

SAYMA MEETINGS AND WORSHIP GROUPS

Aiken Worship Group	South Carolina	(803) 640-9650
Asheville Friends Meeting	North Carolina	(828) 423-0714
Athens Friends Meeting	Georgia	(706) 309-0310
Atlanta Friends Meeting	Georgia	(404) 377-2474
Berea Friends Meeting	Kentucky	(859) 344-0406
Big Stone Gap Worship Group		(276) 546-5884 suekobak@roadrunner.com
Birmingham Friends Meeting	Alabama	(205) 592-0570
Boone Friends Meeting	North Carolina	(828) 263-0001
Brevard Friends Meeting	North Carolina	(828) 698-2862
Canton Worship Group	Georgia	(770) 720-4669
Celo Monthly Meeting	Burnsville NC	(828) 675-4456
Charleston Friends Meeting	West Virginia	(304) 756-3033
Chattanooga Friends Meeting	Tennessee	(423) 629-2580
Columbia Friends Meeting	South Carolina	(803) 780-4197
Cookeville Monthly Meeting	Tennessee	(931) 268-2592, (931) 268-9889
Crossville Friends Meeting	Tennessee	(931) 484-9033
Foxfire Friends Meeting of Holston Valley	Johnson City TN	(423) 202-8661
Greenbriar Valley Worship Group	Lewisburg, WV	(304)832-6020 wd.bouldin@gmail.com
Greenville Friends Meeting	South Carolina	(864) 246-6852
Huntsville Area Friends Meeting	Alabama	(931) 484-9033
Macon Worship Group.	Georgia	(478) 227-8892 maconquakers@gmail.com
Memphis Friends Meeting	Tennessee	mfm@memphisfriendsmeeting.com
Nashville Friends Meeting	Tennessee	(615) 329-2640
Oxford Quaker Meeting	Mississippi	(662) 473-0230
Sevier County Worship Group	Sevierville TN	(865) 453-0130
Sewanee Worship Group	Tennessee	(931) 598-5031
Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting	Black Mountain NC	(828) 669-0832
West Knoxville Friends Meeting	Knoxville TN	(865) 694-0036

SAYMA

106 Wax Myrtle Ct
Savannah, GA 31419

SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN FRIEND

Winter

The newsletter of

2015

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Sayma

Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting & Association

John Woolman and Me

John Woolman has been looking over my shoulder for the past 45 years. Sometimes his spiritual presence has directed me. As often, I have ignored his spirit to my ultimate discomfort. That discomfort has caused me to wonder if he ever lost his equanimity as I have. His writings suggest not.

Forty-six years ago, at my second or third Quaker Meeting in La Jolla, California, Gretchen Rudnick thrust John Woolman's Journal in my hands and declared, "You must read this!" I did and it changed my life.

Returning to Atlanta, I embedded myself in the Friends Meeting. As the Vietnam War progressed, I became more aware of Woolman's protests against paying for war. First, I donated one half of my university salary to the meeting to use for its social concerns, primarily draft counseling.

With the return of the withheld taxes I traveled to England and climbed Pendle Hill where I felt Fox's vision of light overcoming darkness. Returning, I experienced a strong leading to retire from my tenured position and let the way open. At the time, in my resignation letter, I said that I was going to north Georgia to start an environmentally aware community. The true reason why was that I was reducing my taxable income. That reason was too fresh to explain. Way did open to lead a life of varied service in various Quaker capacities as well as in my community.

Through these years I have refused to willingly pay at least one half of the income tax. At times I have lived

simply below the taxable level. At other times I have carried out a lively correspondence with the IRS.

Recently, I have been lead to reread the journal again, particularly the sections on paying the taxes for the French and Indian War. While I remembered the impact on me at the time, I had forgotten the details. In spite of Friends much more weighty than he, Woolman ". . . **could not see that their example was a sufficient reason for me to do so, while I believed that the spirit of Truth required of me as an individual to suffer patiently the distress of goods rather than pay actively.**" Likewise, my witness against paying for war has placed me outside of most Friends.

Woolman dates his action on his concern to April 1748, when the Pennsylvania Assembly took up the request for money for defense. He was allowed to address the Assembly many of which were not Friends. He pointed out that God was their protector: "*May it with gratitude be ever remembered how remarkable we have been preserved in peace and tranquillity for more than fifty years: no invasion by foreign enemies, and the treaties of peace with the natives, wisely began by our proprietor William Penn, preserved inviolable to this day.*" (While Pennsylvania experienced this tranquility, the more northern colonies and Europe had fought King William's War, Queen Anne's War and King George's War from 1690 to 1748.)

The final French and Indian War began over the massacre of French soldiers near Fort Duesquaine (Pittsburgh today), with the greenhorn George Washington complicit.

As described by Woolman, Pennsylvania was instructed to send taxes to England to support the British troops protecting the frontier. Militia was called up to rescue Fort William Henry in New York. In November 1755, a petition was presented to the Assembly signed by 20 “weighty Friends” including Woolman. This statement is what I have stood for for 45 years. It was very clear that the intent of the Friends stated here and the Epistle from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of December 1755, that Friends willingly pay taxes for the community’s needs

The journal follows this petition with a history of Friends suffering in England and a falling away from this testimony by some contemporary Friends, “. . . **having their religion chiefly by education and not being enough acquainted with that cross which crucifies to the world, do manifest a temper distinguishable from that of an entire trust in God.**”

Some paid the tax. Some did not. Some wanted the payers to be examined and the suggestion was brought before a group of weighty Friends including Woolman. The committee felt that public discussion at the yearly meeting was not proper because of the “diversity of sentiments.”

As was the custom, Woolman was told to house soldiers. He refused payment and eventually explained to the officer why. His reason coincided with his description of a conversation with a Friend, who was a justice of the peace, about paying for war. He laid out the opposing views that have lasted until today. To pay or not to pay even if not to pay means suffering: **“But when from a clear understanding of the case we are really uneasy with the application of money, and in the spirit of meekness suffer distress to be made on our goods rather than to pay actively, this joined with an upright uniform life may tend to put men athinking about their own public conduct.”**

In the spring of 1755, Woolman was again signatory to an Epistle from the Yearly Meeting which expressed the admonition that “. . . *let us constantly endeavour to have*

our minds sufficiently disentangled from the surfeiting cares of this life and redeemed from the love of this world that no earthly possessions nor enjoyments may bias our judgments or turn us from that resignation and entire trust in God to which his blessing is most surely annexed. . . .”

Woolman was a 24-7 Quaker in constant struggle with himself over right thinking and expecting the Truth to be his Guide. He describes a spiritual experience of waking up to a light in his darkened bedroom and hearing an inner voice speaking “Certain Evidence of Divine Truth.”

His concerns and writings about slavery are well-known inferring “. . . **that burden will grow heavier and heavier till times change in a way disagreeable to us,**” possibly predicting a future war. He was not a “lone wolf” but consulted with his elders and traveled with like-minded Friends obtaining traveling minutes from his meeting for his visits to other meetings as well as to the Indians and to England. On this trip he recognized the poor treatment of sailors, particularly young, apprentice sailors and the stage coach horses and the boys who must ride them.

His constant desire for more equitable distribution of wealth is evident throughout his writings. What he called “superfluities” and the consequences of their holdings is best expressed in his *Plea for the Poor*: **“Oh that we who declare against wars and acknowledge our trust to be in God only, may walk in the Light and therein examine our foundation and motives in holding great estates! May we look upon our treasures and the furniture of our houses and the garments in which we array ourselves and try whether the seeds of war have any nourishment in these our possessions or not.”**

Gentle reminders such as this constantly challenge me and the rest of us to look to our own lives that we may, as George Fox said, “. . . be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come.”
—Perry Treadwell, *Atlanta MM*

Nashville Friends Meeting To Host Shane Claiborne

We are proud to announce that on **March 7, 2015** we are hosting nationally recognized author and speaker **Shane Claiborne** (<http://www.thesimpleway.org/shane>).

Shane and NFM prefer NOT to limit the event on the basis of a paid registration; however, it is important to note that our main worship space only holds **85 people, so interested parties need to email NOW to reserve a place and indicate housing needs.**

The event will run from **9am-4pm** with worship, a keynote, meal, and smaller-group afternoon breakout sharing/workshop sessions visited by Shane. Child care will be provided, and one of the afternoon sessions will be a young Friends group.

Send inquiries to davesmyers@gmail.com.--David Myers, on behalf of NFM Ministry and Counsel

LOUISVILLE, KY, MONTHLY MEETING HOSTS THE 16TH WHITE PRIVILEGE CONFERENCE March 11-14, 2015--*Save The Date!*

As a member of Louisville Friends Meeting's hosting support team and the local conference organizing committee, I want to urge SAYMA Friends—and your like-minded community/ social justice allies—to consider attending the White Privilege Conference (WPC) coming up in March in Louisville. It's less than a days' drive from anywhere in SAYMA!

Have you heard about the WPC? It is a national gathering of 2,000+ students, educators, health and social workers, activists, faith groups, labor, and community people of all ages, colors and descriptions from across the country. Participants will come together in a safe, collaborative environment to examine challenging, intersecting issues of privilege-- in race, gender, sexuality, class, disability, etc. — and the different ways in which we all experience and are affected by them. The conference has literally scores of different workshops, plenary speakers, unstructured caucuses, and arts and media on all aspects of “unearned advantage” and the lack of it. The focus is on recognizing it and then responding to it in our own lives and working to dismantle it in the institutions of our society.

The theme for WPC16-Louisville is *Resistance, Action, Courage, & Equity: The South Leading the Way*. This is only the second time it has been south of the Mason Dixon line. Two of the four keynotes—Loretta Ross and Chris Crass live and work in the South. For more general information, background on the concept of privilege and a look at the draft WPC schedule, workshops, institutes and speakers, go to: whiteprivilegeconference.com; Facebook at *got privilege?*, or Twitter at *#got privilege?*

FGC is a co-sponsor of the WPC. There has been increasing Quaker involvement-- last year 80 Friends attended from across the country. This is an opportunity to share experiences, insights and strategies from across the South and the nation. We will have time together to

help each other understand and witness to our equality testimony more fully. With the events in Ferguson and across the nation this year, what could be a more timely and appropriate topic to provide F/friends—young and old-- with the personal awareness and tools to engage in changing our lives and our society?

Along those lines, word has spread up here of SAYMA's terrific teen program. I encourage you to consider WPC attendance for them as a tremendous learning opportunity. There are special rates and specific workshops and institute tracks for middle school, high school and university students. Scattergood Friends School and Guilford College and Public High schools sent students last year. Our Louisville public schools and the University will be sending students as well.

At FGC's website, you can find more information, testimonials, and details about discounted (~55%!) registration (for Quakers only): <http://www.fgcquaker.org/events/2015-white-privilege-conference-wpc16>. FGC will also channel requests for housing assistance to us. We are a small meeting, but will do our best to find beds--or at least Meetinghouse floor space—primarily for those for whom hotel costs might prevent their attendance. We want you to come. We look forward to welcoming and sharing with you, and all Friends nationwide.

Please sign up there immediately if you have any interest and want to know more. **Registration opened January 1**, but you must sign up at FGC's website for the special codes for registration discounts. Do not go to the WPC website registration until you have that code.

If you have Louisville-specific questions or would be willing to help spread the word in your local Meeting, and/or in your local school, peace and justice organizations, etc, please contact me -- *Chris Harmer (colonel221@yahoo.com)*

CONTRIBUTIONS SOUGHT

The SAFriend is YOUR newsletter! All contributions are welcomed, needed, and will be put to use! Please send digital submissions for the spring SAFriend to Beth Ensign: h.e.ensign@gmail.com by **April 1, 2015**.

Many thanks to all of those Friends who regularly contribute thoughts, writings, and suggestions. I could not do this without you.

NEWS OF MEETINGS

Adapted from meeting minutes, mid August 2014--mid January, 2015.

Athens: The meeting lost its rented space and is currently taking place in a Friend's home while searching for a new location. Became a member of Charter for Compassion. Donations to: Nancy Travis Children's Project, Economic Justice Coalition's Christmas Project, Family Connection, Jubilee Partners. Organizing meeting's 30 year anniversary celebration.

Atlanta: Women's Weekend at Ferguson cabins. Friends marched in October's Gay Pride parade. 46 Atlanta Friends attended 2014 yearly meeting. Special meeting for worship to welcome new babies. Will host February FGC Nurturing Ministries Committee.

Birmingham: Royal worship group has been laid down due to lack of interest among members of the Royal community. *—submitted by Sara Rose.*

Berea: Meeting is participating in Apostle Build project. Peace and Social Concerns committee is working with Kentuckians for the Commonwealth Death Penalty Abolition Action Team. Will host SAYMA representative meeting March 6-8. One second hour each month devoted to letter writing.

Celo: SAYMA child protection policy approved. Clearness committee appointed to support Friend in Samburu Project and funding approved. Adult literacy project completed. Updated SAYMA directory information. Friends approved support of The Challenge of Climate Change. January 3 baby blessing. Celo Friends now have 4 groups of Friendly Eights. All of us shared our Spiritual Journeys first. Next we are starting on the Testimonies. It seems to be something we need to do every several years to understand our Friends. *(submitted by Jane Goldthwait)*

Charleston: Some meeting Friends have started a blog on the subject of living as a Quaker. <http://reaching4light.blogspot.com/> Hosted Christmas

breakfast at Sojourner's Shelter and sponsored a family for Covenant House Christmas gift program. Began in December preparations for SAYMA state of the meeting report.

Columbia: Peace and Social Concerns committee worked on Hiroshima vigil. Ministry and Nurture committee continues oversight of Aiken worship group. December Alternatives to Violence training. Vehicle charging station installed. Friends are installing a labyrinth. Received a gift of property adjacent to meeting.

Cookeville: Friends continue work with prison ministry, peace project, renewable energy. Two active care committees for meeting members. Peace Project is preparing for school essay contest. Road cleanup.

Memphis: Check out the meeting website: www.Memphisfriendsmeeting.org. They have an excellent newsletter. Friends approved adding meeting to statement on Facing the Challenge of Climate Change. Fall garden included watermelons, pumpkins, squash, lima and green beans. Began moving investments to Friends Fiduciary which avoids fossil fuel investments. Zen meditation group uses meetinghouse every Monday evening. Pax Christi begins using meetinghouse.

West Knoxville Meeting: financial books reviewed with success. Friends approved TVA energy assessment and replacement of the meetinghouse heating/cooling system. Meeting joined Tennessee Interfaith and Promise. The meeting is investigating solar power options.

—Compiled by Errol Hess. errol@kitenet.net

To make sure that your meeting's news is included in this compilation, please add Errol to your newsletter's e-mail distribution list, and he will make sure to highlight events from your meeting, too.



Celo Friends Meeting First Day School had a really great time working on a Christmas Play this year which we performed on Dec 13, 2014 on the stage we put together every year at our meeting house. We chose a story, "Amahl and the Night Visitors." We had 10 children and 3 musicians participate for the play. The story was so beautiful and songs were so moving. Three shepherds danced with live music. It was so fun! This group worked very hard since October. They are elementary school age, 7-10 years old, so it was challenging just to stay focused! We have raised money for local reconciliation house, and we took donated food and money afterwards. We celebrated with cast party and watched a real film which is an opera! You can watch our play [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SyXo2VmBapK).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SyXo2VmBapK>

NOTES FROM PEACE AND SOCIAL CONCERNS

The new, exciting thing we have learned of is Celo Meeting's Samburu Education Project, which aims to transform the lives of girls growing up in the Samburu tribe of northern Kenya, a tribe of nomadic, pastoral people (*ed note: see Fall 2014 SA Friend for a report from Celo Meeting on this project*). We urge Friends to learn more about this project which has so engaged Celo Meeting by going to the website

changeinsights.wordpress.com. A minute urging all our Meetings to join Celo in this effort might be prepared for our Yearly Meeting sessions in June.

Our Committee would like to hear from SAYMA Friends who are close to Quaker Earthcare Witness. Might there be a minute forthcoming from that direction?--*Bob Welsh, Chair*

At SAYMA 2014, The Peace and Social Concerns committee was charged with writing a new minute about how we could relieve Palestinian suffering, a minute that we could unite behind.

This process will begin with a discernment process led by Deborah First on Saturday, Feb 28, at Asheville Friends Meeting. Deborah is a seasoned Friend who has close ties with Israel/Palestine - as the clerk of Friends of Ramallah Friends Meeting and as a long serving member on the Executive Board of Neve Shalom/Wahat al Salam, an intentional village of Jews and Palestinians living together in Israel. All are welcomed. Additional info will be sent to meetings soon.

What follows is Deb's letter. It sets the tone for our upcoming meeting—*Florence Yaffe*

A journey that began 20 years ago with the decision to spend time walking in the pathways of St. Paul has continued to shape my life. The journey has opened and nourished my spirit and taken layers of dust from my eyes.

A chance encounter with an elderly man, who over twenty years has become more elderly and a closer friend, led us to visit the village of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam (the Oasis of Peace), specifically to spend time in their Primary School. The village sits on the Green Line in Israel and, as the love child of Father Bruno Hussar and his prayers, the village lives his vision of equal numbers of Israeli-Jewish and Israeli-Palestinian families living, learning and working together in equality and mutual respect.

As a Friend, I wanted to know how it was that the beloved community was there before my eyes, children and their parents committed to living the answer to the conflict and yet I hadn't seen it before. Not a utopia, but a living laboratory where everything that is outside comes in and then gets worked on, a place committed to the equality and mutual respect of two peoples, descendants of Abraham both committed to the very same piece of land, nobody taking his or her marbles and "going away."

When Sunday came, Ted and I found the only Friends Meeting in the region and drove there with the familiar anticipation that we might be privileged to meet the Spirit, to be in blessed communion with fellow Friends. Meeting for Worship in Ramallah is like and unlike Meeting anywhere. The small space fills with those who, like individual heart cells, are compelled to come together in order to beat as one. We worshipped, went for lunch and ice cream on the street and returned to Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam.

What is different is the way in which the occupation of the streets of Ramallah, and indeed the whole West Bank, affects both the worship and what comes after. To be the underclass in your own land, to be afraid of those who patrol the streets, to know that everywhere there are cameras filming you and

that your only real sanctuary is within the Meeting, in some ways connects us with early Friends who found themselves against the powers and principalities of their time. Our worship could not be separated from the suffering outside, and yet worship in Ramallah is actually never political but centered in the Spirit.

Over the years, and our increasing engagement with both the Ramallah Friends Meeting and Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam, we have come to know the ordinary people, the laborers in the vineyards who share their wages, the Israelis and Palestinians who work together, across the borders and beyond their fears. They create a sense of right-ordered living, of tikkun olam, to the small piece of land on which they all stand. They are many. When they speak of justice and peace, they speak as people who know the cost of such talk; they have lost work, health, home, family, land, security and some have lost their life.

For all these years, I have taken care to learn the roots of the conflict among and between Israelis and Palestinians (Christians and Muslims), to let love and worry grow in me while I met with peace workers and settlers, with imams, pastors and rabbis, with teachers and doctors and shopkeepers, with children and retirees and with farmers and mechanics. I have spent time on both sides of the divide, serving the boards of Wahat al-Salam/Neve Shalom in Israel and the Friends of Ramallah Friends Meeting in Palestine. And over and over I have responded to the call to "tell both sides of the story." I have learned that the question isn't "what is the other side" of the story, but "what is it we are called to do to live more mercifully, more justly, more peacefully....to be agents of transformation where there is fear, hopelessness, suffering.

During these twenty years I have learned over and over of the ever-present privilege provided by my "international" status, moving freely around the occupied territories, going to Gaza, driving from Israel to Palestine and back, never fearing that I might be detained for longer than an hour, never being told that I couldn't go where I had planned. And when we had a

medical emergency, I had no fear that I wouldn't be allowed to seek necessary hospital care in the hospital best suited to the need.

And yet, today, it is as if I have seen the privilege in clear sharp lines as never before. While internationals come to be in solidarity with the Palestinian farmers during olive harvest, offering the protection from the settler violence and being extra hands for the impossibly limited hours that the IDF gives farmers to go into their fields, there is the reality that the Palestinians may not travel to assist others, may not get into a van and go to visit friends in Israel, may not even go to Jerusalem or to Gaza, not to visit, to worship nor to be with family.

Then, the internationals like myself return to our own native lands and give reports because the Palestinians cannot leave their own country with any assurance that they will be allowed to return or that their property will be there when they do. So, they cannot even be the experts present to report on their own conditions and sense of things...and Friends, like everyone else, begin to look toward other internationals for a true sense of how things are and what needs to be done. Those we come to love, to be in solidarity with, to learn from and grow with slowly but surely become people we make choices for, places we will make decisions about.

Returning to Meeting for Worship, to the mystery of truths slowly revealed, present to all who worship in spirit together, we find that we can be saved from our own hubris. We find that together we all may yet be bringers of peace and healers of nations. And that brings me back to Meeting for Worship in 2014 in Ramallah.

The quality of worship here is deeper these days than I had experienced before, due in part to the increased pressure of the occupation and because the Meeting itself is centered as a loving and worshipping community. It is drawing in seekers like butterflies to flowers. Singing, praying, worshipping in silence, on our feet, on our knees, Friends from six countries,

drawn together by the Spirit to the old stone Meetinghouse in Ramallah to see what the Spirit would make of us this day, led to acknowledge the reality of the Palestine in which this Meeting is located and faithful to the meaning of claiming commitment to living as Friends in this region, to be the hands and feet of the Spirit that guides, informs, comforts, challenges.

I am led to call out to Friends to be open to the leading of the Spirit in matters of Israel and Palestine. It is not enough to be still and quiet in the face of suffering, not in Germany, not in Rwanda, not in the Confederate South, not in Palestine/Israel. It can be given to us to be instruments of reconciliation, to be listeners to stories that are not ours but which are true, to be present to the suffering and to be humble enough to believe that there isn't one answer out there that will "fix" everything.

It can also be given to us to speak for the world that we want to see for the grandchildren of Israelis and Palestinians. I am led to call out to Friends to recognize our part in sustaining the occupation of Palestine, often as a result of our own fears and memories of Holocaust. And yet, looking back never allows us to be open to way forward, and our own fears and histories are not those of "the other side" with its own history of loss and suffering.

I ask Friends, urgently, to join with one another in actively discerning our roles and our leadings to action -individually and corporately- in responding to the suffering and loss resulting from the occupation and its ongoing US legislative, financial support.

Deborah First, Fredonia Meeting (NYYM)
Clerk, Friends of Ramallah Friends Meeting
Board of Directors, American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam
December 2014

Other items of interest around our yearly meeting

Recently three Celo Friends went to Swannanoa Friends Meetinghouse to hear a speaker from Christian Peacemakers Team. She is placed in Palestine where teams accompany children to school, record activities around guard houses and incidents that happen such as arbitrary gate closures that prevent shepherders getting market to sell his products, etc. Their records are used by groups working for rights of Palestinians. I am not using the speaker's name because if I did, Israel might not let her back to the project in Palestine. Thanks to Swannanoa Meeting for setting this up and inviting us and Western North Carolinians for Peacemaking in the Middle East. --*Jane Goldthwait*

Susan Schmidt, member of Celo MM living in Beaufort, NC, will publish two new books February 1. Both poetry and novel will be available as paperback and ebook online

from Amazon and Barnes & Noble. Find links on www.susanschmidt.net

In *Salt Runs in My Blood*, she writes poems about moving from dark into light. Several have Quaker allusions, including Celo Friends Meeting. In poems as she observes birds, she learns her own survival strategies. Susan travels to New Zealand, Alaska, the West Indies, but stays South where she can name the trees and paddle year round.

Black Waters Black Waters is about a young woman who organizes her mountain community to oppose a proposed dam that will flood her family farm. In this young-adult novel set in the Virginia mountains, Susan writes about river and forest ecology, flyfishing, whitewater canoeing, bluegrass music, square dancing, chestnut trees, quilting, endangered species, cooking, and environmental organizing.

Patchwork Quilt: some thoughts on the nature of the struggle to avert climate change

What follows is a brief excerpt from Friend Bob McGahey's blog, *ecospirit*. Please visit the blog at <http://ecospirit.blogspot.com/> to read the complete post, which is a careful analysis of the recent climate summit in Lima, Peru.

Today, I read what a Friend on the [Quaker Earthcare Witness](#) listserv had written about the nature of working on the daunting issue of climate politics. In response to another woman's concerns for the right strategy and the most effective action, she said, "Just stick to your square in the quilt," not knowing what the final patchwork might be. We arrive at the task of our particular square through a process of following our leadings, and paying careful attention to signs, both inner and outer, that confirm or disconfirm our path. Like the evolutionary process itself, we self-correct as we go, using the feedback process from the entire context of our work. I must confess to being one who has been caught up in strategy and effectiveness, sometimes discounting or forgetting my leadings. This has meant a series of Advents in which I have had my faith in the rebirth of Light regularly challenged by the failure of climate geopolitics.

Looking at the global picture, the patchwork metaphor allows us to see that there is indeed a trend towards reducing CO2 emissions, a combination of regional carbon markets, commitments by individual nations, as well as hundreds of cities world-wide. The week of the People's Climate Rally, a World Bank director announced that there was a substantial surge in the world's carbon markets, now covering 25% of carbon emissions. During the Lima talks, representatives of these markets were hard at work making their interactions more efficient.

The image of a patchwork works well for the Paris accord. Instead of a grand design, with every nation agreeing to the same action, the last couple of years of patient work have led to a working agreement where each nation chooses its way forward. It's not a binding deal. But the biggest three emitters have provided momentum, with the US, China, and the EU promising the most at this point (still missing is a

commitment from the fourth largest emitter, India). Hopefully that will change by the end of March, which is when nations have agreed to present their "ante," the initial reduction promises. The hope is that an ongoing, regular cycle of review will provide the impetus to improve on these initial positions, an "ex-ante" process whereby the carbon reduction stakes can be raised, driven forward by peer pressure. The potential success of a Paris accord rests squarely on how well this process works.

The clerk of QEW, Roy Taylor, responded to the quilt square analogy, pointing out that the frame and backing for the global carbon reduction quilt is provided by the community. It is the group that stitches the backing and the borders of the quilt. Otherwise, you just have a bunch of squares lying around. This is the context provided by the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) process, and the whole idea of international cooperation. Many green activists, despairing over the slow progress made thus far, have given up on the frame and backing, retiring to their own piece of the quilt. That's okay, because the whole process goes forward regardless of our individual positions. But I want to affirm the international process, flawed as it is, because it provides the frame and backing for this emergent quilt.

Will it be finished in time to accomplish the goal of halting runaway climate change? This remains improbable, but we are all working within the web, and cannot step out and see the whole picture, including the Mystery which underlies the process, the ultimate frame and backing for our effort at planetary survival. My bedrock hope is in the power of that Mystery, which supports and transcends the individual conscience and the checkered endeavors of the global community.--Bob McGahey, *Celo Monthly Meeting*

Time to Register for Peacebuilders Camp!

Peacebuilders Camp registration has opened for 2015! Please help us spread the word.

Peacebuilders Camp is open to all middle schoolers! Session One (July 13-18) is for 11- and 12-year-olds. Session Two (July 20-25) is for 13- and 14-year-olds. Peacebuilders Camp operates on a sliding scale and strives to raise money to ensure that all campers can participate, no matter their family's financial situation.

[Click here to register!](http://www.peacebuilderscamp.org/registration/) <http://www.peacebuilderscamp.org/registration/>

Please join us for camp in 2015!

Jonah McDonald
Co-founder & Administrative Director

Peacebuilders Camp at Koinonia Farm is a unique overnight summer camp in rural south Georgia where youth ages 11 to 14 spend a week together learning how to work toward peace and justice. Campers enjoy farm life, play games and sports, go on field trips, learn about human rights, make new friends, and explore the stories of peacemakers past and present.