 budgeted level when the bank credits SAYMA.

4. SAYF's financial report through 3/31/2016 shows a financially sound program, with modest expenses. SAYF will receive about \$16,800 in direct SAYMA funding this year for salary, liability insurance, background screening, miscellaneous administrative support, and an allocation for program funding. SAYF will likely raise about \$7,000 more in retreat fees and donations from individuals and meetings, as well as additional support of time and effort by volunteers.

SAYF has had six retreats to date during the fiscal year, with two more plus a Steering and Nurturing Committee retreat planned before September 30. An average of 39 young Friends attended each retreat; 74 have attended one or more retreats this year. Nearly all SAYF expenditures support retreats. Total expenses in the first 6 months of the fiscal year have been \$2,952, exclusive of staff salaries and background checks; income has been \$4,820, most of which is retreat fees (\$4,480). Expenses have been similar to those in the first two quarters of FY 2015.

5. SAYMA's current balance sheet is Attachment 3. The Balance line represent net worth of \$36,358, which is about \$6,500 more than this time last year owing reduced liabilities (liquidation of the World Conference Fund), greater assessment revenues to date than last year, and timing of expenditures (e.g., SAYF has not yet used its allocation). SAYMA's budgeted operational expenses exclusive of yearly meeting are \$48,873 this year. The Finance

Committee believes that SAYMA needs reserves of *at least half* that amount or \$24,436. Reduced expenses and improved revenue this year means SAYMA is not in immediate danger of falling below that level. Note that prudent reserves reported here differ from the amount shown for 2016 in the Finance Committee assessment report because this report is based on budgeted amounts, whereas the Finance Committee report uses projected actual data, which predict smaller-than-budgeted expenses.

6. Year to date activity in the set-aside funds is Attachment 4. Each set-aside fund has a minuted purpose and a designated individual or group to authorize withdrawals. The only expenses this year have been two disbursements from the Spiritual Development Fund, each supporting a Friend in attending a program at Pendle Hill. SAYMA is a frequent user of Pendle Hill programs, but we have not made contributions as part of our Wider Quaker Organization support. After including budgeted contributions, there was a net increase in total set-aside fund balances of \$693. Current fund balances are shown in Attachment 3.

7. Explanation of expenses. About half of SAYMA's total expenditures are for yearly meeting. Yearly meeting registration and accommodation fees pay for it. The remainder of the budget covers ongoing operations and projects, which meeting assessments support. Projects are contributions to wider Quaker organizations and set-aside funds. The largest portion of operational and project expenses are for core functions, which include support for SAYMA's committees, Southern Appalachian Friend, reimbursements for delegate travel, and operation of SAYMA's administrative office. The Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) program receives about 1/3 of our operational and project budget. Projects comprise the remainder of the budget.

8. Trends in income and expenses. Please refer to the Finance Committee report on assessments for discussion of trends.

Treasurer contact information and financial procedures

Accounts payable

Individual Friends, meetings, and committees with requests for payment for budgeted expenses should send the request with appropriate documentation to Charles Schade (SAYMA-treasurer@googlegroups.com). E-mail is preferred with documentation in electronic form. Friends may also submit expenses via postal mail to 4100 Virginia Ave. SE, Charleston, WV 25304.

Accounts receivable

Meetings should send assessment payments to SAYMA's administrative assistant Liz Dykes at 106 Wax Myrtle Court, Savannah, GA 31419. Other payments to SAYMA should be sent to Liz for deposit to SAYMA's account..

SAYMA Budget vs. Actual Report 10/1/2015- 5/28/2016

Budget category	FY 2016		Percent of Budget
	Budget	To Date	
INCOME	86,872	62,646	72.1%
Withdrawals from reserves	5,772	-	-
Prior year carried forward	-	-	-
Reduction in reserves	5,772	-	-
Assessments	42,000	27,260	64.9%
Bank Interest	100	123	123.0%
Contributions	1,000	1,560	156.0%
Publication Sales	-	91	-
Yearly Meeting Income	38,000	33,612	88.5%
YM Receipts	35,000	33,612	96.0%
YM Scholarship Donations	1,500	-	-
YM Bookstore Sales Income	1,500	-	-
EXPENSES	86,872	62,646	72.1%
Yearly Meeting Expenses	38,000	1,395	3.7%
Facilities and Services	30,500	1,115	3.7%
Prntng/Mail/Phone/Minutes/Misc	2,000	280	14.0%
Junior Yearly Meeting -- JYM	3,000	-	-
Coordinator	1,400	-	-
Ass't Coordinator	1,400	-	-
Supplies/Sitters/Misc	200	-	-
Scholarship WQO Reps	1,000	-	-
YM Bookstore	1,500	-	-
SAYMA Operational Expenses	44,872	26,469	59.0%
SAYF Operational Transfers	2,000	-	-
Travel Reimbursements	10,100	4,111	40.7%
Committee Travel	400	173	43.3%
Rep Mtgs	100	-	-
Del to WQOs	9,600	3,938	41.0%
Committees	1,100	300	27.3%
Ministry and Nurture Committee	400	-	-
SAYMA Earthcare Action Network	500	300	60.0%
Faith and Practice Revision Committee	100	-	-
Finance Committee	-	-	-
Nominating Committee	100	-	-
Peace & Social Concerns Committee	-	-	-
Outreach Committee	-	-	-
SAYMA Liability Insurance	1,500	1,356	90.4%
SAYMA Personnel	26,402	17,974	68.1%
SAYMA Staff Training	-	-	-
SAYMA Office Administration	3,530	2,026	57.4%
Phone, Internet & Office Expenses	480	240	50.0%
Postage	200	130	65.0%
Duplication	200	37	18.7%
Guilford College Archiving	150	300	200.0%
Misc. Office	2,500	1,319	52.7%
SAYMA Newsletter	-	617	-
SAYMA Directory	150	-	-
SAYMA Treasurer	50	-	-
SAYMA F&P	-	84	-
SAYMA Website Hosting Service	40	-	-
SAYMA Other Expenses	-	-	-

SAYMA Budget vs. Actual Report 10/1/2015- 5/28/2016

Budget category	FY 2016		Percent of Budget
	Budget	To Date	
Yearly Meeting Projects	4,000	4,000	100.0%
Transfers To Funds	1,400	1,400	100.0%
Spiritual Development Fund	200	200	100.0%
Released Friend Fund	400	400	100.0%
FWCC - 3rd Wid Del	800	800	100.0%
FWCC World Conference Fund	-	-	
Youth Enrichment Fund	-	-	
Young Adult Friends Scholarships	-	-	
Contributions Wider Quaker Org	2,600	2,600	100.0%
AFSC	200	200	100.0%
FCNL	200	200	100.0%
FGC	200	200	100.0%
FWCC	200	200	100.0%
Right Sharing of World Resources	200	200	100.0%
Quaker House	300	300	100.0%
Friends for LGBTQ Concerns	-	-	
Quaker Earthcare Witness	200	200	100.0%
Friends Peace Teams	200	200	100.0%
Wm Penn House	200	200	100.0%
Friends Journal	200	200	100.0%
Rural Southern Voice for Peace	-	-	
Bolivian Quaker Education Fund	200	200	100.0%
Quaker Voluntary Service	300	300	100.0%
Samburu Education Project	-	-	
Other	-	-	
Surplus	-	30,782	
Transfer to Reserves	-	-	
Carry Forward to Next Year	-	30,782	

Note: For simplicity, some minor lines are omitted from the report. Therefore, not all subcategories will add up to the respective category total. For example, refunds are included in the YM Total Expenses (negative), but are not itemized.

Income and expense except for Yearly Meeting

OPERATIONAL AND PROJECT INCOME	\$29,034
OPERATIONAL AND PROJECT EXPENSES	\$30,469
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	(\$1,434)

Attachment 2

SAYMA-Assessments Received Current Year - Year To Date

10/1/2015 through 5/28/2016 Using SAYMA-FiscalYear

Assessments	Amount
Asheville	1,430.00
Athens	150.00
Atlanta	7,650.00
Berea	1,200.00
Birmingham	1,000.00
Boone	-
Brevard	-
Celo	1,530.00
Charleston	-
Chattanooga	1,240.00
Columbia	1,250.00
Cookeville	360.00
Crossville	-
Foxfire	-
Greenville	720.00
Huntsville	1,500.00
Memphis	1,800.00
Nashville	3,600.00
Oxford	250.00
Swannanoa Valley	1,880.00
West Knoxville	1,700.00
TOTAL Assessments	27,260.00

Attachment 3

SAYMA Balance Sheet - As of 5/28/2016

Assets	
Checking	\$55,127
Self-Help Money Market	\$31,678
TOTAL Assets	\$86,806
Liabilities	
FWCC Third World Delegate Fund	\$800
FWCC World Conference Fund	\$0
Released Friend Fund	\$10,000
Spiritual Development Fund	\$3,371
Young Adult Friends Scholarships Fund	\$1,365
Youth Enrichment Fund	\$2,696
Subtotal set-aside funds	\$18,232
Obligated funds for Yearly Meeting	\$32,217
TOTAL Liabilities	\$50,448
Balance	\$36,358

SAYMA Multi-Year Funds Spending FY - Year To Date

10/1/2015 through 5/28/2016

Date	Account	Description	Memo	Amount
BALANCE 9/30/2015				17,537.75
10/01/2015	Spiritual Development Fund	Annual Contribution	RM 135	200.00
10/01/2015	Released Friend Fund	Annual Contribution	RM 135	400.00
10/01/2015	FWCC Third World Delegate Fund	Annual Contribution	RM 135	800.00
05/20/2016	Spiritual Development Fund	Autumn Edwards Bill Payment	Support transportation to Pendle Hill 06-08-2016	(200.00)
10/19/2015	Spiritual Development Fund	Jon Saderholm Bill Payment	Pendle Hill clerking workshop 11-22-2015	(506.20)
BALANCE 5/28/2016				18,231.55
EXPENSES				(706.20)
CONTRIBUTIONS				1,400.00
NET INCREASE (DECREASE)				693.80

Attachment E: Wider Quaker Organization Reports

- American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)
- Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)
- Friends General Conference (FGC)
- Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Concerns (FLGBTQC)
- Friends Peace Teams (FPT)
- Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC)
- Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW)
- Quaker House
- Right Sharing of World Resources (RSWR)
- William Penn House

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)

SAYMA's representatives to the American Friends Service Committee are members of AFSC's Corporation, the representative governing body of AFSC. We gathered at Friends Center in Philadelphia for the annual Corporation meeting of the American Friends Service Committee Corporation. The theme of the meeting was "Change the Story, Change the World: Telling the truth about Militarism in US communities and around the world." This was the last meeting prior to the 100th anniversary of AFSC in 2017. During business sessions we did the basic work of the Corporation including approving nominations to the Board of AFSC and for members-at-large to the Corporation.

In the General Secretary's report, Shan Cretin spoke to us about the two "overarching strategies" of the AFSC. One is a focus on transformative youth leadership in a process that starts with youth services, moves into youth development and youth leadership and ends up with civic engagement and youth organizing. She told us the story of Elmo in Seattle who went from starting a small gardening project to organizing that led to fundamental changes in school disciplinary processes.

The other strategy for AFSC is based on the need to change narratives -- especially around war and militarism. In many ways the public now glorify war and the military. In the past AFSC has focused on efforts to ameliorate the effects of war through hunger relief and rebuilding efforts. The focus is shifting to changing the narratives around war to prevent future wars. The story she told here was about AFSC's work in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) which has focused on programs to raise farm productivity. North Korea does not have adequate food security. AFSC's program builds trust and good will, and demonstrates that productive engagement is possible.

In addition to the business sessions, there were a variety of plenaries, worship (both programmed and unprogrammed) and workshops. Our first formal session began with "Quaker hip hop" by Sterling Duns; the entire assembly joined at the end, singing "I believe in you." The Reverend Dr. William Barber II delivered an inspiring presentation describing the work of "Moral Mondays" in bringing morality to bear on immoral policies. The second evening program was "When I See Them, I See Us: Policing in a Community under Occupation, How We Resist across Movements and Promote Alternatives." This program featured a panel with Ahmad Abuznaid of Dream Defenders, Joshua Saleem from AFSC's St. Louis office and Tabitha Mustafa with AFSC's New Orleans office. They made the connection between Black oppression here and Palestinian oppression in the Middle East and the solidarity and opportunities those

connections can bring. Friends received the testimony of program participants and guests with nonjudgmental empathy.

Workshop sessions focused on a variety of AFSC programs. Staff from regional and international programs showcased a variety of projects. From Palestine, Yazan Meqbil and Brad Parker created a documentary on the problem of Palestinian children being arrested and taken, often in the dead of night, and subjected to brutal interrogations and imprisonment. They discussed the psychological trauma these children suffer and invited participants to send videos to the children and their families. Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) staff is asking Quaker testimony inspired questions, as the opportunities arise, to engage diplomats in relationships that may influence state policies. QUNO and AFSC staffs are also working hard to give voice to civil society organizations in conflict states, like Burundi, and have successfully impacted Chinese think-tanks and university researchers who have proved eager to study international peace building strategies. Guided by Quaker principles and in collaboration with like-minded partners, AFSC is demonstrating it is doing real “Spiritual Witness” work at multiple levels of engagement. Jerry Elster & Dustin Washington discussed transformative justice as an alternative to retributive justice and mass incarceration.

How is AFSC looking to us as SAYMA Friends? There were three of us at this year’s meeting and we have three different perspectives. One of us was impressed with the Friendly manner in which business was conducted both at the Corporation meeting and the following Board meeting (which we were invited to observe.) The depth and engagement offered by AFSC programs seems truly impressive and appears to be a strong outreach of Quaker concerns and values. Another has a concern that, when hosting non Friends witnessing to the injustice they have suffered or documented, we do not offer a sufficient witness to the possibility of confronting injustice without rancor. The staff of AFSC seems at times to buy into anger and defiance over forgiveness and reconciliation. Our third perspective is that AFSC has a great influence through its programs and through involving young people from diverse communities on the staff working on many social issues. The staff does a good job of orienting staff to Quaker testimonies and in this way encourages those who are interested to learn more about Friends. The overall support for AFSC by Quakers and Yearly Meetings make clear that AFSC is strongly rooted in Quakerism. By involving members of communities in working on a variety of problems through local organizing, AFSC has a respectful approach and encourages mutual problem solving.

We all appreciate the opportunity to represent SAYMA with the American Friends Service Committee and look forward to 2017 as an especially interesting time to be involved since it will be AFSC’s 100th anniversary.

Susan Murty, Arnold Karr, Lee Ann Swarm

Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)

By Jane Hiles (Birmingham), Larry Osborne (West Knoxville), and Charlie Wilton (Berea)

As your SAYMA Representatives to the Friends Committee on National Legislation, we attended the sessions of FCNL’s annual meeting in Washington, DC, November 12 – 15, 2015. The theme: Building a Pathway to Peace.

Annual Meeting 2015

The main focus of the more than 400 Quakers and like-minded activists met in Washington, DC, was to build a pathway to peace. We lobbied in support of the Atrocities Prevention Board and

Attachment E: Wider Quaker Organization Reports

tools to pivot U.S. foreign policy to peace. Senators and Representatives across the political spectrum thanked the group for their advocacy, and we're looking forward to new legislation to prevent atrocities and genocide. Following the Quaker Public Policy Institute and Lobby Day, FCNL's governors met to approve members of our General Committee, set the budget, and lay out plans for advocacy work in the next year.

The much-beloved "War Is Not the Answer" message which has adorned FCNL banners and yard signs since 2001 has been recast with a positive message and updated for the social media generation: "#Pivot2Peace (War doesn't work)."

FCNL's financial position remains strong. The 2016 and 2017 budgets are the largest ever. FCNL is returning to the financial and advocacy trajectory hoped for before the 2008 financial crisis, when staff was cut from 40 full time equivalent (FTE) employees to of 24.6 FTE. FCNL is currently staffed at 43 FTE. While investment income waxes and wanes, individual contributions have remained on a path of steady growth. In order to allow for maximum management flexibility, be sure that contributions are made to FCNL (a 501(c)4 organization), as opposed to the FCNL Education Fund (a 501(c)3 organization), whenever possible. *Friends meetings are not at risk of losing their status as tax-exempt religious organizations by making contributions to FCNL.*

Other meeting highlights included the Snyder Peace Award to Senator Dick Durbin and a celebration of Ed Snyder's 90th birthday. Ed recommended a book title for us all: *Why Civil Resistance Works* by Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan.

What has FCNL done in the last year?

FCNL is seeing significant progress toward a number of its legislative priorities. At the same time, the Capital Campaign has allowed FCNL to expand programs and opportunities to involve Young Friends in this work.

New opportunities for advocacy—especially for Young Adults and Young Friends

Spring Lobby Weekend 2016

The Spring Lobby Weekend is an important part of FCNL's outreach to Young Friends and Young Adult Friends, drawing from Quaker Schools as well as from a variety of colleges and universities across the country. The event gathers attendees, briefs them on a legislative goal and helps them lobby on the Hill. The program began in 2013 with 110 participants who made 56 lobby visits. It has grown in popularity with student groups, and this spring it hosted 397 participants who made 158 lobby visits in support of sentencing reform: the Senate Sentencing Reform & Corrections Act (S 2123) and two bills in the House, The Sentencing Reform Act of 2015 (H.R. 3713) and The Recidivism Risk Reduction Act (H.R. 759). Watch the SAYMA list for news of the 2017 Spring Lobby Weekend from your FCNL representatives.

Young Fellows Program

Young Fellows join FCNL staff in Washington full-time for 11 months. In this continuing program, Fellows are paid at the DC living wage standard and receive benefits. Aimed at college graduates.

Summer Internships

Interns receive a broad introduction to federal policy, grassroots organizing, and nonprofit management during two months (June 1 - July 31) of unpaid internship. Ideal for ages 18-23, but older people have also benefitted from this experience.

Attachment E: Wider Quaker Organization Reports

Advocacy Corps

Advocacy Corps members connect local activists and leaders with their members of Congress to effect long-term change. They learn critical organizing skills and put them into practice with hands-on leadership experience. Spend 10 days in Washington in the summer (all expenses paid) and then work 25 to 35 hours a month back on your college campus or in your home community.

Advocacy Teams

Led by Maiya Zwerling (who visited SAYMA 2 years ago), Advocacy Teams gather locally once a month to hear from experts, to celebrate and learn from those across the country, and to take action for a more peaceful world. Teams listen to a conference call for the first hour and spend the following hour taking action together. From July to mid-September, team members from across the country logged over 80 lobby visits with members of Congress and their staff and published over 30 letters to the editor. Open to all.

Progress on Legislative Priorities

Although the legislative field has been fraught, FCNL has worked in coalition and on both sides of the aisle in Congress to effect the changes that we hope to see. And it has made a difference. Here are highlights of some recent successes.

- FCNL's Elizabeth Beavers and Michael Shank broke the story of the militarization of Main Street in two op-eds long before the events in Ferguson, MO, brought it into the headlines, and in May 2015, President Obama issued an executive order limiting the Pentagon 1033 program that allows military weapons to go to local U.S. police departments. The executive order bans the federal government from sending some types of military equipment to U.S. police departments, and it mirrors the bill FCNL had been advocating for a year, the Stop Militarizing Law Enforcement Act.
- Successful bi-partisan introduction of the Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act, S.2551, on February 11, 2016, by Senators Cardin (MD) and Tillis (NC) with a bipartisan group of cosponsors. Since introduction three additional co-sponsors have joined, including two Republicans. The Statement of Support for the Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act was signed by 64 organizations with major support from United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and World Relief. The FCNL network has sent 53,345 messages to their Senators urging support for the Act. This bill extends the recommendations of the bipartisan S.Con.Res.71 (Feingold, 2010) that led to **President Obama's May 18, 2016 Executive Order: Comprehensive Approach to Atrocity Prevention and Response**. FCNL continues to support the legislation because S.2551 serves to better focus U.S. policy and Congressional oversight on the prevention of mass atrocities, and supports the moral obligation and commitment to the promise of "never again" made after the Holocaust.
- Every Student Succeeds Act, Congress agreed to put this statement in the federal law books (Title 20, Section 7401): "It is further the policy of the United States to ensure that Indian children do not attend school in buildings that are dilapidated or deteriorating, which may negatively affect the academic success of such children." Both the "budget deal" in December and the President's budget included important funding increases for a wide range of programs in Indian Country. While budget games and budget constraints may prevent all of these improvements from being funded, the proposals at least show awareness of the areas of need.
- FCNL worked closely with Rep. Blumenauer's office in strategizing on the Gaza Water Crisis and were happy to see his inclusion of Gaza in his op-ed on World Water Day in *The Hill*.

Attachment E: Wider Quaker Organization Reports

· Issues related to Climate Change have seen a lot of activity. Rep. David Jolly (FL) became the 12th co-sponsor of the Gibson Climate Change Resolution, H. Res. 424, bringing the total up to 13 Republicans. The State Dept. successfully funded \$500 million to the Green Climate Fund, fulfilling the first part of President Obama's pledge to the international community. Over 115 faith and religious organizations signed onto an interfaith letter asking Congress to fund \$750 million for FY 2017 for the Green Climate Fund.

· All that and fewer nukes. January, 2015 marked the formal implementation of the international agreement with Iran that has reduced the prospects of a nuclear-armed Iran and demonstrated how effective diplomacy can work to end a thirty-year cycle of hostile rhetoric and actions. Lobbying from FCNL and like-minded groups helped assure that opponents didn't dismantle the treaty as they had threatened to do.

Capital Campaign

Over the last two years, we have reported to you about FCNL's five-year, \$15 million Capital Campaign. With these funds, FCNL hopes to increase advocacy by young adults, sustain and expand lobbying, and re-establish the *Friend in Washington* program. Nine of the fifteen million dollars will be added to FCNL's endowment to protect our long-term viability in these areas. One million dollars is being used to renovate the 205 C Street property into a (carbon neutral) welcome center and informal meeting space. This campaign is in addition to the Annual Fund, which is projected to remain on a path of steady growth.

The third year of the Capital Campaign has just ended, with over \$13 million (88% of goal) in gifts and commitments from large donors and General Committee members. Expanded programming has already begun, such as the new Advocacy Corps (see above).

The public phase of the Campaign has now begun, and includes solicitation of contributions from monthly and yearly meetings (that's us!). We urge each of SAYMA's constituent meetings to think and plan for a special Capital Campaign contribution to FCNL. We also urge SAYMA to consider how it can support FCNL in this way. Commitments may be made up to June 30, 2017 and paid over a period of up to five years.

Representatives' Concerns

We are hoping to develop stronger lines of communication among FCNL Contacts in SAYMA's constituent meetings. We hope that every monthly meeting will name an FCNL Contact and send that Contact's information to us, so we can keep in touch more effectively. Since this spring was a Priorities Setting year, we attempted to communicate with monthly meetings via the SAYMA email list and would like to know if your meeting did not receive our information about the Priorities Process. The biennial Priorities Setting Process will direct FCNL's work for two years beginning in 2017, when we will have a new President and a new Congress. Reports from FCNL indicate that responses were up significantly this year, and we thank the meetings that participated in this worthwhile work. Please contact us if we can help your meeting engage more fully with FCNL's work.

Selected meeting documents online: http://fcnl.org/events/annual_meeting/2015/report/

Friends General Conference (FGC)

It is often helpful to have some historical background to fully appreciate current situations. In the mid 70's SAYMA discerned that affiliation with FGC was important. This discernment took several years of examining how SAYMA fit with other member yearly meetings in seeking to grow in our spiritual life. This affiliation was a two way street. FGC

Attachment E: Wider Quaker Organization Reports

provided services to yearly meetings, and yearly meetings supported FGC with the service of representatives and financial support.

For many Friends, the primary connection with FGC was through attendance at the annual gathering. However, there have always been many other services that FGC provided to yearly meetings: connection with other yearly meetings with exchange of concerns and actions; religious education support for teachers and curriculum material; ministry and nurture experience for young and growing yearly meetings; representation of Friends in various ecumenical and interfaith events and organizations; Friends Meeting House Fund; and, finally, through the Bookstore and publication of books of interest to un-programmed Friends.

It has been a hard year for Friends General Conference. Over the years, there have been opportunities to provide new and expanded services for Friends. We were able to do this work with the support of Friends' financial gifts, special funds and grants. It was hoped that this year at Central Committee we would be talking about expanding our programs and instead we heard from the wider community that we needed to be more clear about our core mission and not only tighten the focus of the programs but the budget as well. FGC is committed to responding to these concerns from the community. Several programs have been laid down or moved to independence as a result of the need for budget cuts but also to support the prudent expenditure of special funds and grants for specific projects. SAYMA Monthly Meetings and individual Friends have benefited from these various programs. Over the years many Friends have participated in the programs and served as facilitators and traveling ministers. Quaker Quest, the New Meeting project, traveling ministry and the Stewardship program have been laid down. The Bookstore has been relocated to Pendle Hill and this collaboration has gone well. The ministry of the word continues. Couple Enrichment has become an independent organization with 21 active leader couples and will continue to offer workshops at Gathering. FGC is embracing these changes to foster new growth among Friends.

Programs that are continuing include the Gathering, the Quaker Cloud, the Ministry on Racism, Vanessa Julye is the staff person supporting this ministry and is here this year to support SAYMA's efforts to work on issues of racism, and religious education support through Faith and Play. More importantly, FGC is using the Internet to expand connection among Friends.

The FGC web site is a treasure of information and support. The Grow Our Meeting Resource and Activity Toolkit is readily available to any Meeting to use in sparking creativity and momentum with in their meeting. New Faith and Play stories will soon be available for children's programs.

FGC's Facebook page provides information about what is happening in other Yearly Meeting and what concerns and actions are being inspired by their spiritual paths.

An exciting new FGC program, Spiritual Deepening, will be available on-line in the fall. This has been in the piloting stage since last summer and has received overwhelmingly positive feedback. The program is designed to help us to be more grounded in the fundamentals of our faith so that our spiritual lives will be transformed through faithfulness and that we will be able to support seekers to explore the Quaker path.

Rebecca and Sharon serve as your current representatives. SAYMA is entitled to send three individuals as representatives to FGC, and we feel strongly that SAYMA should do so. Rebecca serves on the Nominating Committee and Sharon on the Development Committee. FGC

Attachment E: Wider Quaker Organization Reports

committees, such as these two, complete their work in the spirit of worship. Providing a third representative to SAYMA will expand the variety of voices heard by FGC and broaden SAYMA's participation in the work of FGC. In addition to providing a third representative to FGC, we are asking that SAYMA spend time each year asking what the organization would like to see from FGC so that your representatives can better serve both FGC and SAYMA. Finally, SAYMA, as a member of FGC, should continue to uphold its responsibility to support it financially.

Lastly, at last October's Central Committee, FGC approved the following organizational priorities: "fostering and nurturing collaboration among the Yearly and Monthly Meetings that are FGC, growth and strengthening the Religious Society of Friends and fostering inclusiveness in our communities." As SAYMA's representatives, we are committed to supporting FGC in these new goals and we ask that you join us in this work.

Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Concerns (FLGBTQC)

Submitted by Susan Phelan

As reported at the Spring 2016 representative's meeting, I have not been an active representative to the FLGBTQC organization and have not been able to attend any of the gatherings. FLGBTQC gatherings are held twice a year, at Friends General Conference and the Mid-Winter Gathering over the long weekend surrounding U.S. President's Day. I have attempted to contact the co-clerks of the organization through the website twice to get any recent information that would be beneficial to SAYMA, but have not yet received a response.

FLGBTQC has a website which provides information about the organization, about gatherings, and resources. FLGBTQC is collecting Marriage Minutes written by Quaker Meetings affirming same-sex Quaker marriages and other commitment ceremonies. Meetings are invited to send minuted support for same-sex Quaker marriages for inclusion on the website. FLGBTQC is also collecting Minutes that specifically welcome and affirm transgender people, including minutes that are primarily concerned with transgender inclusion. Minutes are also collected that more generally affirm lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people.

FLGBTQC has also participated as signatories in a number of Friend of the Court Briefs. These documents are listed on the website as well.

I encourage SAYMA Friends to visit the FLGBTQC website for more information about how to subscribe to the newsletter, how to contribute Minutes for the website, and to make donations. And I encourage SAYMA to continue to financially support the FLGBTQC faith community as they honor, affirm and uphold that of the Divine in all people.

<http://flgbtqc.quaker.org/>

Friends Peace Teams (FPT)

Friends Peace Teams are the peacemakers' equivalent of guerilla units: Ready to strike where needed using resources at hand to help free people with people. It is not part of a hierarchical regular "army," under "command and control" structure, but rather units of facilitators able to mobilize local, indigenous peoples to self-initiated action to bring peace and harmony to communities where there is violence and hostility.

Friends Peace Teams (FPT) as a formal organization grew out of a discussion group at the 1993 FGC Gathering at Stillwater, OK on the plight of Bosnia, then a newly formed country under attack by its neighbors in the former Yugoslavia. The discussion group resulted in a

Attachment E: Wider Quaker Organization Reports

Quaker consultation in 1994, which instituted FPT. In the years since, teams have created networks of cooperative individuals and groups in villages, towns and cities in central Africa, Central America, and stretches from western Pacific archipelagoes to Nepal and Bhutan. Teams support Friends with leadings to work in peacemaking and reconciliation efforts as well as conducting HROC (Healing and Reconciling Our Communities) , AVP Alternatives to Violence Project), trauma healing workshops and developing partners and facilitators for these.

Currently the FPT umbrella includes three "initiatives": The African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI) begun in 1998, Peacebuilding en las Américas (PLA) in 2009, and the Asia West Pacific Initiative (AWPI) in 2012.

The newest initiative, AWPI, works in Indonesia, the Philippines, Aceh, Sumatra, Java, Nepal, Israel. It has seen breakthroughs in producing ceramic water filters in partnership with Society of Health, Education, Environment and Peace (SHEEP)-Indonesia. Last month the SHEEP lab produced filters that achieved 98.6 percent clean water. The technological innovation combines micro-biology with ceramic research to produce inexpensive water filters in regions notorious for filthy, unclean, and unhealthy water supplies. SHEEP has trained native potters to produce these filters with the mantra: water filters manufactured in Indonesia for Indonesians.

In addition AWPI continued its peace training of people, children and developing facilitators with AVP materials. To get a flavor of their work, here is a description of an AVP basic workshop in Tamiang Aceh:

The group began larger, but got much smaller after the first morning when the police, military, and intelligence officials burst open the doors hollering, "Deport them! Deport them now!" The facilitators all said that watching Nadine handle them was the best lesson in AVP they could have gotten. She smiled, invited them to join the workshop, offered them a manual, collected up the passports and sat quietly as they read them over. She talked to the quiet, "buff" guy. "No, immigration says I can't use a work visa since we're not paid, we're not 'working'. Strange, yeah?"

"No participants aren't paid either, no transportation money, no sitting fee, no allowance, but they're here. Strange, yeah?" "Yes." he said with amazement. They escorted us to the police station like they were going to arrest us, but then did not take us in the front door (it would have to be official at that point), but rather took us around to the driver's license office... Hmmm... someone thinks they're going to get a bribe from me! In 35 years I have never paid a bribe in Indonesia; it won't start now. By the time we got back to the workshop, only a few preschool teachers and a couple youth organizers from the mosque were there. Along with the facilitation team we had a great workshop and everyone learned a lot.

Nadine Hoover began the initiative nine years ago.

Val Liveoak began PLA. She has resigned as coordinator but refutes the notions that she is going into retirement. PLA works in Columbia as well as Central America. It has conducted workshops in conjunction with such groups as Co-Madres, an organization in El Salvador that supports family members of the "disappeared"; Plan International, a child-centered community development organization working to promote and protect children's rights; Maryknoll Lay Missioners, who work with youth and adolescents in communities or high risks and violence; Comunidad La Esperanza, a free middle school for at risk youth in Guatemala; Colegio Los Amigos, a Quaker school in Guatemala; American Friends Service Committee (AFSC); Guaremla Village Health; the Franciscan Sisters, Misericordia Tejedoras de Sueños (Mercy

Dreamweavers), a woman's empowerment group funded by the Sisters of Mercy in Honduras; and Proyecto Paz y Justicia, a program of the Mennonite Peace and Justice Project.

All told, PLA has conducted 53 workshops (AVP basic, advanced, training for facilitators, TFF, trauma healing) with 831 participants. In Barranquilla, Columbia, local facilitators had set a goal of bring AVP to the personnel of a local health clinic. By December 63 doctors, nurses and administrators had completed the basic workshop and 20 healthcare workers, the advanced workshop.

The African Great Lakes Initiative is the oldest of the FPT initiatives and was started by David Zarembka 18 years ago. It has established communal networks in Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and the Congo. He has assembled climate change data that indicates the four-year drought that occurred in Syria during 2006 to 2011 and drove millions from the farming countryside into the cities portends what is soon to happen in east and central Africa as the area becomes drier with more frequent and severe drought, often followed by major flooding.

Along with AVP, the initiative conducts many HROC 3-day workshops. A Burundi government education agency has asked HROC to conduct 40 workshops in the 27 high schools in Bujumbura. HROC is also conducting Peace Dialogues supported by AFSC and a citizen reporter project funded by the Carter Center. Workshops are also asked for in Uganda settlements by the America Refugee Committee (ARC) and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The Mennonite Central Committee in Chad and the Search for Common Ground in Nigeria are sending people to attend the July HROC International Training in Rwanda.

In February David Zarembka and a AGLI team accompanied a trained team from a Mennonite church in Boise, Idaho who conducted HROC workshops in the Kakuma Refugee Camp, Congo. One night several people from the Turkana tribe were chased after attempting to steal. One was caught and lynched about two blocks from the Friends church where the team was staying.

More stories and information on FPT are available from various websites. The Friends Peace Teams web site is at <http://friendspeaceteams.org> . The Asian West Pacific web site is at <http://fpt-awp.org/index.php?q=content-about> . More about the African Great Lakes Initiative is at <http://www.aglifpt.org>. And accounts of Peacebuilding en las Américas (PLA) is on the FPT site here: <http://friendspeaceteams.org/our-actions/americas/>.

Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC)

The Friends' World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) held a world plenary meeting in Pisac, Peru in late January. Three hundred and twenty eight Friends from thirty eight countries met for the ten-day event. Those at the gathering helped conduct the business of FWCC, participated in consultations and shared daily silent worship, programmed worship, and meals. The event organizers sought to include equal representation from every Yearly Meeting around the world and they went to great effort to provide translation between English, Spanish and French.

Several meaningful workshops were available, such as those on AVP (Alternatives to Violence Project), hands-on art, Biblically-inspired affordable housing initiatives, Godly play, and the Convergent Friends Movement. Friends were also able to go deeper in personal sharing by participating in a home group that met several times throughout the course of the gathering.

Significant decisions were made at the meetings for worship with attention to business. Approval was made for FWCC to hold future world plenary meetings no longer than every ten years, with expressed intent on the next one being held around seven years from now. This is a change from the previous decision to hold meetings every four years. The decision to lengthen the interval between gatherings is an attempt to reduce the carbon footprint from travel and free up the FWCC Central Executive Committee from the extensive time needed for event planning to focus on other work. Other topics were discussed as well.

The FWCC world business meetings heard from the four consultations held at the gathering. A World Young Adult Friends Committee was formed out of the leadings of a consultation on youth and a video was presented that encapsulated discussions made in the consultation on living ministry. The consultation on the environment culminated in the approval at business meeting of a minute that outlines several actions on the environment to which the FWCC Central Executive Committee commits itself, as well as several actions that FWCC asks of Yearly Meetings. FWCC urges SAYMA to follow the action points enumerated in that document. The Section of the Americas held several business meetings at the event as well.

The three SAYMA representatives in attendance at the gathering reflected on their experiences at the gathering. All agree that it was an invaluable experience to meet and get to know other Friends from around the world, and to contribute to a global Quaker worship and dialogue. Indeed, a ten-day conference gave plenty of opportunities to share personal stories with one another. All enjoyed the mountainous setting in Pisac as well. The representatives shared concerns with one another about the leadership of the FWCC organization, particularly noting in meetings for worship with attention to business the palpable tension that seemed to exist in between the clerking table and those on the floor.

These tensions were seen in discussions during meetings for worship with attention to business and in private discussions throughout the week. Some sensed that there should have been proportionally more emphasis placed on the leadings of Friends during the gathering. Most of the time spent in business meetings was directed toward review of updates to the constitution--a document required by British law--and very little time given to what came out of the four consultations. It was also widely noted that with more emphasis placed on the consultations, the consultations could have been facilitated with more effective attention placed on outcomes. These observations were made with the loving desire for FWCC to grow and to reflect Friend's reaction to the changing nature of the world.

Matt Riley enjoyed his time immensely at the gathering, and left with the desire to see FWCC take on more of the external leadings of Friends. He became centrally involved in the drafting of the minute on the environment, and networked with other Friends on this topic. He witnessed FWCC working to encourage involvement from Young Friends and believes that FWCC has room to grow in this area. His favorite part of the gathering was forming close connections with certain Friends from New Zealand, Scandinavia, Great Britain, Kenya and the United States. He also enjoyed seeing familiar faces from section meetings in Mexico City and Indiana.

Michael Galovic engaged in regular conversations with Friends where Plenary themes and Plenary business were discussed. In such meetings, he had the chance to explore his leading on how FWCC can be a repository for much needed interfaith dialogue. Much of the world is deeply divided; we are told there are irreconcilable differences between ethnic, religious and political groups. In this regard FWCC has an advantage of being a place where a wide diversity of religious practice and experience reside--all within the confines of the Quaker tradition. Michael discovered that friends came together around the need for tools to safely hold such

dialogue. In other activities, Michael continued his active participation in meetings of the Communications Program Group of the Section of the Americas.

Kelsey McNicholas found great richness in cross theological conversations, the Sacred Valley setting, and the faith of other conference attendees. She particularly carries with her one conversation with a Young Adult pastor from Honduras about grey areas and what injustices in the world mean for our understanding of God. Kelsey served on the facing bench as an elder for two sessions of Meeting For Worship With Attention To Business. She also became an informal elderring presence during during the rich, grounded, and transformational meetings of Young Adult Friends and was asked to continue formerly serving as an elder for a newly formed World YAF Committee. Kelsey spent quite a bit of time representing Quaker Voluntary Service, a Wider Quaker Organization birthed within SAYMA. International Quakers are extremely interested in the program.

Respectfully Submitted,

Matt, Michael, and Kelsey
SAYMA Representatives to FWCC
February, 2016

Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW)

Quaker Earthcare Witness continues to work on many fronts to increase awareness and action on climate change and environmental justice. Steering Committee Meetings were held last fall at Ben Lomond Quaker Center in California and in the spring in Chicago.

Here are some of the highlights since last June:

Paris Climate Talks

Several members of QEW attended the Paris Climate talks (COP 21) in Paris last December along with representatives from Quaker Voice, Quaker United Nations Office, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Earth Quaker Action Team, and Alaska Friends Conference. While the agreement that was reached fell far short of what we'd hoped for, it is still heartening that an international agreement was reached. The task QEW has set for itself going forward is to work toward the ambitious goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees. According to Shelley Tannenbaum, General Secretary of QEW, "It was both inspiring and frustrating to be on the ground in Paris. I came away with many ideas and connections for follow-up that have taken me well into this year with new initiatives and articles." Shelley is hard at work publishing articles, strengthening connections within the Society of Friends, and fundraising.

FWCC Minute on Sustainability

A sustainability minute furthering the Kabarak Call for Peace and Eco-Justice entitled, "Living Sustainably and Sustaining Life on Earth" was approved by FWCC World Plenary in Pisac, Peru last December. The minute contains a series of suggestions for concrete actions that can be taken at the individual, Monthly Meeting and Yearly Meeting levels.

The first suggestion for Yearly Meetings urges us to **initiate at least two concrete actions on sustainability within the next 12 months**. These may build on existing projects of individuals or monthly meetings or they may be new initiatives. We are encouraged to ask Young Friends to play key roles. We are asked to minute our progress and results, so as to share them with FWCC and Quaker meetings. *The full minute can be found on the Earthcare tab of the SAYMA web site.*

Attachment E: Wider Quaker Organization Reports

Laudato Si', On Care for Our Common Home

Quaker Earthcare Witness gives thanks for the papal Encyclical. From the QEW minute, “We share the conviction that all life is sacred and interdependent, and that the natural world is an infinite source of awe, wonder and wisdom. We unite in the urgency to transition away from human systems, values, and lifestyles that are weakening earth’s natural planetary health, causing the suffering and extinction of other species, and deepening the disempowerment of vulnerable peoples.”

Upcoming Meetings

QEW’s October 2016 Steering Committee sessions will be held at Pendle Hill, October 6-9. The October sessions include our regular business sessions, and committee and working group meetings, plus 2-3 presentations. The Spring 2017 meeting of is likely to be held at the Atlanta Meeting House.

Resources

Friends are encouraged to visit quakerearthcare.org and find a wide range of resources from BeFriending Creation newsletters to articles and trifold brochures on a wide range of climate related topics.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Rose

Quaker House

A dedicated, gifted Quaker House staff, volunteers, and board are making peace in our world in a largely military environment: Ft. Bragg, N.C.

They do this in a variety of ways, offering counseling and educational service and healing to soldiers and veterans and their families. Benefiting also from this vital work is the wider community: Fayetteville and Piedmont North Carolina and far beyond.

Through the special gifts of the staff—led by Lynn and Steve Newsom--doors in the military base and surrounding community which were closed have been opened.

Quaker House is now searching for new directors to take over the helm when the Newsoms retire in 2017—a hard act to follow.

According to their latest report, ongoing priorities of the Quaker House Witness to Peace are: Hotline Counseling. Many GIs get biased or false guidance about issues of conscience, discharge, medical, psychological and other regulations. QH offers free, accurate, non-directive information.

Supporting Conscience. Many soldiers who are led to renounce war confront the military court system. QH has stood with many resisters who faced official intimidation, court martial, and even jail.

Public Peace Witness. Large peace rallies, quiet vigils—QH public peace actions take many forms.

Torture and Accountability. Much of the U.S. Government-sponsored torture network was spawned at Ft. Bragg. QH has actively urged an end to such official law breaking, and accountability to prevent its return.

Truth in Recruiting. Potential enlistees are often misled about military life. QH "Sgt. Abe the Honest Recruiter" materials have been used nationwide to help them make fully informed decisions.

Violence Within the Military. The US Armed Forces face serious, chronic problems of internal violence: suicides, family abuse, sexual assaults, etc. QH monitors these and supports efforts to combat them, as fruits of the poisoned tree of war.

Peace Resources. QH is bringing its work to wider audiences and media, educating on torture, the military industrial complex, and peace strategies.

They need our steady and enthusiastic support.

--Anne Welsh

Right Sharing of World Resources (RSWR)

"Right Sharing of World Resources is a Quaker micro-credit organization that supports grassroots income-generating projects in developing countries, led by women, many of whom are making less than a dollar a day." (<http://www.rswr.org/>, Headline)

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

Using about \$1.5 million of total assets, RSWR made grants of about \$175,000 (ranging from \$2,713 to \$5,400 each), and micro loans, in addition to paying all expenses related to their operations. They survive on donations. (2013 Audit Report)

What can any of us do to support RSWR?

1) **Cut stamps** from envelopes with 1/8" to 1/4" of paper around the stamp. For foreign mail include the envelope as well because many dealers collect foreign envelopes. Save the envelopes of domestic mail postmarked prior to 1946 too. Do not remove stamps from very old letters, as the envelopes and letters can have considerable value.

In addition to stamps, baseball cards, coin collections, Box Tops for Education, picture postcards and governmental postal cards in their entirety, historical paper including photographs, documents prints, autographs, etc. Greeting cards, birthday cards, Valentines, etc. from the early 1900's are also very valuable.

Send your stamps and other collectibles to:

Earl Walker/Quaker Missions West, 650 Harrison Ave., Claremont, CA 91711.

2) Donate Money.

3) Apply to be the next Communications and Development Associate.

Thanks,

Steve Olshewsky

William Penn House

I became acquainted with William Penn House in 2013 by a coincidence in which I am certain was arranged by my Higher Power. I was planning a trip to Washington DC but uncertain about how I could find lodging within my financial realities. I google searched for the Quaker Meeting House and found the William Penn House listed on a Hostel Site. This was the perfect scenerio for me. I was dealing with the recent death of my husband. The William Penn House provided the peaceful healing energy that I needed to get through that difficult time. I have since taken several trips to Washington DC and usually stay at the William Penn House. It was finally suggested that I become a William Penn House Representative.

My first official visit as a William Penn House Representative was in November of 2014. We started out by having Lunch at the South East White House. This is a center where the local clergy work together to serve the blighted neighborhood while mentoring the youth to guild them on a positive path. There were meetings afterwards with discussions about the Youth Work Camps that the William Penn House. Young people travel to Washington DC and stay at the William Penn House. They go into the underserved neighborhood working the neighborhood locals with various improvement projects including community gardens. The two groups of youth within a few days gain a positive prospection of each other that would not happen if they had not worked together.

There was also discussion on the legal dilemma that William Penn House faces with the City of Washington DC. The DC City Tax Collectors are of the opinion that the William Penn House is a hospitality business thus not entitled to the tax exempt status of a Religious Organization. This could potentially cause to William Penn House to close down or at least relocate where they would not be as effective as they currently are. This is a legal battle that is still pending.

2016 brings a new Executive Director because the previous Executive Director Byron Stafford retired. The new executive director Andrei Israel came on board in in January. He's been a long term member of Baltimore Yearly Meeting and recently has returned from Binghamton, New York where he was a professor.

Next year they are hoping to be able to have a staff member attend the SAYNA annual session, but this year the logistics couldn't work for that. I do travel to Washington DC but cannot always get booking at the William Penn house. Priority is given to youth groups and sometimes they are completely full before opening up individual reservations. I have learned to find out when there is availability and make plans accordingly.

On SAYMA's donations to William Penn House: SAYMA has long been a faithful supporter, and has made an annual contribution of \$200 for the past several years. Funds are tight within a small yearly meeting, but I was told that an increased contribution would be very helpful and appreciated

Another way that we can support the William Penn House is by having SAYMA or the individual meetings to have programs that would support the religious tax exempt status. The High Schoolers can participate in the youth programs while some of the older Friends can lobby. The William Penn House is a short walk from the Capitol where the Senate and Representatives reside on either side of the Building. It is also an even shorter walk from the Folger Shakespeare Theatre for lovers of Culture with the Library of Congress nearby.

The William Penn House was founded in the fall of 1966 thus are celebrating the 50th anniversary this year. Friends can consider making a special contribution in honor of this milestone. Donation envelope are available with the materials on the table that I plan to set up. Contributions of any amount are needed and welcomed. Often the collective strength of individuals making small donations exceeds what monthly or yearly meetings can donate corporately.

On the property tax issue, The appeal is ongoing. We need to continuously hold the William Penn House up in the Light and Prayer as they struggle with the DC government about this.

Respectfully Submitted
Bonnie Isaacs

Attachment F: Nominating Committee Report

New (and new terms) appointees in 2016 appear in boldface. Blank lines indicate appointments needed.

Note: All terms are two years – WQOs are three years. Terms begin & end after YM each June.

Officers

CLERK	Jon Saderholm	16-18	Berea (KY)
ASSISTANT CLERK	Barbara Esther	16-18	Asheville (NC)
RECORDING CLERK	Rebecca Sullivan	15-17	Atlanta
TREASURER	Roger Wise	16-18	Charleston (WV)
ASST. TREASURER	Charles Schade	16-17	Charleston (WV)

Standing Committees

Ministry & Nurture Committee

Co-CLERK	Laura Seeger	15-17	Chattanooga
Co-CLERK	Thais Carr	16-18	Nashville (TN)
MEMBER	Christine Sears	16-18	Huntsville (AL)
MEMBER	Chris Easton	16-18	Athens (GA)
MEETING APPOINTEE	Kim Saderholm		Berea (KY)
MEETING APPOINTEE	Tom Beeson		West Knoxville (TN)
MEETING APPOINTEE	Robin Josephs		Swannanoa Valley (NC)
MEETING APPOINTEE	Jan Stansel		Nashville (TN)
MEETING APPOINTEE			
MEETING APPOINTEE			

Finance Committee

CLERK	Lee Ann Swarm	16-18	West Knoxville (TN)
MEMBER	Geeta McGahey	16-18	Celo (NC)
MEMBER	Kendall Ivie	16-18	W. Knoxville (TN)
MEMBER	Wood Bouldin	16-18	Greenbrier WG (WV)
Ex officio	Roger Wise-Treasurer		Charleston (WV)
Ex officio	Charles Schade		Charleston (WV)

Personnel Committee

CLERK	Barbara Esther	16-18	Asheville (NC)
MEMBER	Missy Ivie	15-17	West Knoxville (TN)
MEMBER	Charles Schade	16-18	Charleston (WV)
MEMBER			
SUPERVISOR OF Adm. Asst.	Jon Saderholm		Berea (KY)
SUPERVISOR SAYF Adm. Asst.			

SAYF STEERING COMMITTEE

CO-CLERK			
CO-CLERK			
MEMBER	Mary Linda McKinney	15-17	Nashville (TN)
MEMBER	Aaron Ruscetta	15-17	Atlanta (GA)
MEMBER	Jennifer Chapman	15-17	Durham (NC)
MEMBER	Mark Wutka	16-18	Nashville (TN)
MEMBER	Wren Hendrickson	16-18	Chapel Hill (NC)
MEMBER			
ex officio	Jonah McDonald		Atlanta (GA)

JYM OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

CONVENER	Jennifer Dickie	15-17	Atlanta (GA)
MEMBER	Marcie Thaxter	16-18	Asheville (NC)
MEMBER	Beth Ensign	15-17	Atlanta (GA)
MEMBER	Paul Laudeman	15-17	Knoxville (TN)
MEMBER	Ron McDonald	16-18	Memphis (TN)
JYM Coordinator(s)	Mary Janhtz	15-16	Atlanta (GA)

YEARLY MEETING PLANNING COMMITTEE

CLERK	Carol Nickle	15-17	West Knoxville (TN)
ADULT PROGRAMS	Hank Fay	16-17	Berea (KY)
WORKSHOPS	Chris Berg	16-18	Greenville (SC)
CO-REGISTRAR	Karen Wise	15-17	Charleston (WV)
CO-RESGISTRAR	Lissa West	16-18	Cookeville (TN)
RECORDING REGISTRAR	Liz Dykes		Admin Asst [Savannah (GA)/SEYM]
BOOKSTORE	Kofi Adams	16-18	Atlanta (GA)
ASST. BOOKSTORE	Pam Beziat	16-18	Nashville (TN)
LOCAL ARRANGMNT	Bob Welsh	16-18	Swannanoa (NC)
JYM Rep	Jennifer Dickie	16-18	Atlanta (GA)
YAF REP	Autumn Trayham	16-18	Berea (KY)
WORSHIP CO-ORD.	Folami Adams	16-18	Atlanta (GA)
LAYOUT EDITOR			
SAYF Rep	Aaron Ruscetta	16-18	Atlanta (GA)
At Large	John Potter	16-18	Nashville (TN)

Young Adult Friends

CLERK			
-------	--	--	--

Nominating Committee (named by the Naming Committee at SAYMA YM)

Co-CLERK	Beth Myers	16018	Berea (KY)
MEMBER	John Adams	16-18	Atlanta (GA)
MEMBER	Autumn Trayham	16-18	Berea (KY)
MEMBER	Bert Skellie	15-17	Atlanta (GA)
MEMBER	Wood Bouldin	16-18	Greenbriar Valley (WV)
MEMBER	Lisa Bennett	16-18	Memphis (TN)

Peace & Social Concerns Committee

CLERK	Bob Welsh	16-18	Swannanoa (NC)
MEMBER	Florence Yaffe	16-18	Celo (NC)
MEMBER	Patti Hughes	16-18	Asheville (NC)
MEMBER	Elbon Kirkpatrick	15-17	Birmingham (AL)
MEMBER	Steve Olshewsky	15-17	Berea (KY)
MEMBER	Christopher Easton	16-18	Athens (GA)
MEMBER	Harry Rogers	16-18	Columbus (SC)

Earthcare Action Network

CLERK	Bob McGahey	15-17	Celo (NC)
MEMBER	Kendall Ivie	14-16	West Knoxville (TN)
MEMBER	Pat Johnson	15-17	Asheville (NC)
MEMBER	Roy Taylor	16-18	Atlanta (GA)
MEMBER	Lisa Rose	15-17	Celo (NC)
MEMBER	Paul Laudeman	16-18	West Knoxville (TN)

Southern Appalachian Friend

EDITOR	Beth Ensign	15-17	Atlanta (GA)
--------	-------------	-------	--------------

Web Support

WEB MANAGER	Charlie Wilton	15-17	Berea (KY)
MEMBER	Robyn Josephs	16-18	Swannanoa (NC)
CLERK	Steve Livingston	16-18	Asheville (NC)
MEMBER	Sig Christensen	16-18	West Knoxville

Outreach

CLERK			
MEMBER	Aimee Allen	15-17	Chattanooga
MEMBER	Kathleen Mavournin	15-17	West Knoxville
MEMBER			
YAF MEMBER			

Operational Handbook

CLERK	Kendall Ivie	16-18	W. Knoxville (TN)
ARCHIVIST	Missy Ivie	16-18	West Knoxville (TN)

Ad Hoc Committee

Faith & Practice Revision

CLERK	Free Polazzo	Began 01	Atlanta (GA)
MEMBER	Missy Ivie	Began 01	West Knoxville (TN)
MEMBER	Edie Patrick	Began 07	Asheville (NC)
MEMBER	Beth Myers	Began 14	Lexington (OVYM)
MEMBER	Thais Carr	Began 12	Nashville (TN)

Representatives to Wider Quaker Organizations

AFSC Corporation	John Adams	16-19	Atlanta (GA)
	Lee Ann Swarm	15-18	West Knoxville (TN)
	Susan Murty	15-18	Swannanoa Valley (NC)
	Free Polazzo	16-19	Atlanta (GA)
FCNL	Charlie Wilton	15-18	Berea (KY)
	Jane Hiles	16-19	Birmingham (AL)
	Larry Osbourne	15-18	West Knoxville (TN)
FGC	Sharon Annis	15-18	West Knoxville (TN)
	Rebecca Sullivan	15-18	Atlanta (GA)
FLGBTQC			
FWCC	Kelsey McNichols	15-18	Atlanta (GA)
	Matt Riley	14-17	Celo (NC)
	Shahina Lakhani	16-19	Atlanta (GA)
FRIENDS PEACE TEAMS	Sallie Prugh	16-19	Columbia (SC)
	Jack Willis	15-18	Nashville (TN)
QEW	Lisa Rose	13-16	Swannanoa (NC)
	Bob McGahey	16-19	Celo (NC)
QUAKER HOUSE			
RSWR	Pat Williams, Co-Rep	14-17	Atlanta (GA)
	Steve Olshewsky Co-Rep	14-17	Berea (KY)
WM. PENN HOUSE	Bonnie Isaacs	14-17	Lewisburg WG (VW)

Attachment G: Committee Reports

- Faith & Practice Revision
- Finance Committee
 - Assessments Study
 - Proposed Budget
- Ministry & Nurture
 - State of SAYMA Report
 - Draft Guidelines for Released Friend Fund
- Peace & Social Concerns
- SAYMA Earthcare Action Network
- Southern Appalachian Friend
- Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF)
- Web Manager

Faith & Practice Revision

Since the 2015 Yearly Meeting, the Committee to Revise the Guide to our Faith and Practice has met 4 times in September, November, February and May at the West Knoxville Meetinghouse.

We recommend approval of a “fast track” process for revisions that are required by factual changes. Examples of these might be names of committees, revised committee descriptions minuted by them or new committees approved by the Yearly Meeting. These events usually have minutes that the YM already has approved, so there is authorization already given for these changes. (See minute below on page 2 of 2)

We have completed our initial revision of the queries. We still have to decide how to group the queries we have and then determine what topics of importance may be missing. The committee will be sending the entire queries section to the Monthly & Preparatory Meetings after we complete our work.

Our next meeting is scheduled in August at the Berea Meetinghouse.

The committee thanks the Yearly Meeting and Monthly & Preparative Meetings for their patience. The Spirit is moving at just the right pace.

For the Committee:
Free Polazzo, Clerk

SAYMA Committee to Revise the Guide to our Faith & Practice; November 20, 2015

Minute on how changes of fact are to be made in the guide. The idea is to make these changes without the lengthy process of waiting for a revision committee to be formed every year or an examining committee every ten years. The Committee approved the following addition to the Guide:

Revision of the Guide when a fact changes:

There are changes of fact that happen from time to time. Examples include name change for a committee or a change to the list of Representatives to Wider Quaker Organizations or changes

in the job description of YM staff. There will be minutes from SAYMA committees that identify and approve these changes. These minutes will be the catalyst for changing the guide as follows:

The SAYMA Administrative Assistant (AA)

1. Creates a report that explains the changes of fact to be made to the Guide and then submit the report to the next Representatives & Yearly Meetings.
2. Makes the changes contained in the report in the book version of the Guide published on line.
3. Create a new PDF version of the Guide and e-mails it to the SAYMA website manager.
4. Sends the report with the changes of fact to the Guide to the editor of the Southern Appalachian Friend.

*** Recommend that this process be placed after the first short sentence on page 6 of the Guide***

Finance Committee (Assessment Study)

Representative Meeting adopted the following minute (136-07), addressing SAYMA's financial situation:

"Finance Committee is asked to do a study to determine an appropriate assessment per person to meet operating expenses and contributions without operating in the deficit."

Background and analysis

While a straightforward-sounding question, the matter does not yield to a simple answer because of the following considerations:

1. SAYMA's operational expenses have increased steadily since 2005. Personnel expenses generally increase parallel to the Social Security COLA, but there have been occasional salary adjustments.
2. One component of operational expenses (delegate travel) has been largely unpredictable, contributing to the variation in operational expenses.
3. SAYMA's assessment revenue has grown little since 2005, consistent with relatively flat SAYMA membership. However, it has had enormous fluctuations during that time period, which are hard to explain. There is also wide variation in meetings' apparent definition of "regular attender."
4. Yearly meeting profit/loss has been a significant source of variation, particularly early in the period.
5. SAYMA projects (contributions to wider Quaker organizations and set-aside fund have been relatively stable over time, except for two crises.
6. Individual contributions to SAYMA have been a minor part of the budget, but have increased in times of crisis.

Based on that information, Finance Committee can project income and expense into the future, but only with considerable uncertainty.

Table 1 shows projections for five years, based on the following assumptions:

1. Expenses increase at the historical rate (3.4% per annum) from a baseline determined by the best fit to the past 11 years. 2016 is anomalously high, based on

Attachment G: Committee Reports

actual expenses to date, projected to year's end; FY 2017 is assumed to return to the trend line.

2. Contributions continue at the projected 2016 level and do not become a major source of income.
3. Assessment income is assumed level at its historical average.
4. Yearly meeting projects are at their historical average.

In this scenario, SAYMA's reserves would be inadequate in 2018 and SAYMA's cash balance exhausted by 2020.

Table 1*

Base Case

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Assessments	42,458	42,000	40,555	40,555	40,555	40,555	40,555
Contributions	3,042	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
SAYMA operations	41,513	44,872	39,746	41,087	42,473	43,906	45,387
YM Projects	9,090	4,000	9,419	9,419	9,419	9,419	9,419
Surplus/deficit	(5,104)	(4,872)	(6,610)	(7,951)	(9,337)	(10,770)	(12,251)
Resulting fund balance	37,800	32,928	26,318	18,367	9,030	(1,740)	(13,991)
Reserves @50% of ops	20,757	22,436	19,873	20,543	21,236	21,953	22,694
Reserve surplus/deficit	17,043	10,492	6,445	(2,176)	(12,206)	(23,693)	(36,684)

Suppose SAYMA increased assessments. Table 2 shows the impact of 20% increase in assessment income starting in 2018. In that scenario, we postpone reaching critical reserve levels until 2021, but the trends from there on are alarming.

Table 2

Increase Assessments by 20% in 2018

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Assessments	42,458	42,000	40,555	48,666	48,666	48,666	48,666
Contributions	3,042	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
SAYMA operations	41,513	44,872	39,746	41,087	42,473	43,906	45,387
YM Projects	9,090	4,000	9,419	9,419	9,419	9,419	9,419
Surplus/deficit	(5,104)	(4,872)	(6,610)	160	(1,226)	(2,659)	(4,140)
Resulting fund balance	37,800	32,928	26,318	26,478	25,252	22,593	18,453
Reserves @50% of ops	20,757	22,436	19,873	20,543	21,236	21,953	22,694
Reserve surplus/deficit	17,043	10,492	6,445	5,935	4,016	640	(4,240)

The reason that a one time increase in assessments does not solve the problem is that expenses are trending upward. To stay abreast of them, we would need to increase assessments roughly 10% every three years. The 20% increase used as an example merely catches up with recent increases in operational expenses, but does not get us ahead.

Another option is presented in Table 3. In that scenario, we limit expenditures for yearly meeting projects to the lesser of \$4,000 or the amount we can expend and still retain adequate reserves. That scenario might work until 2020, but we would then be in a major crisis, for reasons similar to the explanation of the assessment increase scenario.

* Note: in all three tables of projections, we have used the term "fund balance" to indicate the difference between assets and liabilities at a point in time. In budget reports, we have generally referred to this as "reserves." In these projections, we wanted distinguish this amount from prudent reserves as recommended by the Finance Committee.

**Table 3
Freeze YM Projects**

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Assessments	42,458	42,000	40,555	40,555	40,555	40,555	40,555
Contributions	3,042	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
SAYMA operations	41,513	44,872	39,746	41,087	42,473	43,906	45,387
YM Projects	9,090	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	1,983	0
Surplus/deficit	(5,104)	(4,872)	(1,191)	(2,532)	(3,918)	(3,334)	(2,832)
Resulting fund balance	37,800	32,928	31,737	29,205	25,287	21,953	19,121
Reserves @50% of ops	20,757	22,436	19,873	20,543	21,236	21,953	22,694
Reserve surplus/deficit	17,043	10,492	11,864	8,662	4,051	0	(3,573)

Recommendations

Finance Committee recommends that SAYMA take the following actions in response to the projected deficits:

1. Increase the assessment rate by \$5.00 per member and active attender starting in FY 2017, with a further increase of \$10.00 per member and active attender in FY 2018. This staggered increase will allow us to see the impact of the initial increase on assessment revenues. The total increase after FY 2017 would be 20%, which is slightly less than the increase in the Consumer Price Index between 2005 and 2015*. The assessment rates would then be:

FY 2017: \$65

FY 2018: \$75

2. Appoint an ad hoc committee to study the matter of how people are counted for the purpose of assessment

* For this calculation, we used the change in the broadest measure of consumer prices, the CPI-U. Its annual average value was 195.3 in 2005 and 237.017 in 2015, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The percentage increase over that time period was 21.3%.

SAYMA First Draft Budget for FY 2017

Budget Category	FY 2015		FY 2016		FY 2017
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Projected	Budget
INCOME	89,067	87,797	86,872	80,924	84,007
Withdrawals from reserves	8,867	5,695	5,772	3,423	2,807
Prior year carried forward	2,065	2,065	-	-	-
Reduction in reserves	6,802	3,630	5,772	3,423	2,807
Assessments	40,000	42,458	42,000	37,251	42,000
Bank Interest	200	151	100	250	200
Contributions	-	3,042	1,000	2,000	1,000
Publication Sales	-	76	-	-	-
Yearly Meeting Income	40,000	36,376	38,000	38,000	38,000
YM Receipts	-	34,361	35,000	35,000	35,000
YM Scholarship Donations	-	1,669	1,500	1,500	1,500
YM Bookstore Sales Income	-	1,148	1,500	1,500	1,500
EXPENSES	89,067	87,797	86,872	80,924	84,007
Yearly Meeting Expenses	40,000	37,194	38,000	38,000	38,000
Facilities and Services	32,000	30,884	30,500	30,500	30,500
Prtng/Mail/Phone/Minutes/Misc	1,000	1,971	2,000	2,000	2,000
Junior Yearly Meeting -- JYM	4,000	3,198	3,000	3,000	3,000
Coordinator	-	2,400	1,400	1,400	1,400
Ass't Coordinator	-	400	1,400	1,400	1,400
Supplies/Sitters/Misc	-	398	200	200	200
Scholarship WQO Reps	1,000	-	1,000	1,000	1,000
YM Bookstore	2,000	1,141	1,500	1,500	1,500
SAYMA Operational Expenses	40,127	41,513	44,872	38,924	41,307
SAYF Operational Transfers	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Travel Reimbursements	4,100	7,786	10,100	4,300	5,400
Committee Travel	-	229	400	300	300
Rep Mtgs	100	-	100	-	100
Del to WQOs	4,000	7,557	9,600	4,000	5,000
Committees	1,200	397	1,100	800	1,000
Ministry and Nurture Committee	600	183	400	200	400
SAYMA Earthcare Action Network	-	140	500	500	500
Faith and Practice Revision Committee	600	22	100	-	-
Finance Committee	-	-	-	-	-
Nominating Committee	-	52	100	100	100
Peace & Social Concerns Committee	-	-	-	-	-
Outreach Committee	-	-	-	-	-
SAYMA Liability Insurance	1,500	1,412	1,500	1,427	1,500
SAYMA Personnel	25,967	26,410	26,402	26,367	26,627
SAYMA Staff Training	-	-	-	-	-
SAYMA Office Administration	3,560	2,877	3,530	3,030	3,530
Phone, Internet & Office Expenses	360	390	480	480	480
Postage	300	105	200	200	200
Duplication	250	383	200	200	200
Guilford College Archiving	150	150	150	150	150
Misc. Office	2,500	1,999	2,500	2,000	2,500
SAYMA Newsletter	1,200	408	-	1,000	1,000
SAYMA Directory	100	-	150	-	-
SAYMA Treasurer	50	106	50	-	50
SAYMA F&P	-	117	-	-	-
SAYMA Website Hosting Service	200	-	40	-	200

Attachment G: Committee Reports

SAYMA First Draft Budget for FY 2017

SAYMA Other Expenses	250	-	-	-	-
Yearly Meeting Projects	8,940	9,090	4,000	4,000	4,700
Transfers To Funds	2,440	2,440	1,400	1,400	1,400
Spiritual Development Fund	300	300	200	200	200
Released Friend Fund	600	600	400	400	400
FWCC - 3rd Wld Del	250	250	800	800	800
FWCC World Conference Fund	1,000	1,000	-	-	-
Youth Enrichment Fund	250	250	-	-	-
Young Adult Friends Scholarships	40	40	-	-	-
Contributions Wider Quaker Org	6,500	6,650	2,600	2,600	3,300
AFSC	700	700	200	200	700
FCNL	1,000	1,000	200	200	200
FGC	700	700	200	200	200
FWCC	700	700	200	200	200
Right Sharing of World Resources	700	700	200	200	200
Quaker House	700	700	300	300	300
Friends for LGBTQ Concerns	100	100	-	-	-
Quaker Earthcare Witness	800	800	200	200	200
Friends Peace Teams	-	-	200	200	200
Wm Penn House	200	200	200	200	200
Friends Journal	300	300	200	200	200
Rural Southern Voice for Peace	-	-	-	-	-
Bolivian Quaker Education Fund	600	600	200	200	200
Quaker Voluntary Service	-	-	300	300	500
Samburu Education Project	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Surplus	-	-	-	-	-
Transfer to Reserves	-	-	-	-	-
Carry Forward to Next Year	-	-	-	-	-

Ministry & Nurture

SAYMA M&N would like to thank Sharon Annis for her time as Clerk of SAYMA M&N. It is truly a gift of service.

SAYMA M&N (M&N) began the year with new co-clerks.

M&N had a nurturing presence at SAYMA Rep meeting in Atlanta, GA in September 2015. Most members of M&N were at Rep meeting in at least 2 roles.

M&N met on Saturday 7 November 2015 at Chattanooga Friends Meeting for our Autumn meeting. The primary foci of this meeting were drafting the Released Friends guidelines and preparing queries to be used for the State of the Meeting requests.

M&N had a nurturing presence at the March 2016 Rep Meeting at West Knoxville Friends Meeting.

M&N met on Saturday 23 April 2016 at Asheville Friends Meeting for our Spring meeting. The foci of this meeting were preparing the State of SAYMA report and preparing for SAYMA's annual meeting in June at Warren Wilson.

In addition to our physical meetings, M&N has utilized both email and conference calls to address immediate/emergent needs of SAYMA's Monthly Meetings.

M&N currently has only 7 members, while there are 21 Monthly Meetings, 5 Worship Groups and Isolated Friends making up SAYMA. M&N has divided up the MM & WG amongst M&N members in order to keep in touch with all members of SAYMA. We have met with limited success.

M&N would like to have committee members from more of the MM, WG and Isolated Friends. And if unable to provide a committee member to M&N, M&N would like to have more frequent interaction with monthly meetings, worship groups and isolated friends.

SAYMA M&N looks forward to continuing to serve the SAYMA community in whatever ways MM, WG and Isolated Friends identify in the coming year.

Released Friend Fund Guidelines:

Money in the Released Friend Fund is available for use by Friends, but there are no specific guidelines for how to release those funds. Ministry & Nurture wants to develop guidelines and then put them on the SAYMA website and share through social media so that Friends are aware of the funds and how to request them.

Put the guidelines on the SAYMA website and perhaps share through social media. Post on the SAYMA website, put on the Released Friends Facebook page, send to MMs to put on their Facebook pages. Post on the SAYMA website, put on the Released Friends Facebook page, send to MMs to put on their Facebook pages. Any member of a monthly meeting is eligible for these funds.

Current SAYMA text: Provide clearness committee and holding accountable the person who receive the funds.

Proposed policy: Friends wishing to request funds should submit an application form to the Clerk of SAYMA's Ministry & Nurture, who will then bring it to Ministry & Nurture where it will be considered. If approved, the amount released will be up to the amount requested. Any member of a monthly meeting is eligible for these funds. Isolated Friends in SAYMA's coverage area apply directly to SAYMA. Ideally, discussions among SAYMA M&N will occur face-to-face, but will incorporate other discussion modalities (e.g., conference calls, Skype, etc.) when necessary.

Proposed application form:

- Name, address, phone, email
- Monthly Meeting/Worship Group
- Amount requested and the monthly meeting's contribution
- An explanation of release
- A copy of the letter of support from monthly meeting
- The date of release, anticipated length of release, and a timeline for reporting to the monthly meeting and SAYMA's Ministry & Nurture.

Proposed process:

- Application and associated materials submitted to the Clerk of SAYMA's Ministry & Nurture
- Clerk of SAYMA's Ministry & Nurture brings it to Ministry & Nurture
- In the case of an isolated Friend, and/or in cases where additional information is needed from the applicant, Ministry & Nurture will approve a clearness committee.
- Request is approved or disapproved from SAYMA M&N, including an expected timeframe for report (e.g., within six months of end of release).
- Amount released will be up to the amount requested
- Proposed wording:
- Isolated friends come directly to SAYMA, while attenders/members of a MM go to the MM for financial support from there first.

2015 State of SAYMA Report:

18 Monthly Meetings submitted State of the Meeting reports (Asheville, Atlanta, Berea, Birmingham, Boone, Brevard, Celo, Charleston, Chattanooga, Cookeville, Crossville, Greenville, Huntsville, Memphis, Nashville, Oxford, Swannanoa, W. Knoxville.) The committee did not receive 3 reports in time to include in our state of the meeting report for SAYMA.

Monthly Meeting responded to the following queries: What challenges have arisen this year? How have we as a group met them and how has that changed us? How has the meeting lived the testimonies this year? What have been your disappointments and your joys?

The responses were all over the map, literally—as we are geographically far flung—and figuratively in that some meetings grew, while others shrank; some were flush with funds, others struggled to contribute to the SAYMA census; some enjoyed children and young people while others wished young friends blessed their meetings.

Still, some common challenges, joys, and concerns emerged. Many Monthly Meetings were challenged with stewardship of often limited funds, discerning how best to use funds. Those that owned a meeting house strive to discern the best way to care for and maintain their properties in an environmentally responsible way. Those that did not own a meeting house faced the challenges and benefits of that condition.

Most Monthly Meeting addressed changing demographics of declining or growing attendance

Attachment G: Committee Reports

Meetings addressed these changes in various ways. Several work towards care and inclusion of older Friends with home visits or transporting those in need to meeting. Meetings with young Friends were enriched by their presence, but were challenged to rotate responsibility for First Day School.

Several Meetings were working through conflict and crisis, and M&N noted a rising interest in Meetings for Healings perhaps related to that trend. Some Monthly Meetings centered on inward care of current attenders and some reached outward to expand their numbers. Whether growing or not, most monthly meetings expressed concern about limited involvement in committee work. Committees languished without clerks or without members to do the work. Some people serve for years on committees or other positions rather than positions being rotated to others.

Monthly Meetings expressed a commitment to work through their issues in community. Several worked to deepen worship experiences and to educate themselves on the role of vocal ministry in doing so. They offered hospitality and welcome to visitors and newcomers. Meetings created spaces for their communities to come together: home visits to worship with older Friends; Friendly 8 groups; potlucks that continue to nurture community; and Meetings for Healing.

Monthly Meetings “let [their] lives speak in a multitude of inspiring ways, particularly in areas of peace and social concerns, racial justice, and Earthcare. Several meetings are active with AVP. Many are involved with Israel/Palestine issues and welcoming Syrian refugees. Cookeville taxes themselves 10 cents a gallon for each gallon of gas used and uses collected funds for Earthcare.

These State of the Meeting Reports showed a commitment to Monthly Meetings and that in our meetings, we see Quakerism as vital and important. Monthly Meetings and Friends matter for us! SAYMA M&N gained inspiration, encouragement, and a sense of connection to a larger community from reading these reports.

-Volunteer for SAYMA M&N if you would enjoy this sense of re-engagement and inspiration!

Peace & Social Concerns

From last year's sessions we have on our plate the continuing stalemate, and its great human cost, between the Israelis and the Palestinians. What more can Friends do to help resolve this stalemate and move the peace-with-justice process forward? Several of our Meetings have held sessions on this topic this past year, and two SAYMA Friends, Chip Poston (Celo) and Steve Olshewsky (Berea) have made themselves available to all our Meetings as resource persons. At this 2016 Yearly Meeting we are hosting for the first time a worship service in which Friends are asked to hold the Israelis and the Palestinians in the Light. And just days before this Yearly Meeting, Swannanoa Valley Meeting adopted a minute, based on actions called for in the May newsletter of FCNL, urging SAYMA's response to an impending drinking water crisis in Gaza. That minute will be presented by Peace and Social Concerns to our business sessions this year.

A very significant event occurred at Pendle Hill this April, and at least three of our SAYMA Friends, Carol Nickle (West Knoxville), Beth Keiser and Susan Lathrop (Swannanoa Valley) attended. This event, attended by several dozen Friends from around the country, as well as several internationals, marked the rebirth of the Quaker Palestine Israel Network, or QPIN. In this coming year, Peace and Social Concerns will make sure that materials designed for Friends Meetings by QPIN reach all our SAYMA Monthly Meetings.

Attachment G: Committee Reports

In just this past week we have learned of Asheville Meeting's minute calling on SAYMA to establish a standing Racial Justice Committee to support SAYMA Friends of color and to educate the SAYMA community on issues of race and racism. This minute has not been referred to our committee and will be presented to this Yearly Meeting by Asheville Meeting's SAYMA rep. We are gratified that all of us are together struggling with racism this year, and we are prepared to help advance concerns and/or minutes that Friends want to share with each other and with the world.

Bob Welsh, Convenor

SAYMA Earthcare Action Network

This year we've seen several significant events that signal that the world community is increasingly turning it's attention to care for the planet: the Pope's encyclical, Paris Climate talks, and in the Quaker world, a new sustainability minute from FWCC. The mission of our group is to inspire this same passion within SAYMA for taking action on climate change and environmental justice.

Recent Activities We are currently in the process of contacting our Monthly Meeting Representatives for updates on Earthcare-related activities that are taking place in SAYMA. Twice this year Lisa visited SAYF teens at their weekend retreats to talk about environmental justice. They learned about powerful online tools for identifying the intersections between environmental hazards, race, and poverty and began to explore environmental hot spots in their areas. SEAN continues to work on identifying meaningful and do-able actions that SAYMA Friends across across our geographic region could take collectively.

The FWCC sustainability minute builds on the Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice and offers specific suggestions that Yearly Meetings, Monthly Meetings and individuals can take to address our increasingly urgent environmental crisis. We are inspired by this newest call to action for Quakers worldwide, and would like to move toward a meaningful response to this call in our yearly meeting. Here's the full text:

Living Sustainably and Sustaining Life on Earth*

Sustainability Minute Approved, FWCC, 2016, Pisac, Peru

The Light of Christ has inspired Quakers throughout the generations. As we gather together in Pisac Peru in 2016, we feel this light stronger than ever in our calling to care for the Earth on which we live. It is calling us from all traditions: programmed, unprogrammed, liberal, and evangelical. It calls us to preserve this Earth for our children, our grandchildren and all future generations to come, working as though life were to continue for 10,000 years to come. *Be ready for action with your robes hitched up and your lamps alight. (Luke 12:35, Revised English Bible)*

Our faith as Quakers is inseparable from our care for the health of our planet Earth. We see that our misuse of the Earth's resources creates inequality, destroys community, affects health and well-being, leads to war and erodes our integrity. We are all responsible for stewardship of our natural world. We love this world as God's gift to us all. Our hearts are crying for our beloved mother Earth, who is sick and in need of our care.

We are at a historical turning point. Internationally, the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals oblige governments to take action. Faith groups and other civil society are

Attachment G: Committee Reports

playing a major role. As Quakers, we are part of this movement. The FWCC World Conference approved the Kabarok Call for Peace and Ecojustice in April 2012, while the FWCC World Office was a signatory to the Quaker statement on climate change in 2014 and divested from fossil fuels in June 2015.

We recognize that the environmental crisis is a symptom of a wider crisis in our political and economic systems. Our loving and well informed environmental actions as Friends, consistent with our spiritual values, must therefore work to transform these systems.

Many of us all over the Quaker world are taking practical actions as individuals and communities. At this Plenary, a consultation of more than sixty Friends from all over the world worked to build on these leadings with further practical action. The Annex attached to these minutes shows examples of what Friends are doing already or propose to do.

We must redouble our efforts right now. We must move beyond our individual and collective comfort zones and involve the worldwide Quaker community and others of like mind. Just as Jesus showed us, real change requires us to challenge ourselves to be effective instruments of change. We can do more.

On recommendation of this Consultation, and after some discussion, we adopt the following minute:

In this effort for sustainability, and mindful of the urgency of this work, this Plenary asks the FWCC World Office and Central Executive Committee to:

1. Invest FWCC World funds ethically.
2. Share Quaker experiences with other faith groups to inspire them to action, especially through the World Council of Churches.
3. Seek ways of connecting Friends worldwide that are sustainable.
4. Facilitate dissemination of training materials on sustainability issues for Quaker leaders, pastors and teachers.

This FWCC Plenary Meeting also asks all Yearly Meetings to:

1. Initiate at least two concrete actions on sustainability within the next 12 months. These may build on existing projects of individuals or monthly meetings or they may be new initiatives. We ask that they encourage Young Friends to play key roles. We ask that meetings minute the progress and results, so as to share them with FWCC and Quaker meetings.
2. Support individuals and groups in their meetings who feel called to take action on sustainability.
3. Support the work done by Quaker organisations such as the Quaker United Nations Office and the Quaker Council for European Affairs to ensure that international agreements and their implementation support sustainability.

This FWCC Plenary Meeting asks individual Friends and groups (such as Monthly Meetings, Worship Groups and ad hoc groups within Meetings) to Share inspiring experiences of living sustainably on the new “sustainability webpage” of the [Quakers in the World Website](#). This webpage can be used as a source of ideas, inspiration and action.

**IRM 16-20. Sustainability. The Consultation on Sustainability, facilitated by Jonathan Woolley (Mexico City MM/Pacific YM; Staff, QUNO-Geneva), Rachel Madenyika (Staff, QUNO-NY), and Charlotte Gordon (Aotearoa/New Zealand YM) have presented a minute for our consideration.*

Annex to the Minute:

Possibilities for practical sustainability action from the Pisac consultation

Individuals can:

1. Dedicate personal time to nature.
2. Reduce consumption and use your consumer buying power to create change.
3. Cut down on meat consumption, be aware of energy costs in production and transport of all foods and methane from ruminant animals, support sustainable agriculture.
4. Travel – cycle, walk, use public transport or alternatives to private cars, keep air travel to a minimum.
5. Grow your own food and plant trees.
6. Be politically active in promoting sustainability concerns.
7. Share environmental concerns through books, publications, conversations, electronic media
8. Reduce energy use.
9. Use less water and harvest water.
10. Make time for spiritual connection with God.

Monthly Meetings, Worship Groups and small groups within Meetings can:

1. Live in a community, share housing, participate in a transition town movement.
2. Educate yourself and others.
3. Share transport and equipment.
4. Develop urban agriculture, community gardens, community supported agriculture, tree planting.
5. Love nature and encourage others to do so: we protect the things we love; get children out in nature; take care of nature around your meeting house (e.g., picking up trash/litter).
6. Invest ethically and divest from fossil fuels.
7. Ensure meeting houses are carbon neutral.
8. Build alliances, seek visibility, approach legislators.
9. Share sustainability skills.

Yearly Meetings can:

1. Support the sustainability actions of Monthly Meetings.
2. Build solidarity with local people.
3. Support Quakers in politics and international work.
4. Form support networks and alliances to make more impact – we can only do so much on our own.
5. Invest ethically, including on sustainability issues.
6. Practice what we preach.
7. Discern and move concerns to action.
8. Set targets for increased sustainability.
9. Connect and share with other YMs, direct or via FWCC Sections and World Office

We recognize that different actions are relevant to different Quaker meetings in different parts of the world.

Quaker Volunteer Farm Network Our committee met face-to-face during Representative Meeting in March where we heard a proposal from Matt Riley of Celo Monthly Meeting for a Quaker network of farm volunteers similar to Willing Workers on Organic Farms (WWOOF). We were inspired by Matt's idea and were moved to help him get started, so we donated part of our budget to give him leg up. Matt's proposal follows:

The Quaker Volunteer Farm Network (QVFN) will be a network of growers who wish to mentor volunteers on their farms. This network will enable Friends to follow their leadings with

Attachment G: Committee Reports

regards to our shared responsibility for the care of our planet and its many diverse peoples. It is a network for sharing the many skills that are essential to a sustainable and peaceful world, and is an action network for farmers and farm volunteers. It is QVFN's vision for this to be a program that can appeal to Young Friends and to Young Adult Friends.

QVFN will be organized similarly to the WWOOF program, in that it connects volunteers to farms via farm profiles listed on the project's website. These profiles will provide the volunteer with information such as what the farm grows or raises, the type of help needed on the farm, and accommodations provided. The program differs from WWOOF in that its spirit is based in the Friends' testimonies and can draw volunteers who may not otherwise have found their way to that work. It gives opportunities for Monthly Meetings to support local small farms by giving spiritual support to volunteers in their area and perhaps providing accommodations to volunteers in need.

Currently the project is in its infant stages. Matt Riley of Celo Friends Meeting and Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association is the principal organizer at this point. He has received a small but generous contribution from SAYMA Earthcare Action Network as seed money to pursue the project. He is in the process of locating a fiscal sponsor, building the website, and finding as many Quaker farmers as possible (or those small farms who have the support of Friends). As a fellow farmer, Matt will be doing much of this work during the off season.

If you are interested in helping with this project or know of a small farm with Quaker affiliation, please contact Matt at communityfarmconsulting@gmail.com. You can learn more about Matt and his work at www.communityfarmconsulting.com.

Moving Forward We invite Friends to join us in the process of developing and implementing Earthcare-related actions in the yearly meeting. **Please join us on the Gladfelter patio at lunchtime on Friday and Saturday, and from 3:15 -4:45 on Saturday at Annual Gathering.** After Gathering, visit our page on the SAYMA web site where you can join our Google group, connect with our Facebook page, stay up to date on our activities, and take part in the conversation.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Rose June 2016

Southern Appalachian Friend

Southern Appalachian Friend produced 3 issues in the past year. Based on this year's pattern of response for calls for submissions, and my work schedule, I am planning to produce 3 issues over the next year, also. Projected submission deadlines are:

Fall 2016: Labor Day weekend, Friday, September 2

Winter 2017: the Friday before MLK Day, Friday, January 13

Spring 2017: last Friday in March, March 31

This is the last year of my term, and, while I have enjoyed producing the newsletter, I think it is a good thing for these jobs to be shared around. Therefore, I would like to be replaced once my term is completed.

In the Light,

Beth Ensign, Atlanta

Attachment G: Committee Reports

Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF)

Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) held 6 retreats during the past year. We have averaged 39 Young Friends (YF) per retreat with 74 different teens coming to at least one retreat during the past year. Some Young Friends attended all 6 retreats and others attended only one. Details of each retreat are summarized below. Most retreats were hosted at Meetinghouses, but we also gathered once at the Arthur Morgan School. Asheville and Atlanta Meetings were very gracious to host us twice. And we were excited to hold a retreat at the Nashville Friends Meetinghouse for the first time in many years. We are deeply appreciative to Friends for allowing us to use their facilities.

We also held two joint Nurturing and Steering Committee retreats, in August at Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting and in February at West Knoxville Friends Meeting.

We have a very large graduating class of more than 15 people, but leadership among teens continues to be strong. In particular, the group coming from Nashville has been growing steadily all year. We also have welcomed two teens from Charlotte Friends Meeting and one teen from West Knoxville Friends Meeting this year. Participation from other Friends Meetings is always welcomed!

Though we have a very dedicated team of active FANs, adult participation reached a bit of a low point this year, with only four full-time FANs at our April retreat. We seek more participation from SAYMA members.

SAYF Retreats:

- 1. Asheville Meetinghouse Retreat** **September 18-20, 2015**
Theme: *Truth*
of YFs: 39
of full-time FANs:* 7
(*Friendly Adult Nurturers)
Activities included: Service project, visits to museums, and a night in downtown Asheville

- 2. Atlanta Meetinghouse Retreat** **October 16-18, 2015**
Theme: *Helping our Happiness in Health*
of YFs: 43
of full-time FANs: 7
Activities included: Hiking, Yoga, and workshops about different aspects of personal health

- 3. Asheville Meetinghouse Retreat** **November 6-8, 2015**
Theme: *Reduce, Reuse, Recycle*
of YFs: 28
of full-time FANs: 8
Activities included: Zero food waste meals, thrift store shopping, and clothes donation drive

- 4. Nashville Meetinghouse Retreat** **January 16-18, 2016**
Theme: *Don't Stand Idly By*
of YFs: 40
of FANs: 6
Activities included: Service project and talent show

5. Celo Retreat March 18-20, 2016

Theme: *Think Outside the Box*

of YFs: 45

of full time FANs: 6

Activities included: Hiking, sushi-making, visit to the physics playground, introduction to Earthcare

6. Atlanta Friends Meeting Retreat

April 15-17, 2016

Theme: *Earthcare & SAYF Prom*

of YFs: 37

of full time FANs: 4

Activities included: Gardening and SAYF Prom

Nurturing/Steering Committees Retreats

1. Atlanta Meetinghouse August 28-30, 2015

of Nurturing Committee Members: 15

of Steering Committee Members: 5

2. Swannanoa Meetinghouse February 26-28, 2016

of Nurturing Committee Members: 16

of Steering Committee Members: 7

Web Manager

Due to several problems with the sayma.org email forwarding, we are changing our internet service provider. It's a slow process but it is happening and will hopefully be completed soon.

SAYMA now has a Facebook page. Follow the link on the sayma.org website to find it, and "like" us.

The Yearly Meeting Planning Committee has created the position of gathering photographer. Kofi Adams (Atlanta) will be documenting our meetings and activities for use on our website and FB page. If you do not want your image appearing on the internet, please tell Kofi. There is also a box to check on the registration form to indicate your wishes. With regard to pictures of children, the web manager uses the follow policy:

- (1) recognizable photos of any minor requires prior permission of parent or guardian before publishing online; and
- (2) photos of minors are never identified by name online.

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

Meeting clerks and SAYMA Reps: please help me keep your meeting's information current on the sayma.org website.

Comments or questions welcomed.

Charlie Wilton
SAYMA web manager
web@sayma.org

Attachment H: Swannanoa Minute on Impending Crisis in Gaza

adopted and forwarded to SAYMA at Monthly Meeting for Business,
Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting June 5, 2016

From Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) we have learned that there is a humanitarian crisis on the verge of eruption in Palestine and that meeting that crisis could constitute a significant step toward easing tensions and fostering cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians.

The humanitarian crisis is the probability that by the end of 2016, people in Gaza will run out of drinkable water. This crisis has been caused by Israeli bombings in the past, which destroyed much of Gaza's water infrastructure, and Israel's current blockade of Gaza, which prevents shipment into Gaza of both water and materials necessary to rebuild crucial water infrastructure. We of Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA) join FCNL in calling on the U. S. government to take three crucial steps: first, to press Israel to double its sale of water to Gaza; second, to press Israel to increase its electricity sales to Gaza; and third, to press Israel to allow Gaza to rebuild its water and sewage infrastructure.

We ask every Meeting and Worship Group in SAYMA to communicate with its Representative and Senators on this issue. (Friends might want to use further information given by FCNL in its Washington Newsletter of May 2016 devoted entirely to the Israel-Palestine issue.)

Attachment I: Registrar's Report

Category	2016	2015
Registered	250	222
Cancelations	4	3
NET	246	219
JYM	18	11
SAYF	43	38
YAF	8	10
First Time attenders	Not counted	38
Scholarship Fund Donations	\$1439	\$1365
Late Fees	\$720	\$1020
Scholarships granted	\$1243	\$774
Fee waivers (Staff, FANs, guests)	\$2963	\$3315

JYM count includes 8 children under 4.

6 Friends registered as walk-ins

26 of 160 forms (44 Friends) included a late fee

59 Friends postmarked their forms on May 16 (the last day before the late fee)

36 Friends postmarked their forms on May 15.

So 105 Friends registered before the next to the last minute. 145 registered just at or after the deadline!

Attachment J: Epistle

To all Friends everywhere, greetings from the 46th annual session of Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA) gathered at Warren Wilson College in Swannanoa, North Carolina, June 9 – 12, 2016.

Our theme this year was “Unraveling Racism.” Over the last year our yearly meeting’s planning committee worked to create an opportunity for us to gather together around this theme. We are grateful to the committee and particularly appreciate the gifts of the Friends of color who joined the committee. We explored our theme through plenary sessions, interactive exercises, workshops, small groups and worship sharing.

In our first plenary, invited speaker Vanessa Julye, Coordinator of FGC Ministry on Racism, laid out a systematic analysis of the origin and development of the structures of inequality and oppression in the United States. We understand the oppression of today has deep roots in history. On our second night together, a facilitated dialogue and interactive exercises allowed us to express and witness our differing life experiences and the effects of systematic racism. In these interactions, we witnessed and experienced the continuing hurt and damage of racism along with the struggle to find reconciliation and understanding. We felt both the fierce urgency of this work and the need to be tender with each other.

During the weekend, we were brought to realize we have a long way to go to unravel racism, including within the Society of Friends.

Twenty-one workshops were held permitting Friends the opportunity for deeper exploration of topics, most of which related to the theme of unraveling racism. Workshops included healing the wounds of racism and oppression, mass incarceration and racism, and supporting African women through micro-lending projects.

In our business sessions, we considered proposals seasoned in our monthly meetings. We considered and approved the creation of the standing Committee on Racial Justice. This will provide a space at the yearly meeting level for Friends of color to come together and support each other, to educate the wider SAYMA community and to gather resources for education. A proposal for action regarding the water crisis in Gaza highlighted our continuing struggle to discern right action regarding the conflict in Israel-Palestine. We agreed to share this concern with our constituent monthly meetings and worship groups, encouraging them to take action as led.

To meet the needs of our yearly meeting and expanding program costs, we are seeking the right way to insure the appropriate level of financial support. Our finance committee brought a recommendation to increase assessments and while this will provide a short-term solution, a long-term approach is needed. We appointed an ad hoc committee to explore this issue. We are also seeking to discern the right level of support for our Wider Quaker Organizations, from both monthly and yearly meetings. We asked our monthly meetings to provide guidance as to the Wider Quaker Organizations that reflect our current concerns and the appropriate level of support we should provide them. We struggle to cover all the business and permit all the contributions. We struggle with good order. The excitement and passionate urgency of the issues challenges us to stay present in worship.

We were blessed by visitors from Wider Quaker Organizations. We heard reports from Shan Cretin, General Secretary of the American Friends Service Committee who shared information

Attachment J: Epistle

on their new program direction. Jacqueline Stillwell, General Secretary of Right Sharing of World Resources described their microloan programs, the ripple effects of them and transformed lives that resulted. Vanessa Julye shared the work of Friends General Conference. We were particularly excited to receive an update from our newest WQO, Quaker Voluntary Service. Christina Repoley, executive director of Quaker Voluntary Service provided a report of their work. Quaker Voluntary Service provides a yearlong service opportunity for young adults in which service, spiritual development and life in community are united. QVS's first service house began in Atlanta and has now expanded to four cities, by the end of this year 70 young people will have completed their year of service and another 30 will begin.

Our yearly meeting was enriched by the presence of 18 young Friends less than eleven years. They participated in a variety of activities with Junior Yearly Meeting. Their presence at mealtimes reminded us of new ways of looking at our world and of the joy to becoming as children. Our Southern Appalachian Young Friends Program (SAYF) graduated 14 young friends this year. SAYF provides a deep and rich opportunity for our high school friends to meet and support one another. We look forward to their continuing participation as young adults. Young adult Friends (YAF's) are moving into positions of yearly meeting leadership and we are supported by their energy and technological savvy.

There were opportunities for us to gather in worship. We began and ended our business sessions in worship; we worshipped early in the morning, late at night, and in men's and women's groups. We worshipped to remember the lives of those who have died in the last year. Worship sharing offered queries about racial justice based on our testimonies and faith. Our worship has been rich. It has provided occasion to be grateful for the beauty of this place, and provided a time to hold in the Light the difficult work we have done in this gathering. We have been refreshed and energized. We can deal with difficult issues and conflicts and stay together.

We are called to be witnesses. Our clerk opened our sessions reading from the writing of Whittaker Chambers who described the witness as "one whose life and faith are so completely one that when the challenge comes to step out and testify for [our] faith [we] do so disregarding all risks, accepting all consequences."

We are grateful for this time together. We are grateful for the Friends of color from our yearly meeting and beyond who participated with us. We are grateful for the work of the yearly meeting planning committee and the Friends of color who shared their gifts on planning committee.

Attachment K: State of the Meeting Reports

- Asheville Friends Meeting
- Atlanta Friends Meeting
- Berea Friends Meeting
- Birmingham Friends Meeting
- Boone Friends Meeting
- Celo Friends Meeting
- Charleston Friends Meeting
- Chattanooga Friends Meeting
- Columbia Friends Meeting
- Cookeville Friends Meeting
- Crossville Friends Meeting
- Greenville Friends Meeting
- Huntsville Area Friends Meeting
- Memphis Friends Meeting
- Nashville Friends Meeting
- Oxford Friends Meeting
- Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting
- West Knoxville Friends Meeting

Asheville Friends Meeting

The year 2015 has been very active at AFM, with emphasis on improving house and grounds, working on racial justice issues, and enjoying Second-Hour opportunities for spiritual growth.

This report, written as a response to SAYMA’s four thought-provoking queries, was compiled by the Committee Clerks and the Meeting Co-Clerks and then, after incorporating input from the Meeting as a whole, was approved by the Meeting:

1. What challenges have arisen this year? How have we met them? How has this changed us?

Challenge	Action	Result
<u>Caring for the Meetinghouse with-in the budget:</u> Needs major indoor and outdoor painting and repair; mold remediation; yardwork; driveway improvement & visibility; improved interior “hominess”.	House & Grounds Committee worked hard to discuss issues, pre-prepare bid, find contractor, meet budget. Meeting approved 1 st stage rehab plans, set workdays, did yardwork, had trees trimmed, dug drain, made minor repairs.	Now ready to implement 1 st stage of rehab plan. H&G Committee learned to work together, to communicate and handle conflicts effectively. Meeting learned ways to live green.
<u>Upwelling of concern for systemic racism that exists among all people in US, including Quakers.</u> Struggled to find unity on goals, methods, and language used to address the issues in Meeting and larger community.	Formed Racial Justice Committee, with many members. Ongoing discussion, sometimes angry, with some overall progress. Reps of Ministry & Counsel and RJC met with SAYMA Ministry and Nurture Committee. Held Threshing Session.	Tension, injured feelings, lack of trust and respect, and misunderstandings at times. Strong desire to be welcoming and supportive of all people and racial justice ministry, united in Quaker Testimonies of Equality, Integrity, and Peace.
<u>Second-hour activities:</u> Great opportunities for spiritual growth; but lacked enough First Days in year to meet topic demands. Needed more greeters, volunteers to set-up for Meetings, and folks to	Excellent calendar management by the Spiritual Enrichment Committee to meet most needs in order of urgency. A sign-up sheet was developed to enlist folks to serve as greeters, set-up	Educational, enlightening programs, with increased interest and attendance. Positive response to request for greeters and set-up volunteers. More people brought more food of greater

bring food to serve after Meeting for Worship.	staff, and food volunteers.	variety. Hospitality Committee served well.
<u>Leadership challenges</u> : most Committees needed more Members; some lacked Clerks; difficulty replacing very competent Treasurer when her term expired.	Nominating Committee works hard & consistently to enlist Committee Members & Clerks, matching skills to tasks. A Co-Clerk stepped up to heavy responsibility of Treasurer.	Some Committees are better staffed and clerked. Still need an Assistant Treasurer who will become the next Treasurer.
<u>More active attenders, including children, but no active youth group at this time</u> ; need new SAYF liaison, and childcare in First Day School and Second Hour.	Good leadership by Religious Education Committee. Enlisted needed helpers. Hired child-care worker for First Day School but not yet for Second Hour.	Gained volunteer leader and some assistants for First Day School. No results yet from discussion of youth needs, but we still happily host SAYF retreats at Meetinghouse.

2. How has the Meeting lived the testimonies this year?

First Day School has focused on each Testimony monthly, and Second Hour provided discussion/introspection on various Testimonies; Meeting as a whole provided many opportunities throughout the year for Spirit-led, conviction-driven interaction.

- a. **Simplicity:** Held second Hour Simplici-teas.
- b. **Peace: Provided various kinds of support for community peace groups.**
 - Participated in Moral Monday sessions in Raleigh and International Day of Peace.
- c. **Integrity: Kept books in good order, ending 2015 in the black (Finance Committee).**
 - Despite discomfort, worked with integrity to inform Friends of issues/resolve tension.
- d. **Community: (Internal) Experienced growth, development, and evolution as a Quaker community through active involvement in Meetings for Worship and for Business; Second Hour spiritual enrichment; Committee work; and intergenerational activities.**
 - Welcomed new people to AFM, supported those having personal problems, shared food and fellowship, and involved Meeting community in solving Meeting problems.
 - Encouraged intergenerational interaction by including children with the adults in singing before Meeting for Worship and at beginning/end of worship each First Day.
 - **(External)** Participated as group and as individuals in various community activities; donations of almost \$9,000 (more than 1/3 of budget) to local outreach, SAYMA, and wider Quaker organizations; food collection for Manna Food Bank; and work with local organizations to help resolve wider community problems.
 - Worked with neighbor when conflict arose over grounds issue; after resolving disagreement, we asked her to help solve the problem and she agreed.
 - Supported the use of fair-trade products; one Member distributes Palestinian products to help the Palestinian economy and to keep us aware of need to do so.
 - Led by Peace and Earth Committee, sent postcards to public officials in support of positions on various social issues.
 - Communications Committee used Listserv and Facebook to inform Friends of all activities.
- e. **Equality: (See “Challenges” table above for discussion on racial issues.)**
 - RJC conducted workshops and added books on racial issues to library.

Attachment K: State of the Meeting Reports

- Stressed importance of everyone to Meeting through inter-generational activities.
- f. Stewardship: Joined Creation Care Alliance to support environmental stewardship.**
- Examined from several angles the options for completing Meetinghouse rehab; broke down projects into the most essential steps with regard to time and money, then prioritized completion of most important steps first.
Used green techniques in caring for house and grounds; paid attention to the environment; continued to compost and to avoid harmful products, such as Styrofoam.

3. What have been your disappointments?

Many Friends felt that we largely did a good job throughout the year, and we continue to grow and improve, but there were a few disappointments:

- a. Some Committees, not very active at beginning of year, increased activity; some need more Members, despite Nominating Committee's determined efforts to enlist others.
- b. First Day School workers can seldom attend Meeting for Worship because too few relief workers are available.
- c. Air quality in the Meetinghouse has kept some people from participating; some library books are deteriorating due to moisture; remediation included in stage 1 of rehab plan.
- d. Kitchen has not yet been updated, but it is included in a later stage of the rehab plan.
- e. There is still no newsletter.
- f. Some Friends felt that there were not enough opportunities for retreats, query-based small group Meetings, or social groups, such as our former "Quaker Eights".

4. What have been your joys?

There were more joys than disappointments during 2015:

- a. Worship in Light and love, with spirit-led ministry, both vocal and non-vocal.
- b. Welcoming spirit and loving concern within Meeting.
- c. Good oversight of Meeting by M&C Committee.
- d. Willingness of Friends to give time to Meeting and to step up to responsibilities, particularly in Committee work; this work was both educational and rewarding.
- e. Well-run and productive Meetings for Worship with Attention to Business.
- f. Opportunities to participate in SAYMA, FGC, and other Quaker-related organizations.
- g. Opportunity of Friends to facilitate workshops and racial justice awareness at SAYMA.
- h. Children in our midst, including the birth of a baby; new parents can participate in Meeting for Worship in library/nursery using speaker set-up.
- i. First Day School curriculum, based on Quaker Testimonies, that help our children grow in the Light and apply Testimonies in practical ways; discussion of new curriculum.
- j. When teens were active in Meeting, the method of moderating the group, leaving space for teens to express themselves and explore their leadings; also guest visitors from Friends community.
- k. Secret Pals, Spring Youth Celebration, Thanksgiving at the Meetinghouse, Christmas "Play in a Bag", and Edie's bread after Meeting for Worship.
- l. Reflecting on the life of Phil Neal, a founding member of AFM and long-time Friend.
- m. Support of Friends by Care & Nurture Committee and other individual Friends.
- n. Beginning of more specific method to maintain emergency contact with Friends.
- o. Great resources available in library, maintained by Library Committee.
- p. Scholarships supporting various Quaker activities, as needed, coordinated by Scholarship Committee.

- q. Small groups of Friends that gather outside of Meeting for fellowship.
- r. Outpouring of support for child-care worker's family that suffered a house-fire.

The year 2015 reveals a great deal of spiritual struggle, reflection, and growth; active participation in local and wider Quaker communities; and strong action within the larger community. Asheville Friends Meeting will continue to walk in the Light as way opens in 2016.

Atlanta Friends Meeting

This year has been one of deepening and articulating our sense of spiritual community. In the winter and spring we held two forums on vocal ministry and our experience of worship. This has allowed the meeting to continue to talk about our personal understanding of worship. Our meeting retreat was also on the experience of worship. This year our meeting has deepened and re-affirmed our support for Quaker Voluntary Service. We received three membership requests from long time attenders, had two members transfer their membership to AFM, and held three weddings under the care of the meeting. Our young adults have continued to meet monthly together and our young Friends join us for the first fifteen minutes of worship more regularly. Our worship has continued to flourish and enrich our community. We are grateful for the experience and conversations that have arisen from this year's worship. We realize that many volunteers contribute to the work of community building that our committees do.

Care & Counsel Committee continued to focus on ways to help build and maintain a community that unites all in the Meeting in a shared spiritual life expressed in caring for each other. To let AFM participants know what type of help is available and to encourage Friends to ask for assistance when needed, we published the guidelines for the Assistance Fund for Members and Attenders. In addition, we reached out to newcomers and visitors by having a person meet with them in the library after Meeting for Worship to answer questions. Caring for the Meeting community has also meant assisting individuals with ongoing concerns, remembering Friends in memorial services, continuing our attention to Conscious Aging/Mindful Dying, and sponsoring a celebration of legal marriage equality for same gender couples. Most importantly, we want the community to know that the work of Care & Counsel is love, peace, caring for one another, and lifting one another up.

The Nominating Committee was able to fill nearly 20 committee positions this past year. Most of these were matched with long time members and attenders, as it is sometimes challenging to find younger people who are willing to serve. We will continue to search for and encourage younger Friends, as we know this is important to the vitality of the whole meeting and our future. We also asked for and received changes to the AFM Handbook job descriptions of Meeting committees and descriptions, which will be updated on the website. This had last been done in 2011. Nominating also sponsored a job fair, so that interested F/friends could learn more about positions and committees and what they do.

Much needed repairs and renovations to the Meetinghouse began with the repair and restoration of the sprinkler system, new carpeting in the Meeting Room and Library, and new Library furniture. Painting and repair of the library walls and ceiling made for a more comfortable and pleasing space. Major 2016 permanent improvements were prioritized and planned. Workdays were held to maintain the Meeting grounds, including clearing and mulching the vacant lot adjacent to the playground; the Meeting was also surveyed on potential uses for the lot. A new composting system was created, thereby helping to reduce Meeting waste. New parking signs and spaces for physically challenged Friends were installed. The Meeting continued to welcome outside renters, approving new long-term rentals and developing a new rental rate chart. The new personnel liaison joined

the Administration committee, a revised custodial task checklist was created for the custodian, additional Sunday childcare was approved, and revisions to the Friend in Residence job description were approved. The creation of a search committee led to the selection of a new Friend in Residence for 2016. Everything that was accomplished in 2015 was made possible by the willing volunteer efforts of so many Meeting members and attenders.

Through the Quakers for Racial Equality group, AFM acts on an ongoing commitment to live our testimony of equality, which compels us to address racism in ourselves, our communities, and in society, especially in the criminal justice system. Quakers for Racial Equality (QRE) engaged the Meeting and Yearly Meeting through workshops, video/discussions, and personal reflections to queries about dismantling racism. At AFM, we've also offered a weekly literature table and a monthly Listening Ear for concerns about racism. We have initiated networking among Friends from Yearly Meeting and Friends General Conference who are working against racism within Friends' institutions and in the nation. QRE and other AFM Friends are involved in our communities addressing racial profiling by police, holding vigils, offering creative conflict resolution workshops, and countering systemic racism in the criminal justice system, housing, and schools. AFM and QRE continue to support a sojourning Friend in her ministry to work for racial justice in the criminal justice system with those most negatively impacted by racial inequity. We appreciate the witness of Friends, both here and physically distant, who challenge us to follow our spiritual leadings to stand up for racial equality.

The Library Committee worked throughout the year to align the library's collection more precisely with items that support specific, current Meeting interests and activities, and to do what was necessary for computerizing the library's catalog and its borrowing procedures. Among other things, the new catalog will allow Meetinghouse attendees to conveniently search the library's holdings from their home computers and allow the Library Clerk to keep more accurate records of which items have been borrowed. Dozens of no-longer-needed library items were sold at several Meetinghouse book sales to raise additional funds to replace missing items or to purchase new materials.

Religious Education is in the 2nd year of our three-year teaching cycle. In preparation for this year's New Testament teaching we continued with our practice of meeting for a retreat in July. There we acknowledged that we come to the New Testament from different experiences. Jesus and the New Testament speak to each of us differently. We all resonate with the ideas of listening for newness in the old stories and with helping children to discern Truth. Our commitment to nurturing children to find the divine within and exploring scripture in order to re-discover the stories led to this year's guiding theme: Nurturing the Light within that we may discover the scripture anew. Led by 14 classroom teachers, we continue to use the guidance of the Godly Play curriculum in our teaching. Each grade grouping has four teachers who share the 4 teaching Sundays each month. We depend on volunteers to sign up to assist teachers with door-keeping on each First Day. The nursery (ages 0-2), has 5 to 10 babies on First Day. The lower grades class, (3 years-1st grade) has 8 to 13 children regularly. The middle grades class, (2nd – 4th grade) has 5-8 children; the upper grades class (5th – 7th grade) has 3-6 each week, and the High school group (8th -12th grade) has 10 or more teens most Sundays.

The Burundi Friends who have become such an integral part of our meeting continue to help us explore how people with different backgrounds and beliefs can come together in one gathered spiritual home. Our community is deepened by the presence of many visitors throughout the year. Atlanta Friends Meeting continues to be a vibrant, supportive community with many opportunities to participate.

Berea Friends Meeting

Berea Friends Meeting continues to be a spiritually healthy and dynamic community of seekers. We regularly welcome from five to seven children, five to seven teens, and fifteen to twenty adults at Meeting for Worship. Our Meetings for Business in the Spirit of Worship are normally attended by about ten people. This year we welcomed two Friends into membership in the Meeting, while we honored the request for transfer of membership to a different Meeting for one and removed four others who have not been in communication for some time. And notably, for the first time in a generation, we have taken the marriage between two Friends under our care. The participation of new regular attenders in all aspects of Meeting life invigorates and energizes us. Visitors frequently join us.

Our spiritual focus is steadily expanding outward to our local community and region. Our biannual visioning process enabled us to discern our role promoting communication and conflict resolution between the disparate groups within our community. Consequently, we are well on our way to becoming a regional center for the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP). Several of us continue to support the broader Quaker community through participation on standing committees of the Yearly Meeting and as representatives to national and global Quaker organizations. Twenty-two of us attended SAYMA and four of us presented workshops. Our vibrant youth program has found new energy and focus and our teens continue to be nourished by participation in the Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) program. Our frequent First Hour discussion sessions are well attended, providing fertile soil in preparation for Worship. We have also begun weekly Meetings for Healing providing participants an opportunity to focus healing energy on individuals and groups.

Our Peace and Social Concerns Committee continues to organize letter writing every month as part of our broader intention to build relationships with our local, state, and national elected officials. Continued collaboration with the Quaker Committee on Kentucky Legislation (QCKL) promotes legislative issues in Kentucky that align with our Quaker identity, and extends our advocacy for the abolition of the death penalty by connecting with our local Kentuckians for the Commonwealth (KFTC) chapter to organize monthly meetings.

While our budget has stabilized, we continue our struggle to realize a budget that can support entities from which we draw support in our local community, as well as those that are doing important work in the world, including wider Quaker organizations. While these are temporal matters, they impact our spiritual lives and continue to present spiritual challenges for us. The architect we have contracted to provide design suggestions for a major Meetinghouse renovation has drafted some interesting plans and continues to work on more extensive renderings.

We actively nurture a community that provides gentle correction and guidance, and 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 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 with those both inside and outside the community, and to serve as examples of what we believe by living what we believe.

Respectfully submitted,
Jon Saderholm
Clerk, Berea Friends Meeting

Attachment K: State of the Meeting Reports

Birmingham Friends Meeting

Birmingham Friends continued to develop our community and to extend our outreach into Birmingham and Alabama during 2015.

Meeting for Worship was often held in complete silence, but sometimes aided by inspiring messages. A growing point is to be sure messages don't become dialogues. Generally, however we were enriched by our corporate worship. Our numbers have increased somewhat; what was once a large gathering of eleven or twelve Friends is now close to twenty, give or take a Friend or two.

Following Meeting for Worship, we are energized by a time of refreshments and visiting before engaging in lively discussions of various topics. This past year our Second Hours included poetry, comparisons of the teachings of Jesus and the Buddha, Walt Whitman's Quaker influences, Spiritual Journeys, a discussion of the Life and Works of William Blake, even a hymn singing. We finished the year with a discussion of the book, "Waking Up White."

Various Friends shepherded our two Quaker children, Aubrey Turner and YangYang Cormier. They read books, enjoyed the outdoors, drew pictures, learned about early Friends, and solved puzzles. Aubrey began working on a Cub Scout project through which he learned the history and current practices of Friends. We would like to have more children.

We agreed at the November Meeting for Business to pay off our mortgage. We are grateful to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's mortgage program, which has held it for us. We have an active, talented House and Grounds committee which has overseen the mundane and the dramatic needs of our Meeting House, including painting the porch, cutting the grass and trimming bushes, removing a dangerous jungle gym from the yard, spraying for pests and removing squirrels from the attic, and addressing structural concerns.

Birmingham Friends attempt to live up to Quaker testimonies, and in doing so seek to know the concerns of our community. We have a "social concerns" (as of 2016 "peace and justice") third Sunday of the month during which representatives of local nonprofits or elected officials tell us of their concerns. This year we have heard the needs and appreciated the activities of such groups as the Southern Poverty Law Center, Alabama Arise, Alabama Possible, Birmingham Faith in Action and even Bards of Birmingham, a local Shakespeare group that reaches out to children. The needs of our community and state are many. We actively support and work with Alabama Arise and Greater Birmingham Ministries, plus we donate the amount of money we are excused from paying property taxes to the PTA of our neighborhood school, Avondale Elementary. We try to stay current on national and local affairs; sometimes we feel the needs are overwhelming and we are called to stay centered.

We try to maintain community beyond our once-a-week Meeting for Worship and Second Hours by joining in other activities. We have a sporadically meeting book group, which focused on banned books this year, with such books as "The Absolute True Diary of a Par-Time Indian," by Sherman Alexie, and Salman Rushdie's "Satanic Verses." We also read Harper Lee's "Go Set a Watchman." In addition to the book group, we have a "simple supper" of soup and bread at Friends' homes each month, and a summer film series, also at a Friend's home.

We remembered the life and spirit of Connie LaMonte with a donation to SAYMA and we grieved with Dick Mills at a memorial service for his wife in the woods of the Botanical Gardens.

In December we agreed to establish a long-range planning committee to begin in 2016 and to invite Brent Bill for a workshop retreat. With new, younger and very active members we are looking forward to 2016 as a renewal of life in the Spirit for Birmingham Friends.

Boone Friends Meeting

Boone Friends is still meeting at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 381 E. King Street, Boone, NC. The meeting time is going to change to 3:00 pm First Day. This is per the request of the UUs. The Meeting does not have a phone number but John/Judy Geary at 828/264-5812. Attendance is still low, usually three of us. We do get some summer dropins and hopefully more students this fall. John is going to retire this academic year (2016-2017). If the Geary's are not in Boone there is the real possibility that the meeting will be laid down. The Quaker Student Club is still active and has plans to recruit for the fall semester. This year is going to be a year of transition for Boone Meeting and attenders. We will keep the Yearly Meeting informed.

John Geary, Clerk

Celo Friends Meeting

Celo Friends Meeting is blessed by active participation of a diverse group attending worship each First Day. Silent worship is the heart of our Meeting from which our other strengths are drawn. We are especially strengthened by a number of younger "millennial" Friends who participate regularly in worship and other Meeting events.

We continue to share a potluck lunch after Meeting each First Day. This social time is an important opportunity to connect with new attenders. It is often followed by a forum discussion or other planned program.

Adult Religious Education Committee has grown and become a very active part of our Meeting. Participation of several younger attenders in this committee has led to topics of particular interest to them. Multiple Friendly eights groups have been organized. Fifty people participate in five groups. Panel discussion forums have been well attended and help to deepen the worship experience for all. Topics have included; What do I do in Meeting for Worship?; How do I know when to speak during worship?; Different perspectives on membership in the society of Friends; and How do I discern the Light Within? We held two sessions using the worship sharing format focused on gifts, with the queries; What are my gifts?; and What are the gifts of others in my Meeting? We have also had the benefit of visiting Friends as resource speakers. Larry Ingle spoke on "Early Friends and the Light Within", and Carol and John Stoneburner spoke on "Quakers and Cultural Reform in the 19th and 20th Century". In March Peter Blood and Annie Patterson led a sing-a-long benefit performance from their new "Rise Again" songbook, and also did a separate lecture on Quaker Spirituality.

We are blessed to have continuing strong leadership for our program for children and youth. The seasonal events that draw in many families from our wider community are one of the most significant forms of outreach that we do. Our Christmas play this year was "Prison Angel" written by two women of the meeting. It helped the children and adults learn the story of Elizabeth Fry. The children also enjoyed donating the money raised from their performance for a local homeless shelter. There is a large youth group which participates in SAYF events and is active locally. Some of the older teens in this group are ready to take on leadership roles within SAYF. They helped host a very successful SAYF retreat in Celo in March 2015 and plan to do the same this year. Several students from the Arthur Morgan School (a Quaker School)

participate in SAYF events and occasionally come to worship. The school is instrumental in helping host the SAYF retreat in Celo.

Concern for peace and justice issues, locally and throughout the world, is of continued importance to Celo Friends. We have found that our best approach as a meeting is to support the efforts of individual Friends as they follow their leadings. In this manner we have reached out on a number of issues, and had the benefit of Friends sharing their experiences and concerns with us all. Feed-a-Child, a local interdenominational effort to reduce food insecurity among children in the public schools, is an ongoing focus of our meeting. Friends volunteer locally with Habitat for Humanity, and in the local schools. Many in our Meeting continue to be active in a local chapter of the NAACP and have supported their efforts locally and statewide. Friends marched and held vigil at the annual School of The Americas action. The Samburu or "Nurturing Knowledge" committee continues to be active and collaborates regularly with Kenyan Friends providing scholarship support for young women to pursue secondary education. We had a visit from David and Gladys Zarembka of the African Great Lakes Initiative, which helped us learn more about the history of conflicts in that region, where two of our members have gone to work in the past. A concern for undocumented youth in our local schools led to a letter writing campaign and fundraising to support college scholarships for undocumented students. We spent time creating a minute of concern for the situation in Palestine-Israel to bring to yearly meeting, and continue to try to raise awareness of the situation there. We hosted Lynn and Steve Newsom from Quaker House of Fayetteville who did a workshop for local youth entitled "Am I A Conscientious Objector?". Two Celo Friends represented SAYMA at the FWCC gathering in Mexico and also at the world plenary in Peru. One Friend traveled to the Mexican border in Arizona to work with migrants coming through the desert. A new initiative this year is Charity House, a cooperative effort among local churches to establish a resource center for homeless people in our area.

The Committee for Ministry and Care continues to prepare a query for each month. For several months our queries were focused on the testimonies, and our Friendly Eights discussions were coordinated on the same theme. A challenge for this year has been meeting the needs of some of our seniors who have health problems or can no longer drive. Two Friends share the effort to bring one elder to worship once each month. Another elder couple receives monthly visits for in-home worship "Parlor Meetings". As our membership ages, we want to find more ways to support our seniors. We welcomed one new member into our meeting this year. We continue to be active in death education, pre-planning and care of our cemetery. Our annual observance of "Day of the Dead" is always meaningful. We invited resource people to come tell us about "home funerals" as an option for after death care. We are concerned that many of our attenders have little awareness of, or connection to, SAYMA and are making a concerted effort to promote attendance at yearly meeting through financial scholarship.

We are grateful for our buildings and grounds and for the effort of Friends to create and maintain them. Twice a year we hold a day-long work day to do periodic maintenance and cleaning. The camaraderie of working together is a bonus in addition to the work that gets done.

At Celo we are grateful to be part of a vibrant and active Meeting where we are all growing and learning together in the Light.

Charleston Friends Meeting

1. *What challenges have arisen this year, how have we as a group met them, and how has that changed us?*

Making meeting hospitable to visitors until they are comfortable with Quaker worship is a challenge. This year we have had modest success, for several new folks became frequent attenders. We are happy that people choose to visit. We want to help visitors find a spiritual home in hopes that some will make our meeting theirs.

Greenbrier Valley Worship Group (under our care) was struggling for a while with distance, time, and declining attendance. Lately, participants are showing renewed interest, or are perhaps less busy. We hold them in the Light as we find ourselves with sometimes-sparse attendance and an uncertain future.

We know that our community is transient, like life itself. As many of us age and retire from outward work, we increasingly think about how and where we will live as our physical and mental capabilities change. Some envision lives nearer children and grandchildren, none of whom live in West Virginia. Over the next few years it is likely that Friends who built this meeting will no longer be physically among us. We pray that we can support newcomers in their spiritual journeys as our own journeys near their conclusions. Charleston Friends Meeting will increasingly rely on new and younger hands in coming years.

2. *How has the meeting lived the testimonies this year?*

Stewardship. An important part of our business this year has been discernment over our charitable portfolio. Prior to adopting our budget, we examined our donations and resources, and considered queries focused on corporate charitable giving. Because we have decided not to pursue having a meetinghouse, we are slowly spending down that endowment. We have generally given priority to activities within our immediate community, but we also support wider Quaker organizations. This year we were able to offer financial support for an event at a children's advocacy group where West Virginia American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) staff were honored. The strong AFSC presence in West Virginia is the most visible manifestation of Quakers in the state.

Outreach. With the support of the community organization whose building we use on Sundays, Charleston now has a permanent sign announcing its presence. Several committed Friends write periodically for the Quaker blog *Reaching for the Light* (<http://reaching4light.blogspot.com/>).

Two members were invited to participate in a Lenten Season series of talks at a local Episcopal church. They sketched the basics of Friends beliefs and practice and had a lively discussion with church members in attendance.

We continue to reach out to the wider Quaker community, both through participation in SAYMA and its committees and positions of responsibility, as well as with the AFSC, Friends Committee on National Legislation, and Bolivian Quaker Educational Fund.

Peace and social concerns. Friends continue to express concern over the situation in the Middle East, both the military struggles in Syria and Iraq that have caused so much loss of life, and the festering problem of Israel-Palestine. We have been especially concerned with the Syrian refugee crisis and the welcome refugees should receive if they come to our community.

Attachment K: State of the Meeting Reports

Meeting members have participated in community activities to show support and tolerance. In the fall we heard a report from an AFSC staff member who had been part of a delegation to Gaza and the West Bank. We were not encouraged about the prospects for a peaceful and just resolution to the longstanding differences. We continue to seek unity about the best way Friends (and particularly SAYMA Friends) can minister to the various sides of the long-running conflict.

As in previous years, we have prepared and served special meals at a local men's shelter and women's shelter. The latter, near Christmas, allows us to celebrate the season with a few gifts to the little ones who are in shelter with their mothers. New attenders have brought and implemented new ideas for local service work, such as contributing suitcases to a mission for use by foster children in their all-too-frequent moves.

3. *What have been your disappointments?*

At the end of worship, we set aside time for sharing joys and sorrows. This year Friends more often shared the need to hold people in the Light because of illness or personal distress than in previous years. For Friends, such intercessory prayer is strengthened by the certainty that the Ocean of Light is infinite, only waiting for an invitation to flow where it is needed.

We have learned how difficult it is to maintain a blog on Quaker spirituality.

4. *What have been your joys?*

Worship. Charleston Friends Meeting continues to have small, often quiet Meetings for Worship, but even when an entire hour is spent in silence, Friends feel the Divine Presence. Gifts of ministry among members and attenders are evident. Those moved to speak often find themselves saying what others were thinking. Monthly readings of queries focus our thoughts and often result in heartfelt response in worship.

Occasionally, we vary our form of worship, with Worship Sharing on fifth Sundays when they occur. This year's worship sharing themes have included imprisonment, memory and remembrance, and preparing for Meeting. Sometimes we change our place of worship, this year worshipping once in the woods above Charleston, and once at an historic church associated with Booker T. Washington.

We continue biweekly Bible study, reading the Gospel of Luke for most of the year. As part of Bible study, we tried a meditative approach called *lectio divina*, which rewarded us with deeper understanding of the verses we read and of how other Friends responded to them.

Modest growth. We have continued to work on outreach through discussion and communication via social media. There is some indication that social media is helping seekers find us, particularly the blog. Several individuals who began attending learned of us that way. We've also welcomed two new members, both through the Greenbrier Valley Friends Worship Group.

Inter-visitation. We visited Greenbrier Valley Friends Worship Group (under our care) in October, where we conducted a clearness committee and shared a potluck in a beautiful home in the mountains.

This year's West Virginia Fall Gathering of Quakers from the four yearly meetings near West Virginia (and isolated Friends) focused on Quaker testimonies. One session was a discussion of

Douglas Gwyn's *A Sustainable Life*. Friends came back from the gathering refreshed and looking forward to next year's event.

Community. Grandchildren and expected grandchildren keep many of us busy visiting, taking pictures, and delighting in milestones, from a confirmatory ultrasound to the first days of school. We rejoice in new lives and growing families.

A small group like ours ought to be able to do Friendly business with dispatch. That we don't is less an indication of disorganization than that we genuinely enjoy being present with one another as we try to discern the work God would have us do. Meetings for Business are well attended.

Meeting provides opportunities for fellowship and spiritual growth during second hour after worship and at other times during the week. In adult discussion we concluded reading Woolman's essays and studied a Pendle Hill pamphlet on Margaret Fell. The meeting-related book club continues to read and discuss a wide range of fiction and nonfiction, from *All the Light we Cannot See* to *Follow the River*, with many interesting stops in between.

Nearly any excuse will cause us to have a potluck.

Giving thanks. We continue to rejoice in our good fortune to live a Friendly community in relatively peaceful times. We know many are not so blessed.

Chattanooga Friends Meeting

As we review 2015, we are a bit surprised at all that has transpired. Week after week, it seemed like the same steady meeting. In retrospect, much has happened.

Our new Outreach Committee accomplished several goals during the year:

- A booth at the Tennessee Valley Pride event was set up and staffed in October.
- A Newcomer's Handbook was written for distribution to interested visitors
- The meeting approved use of the meetinghouse for monthly Neighborhood Association meetings. Most had never been inside before these meetings.
- The CFM website (<http://chattanoogafriendsmeeting.org>) was completely revamped and is kept current.
- Our FaceBook page is routinely updated.

Both of these forms of outreach have been very successful in helping interested folks find us.

A spring and fall workday to clean and maintain the meetinghouse were well-attended and much work completed. A generous monetary gift was given in April to start a roofing fund. A second gift was soon added to this to give us a good start.

We purchased a PC projector for second-hour sessions and have enjoyed several very active second hour sessions using "Quaker Speak" videos followed by group discussion. We have been enriched by a number of members/attenders presenting their fascinating personal spiritual journeys.

We held a lighter second hour session in October when we carved and decorated pumpkins just for fun.

A visiting speaker, Chip Poston spoke on "Voices from Israel and Palestine" in November.

A freshly retired member became a student at the School of the Spirit and is encouraged by a committee of supporters who meet with him every six weeks.

CFM had a slightly larger attendance to meetings in 2015. We were pleased to welcome one new member who transferred from a Florida meeting and two new regular attenders who moved here from a meeting in Ohio. Although we have no children, we continue to hope for them and welcome all young visitors. Much to our pleasure, several visitors have become regular attenders.

We experienced two deaths: a member's much-loved partner for whom we hosted a large memorial service and the dear grandfather of a young member. We had no weddings or births.

Several women's meetings were held and much enjoyed by those attending.

The SAYMA Ministry & Nurture semi-annual traveling meeting was hosted at CFM in November.

We worked on improving good Quaker process during meetings for business by reminding ourselves several times that this is a meeting for worship and so we should act accordingly. This mindfulness has carried over into our weekly meetings for worship and improved the tone and depth of these as well.

The vision and mission statements diligently developed by an ad hoc committee were approved in March:

Chattanooga Friends Meeting Mission Statement

- *Nurture individual experience and understanding of the Inward Light and each person's spiritual journey based on historic Quaker faith*
- *Cultivate personal, meeting, and wider community awareness and active practice of core Quaker values including simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, stewardship, and speaking truth to power*

Chattanooga Friends Meeting Vision Statement

- *We maintain a growing, dynamic, diverse, and fiscally thriving meeting that works together in implementing the mission of Chattanooga Friends Meeting. We inform, transform, and inspire our members, attenders, neighbors, and our community near and far to practice core Quaker values. The following are some ways we accomplish this vision:*
- *We worship together weekly in the manner of unprogrammed Friends.*
- *We conduct a regular monthly meeting for business in the manner of the Religious Society of Friends.*
- *We provide various learning opportunities appropriate to meet the diverse need of the Meeting's participants.*
- *We regularly conduct Second Hour discussions about topics related to core Quaker values.*
- *We communicate effectively among ourselves.*
- *We maintain active participation in Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting & Association (SAYMA).*

- *We hold clearness committees to support individuals and groups in making decisions.*
- *We maintain active outreach strategies.*
- *We examine and question our own assumptions and perceptions so we can conduct ourselves more consistently with our Quaker values.*
- *We actively work for fairness and justice for all.*
- *We actively work for good stewardship of the Earth.*

Our budget was minimal; however, we were fortunate to exceed the expected income during the year. New guidelines were established regarding how to use the excess funds with 50% going into the roofing fund and the balance to be distributed to charitable organizations:

50% to local groups

25% to wider Quaker organizations

25% to international organizations

A contribution of \$1,000 from our Helping Fund was made to the Salvation Army who stepped in to assist during a local housing crisis when dozens of families were abruptly made homeless when the city closed down an old motel.

We are looking forward to 2016 because we feel some happy anticipation that members and attenders are becoming more engaged with the meeting. Our meeting is important to us and we want to see it thrive.

Columbia Friends Meeting

In 2015 the spirit led us to focus on many areas. support of our members and attenders, outreach to the greater community, and improvement of our grounds and building to make our Meeting House more welcoming and earth friendly. We welcomed increased participation among many of our members.

The spirit led us in several ways to support the spiritual development of our Meeting. Our young friends continued to help with preparing food for the homeless once a month and were enriched by the programs offered throughout the year such as a trip to the zoo. Representatives of our Meeting also visited the Aiken Worship Group several times during the year to support that smaller group. Second hour programs included discussions of spiritual journeys, SAYMA queries, spirituality as life changes, a talk by our local Iman, the Israel/Palestine conflict, Encyclical chanting, green burials, mass incarceration, AVP anniversary celebration, writings by Ursula Leguin and John Woolman, addiction, forgiveness, labyrinth celebration, work in Tanzania, report from a young friend about her trip to Maine and a Lakota Native American reservation, compassionate speech, members and attendees, report regarding the plight of elephants in circuses, the death penalty, following the leading of the spirit, child abuse prevention and the FCNL report. The First Day School programs focused on Bible readings and discussions of weighty Friends throughout history.

We celebrated the beauty of the earth with many new plantings in the Green Space including an orchard. Friends invested their time, plants and creativity into developing a long term design to encourage Meeting activities around cultivating natural resources. The garden continues to be a source of joy to all who see it and enjoy its bounty. Walking trails are being created in spaces around the Meeting House and Green Space. Trees and bushes have been planted around the labyrinth to increase the quality of the meditation enjoyed there. Several friends were able to attend the first permaculture course offered in Columbia and 3 were given scholarships by the

Meeting. We anticipate that those who attended will be able to contribute their knowledge to the design of the Green Space.

Columbia Friends hosted several successful AVP workshops which were enthusiastically supported by attendees. The Summer Camp for young friends was a tremendous success. One of the most moving events of the year was the Hiroshima Day Vigil in memory of Rebecca Rogers, a longtime peace activist and former clerk of Columbia Friends Meeting who died December 2014. The vigil included performances by the SC Philharmonic string quartet. We hosted the SC Christian Action Council meeting and received a spiritual blessing by our participation in that event. We also hosted the Palmetto Friends Gathering and were so happy to have a youth group from North Carolina join in our workshops. Several Friends as well as two young friends were able to attend the Friends General Conference in North Carolina as well as attend the SAYMA yearly meeting. A young friend was sponsored to attend a Friends camp in Maine and time in the Pine Ridge reservation, an Oglala Lakota Native American reservation in South Dakota. We were able to provide financial aid to a student from South Sudan attending Benedict College. We continued our support of Harvest Hope Food Bank and Food not Bombs.

Our committees such as Building and Grounds, Peace and Social Concerns, Book Club discussion group, Ministry and Nurture and the First Day School Program continued to thrive.

Cookeville Friends Meeting

Despite our sense of ebbing at times, Spirit is still present in our close knit group. With our aging and decline come more respective needs, which can be a burden at times but is also a blessing. As we recognize our interdependence, individual isolation decreases. We still have occasional visitors and even some younger frequent attenders, all of which we thoroughly appreciate.

On August 31st we lost a founding member in Susie Black. This bereavement seems especially keen when we think of the loss of two other strong female members over the years. With wonderful support from SAY MA Friends, we celebrated Susie's life and spirit on October 9th. It may not have been a traditional Quaker Memorial service, but Spirit moved strongly among those gathered.

Even though our energy is low, we have felt that vital spark of Sprit move us to many small actions such as:

- taxing ourselves 10cents a gallon on gas use to encourage conservation and using the money collected to help our struggling planet.
- “adopting” a roadway in Cookeville and collecting trash 4 times a year there.
- engaging in Cookeville Gay Pride and the interdenominational picnic again.
- participating in a new interfaith initiative at the local university and conversing about our faith with lots of different people for an entire morning.
- joining Tennessee Interfaith Power and Light for organizational and moral support.
- inviting David Zarembka of the African Great Lakes Peace Team Initiative to talk with us about the persecution of gays in Kenya and Uganda.
- organizing our fourth annual Peace Project contest for the local high schools, and enjoying the best attendance yet at the award ceremony.
- continuing to support each other in our individual testimonies such as prison visitation, witness at the local high school on alternatives to the military, animal welfare, environmental action groups, and others.

Crossville Friends Meeting

This year has been one of weathering many personal challenges—medically, financially, employment-wise—and we’ve done our best to provide solidarity and comfort to each other through these times. Holding each other in the Light has been an ongoing reality, as we also hold concern for peoples across our planet facing the same challenges as ours and many far more catastrophic, due to human and/or natural crises. So, too, we share concern for the Earth itself, and its continuing degradation.

In our striving to live out of the testimonies, we use dishes we wash after our coffee/snack times rather than use paper plates and disposable cups. We listen carefully to each person who shares from his or her journey, and seek to make gracious responses. We studied Philip Gulley’s “Living the Quaker Way” to help new attenders get a better grasp of the Quaker use of testimonies and to stimulate discussion and review. Medical issues and conflicts which kept some from being able to consistently attend Meeting have delayed commencement of our study of SAYMA Faith and Practice. We will be adding a book to our library each year.

Our members all come from some distance away, so we do not see each other during the week. Our post-Meeting discussion period around coffee and snacks, as well as our monthly pitch-in following business meeting, gives us an opportunity of keep abreast of developments in our lives. We have flexibility, being such a small meeting, and we’ve bent to insure everyone’s best chances of attending our monthly Meetings for Business and potlucks.

Differences in education are not a criterion for speaking, nor is economic status a factor, for all of us participate fully in worship as well as the social and business aspects of our activities, bringing our range of gifts to bear.

Several members/attenders continue their involvement in stewardship and service on the local level: Interfaith Power and Light, Obed Watershed Association, Cumberland Trails, Boy Scouts (at local and district levels), and World without Anger (Nepal).

We had several visitors during the year, but none have become regular attenders. Just one of us managed to attend Yearly Meetings gatherings. After some absence, we have resumed participation in SAYMA Representatives Meetings. And as acknowledged in our previous Report, many of us are in states of flux that do not create the settled conditions from which to do serious outreach. This is a matter for further reflection.

We pray for guidance and clarity, to discern what we can and cannot do, and accept that this is just where we are. Our meeting has contributed much to the Yearly Meeting in years past, and hope to continue to do so.

John F. Strain, Clerk

Greenville Friends Meeting

We have continued to grow in the life of the Spirit during the past year. We have had a number of visitors, many of whom have found us through our website via the Quaker Cloud. The adults enjoy hearing from the children about their Sunday lessons each time we gather; their capable teachers include parents, who provide instructive ideas for all.

Despite these strengths, we continue to discern a need to attract additional attenders/members to our Meeting, given its relatively small size (we have 6-8 weekly attenders). We are also keeping the daughter of one of our attenders in the Light as she struggles with significant health issues.

Attachment K: State of the Meeting Reports

GMM's Activities

Some of us are active with the Palmetto Friends Gathering (PFG), some with SAYMA, some with FGC. That means that each of us has some type of connection to the larger Quaker community.

As noted above, GMM representatives continue to attend programs organized by the Palmetto Friends Gathering (PFG) and SAYMA. We anticipate that this will continue throughout 2016.

We provided a scholarship for one of our members attend Friends General Conference in Cullowhee, North Carolina this past summer. She had an enriching experience, the highlights of which she subsequently shared with the rest of us.

We are grateful for the gracious support and hospitality that are provided to us by the Chaplin's Office at Furman University.

GMM's Giving Opportunities

One of our members is a representative on the Board of Directors of the Greenville Area Interfaith Hospitality Network (a local group focusing on the needs of homeless families that we regularly support with our donations). We also continue to support Quaker House (located in Fayetteville, North Carolina) and several local charities. We remain eager to identify other giving opportunities as they present themselves.

GMM's Fellowship

GMM continues to rejoice in mutual fellowship. We enjoy socializing after Meeting. We have a potluck lunch after Meeting on the first Sunday of each month. One member wrote about the issue of community ecology, and then led a talk about that topic at the Rise of Meeting one Sunday. Furthermore, another member has kindly hosted gatherings at his home on Friday evenings for spiritual fellowship and discernment.

We pray for opportunities to serve God and our community, and to continue to find joy in the Light and among ourselves.

Huntsville Area Friends Meeting

HAFM faced the challenge of finding a new meeting location this year. The search mobilized all of us in a true team-building activity. We honored all meeting needs and listened to everyone's considerations and reflections. As of Nov. 1st, our new meeting home, Holy Cross-St. Christopher Episcopal Church, allows us to interact with a small, but diverse, congregation, which is a gift to HAFM. We have participated in their monthly project of making sandwiches for a local agency serving the homeless, a great joy for us. We look forward to growing connections with Holy Cross's members.

We experience joy in our community and spiritual growth together. Our connections with one another have grown in the last year through our search for a new meeting space and saying farewell to our previous HAFM home. We have also grown spiritually closer through community-building second hours, especially one on envisioning what we wish for HAFM; a Fall HAFM retreat on sharing our stories; social gatherings like potlucks at members' homes; and

Attachment K: State of the Meeting Reports

educational second hours (especially when we invited Anis Salib who spoke to us about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict). Connections to other Friends is also important through SAYMA and other Quaker gatherings.

Because of a second hour on membership, one long time attender felt moved to schedule a clearness committee and become a Friend, which was a joy to all of us. Sadly, we have had several losses this year. One dear friend passed away; one moved permanently and two temporarily relocated; and one "laid down" her membership. Our small community feels these losses. We miss those who cannot worship physically with us, but who continue in relationship to us in ways that add to our whole (our member out West, for example).

We particularly mourn the loss of our dear friend Felix Godwin. We joined for a Meeting with Attention to Grieving and Celebrating to share our joy in knowing Felix and being part of his life and he ours, and to grieve our loss. We hold Hethalyn Godwin in the Light and hope to support her now and continually.

We have had the great joy of welcoming a few visitors this year and friends who can join us more frequently this year.

We feel challenged by the smallness of our group. We welcome all who visit HAFM or reach out to us. Many of us engage in community outreach as part of our jobs or avocations; this keeps Quakers connected to our larger Huntsville community. We have divided energies. Some feel motivated to focus on outreach and growing our membership. Others wish to welcome new members, but feel a need to minister to our own spiritual needs and that of our beloved community during this time of change for HAFM. We look forward to continued growth among us as we open to the experiences and ways of a new year.

Memphis Friends Meeting

At a recent Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, a rosebush was welcomed to the Memphis Friends Meeting. This welcoming marked the death of one member's mother, the most recent caretaker of the rosebush, and acknowledged the legacy of the rosebush's previous caretaker, a founding member of Memphis Friends Meeting who used to ask Friends for help in tending her rose garden. The rosebush is now planted in its new home in the meetinghouse's front yard, awaiting the Memphis spring and summer when its blooms will be a testimony of the nurture we find in our community.

Because of our communal work in 2015, we expectantly await other blooms.

Our circle has grown this year, with many visitors and new attenders in their twenties and thirties. Visitors often leave with copies of our newsletter and our new Quaker history booklet. Our children's community has shifted to incorporate younger children as well, with the older children stepping into mentoring roles and helping to introduce the younger children to Quaker play and practice. Often newcomers remark on the spiritual vitality of our meeting. We feel that vitality, too. Our meetinghouse has become a busy place - with our own meetings for worship, business, committee work, learning, singing, care, clean-up, and fellowship as well as regular meetings of other groups.

Because we are grounded in the richness of our silence, the busy-ness of our meeting does not tire us but instead invigorates us. One meeting treasured by many this year was a mini-retreat on our spiritual gifts, led by Arkansas Friend Marianne Lockhart. We have been pleased that our meetinghouse's guest room has been well used by Marianne and other sojourning Friends. We

Attachment K: State of the Meeting Reports

have enjoyed making our entryway more welcoming and we continue to explore how to improve the accessibility of our meetinghouse.

We have enjoyed journeying together outside our meetinghouse, too, joining the city's Pride parade, standing together on local and national causes, attending the performances of individual Friends, and carpooling across the long state of Tennessee to SAYMA. Friends have expressed our testimonies on intimate, local, national, and international issues – taking stands, for example, to support victims of domestic violence, to protect our local public spaces, to protest police violence in our community, to remain engaged in capital punishment discussions, and to call for international diplomacy.

One new group making use of our meetinghouse is the Memphis Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP). The meeting's yearning for AVP in Memphis was brought to the surface early in 2015 when Friends David Zarembka and Gladys Kamonya came to tell us about their Friends Peace Teams work that uses AVP and other techniques in the Great Lakes Region of Central Africa. Soon thereafter way opened for AVP work in Memphis' juvenile justice facilities. Memphis Friends quickly approved serving as a fiscal umbrella group for Memphis AVP, and in October 2015 a beginner AVP workshop was held at the meetinghouse, with one member serving as a facilitator and seven other members or attenders participating. The lead facilitator was South Carolina Friend Rubye Braye.

Many Friends suffered losses this year and asked the meeting for support for themselves and for one another. In response we held one another in the light, listening and sitting in silent worship together. The Ministry and Nurture Committee also fostered conversations on grief and stayed in regular contact with Friends in trouble. At a standing-room-only Meeting for Learning, a Friend who is also a counselor mapped a therapeutic model of grief and also made room for deep worship sharing.

Towards the end of 2015, we reflected on our budgeted expenditures that were exceeding our contributions. We reviewed the budgeted Quaker causes that mean so much to us. We reviewed our budgeted local causes that are also dear to us. We spent time appreciating the labor that many Friends have given to these local causes and to the care of the meetinghouse. We considered pruning our budget, but instead we stepped back. Like experienced gardeners, we waited to see what would happen.

At a recent Meeting for Learning, Friends were asked what the meeting means to them as individuals. The answers were varied but harmonious: "Contemplation, inspiration, celebration," "Friendship, connections," "Home," "Sanctuary," "Insurance," "Resting in the arms of the testimonies," "Place to replenish and reinforce values." As the Meeting for Learning drew to a close, there was a sense that a first draft of the State of the Meeting Report had been spoken.

*Seasoned in January 2016 in Meeting for Learning and in Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business and in March 2016 in Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business.
Approved at March 2016 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business.*

Nashville Friends Meeting

2015 has been a year of turning outward for Nashville Friends Meeting. At the end of 2014, we struggled with finding clearness on using our meeting space as a shelter for the homeless. Early in 2015, we welcomed Shane Claiborne of The Simple Way community in Philadelphia as the speaker at our Regional Gathering. We found that the combination of our discernment about inviting Shane, the preparation for his arrival, and his message to us helped us find unity around

Attachment K: State of the Meeting Reports

providing shelter and we partnered with The Little Pantry That Could to provide space for a warming shelter at the meeting house on very cold nights. We have learned much about ourselves and our community through this ministry.

In response to the shooting at a church in Charleston, SC in the summer, we discerned that we needed to know the churches in our neighborhood better, so a few Friends from our Peace and Social concerns committee have occasionally gone to worship at Hosea Community Church and St. Luke Missionary Baptist Church that are both just one block from Nashville Friends Meeting, not with any agenda other than to worship together.

Our meetings for worship continue to nourish our lives, both individually and as a spiritual community, whether or not there are any messages spoken. We recognize that our worship can be deep and powerful without a single word spoken out loud, because we sense that divine whisper that enters by the ear of the soul. On third sundays we begin our worship a little early and go straight from worship into the business meeting without interrupting the spirit of worship. This gives our business meeting more spiritual depth and continues engage our community more fully. In 2014 we started minuting our answer to a query as a body to begin the business part of the worship. We continued that practice in 2015, but found we needed to make some adjustments to the schedule to keep the business meeting from running too late, which was causing a strain for our Children's Ed volunteers. The process of examining ourselves as a meeting has strengthened our sense of community.

We welcomed one new member, Jenny Knott, in 2015. We also sadly bid farewell to Charlotte Oliver who moved to Denver, and to Roan and Shawna Marion as they moved to San Antonio at the end of the year, but celebrated at the birth of Trillium Marion, born in San Antonio. In August we celebrated the marriage under our care of Megan Potter, who grew up in Nashville Friends Meeting, to Kristin Busch. Their new last name is Potterbusch. We also celebrated the chaplaincy board certification of Cody Case, whose chaplaincy ministry is under our care.

We continue to care for our meeting community and our local community in various ways. We continue to have a number of ongoing support committees, as well as occasional clearness committees, and quarterly meeting for healing. We also helped facilitate a clearness committee for someone outside the meeting who was familiar with Parker Palmer's work, which was a deep and enriching time. In response to a leading to create a listening project, we developed Friends Talk/Friends Listen and trained seven people in active/reflective listening. We have dealt with a number of crises that have drawn us together and created great tenderness and compassion in our community, and occasionally worn us pretty thin.

Our Children's Ed program continues to be strong. We have a number of teens in the program and in 2015 the Children's Ed committee, in consultation with Ministry & Counsel, came up with a Coming-of-Age process to facilitate the transition from First Day School to participation in Meeting for Worship. We have more teens participating in the SAYF program now so that we occasionally have to rent a larger vehicle. We are also looking forward to hosting a SAYF retreat in January of 2016, our first since 2009.

Our Adult Education committee experimented with combining the worship sharing hour before meeting with Second Hour after meeting and scheduling various activities during those two time slots, but ended up going back to doing worship sharing before meeting and Second Hour afterwards. Our book discussion group finished reading Lloyd Lee Wilson's "Essays on the Quaker Vision of Gospel Order" and began reading Douglas Gwyn's "A Sustainable Life:

Quaker Faith and Practice in the Renewal of Creation". The book discussion group has continued to feed our meeting spiritually.

Our Alternatives to Violence Committee continues to be very active. Not only did they hold three workshops and one mini-workshop this year, but they also trained 6 new AVP facilitators.

During the year we decided to try to have snacks after meeting each Sunday. The added workload for our Hospitality and Special Events committee resulted in us splitting the committee, so that Hospitality is responsible for the snacks, as well as arranging greeters each Sunday, and Special Events handles less-frequent events such as the yearly Fall Retreat, which we held again this year at Montgomery Bell State Park, the Christmas Eve program, and other events that may require special hospitality arrangements.

Our House & Grounds committee continues to be a good steward of our property. This year we put down new flooring and began preparations to improve our classroom space. The committee has also been exploring ways to adjust the acoustics in the meeting room to help those who cannot hear well, and also how to be more energy-efficient.

In addition to its work in arranging the warming shelters, our Peace & Social Concerns committee has been active in a number of areas, including raising awareness of issues regarding Israel-Palestine. The committee has taken to heart SAYMA's minute on Israel-Palestine from this year's annual session. The committee also continues to be active with the Nashville Public Schools' HERO tutoring program for preschool through 12th grade. We planted a peace pole on our grounds on the summer solstice.

At the end of last year we felt that we had been turning inward to build a strong foundation to soon nurture fruit. This year has indeed been fruitful.

Oxford Friends Meeting

The Oxford meeting remains a very, very small meeting. We welcomed two new attenders, one of whom recently joined the Ole Miss faculty. To our sorrow one of our attenders died during 2015. We continue to have a core group of 6-7 members and faithful attenders. We continue the practice of ending each meeting with a group hug. We are a tight, happy little band.

The meeting has encountered an unusual challenge that arose during the fall of 2015. An isolated Friend requested membership in the Oxford Quaker Meeting even though he lives at a distance and will be unable to participate in the life of the meeting. He does not wish to join with Quaker meetings closer to his place of residence, largely on theological grounds, and he has particular interest in finding a congenial meeting in Mississippi, where he grew up and where he hopes to retire in a few years. To date the meeting has not seen its way clear to making him a member, though we continue to maintain contact with him, have assured him we will continue to give his request our prayerful consideration, and have assured him we will be glad to welcome him as an attender and potential member when he moves into our vicinity. The SAYMA Ministry and Nurture Committee has given us helpful and thoughtful advice as we dealt with this request.

We continue to have the good fortune to meet at the Powerhouse community arts center. It is a comfortable and welcoming environment that provides the feel of a church. We appreciate the generosity of the Powerhouse who provides its space to the meeting without charge.

Attachment K: State of the Meeting Reports

Leadership: During 2014 there was no change in the meeting's officers.

Starkville Monthly Meeting: We continue to correspond with the Starkville Meeting via email although we have not visited them in the last year.

Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting

We have had a peaceful year among us. We have looked with spiritual sensitivity toward what we are called to do. Our Meeting for Worship and Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business have met our needs for spiritual depth. We feel safe to be vulnerable in our sharing of personal concerns and we find support from one another. M&C, noting the nourishing deep silence of our worship with little vocal ministry and the richness of ministry in the Afterword, are considering whether Friends resist following leadings to speak in the regular time of worship to wait for the Afterword. We have clarified that ministering in the Afterword should only come from having felt a leading in worship that one has not been able to offer in the time allowed.

New people have reported feeling welcomed during meeting and after.

We have many ways we stay connected as a community – mid-week Meeting for Worship, monthly movies with discussions following, Experiment with Light, Spiritual Friendship Circles, programs following worship time and a spiritual autobiography workshop. We cared for and had touching memorial services for three members who died this year; Tony Bing Phil Neal and Brett White. A Communications Committee is discerning ways in which electronic and non-electronic means might increase connection for both new and long time attenders.

Adult Education and Spiritual Nurture Committee has provided many fulfilling and well-attended forums on world concerns, personal sharings and Quaker faith, practice and history led by members and by those from outside the Meeting.

Our first day school and monthly teen discussion groups continue well. Their regular sharing of first day activities is a joy.

Our grounds become more beautiful every year. Our efforts to maintain safety and this ever-growing beauty have increased due to river flooding.

The Building Committee nurtures the spiritual life of SVFM through its stewardship of the building, making our Meetinghouse a secure and comfortable space in which to worship and conduct the Meeting's business. They seek to exercise this responsibility within the understanding of the simplicity testimony and our limited financial resources. The Committee decided to pursue an energy audit to find ways to reduce our carbon footprint.

We are working diligently to meet our financial goals which modestly exceed our income. We are becoming more intentional about the organizations to which we contribute. After much deep discussion, we created an ad hoc committee to discern how best to steward, from both a practical and spiritual vantage point, major gifts given to the Meeting.

Testifying to equality, our Meeting has responded to a hateful homophobic action that took place at the home of one of our attenders by organizing, as a first step, an educational forum on the intersection of spirituality, sexuality and freedom of choice that may be taken to the wider community.

Affirming integrity, we are challenged to follow through on a minute we passed on Palestine-Israel.

Attachment K: State of the Meeting Reports

We continue to visit with our group home neighbors at Christmas time. We could connect more with nearby Quaker meetings and with other denominations. We have members who keep us connected with SAYMA , FWCC, Quaker House, Quaker Voluntary Service and Quaker Earthcare Witness.

The Peace and Social Concerns committee has been active in many areas this year. They helped meet local needs for food, clothing, and heat through Meeting support of 211-First Call for Help and Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministries. They continue to focus on the difficult process of fostering peace and justice between Israelis and Palestinians. A January showing of the film, "The Color of Fear" was an important continuation in helping our community to look at racism. Earthcare is receiving more of our attention than in past years, thanks to one of our members who works with Quaker Earthcare Witness. We are looking into creating a network with other "green" faith communities in the coming year, studying how we can reduce energy use in our Meeting House, and how we can obtain more of our electricity from renewable sources.

We are a stable, growing and healthy Meeting and seek to stay open to leadings to move into new areas of growth.

West Knoxville Friends Meeting

We are learning to accept and love each other for who we are, people with both strengths and weaknesses. This kindness to ourselves and others has nurtured our spiritual growth and energized our meeting to do more as a community. While we have rejoiced in what it has helped accomplish it has also made it easier for us to recognize our problems and work toward solutions. This is a source of joy, which leads us to "walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one".

As a community we are learning better ways to work together. Whenever we failed to use Quaker process during our work to choose and install a HVAC system for our meetinghouse in 2014, we found that we stumbled without the Light to guide us. Early in 2015, our meeting had a second hour to acknowledge the resulting bruises and deeper pains this had caused. We used guidelines from a Pendle Hill clerking workshop to help us learn what good committee work requires and how to support the work our committees do for us. Larry Ingle's comments on the need to appreciate the seasoning that goes into committee recommendations (SAF, Fall 2014) rang true for us. As we enjoy the reduced utility bills and environmental responsibility, we also benefit from the lessons it provided for committee work and for dialogue with each other.

Our committees have served our meeting well this year. Hospitality has seen that we were nourished with healthy, delicious foods, that respected all our different dietary needs (vegan, vegetarian, gluten free and omnivore). No hunger pangs to make us grouchy during second hour and business meeting discussions! Our religious education committee expanded its work beyond the care of our young friends to quarterly adventures for adults to explore our faith heritage and its meaning in our lives. These quarterly gatherings, led by a new and younger member, supplement the weekly Quaker reading and discussion group, which itself has more attenders than in previous years. Our electronic communications committee has successfully implemented an email discussion forum, in addition to an email announcement service. Together these have helped keep us in touch in spite of the physical distances between us.

With three attenders becoming members and two couples requesting clearness committees for marriage, our meeting found that we have work to do in responding promptly in setting up these

Attachment K: State of the Meeting Reports

clearness committees. We acknowledge this problem and appreciate both the patience of our members and attenders, as well as the strong love for our meeting, which gives people the strength to hold our committees responsible. We have benefited from this combination of patience and speaking truth, along with the ability to listen to each other, in our business meetings. The spiritual gift of holding our meeting in the Light during these sessions has worked wonders.

We are in the process of examining our individual privileges which many others in our society do not share. This is a step toward becoming allies to those who suffer racial and economic injustice. We have been able to do something tangible by serving quarterly as a helper church for the Family Promise program for homeless families in our community. We also have a number of people who write letters monthly to government officials, attend rallies and provide music to promote environmental and social justice, and we financially support Compassionate Ministries Uganda.

This does not begin to cover all the work of our committees and of our members and attenders to care for our world and for each other. What this does hopefully convey is the growing love in our fellowship which leads us to gather in silence, to listen for “that of God” which grows in our joint seeking, and to find the wisdom and strength to follow the leadings we have received and tested in community.