

Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association
State of the Yearly Meeting
Prepared June 2024

We come together for our annual retreat and sessions experiencing the anticipation of seeing one another as we travel from all over the Southern Appalachian region. The continuation of hybrid sessions and workshops demonstrates the width of our caring reach to those who cannot travel to join us.

We continue to face challenges as we strive to change and become breath of Spirit, as our theme this year has invited us to do. Many Friends work to further our goal of becoming a multicultural, welcoming, and inclusive yearly meeting. We find change to be a difficult process. We notice those Friends who are consistently faithful in accountability to this and other social justice concerns and those Friends who hold the Yearly Meeting in the Light. These efforts have kept us strong as we work toward transformation.

We have had some opportunities to visit among Friends including our first hybrid representative meeting in several years, visits by members of Ministry and Nurture Committee, gatherings of Young Adult Friends, SAYF and Junior Yearly Meeting retreats as well as visits by individuals. Those visits and in-person meetings have been rich and helpful. We encourage Friends to continue inter-visitation when opportunities arise.

In conclusion, the yearly meeting remains tentative as we struggle to change through our efforts to listen deeply and accept continuing revelation as we agree or disagree. We seek to continue the love and community we cherish even as we imperfectly understand the experiences and perspectives of others.

Sincerely,

The members of the Ministry and Nurture Committee

Joan Barnette, West Knoxville FM
Brenda Barrington, Columbia FM
Daryl Bergquist, SAYMA co-clerk, Birmingham FM
Annie Black, Cookeville FM
Wood Bouldin, Charleston FM Greenbrier WG
Rob Collins, Birmingham FM
Maggie Davies, Birmingham FM
Barbara Esther, clerk M&N, Asheville FM
Margaret Farmer, SAYMA co-clerk, Asheville FM
Diana Masso, Charleston FM
Adrian Mehr, Memphis FM
Lissa Place, Atlanta FM
Melissa Preast, West Knoxville FM