

**Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association  
53rd Annual Meeting, Virtual and Hybrid Setting  
Sixth Month, 14, 22, and 23, 2025**

**Saturday, June 14 (Session I - Virtual)**

**54-01 Opening Worship**

Friends met virtually for the first session of the 54th annual gathering of SAYMA, beginning with an extended period of worship at 2:00 pm Eastern on Saturday, June 14, 2025.

**54-02 Clerk's Welcome to SAYMA Body, June 2025**

Clerk Jennifer Dickie (Atlanta) welcomed Friends, noting those who are working behind the scenes to prepare business for today, including Margaret Farmer (Asheville), Assistant Clerk; Lissa Place (Atlanta), holding the Clerk in the light in person; Blake Burr (Memphis), Recording Clerk; Charlie Wilton (Berea), Web Manager; and all committee clerks.

She shared aloud the following welcome letter:

Welcome Friends.

It seems appropriate that we are gathered in this community today with the backdrop of a questionable celebration of the 250th anniversary of the establishment of the army by the 2nd continental congress in 1775. What better way for Friends, if we aren't in the streets protesting, to carry on with our worship and business as usual building community and focusing on repairing and transforming conflict where the world seems broken.

In reading the reports submitted by 6 of our wider Quaker organizations I am moved by the work of Friends in the world - standing in opposition to wars and genocide across the globe, grappling with immigration violence, structural racism and ongoing and new oppression within our own country. Friends are finding ways to build, strengthen, and support communities working for justice and peace including strengthening Quaker communities in a time of broad challenges to Spiritual life and in a world that seems broken.

Today we will hear from the finance committee and the nominating committee. We will be reminded by the treasurer to approach our discernment with the spirit of generosity and abundance. What does this look like for you? For us? in a world where there should be plenty for everyone, but there isn't enough because of the greed of a few. In a country

of plenty where migrants are being captured, jailed, and deported because of the false belief that there isn't enough to go around, where reparations for Indigenous and African American citizens is off the table because we refuse to accept responsibility for our past, what does a spirit of generosity and abundance look like in SAYMA?

I invite you to join me in listening for that of God/Spirit/Divine/Love in what rises today. Let us live into a Spirit of abundance and generosity for each other.

Jennifer Dickie  
SAYMA Presiding Clerk

#### **54-03 Roll Call ([Attachment A: Attendance Roster for Session I](#))**

Meeting attendees were asked to raise their hand as their meeting's name was called by the Administrative Assistant, Rob Collins (Birmingham). Ten meetings and worship groups were represented. (Note: Later in the afternoon, a member of an additional meeting joined the session.)

#### **54-04 Introductions of Visitors**

The Clerk invited visitors to be recognized. Visitors present were:

- Sarah Johnson, representing invited guest Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), who will be leading a workshop next week on FCNL and Friends Place
- Stuart Greene, of Patapsco Friends Meeting on Piscataway Land, who carries a leading to hold SAYMA in the light
- Mathilda Navias, of Rochester Monthly Meeting, who will be leading a plenary and a workshop next week

Associate Friends were also recognized:

- Christopher de Beer, associated through Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF)
- Chris Berg, formerly attending a SAYMA affiliated meeting and now living in Hendersonville, North Carolina
- Steve Olszewsky, of Swarthmore Friends Meeting, who is now living in Kentucky
- Rochelle Sjolseth, of Santa Cruz Friends Meeting, who is now living in Alabama

#### **54-05 Narrative Minutes Procedure**

The Clerk noted that as in Session II of the most recent SAYMA Representative Meeting, Friends will review and approve the minutes after each item, allowing worshipful silence as

needed while the Recording Clerk prepares the minutes for review. There is precedence for this process in Yearly Meeting annual sessions.

## **54-06 Guidance for Our Meeting**

The Clerk shared the following guidance for participants in Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. This guidance was initiated by former Co-clerks Daryl Bergquist (Birmingham) and Margaret Farmer (Asheville) and was recently revised with input from SAYMA's Ministry & Nurture Committee (M&N) and SAYMA's Racial Conflict Transformation Team (RCT), with additional editing assistance and guidance from Mathilda Navias:

### **On Listening**

- Hold the meeting in worship
- Look for and affirm that of God in yourself and others
- Listen in a spirit of continuing revelation
- Receive words spoken as you receive vocal ministry in meeting for worship

### **On Speaking**

- Wait for guidance from Spirit before speaking
- Wait to be recognized by the clerk before speaking and address your remarks to the clerk
- Raise your hand only after someone else has finished speaking
- Speak to the question at hand and be concise
- Speak only once to an issue unless there is a new revelation or the need for clarity
- Refrain from put-downs of self or others

### **On Discomfort and Harm**

- Experiencing discomfort is normal - Disagreement is ok - we recognize that of Spirit in one another even while we disagree
- Friends are encouraged to use words that are natural to them. Interpreting and understanding others' words is the responsibility of listeners. This is often called "listening in tongues"
- The clerk may intervene if a Friend is blaming others, questioning their truthfulness, attacking a person as opposed to what they said
- The clerk will reserve a time to address the harm as soon as possible, even in the moment

- If a concern doesn't get addressed at the moment, write it down and seek to resolve it between the parties or share with the clerk at a later time

#### **On Self Advocacy**

- Be open to receive assistance if someone notices that you are having trouble following this guidance
- Be open to assisting if you notice someone is having trouble following this guidance

#### **54-07 Agenda Review ([Attachment B: Agenda for Session I](#))**

The agenda for Session I was reviewed and adjusted as needed, with a first-session focus on establishment of needed committees, first readings of the nominating slate and the proposed budget, acceptance of reports, and several items from the Clerk's table. The agenda was accepted. A tentative list of the agenda items for each session will be available on the [sayma.org](http://sayma.org) web site.

**These minutes were read in the face of the meeting and were approved.**

#### **54-08 Appointment of Epistle Committee**

The Epistle Committee meets two or three times during the yearly meeting sessions to capture the essence of what happens throughout our time together. Two Friends in attendance at Session I indicated interest to serve on this Epistle Committee during Yearly Meeting 2025 - 54 - Barbara Esther (Asheville) and Rob Collins (Birmingham). Additional Friends in attendance next week may also be led to this work. A Friend encouraged a focus on racial justice content of the yearly meeting sessions within the epistle.

#### **54-09 Finance Reports - Treasurer's Report ([Attachment C: Treasurer's Report for Session I](#))**

Treasurer Daryl Bergquist (Birmingham) was unable to attend Session I. However, Assistant Treasurer Kendall Ivie (West Knoxville) read the report prepared by the Treasurer. He also highlighted the Treasurer's visual representation of our current and proposed budgets and our historical level of assessment contributions by monthly meetings. Of concern is that our personnel expenses have continued to rise, now making up approximately 90% of assessments.

A Friend noted that investments in racial justice are not reflected in these visual representations since those investments are currently supported through restricted donations. Friends agreed that future visualization presentations should include information about SAYMA's efforts related to racial justice.



The Assistant Treasurer explained that the visual representations do not reflect expenses and income related to yearly meeting annual sessions.

The Clerk asked that conversation about the visual representations be continued after the presentation of the other Finance Reports.

**The report was accepted after the presentation of all three Finance Reports.**

**54-10 Finance Reports - Finance Committee Clerk's Report ([Attachment D: Finance Committee Clerk's Report](#))**

The Finance Committee clerk, Karen Morris (Atlanta), presented the Finance clerk's report, noting that the Finance Committee expects SAYMA to end the year "barely in the black." To date, requests for grant funding from other yearly meetings have not yielded any new income streams. As noted in the report, the proposed budget is a deficit-budget that was distributed as a draft to monthly meetings in May for discussion. Friends are encouraged to join the lunch-hour hybrid discussion on the budget on June 21, 2025. The Zoom link for this discussion will be distributed via email to all registered attendees (those experiencing difficulty accessing the link may contact [saymaoffice@sayma.org](mailto:saymaoffice@sayma.org)).

**The report was accepted after the presentation of all three Finance Reports.**

**54-11 Finance Reports - First Reading of the Proposed Budget ([Attachment E: Proposed Budget v.1.0](#))**

The Finance Committee clerk then presented the proposed budget for the upcoming year beginning October 1, 2025, with that budget to be considered for approval at a later session during Yearly Meeting 2025 - 54. The following points were highlighted by the Finance Committee clerk (below are written notes provided by the Finance Committee clerk):

The role of the Finance Committee is to estimate how and where we can spend money according to the wishes and needs of SAYMA. Budgets are projections. Budgets can show us where the life of Spirit is. SAYMA as a whole body determines where to put our wealth, our spiritual energy. The Finance Committee can only budget what we have.

- Line 3: Income AA -2025 = \$84,655 vs. AC-2026 income = \$88,600 - projected \$4,000 more.
- Lines 5 - 25 in the AC column show the projected assessments by monthly Meetings - if we didn't hear from a MM then we used a previous year amount.

If you know that the figure shown for your Meeting for FY 2026 is incorrect, please let the Treasurer know. ([saymatreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:saymatreasurer@gmail.com))

- Line 38 Expenses AC 2026 column = \$106 204. The difference between income and expenses is projected to be Net of minus \$17,604. This number is also shown at the bottom on line 124. You may notice the similarity between the FY 24 projected Net of minus \$17,134 and FY 2026. In 2024, we still had Undesignated surplus funds that were used to offset the negative net. For FY 2026, we have depleted the undesignated funds, so we will likely need to use the Reserve line 132 to help us make up the difference. Or we can hope for contributions to the General Fund by Meetings and individuals, which is better for the overall health of SAYMA. Reserve funds for most organizations are to use for a time that the organisation ceases operations to handle debts.
- Payroll expenses line 53 are projected to increase by about \$7,000 since FY 2024. Reasons for this increase include: hiring a professional bookkeeper to assist the treasurers with the accounting software, a staff merit increase in salary, cost of living increases, and an increase in the cost of payroll accounting software services.
- Lines 63- 81 in the AC column show projected committee expenses Some committees have \$200 for their line item, which is the expenses for zoom for their committee meetings. The finance committee, line 66, shows \$1000, which is budgeted for a financial review - a stipulation in the Finance Handbook when the Treasurer changes, which happened last year.
- Line 82 - travel reimbursements, in the AC column, is twice as much as the projection for FY 2025 in the AB column. In fact, travel expenses have increased dramatically for Wider Quaker Organization reps and other SAYMA folks who travel for the YM, and will probably exceed the FY 2025 budgeted amount of \$2500. Travel expenses include the conference fee and lodging costs in addition to plane, car, or bus travel.
- Lines 85-91- Set aside annual allotments are the same as previous years and will only be put in those accounts toward the end of the FY if the budget can allow the expense.
- Lines 94-102 Yearly Meeting Gathering is expected to pay for itself. In FY 2024, the expenses were less than budgeted.
- Lines 103-106 Junior Yearly Meeting expenses cover the entire year, in addition to YM sessions. They are projecting less gatherings for FY 2026.
- Lines 107-110 Quaker Membership organizations and annual contributions. As for FY 2024 and 2025, the membership and contributions are budgeted at \$625 each for FGC and FWCC and will be restored to the regular \$1250 each if funds are available at the end of the year (EOY). Funds were available in 2024 because of substantial donations to the General Fund.

- Line 111 Other WQO Annual Contributions. As for FY 2024 and 2025, the total contribution combined amount for other WQOs budgeted at \$0 and will be restored to a combined amount of \$3,000 if funds are available at the end of the year (EOY). Funds were available in 2024 because of substantial donations to the General Fund.
- Line 132 Ideally, the Reserve Funds are kept in reserve by an organization in case an organization ceases to exist. However, in the coming year, SAYMA may need to draw from this line item to address deficit-budget concerns.

The Assistant Treasurer noted that general contributions in 2024 were significantly high, reflecting generosity and abundance, and thus the 2025 budget was not confronted with the same deficit-budget scenario of the proposed budget for 2026. The second Treasurer's Report accompanying the second reading of the proposed budget will include additional reports providing a more nuanced overview of 2025 financial activity of SAYMA.

Several Friends shared that their meetings had discussed the proposed budget. In one case, discernment within the local meeting led to an increase in that meeting's assessment commitment. The Clerk reminded Friends that those worshipping on June 15 with their monthly meetings will have an opportunity to gather input from Friends for consideration at the second reading of the proposed budget next week.

The Clerk held space for Friends to sit with the deficit-budget scenario while holding abundance and generosity in our hearts.

**The proposed budget was accepted in conjunction with the other two Finance Reports.**

#### **54-12 Spotlight on Friends Committee on National Legislation**

In an amendment to the agenda, Sarah Johnson (FCNL) shared with Friends information about FCNL and Friends Place (formerly William Penn House). Friends Place is an FCNL program for radical hospitality, which offers 40 beds and has hosted a wide range of groups. Currently Friends Place is hosting Continuing Revolution, now in its second year. More information is available online at <https://www.friendsplacedc.org/>

**These minutes were read in the face of the meeting and were approved.** Following a brief break, Session I continued.

#### **54-13 Naming Committee Report**

The ad-hoc Naming Committee formed during Yearly Meeting 2024 to identify prospective members of the Nominating Committee has never been laid down because the Nominating

Committee positions were not completely filled by the close of Yearly Meeting 2024 - 53 or in the ensuing months. Chris Berg (Associate Member), serving as clerk of the Naming Committee, presented a brief report. Margaret Farmer (Asheville) has expressed a willingness to serve on the Nominating Committee for the period of 2025-2027.

**54-13-01** Margaret Farmer (Asheville) is approved to serve on the Nominating Committee for the period of 2025-2027. **Friends approved.**

**The verbal report was accepted.**

**These minutes were read in the face of the meeting and were approved.**

**54-14 Nominating Committee - First Reading of the Slate ([Attachment F: Nominating Committee Report](#))**

Nominating Committee clerk Kendall Ivie (West Knoxville) presented the Nominating Committee's report, including summaries of open positions and the nominating slate as of now. The open positions document on the web site is a dynamic document that will continue to change; it will continue to be updated.

Friends were asked to sit with the nominating slate being brought forth by the Nominating Committee, with that slate to be revisited at a later session. The following slate was presented, with some corrections made to reflect input at later sessions of YM 2025 - 54:

- **Rob Collins (Birmingham) as the new Archivist (2025-2027)** - Rob serves as archivist for his monthly meeting.
- **Blake Burr (Memphis) as a new member of Ministry & Nurture (2025-2027)** - Blake has served on Ministry & Nurture for her monthly meeting.
- **Margaret Farmer (Asheville) as a new member of Ministry & Nurture (2025-2027)** - Margaret has served in the past on SAYMA's Ministry & Nurture.
- **Kendall Ivie (West Knoxville) as a new member of the Finance Committee (2025-2027)** - Kendall brings to the committee his long experience as SAYMA Treasurer.
- **Karen Morris (Atlanta) as a continuing member of the Finance Committee (2025-2026)** - Karen currently serves as clerk of the committee.
- **Tribal Raine (Paul Cuffee) as a continuing member of the Finance Committee (2025-2027)** - Tribal currently serves as a member of the committee.
- **Charlie Wilton (Berea) as the continuing clerk of the WQO Allocations**

**Committee (2025-2027)** - Charlie currently serves as clerk of the committee.

- **Geeta McGahey (Celo) as a continuing member of the WQO Allocations Committee (2025-2027)** - Geeta currently serves as a member of the committee.
- **Melissa Preast (West Knoxville) as a continuing member of the Personnel Committee (2025-2027)** - Melissa currently serves as a member of the committee.
- **Jennifer Killen (Associate) as a member of the Personnel Committee by virtue of her role as SAYF Supervisor** - Jennifer currently serves as a member of the committee.
- **Jennifer Killen (Associate) as clerk of the SAYF Steering Committee (2025-2027)** - Jennifer currently serves as a member of the committee.
- **Beth Myers (Associate) as a continuing member of the SAYF Steering Committee (2025-2027)** - Beth currently serves as a member of the committee.
- **Julia Hudson (Celo) as a new member of the SAYF Steering Committee (2025-2027)** - Julia is a former SAYFer, SAYF Nurturer, and Nurturer Clerk.
- **Asa Kramer-Dickie (Atlanta) as a continuing member of the SAYF Steering Committee (2025-2026)** - Asa is a former SAYFer and SAYF Nurturer who currently serves as a member of the committee.
- **Stoph Hallward (Atlanta) as a new member of the SAYF Steering Committee (2025-2027)** - Stoph has been active with the SAYF community for four years, with three SAYF-aged children who are planning to be at the annual sessions retreat.
- **Emma Yockey (Nashville) as a new member of the SAYF Steering Committee (2025-2027)** - Emma is a former SAYFer and SAYF Nurturer.
- **Danielle Capillo (Berea) as a new member of the SAYF Steering Committee (2025-2027)** - Danielle has been active with the SAYF community for many years, and two of her children are currently participating in SAYF.
- **Jennifer Dickie (Atlanta) as a continuing member of the SAYF Support Committee (2025-2027)** - Jennifer currently serves as a member of the committee.
- **Lee Ann Swarm (West Knoxville) as a continuing member of the SAYF Support Committee (2025-2027)** - Lee Ann currently serves as a member of the committee.
- **Rose Black (Cookeville) as a continuing member of the JYM Support Committee (2025-2027)** - Rose currently serves as a member of the committee.
- **Lee Ann Swarm (West Knoxville) as a continuing member of the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee (2025-2027)** - Lee Ann currently serves as a member of the committee. Her focus is on adult programming.
- **Braden Mills (Berea) as a new member of the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee (2025-2027)** - Braden is a Young Adult Friend who has been active in his

monthly meeting and in the yearly meeting. This will be his first committee role. His role will be as co-registrar.

- **Judy Geary (Associate) as a continuing member of the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee (2025-2027)** - Judy currently serves as a member of the committee. Her dual focus areas will be the bookstore and layout editing.
- **Kim Saderholm (Berea) as a continuing member of the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee (2025-2027)** - Kim currently serves as a member of the committee. Her focus is on on-site coordination.
- **Kendall Ivie (West Knoxville) as a continuing member of the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee** - Kendall currently serves as a member of the committee. He will continue in the role as liaison to the Finance Committee.
- **Annie Black (Cookeville) as a continuing member of the Web Manager Support Committee (2025-2027)** - Annie currently serves as a member of the committee.
- **Susan Phelan (Huntsville) as a continuing member of the Web Manager Support Committee (2025-2027)** - Susan currently serves as a member of the committee.
- **Jane Hiles (Birmingham) as a continuing SAYMA representative for Friends Committee on National Legislation (2025-2028)** - Jane currently serves in this role.
- **Alison Mawle (Atlanta) as a new SAYMA representative for Friends World Committee for Consultation (2025-2028)** - Alison recently attended the FWCC World Plenary Meeting (WPM) in South Africa virtually.
- **Star Smith (Paul Cuffee) as a new SAYMA representative for Friends World Committee for Consultation (2025-2028)** - Star recently attended the FWCC World Plenary Meeting (WPM) in South Africa.

The Clerk noted that while the nominating slate is long, there are many remaining open positions. Most significantly, SAYMA needs to identify an Assistant Clerk (or Co-Assistant Clerks). Current Assistant Clerk Margaret Farmer (Asheville) noted that the incoming Assistant Clerk will be able to benefit from the current Clerk's experience and tutelage before moving into the role of Clerk in 2027. Similarly, the new Recording Clerk will be able to work with the current Clerk before serving at the clerking table for a new Clerk. The current Finance Committee clerk, Karen Morris (Atlanta), also noted that she has agreed to stay on the Finance Committee for an additional year to support a new Finance Committee clerk.

A Friend emphasized that almost all committees have positions available for Friends to pick from.

Members of the Nominating Committee who will be present at yearly sessions are the committee's clerk Kendall Ivie (West Knoxville), Wes Morris (Nashville), Shannon Roberts-Smith (Berea), and big Softy (Atlanta). Questions or concerns about the proposed slate

may be directed to them in preparation for the second reading (additionally, questions or concerns may be directed to [nominating@sayma.org](mailto:nominating@sayma.org)). Friends are also encouraged to share with their monthly meetings on June 15 information about open positions, so that over the course of Yearly Meeting 2025 - 54 additional nominations may continue to come forward.

**The report was accepted.**

**These minutes were read in the face of the meeting and were approved.**

Finally, the Clerk invited the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee Clerk, Melissa Preast (West Knoxville), to provide updates to those planning to attend in-person or virtual activities next week as part of Yearly Meeting 2025 - 54. Currently 138 registrants are expected, with over 30 workshop sessions spread over three time slots. Friends attending in person are reminded to bring their own linens and pillows. The Ministry and Nurture Committee and the Racial Conflict Transformation Team are preparing to provide support as needed. Look for information about an ice breaker.

The session ended after a brief period of silent worship at 5:08 pm Eastern on Saturday, June 14, 2025.

### **Sunday, June 22 (Session IIA - Virtual and In-Person)**

#### **54-15 Opening Worship**

Friends met virtually and in-person at Berea College, Berea, Kentucky, for the second session of the 54th annual gathering of SAYMA, beginning with an extended period of worship at 8:00 am Eastern on Sunday, June 22, 2025.

#### **54-16 Clerk's Welcome**

Clerk Jennifer Dickie (Atlanta) welcomed Friends, thanking a Friend who had spoken during the opening worship to voice her concern about the news of the U.S. bombing of Iran. The Clerk noted her confidence that we are here to make ourselves better and stronger so that we can make our world better and stronger.

#### **54-17 Roll Call ([Attachment G: Attendance Roster for Annual Sessions](#))**

Meeting attendees were asked to raise their hand as their meeting's name was called by the Clerk. Twelve meetings and worship groups were represented. A Friend noted that Boone Friends Meeting is re-forming, and the Clerk noted that this good news will be reflected in the Clerk's Items.

## 54-18 Introductions of Visitors

Associate Friends were recognized:

- Chris Berg, formerly attending a SAYMA affiliated meeting and now living in Hendersonville, North Carolina
- Steve Olschewsky, of Swarthmore Friends Meeting, who is now living in Kentucky
- wood bouldin, living in West Virginia
- Pat Gailey, living in Berea, Kentucky

The Clerk also invited visitors to be recognized. Visitors present were:

- Stuart Greene, of Patapsco Friends Meeting on Piscataway Land, who carries a leading to hold SAYMA in the light and travels with a minute from his meeting
- Wayne Finegar, representing invited guest Quaker House as its Executive Director, who offered a workshop on Saturday, June 21, 2025, on *Conscientious Objection: The Return*
- Jade Rockwell, Director for Quaker Connect, a program of Friends World Committee for Consultation
- Tom Rockwell, Superintendent of Western Yearly Meeting in Indiana, who is intentionally visiting other yearly meetings this year
- Sarah Johnson, representing invited guest Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), who will be leading a workshop in the afternoon on *Radical Hospitality and Quaker Witness in Washington*
- Mathilda Navias, of Rochester Monthly Meeting within New York Yearly Meeting, who will be leading a plenary between Sessions IIA and IIB on the topic of *God, Truth, and Racism among Us*, as well as an afternoon workshop on the topic of *Quaker Process*

Jeremiah Gold-Hopton (Atlanta), in his role with Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Concerns (FLGBTQC), added that he will be leading a workshop in the afternoon on a way forward for this international organization.

In the review of the minutes for approval, two additional visitors were introduced, both Friends from Latin America:

- Renzzo Caranza, Guatemala, a member of Fairfield Monthly Meeting in Western Yearly Meeting, who recently assumed a job with *Friends Journal*
- Myron Guachalla, Bolivia (Central Yearly Meeting in Bolivia), sojourning member of West Richmond Friends

## 54-19 Guidance and Agenda Review ([Attachment H: Agenda for Session II](#))



Friends were encouraged to keep in mind the guidance for meeting for worship with attention to business, cited within these minutes in [54-06](#). Friends read aloud the guidance. The Clerk expressed gratitude for the ways Friends are holding this guidance as we conduct business.

The agenda for Session IIA was reviewed, with a second-session focus on first readings of additional nominations, acceptance of committee reports, and clerks' items.

**The agenda was accepted.**

As noted in the agenda posted online, Session II is broken into a short period in the morning (Session IIA) and a longer afternoon period (Session IIB).

### **54-20 Naming Committee Report**

Chris Berg (Associate Member), serving as clerk of the Naming Committee, reported that no Friends have been identified to serve on the Nominating Committee since Session I. However, two additional members of the Nominating Committee are still being sought. Anyone interested in serving on the Nominating Committee may reach out to Chris Berg, Star Smith (Paul Cuffee), or Alison Mawle (Atlanta), who serve on the Naming Committee.

**The verbal report was accepted.**

### **54-21 Nominating Committee - First Reading of Additions to the Slate**

Kendall Ivie (West Knoxville) as clerk of Nominating announced the addition of several nominations to the slate since Session I:

- **Guthrie Armstrong (Atlanta) as the new Recording Clerk (2025-2027)** - Guthrie has served as Young Adult Friends (YAF) clerk and has been working with the current Recording Clerk over the last year.
- **Carol Nickle (West Knoxville) as a continuing member of the Handbook Committee (2025-2027).** - Carol is a past clerk of the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee, is very active in West Knoxville, and has served in other positions in SAYMA.
- **Jeremiah Gold-Hopton (Atlanta) as new member of Yearly Meeting Planning Committee (2025-2027)** – Jeremiah has been serving on the committee since spring, and he has been very active in SAYMA in the past.
- **Annie Black (Cookeville) as a new SAYMA Representative to Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Concerns or FLGBTQC (2025-2028)** – Annie has been active in SAYMA for a long time, previously clerk of

the Nominating Committee.

- **Blake Burr (Memphis) as the continuing clerk of the Web Manager Support Committee (2025-2027)** - Blake currently serves as clerk of the committee.

**These additions to the nominating slate were accepted.**

Positions remain open. The list is available on the [sayma.org](http://sayma.org) web site and on an easel in the lounge where business meeting is being held in person (Baird Lounge).

**The minutes were read in the face of the meeting and approved.**

**54-22 Acceptance of Committee Reports ([Attachment I: SAYF Steering Committee Report](#); [Attachment J: Racial Conflict Transformation Team Report](#); [Attachment K: SAYMA Uplifting Racial Justice Report](#); [Attachment L: Ministry & Nurture Committee Report](#); [Attachment M: Junior Yearly Meeting Support Committee Report](#); [Attachment N: Report of the Web Manager 2025](#); [Attachment O: SAYF Annual Report](#))**

The Clerk noted that the following reports had been submitted and asked that they be accepted into the minutes.

- SAYF (Southern Appalachian Young Friends) Steering Committee Report
- Racial Conflict Transformation Team Report
- SAYMA URJ (Uplifting Racial Justice) Report
- Ministry and Nurture Committee Report
- JYM (Junior Yearly Meeting) Support Committee Report
- Report of the Web Manager 2025
- SAYF (Southern Appalachian Young Friends) Annual Report

All accepted reports are available for review on the [SAYMA.org](http://SAYMA.org) web site and at the in-person registration area for the annual sessions.

Most of the committees still have openings. Only Friends of Color may be members of URJ, and those interested should contact the clerk of URJ, Star Smith.

**The reports were accepted.**

Time did not allow for comments from committee representatives.

**54-23 Spotlight on Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC)**

Geeta McGahey (Celo), as a SAYMA representative to FWCC, gave highlights of her report to be accepted in a later session. Friends were invited to join her and SAYMA-affiliated attenders of the recent FWCC World Plenary (Alison Mawle, Star Smith, and Jackson Napier) in a lunchtime conversation in collaboration with the FWCC Quaker Connect director, Jade Rockwell. The Zoom link for this conversation will be distributed via email to all registered attendees (those experiencing difficulty accessing the link may contact [saymaoffice@sayma.org](mailto:saymaoffice@sayma.org)). Geeta also noted that World Quaker Day is October 5, 2025. Related materials are available at the FWCC table at annual sessions and are linked from Geeta's report. Tom Rockwell added that in 2027 a FWCC bi-annual in-person meeting of the Section of the Americas is being planned to be held in Indiana.

**These minutes were read in the face of the meeting and were approved.**

Melissa Preast (West Knoxville) as clerk of the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee provided announcements for in-person attenders. She noted corrections to the program. Three minutes of remembrance from Atlanta were not shared at the Saturday meeting for remembrance and will be shared on Monday, June 23, 2025.

Session IIA ended at 9:39 am Eastern on Sunday, June 22, 2025.

### **Sunday, June 22 (Session IIB - Virtual and In-Person)**

Session II business resumed at 12:45 pm Eastern on Sunday, June 22, 2025, opening with silent worship.

### **54-24 Welcome to New Visitors and Monthly Meetings**

The Presiding Clerk welcomed new visitors and monthly meetings.

- Rowan Hunter, visiting from Richmond Friends Meeting and a member of Hong Kong Monthly Meeting
- Wendy Rockwell, visiting from Monteverde Friends Meeting

### **54-25 Agenda and Guidance Reminder**

The Clerk reviewed remaining agenda items for Session II, including the Clerk's items that had not been covered in Session IIA as well as second readings of the Nominating Committee's slate and the proposed budget and acceptance of the Wider Quaker Organization (WQO) reports. The Clerk encouraged Friends to refer as needed to the guidance for the meeting for worship with attention to business.

**The agenda was accepted.**

## **54-26 Nominating Committee Second Reading and Discernment**

Because of the length of the nominating slate, the Presiding Clerk read the slate by category, querying Friends for approval of each category and opening the floor for comments as Friends were led.

### **Officers and Individual Positions**

- **Guthrie Armstrong (Atlanta) as the new Recording Clerk (2025-2027)** – Guthrie has served as Young Adult Friends (YAF) clerk and has been working with the current Recording Clerk over the last year.
- **Rob Collins (Birmingham) as the new Archivist (2025-2027)** - Rob serves as archivist for his monthly meeting.

**54-26-01. Friends approved the nominations for Officers and Individual Positions.**

### **Ministry and Nurture**

- **Blake Burr (Memphis) as a new member of Ministry & Nurture (2025-2027)** - Blake has served on Ministry & Nurture for her monthly meeting.
- **Margaret Farmer (Asheville) as a new member of Ministry & Nurture (2025-2027)** - Margaret has served in the past on SAYMA's Ministry & Nurture.

**54-26-02. Friends approved the nominations for Ministry and Nurture.**

### **Finance**

- **Kendall Ivie (West Knoxville) as a new member of the Finance Committee (2025-2027)** - Kendall brings to the committee his long experience as SAYMA Treasurer.
- **Karen Morris (Atlanta) as a continuing member of the Finance Committee (2025-2026)** - Karen currently serves as clerk of the committee.
- **Tribal Raine (Paul Cuffee) as a continuing member of the Finance Committee (2025-2027)** - Tribal currently serves as a member of the committee.
- The committee currently does not have a clerk. The Nominating Committee welcomes inquiries from interested Friends.

**54-26-03. Friends approved the nominations for Finance.**

### **Personnel**

- **Melissa Preast (West Knoxville) as a continuing member of the Personnel Committee (2025-2027)** - Melissa currently serves as a member of the committee.

**54-26-04. Friends approved the nomination for the Personnel Committee.**

## Handbook

- **Carol Nickle (West Knoxville) as continuing member of Operational Handbook Committee (2025-2027)** – Carol is a past clerk of the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee, is very active in West Knoxville, and has served in other positions in SAYMA.
- The Archivist is an ex-officio member of the Handbook Committee.
- A Friend asked for clarification about the mission of the Handbook Committee. The Clerk asked that this topic be deferred to an upcoming SAYMA Rep meeting.

### **54-26-05. Friends approved the nomination for the Handbook Committee.**

## Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) and Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM)

- **Jennifer Killen (Associate) as clerk of the SAYF Steering Committee (2025-2027)** - Jennifer currently serves as a member of the committee.
- **Beth Myers (Associate) as a continuing member of the SAYF Steering Committee (2025-2027)** - Beth currently serves as a member of the committee.
- **Julia Hudson (Celo) as a new member of the SAYF Steering Committee (2025-2027)** - Julia is a former SAYFer, a SAYF Nurturer, and Nurturer Clerk.
- **Asa Kramer-Dickie (Atlanta) as a continuing member of the SAYF Steering Committee (2025-2026)** - Asa is a former SAYFer and SAYF Nurterer who currently serves as a member of the committee.
- **Stoph Hallward (Atlanta) as a new member of the SAYF Steering Committee (2025-2027)** - Stoph has been active with the SAYF community for four years, with three SAYF-aged children at this retreat.
- **Emma Yockey (Nashville) as a new member of the SAYF Steering Committee (2025-2027)** - Emma is a former SAYFer and SAYF Nurturer.
- **Danielle Capillo (Berea) as a new member of the SAYF Steering Committee (2025-2027)** - Danielle has been active with the SAYF community for many years, and two of her children are currently participating in SAYF.
- **Jennifer Dickie (Atlanta) as a continuing member of the SAYF Support Committee (2025-2027)** - Jennifer currently serves as a member of the committee.
- **Lee Ann Swarm (West Knoxville) as a continuing member of the SAYF Support Committee (2025-2027)** - Lee Ann currently serves as a member of the committee.
- **Rose Black (Cookeville) as a continuing member of the JYM Support Committee (2025-2027)** - Rose currently serves as a member of the committee.

**54-26-06. Friends approved the nominations for the committees related to SAYF and JYM.**

**Yearly Meeting Planning Committee**

- **Lee Ann Swarm (West Knoxville) as a continuing member of the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee (2025-2027)** - Lee Ann currently serves as a member of the committee. Her focus is on adult programming.
- **Braden Mills (Berea) as a new member of the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee (2025-2027)** - Braden is a Young Adult Friend who has been active in his monthly meeting and in the yearly meeting. This will be his first committee role. His role will be as co-registrar.
- **Judy Geary (Associate) as a continuing member of the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee (2025-2027)** - Judy currently serves as a member of the committee. Her dual focus areas will be the bookstore and layout editing.
- **Kim Saderholm (Berea) as a continuing member of the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee (2025-2027)** - Kim currently serves as a member of the committee. Her focus is on on-site coordination.
- **Kendall Ivie (West Knoxville) as a continuing member of the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee** - Kendall currently serves as a member of the committee. He will continue in the role as liaison to the Finance Committee.
- **Jeremiah Gold-Hopton (Atlanta) as new member of Yearly Meeting Planning Committee (2025-2027)** – Jeremiah has been serving on the committee since spring, and he has been very active in SAYMA in the past.

**54-26-07. Friends approved the nominations for the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee.**

**Web Manager Support**

- **Annie Black (Cookeville) as a continuing member of the Web Manager Support Committee (2025-2027)** - Annie currently serves as a member of the committee.
- **Susan Phelan (Huntsville) as a continuing member of the Web Manager Support Committee (2025-2027)** - Susan currently serves as a member of the committee.
- **Blake Burr (Memphis) as a continuing clerk of the Web Manager Support Committee (2025-2027)** – Blake Burr has agreed to continue as the clerk of this committee for a 2-year term.
- The Web Manager is Charlie Wilton (Berea), who is instrumental to the sharing of information about all SAYMA-related activities.

**54-26-08. Friends approved the nominations for the Web Manager Support Committee.**

Wider Quaker Organizations (WQO) Allocations Committee

- **Charlie Wilton (Berea) as the continuing clerk of the WQO Allocations Committee (2025-2027)** - Charlie currently serves as clerk of the committee.
- **Geeta McGahey (Celo) as a continuing member of the WQO Allocations Committee (2025-2027)** - Geeta currently serves as a member of the committee.

**54-26-09. Friends approved the nominations for the WQO Allocations Committee.**

Wider Quaker Organizations (WQO) Representatives

- **Jane Hiles (Birmingham) as a continuing SAYMA Representative for Friends Committee on National Legislation (2025-2028)** - Jane currently serves in this role.
- **Annie Black (Cookeville) as a new SAYMA Representative to FLGBTQC (2025-2028)** – Annie has been active in SAYMA for a long time, previously clerk of the Nominating Committee.
- **Alison Mawle (Atlanta) as a new SAYMA Representative for Friends World Committee for Consultation (2025-2028)** - Alison recently attended the FWCC World Plenary Meeting (WPM) in South Africa virtually as an individual Friend. She has made it clear to the Nominating Committee that she will serve only in conjunction with Star Smith as a SAYMA Representative to FWCC.
- **Star Smith (Paul Cuffee) as a new SAYMA Representative for Friends World Committee for Consultation (2025-2028)** - Star recently attended the FWCC World Plenary Meeting (WPM) in South Africa with the support of anti-racist SAYMA Friends. Her nomination has been brought forth previously by the outgoing FWCC SAYMA Representative and URJ, and the Nominating Committee believes that she has the skill-set to add to FWCC's work.

**54-26-10. Friends approved the nominations for the WQO Representatives.**

There was an objection to and subsequent discussion of approving Star Smith as SAYMA Representative to FWCC. Friends reaffirmed their approval of this appointment. A member of the Racial Conflict Transformation Team reminded Friends that the team can be a resource for Friends.

**The minutes were read in the face of the meeting and approved.**

Concerns were raised. The Clerk will reach out to Friends to address these concerns. Friends reviewed the guidance, including a reminder to speak for ourselves, not others.

**54-27 Treasurer's Report ([Attachment P: Treasurer's Report for Session II](#))**

Treasurer Daryl Bergquist (Birmingham), based on input received during Session I, has submitted a second Treasurer's report for inclusion in the minutes. This report includes an introductory overview and contains a balance sheet for the current budget year (which ends September 30, 2025), a budget vs. actual analysis for the current budget year, an income and expense analysis of the current budget year, and a funds report (including an analysis of donations to donor-specified funds as well as balances in designated funds). Copies of these reports have been posted on the [sayma.org](http://sayma.org) web site and are also available on easels within Baird Lounge. He welcomes questions at [treasurer@sayma.org](mailto:treasurer@sayma.org).

**The Treasurer's Report was accepted.**

**54-28 Finance Committee - Second Reading of the Proposed Budget and Discernment**  
**([Attachment Q: Finance Committee Clerk's Report to Session II](#); [Attachment R: Proposed Budget v. 1.1](#))**

Karen Morris (Atlanta), clerk of the Finance Committee, provided an update to her Finance clerk's report. In this update, she noted that at the open Finance meeting at lunch on June 21, six individuals had attended to ask for clarification and to share concerns about the aspirational budget for 2026.

The Finance Committee met after this lunchtime meeting and has now changed the Reserve line (127:A) in the proposed budget (v. 1.1). A Friend noted that this change may need to be separately approved prior to consideration of the proposed budget for approval. This Friend carries a concern that a proposed Reserve of \$10,000 may be inadequate for SAYMA's needs. Assistant Treasurer Kendall Ivie (West Knoxville) noted his hope that by the time of a future session to review the proposed budget for approval, there will not need to be such a deep cut in the Reserve line.

Kendall called attention that in the proposed budget the set-aside fund allotments of \$4,800 (line 85) will not be made if funds are not available. This is true for both fiscal year 2025 and fiscal year 2026.

Daryl Bergquist (Birmingham, as Treasurer, noted that if we do not accept a budget now, then SAYMA may be operating without a budget by the Fall Representative Meeting. The Clerk noted that she may call a meeting before the end of the fiscal year to prevent this scenario.

Kendall also noted that all participating in the budget conversation thus far have acknowledged the importance and popularity of Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) programming. The Finance Committee and the SAYF Steering Committee clerks have begun conversations



about supporting the costs of SAYF incurred by SAYMA in a way for monthly meetings and individuals to donate to help cover the costs of SAYF personnel and operations. Friends expressed concerns that careful discernment is needed in this matter.

Daryl encouraged both individual Friends and monthly meetings to continue making General Fund donations to improve the fiscal security of SAYMA.

**The minutes were read in the face of the meeting and were approved.**

Melissa Preast, as clerk of the Yearly Meeting Planning Commission, shared a few announcements.

With gratitude for Friends who stayed beyond the scheduled time, Session IIB ended at 3:45 pm Eastern.

### **Monday, June 23 (Session III - Virtual and In-Person)**

#### **54-29 Opening Worship**

Session III opened at 8:45 am Eastern on Monday, June 23, 2025, with a period of worship grounded in silence.

Lucy Lane (Asheville), a member of Junior Yearly Meeting, assisted Melissa Preast (West Knoxville) in providing updates for in-person attenders from the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee.

Alison Mawle (Atlanta) shared the names of three long-time Atlanta members who have passed over the past year. Minutes of Remembrance for these Friends will be available at the rise of meeting.

#### **54-30 Agenda and Guidance Review ([Attachment S: Agenda for Session III](#))**

The adjusted agenda for Session III was reviewed.

**The agenda was accepted.**

The Clerk then spoke of her experience of the guidance during yesterday's discernment regarding nominations. She experienced both weight and joy yesterday as we tried to lean on the guidance, sometimes faltering. The Clerk drew special attention to one guidance: "If a concern doesn't get addressed at the moment, write it down and seek to resolve it between the parties or

share with the clerk at a later time.” She encouraged Friends to approach her with any concerns or feedback.

No new visitors were noted.

### **54-31 Clerk’s Items and Announcements, Part I**

The Clerk brought Friends’ attention to several matters.

As reported at Representative Meeting 154 in May 2025, the ad-hoc Faith and Practice Committee has been temporarily suspended. The committee welcomes additional nominees or volunteers who are led to help the committee resume its work.

Additionally, Boone Friends, under the care of Celo Meeting, have indicated an intent to restart a meeting in Boone, North Carolina. SAYMA, at its Yearly Meeting sessions in 2018, minuted the laying down of Boone Monthly Meeting (Minute 48-21 in the minutes available [online](#) on the SAYMA web site):

At the request of the only remaining member of Boone Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), the Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA) hereby discontinues the meeting and instructs the treasurer to take possession of the records, physical property and investments belonging to the meeting, except when otherwise determined by deed or other legal obligation.

As approved in May 2019 at Representative Meeting 142, SAYMA has held funds for the meeting in order to protect those funds from being taken by the state. Below is the approved minute (142-07-01) from RM 142 (available [online](#) on the SAYMA web site):

Boone Friends Meeting having been laid down according to SAYMA minute 48-21, and Boone Friends Meeting’s funds of \$2,677.08 having been recovered on SAYMA’s behalf as directed in that same minute, the finance committee recommends that these funds be put into a Boone Set-aside Fund until March 16, 2024. If at that date there is a Worship Group in the Boone area under the care of a SAYMA Monthly Meeting, the Boone Set-aside Fund will be extended to allow time for the possible development of a Monthly Meeting associated with SAYMA. If there is no Worship Group in the Boone area under the care of a SAYMA Monthly Meeting as of March 16, 2024, the treasurer will close the Boone Set-aside Fund and return the money to the SAYMA General Fund.

If the Boone Set-aside Fund still exists and a new Preparative Meeting associated with SAYMA is established in the Boone area before March 16, 2029, the clerk of SAYMA

Ministry and Nurture is authorized to direct the disbursement of the funds to the new Preparative Meeting in the Boone area. If no Preparative Meeting associated with SAYMA is established in the Boone area before March 16, 2029, the SAYMA treasurer will close the Boone Set-aside Fund and return the money to the SAYMA General Fund.

The Treasurer will work to take the steps necessary to return funds to Boone Friends. Mark Nunes is the contact for Boone Friends. Meetings are held at Blue's Brews at 10:00 am on Sunday mornings. Morgan Murray, previously active in SAYMA, is the owner of Blue's Brews, and his child Blue is active in SAYF. Boone Friends have already met several times with Celo Friends and have been approved as a Preparative Meeting. Celo was the Monthly Meeting under which the original Boone Preparative Meeting was organized. The Treasurer asked that the Celo Meeting provide a minute to the Treasurer to facilitate next steps.

**The minutes were reviewed in the face of the meeting and approved.**

#### **54-32 Registrar's Report ([Attachment T: Registrar's Report](#))**

Friends attended YM 2025 - 54 both in-person and virtually, with 125 Friends registering in person and 13 Friends registering virtually, and a total of 136 attending. Those attending included 11 JYM participants, 25 SAYFers, 16 Young Adult Friends, and 14 Friends of Color.

**The registrar's report was accepted.**

#### **54-33 Presentation of Epistles, Part I ([Attachment U: SAYF Epistle](#))**

Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) presented the JYM epistle, featuring their handprint community agreements. Some of the queries that informed the children's epistle were:

- I wonder how you are feeling.
- I wonder how you felt alive today.
- I wonder what you would like to have left out or added to have everything you needed.

Laura Lane (Asheville), clerk of JYM Support Committee, shared an overview of planned activities for JYM in the coming year. This year a fall retreat and a spring retreat are being planned. The fall retreat will be in Asheville, North Carolina, and the spring retreat will tentatively be in East Tennessee. Any young families within SAYMA who are not yet a part of the JYM email list are encouraged to reach out to [JYM@sayma.org](mailto:JYM@sayma.org).

**The JYM epistle was accepted.**

Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) presented the SAYF epistle, which will be provided in writing for the minutes. The Clerk celebrated graduating SAYFers and welcomed their continuing participation in SAYMA as Young Adult Friends.

**The SAYF epistle was accepted.**

No Young Adult Friends (YAF) epistle or SAYMA-URJ (Uplifting Racial Justice) epistle was presented. Star Smith (Paul Cuffee), as clerk of SAYMA-URJ, shared that an epistle is forthcoming and will be emailed to the Clerk for further dissemination.

**54-34 Clerk's Items and Announcements, Part II**

The Clerk continued her overview of Clerk's Items and Announcements. She reported that she has received a communication from the clerk of Greenville Monthly Meeting of Friends (South Carolina):

After a lengthy period of reflection and discernment, Greenville, SC Friends are in unity that we withdraw our membership from SAYMA.

The Clerk has reached out for more information about Greenville Friends' discernment.

Because not all planned business will be completed by the close of Session III, the Clerk has asked that a fourth session be held virtually. Blake Burr (outgoing Recording Clerk) and Karen Morris (outgoing Finance clerk) have agreed to continue to serve in their current roles for this fourth session. The date and time of Session IV, on a Sunday afternoon, probably for a two-hour period, will be confirmed via email soon.

**The minutes were reviewed in the face of the meeting and approved.**

**54-35 Acceptance of Wider Quaker Organization (WQO) Reports ([Attachment V: FWCC - SAYMA Representative Report](#); [Attachment W: FCNL - SAYMA Representative Report](#); [Attachment X: Quaker House Report](#); [Attachment Y: FGC - SAYMA Representative Report](#); [Attachment Z: AFSC - SAYMA Representative Report](#); [Attachment AA: AFSC - Epistle](#); [Attachment BB: Friends Peace Teams Report and Epistle](#))**

The Clerk noted that the following reports on Wider Quaker Organizations (WQOs) had been submitted and asked that they be accepted into the minutes.

- FWCC (Friends World Committee for Consultation) - SAYMA Representative Report
- FCNL (Friends Committee on National Legislation) - SAYMA Representative Report

(an invited guest at YM 2025)

- Quaker House Report (an invited guest at YM 2025)
- FGC (Friends General Conference) - SAYMA Representative Report
- AFSC (American Friends Service Committee) - SAYMA Representative Report
- AFSC (American Friends Service Committee) - Epistle
- Friends Peace Teams Report and Epistle (an invited guest at YM 2025)

All reports are available for review on [sayma.org](https://sayma.org) and at the registration area for the annual sessions.

### **The reports were accepted.**

Highlights of the reports were shared as time allowed:

- Jane Hiles (Birmingham), as SAYMA Representative to Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), announced that the theme of FCNL's upcoming virtual gathering in November is "Still Speaking Truth to Power," featuring Timothy Snyder, noted historian and scholar of authoritarianism. She thanked her colleague as SAYMA Representative to FCNL, Susan Penn (Memphis), and emphasized that a SAYMA Representative to FCNL position is now open. If interested, contact [nominating@sayma.org](mailto:nominating@sayma.org).
- Wayne Finegar, Executive Director of Quaker House, added to his written report to provide an update related to the nationalization of the California National Guard. A GI Rights hotline - which was developed in collaboration with Quaker House - has seen heavy use since this nationalization action. Now is a time of high volatility associated with unlawful orders. Friends are encouraged to visit [quakerhouse.org](https://quakerhouse.org) for developing news. Currently there is no official SAYMA Representative to Quaker House. However, one Friend has been volunteering and will be reaching out to [nominating@sayma.org](mailto:nominating@sayma.org).
- Margaret Farmer (Asheville), as SAYMA Representative to Friends General Conference (FGC), announced the upcoming in-person gathering for FGC will be in Burlington, Vermont, in July 2026. A smaller in-person gathering will be held this summer in Michigan for Young Adults and Youth (YAY). Margaret also drew attention to the work of the FGC Governance Working Group, which reflected input from three SAYMA Friends. Central Committee of FGC will be reviewing the Governance Working Group plan this fall. A second position for a SAYMA Representative to FGC remains open. However, given the unfinished business of the Governance Working Group, Margaret has not actively recruited an additional SAYMA Representative to FGC.
- Turtle MacDermott, on behalf of Friends Peace Teams, asked for help spreading the

word within SAYMA about the work of Friends Peace Teams, either informally as a volunteer or formally as a SAYMA Representative to Friends Peace Teams. If interested, contact [nominating@sayma.org](mailto:nominating@sayma.org). Friends were encouraged to watch the video version of the Friends Peace Teams epistle, [available on YouTube](#).

#### **54-36 Presentation of the SAYMA State of the Yearly Meeting Report ([Attachment CC: SAYMA State of the Yearly Meeting Report](#))**

On behalf of Ministry and Nurture, Annie Black (Cookeville) read the SAYMA State of the Yearly Meeting Report.

Eight Monthly Meetings ([Asheville](#), [Atlanta](#), [Celo](#), [Columbia](#), [Cookeville](#), [Huntsville](#), [Memphis](#), and [West Knoxville](#)) have submitted State of the Meeting Reports that were synthesized into this Yearly Meeting Report. The Monthly Meetings' reports are included as addenda to the State of the Yearly Meeting Report.

#### **The SAYMA State of the Yearly Meeting Report was accepted.**

A Friend noted that the word “racism” was not included in the State of the Yearly Meeting Report and noted that much of the conflict that SAYMA has been working on is related to issues of race and racism. The Clerk asked that this observation be relayed to Ministry and Nurture for their discernment and formal response:

Why was the word “racism” not included in the Yearly Meeting Report?

A Friend later asked if there are other rising concerns from Monthly Meetings. It was noted that the Yearly State of the Meeting Report was developed by drawing from only eight Monthly Meeting reports that were submitted.

#### **54-37 Presentation of the SAYMA Epistle ([Attachment DD: SAYMA Epistle](#))**

The SAYMA epistle was presented, summarizing YM 2025 - 54. A Friend asked that FLGBTQC be added to the list of presenting Wider Quaker Organizations. Friends asked that the full titles of both plenaries be added to the epistle. Upon review of the minutes, a Friend asked that the epistle be updated to reflect the integral involvement of the Racial Conflict Transformation (RCT) Team in the planning of Yearly Meeting and the presence of the RCT Team and Ministry and Nurture as support during annual sessions.

#### **54-37-01 The epistle was approved as amended with the requested changes in the face of the meeting.**

Aaron Ruscetta (Atlanta), providing technical support, thanked Friends, both in person and online, for their patience with the technical support team.

The Clerk asked that the following minute be approved.

**54-37-01** Friends are grateful for our time together in the beautiful setting of Berea College that has grown familiar to us as a location for our annual sessions. We are glad to gather in a multi-racial campus that resonates so well with our values and our vision for the future of SAYMA. We are grateful for the friendliness of its staff, including Abby Morris-Nantz as our primary contact, and the hard work of the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee, clerked by Melissa Preast who stepped in at the last minute to make our time together possible. We are thankful for the many Friends who served on the committee either as formal members or informal volunteers, and for Berea Friends Meeting, which served as our co-host. We are particularly appreciative of those who enabled golf cart accessibility during our time. We also thank our tech team (Aaron Ruscetta and Lorin Dent) who made events accessible to us both in person and on Zoom, and for the tech capabilities in not only plenary spaces but also workshops spaces, and especially at the Talent Show. We recognize and appreciate the gifts and enthusiasm of Mathilda Navias and Justus Bowland-Gleeson, the representatives of the Wider Quaker Organizations, and other guests, who were very present among us throughout our time and who carried with them a sense of the Spirit that had brought them to us. We are glad to have time together, face to face as we do the work of the Yearly Meeting, build community, grapple with challenges, and envision a future together with even better relationships amongst Friends.

**The minute of appreciation was approved.**

**The minutes were read in the face of the meeting and were approved.**

With all further business moved to the virtual Session IV, Friends entered into worshipful silence. The third session ended at 11:45 am Eastern on Monday, June 23, 2025.

## **Attachment A: Attendance Roster for Session I**

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

The roster for Session I will be included in the archived version of these minutes.



## **Attachment B: Agenda for Session I**

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

### **SAYMA Sessions and Retreat 2025 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business Agenda (updated to reflect what was covered)**

#### **Saturday, June 14, 2025, 2:00-5:00 pm Eastern (Session I), Virtual Only**

- Clerk's Welcome
- Roll Call and introduction of visitors
- Narrative Minutes procedure
- Guidance for our meeting
- Agenda Review
- Epistle Committee Appointed
- Finance Reports
  - a. Treasurer Report
  - b. Finance Committee Report
  - c. 1st reading of the proposed budget
- Spotlight on Friends Committee on National Legislation (invited guest)

#### **BREAK**

- Naming Committee Report
- Nominating Committee - 1st reading of nominating slate
- Yearly Meeting Planning Committee Announcements

## Attachment C: Treasurer's Report to Session I

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

### SAYMA Treasurer's Report on the Fiscal Year 2026 Proposed Budget for Sessions June 14 and June 22, 2025

Since reconnecting with Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association at the 2021 virtual Yearly Meeting Sessions, I have learned and grown a lot from working with you. One big lesson for me is living with an increased awareness of abundance and generosity. I witness that generosity demonstrated every day by the Friends that are doing the work of SAYMA and that are supporting it financially. Thank you!

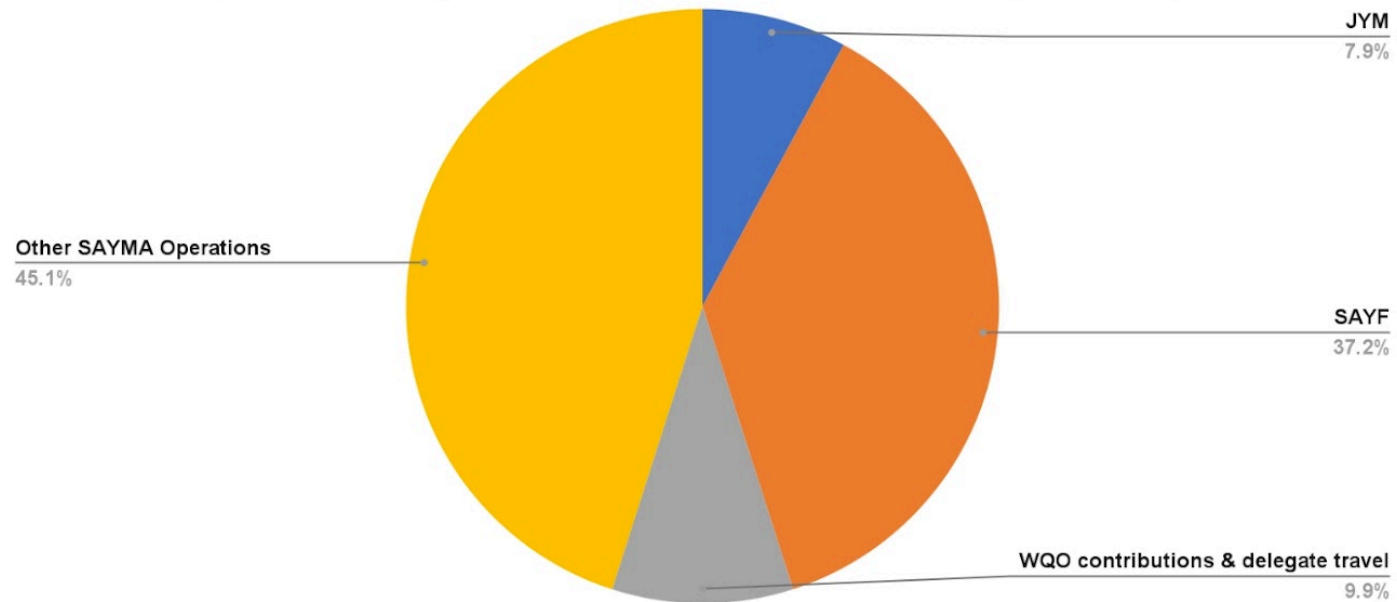
SAYMA is transitioning to a new stage financially. For many years SAYMA has held significant excess money beyond our operating Reserves. We call this extra money Undesignated Funds. The amount of Undesignated Funds, this excess money, is listed and estimated on the bottom line of the FY26 Proposed Budget. Recent SAYMA budgets have intentionally had significant deficits: spending more money than received in order to reduce our Undesignated Funds. We have succeeded in spending down the large excess in our Undesignated Funds.

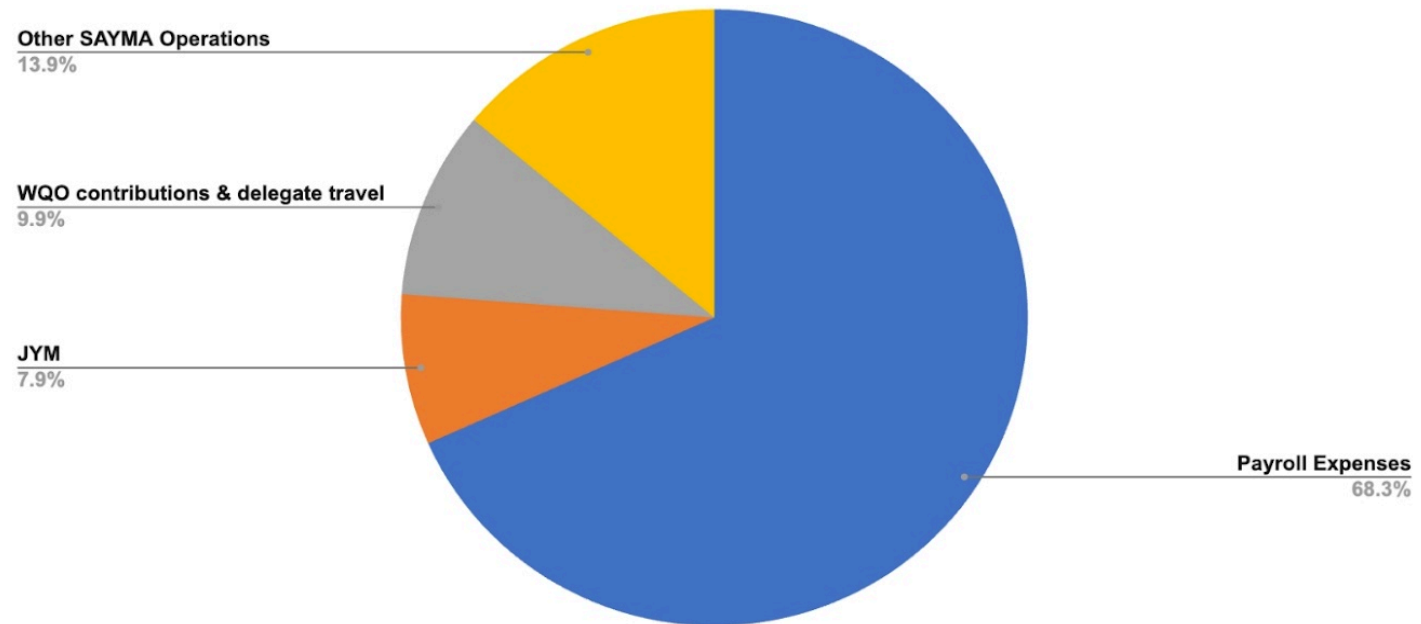
Our work now is to come up with a more balanced budget for FY26. The proposed budget has too high a deficit. The budget as proposed already cuts out our donations to Wider Quaker Organizations (WQOs) except for the two Friends organizations of which we are members, Friends General Conference (FGC) and Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC), and it cuts in half our contributions to those two. We include a provision for restoring those WQO contributions to their previous levels if funds allow at the end of the year. The budget does provide for travel reimbursement for SAYMA delegates to the WQOs. It holds the allotments to our set-aside funds until the end of the year pending sufficient funds. These held set-aside allotments include funds for FWCC 3rd World Delegate Expenses and for FWCC SAYMA International Delegate Expenses and other funds as well.

My hope is that individuals and meetings within SAYMA will recognize the need, and continue contributing even more generously to SAYMA General Funds in order to continue the good work of SAYMA.

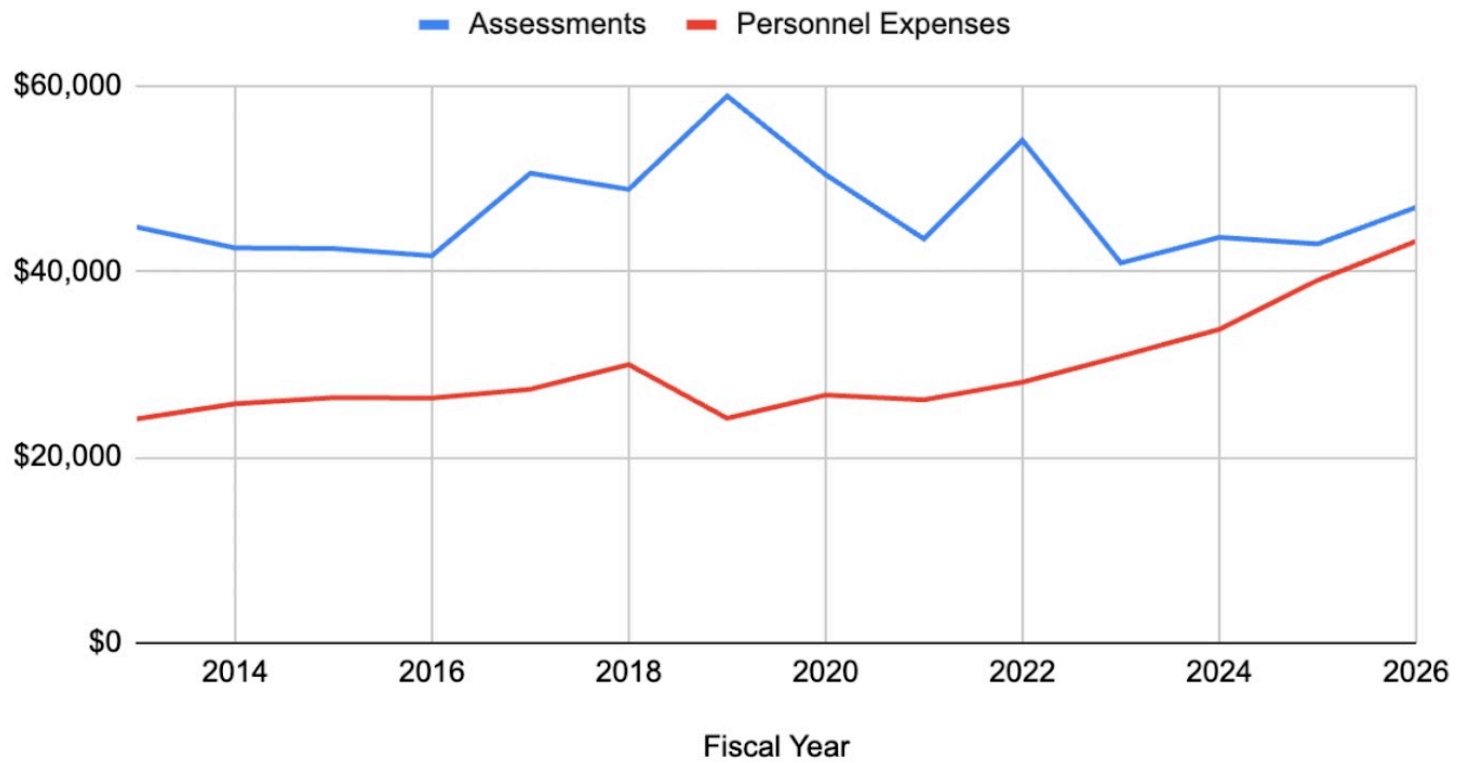
Daryl Bergquist, SAYMA Treasurer

## FY 26 Proposed Budget: General Funds excluding YM Expenses

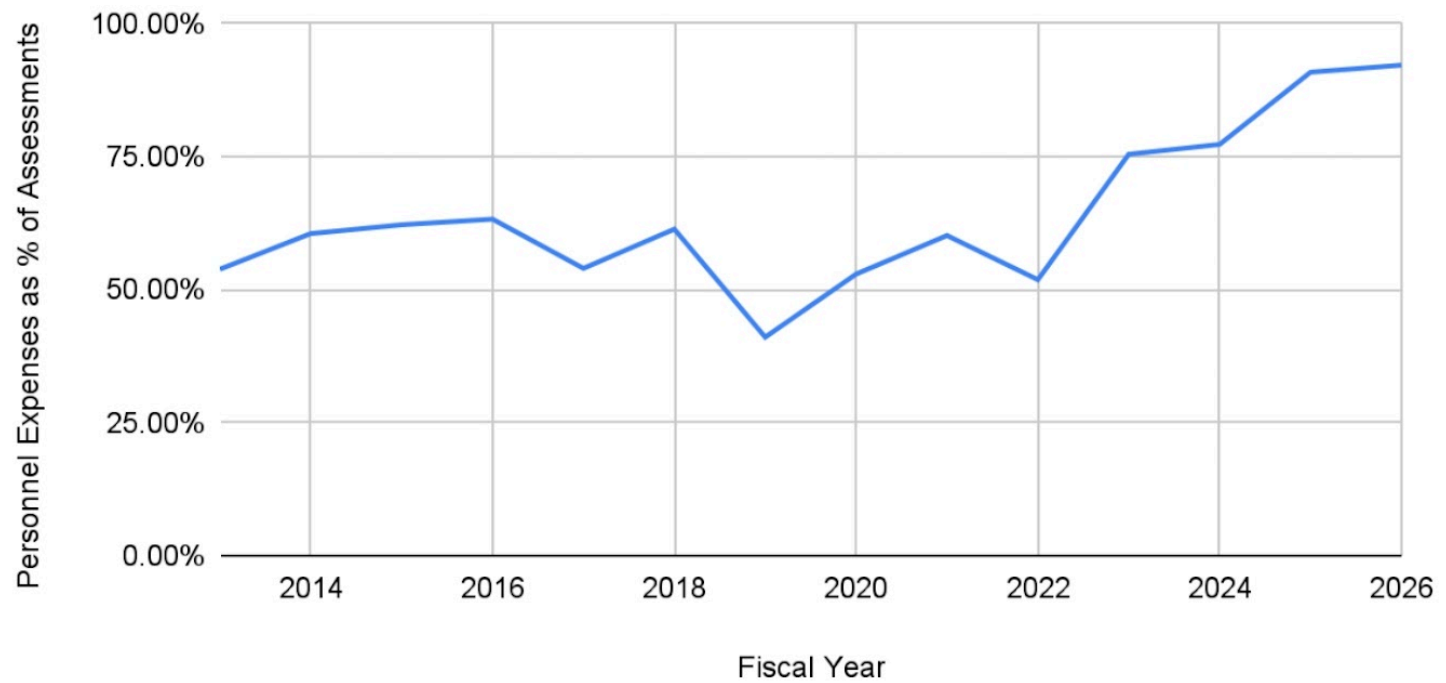




## Assessments and Personnel Expenses



## Personnel Expenses as Percentage of Assessments vs. Fiscal Year



## Attachment D: Finance Committee Clerk's Report

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

### SAYMA Finance Committee Report for Sessions June 14 and June 22, 2025

The Finance Committee is thankful to SAYMA monthly meetings for timely assessments and donations from SAYMA individuals in FY 2025. As the treasurer has noted, we expect to finish the year in the black with a small surplus.

The Racial Conflict Transformation (RCT) program is in its 3<sup>rd</sup> year. Last year we reported that we were reaching out to 4 Yearly Meetings, New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New England, with a request for grants for the RCT program. New York informed us that their funds were only for Meetings under their care. Baltimore and New England asked for more information, however, neither has followed up with a reply. We did not hear from Philadelphia. Donations from individuals and participant registration fees funded the program, which continues into early fall of 2025. The fourth year is in the planning stages.

Saturday, June 14, during the first Meeting for Business for 2025 YM sessions is when the Fiscal Year 2026 budget is presented for the first reading. The proposed 2026 budget and a letter from me were sent in early May to the Monthly Meeting Clerks, Treasurers, and Representatives asking for comments before the end of May. I received no comments or questions. If your Meeting did not receive this information, please share the names, emails and/or phone numbers with the SAYMA Administrative Assistant Rob Collins so that the list is correct.

The second reading will be at SAYMA sessions in Berea, on Sunday June 22. Questions and comments about the proposed budget may be shared at an **open hybrid meeting** with the Finance committee on Saturday, June 21, at lunch, in the side room, Hutchins, which is a large room for people to bring in their lunches for “eating while meeting.”

### Background info

1. For several years, the annual budgets have intentionally been spending down the undesignated funds line which had approximately \$35,000.
2. For FY 2026, we have depleted the Undesignated funds.
3. The FY 2026 budget has a negative balance in Undesignated funds of about \$10,000. We will need to draw those funds from our Reserves.
4. How to manage this deficit budget:
  - a. **Assessments** – the rate for assessments increased for FY 2025. Currently we do not know what each MM will be contributing as only 2/3 of the fiscal year

- has been completed. Consequently, we do not yet have an accurate figure for the total of the 2026 Assessment income – our primary source of budget funds.
- b. **Donations to the General Fund** by individuals and Meetings
  - c. **Decreasing budgeted allotments**
- 5. **About 90% of the assessments go toward employee salaries.**
  - 6. **Nearly 50% of the budget supports the future of SAYMA, i.e., the SAYF and Junior Yearly Meeting programs.**
  - 7. **The General Funds category supports the SAYF program** which includes the annual SAYF allotment, the program coordinator salary, FICA, payroll costs, and volunteer background checks. **SAYMA joyfully supports the SAYFers!**
  - 8. SAYMA Young Adult Friends are currently supported by funds from a grant from the Kenworthy family.
  - 9. Travel costs have increased for Wider Quaker Organizations (WQO) representatives. SAYMA needs our representatives to attend WQO meetings and to share information with us about Friends' activities in the world.

The Finance committee welcomes **contributions by check, credit card (through SQUARE), Zelle, and by stock**, in an account with the Quaker-led organization, Friends Fiduciary. We chose Friends Fiduciary because of their strong commitment to “investing with values: rigorously screened investments in unity with Friends beliefs in peace, social justice, and the environment.” (You can read about this company online, [friendsfiduciary.org](https://www.friendsfiduciary.org).) Donation information is on the SAYMA website. **Contact the Treasurer ([saymatreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:saymatreasurer@gmail.com)) if you wish to use Zelle or you have stock to contribute.**

Many thanks to the Finance committee members, the Treasurers, the SAYMA clerk and assistant clerk, for your attention and care for the well-being of SAYMA. **Thanks, also, for our Monthly Meetings, without whom SAYMA would not exist.**

Respectfully submitted,

Karen terHorst Morris, SAYMA clerk (Atlanta Monthly Meeting)

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

Finance Committee members: Daryl Bergquist (Birmingham), SAYMA Treasurer ex officio; Kendall Ivie (West Knoxville), SAYMA assistant treasurer ex officio; Margaret Farmer, (Asheville), SAYMA assistant clerk, ex officio; Tribal Raine, (Paul Cuffee Worship Group); Stacey Sharer, (Atlanta)



## Attachment E: Proposed Budget v.1.0

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

A	B	Y	Z	AA	AB	AC	AD
		FY24 Budget 1.1 Approved 6/21/2024	FY24 Actual 9/30/2024	FY25 Budget 1.0 Approved 6/22/2024	FY25 Actual YTD 5/31/2025	FY26 Budget 1.0 proposed 6/14/2025	Notes
1	<b>SAYMA FY 2026 Budget</b>						
2	<b>V1.0 proposed</b>						
3	Income	\$83,842	\$96,530	\$84,655	\$32,623	\$88,600	Totals are in Black
4	Adjustments to Income						Individual Items are in Blue
5	Assessments	\$42,142	\$43,664	\$42,955	\$30,793	\$46,900	
6	Asheville	\$4,050	\$4,125	\$4,050		\$4,050	
7	Athens	\$600	\$600	\$600	\$620.00	\$600	
8	Atlanta	\$14,250	\$14,250	\$14,250	\$14,785.00	\$22,000	
9	Berea	\$2,700	\$3,000	\$2,700	\$1,700.00	\$2,700	
10	Birmingham	\$2,100	\$2,100	\$2,100	\$2,179.25	\$2,100	
12	Celo	\$2,925	\$3,038	\$3,225	\$2,162.50	\$1,100	
13	Charleston						
14	Chattanooga	\$1,960	\$2,269	\$1,960		\$0	
15	Columbia	\$1,800	\$1,800	\$1,800	\$1,530.00	\$1,530	
16	Cookeville	\$500	\$675	\$500	\$680.00	\$500	
17	Crossville		\$0	\$0		\$0	
19	Greenville	\$825	\$825	\$825		\$825	
20	Huntsville	\$1,120	\$1,120	\$1,120	\$560.00	\$1,120	
21	Memphis	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$1,500.00	\$3,000	
22	Nashville	\$3,375	\$3,375	\$3,375	\$2,400.00	\$3,375	
23	Oxford	\$200	\$0	\$0		\$0	
24	Swannanoa Valley						
25	West Knoxville	\$2,737	\$3,488	\$3,450	\$2,676.50	\$4,000	
26	Contributions – General	\$3,000	\$16,029	\$3,000	\$1,145.00	\$3,000	
27	Interest - CD						
28	Interest - Money Mkt	\$600	\$1,323	\$600	\$684.93	\$600	
29	Publication Sales	\$0	\$31	\$0		\$0	
32	YM Income	\$38,100	\$35,482	\$38,100	\$0	\$38,100	
33	YM Adjustments to Income (Kenworthy)	\$4,500	\$5,785	\$4,500		\$4,500	
34	YM Bookstore Inc	1,300	252	1,300		1,300	
35	YM Receipts	31,100	29,179	31,100		31,100	
36	YM Scholarship Contrib	1,200	266	1,200		1,200	
37							
38	Expenses	\$100,977	\$94,151	\$100,424	\$32,470	\$106,204	

A	B	Y	Z	AA	AB	AC	AD
		FY24 Budget 1.1 Approved 6/21/2024	FY24 Actual 9/30/2024	FY25 Budget 1.0 Approved 6/22/2024	FY25 Actual YTD 5/31/2025	FY26 Budget 1.0 proposed 6/14/2025	Notes
1	SAYMA FY 2026 Budget						
2	V1.0 proposed						
39	Adjustments to Expenses						
40	SAYMA Operations	\$49,977	\$44,337	\$49,274	\$32,470	\$57,054	
41	SAYF Operational Transfers	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	
57	Bookkeeping Costs - QuickBooks Online	\$960	\$841	\$960	\$821.70	\$960	
42	Liability Insurance	\$925	\$830	\$925	\$1,351.00	\$1,500	
43	Office Admin	\$3,150	\$1,545	\$3,150	\$249	\$1,950	
44	Banking Fees		\$79		\$79.78	\$100	Square processing fees
45	Office - Duplication	\$50	\$0	\$50	\$0.00	\$50	
46	Office - Guilford Archiving	\$150	\$150	\$150		\$150	
47	Office - Supplies, Equip, Misc	\$50	\$0	\$50	\$100.31	\$50	
48	Office - Officer Exp	\$150	\$0	\$150	\$0.00	\$150	
49	Office - Electronic Services	\$1,500	\$430	\$1,500	\$39.90	\$200	
50	Office - Postage	\$50	\$4	\$50		\$50	
51	Office - Volunteer Bkgrd Chks	\$400	\$251	\$400	\$28.98	\$400	
52	Travel - Office Staff	\$800	\$631	\$800		\$800	
53	Payroll Expenses	\$36,242	\$33,755	\$39,039	\$25,870	\$43,244	
54	Payroll Costs		\$1,475		\$2,751.50		Friends Journal ads \$1,250 pd FY25 for previous years
55	Salaries Exp		\$30,978		\$21,475.44		
56	Tax Payments		\$1,302		\$1,642.86		
58	Publications Expenses	\$500	\$0	\$500	\$0	\$800	
59	Pub Exp - Directory						
60	Pub Exp - Faith & Practice	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
61	Pub Exp - Newsletter						
62	Pub Exp - Web & Hosting Srvc	\$500	\$0	\$500	\$0	\$800	
63	SAYMA Committees	\$4,200	\$3,650	\$700	\$320	\$2,100	
64	Cmte Exp – Contingency Pool	\$300	\$0	\$300	\$159.90	\$300	
65	Cmte Exp - Faith & Practice Rvsn	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0.00	\$0	
66	Cmte Exp - Finance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0.00	\$1,000	financial relview
67	Cmte Exp - Ministry & Nurture	\$200	\$0	\$200	\$0.00	\$200	
68	Cmte Exp - Nominating	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0.00	\$0	
69	Cmte Exp - Outreach	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0.00	\$0	

A	B	Y	Z	AA	AB	AC	AD
		FY24 Budget 1.1 Approved 6/21/2024	FY24 Actual 9/30/2024	FY25 Budget 1.0 Approved 6/22/2024	FY25 Actual YTD 5/31/2025	FY26 Budget 1.0 proposed 6/14/2025	Notes
1	SAYMA FY 2026 Budget						
2	V1.0 proposed						
70	Cmte Exp - Peace & Social Concerns	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0.00	\$0	
71	Cmte Exp - SAYMA Earth Justice						
72	Cmte Exp - Uplifting Racial Justice	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0.00	\$200	
73	Cmte Exp - WQO Allotments						
74	Cmte Exp - Operational Handbook	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0.00	\$0	
75	Cmte Exp - JYM Support						
76	Cmte Exp - Personnel						
77	Cmte Exp - SAYF Support						
78	Cmte Exp - SAYF Steering						
79	Ad Hoc Exp - URJ Support						
80	Cmte Exp - Yearly Meeting Planning	\$200	\$150	\$200	\$159.90	\$200	
81	Ad Hoc Exp - Racial Conflict Training	\$3,500	\$3,500			\$200	Donations should cover FY25
82	Travel Reimbursements	\$2,500	\$2,217	\$2,500	\$2,358	\$5,000	
83	Travel - Rep Meetings	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
84	Travel - WQO Delegates	\$2,500	\$2,217	\$2,500	\$2,358.45	\$5,000	
85	Set-aside Fund Annual Allotments	\$5,150	\$5,150	\$4,800	\$0	\$4,800	
86	Boone MM In Trust						
87	FWCC 3rd World Delg Annl Exp	\$750	\$750	\$400		\$400	Hold until Near EOY
88	FWCC Conference Annl Exp	\$400	\$400	\$400		\$400	Hold until Near EOY
89	Released Friend Annl Exp	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000		\$2,000	Hold until Near EOY
90	Spiritual Development Annl Exp	\$500	\$500	\$500		\$500	Hold until Near EOY
91	Uplifting Racial Justice Annl Exp	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500		\$1,500	Hold until Near EOY
92	YAF Scholarships Annl Exp						
93	Youth Enrichment Fund Annl Exp						
94	Yearly Meeting Gathering	\$38,100	\$34,150	\$38,100	\$0	\$38,100	JYM no longer sums here
95	Facilities & Services Exp	\$35,800	\$32,967	\$35,800	\$0	\$35,800	
96	YM Accommodations & Meals	\$34,200	\$26,524	\$34,200		\$34,200	
97	Financial Services Fees (Eventbrite)	\$0	\$2,133	\$0		\$0	
98	YM Honoraria and Speaker Travel	\$500	\$700	\$500		\$500	
99	YM Services	\$700	\$3,610	\$700		\$700	
100	YM Supplies	\$400		\$400		\$400	
101	YM Bookstore Exp	\$1,300	\$396	\$1,300		\$1,300	



A	B	Y	Z	AA	AB	AC	AD
		FY24 Budget 1.1 Approved 6/21/2024	FY24 Actual 9/30/2024	FY25 Budget 1.0 Approved 6/22/2024	FY25 Actual YTD 5/31/2025	FY26 Budget 1.0 proposed 6/14/2025	Notes
1	SAYMA FY 2026 Budget						
2	V1.0 proposed						
102	YM Print Post Phone & Misc	\$1,000	\$788	\$1,000		\$1,000	
103	Junior Yearly Meeting Exp	\$6,500	\$5,013	\$7,000	\$0	\$5,000	
104	JYM Asst Coordinator(s)		\$2,700				
105	JYM Coordinator(s)		\$1,980				
106	JYM Supplies, Sitters, Misc		\$333				
107	Quaker Membership Orgs Annual Contribns	\$1,250	\$2,500	\$1,250	\$0	\$1,250	
108	WQO - FGC	\$625	\$1,250	\$625		\$625	Restore if funds are available
109	WQO - FWCC - Direct Contrbn	\$625	\$1,250	\$625		\$625	Restore if funds are available
110	WQO - FWCC - Capital Campaign	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	Restore if funds are available
111	Other WQO Annual Contribns	\$0	\$3,000	\$0		\$0	Restore if funds are available
124	Net(Surplus/Deficit) before Reserve Change:	-\$17,134	\$2,379	-\$15,769	\$153	-\$17,604	
125	Yearly Gathering Net:	\$0	\$1,332	\$0	\$0	\$0	
126							
127	Reserve Change:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
128	Net(Surplus/Deficit) with Reserve Change	-\$17,134	\$2,379	-\$15,769	\$153	-\$17,604	
131							
132	Reserve	\$22,208	\$22,208	\$22,208	\$22,208	\$22,208	
133	Undesignated Funds	\$1,883	\$19,332	\$3,563	\$19,486	-\$14,041	AC133 Based on AA133
135	AB135 projected EOY Undesignated fund				\$7,000	-\$10,604	AC135 Based on AB135
137	File: FY26 Budget - V1.0 proposed						

## Attachment F: Nominating Committee Report

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

Open Positions 6/14/2025

Colors: None: no  
change

New Continuing Open Discerning  
Term ends Mtg Appointee

	First Name	Last Name	Position	Current Ter	Position Term
<b>OFFICERS AND INDIVIDUAL POSITIONS</b>	Officers and Individual Positions		Assist Clerk		1-2-1
			Recording Clerk		2
			Asst Treasurer		1-2-1
	Finance Committee		Clerk	2025-2027	2
			member	2022-2024	2
	WQO Allocations		member		2
			member		2
	SAYF Support		Clerk		2
			member		2
	JYM Support		member		2
<b>STANDING COMMITTEES</b>	Yearly Meeting Planning Committee		Co-registrar		2
			SAYF Rep		2
			member		2
	Web Manager Support		member		2
					2
					2
					2
					2
					2
	Peace and Social Concerns		Clerk		2
			member		2
			member		2
			member		2
			member		2
			member		2
	Earth Justice		Clerk	2022-2024	2
			member	2022-2024	2
			member		2
	Outreach		member		2
			member		2
			YAF member		2
	Southern Appalachian Friend		editor		2
					2
					2
	Operational Handbook		Clerk	2022-2024	2
			member	2022-2024	2

			3
	AFSC Corp		3
	FCNL	2022-2025	3
	FGC	2023-2026	3
	FLGBTQC	2022-2025	3
Representatives to Wider Quaker Organizations	FWCC	2022-2025	3
	Friends Peace Teams	2021-2024	3
	Q Earth		3
	Witness		3
	Quaker House		3
	RSWR		3

Positions to be Approved 6/14/2025

Colors:		New	Continuing	Open	Discerning			
			Term ends	Mtg Appointee				
		First Name	Last Name	Position	Current Term	Meeting	Position Term	
OFFICERS AND INDIVIDUAL POSITIONS	Officers and Individual Positions	Robert	Collins	Archivist	2025-2027	Birmingham	2	
	Ministry and Nurture	Blake	Burr	member	2025-2027	Memphis	2	
		Margaret	Farmer	member	2025-2027	Asheville	2	
	Finance Committee	Kendall	Ivie	member	2025-2027	West Knoxville	2	
		Karen	Morris	member	2025-2026	Atlanta	2	
		Tribal	Raine	member	2025-2027	Paul Cuffee W	2	
	WQO Allocations	Charlie	Wilton	Clerk	2025-2027	Berea	2	
		Geeta	McGahey	member	2025-2027	Celo	2	
	STANDING COMMITTEES	Personnel Committee	Melissa	Preast	member	2025-2027	West Knoxville	2
			Jennifer	Killen	Supervisor	SAYF PC	Durham	
SAYF Steering		Jennifer	Killen	Clerk	2025-2027	Durham	2	
		Beth	Meyers	member	2025-2027	Lexington	2	
		J ulia	Hudson	member	2025-2027	Celo	2	
		Asa	Kramer-Dickie	member	2025-2026	Atlanta	2	
		Stoph	Hallward	member	2025-2027	Atlanta	2	
		Emma	Yockey	member	2025-2027	Nashville	2	
		Danielle	Capillo	member	2025-2027	Berea	2	
SAYF Support		Jennifer	Dickie	member	2025-2027	Atlanta	2	
		Lee Ann	Swarm	member	2025-2027	West Knoxville	2	
							2	
JYM Support		Rose	Black	member	2025-2027	Cookeville	2	
Yearly Meeting Planning Committee		Lee Ann	Swarm	Adult Program	2025-2027	W. Knoxville	2	
		Braden	Mills	Co-registrar	2025-2027	Berea	2	
		Judy	Geary	Bookstore	2025-2027	Boone	2	
		Kim	Saderholm	On-Site Coordi	2025-2027	Berea	2	
		Judy	Geary	Layout Editor	2025-2027	Boone	2	
		Kendall	Ivie	FC Rep	FC Rep	West Knoxville		
Web Manager Support Committee		Annie	Black	member	2025-2027	Cookeville	2	
	Susan	Phelan	member	2025-2027	Huntsville	2		

Representatives to Wider Quaker Organizations	FCNL	Jane	Hiles	2025-2028	Birmingham	3
						3
	FWCC	Alison	Mawle	2025-2028	Atlanta	3
		Star	Smith	2025-2028	Paul Cuffee W	3
Colors:      None: no char						
		New	Continuing	Open		



## **Attachment G: Roster for Annual Sessions**

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

The SAYMA Annual Sessions registration roster for YM 2025 - 54 will be included in the archived version of these minutes.

## **Attachment H: Agenda for Session II**

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

### **SAYMA Sessions and Retreat 2025 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business Agenda (updated to reflect what was covered)**

#### **Sunday, June 22, 8:00-9:30 am Eastern (Session IIA), Hybrid - In Person & Virtual**

- Welcome
- Roll Call & Acknowledge Visitors
- Agenda & Guidelines Review
- Naming Committee present any new nominations (Report)
- Nominating Committee - 1st reading of new nominations (Report)
- Committee Reports accepted into minutes (highlights reported)
  - a. SAYF Steering Committee
  - b. Racial Conflict Transformation Team
  - c. SAYMA Uplifting Racial Justice
  - d. Ministry & Nurture
  - e. JYM Support Committee
  - f. Report of the Web Manager 2025
  - g. SAYF Annual Report
- Spotlight on FWCC

#### **Sunday, June 22, 12:45-3:15 pm (Session IIB), Hybrid - In Person & Virtual**

- Welcome to New Visitors and Monthly Meetings
- Agenda & Guidelines Reminder
- Nominating Committee 2nd presentation of all nominations (Discernment)
- Treasurer's Report accepted into the minutes
  - a. Balance Sheet YTD
  - b. Budget vs. Actual
  - c. Income and Expense
  - d. Funds Report
- Finance Committee - 2nd reading of the proposed budget (Discernment)

## **Attachment I: SAYF Steering Committee Report**

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

### **SAYF Steering Committee Report Yearly Meeting 2025**

SAYF has had a wonderful year, continuing to rebuild and deepen in connection, despite some unique challenges this year. SAYMA at Berea last year was an excellent start, with an opportunity for SAYFers to share their lived experience with the wider community during the plenary session. Several SAYFers presented on how they build community, even when there are disagreements and varied perspectives. We heard from many members of the community that it was an inspiring point of connection. As a part of SAYMA we work to minimize costs as much as possible, so we are pleased that as our numbers have grown and with careful stewardship we have been able to cover the basic retreat costs of groceries and activities with registration fees. This year we have directed funds and planning time to make sure that young friends from Western North Carolina have been able to participate as they are able, despite the devastation that Hurricane Helene brought to that region in late September. We had to adjust the retreat locations for the fall and had volunteer drivers from other areas assist in getting youth to the retreats. We were so glad that we could return to Celo for our March retreat, a milestone in the recovery efforts. We had our first retreat in several years at Nashville this spring, and the local FAN and nurturers did a stellar job.

I am also particularly pleased that in addition to growth in our young friends, we have grown our base of adult volunteers. It is an enormous amount of work to drive youth from multiple states to meet at a location, bring enough food for 20-30 people, and (in collaboration with the youth) cooking, cleaning and keeping everyone with the same number of fingers and toes as when they arrived. Beyond the logistics, the Steering committee and our program coordinator Autumn Woodward do faithful work in supporting the growth and development of the youth nurturers and considering how to shepherd SAYF so it can continue to be a beacon for youth for decades to come.

Inspiring is a word that frequently comes up for the adult volunteers that have the privilege to be with these young friends during their retreats. As clerk of Steering Committee for the last three years, and as a Steering Committee member and FAN for many years prior, I have borne witness to the transformation that occurs as young friends practice over and over again what it means to be a community – to explicitly work to include those who may feel excluded, to encourage each member to self-advocate for their own needs while also caring for the needs of others, to do the work of cooking, cleaning, and setting a schedule, to find time to play, time to serve others and time to worship in silence. I can also speak as a parent whose now young adult child spent many of her formative years in SAYF and continues to speak of the impact it had on her as she steps into other communities. I know I speak for all of us – youth, parents,

volunteers, when I say we are so grateful for the support of SAYMA – financial and otherwise. It has been a truly life-shaping event to be clerk of the SAYF Steering committee, and I am beyond grateful to be passing the torch to the able hands of Jennifer Killen, the upcoming clerk who I am positive will bring new energy to the role.

Peace,

Christopher de Beer

Clerk, SAYF Steering Committee

## **Attachment J: Racial Conflict Transformation Team Report**

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

### **Racial Conflict Transformation Team Report, SAYMA Sessions & Retreat 2025**

Identify Quaker resources available to aid us in this work.

iii. To implement the process as needed to address racial conflict.

The committee consists of:

- i. Interested SAYMA Friends of Color
- ii. SAYMA Presiding clerk(s)
- iii. Clerks or representatives from M&N Committee, Yearly Meeting Planning Committee, the Racial Justice Working Group, and the Finance Committee and/or SAYMA Treasurer
- iv. Additional members may be added as needed for the work.

The committee meets monthly, calling additional meetings as necessary.

One of the RCT's primary goals is working to decenter racial conflicts from being about individuals and personalities to focus on the systemic nature of racism among Friends as the source of our racial problem, thereby laying the path to resolutions. We have come to see that racial conflict largely derives from white Friends struggling with their internalized racism, and not from Friends of Color who point out the racism they experience among us. Our work as white Friends on the committee is to analyze the racial power dynamics we see in racial conflict, and to work with white Friends who may have gaps in their understanding of what racism is and how it functions within our society. We hope that doing so will avoid the problem of placing the burden of said cultural incompetence onto Friends of Color and causing further harm and/or Injustice. We believe this struggle is SAYMA's spiritual opportunity to grow into being a truly anti-racist, multicultural community that Quaker Testimonies would have us be.

This involves:

- Responding to racial issues when they arise.
- Providing anti-racist analysis, perspective, and support to all concerned parties, and working to build pathways for mutual understanding and growth.
- Generating opportunities for Friends to engage with racial conflict as an opportunity for growth, rather than seeing it as an intractable state.
- Offering strategies and practices to address racial conflict, such as restorative justice circles, to Monthly Meetings.

The Racial Conflict Transformation Team has been reaching out to those who have lingering concerns since last year's Yearly Meeting offering transformation or restorative practices. We are also working to address racial conflict within our YM by assisting the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee to hold spaces for racial "healing" at annual sessions. We are sponsoring this year's plenary, "Twenty Years of Racial Justice Ministry Among Friends: Star's Story," during which Star Smith, clerk of SAYMA Uplifting Racial Justice (URJ), will share her experience and

insights as a Friend of Color led to engage in racial justice ministry that challenges white Friends on their racism and racism denial. This program will include affinity group work for white Friends and Friends of Color to explore their reactions to Star's story. Hopefully, hearing and reflecting upon Star's story will enable us to move forward, rather than remaining stuck in painful moments of the past. The program also includes opportunities for Friends to engage in a restorative community-building activity together designed to move us beyond our racial fears and anger, toward a healthy racial conflict transformation process. We are hoping to have a community building circle in the next few months to continue this process throughout the year.

SAYMA's Racial Conflict Transformation Team (RCTT) is committed to seeing SAYMA through its racial conflicts, which, in our view, has been allowed to fester for too many years without resolution. We are committed to exploring strategies to nurture racial justice among Friends in an ethical and compassionate manner.

Racial Conflict Transformation Team

Lissa Place, Clerk

June 2025

## Attachment K: SAYMA Uplifting Racial Justice Report

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

### SAYMA.URJ Report. June 2025

Uplifting Racial Justice (URJ) is a standing committee of the Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA), comprised entirely of Friends of color.

#### Who We Are

Mission: ***SAYMA Uplifting Racial Justice (URJ)*** provides space for Friends of color to bring issues and concerns regarding racism and to find support and advocacy. The committee also works to raise awareness about white supremacy/racism among Friends by compiling and disseminating educational resources.

#### How URJ Fulfills its Mission:

**URJ established the Paul Cuffee Worship Group (PGWG)** for people of color who wish to worship in the manner of Friends in fellowship with other Friends of color. The PCWG meets virtually for worship twice a month, on New Moons and Full Moons. Friends of color who wish to join us in worship can contact us at [urj@sayma.org](mailto:urj@sayma.org) to request a schedule.

**The Interactive Racial Justice Resource List at sayma.org** was created in collaboration with the SAYMA Racial Justice Working Group. Find the full interactive list on the SAYMA website at [www.sayma.org](http://www.sayma.org), under Committees/Racial Justice. (URJ feels that the resource list is not easy to find on the SAYMA website; therefore, URJ requests that it be made accessible from the front page.)

**Racial Conflict Transformation Program: Understanding Racism/White Supremacy: What it IS, How it WORKS, and What Friends Can DO About it.** This program is a unique opportunity to engage in meaningful conversations and transformative experiences aimed at expanding our capacity to hold space for uncomfortable conversations about race and racism in Quaker circles and what it takes to resolve racial conflicts between Friends.

#### Program Details:

3-Module Systemic Racial Analysis Training Series: thoughtfully curated and led by the SAYMA Racial Conflict Transformation team, and monthly facilitated worship/study Affinity groups.

Module #1 What IS Racism/White Supremacy/Racism and How it Works?

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

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

The systemic racial analysis training sessions provide invaluable insights and practical tools for identifying, analyzing, and addressing racial conflict in Quaker spaces, toward understanding and dismantling systemic racism as part of the process of becoming an anti-racist faith community, competent to welcome diverse peoples of color and families.

We have already observed dynamic outcomes from this program, which was developed by Quakers for Quakers. Though we are still laboring through SAYMA's racial conflict, we are witnessing a loving and growing power of embodied anti-racist praxis in our meetings as a result of this racial conflict transformation program.

**The Racial Justice Fund:** Offers mutual aid for Friends of color experiencing racism—ALL people of color experience racism.

In past years, URJ has been fortunate to provide mutual aid to Friends of color in need. We paid rent during the pandemic, helped several Friends repair vehicles, and covered moving and travel expenses. We have given aid to start-up businesses, emergency operating funds to a FOC-led non-profit, and contributed to bail funds for a young Friend in need of legal support. We are proud of our record.

URJ started with a healthy budget of over \$20,000 in 2018. Yet after five (5) plus years of organized opposition from a few Friends in positions of authority standing in the way of URJ funding, URJ has less than \$2,000 left to fulfill its mission to provide mutual aid support and advocacy for Friends of color experiencing racism.

Point of Information:

In a rogue white supremacist colonial settler state, founded on crimes against humanity such as genocide, slavery, rape and theft, maintained by ongoing and relentless racially motivated violence, ALL BIPOC experience racism 24/7/365. In other words, all day, every day, and every hour, there is an individual, a family, or community adversely impacted by settler colonial white supremacy. And now there are actual Nazis in control of our government.

Therefore, SAYMA Uplifting Racial Justice (URJ) asks Friends—individuals and meetings--to contribute according to your capacity as generously as you can to URJ's Racial Justice Fund. Thereby fulfilling your commitment to our Quaker testimonies of Integrity, Equality, and Community. We aim to raise \$20,000 in mutual aid funds for Friends of Color this year.

## **Why?**

We are living in unprecedented times—even for white people. As the old saying goes, “When the rest of America catches a cold, Black folks end up with pneumonia.”

White supremacists in power are deliberately violating the Constitution, the Bill of



Rights, and the civil and economic rights of Black and Indigenous Americans. Ever since what Bishop William Barber calls “that twice impeached criminally convicted felon-in-chief” was inaugurated, racism, xenophobia, exploitation, and corporate greed have run amok amid “epidemic poverty in the wealthiest country in the world”. Corporate greed has gone unchecked, exacerbating already extreme inequality, as “our political leaders abdicate their moral and civic responsibilities.”

**DATA:** Supplied by Bishop William Barber (Not for the faint of heart.)

Poverty is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest cause of death in America. 800 people die every day from poverty. Out of 140 million poor and low-income people, 60% are Black (26 million), and 30% are white (66 million).

Meanwhile, according to Musk, all jobs will be replaced by computers and smart machines by 2035, while cutting the nation’s social safety net. Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, SNAP, and HUD are being cut, in the name of waste and abuse, to give tax breaks to billionaires and even more money to the military-industrial complex. 3.9 million families receive eviction notices in a typical year, and now those numbers will only go up.

68 million people receive Social Security and Medicare benefits. As of 2021, 42% of Americans aged 56 -64 have zero retirement savings, and BIPOC have always had lower median incomes in their retirement years than white Americans.

72 million people are enrolled in Medicaid as of October 2024. 7 million are enrolled in CHIP (Children’s health Insurance program). 60% of nursing homes depend on Medicaid. (36 million people are impacted).

Food Assistance: 230 billion in cuts. In 2024, SNAP and WIC served 41 million people: 1 in 5 children, 37% white, 26% Black, 16% Latino, 3% Asian, and 2% Native American.

Head Start: serves 650 thousand children.

Assaults on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is a blatant attack on federal workers in the name of eliminating waste and abuse, intentionally targeting the Black Middle class: 1 in 5 federal employees are African American. Qualified and often overqualified BIPOC are being fired or forced to resign and replaced by unqualified white supremacists.

Violations of First Amendment rights to freedom of speech and peaceful assembly, attacks on the Voting Rights Act, due process, and 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment birthright citizenship are blatant assaults on the Black, Latino, and Native American communities.

Each day brings more alarming news for everyone, especially Friends of Color, who tend to be predominantly Black and middle class. This is just not a good time for

feel-good performative allyship. IF you care to be in right relationship with our most impacted community members, now is the time for comfortably middle-class white people to put your money where you say your values are.

“In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our Friends.” --Martin Luther King, Jr.

**How YOU Can Help:** Speak out, speak up. Demand more from your elected officials: Call this # 202.224.3120, and give them a piece of your mind, regularly.

Use your economic power: Boycott organizations, institutions, and corporations with no working Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policies in place. Boycott Walmart, Target, Amazon, and Starbucks. (NO DEI =NO BUY!) DO support small local BIPOC owned businesses, buy second-hand, reuse, recycle, repurpose, instead.

Generously support the SAYMA Uplifting Racial Justice Fund.

### **Ways to Support URJ**

Remember, SAYMA Uplifting Racial Justice (URJ) provides support and advocacy for Friends of Color experiencing racism--ALL Friends of color are experiencing racism. To that end, URJ established an Uplifting Racial Justice Fund in 2019. It is a donor-restricted, tax-exempt fund. Donors may specify the purpose of donor-restricted contributions to the URJ Racial Justice Fund in one of three ways:

1. Memo line of check
2. Note or letter accompanying check
3. SAYMA Square Contribution: [Link](#)

*For finance questions about URJ, please email [treasurer@sayma.org](mailto:treasurer@sayma.org).*

For questions about URJ's operations, contact the URJ clerk at [urj@sayma.org](mailto:urj@sayma.org).

In Friendship,

Star Smith, clerk of URJ

Approved by URJ on March 11, 2025

## **Attachment L: Ministry and Nurture Committee Report**

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

### **Ministry and Nurture Report to Annual Sessions 2025**

Ministry and Nurture had a full year working hard to live into the Spirit. We started with an in-person retreat where we worked to support SAYMA by studying *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation* by John Paul Lederach. This book helped guide our discussions about how to support SAYMA and Monthly Meetings as we practice conflict transformation. We discussed strategies to support the clerk in business meeting, as well as how to provide space for Ministry and Nurture to become a place where Friends are able to bring conflict and work it out together. We allowed space for our committee to heal together from past harms. We felt closer after the retreat.

Ministry and Nurture has tried to re-establish face-to-face connections among Friends and Meetings after a period of diminished intervisitation due to the pandemic. We have attempted to respond in this way to the needs of Meetings that have said they were struggling with their relationship with SAYMA. We visited two of these Monthly Meetings and listened to their concerns. As a group, we would like to visit Meetings in SAYMA more regularly, particularly at this time when Meetings are feeling tension with SAYMA. It is our hope that this will help Meetings to a more open understanding of what is happening in SAYMA now. We remain committed to hearing all voices and helping Friends gain clarity about their relationship to SAYMA. We are aware of the different dynamics of in-person and virtual gatherings, and encourage Friends to engage in more frequent intervisitations between yearly sessions.

During the virtual Spring Representative Meeting, three Friends from Ministry and Nurture were present at the Clerk's table holding the meeting in the Light and providing support in any way that was needed. The Clerk indicated that this presence was helpful, particularly when challenges arose.

As always, Ministry and Nurture managed the Released Friends Fund and the Spiritual Development Fund. We had less money to distribute than in the past and hope that this will be remedied in the future.

All in all, our committee worked this year to get our act together. We maintained a spirit of growing together and being willing to share differing views with each other, while being open to criticism. We met regularly with good attendance all year. We look forward to continued spiritual growth, and representation from every Monthly Meeting in the coming year.

Lissa Place, Clerk

June 2025

## **Attachment M: Junior Yearly Meeting Support Committee Report**

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

### **Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) Support Committee Report to SAYMA**

**Submitted by Laura Lane, clerk**

**June 2025**

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Due to anticipated lower numbers, we again offered a combined JYM and Playcare program for ages 2-12. We also offered babysitting for children under 2 years of age.

Children's attendance was down a bit this year. There are 10 children registered, ages 2-11. They represented 6 different monthly meetings or worship groups and included a couple first time attendees. Most of the children attending have been with SAYMA since the time they were toddlers, and it has been a joy to see their friendships grow and deepen over the years.

Our staff this year includes program coordinator Laura MacNorlin (Atlanta) with assistants Connor McMahon (Atlanta), Hugh Thomforde (Cookeville), and J Thomas (Atlanta). We are grateful that three of our four staff are returning from previous years and already have relationships with most of the children. We are also supported by the JYM committee and volunteers and families from the broader SAYMA community.

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

We had hoped to continue our momentum with the JYM family retreats. Our fall retreat was to be held in Asheville and had to be cancelled due to the impacts of Hurricane Helene. In the spring, the Atlanta meeting was already hosting the QREC (Quaker Religious Education Collaborative) annual conference. We invited our SAYMA families to attend that conference, but did not have a separate family retreat. We hope to rekindle these retreats next year, as we believe these retreats will continue strengthening connections between children and parents and grow our JYM community in SAYMA. We are hearing from many meetings that they are finally beginning to have families and young children return, post COVID. We hope to continue our outreach to these new attenders to pull them into our larger SAYMA family community.

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

Laura Lane (Asheville), clerk

Alexis Hamnett (from Nashville, continues to be involved with our committee on her own)

Rose Black (Cookeville)

Laura MacNorlin (attending as JYM coordinator)

## Attachment N: Report of the Web Manager - 2025

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

### Report of the Web Manager

June 2025

Our website should serve the needs of the monthly meetings, worships groups, committees, staff, clerks, and individual Friends that make up SAYMA. If the website could better support you or the work you are trying to accomplish, please be in touch.

Friends can help me to keep the website useful in the following ways:

- **Committee clerks:** please let me know if you would like space on sayma.org to publish news and information on whatever work you are doing.
- **Monthly Meeting clerks and SAYMA Reps, or anyone else who spots something incorrect or out of date:** please help me keep your meeting's information current on the sayma.org website.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlie Wilton

SAYMA web manager

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

## Attachment O: SAYF Annual Report

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

### SAYF Annual Report to SAYMA

June 13, 2025

Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) held 6 regular retreats during the past retreat cycle, August 2024-May 2025, with SAYF at SAYMA retreat upcoming. There were two Nurturing Committee retreats in August and February, meeting jointly for business with SAYF Steering Committee. SAYF will meet in Berea, KY on June 20-23, 2025 for SAYMA's yearly gathering.

Typical retreat size has been 20-26 Young Friends (YF) per retreat across the six regular retreats during the school year, with a couple of retreats having lower attendance (the October retreat following Hurricane Helene, which affected travel) and the lovely Nashville retreat (which is far for some meetings to travel), for an overall average of about 20 teens per retreat. The Nurturing Committee has grown again, following diminishment in numbers during Covid times, and is active, engaged and discerning.

#### SAYF Retreats:

Retreat	Location	Participants	Theme
Steering, Nurturing and Support Committee Retreat	<b>August 2024</b> Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting	9	<i>Steering, Nurturing and Support Meeting</i>
SAYF Retreat	<b>September, 2024</b> Atlanta Friends Meeting	26	Find relaxation in the environment around you
SAYF Retreat	<b>October, 2024</b> Berea Friends Meeting	11	Fall Funsies
SAYF Retreat	<b>November, 2024</b> Durham Friends Meeting (relocated from Asheville due to Hurricane Helene recovery)	21	Taking care of ourselves and our community
SAYF Retreat	<b>January, 2025</b> Atlanta Friends Meeting	26	Climbing Through Change
Steering, Nurturing and Support Committee Retreat	<b>February, 2025</b> West Knoxville Friends Meeting	12	<i>Steering, Nurturing and Support Meeting</i>
SAYF Retreat	<b>March, 2025</b> Arthur Morgan School, Celo, NC	25	Cultivating Community
SAYF Retreat	<b>May, 2025</b> Nashville Friends Meeting	12	Music in Our Lives, Visit to the National Museum of African American Music



Including Yearly Gathering registrations, 45 different teens have or will have attended at least one retreat during the past year, compared to 40 last 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 SAYF also gathered at Arthur Morgan School (AMS) in Celo, NC. We are deeply appreciative to Friends and to AMS for allowing us to use their facilities. Also, we are thankful to Durham, West Knoxville and Atlanta Friends Meetings, and individual SAYF families, whose generous donations have helped support scholarships for SAYF, and contributed to nourishing the program. Wonderful adult volunteers give their time and energy as Friendly Adult Nurturers (FANs), drivers, retreat hosts and as members of SAYF Steering and Nurturing Committees. The SAYF Nurturing Committee, composed of older SAYFers, guides and gives leadership to the community. SAYF appreciates the great contributions of all members of the community.

### **Sample of Retreat Overviews and Activities**

#### **September 2024 - Atlanta**

This retreat was a great start to the new SAYF year. We began Saturday morning with opening circle followed by the talent show, which was different then when the talent show is usually scheduled, but went off quite well with the teens. We then packed burrito lunches and loaded into cars to drive about 30 minutes west of Atlanta to the Douglasville Animal Shelter, where we picked up 5 dogs through their Doggy Day Out program, and took them to Sweet Water Creek State Park. We spent a couple hours walking the dogs and swimming in the river before returning. Before dinner, young friends had free time and played board games. After dinner, a guest speaker came in and taught us all how to carve our own stamps out of erasers, which the young friends did then printed their stamps on bandanas, cards, and bags. Overall, it was an amazing retreat!

#### **October 2024 - Berea**

Meeting House workday and hike to Berea College Pinnacles. We then packed a sack lunch and ate it at the Pinnacles Amphitheater in the Berea College Forest. The kids performed a talent show on the stage and then we hiked to Indian Fort Lookout. We returned to the meeting house for some free time. Heather Dent from Winterberry Studio joined us for pumpkin decorations. The teens were very creative in their designs.

#### **November 2024 - Durham**

We did mindfulness activities & learned how to do body scans to find out where we are holding stress and how to discharge energy. We explored Duke gardens, performed a skit for our Stone Soup community potluck, then had a Fishbowl with local adults.

#### **January 2025 - Atlanta**

We began Saturday morning with a breakfast made by a SAYFers mom in celebration of her 15th birthday (quinceanera). We learned some about what a quinceanera means as a coming of age ceremony in Latinx culture. Following that we made bottle cap pins, using paint, collage material, and markers, then sealing it with clear nail polish and attaching a pin to the back. After lunch, our plans to hike up Stone Mountain were adjusted due to weather, so we went to the Doll's Head Trail, at Constitution Lakes. The trail is through the Weelaunee forest, and trash that was strewn in the area was collected and made into art for park visitors. We talked briefly about the history of the land and the Muscogee people who lived there, and about Tortugueta who was killed very near to those woods, two years ago on the same day. We held the tension between the violence that has happened on that land and the beauty of the land. In the evening, we

did an impromptu talent show, and finished the evening out with birthday cake and bear.

### **February 2025 - West Knoxville - Nurturing Retreat**

Nurturers from Atlanta, Celo, Asheville, Berea, Durham and Chapel Hill gathered for a nurturers retreat to plan SAYF retreats. We completed productive business meetings on Saturday, and enjoyed time spent talking, watching movies, playing music, and creating amazing hairstyles during our down time.

### **March 2025 - Celo**

This retreat was about being witness of and experiencing how it feels to be in a space such as Celo where we actively participate in a cultivated community. We experienced Tai Chi which grounded us and lead us to tap into the energy around us. We further Immersed ourselves into community land, enjoyed the community of each other and then helped Bruce, the new Camp Celo farmer, with his work. Experienced an exciting new game. The teens hiked and picnicked at a nearby pond. Nearly the entire day was outside with the exception of sleeping, cooking and eating.

### **May 2025 - Nashville**

Although our group was smaller than usual, with many of our dear friends absent due to end-of-school-year commitments, the SAYF group had a great time in Music City. On Saturday, we took a trip to the National Museum of African American Music where we took a walk across time, seeing how African American music arose as a liberatory practice and continues to inspire people to move toward freedom today. After spending time at the Museum, we returned to the meetinghouse to enjoy a potluck with the Nashville Friends Meeting adults followed by musically themed skits and a game of bear.

### **Young Friend Queries**

1. How can we create peace in a hostile world?
2. How do you stand firmly against inequality? How do you peacefully challenge problematic social norms?
3. How do you create and nurture community?
4. How do you practice good social work while nurturing your well being and what avenues exist between those?
5. What do you do that harms/affects the environment and how can you better such impact?
6. In what ways do you use your voices and express your perspectives?
7. How do we support people's identity and growth?
8. When do you reevaluate your perspective?



## **Attachment P: Treasurer's Report for Session II**

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

### **Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association Treasurer's Report on financial sheets for Yearly Meeting, June 2025**

SAYMA's fiscal year is October – September, so the attached reports are as of June 18, 2025 and represent about 2/3 of the year.

General items of note for this fiscal year.

- I assumed the responsibilities of treasurer at the beginning of this fiscal year, September 2024.
- SAYMA uses the Services of QuickBooks Online Plus for bookkeeping and Payroll Elite for managing Payroll. These complex online programs allow multiple users to view and use them. Kendall Ivie as outgoing assistant treasurer has spent countless hours on Zoom teaching me the basics of using these programs. Brianna Kempe, SAYMA bookkeeper assists with the accountant functions required for using the QuickBooks programs, as well as helping us understand the programs. Brianna's help has been essential.
- There remain errors and omissions in the financial sheets below that I will attempt to point out and explain in this report.
- No contributions to Wider Quaker Organizations have been made to date.
- No allotments to Set-Aside funds have been made to date.
- No reports show the activity in the Southern Appalachian Young Friends account which is maintained by SAYF Administrative Assistant, Autumn Woodward.
- Much of the Yearly Meeting Sessions income has been received at this time and few expenses paid. The finances will look quite different after the expenses of YM Sessions have been paid.

### **Descriptions of the following reports**

#### Balance Sheet YTD Comparison

This comparative balance sheet shows SAYMA's assets, liabilities, and equity for 6/18/2025 and 9/29/24.

Report items of note:

- The report shows \$6,417.25 in liabilities as at the end of FY 2024. This is due to checks written toward the end of the year that had not cleared the bank, and payroll taxes at the end of the quarter. There is currently a pending payment of \$1,195.83 for WQO delegate travel reimbursement.
- QuickBooks does not directly compute Undesignated Funds. It is calculated by summing the Undesignated Equity, Undesignated Net Assets and Net Income as follows:

	6/18/2025	9/29/2024
<b>Undesignated Equity</b>	\$30,111.44	\$30,111.44
<b>Unrestricted Net Assets</b>	-\$16,147.55	-\$5,173.27
<b>Net Income</b>	\$33,434.07	-\$5,273.27
<b>Undesignated Funds</b>	\$47,397.96	\$19,662.52

In the past this report was exported to Excel and then massaged. This year we used the report as generated by QuickBooks.

- We expect the Undesignated Funds to be about \$7,000 by 9/30/25. The amount in Undesignated Funds would be less if the yearly meeting gathering runs a deficit which now seems likely.
- The Reserves line is to be about 40% of SAYMA's budget excluding the YM Sessions. SAYMA increased the Reserves to \$22,208 beginning with FY 2023.
- The donor restricted fund balances for Racial Conflict Transformation, SAYF, and URJ Fund are not current. Current information is in the Funds report.
- FWCC SAYMA Intl Delegates - Donor Restricted Funds were \$0.00 not \$1,100.00, and FWCC SAYMA Intl Delegates - Set-Aside Funds were \$5,600 not \$4,500 at the end of FY24. These funds have not changed in FY25.

#### Budget vs. Actuals

This report compares actual income and expenses to the FY 2024 Budget.

#### Income and Expense

This report shows income and expenses this fiscal year to date.  
Donor Restricted Contributions to SAYF total \$460 to date.

#### Fund

This report shows balance and activity for each fund.

Daryl Bergquist, Treasurer



**SAYMA**  
**Balance Sheet YTD Comparison**  
 As of June 18, 2025

	TOTAL	
	AS OF JUN 18, 2025	AS OF SEP 29, 2024 (PP)
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current Assets		
Bank Accounts		
Checking - PNC	49,454.81	20,917.98
Friends Fiduciary	11,443.67	21,443.67
Money Mkt - Self Help	41,592.91	40,907.98
<b>Total Bank Accounts</b>	<b>\$102,491.39</b>	<b>\$83,269.63</b>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$102,491.39</b>	<b>\$83,269.63</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$102,491.39</b>	<b>\$83,269.63</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>		
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable		
Accounts Payable	0.00	5,968.90
<b>Total Accounts Payable</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$5,968.90</b>
Other Current Liabilities		
Payroll taxes payable	0.00	0.00
AL payroll taxes due	0.00	30.59
Federal PR taxes due	0.00	415.36
OH Income Tax	0.00	2.40
<b>Total Payroll taxes payable</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>448.35</b>
<b>Total Other Current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$448.35</b>
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$6,417.25</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$6,417.25</b>
Equity		
Donor-Restricted Funds		
Donor-Restricted Funds	0.00	0.00
FWCC SAYMA Intl Delegates	0.00	1,100.00
Kenworthy Charitable Trust	7,594.50	7,594.50
Racial Conflict Transformation	3,632.10	4,443.05
SAYF	10.00	0.00
URJ Fund	1,042.04	277.30
YAF Scholarships	2,500.00	2,500.00
YM Sessions Scholarships	50.00	0.00
<b>Total Donor-Restricted Funds</b>	<b>14,828.64</b>	<b>15,914.85</b>

	TOTAL	
	AS OF JUN 18, 2025	AS OF SEP 29, 2024 (PP)
Funds Designated by SAYMA	0.00	0.00
Reserves	22,208.00	22,208.00
Set-Aside Funds	0.00	0.00
Fund - Boone MM in Trust	2,677.00	2,677.00
Fund - FWCC 3rd World Delegates	1,500.00	1,500.00
Fund - FWCC SAYMA Intl Delegate	5,600.00	4,500.00
Fund - Released Friend	2,859.00	2,859.00
Fund - Spiritual Development	1,398.04	1,898.04
Fund - Uplifting Racial Justice	512.00	2,122.22
Fund - YAF Scholarship	814.75	814.75
Fund - Youth Enrichment	2,696.00	2,696.00
<b>Total Set-Aside Funds</b>	<b>18,056.79</b>	<b>19,067.01</b>
<b>Total Funds Designated by SAYMA</b>	<b>40,264.79</b>	<b>41,275.01</b>
Undesignated Equity	30,111.44	30,111.44
Unrestricted Net Assets	-16,147.55	-5,173.27
Net Revenue	33,434.07	-5,275.65
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>\$102,491.39</b>	<b>\$76,852.38</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	<b>\$102,491.39</b>	<b>\$83,269.63</b>

# SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN YEARLY MEETING AND ASSOCIATION

Budget vs. Actuals - June 18, 2025

October 2024 - September 2025

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
Revenue				
Assessments				
Asheville		4,050.00	-4,050.00	
Athens	620.00	600.00	20.00	103.33 %
Atlanta	14,785.00	14,250.00	535.00	103.75 %
Berea	1,700.00	2,700.00	-1,000.00	62.96 %
Birmingham	2,179.25	2,100.00	79.25	103.77 %
Celo	2,162.50	3,225.00	-1,062.50	67.05 %
Chattanooga		1,960.00	-1,960.00	
Columbia	1,530.00	1,800.00	-270.00	85.00 %
Cookeville	680.00	500.00	180.00	136.00 %
Crossville		0.00	0.00	
Greenville		825.00	-825.00	
Huntsville	560.00	1,120.00	-560.00	50.00 %
Memphis	1,500.00	3,000.00	-1,500.00	50.00 %
Nashville	2,400.00	3,375.00	-975.00	71.11 %
Oxford		0.00	0.00	
West Knoxville	2,676.50	3,450.00	-773.50	77.58 %
<b>Total Assessments</b>	<b>30,793.25</b>	<b>42,955.00</b>	<b>-12,161.75</b>	<b>71.69 %</b>
Contributions to SAYMA				
Contrib to DR RCT	4,138.63		4,138.63	
Contrib to DR URJ	8,260.00		8,260.00	
Contrib to General Fund	1,745.00	3,000.00	-1,255.00	58.17 %
Contrib to SAYF	460.00		460.00	
<b>Total Contributions to SAYMA</b>	<b>14,603.63</b>	<b>3,000.00</b>	<b>11,603.63</b>	<b>486.79 %</b>
Interest - Money Mkt	684.93	600.00	84.93	114.16 %
YM Sessions Income				
YM Bookstore		1,300.00	-1,300.00	
YM Registration Receipts		31,100.00	-31,100.00	
Scholarships Applied to Fees		4,500.00	-4,500.00	
YM Registration Fees	22,743.32		22,743.32	
<b>Total YM Registration Receipts</b>	<b>22,743.32</b>	<b>35,600.00</b>	<b>-12,856.68</b>	<b>63.89 %</b>
YM Scholarship Contributions	975.00	1,200.00	-225.00	81.25 %
<b>Total YM Sessions Income</b>	<b>23,718.32</b>	<b>38,100.00</b>	<b>-14,381.68</b>	<b>62.25 %</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$69,800.13</b>	<b>\$84,655.00</b>	<b>\$ -14,854.87</b>	<b>82.45 %</b>
<b>GROSS PROFIT</b>	<b>\$69,800.13</b>	<b>\$84,655.00</b>	<b>\$ -14,854.87</b>	<b>82.45 %</b>
Expenditures				
CC Processing Fee	91.98		91.98	
DR or Set-Aside Fund Expense Grant	7,225.00		7,225.00	
DR or Set-Aside Fund Expense Reimbursement	1,056.28		1,056.28	
Junior Yearly Mtg Exp		7,000.00	-7,000.00	
SAYMA Operations				
Banking Costs	20.00		20.00	

Accrual Basis Wednesday, June 18, 2025 12:06 PM GMT-05:00

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	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
Bookkeeping Costs	930.60	960.00	-29.40	96.94 %
Liability Insurance	1,351.00	925.00	426.00	146.05 %
Office Admin				
Office - Duplication		50.00	-50.00	
Office - Electronic Services	39.90	1,500.00	-1,460.10	2.66 %
Office - Guilford Archiving		150.00	-150.00	
Office - Officer Expense		150.00	-150.00	
Office - Postage		50.00	-50.00	
Office - Supplies, Equip, Misc	100.31	50.00	50.31	200.62 %
Office - Volunteer Bkgrnd Chks	28.98	400.00	-371.02	7.25 %
Travel - Office Staff		800.00	-800.00	
<b>Total Office Admin</b>	<b>169.19</b>	<b>3,150.00</b>	<b>-2,980.81</b>	<b>5.37 %</b>
Personnel				
Payroll Service Expenses	2,930.80	3,599.00	-668.20	81.43 %
Payroll Taxes - SAYMA share	1,837.04	2,520.00	-682.96	72.90 %
Salaries - gross	24,013.62	32,920.00	-8,906.38	72.95 %
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>28,781.46</b>	<b>39,039.00</b>	<b>-10,257.54</b>	<b>73.72 %</b>
Publication Expenses				
Pub Exp - Web & Hosting Svcs		500.00	-500.00	
<b>Total Publication Expenses</b>		<b>500.00</b>	<b>-500.00</b>	
SAYMA Committees				
Cmte Exp - Contingency Pool	159.90	300.00	-140.10	53.30 %
Cmte Exp - Ministry & Nurture		200.00	-200.00	
Cmte Exp - YM Planning	159.90	200.00	-40.10	79.95 %
<b>Total SAYMA Committees</b>	<b>319.80</b>	<b>700.00</b>	<b>-380.20</b>	<b>45.69 %</b>
Transfer to SAYF	1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00	100.00 %
Travel Reimbursements				
Travel - WQO Delegates	2,358.45	2,500.00	-141.55	94.34 %
<b>Total Travel Reimbursements</b>	<b>2,358.45</b>	<b>2,500.00</b>	<b>-141.55</b>	<b>94.34 %</b>
<b>Total SAYMA Operations</b>	<b>35,430.50</b>	<b>49,274.00</b>	<b>-13,843.50</b>	<b>71.91 %</b>
Set-aside Fund Annl Allotments				
FWCC 3rd World Delegate Allot		400.00	-400.00	
FWCC SAYMA Intl Delegates Allot		400.00	-400.00	
Released Friend Annl Allotment		2,000.00	-2,000.00	
Spiritual Devt Annl Allotment		500.00	-500.00	
Uplifting Racial Justice Allot		1,500.00	-1,500.00	
<b>Total Set-aside Fund Annl Allotments</b>		<b>4,800.00</b>	<b>-4,800.00</b>	
WQO Annual Contributions				
WQOs - Membership				
WQO - FGC		625.00	-625.00	
WQO - FWCC		625.00	-625.00	
<b>Total WQOs - Membership</b>		<b>1,250.00</b>	<b>-1,250.00</b>	
WQOs - Other				
WQO - BQEF	0.00		0.00	
WQO - Quaker Earthcare Witness	0.00		0.00	
<b>Total WQOs - Other</b>	<b>0.00</b>		<b>0.00</b>	
<b>Total WQO Annual Contributions</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1,250.00</b>	<b>-1,250.00</b>	<b>0.00 %</b>
YM Sessions Expense New				

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
Audio Visual - zoom, internet, equipment rental, staff		1,100.00	-1,100.00	
Bookstore				
Books, Supplies, Shipping		1,300.00	-1,300.00	
<b>Total Bookstore</b>		<b>1,300.00</b>	<b>-1,300.00</b>	
Printing, Phone, etc.		1,000.00	-1,000.00	
Speakers, Guests and Entertainment				
Honoraria, etc.		500.00	-500.00	
Travel	407.36		407.36	
<b>Total Speakers, Guests and Entertainment</b>	<b>407.36</b>	<b>500.00</b>	<b>-92.64</b>	<b>81.47 %</b>
Venue				
Facilities and Conference Fees		34,200.00	-34,200.00	
<b>Total Venue</b>		<b>34,200.00</b>	<b>-34,200.00</b>	
<b>Total YM Sessions Expense New</b>	<b>407.36</b>	<b>38,100.00</b>	<b>-37,692.64</b>	<b>1.07 %</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$44,211.12</b>	<b>\$100,424.00</b>	<b>\$ -56,212.88</b>	<b>44.02 %</b>
NET OPERATING REVENUE	<b>\$25,589.01</b>	<b>\$ -15,769.00</b>	<b>\$41,358.01</b>	<b>-162.27 %</b>
NET REVENUE	<b>\$25,589.01</b>	<b>\$ -15,769.00</b>	<b>\$41,358.01</b>	<b>-162.27 %</b>



Income and Expense Comparison June 17, 2025  
SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN YEARLY MEETING AND ASSOCIATION  
October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	TOTAL	
	OCT 1 2024 - SEP 30 2025	OCT 1 2023 - SEP 30 2024 (PY)
Income		
Assessments	0	0
Athens	620.00	600.00
Atlanta	14,785.00	14,250.00
Berea	1,700.00	3,000.00
Birmingham	2,179.25	2,100.00
Celo	2,162.50	3,037.50
Columbia	1,530.00	1,800.00
Cookeville	680.00	675.00
Huntsville	560.00	1,120.00
Memphis	1,500.00	3,000.00
Nashville	2,400.00	3,375.00
West Knoxville	2,676.50	3,487.50
Asheville		4,125.00
Chattanooga		2,269.26
Greenville		825.00
<b>Total for Assessments</b>	<b>\$30,793.25</b>	<b>\$43,664.26</b>
Contributions to SAYMA	0	0
Contrib to DR RCT	4,138.63	11,250.00
Contrib to DR URJ	8,260.00	653.00
Contrib to General Fund	1,745.00	16,028.67
Contrib to DR YAF Scholarship		2,500.00
<b>Total for Contributions to SAYMA</b>	<b>\$14,143.63</b>	<b>\$30,431.67</b>
Interest - Money Mkt	684.93	1,323.46
YM Sessions Income	0	0
YM Registration Receipts	0	\$28,766.12
YM Registration Fees	22,743.32	412.50
<b>Total for YM Registration Receipts</b>	<b>\$22,743.32</b>	<b>\$29,178.62</b>
YM Scholarship Contributions	975.00	6,051.00
YM Bookstore		252.20
<b>Total for YM Sessions Income</b>	<b>\$23,718.32</b>	<b>\$35,481.82</b>
Publication Sales	0	0
Pub Sales - F&P		31.36
<b>Total for Publication Sales</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$31.36</b>
<b>Total for Income</b>	<b>\$69,340.13</b>	<b>\$110,932.57</b>



Income and Expense Comparison June 17, 2025  
SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN YEARLY MEETING AND ASSOCIATION  
October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	TOTAL	
	OCT 1 2024 - SEP 30 2025	OCT 1 2023 - SEP 30 2024 (PY)
Cost of Goods Sold		
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>\$69,340.13</b>	<b>\$110,932.57</b>
Expenses		
CC Processing Fee	91.98	78.53
DR or Set-Aside Fund Expense Grant	7,225.00	20,134.97
DR or Set-Aside Fund Expense Reimbursement	1,056.28	1,922.48
SAYMA Operations	0	0
Banking Costs	20.00	
Bookkeeping Costs	930.60	841.31
Liability Insurance	1,351.00	829.67
Office Admin	0	0
Office - Electronic Services	39.90	429.90
Office - Supplies, Equip, Misc	100.31	
Office - Volunteer Bkgrnd Chks	28.98	250.94
Office - Guilford Archiving		150.00
Office - Postage		4.40
Travel - Office Staff		631.48
<b>Total for Office Admin</b>	<b>\$169.19</b>	<b>\$1,466.72</b>
Personnel	0	0
Payroll Service Expenses	2,930.80	1,474.63
Payroll Taxes - SAYMA share	1,837.04	1,302.26
Salaries - gross	24,013.62	30,977.73
<b>Total for Personnel</b>	<b>\$28,781.46</b>	<b>\$33,754.62</b>
SAYMA Committees	0	0
Cmte Exp - Contingency Pool	159.90	
Cmte Exp - YM Planning	159.90	149.90
Ad Hoc Exp - Racial Conflict Training		3,500.00
<b>Total for SAYMA Committees</b>	<b>\$319.80</b>	<b>\$3,649.90</b>
Transfer to SAYF	1,500.00	1,500.00
Travel Reimbursements	0	0
Travel - WQO Delegates	2,358.45	2,216.72
<b>Total for Travel Reimbursements</b>	<b>\$2,358.45</b>	<b>\$2,216.72</b>
<b>Total for SAYMA Operations</b>	<b>\$35,430.50</b>	<b>\$44,258.94</b>

Income and Expense Comparison June 17, 2025  
SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN YEARLY MEETING AND ASSOCIATION  
October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	TOTAL	
	OCT 1 2024 - SEP 30 2025	OCT 1 2023 - SEP 30 2024 (PY)
WQO Annual Contributions	0	0
WQOs - Other	0	0
WQO - BQEF		150.00
WQO - Quaker Earthcare Witness		450.00
WQO - AFSC		300.00
WQO - FCNL		450.00
WQO - FLGBTQ		150.00
WQO - Friends Journal		300.00
WQO - Friends Peace Teams		150.00
WQO - Quaker House		450.00
WQO - Quaker Volunteer Service		300.00
WQO - Right Sharing World Res		300.00
<b>Total for WQOs - Other</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$3,000.00</b>
WQOs - Membership	0	0
WQO - FGC		1,250.00
WQO - FWCC		1,250.00
<b>Total for WQOs - Membership</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$2,500.00</b>
<b>Total for WQO Annual Contributions</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$5,500.00</b>
YM Sessions Expense New	0	0
Speakers, Guests and Entertainment	0	0
Travel	407.36	
Honoraria, etc.		700.00
<b>Total for Speakers, Guests and Entertainment</b>	<b>\$407.36</b>	<b>\$700.00</b>
Audio Visual - zoom. internet, equipment rental, staff		3,610.19
Bookstore	0	0
Books, Supplies, Shipping		395.74
<b>Total for Bookstore</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$395.74</b>
Printing, Phone, etc.		787.50
Registration	0	0
Payment Processing Feess		2,132.57
<b>Total for Registration</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$2,132.57</b>

Income and Expense Comparison June 17, 2025  
SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN YEARLY MEETING AND ASSOCIATION  
October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	TOTAL	
	OCT 1 2024 - SEP 30 2025	OCT 1 2023 - SEP 30 2024 (PY)
Venue	0	\$6,150.00
Lodging	0	0
Attender		4,090.00
Friends of Color		360.00
JYM		240.00
SAYF		1,620.00
Staff and Guests		1,440.00
<b>Total for Lodging</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$7,750.00</b>
Meals	0	0
Attender		9,900.00
Friends of Color		630.00
Staff and Guests		1,260.00
<b>Total for Meals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$11,790.00</b>
Sales Tax		834.00
<b>Total for Venue</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$26,524.00</b>
<b>Total for YM Sessions Expense New</b>	<b>\$407.36</b>	<b>\$34,150.00</b>
Junior Yearly Mtg Exp	0	0
JYM Staff	0	0
JYM Asst Coordinator		2,700.00
JYM Coordinator		1,980.00
<b>Total for JYM Staff</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$4,680.00</b>
JYM Supplies, Sitters, Misc		333.30
<b>Total for Junior Yearly Mtg Exp</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$5,013.30</b>
Set-aside Fund Annl Allotments	0	0
FWCC 3rd World Delegate Allot		750.00
FWCC SAYMA Intl Delegates Allot		400.00
Released Friend Annl Allotment		2,000.00
Spiritual Devt Annl Allotment		500.00
Uplifting Racial Justice Allot		1,500.00
<b>Total for Set-aside Fund Annl Allotments</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$5,150.00</b>
<b>Total for Expenses</b>	<b>\$44,211.12</b>	<b>\$116,208.22</b>
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>\$25,129.01</b>	<b>-\$5,275.65</b>
Other Income		
Other Expenses		
<b>Net Other Income</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$25,129.01</b>	<b>-\$5,275.65</b>

## **SAYMA Funds Report 6/18/25**

### **Donor Restricted Funds**

#### **FWCC 3<sup>rd</sup> World Delegates**

This fund started the fiscal year with \$0 and has had no activity.

#### **FWCC SAYMA Intl Delegates**

This fund started the fiscal year with \$0 and has had no activity.

#### **Kenworthy Charitable Trust**

This fund started the fiscal year with \$7,594.50 and has had no activity. Several thousand dollars will be used to support YAFs attending Yearly Meeting Sessions with 50% scholarships.

#### **Racial Conflict Transformation**

\$4,443.05	Beginning balance 9/30/24
	Income
\$2,150.00	Registration Total Cohort 3 paid by 8 people in FY25 (others paid in FY24)
\$1,100.00	Donation Total to RCT Fund from 4 individuals
<u>\$888.63</u>	Donation Total to RCT Fund from 3 monthly meetings
\$4,138.63	Total Income to RCT Fund
	Expenses
\$775.00	Training for Cohort 2
\$1,000.00	Facilitation at YM 2024
\$2,000.00	Training for Cohort 3
\$626.90	Books for Cohort 3
<u>\$18.30</u>	Credit Card Processing Fees
<u>\$4,420.20</u>	Total Expenses from RCT Fund
\$4,161.48	Current Balance RCT Fund 6/18/25

#### **Uplifting Racial Justice**

\$277.30	Beginning balance 9/30/24
	Income
\$7,960.00	Donation Total to URJ Fund from 12 individuals
<u>\$300.00</u>	Donation from 1 monthly meeting
\$8,260.00	Total income to URJ Fund
	Expenses
\$1,600.00	Mutual Aid to 2 individuals or families
\$10.00	Bank Fees for faster payments
<u>\$55.48</u>	Credit Card Processing Fees
<u>\$1,665.48</u>	Total expenses from URJ Fund
<u>\$6,871.82</u>	Current Balance URJ Fund 6/18/25
<u>\$4,314.00</u>	Checks in mail Mutual Aid for 2 others
\$2,557.82	URJ Fund Balance after checks clear

## **Donor Restricted Funds - continued**

### **Southern Appalachian Young Friends**

This fund started the fiscal year with \$0. Funds received in this account are sent by check to SAYF. Funds of \$150 from a monthly meeting were received and sent to SAYF. \$310 was recently donated through Square by two individuals. Square's processing fee was \$11.39. A check for \$298.61 is in the mail to SAYF. The balance in this fund remains effectively \$0.

### **Young Adult Friend Scholarships**

This fund started the fiscal year with \$2,500 and has had no activity.

## **Set-Aside Funds**

### **Boone MM in Trust**

This fund started the fiscal year with \$2677 and has had no activity. These funds were sent to SAYMA when Boone MM was laid down many years ago. Friends are now meeting again in Boone, NC.

### **FWCC 3<sup>rd</sup> World Delegates**

This fund started the fiscal year with \$1,500 and has had no activity.

### **FWCC SAYMA International Delegates**

This fund started the fiscal year with \$5,600 and has had no activity.

### **Released Friend**

This fund started the fiscal year with \$2,859 and has had no activity.

### **Spiritual Development**

This fund started the fiscal year with \$1,898.04. \$500 was sent to help pay student expenses at Earlham School of Religion. Now this fund has \$1,398.04 in it.

### **Uplifting Racial Justice**

This fund started the fiscal year with \$2,122. \$1,600 was sent to a family for Mutual Aid. A \$10 bank fee was charged for that transaction. Now this fund has \$512 in it.

### **YAF Scholarship**

This fund started the fiscal year with \$814.75 and has had no activity.

### **Youth Enrichment**

This fund started the fiscal year with \$2696.00 and has had no activity.



## **Attachment Q: Finance Committee Clerk's Report to Session II**

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

### **June 22, 2025 FY 26 Budget Notes**

Good Morning!

At the open Finance Meeting at lunch on June 21, 6 individuals attended to ask for clarification and to share concerns about the aspirational budget for FY26.

The Finance committee and the Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) Steering committee clerk have begun conversations about supporting the costs of SAYF incurred by SAYMA in a way for Meetings and individuals to donate to help cover the costs of SAYF personnel and operations.

The finance committee met later and has changed the Reserve line 127.  
Also, set aside fund allotments \$4800, (line 85) will not be made if funds are not available.

This brings the ABline 135 projected EOY Undesignated funds into a positive territory.

The Treasurer can answer questions ....

The Finance committee asks for approval of the 2026 V1.1 with the changes noted.

Sincerely, Karen Morris  
Finance clerk

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NFnDxD9ddEnCeaexOE4JfFi6gJp4YQHEBKTHrrbluWE/edit?usp=sharing>

## Attachment R: Proposed Budget for 2026, v.1.1

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

A	B	Y	Z	AA	AB	AC	AD
1	SAYMA FY 2026 Budget	FY24	FY24 Actual	FY25	FY25 Actual	FY26	Notes
2	V1.1 proposed						
3	Income	\$83,842	\$96,530	\$84,655	\$32,623	\$87,775	Totals are in Black
4	Adjustments to Income						Individual Items are in Blue
5	Assessments	\$42,142	\$43,664	\$42,955	\$30,793	\$46,075	
6	Asheville	\$4,050	\$4,125	\$4,050		\$4,050	
7	Athens	\$600	\$600	\$600	\$620.00	\$600	
8	Atlanta	\$14,250	\$14,250	\$14,250	\$14,785.00	\$22,000	
9	Berea	\$2,700	\$3,000	\$2,700	\$1,700.00	\$2,700	
10	Birmingham	\$2,100	\$2,100	\$2,100	\$2,179.25	\$2,100	
12	Celo	\$2,925	\$3,038	\$3,225	\$2,162.50	\$1,100	
14	Chattanooga	\$1,960	\$2,269	\$1,960		\$0	
15	Columbia	\$1,800	\$1,800	\$1,800	\$1,530.00	\$1,530	
16	Cookeville	\$500	\$675	\$500	\$680.00	\$500	
17	Crossville		\$0	\$0		\$0	
19	Greenville	\$825	\$825	\$825		\$0	
20	Huntsville	\$1,120	\$1,120	\$1,120	\$560.00	\$1,120	
21	Memphis	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$1,500.00	\$3,000	
22	Nashville	\$3,375	\$3,375	\$3,375	\$2,400.00	\$3,375	
23	Oxford	\$200	\$0	\$0		\$0	
25	West Knoxville	\$2,737	\$3,488	\$3,450	\$2,676.50	\$4,000	
26	Contributions – General	\$3,000	\$16,029	\$3,000	\$1,145.00	\$3,000	
27	Interest - CD						
28	Interest - Money Mkt	\$600	\$1,323	\$600	\$684.93	\$600	
29	Publication Sales	\$0	\$31	\$0		\$0	
32	YM Income	\$38,100	\$35,482	\$38,100	\$0	\$38,100	
33	YM Adjustments to Income (Kenwort	\$4,500	\$5,785	\$4,500		\$4,500	
34	YM Bookstore Inc	1,300	252	1,300		1,300	
35	YM Receipts	31,100	29,179	31,100		31,100	
36	YM Scholarship Contrib	1,200	266	1,200		1,200	
37							
38	Expenses	\$100,977	\$94,151	\$100,424	\$32,470	\$106,204	
39	Adjustments to Expenses						
40	SAYMA Operations	\$49,977	\$44,337	\$49,274	\$32,470	\$57,054	
41	SAYF Operational Transfers	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	
57	Bookkeeping Costs - QuickBooks Onli	\$960	\$841	\$960	\$821.70	\$960	
42	Liability Insurance	\$925	\$830	\$925	\$1,351.00	\$1,500	
43	Office Admin	\$3,150	\$1,545	\$3,150	\$249	\$1,950	
44	Banking Fees		\$79		\$79.78	\$100	Square processing fees

45	Office - Duplication	\$50	\$0	\$50	\$0.00	\$50	
46	Office - Guilford Archiving	\$150	\$150	\$150		\$150	
47	Office - Supplies, Equip, Misc	\$50	\$0	\$50	\$100.31	\$50	
48	Office - Officer Exp	\$150	\$0	\$150	\$0.00	\$150	
49	Office - Electronic Services	\$1,500	\$430	\$1,500	\$39.90	\$200	
50	Office - Postage	\$50	\$4	\$50		\$50	
51	Office - Volunteer Bkgrd Chks	\$400	\$251	\$400	\$28.98	\$400	
52	Travel - Office Staff	\$800	\$631	\$800		\$800	
53	Payroll Expenses	\$36,242	\$33,755	\$39,039	\$25,870	\$43,244	
54	Payroll Costs		\$1,475		\$2,751.50		Friends Journal ads \$1,250
55	Salaries Exp		\$30,978		\$21,475.44		
56	Tax Payments		\$1,302		\$1,642.86		
58	Publications Expenses	\$500	\$0	\$500	\$0	\$800	
59	Pub Exp - Directory						
60	Pub Exp - Faith & Practice	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
61	Pub Exp - Newsletter						
62	Pub Exp - Web & Hosting Srvc	\$500	\$0	\$500	\$0	\$800	
63	SAYMA Committees	\$4,200	\$3,650	\$700	\$320	\$2,100	
64	Cmte Exp - Contingency Pool	\$300	\$0	\$300	\$159.90	\$300	
65	Cmte Exp - Faith & Practice Rvsn	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0.00	\$0	
66	Cmte Exp - Finance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0.00	\$1,000	financial relview
67	Cmte Exp - Ministry & Nurture	\$200	\$0	\$200	\$0.00	\$200	
68	Cmte Exp - Nominating	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0.00	\$0	
69	Cmte Exp - Outreach	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0.00	\$0	
70	Cmte Exp - Peace & Social Concer	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0.00	\$0	
71	Cmte Exp - SAYMA Earth Justice						
72	Cmte Exp - Uplifting Racial Justice	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0.00	\$200	
73	Cmte Exp - WQO Allotments						
74	Cmte Exp - Operational Handboo	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0.00	\$0	
75	Cmte Exp - JYM Support						
76	Cmte Exp - Personnel						
77	Cmte Exp - SAYF Support						
78	Cmte Exp - SAYF Steering						
79	Ad Hoc Exp - URJ Support						
80	Cmte Exp - Yearly Meeting Planni	\$200	\$150	\$200	\$159.90	\$200	
81	Ad Hoc Exp - Racial Conflict Traini	\$3,500	\$3,500			\$200	Donations should cover
82	Travel Reimbursements	\$2,500	\$2,217	\$2,500	\$2,358	\$5,000	
83	Travel - Rep Meetings	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
84	Travel - WQO Delegates	\$2,500	\$2,217	\$2,500	\$2,358.45	\$5,000	
85	Set-aside Fund Annual Allotments	\$5,150	\$5,150	\$4,800	\$0	\$4,800	



86	Boone MM In Trust						
87	FWCC 3rd World Delg Annl Exp	\$750	\$750	\$400		\$400	Hold until Near EOY
88	FWCC Conference Annl Exp	\$400	\$400	\$400		\$400	Hold until Near EOY
89	Released Friend Annl Exp	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000		\$2,000	Hold until Near EOY
90	Spiritual Development Annl Exp	\$500	\$500	\$500		\$500	Hold until Near EOY
91	Uplifting Racial Justice Annl Exp	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500		\$1,500	Hold until Near EOY
92	YAF Scholarships Annl Exp						
93	Youth Enrichment Fund Annl Exp						
94	Yearly Meeting Gathering	\$38,100	\$34,150	\$38,100	\$0	\$38,100	JYM no longer sums here
95	Facilities & Services Exp	\$35,800	\$32,967	\$35,800	\$0	\$35,800	
96	YM Accommodations & Meals	\$34,200	\$26,524	\$34,200		\$34,200	
97	Financial Services Fees (Eventbrite)	\$0	\$2,133	\$0		\$0	
98	YM Honoraria and Speaker Travel	\$500	\$700	\$500		\$500	
99	YM Services	\$700	\$3,610	\$700		\$700	
100	YM Supplies	\$400		\$400		\$400	
101	YM Bookstore Exp	\$1,300	\$396	\$1,300		\$1,300	
102	YM Print Post Phone & Misc	\$1,000	\$788	\$1,000		\$1,000	
103	Junior Yearly Meeting Exp	\$6,500	\$5,013	\$7,000	\$0	\$5,000	
104	JYM Asst Coordinator(s)		\$2,700				
105	JYM Coordinator(s)		\$1,980				
106	JYM Supplies, Sitters, Misc		\$333				
107	Quaker Membership Orgs Annual Contrb	\$1,250	\$2,500	\$1,250	\$0	\$1,250	
108	WQO - FGC	\$625	\$1,250	\$625		\$625	Restore if funds are
109	WQO - FWCC - Direct Contrbn	\$625	\$1,250	\$625		\$625	Restore if funds are
111	Other WQO Annual Contribns	\$0	\$3,000	\$0		\$0	Restore if funds are
124	Net(Surplus/Deficit) before Reserve Change	-\$17,134	\$2,379	-\$15,769	\$153	-\$18,429	
125	Yearly Gathering Net:	\$0	\$1,332	\$0	\$0	\$0	
126							
127	Reserve Change:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-\$12,208	Reduction to \$10,000
128	Net(Surplus/Deficit) with Reserve Change	-\$17,134	\$2,379	-\$15,769	\$153	-\$6,221	
131							
132	Reserve	\$22,208	\$22,208	\$22,208	\$22,208	\$10,000	
133	Undesignated Funds	\$1,883	\$19,332	\$3,563	\$19,486	-\$2,658	AC133 Based on AA133
135	AB135 projected EOY Undesignated fund				\$7,000	\$779	AC135 Based on AB135
137	File: FY26 Budget - V1.1 proposed						

## Attachment S: Agenda for Session III

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

### **SAYMA Sessions and Retreat 2025 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business Agenda (updated to reflect what was covered)**

#### **Monday, June 23, 8:45-11:30 am (Session III) Hybrid - In Person & Virtual**

- New visitors
- Agenda & Guidance Reminder
- Registrar's Report
- Clerk's Items and Announcements
  - suspended ad hoc F&P committee
  - Boone Friends Meeting restarting
  - Greenville Friends Meeting has withdrawn from SAYMA
  - Virtual session IV - request for Karen to remain acting finance clerk through that meeting, Blake to remain acting recording clerk
- Epistles (9:30am)
  - JYM
  - SAYF
  - YAF
- WQO Reports accepted into minutes (reporting as time allows)
  - FWCC Representative Report
  - FCNL Representative Report (invited 2025)
  - Quaker House Annual Report (invited 2025)
  - FGC Representative Report
  - AFSC Representative Report
    - AFSC Epistle
  - Friends Peace Teams Epistle (invited 2025)
    - [Friends Peace Teams 2025 Epistle EN](#) (Video presentation)
- State of the YM Report
- SAYMA Epistle

## Attachment T: Registrar's Report

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Registrar's Report 2025

Category	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Registered, in person	220		157	145	140	125
Registered, virtual		168	33	16	17	13
Attended	216	141 adults	182	152	157	136
JYM/Playcare	21	19	19	4	17	11
SAYF	32	8	22	21	19	25
YAF	11		25	18	21	16
Friends of Color			16	10	13	14
First Time Attenders	40 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 22 adults</li> <li>• 2 YAF</li> <li>• 8 SAYF</li> <li>• 6 JYM</li> <li>• 2 WQO</li> </ul>		38 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16 adults</li> <li>• 7 YAF</li> <li>• 5 SAYF</li> <li>• 8 JYM</li> <li>• 2 WQO</li> </ul>	29 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 17 adults</li> <li>• 6 YAF</li> <li>• 3 staff</li> <li>• 2 FOC</li> <li>• 2 WQO</li> </ul>	24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 19 adults</li> <li>• 4 YAF</li> <li>• 2 staff</li> <li>• 5 FOC</li> <li>• 1 WQO</li> </ul>	(pending)

## **Attachment U: SAYF Epistle**

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

Twenty four SAYFers and five FANs gathered for SAYF at SAYMA this weekend. We worked with RAW Tools South to turn a gun into gardening tools. Later we did workshops and intergenerational games. We went to a Pride event and did fishbowl with SAYMA members of various ages. Some SAYFers explored the Berea college campus by visiting the fudge shoppe and bookstore. We held our yearly meeting for business; enjoyed an ice cream social with other SAYMA attendees and a talent show. We hosted a graduation for beloved community members Sage Hallward, Michael Killen, and Star Pred. We also hosted an early graduation for beloved community member Stitch Gulson who is moving abroad soon. If you ask any of the SAYFers this weekend was an extremely enjoyable time and we will be looking forward to it in the future.

## Attachment V: FWCC - SAYMA Representative Report

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

### 2025 FWCC Report, Geeta Jyothi McGahey

It's been a big year for FWCC Section of the Americas; the capital campaign is finished and new projects are underway: Quaker Connect, a participatory program to grow meetings, An Interactive map to locate meetings in the whole section of the Americas, and a Digital English-Spanish Quaker glossary almost ready. We also have a new Executive Director Evan Welkin who was educated at Gilford and returns here from service to the Europe Middle East section of FWCC.

The theme for **World Quaker Day, Sunday 5 October 2025**, will be *Love your neighbour* with the supporting Bible passage Galatians 5:14: 'For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbour as yourself."' In times when environmental crisis and conflict, untruths and unfairness seem to dominate, let us see what Love can do – both through our words and as 'doers of the word' (James 1:22). There are linked ideas for how to participate.

Quaker Connect involves both urban and rural Friends Meetings from across the Americas to determine how each individual meeting could better connect with the local community. It is a revitalization program designed to benefit meetings, communities and individuals. There are groups or cohorts of about 10 congregations which work together, with each congregation supplying two or three "apprentices" to serve as contact persons. Each apprentice's involvement would require no more than 2-4 hours per week, with someone from outside assigned as a "companion" to offer guidance. Each meeting will--with help--design three-month experiments on connecting with the local community. These could involve various projects. Experiments do not always succeed. It's OK to fail, since even failure teaches something. The next cohort begins in 2026-27, with a retreat in March 2026. Applications will be available this summer. Through generous grants, there is no cost for a meeting to participate..

The World Plenary Meeting was a hybrid event, held in August 2024 in Johannesburg, South Africa, and online. The theme was *Living the spirit of Ubuntu: Responding with hope to God's call to cherish creation – and one another*. Friends considered three interrelated themes: ubuntu, care for creation, and healing and repairing relationships in light of historic and continuing injustice. Four friends in attendance at our SAYMA sessions attended - Star Smith, Jackson Napier, Alison Mawle (virtual) and Myron Guachalla Montaña from Bolivia. Please welcome Myron.

In Tapestry, a document from the Plenary, is the following quote appropriate for our time, "We need to identify and name the underlying causes of injustice in the world. Only then can we work for repair, through prayerful deep listening. And once we've named the issues, we need to listen to that of God in others, and only then speak our truth with humility, in ways which others can hear. As Friends we are called to action in the world, as individuals and as communities .... 'What canst thou say? What canst thou do?' Let us be a faith community, different from the kingdoms of this world – through the work of the Holy Spirit."

In the coming year, FWCC is putting attention on developing younger leaders to take the message of Friends into the World. There were young adult Friend gatherings before both the World Plenary and the Section of Americas meeting. "*Building the Future as Way Opens*," which I attended. We came away from this gathering excited about projects that inspire and unite us, energized by the possibilities that lie ahead. We are also clear-eyed about the clear and present challenges in the world around us today.

## Attachment W: FCNL - SAYMA Representative Report

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

Report on FCNL to SAYMA from your representative, Jane Hiles  
Yearly Meeting, June 2025

### Still speaking Truth to Power!

Greetings, Friends. This traditional phrase speaks volumes to where we are now as a nation and as a world in conflict. As your representative on the FCNL General Committee and as the clerk of FCNL's Annual Meeting Planning Committee, I'm proud to report that Still speaking Truth to Power is an accurate description of FCNL's work in the last year. Many of you may not have seen Susan Penn's and my comprehensive report after the November Annual Meeting, so here is an update and some highlights.

I invite you to attend FCNL's Annual Meeting, held virtually on November 14-16. Registration will open soon. Our theme this year is **Still Speaking Truth to Power**. We are fortunate to host a live conversation with noted historian and scholar of authoritarianism, **Timothy Snyder**, whom you may know from news broadcasts, TED Talks and an imposing list of published books that have been reprinted in dozens of languages. He has recently left Yale to lead a new department of Modern European History at the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy at the University of Toronto. ( [AM '25 link](#) )

At a time when the political climate is stressful, complex and even frightening, FCNL and other Quaker organizations are acting on Quakers' historic claim to bravery by joining in a lawsuit to prevent ICE and Homeland Security from invading houses of worship. As a recent *Washington Newsletter* reminds us, "In the face of tyranny, every act of democratic participation is an act of moral courage."

As the horror continues in Gaza, FCNL staff and Advocacy Teams across the country continue to petition the legislature to speak out against our government's continued delivery of the tools of war to Israel, our government's intransigent refusal to negotiate effective shipments of food to Gaza to prevent mass starvation, and its refusal to recognize the situation as the crime against humanity it truly is. ( [link here](#) )

FCNL continues to lobby against the administration's budget proposal that would severely cut Medicaid and SNAP to attempt to offset tax cuts for high-income Americans. General Secretary Bridget Moix responded, "this budget resolution takes from the poor to fund tax cuts for the rich, mass deportation, and the continued militarization of our world." This was the lobbying ask for over 300 young adults who attended Spring Lobby Weekend. ( [link here](#) )

Thank you to my joyful and efficient co-worker, Susan Penn, who has stepped away from this work for now. I'll miss her good humor and creativity. However, I hope another SAYMA Friend will join me in this needed work. Please contact Nominating to volunteer.



## Attachment X: Quaker House Report

([Return to the Minutes](#))



223 Hillside Avenue, Fayetteville, NC 28301  
[execdirector@quakerhouse.org](mailto:execdirector@quakerhouse.org)

910-323-3912  
[quakerhouse.org](http://quakerhouse.org)

### 2025 Annual Report

Quaker House's core mission is to work towards the day when there are no more wars, and so no need for a military. Until that day, Quaker House works to lessen the harm done to individuals, families, communities, and our nation by the military-industrial complex. We respond to requests for assistance made to the GI Rights Hotline, we provide free and confidential counseling to people coping with the emotional damage from their experiences, and we bring the challenges and concerns of the military personnel to a broader community that is often far removed from the day-to-day experience.

Like so many other organizations and individuals, Quaker House watched the developments of the past year with increasing concern. The results of the 2024 election cycle on the local, state, and national levels have created new concerns seemingly every day. We are working along with many allied organizations to rise to these new concerns and to attempt to predict the coming needs of those we serve.

We have restarted the *Holding The Line* series of online posts about the ongoing challenges faced by military participants and expanded it to include discussions about the likely effects of the new leadership of the Defense Department and related agencies. All the posts can be found on the Quaker House website at <https://quakerhouse.org/blog-2/>. These posts also get sent by email and social media to those who have subscribed, and we welcome additions to our contact lists. We are also stepping up the frequency of the *On The Homefront* newsletter from twice or three times a year to bi-monthly. These efforts are important, but costly, and we are seeking ways to limit the additional expenses.

The Quaker House Board continues to be active and strong. The members of the board are drawn from appointments by several yearly meetings and monthly meetings across a wide area, and each member brings valuable insights. In the past year they have led an effort to consider what new opportunities could be started to expand our outreach and mission. One notable success was our first-time book fundraiser last summer. Donors were given the opportunity to receive a copy of *Tell It Slant*, a new biography of former Executive Director Chuck Fager. In the first six months of this project, we mailed out 135 books and we continue to receive new requests. We are looking for new publications for future efforts.

Decades of careful stewardship of the donations received by Quaker House has placed us in a strong financial condition. We have been able to effect important repairs to the building at 223 Hillside Avenue to assure that it will be able to serve us for years to come. These have included installation of foundation reinforcements to take the literal load off of the 100-year-old pilings under Quaker House as well as repairs to the side porch that presented a hazard to the children who now worship weekly with Fayetteville Friends Meeting.

Executive Director Wayne Finegar continues his travels, both physically and electronically, to share the work of Quaker House and help strengthen the work of all who seek peace. In April 2025 he will visit with South Central Yearly Meeting for the first time and is looking forward to returning to many of the yearly meetings he has been with in the past. Board member Curt Torell and Wayne are going to be presenting an online session to members of Northern Yearly Meeting about draft registration and ways for young people considering conscientious objection to respond to the requirements of registration now and in the future.

Our work with the GI Rights Hotline continues as well. All of the counselors who work with the Hotline have experienced a rise in callers simply asking to verify that the contact points are correct, and that the Hotline is completely independent of the military. None of us know what this means for sure, but it seems to suggest the same sense of foreboding being felt by so many outside the military of what is coming next. These callers may be planning how they may react in the future and creating lists of potential contacts. In anticipation of this, Quaker House is working with several groups to create materials (both electronic and printed) that can give guidance to members of the military faced with orders that they consider illegal. We are also assisting the Military Law Task Force of the National Lawyers Guild in identifying civilian attorneys and resources to provide counsel if needed for participants who refuse those unlawful orders.

Many people across the nation, and the world, are being affected by the attempts to radically change how the United States operates. The military as an institution, and the individuals who participate either directly or through their families, are very much being affected as well. Quaker House continues to address the needs of those individuals and families. The support of so many people, both Friends and friends, across the country makes it possible for us to continue that work.



## **Attachment Y: FGC - SAYMA Representative Report**

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

### **Friends General Conference Report for YM2025 Annual Sessions**

Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA) is a member of Friends General Conference (FGC), a wider Quaker organization of 16 yearly meetings and 12 directly affiliated monthly meetings across the United States and Canada. Its purpose is, with Divine guidance, to nurture the spiritual vitality of the Religious Society of Friends by providing programs and services for Friends, meetings, and seekers. FGC's website is [fgcquaker.org](http://fgcquaker.org).

The 2025 Gathering of FGC was held virtually in February. An in-person Gathering centering Young Adults, Youth, and children will be held this July 2-6 in Clarkston, Michigan. The 2026 Gathering of FGC on July 7-12 next year in Burlington, Vermont, and is an in-person event for all ages. Hybrid options have been found to be too labor intensive for FGC staff, so there will be no virtual opportunities.

This year FGC joined with a multifaith coalition and the Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection in opposition to the rescission of ICE's sensitive location policy. An injunction has not been granted, and the suit is still going forward.

FGC began the process of working on a change in its governance structure in February of 2024. The Governance Working Group submitted their proposal for change to the Central Committee last fall who united in accepting a proposal to continue this work.. The plan is for the working group's final proposal to go to FGC's Executive and Central Committees for discernment. The current governing body is too large and unwieldy at 115 members who only meet annually. A smaller Governing Board meeting at least 6 times a year, can function more effectively, In keeping with boards of other wider Quaker organizations studied.) A more diverse Representative Council is also recommended, for input from yearly and affiliated monthly meetings to provide communication between the member organizations, FGC staff, and the Governing Board.

FCG has expanded its outreach to those who are newcomers to Quakerism. There are many resources on the FGC website, including a virtual meeting for worship for newcomers and seekers held every second Monday each month at 8 pm ET. There is time for questions and sharing. There is a wealth of suggestions for those who want to know more about Quaker practices. The Spiritual Deepening program offers several e-retreats over the year.

Respectfully submitted, Margaret Farmer

## Attachment Z: AFSC - SAYMA Representative Report

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

### Corporation Meeting of American Friends Service Committee,

#### Spring 2025

The American Friends Service Committee corporation meeting took place April 24-26, 2025, at Friends Center, Philadelphia and online.

The **plenary session on April 24** featured susan abulhawa, a Palestinian American scientist, writer and activist. She spoke at length about the inhuman actions, many of which are not captured in the western press, carried out by Israeli forces in Gaza. She then discussed issues of the unchecked use of power throughout the world, corporate media's acquiescence to portrayals of the war in Gaza and destruction of human rights in other places that align with the ruling elite. She called on Quakers to take action, to once again speak truth to power to address the world domination by a powerful minority that shred norms and values. Her talk can be viewed on YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3nKJA1lw2qs>.

On **April 25, Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business** was held from 9am to 3:15pm. In addition to approving committee reports, there was a panel discussion on AFSC's responses to new federal policies on detention and deportation (Just responses to forced displacement and migration is one of AFSC's three strategic goals for 2020-2030. The other goals are Just and sustainable peace and just economies). The presiding clerk, Alvaro Alvarado, presented 3 business items to the corporation. The first item, changes in the by-laws was without controversy.

There was a lively discussion of the second item, options for the board composition. The current by-laws limit the board to 25 members and 80% must be Quakers. During the April 2024 corporation meeting the by-laws were changed to add representatives from each US and international regional to the board. Since many regional directors are not Quakers this change resulted in the board not meeting the 80% Quaker requirement. Several options were discussed for remedying this situation. The corporation requires additional time for decision making.

The third item was a proposal to experiment with holding the spring corporation meeting online every other year. I think the decision was to continue the current format for the spring. However, a fall meeting of the corporation will be online.

Also to be noted was a discussion of the change in federal policies on funding organizations that support Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. AFSC has not be affected

because it does not receive federal funds and because it is a religious organization that is governed by the Corporation, representatives appointed by yearly meetings and some Quakers at-large.

**Workshops** were held from 3:30 to 5pm and were repeated the afternoon of April 26. These workshops are designed by the AFSC regional and central staff. Two workshops were hybrid and can be accessed, NY/NJ Healing Justice: From the Inside Out ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_J2kauEMS14](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_J2kauEMS14)) and Sowing the Seeds of Justice in New Orleans, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_tCrLOvnPFU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_tCrLOvnPFU)

**6:00pm dinner** was an *Eastern State Penitentiary Bus Trip: Private Tour, Sit-Down Dinner & Programmed Worship with Francisco Burgos, Executive Director at Pendle Hill.*

The April 26 meeting consisted of a continuation of **Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, Workshops and an evening session.** The evening session, Courage to Resist: Commemorating 50 Years Since Vietnam included corporation members recounted their activities in Vietnam. Claudia Krich read excerpts from her new book, Those Who Stayed, a personal account of the collapse of the South Vietnam government and the beginning of the new Provisional Revolutionary Government.

*Submitted 8 June 2025 by Diane Rowley*

(Diane serves on the Community Equity Justice Committee of the AFSC board. The committee initiated a joint staff governance working group charged with “formulating a workplan and structure to embody Beloved Community and to support thriving for Black staff and volunteers within AFSC because Black cultures can and should have an impact on the way AFSC operates, and because Black staff and volunteers need space to be innovative and creative. This initiative also addresses the lingering effects of colonialism, slavery, white supremacy, and other forms of oppression against Black people that we are currently experiencing both within the organization and externally.” Diane is the co-convenor of the working group.)

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Thanks to Diane Rowley you may view susan abulhawa’s plenary address. I suggest to skip the first 10 minutes to the point where her discussion becomes substantive. And I want you to know that her novel titled Mornings in Jenin provides compelling reading. Like her plenary talk, it is well documented with historical facts, but also provides susan’s more hopeful and gentle, more humane and compassionate perspective on the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Throughout the Corporation meeting AFSC’s support for diversity, equity and inclusion were refreshingly evident. At a time when AARP was requiring volunteer tax preparers to remove data regarding sexual orientation from the forms they use to document their

work, AFSC was doubling down to ensure that everyone present be known by their pronouns of choice. Presentations by AFSC staff, including General Secretary Joyce Ajlouny, exemplified how AFSC was created to provide leadership for this time and place, challenging Trump Term Two. I have the sense that AFSC converts my cash donations into social justice. Serving on several governance committees during the past year, I gave enthusiastically of my time to AFSC as an expression of faith in action.

*Submitted by 10 June 2025 by Hugh Thomforde*

## Attachment AA: AFSC - SAYMA Representative Report

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)



**Quaker action for a just world**

1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102  
afsc.org

*If not now, tell me when  
We may never see this moment or place in time again  
If not now, if not now, tell me when  
I see sorrow and trouble in this land  
Although there will be struggle, we'll make the change we can  
If not now, if not now, tell me when*

— Carrie Newcomer, 2019  
Quaker singer-songwriter

Dear Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association,

Greetings from the American Friends Service Committee. In these devastating times, there are an uncountable number of threats to human rights, the fundamental principles which undergird democracy, and the wellbeing of vulnerable communities. AFSC is ready for this moment. Based on our century of experience as a Quaker organization, we are equipped to act boldly and take risks. We have built an agile organization that is able to pivot to respond to immediate needs, build power in communities, and resist until justice and love prevail. We also recognize individual Friends and Quaker congregations who are independently exercising their testimonies to create a better, peaceful, and more just world. Thank you for your witness and courage.

This epistle briefly provides a regional program update, describes our annual Corporation meeting and offers a few highlights about our programs and campaigns. Far short of being comprehensive of AFSC's current work, this epistle seeks to build awareness among Quakers about AFSC's current presence in the world. It also calls upon Friends to act in partnership with us to meet urgent community needs, challenge injustice, and build peace.

### **AFSC Annual Meeting of the Corporation**

The theme for this year's annual meeting of the AFSC Corporation is *Healing Through Justice: Our Collective Journey*. Despite what politicians might say to divide us, policing and prisons do not keep communities safe. Neither does militarism. But today we see a host of new policies that seek to expand on those oppressive systems. Mass detention and deportation of immigrants are modeled after other policies which criminalize Black and Brown communities. Threats in the international arena, including in Palestine, Sudan, Myanmar, and Ukraine, also undermine the pursuit of peace and justice. As Friends, we are led to act in solidarity with communities facing violence and oppression. Our theme for this year's Corporation Meeting spotlights AFSC's Healing Justice programs, which adopt a long-term abolitionist vision as they work to reduce our society's reliance on incarceration and policing. It also responds to calls for justice and healing among immigrant communities and in regions of the world that have been devastated by recent and ongoing wars.



### **Defending migrant rights**

AFSC believes that *everyone* deserves a chance to build a good life, regardless of where they were born or when or how they migrated. When people make the difficult choice to leave their homes, they are seeking safety, opportunities, and a chance to contribute to a new country. They should be welcomed with respect and dignity. The U.S. has the resources to ensure humane, comprehensive support for newcomers. However, the Trump administration is threatening immigrant safety by calling for mass deportations, the dismantling of longstanding rights, and policies that dehumanize immigrants.

As a Quaker organization, we affirm the divine worth of every person, and we refuse to accept these unjust policies. We will not sit back and watch as communities and families are torn apart and fundamental rights are eroded. AFSC is working to address the economic and political drivers of migration, reflecting our commitment to systemic change. One way we do this work is by amplifying the voices of people who have been most impacted by unjust immigration policies. AFSC's TRACES project aims to give light to those untold stories, providing a platform for migrants to share their powerful experiences. AFSC conducted storytelling sessions in New Jersey, Jordan, El Salvador, Mexico, and Guatemala, where we were able to help immigrants reclaim their individual power over their own stories. We also support migrants, refugees, and internally displaced people at each stage of their journey. To ensure that migrant communities are safe and protected, we offer legal services, training, human rights monitoring, and humanitarian relief. And we support immigrant-led organizing and advocacy.

We are asking Friends to familiarize themselves with our [6 principles of a welcoming, dignified, and just approach to immigration](#). These include: (1) valuing immigrant leadership, (2) welcoming people with dignity, (3) offering paths to citizenship; (4) protecting the right to seek asylum, (5) ensuring that everyone can meet their basic needs, regardless of immigration status, and (6) helping people live safely wherever they are. We call upon Friends to affirm these 6 principles through their public witness by taking action. We know that when we take action together, grounded in love, we can make a difference. Learn more at <https://afsc.org/6-principles-welcoming-dignified-and-just-immigration>.

AFSC has [resources](#) designed to equip individuals and communities with the tools they need to make effective change which can be found at <https://afsc.org/issue/migration-immigrant-rights>. These resources intend to support Friends and others when they talk with family and friends, write letters to the editor, comment on local media websites, meet with editorial boards, and host community conversations. A list of [five tips](#) on how to advocate for migration justice well can be found on our website: <https://afsc.org/news/how-talk-about-immigration-divisive-times>. Additionally, we are offering yard signs with the message "QUAKERS WELCOME IMMIGRANTS WITH DIGNITY" to meetings and churches that are ready to stand in public witness with migrant communities. Order a sign for your meeting or church at <https://afsc.org/migration-justice-yard-signs>.

### **Peace and Justice in Palestine**

AFSC has had a historic presence in Palestine, dating back to 1948, when the United Nations commissioned AFSC to lead humanitarian work in Gaza after 750,000 Palestinians were forcibly displaced from their homes. Since

then, our programs have provided agricultural development, kindergartens, midwife training, humanitarian aid, and trauma healing for over seven decades. We also work with civil society organizations in Israel to support their work countering militarism, building awareness among the Israeli public about injustices, and advocating for the Right of Return for Palestinian refugees. We also have staff working in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Jordan who deliver humanitarian aid, advocate for Palestinian self determination and freedom.

In Gaza, tens of thousands of Palestinians have been killed and many more injured since Israel began the genocide in October 2023. People continue to die of starvation, disease and military action. Most hospitals are shuttered, and 90% of homes and buildings are uninhabitable. Nearly all of Gaza's population—2 million people—has been displaced, including AFSC staff, while still under siege, and its people urgently need food, water, medical supplies, fuel, and other essentials. More information about AFSC's humanitarian aid, educational materials, and opportunities for shared advocacy and action can be found at <https://afsc.org/crisis-gaza>.

AFSC's emergency relief effort has helped to alleviate suffering in the short term and reduce inequality and oppression in the long term. Despite facing grave personal losses themselves, AFSC staff in Gaza have provided lifesaving assistance to hundreds of thousands of displaced Palestinians, including hot meals, food parcels, and fresh vegetables. We have also distributed hygiene kits with soap, toothbrushes, women's hygiene products, and other critical supplies, and offered recreational activities for children and counseling to help people process the impact of the violence. Friends can see the challenges our aid workers face on a daily basis and the courageous action they are taking to save lives in AFSC's short documentary titled "[Lifelines](https://afsc.org/lifelines)." Watch the film at <https://afsc.org/lifelines>.

Quaker testimonies teach that injustices must be eliminated for peace to prevail. In 2022, AFSC joined the international human rights community, including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, in amplifying calls to end the apartheid system -- which for decades have been oppressing, suffocating and humiliating Palestinians. Today, AFSC is calling upon Quaker meetings and churches to join our interfaith coalition of over 500 congregations known as the [Apartheid-Free communities](https://apartheid-free.org/). Over 40 Quaker Apartheid-Free communities have joined this coalition and they are demonstrating their commitments to dismantling Israel's apartheid laws and practices through education programs, interfaith engagement, boycott, divestment, and advocacy. Learn more at <https://apartheid-free.org/>.

In the past year, the number of Quaker meetings and churches who have joined the Apartheid-Free coalition has more than doubled! We ask that other meetings and churches take our invitation and when led to do so, sign the Apartheid-Free pledge and take action against racism, militarism, and denial of human rights in Palestine and wherever found. Quaker communities in the Apartheid-Free communities coalition have demonstrated their commitment to the Apartheid-Free movement in various ways, including (but certainly not limited to) outreach to other faith communities, hosting education programs for Friends about apartheid in Palestine, moving their assets and money to divest from supporting Israel's military occupation, and demanding that elected officials address apartheid in their policy decisions and public speaking appearances.



### **South Region Program Updates**

Across the U.S. South, AFSC programs continue to build power, foster community resilience, and challenge systems of oppression through grassroots organizing, advocacy, and collaboration. From food justice and housing rights to immigrant protections and youth empowerment, our teams are advancing AFSC's vision of a just, peaceful, and sustainable world. Here are highlights from each of our regional programs:

#### **AFSC Florida**

AFSC Florida has been active in the state legislative session, mobilizing against anti-immigrant bills and advocating for protections against Notario fraud. The team continues its environmental justice work with Earth Justice and is updating its "Toxic Truth" report while preparing to publish findings on the Glades Detention Center. The Miramar Protection Circle remains a vital presence for immigrants reporting to ICE. Youth engagement flourished through the Seeds of Resistance Academy and a joint conference with West Virginia's ACE program, with plans for a national youth gathering in summer 2025.

#### **AFSC North Carolina**

The NC team launched a weekly Eviction Court Watch, training 40+ volunteers to support tenants and collect data on eviction trends. Their advocacy secured county funding for legal aid and rental assistance. With support from AFSC's Strategy Learning and Impact team, they're building a data-driven campaign for a county-wide right to counsel. Toolkits and town halls are in development to expand this model across the state.

#### **Appalachian Center for Equality (ACE)**

ACE continues to lead in food justice through Voices for Hunger and the West Virginia Food For All Coalition. Their Nourishing Networks workshops have sparked the formation of local Food Security Teams in multiple counties. A revamped Right to Food curriculum and a planned train-the-trainer initiative aim to expand this work statewide.

#### **Atlanta Economic Justice Program**

After years of organizing, AFSC Atlanta celebrated a major legislative win in DeKalb County: water affordability protections and debt relief. The team also supports the People's Campaign to Stop Cop City, recently hosting a 200-person assembly to reimagine public safety. In response to the tragic death of Cornelius Taylor, they are advancing a pilot housing project that will pilot a systems change to Atlanta's approach to homelessness.

#### **Peace by Piece New Orleans (PXP)**

PXP deepened its work in Hollygrove through urban farming, youth leadership development, and community land trust planning. Their quarterly Community Kitchen events and monthly food pantry support food security and neighborhood cohesion. The Eye on Surveillance Coalition launched "Sawt," an AI-powered civic engagement tool, with the long-term goal of building a community-controlled transparency model. PXP also seeks to expand into adjacent neighborhoods with solar and composting initiatives.



#### [West Virginia Economic Justice Program](#)

Amid a challenging legislative session, the WV team has been a strong voice for harm reduction and restorative justice. They co-led the WV Restorative Justice Project's first statewide gathering and continue to support youth and community leadership through the Leading for Justice Conference. Upcoming initiatives include a summer skills-building institute and continued advocacy for criminal legal reform and second chance legislation.

#### **And more . . .**

There are so many more ways to take action with AFSC.

Our [Emerging Leaders for Liberation](#) program, now in its fourth year, equips young adult Friends and other young adults with the skills they need to effectively enact social change. We encourage more young adult Friends to consider applying for this program so they too can receive mentorship from our staff.

Anyone can learn from the esteemed social change leaders on our staff by joining our [Third Tuesdays: Protect, Resist, and Rebuild](#) webinars, hosted every third Tuesday of the month at 8pm EST / 7pm CST / 5pm PST. Join us for [Meeting for Worship with Attention to Peace](#) every Thursday at 5:30pm EST / 3:30pm CT / 2:30pm PST.

We encourage Friends to sign up for our weekly newsletter called "Weekend Reading" and our monthly "Acting in Faith" newsletter, specifically tailored for Friends, for the latest updates about AFSC's work and how you can get involved. More information can also be found at <https://afsc.org/friends-engage>.

There are so many ways for Friends to partner with AFSC towards creating a more just, sustainable, and peaceful world. Our staff will be visiting over 20 Yearly Meetings this year and over 80 events at Quaker meetings, churches, schools, and retirement communities. You can submit a request for a speaker to attend your meeting here: <https://afsc.org/host-event>.

From AFSC to all Friends worldwide, we send peace, prayers for resilience, and our solidarity. In the words of the Quaker refugee rights activist Jim Corbett: "Asking not 'what can I do?' but 'what can we do?' we open the way for each individual offering to be incorporated into a cathedral of love and service that our life as people builds for the Kingdom in human history." Striving forth together, we will build the beloved community that this wounded world needs now.

## Attachment BB: Friends Peace Teams Report

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

### Friends Peace Teams Report to SAYMA 2025

At Friends Peace Teams (FPT), we work "grassroots to grassroots, person to person" with communities affected by violence, oppression, and trauma. We believe that there is good in every person. When we connect through that goodness, healing and transformation become possible—even in the hardest circumstances.

Our justice and peace work grows out of long-term relationships grounded in friendship, respect, and mutual learning. We accompany people as they recover from harm and take courageous steps toward justice and peace in their own communities. We don't arrive with answers. We listen, we learn, and we stay present for the long haul.

We are grateful that Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA) is focusing on FPT this year. Your care, attention, and solidarity strengthen our work in powerful ways.

To see a broad and detailed view of FPT's global justice and peace work, please read our most recent [Epistle](#) at the boom of this report. It reflects spiritual grounding and shared discernment from all five of our regions:

- African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI)
- Asia West Pacific (AWP)
- Europe Middle East (EME)
- North American (NAmerica)
- Peacebuilding en Las Américas (PLA)

In the U.S., FPT continues to support vibrant justice and peace work. [Toward Right Relationship with Native Peoples](#) offers workshops and contributes to the Quaker Indigenous Boarding School research, bringing to light the history of Quaker Meetings' participation in the forced assimilation of Native children. Other active justice and peace work includes [Alternatives to Violence Project](#), [Cultures of Justice and Peace](#), and [Children's Peace Libraries](#).

We invite you to take part in our Conscientious Objection to War project. Whether as an individual, a meeting, or a community, you can write or share your own statement of conscience. Visit the FPT website on [Conscientious Objection to War](#)

for a guide on writing those statements, and post them on the website.

Power of Goodness offers an excellent resource for Quaker religious education for all ages, sharing stories of how nonviolence, healing, and reconciliation work in real lives. We also offer internships for students in Quaker high schools and colleges, and host an economic justice discussion group online.

We're grateful for the time and care Steve Olszewsky and others before him spent connecting us with SAYMA. Because we are volunteer-led, we appeal to you for volunteers and we ask you to find a Friend to join us, representing you in FPT. Other ways you can get involved:

Donate, <https://friendspeaceteams.org/donate/>. Donations go directly to work on the ground because we are minimally-staffed.

Join us, <https://friendspeaceteams.org/get-involved/>.

Read further on our website, <https://friendspeaceteams.org/>.

Please continue to share the deep and abiding confidence we hold that justice and peace are possible.



1001 Park Avenue  
St. Louis, MO 63104-3720 USA  
+1 (314) 588-1122  
A 501(c)3 U.S. Non-profit  
friendspeaceteams.org April 2025 Epistle

## *Celebrating a Diversity of Voices*

**F**riends Peace Teams celebrates a diversity of voices across five continents. Join us to learn about and

support justice and peace work around the world. We would love to hear about your justice and peace work and what you're learning, as well.

**The African Great Lakes Initiative** (AGLI) works inclusively with individuals of all ethnicities, tribes, and clans at the grassroots level. This inclusivity fosters active participation in diverse programs such as Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC), Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP), peer mediation, peace debates, women's economic empowerment, caring for people living with HIV, improving women's reproductive health, supporting rape survivors, scholarships for vulnerable children, and climate resilience workshops for youth.

AGLI's facilitators conducted workshops with South Sudanese refugees in Kenya's Kakuma Refugee Camp, one of the world's largest, and in Uganda. These workshops emphasized healing, reconciliation, and resilience among displaced communities.

In Rwanda, 60 farmers learned conservation agriculture methods through Farmer Field Schools. Additional self help groups focusing on savings and community support were established in Rwanda and Burundi.

In Uganda in November 2024, AGLI convened peacebuilders from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, Kenya, and Uganda. Participants shared experiences and strategies to promote peace and justice regionally.

The Children's Peace Libraries introduced Digital Peacebuilding, integrating iPads and computers. Rural children and educators praised this innovation for its impact on literacy and peace education. AGLI celebrates Africa's diversity as a source of strength. Embracing varied per

spectives fosters unity, honors cultural contributions, and builds collaborative pathways to peace.

**Asia West Pacific** cries out for liberation from colonization, corruption, exploitation, and climate vulnerability. Yet—when we listen—people building regenerative societies call out across the region:

- » Kins collaborates with climate walkers, Plastic Free Bohol, and Student Catholic Action in the Philippines to call for climate justice and reducing single-use plastics.
- » Raissa built Mayâ Community Learning Center to preserve the unique language and culture of Bantayan Island.
- » Jungjoo supports the anti-military base movement and preserves Jeju Island's historic culture of peace. » Petrus coaches vulnerable children and youth exposed to religious extremism, expanding the Indonesian peace movement.
- » Ida helps children in Bima, Indonesia, recover from religious extremism and domestic violence to deepen their faith and culture.
- » Running from mortar fire, Kwi Kwi organizes primary healthcare with youth leadership in Karenland. » Nanik creates a just, peaceful preschool helping families in Java, Indonesia, recover from colonization, and Ratih searches for storybooks that illustrate justice and peace practices in local Indonesian languages. » Selly brings children out of the Papuan forests after communities flee from armed conflict.
- » Melanie visits indigenous and migrant people building skills for community in Malaysia.

» Ram helps teachers in Nepal reduce school violence and introduce interactive learning.

Mutual discernment and high-quality training inspire thriving communities of practice.

**Peacebuilding en Las Américas** supports peace workers who work with children, teens, young adults, adults, families in crisis, incarcerated individuals, people with disabilities, war survivors, and indigenous peoples across El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Colombia, and Ecuador—where persistent inequities and violence prevail.

We are excited to nurture children as young as four years old through the Power of Goodness stories, instilling the values of justice, peace, cooperation, and the dignity of all people. We work with families to end domestic violence. We help teens and young adults build self-love and resilience so that they might resist pressure to join gangs and other criminal groups. We work with people with disabilities, building strength to overcome societal prejudices. In Ecuador, we work with Kichwa women who are studying midwifery to build respect and compassion for themselves and girls and women who are survivors of gender-based violence. In Cuba, we have trained new facilitators and support them in continuing workshops on both ends of the country. Together with the diverse populations we serve, we build justice and peace, resilience, creativity, and the capacity to transform our realities into a vision of inclusion and hope. Please hear the diverse voices of some of our peace workers here: [FPT Work in Latin America](#).

**Europe and Middle East** supports Power of Goodness, gender equality, and AVP-based work in Ukraine, North Caucasus, northern Iraq, and Palestine. Ukraine and Gaza are currently experiencing the horror of all-out war, while people in Chechnya and Kurdistan still feel the impact of war through continued repression, daily violence, and military drafts. Our team in Ukraine supports psychologists and trainers who help communities heal from trauma and spread the message of peace and nonviolence through psychosocial workshops.

Our team in Kurdistan/Iraq joined Friends Peace Teams (FPT) just over a year ago and conducts AVP workshops in the region. Our team in Chechnya brings the Power of Goodness stories of nonviolence and reconciliation to schools and the AVP workshops special topic series Cultures of Justice and Peace to universities.

Our team from Gaza and the West Bank in Palestine joined FPT in May of 2024 and conducts AVP workshops

and other community projects.

In July 2025, Muslim and Christian peace workers from these regions will come together in person to learn from each other and practice our peacebuilding tools at a Cultures of Justice

## Opportunities for you!

We depend on your active participation, prayers, abiding concern, outreach, and financial support. As an organization made up primarily of volunteers, we distribute 100% of funds designated to a specific region directly to the people in that region.

**Share this FPT Epistle** with your meeting, church, family, and friends.

**Write to [Office@friendspeaceteams.org](mailto:Office@friendspeaceteams.org) to:**

» **Share your ministry for Justice and Peace**

» **Join a Regional Team:** African Great Lakes, Asia West Pacific, Europe and Middle East, North America, or Peacebuilding en las Américas

» **Join a Global Support Team:** Communications, Organization, Peace Ministries, or Resource Sharing

» **Invite a speaker** from Friends Peace Teams to join your community online or in person

**Go to [Friends Peace Teams](#) to:**

» **Register for events** or workshops: Alternatives to Violence Project, Power of Goodness, or Toward Right Relationship with Native Peoples

» **Sign up** for e-news, and then share the news with your meeting, church, group, or community and Peace Gathering in Armenia. To experience the diversity of voices from our region, please watch [FPT Europe and Middle East](#).

The **North America** Regional Team recognizes that meaningful peace is rooted in justice and equity, which are, in turn, rooted in respect for all life and the inclusion of diverse perspectives. Join us in this transformative work, which takes many forms.

As a step toward justice, we acknowledge the harms to generations of Native families caused by Quaker Indian Boarding Schools, and we support healing in Native communities today by documenting both historical and ongoing harm. We also confront the wars and ecological destruction perpetuated by U.S. tax dollars, striving to build relationships where we speak authentically and develop our consciences. We invite you to listen to your

conscience, write a statement of conscience, and share your statement on the FPT website.

We are excited to be identifying children's books introducing the practical skills of justice and peace at every reading level and to edit stories to add to the Power of Goodness Story Collection. This developmental work supports FPT's Children's Peace Libraries and Power of Goodness teams globally.

Additionally, we are honored to be amplifying contemporary Indigenous voices, such as Mona Polacca, Candi Brings Plenty, and Jordan Decker, through webinars hosted by Towards Right Relationship with Native Peoples.

» **Read our news** and reach out to the authors to offer encouragement and feedback

» **Read [Power of Goodness stories](#)**

» **Find storybooks** in the [Peace Libraries](#).

» **[Donate online](#)**.

**Donate by** transferring funds or sending a check/cheque:

» **USA (tax-deductible):** Friends Peace Teams, Inc., 1001 Park Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63104 USA

» **Australia:** Friends Peace Teams AWP Inc, Elizabeth J. Drexler, 5/5 Que Court, Riverside, TAS 7250 Australia.

**BSB:** 032 086 **Acct No:** 366770 **SWIFT:** WPACAU2S

» **United Kingdom (tax-deductible):** Friends Peace Teams Europe, Thurlibeer, Stratton, Bude, Cornwall EX23 9NP, United Kingdom. **Sort Code:** 20-04-59 **SWIFT:**

BUKBGB22 **GBP Account:** 03290352 **IBAN:**

GB70BUKB20045903290352 **Euros Account:** 83753644

**IBAN:** GB89BUKB20045983753644

**The needs are great, the Spirit is moving.**

**Thank you for your generosity!**



## **Attachment CC: SAYMA State of the Yearly Meeting Report**

[\(Return to the Minutes\)](#)

In the Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association our Monthly Meeting communities are finding ways to quietly and loudly share a different way with the wider communities we are in. Despite the clamor of the world today, the fear, anxiety and pull of despair, we continue to struggle together and to thrive in our own unique ways.

The destruction of Hurricane Helene is a prime example. This climate catastrophe keenly affected several of our Meetings and one that is no longer in our fellowship. Financial help, prayers and assistance were offered to all that were in the path of destruction, brought communities closer together, and helped us remember that despite our differences we all belong to one family and are responsible to one another and for the health of our planet.

Our Meetings shared compelling examples of how we are living out Quaker testimonies. We are finding ways to involve multiple generations in this vital work. In all the horrible situations happening in our country and the world, these painful and heart-centered concerns unite us deeply, keeping us from being overwhelmed by suffering. We are witnessing that of Spirit working in others through these varied activities of concern for each other, our local communities, our country, and the wider world.

Many of our Meetings have a continuing concern about the health of SAYMA as a whole. The results of this are different for each Meeting. Some are lessening their participation, communicating these concerns in minutes and letters, or withholding financial support, and some are growing more deeply involved. This ongoing difficulty seems to be pulling us apart. This divisiveness adds to the difficulty of finding clerks and other volunteers to do the work we have committed ourselves to do, with the same core group of people carrying much of the burden. The Ministry and Nurture Committee is hopeful that SAYMA can be transformed through deepening relationships in which we truly listen to and are patient with each other and are guided by spirit. We find our way forward when we hold onto and reweave the many threads that hold us together despite our differences.

Ministry and Nurture Committee

June 2025

**State of the Monthly Meeting Report - Asheville**  
([Return to the Minutes](#))

Asheville Friends Meeting  
2024 State of the Meeting Report  
*Approved 3-9-25*

**How have our practices in meeting for worship and business helped move us toward or away from unity as a spiritual community? How have we as a spiritual community encouraged each other to answer the urgings of the Spirit? What kept us from encouraging each other? How have we as a meeting and as individuals used our worldly activities as acts of witness to answer that of Spirit in others?**

At least two dozen Friends have regularly attended our meetings for worship each week and about twenty attended our meetings with attention to business each month. Each week we are blessed with visitors, and a few have become regular attenders. We were overjoyed that some new attenders jumped right in to participate in the work of the Meeting, bringing their energy and perspectives to all our activities. One Friend transferred their membership to our Meeting, and one of our young families was blessed with the birth of a child. We take time to share our joys and concerns at the end of the first hour meetings for worship. This practice brings us closer together, offering opportunities for more intimate and personal interactions. The positive effects of coming to meeting for worship and of participating in committee work rippled outward into the wider community.

Our First Day School program involved more than a half dozen adults and often a dozen or more children ranging in age from toddler to teen. The children conducted junior business meetings regularly, and adults joyfully united with them to support their community service work. Other activities that brought our different generations together for fun and community building were our Secret Pals gift exchange in the Winter, our



annual Youth Celebration and cookout in June, and our holiday programs at the end of the year: on three successive Sundays we enjoyed simple gift making, a Nativity play, and a holiday potluck and carol sing with some talented Friends playing musical instruments. Our children and young people encouraged each other to share their thoughts, their gifts and acts of service in their schools and in the community. They – and we – held each other, as well as the local, national, and global community, in the Light.

Committees concerned with the upkeep of the Meetinghouse met regularly and guided us in many necessary tasks. The House and Grounds Committee organized two work days to attend to our neglected yard and gardens, and the Library Committee restored good order to the library, finding better homes for the various items that had accumulated there during the pandemic. One of our meeting community members opened a business as a handyman. We have benefited from his diligence and competence after hiring him to work on projects that had been pending for some time.

Our spiritual enrichment programs have been rich and varied, encouraging us to seek and follow the leadings of Spirit. Reflection on vocal ministry helped us to answer Spirit's urging. We opened our hearts in worship-sharing on the wars in Ukraine and Gaza. We learned more about Climate Change and steps we can take personally and as a community to mitigate or forestall the looming catastrophe. Our post card writing on each fifth Sunday throughout the year gave us the opportunity to communicate with our elected officials on matters of concern to us as Quakers. Among other things, we lobbied our members of Congress for a cease- fire and humanitarian aid in Gaza, and thanked our County Sheriff for rejecting the demand that his deputies act as agents of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency.

We engaged in a project of Truth and Reconciliation with Asheville's Black Community, facilitated by Dr. Melchor Hall, executive director of the Solidarity Arts & Education Decolonial Initiatives Collective. We met weekly among ourselves and monthly with Dr. Hall throughout the year, our efforts culminating in a draft Statement of Apology to Asheville's Black Community and commitments to engage in repair of historical and

present-day harms. Some of our members attended meetings of the Community Reparations Commission and reported back. One Friend attended the Health & Wellness Impact Focus group that met every two weeks during the time that the Reparations Commission met.

There has been a spirit of community in our business meetings both in handling our day-to-day operations and in considering the many deep and difficult topics that have come to the fore. Friends felt the presence of Spirit as we opened to each other's leadings and listened intently to what each of us was called to share in words and actions, carefully considering what was offered so that we better understood each other, our meeting, our local community, and the world. In our meetings for business in 2024, Friends united in creating an Indigenous People's Fund, seeded with a percentage of our property value and a portion of the money we collect from other groups who rent our building. The Meeting agreed to purchase renewable energy credits each month to compensate for our fossil-fuel- derived electricity consumption, and to invest in clean energy and clean water in underdeveloped regions through a carbon offsetting fund.

We have been looking for a presiding clerk since the term of service for the previous clerk ended in September. In the meantime, former clerks have been taking on this responsibility a month at a time.

As individuals, we did myriad varieties of work in the world, sustained by the nurturing we received amongst ourselves. By reporting on community and non- meeting programs and events, or announcing them in advance, we inspired one another to be more involved. We participated in educational programs that made us aware or gave us insight into others' situations. Friends helped feed those who were hungry, and worked with children in schools or in our meeting as they tried to make sense of interruptions and difficulties that their families faced. Some of us worked to protect our electoral process. Volunteers drove people to voting sites. One of our families spent six months in Ghana. The parents taught in the local university and the children went to school in the community.

Friends supported members who had a felt call to a particular project. One Friend, a professional blacksmith, brought us to participate in a national “gun surrender” project, transforming surrendered guns into garden tools. Some Friends worked with the Zig Zag Zoom initiative of one of our attenders, which supports Black festivals and entrepreneurs in the Asheville area. They helped set up tents, carried materials for vendors, and served water and coffee to vendors and seniors. Other Friends participated in establishing an Alliance for Beyond Land Acknowledgement, to promote right relations with peoples of Turtle Island, especially Eastern Band Cherokee Indians.

Several of us attended the SAYMA Retreat and Sessions in Berea, Kentucky. A member of our community offered a Forest Bathing workshop at SAYMA gathering, providing SAYMA Friends the opportunity to share their experience of communing with God/Divine/Spirit in nature.

We held a memorial in June for Bob Smith, longtime and cherished member of our meeting. We hosted over 100 people from the Asheville community and around the country to celebrate the life of this beloved Friend. We sought and hired a Black professional videographer to record the event. Even before Bob’s death, we had been providing a weekly meal for him and his wife, Donna. We continued this practice after his passing, offering companionship for Donna as well as help around the house and in the garden when needed.

As Asheville faith communities joined with Veterans for Peace in observing the International Day of Peace on September 21, Friends shared among ourselves and with them our anger and grief regarding the starvation and slaughter in Gaza and in other wars across the world.

On September 27th, six days after the International Day of Peace, Hurricane Helene struck communities in western North Carolina. Many of us had never before experienced a major natural disaster. Residents of our area died. Homes, businesses, and the Swannanoa Valley Friends meetinghouse were all destroyed. Most of us were left without

power, water, and other utilities, some for weeks. Many in the broader community were without shelter and adequate food. We tried, as a meeting and as individuals, to restore our lives and the meeting process for worship and business.

In our grief and fear we attempted to cultivate a culture of peace, a safe space in our meeting despite enormous anxieties, discouragements, and exhaustion. During the time after the hurricane, we reached out to neighbors and community members to share resources and support. We took food, water, and phone-charging batteries to shut-ins. We found that the community work was spiritual work, that new relationships could be formed through our interactions. Our young Friends held a bake sale to raise money for the Asheville-Buncombe Community Christian Ministry's (ABCCM) Transformation Village, and the Beloved Community. They wrote letters of encouragement to them and thank you notes to Red Cross Disaster Relief, World Central Kitchen, and Mercy Chefs who helped our community so much during the devastation after the storm.

We encouraged and received funds from far and wide after Helene ravished our area. We facilitated disbursement of these funds as requested by concerned Quakers and others nationwide and from Canada and Great Britain. With the meeting's approval, we disbursed those contributions to those in greatest need, especially our sister meetings in Swannanoa and Celo. Friends opened their homes after the hurricane for people to do laundry and have showers. A group from Athens Meeting in Ohio that came to help with the Helene devastation stayed in a home provided by one of our members. It made us feel useful to be able to help others. Sharing helped us all to heal as a community. When we acted with integrity, all of the efforts deepened our spiritual lives. We developed into a more loving, supportive community, even though we were sometimes so busy with mundane tasks that we neglected to encourage each other, and sometimes we had great ideas, but didn't follow through on them.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Helene and the run-up to the elections, fear and anxieties ran high. We received inspiration from one another responding to the callings that resonated most deeply for each of us and felt authentic. Some of us did not ask for help,

sensing how exhausted many in our meeting and our community were and still are. Some of us felt regret and guilt for not doing more. Our families supported each other through challenges, struggles, and concerns as well as celebrations.

We have been helping each other process the outcome of an election in which a convicted criminal and sexual predator received enough votes to lead the nation. We heard and loved each other as we processed current events and sought a just world in which to live. In North Carolina we were warned by reputable watchdog groups such as the Carter Center that there might be tampering with our elections. We helped each other find balance in our lives as we searched for answers, scared and worried about the state of our country. We have seen increased attendance since the election.

It was a challenging year all in all, reminding us that the well-being of each of us is linked to the well-being of everyone. We listened and encouraged each other to respond to the needs of our Meeting and our community as we were led and had the capacity to do so. We tried to serve those in the community at large with integrity and love. We expanded our connections to other like-minded communities by offering our meetinghouse for a modest fee to a Zen Buddhist meditation group and to the Ethical Humanist Society of Asheville. Their activities reflect our Quaker belief in the Light in all beings. One of the Zen practitioners offered to paint our meeting room for us, if we provided the paint. It was such a thoughtful offer and the newly painted meeting room looks awesome. We are grateful for our Buddhist friends and the Ethical Society. A Black Lives Matter banner stretches across our porch along with peace prayer flags made by our young Friends. All of these things remind us of the Quaker testimonies that provide guidance in our daily lives.

## State of the Monthly Meeting Report - Atlanta

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### State of the Meeting Report – Atlanta Friends Meeting, 2024

*"Where your fear is, there is your task." – Carl Jung*

This past year has called us to courage. As a spiritual community rooted in Quaker tradition, we have faced fears personal, collective, and structural - fears of speaking and listening, of change and inaction, of confrontation and silence. And yet, as Jung reminds us, it is precisely in these spaces of discomfort that our deepest work lies.

Throughout 2024, Atlanta Friends Meeting has continued to grow in spirit, size, and conviction. Our committees report a year of transformation and perseverance, responding faithfully to urgent social issues, nurturing the inner life of the Meeting, and attending to the practical needs of our spiritual home. Below are highlights and reflections from each committee's contributions to our life together.

#### Ministry and Worship

Meeting for Worship remains the heart of our community. In 2024, we welcomed many new attenders drawn by a hunger for spiritual depth amid political and cultural unrest. This influx has challenged our practice of vocal ministry, prompting deeper reflection and the creation of a guide to worship. We began using a microphone during worship to ensure all messages could be heard—recognizing that if ministry is divinely inspired, it must be accessible to all.

Forums this year explored practices such as holding in the Light, membership, and the intersection of creativity and spirituality. We joyfully welcomed new members and held memorials for beloved Friends. The Macon Worship Group remains healthy, and we now support four individual ministries under our care. The committee's work on reparations has evolved into a formal standing committee, reflecting our ongoing commitment to justice and healing.

#### Nominating Committee

This year brought new energy as attendance and volunteerism grew. The committee diligently worked on a major overhaul of the Handbook with new templates for clarity and consistency. This effort included deep collaboration with committee clerks and set a strong foundation for future transparency and discernment.

#### Care and Counsel

Care and Counsel reaffirmed its nurturing role, actively supporting Friends through compassionate outreach and practical assistance. Efforts included addressing the needs of unhoused individuals, contributing to memorial services, and ensuring ongoing support for homebound Friends. The continuation of traditions such as the Welcome Table and the thoughtful use of Quaker Quilts reinforced our Meeting's foundational ethos of care and connection.

## **CURAFM (Committee on Undoing Racism in Atlanta Friends Meeting)**

CURAFM advanced implementation of the AFM Interpersonal Racist Incident Policy, offering training in restorative circles and facilitating community-building events. A confidential racial incident was addressed through peacemaking processes, even as the formal Standing Response Group remains in development. The committee remains committed to fostering anti-racism and accountability within our Meeting.

## **Quakers for Racial Equality (QRE)**

QRE worked energetically across educational, spiritual, and advocacy realms. They hosted forums, expanded library resources, and co-sponsored efforts on voting rights, reparations, and land acknowledgment. Central to their work is a commitment to the Muscogee Creek people, on whose land our meetinghouse stands. Through partnerships and donations, they have engaged in acts of reparative justice and decolonization.

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

Our LGBTQ+ community grew deeper roots in 2024. Alongside potlucks, they added monthly game nights that fostered intergenerational bonds. They marched joyfully in Atlanta Pride and raised awareness about increasing threats to trans and queer lives, recommitting ourselves to solidarity in the year ahead.

## **Social Concerns Committee**

The Social Concerns Committee remained a hub of action. Events addressed issues ranging from Gaza to voting rights. A standout effort was the year-long “Vote Now” banner project in collaboration with NAACP partners. They initiated a new Sanctuary Working Group in response to immigration policy fears and sponsored workshops for the LGBTQIA community. Funds were sent for hurricane relief in North Carolina, to Palestinian students studying at Guilford College, and for 3 student scholarships that are awarded by The Coalition for the People’s Agenda. Despite a mid-year resignation, the committee remained resilient and active.

## **Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)**

The Atlanta FCNL Advocacy Team embodied persistence, lobbying for Pentagon budget reform and a ceasefire in Gaza. Through forums, vigils, and personal connections with lawmakers, they uplifted peace and fiscal responsibility. Their efforts contributed to meaningful co-sponsorships and built relationships critical for long-term change.

## **Administration Committee**

From staffing to sprinklers, the Administration Committee managed the Meeting’s physical and logistical needs with diligence. Major achievements included completing the website revamp, raising staff wages, replacing the stove with a greener option, and improving safety systems. Their care for the building grounds and long-term tenants reflects a stewardship rooted in faithfulness.

## **Landscape Committee**



The ravine behind the meetinghouse has been a quiet focus of spiritual and ecological renewal. Invasive species were removed, native plants introduced, and a sacred space for nature-based meditation nurtured. This work complements our broader efforts toward harmony with Earth and all beings.

### **Gathered Meeting Retreat Committee**

The Gathered Meeting Retreat Committee held its first weekend retreat since 2019, with the meaningful theme "The Story of Me, The Story of Us, The Story of Now," facilitating intergenerational connections and deeper spiritual reflection. Participants reported renewed spiritual intimacy and optimism for the Meeting's direction.

### **Library Committee**

The Library Committee experienced substantial growth, both financially and in the breadth of its collection. Special collections were prioritized, especially around racial equity and language diversity, with significant additions of Quaker-themed fiction, poetry, and resources on Islam, reflecting the Meeting's evolving interests and commitments.

In a year shaped by unrest and renewal, the Atlanta Friends Meeting leaned into its fears and found within a call to deeper witness. We have not turned away from hard questions—about war, racism, belonging, or how to worship in truth. Instead, we are meeting them with the same spirit of listening that grounds our Quaker faith.

We remain a vital, growing, and courageous community, led by Spirit into the work we are called to do. Where fear has stirred among us, it has revealed our path which we walk together.

*Submitted in faith and gratitude,  
David Small Clerk*

*May 18, 2025*

## State of the Monthly Meeting Report - Celo

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### State of Celo Friends Meeting in 2024

As we remember 2024, the year was significantly marked by Hurricane Helene. Our meetinghouse was not damaged, but our surrounding community and county were devastated. Our meeting community came together with love and concern for one another. We provided spiritual support for many people and the meetinghouse was frequently full of new faces on First Day. We received significant physical and emotional support from the wider community, as people quickly came together with fortitude and equipment to clear roads and bridges. Our meetinghouse was an important gathering place for the wider Celo community, both immediately after the flood and in the following weeks. Over the ensuing weeks and months, as we have worked with neighbors from a variety of religious and political backgrounds, we have been profoundly moved by the presence of the Spirit in one another.

This past year started smoothly for Celo Meeting, with the continued use of our playground for both the Garden Preschool and the separate summer program for children organized by volunteer parents. Margithaus had gotten less use due to the COVID slowdown, but rentals started picking up, with two monthly renters scheduled in 2024. It was clear that the rental contract needed to be updated and streamlined, so a Margithaus ad hoc committee began the process. At the end of September when Hurricane Helene devastated the community, we felt fortunate that the meetinghouse compound was spared. Because of this, the Garden Preschool was able to resume the following week on the playground. This, and the resumption of weekly potlucks and First Day School, helped to provide some sense of normalcy in the midst of the hurricane cleanup.

Having an active First Day School program continued to be important to the growth of Celo Meeting and for our outreach to young families. We express our gratitude to Marilyn Cade for her work reestablishing a consistent program after the COVID hiatus. We also thank Mari Ohta-Weir and Becky Gray for their many years of dedication to our children. These three women stepped down from leadership at the end of 2024. To fill the need for leadership, we decided to hire Natasha Shannon to teach an elementary- aged class. This was a big step for Celo Meeting to pay someone to teach our children, but we decided it was the right thing to do, and Tasha has been a great fit for our meeting. We also engaged Julia Hudson, another Young Friend, to coordinate child care for the preschool-aged children. Both age groups require regular volunteer help from the Meeting each week, as more young families and children have been attending Meeting since the hurricane.

We held a Meeting for Worship with Attention to Animals at the end of April. It was beautiful and lively, with many children and their pets in attendance. At least 15 dogs, one rabbit, and one horse were present during our outdoor meeting. Several heartfelt messages were shared.

The Adult Religious Education Committee (ARE) continued to provide educational programs for Celo Friends Meeting to enhance both the individual's and the meeting's spiritual growth. Programs included sessions on Quaker eldering, a focus on social activists from Friends history to present day, and racial justice. Worship-sharing groups continued to meet to support community and deep sharing among members and attenders. These small groups meet monthly to consider spiritual queries and topics of mutual interest.

Our Building & Grounds committee was without a clerk for most of the year, but we managed to have the oaks taken down, which have leaned over Margithaus for many years, and organized an impromptu Work Day in mid-June to tackle, among other tasks, splitting and moving all that wood. We noted rather proudly that the average age of the crew was about 70—an issue we'll need to address in the future—but for at least one over-70 participant, it was “the best work day ever.”

Several Friends in key leadership positions have stepped aside, and we have found that people have less time for volunteer work. We have responded by breaking down key positions in Finance and First Day School into smaller roles. The elders are mentoring younger friends into these and other roles, like Archivist and the Conscientious Objection Committee. This adds another intergenerational aspect to our meeting culture that we all, young and old, value.

In August we held a threshing session regarding SAYMA. Many found this to be helpful as we consider the meeting's relationship with SAYMA—an ongoing discussion for Celo Meeting.

The Racial Equity Committee of the meeting met eight times with residents of the historically Black community of Lincoln Park in Burnsville, NC, at Griffith Chapel Church. We supported creation of their new non-profit Preservation Alliance of the Toe River Region (PATRR), whose purpose is to preserve the history and integrity of their community, cemeteries, churches, historic buildings, and residents since 1865, including that of enslaved people since 1790 and intermarriage with indigenous peoples.

A beloved Friend, James Mize, died in June of this year. Though he was only with us for a short time, he touched deeply the lives of our members. Our meeting held a memorial in the meetinghouse and then we processed to the South Toe River where his ashes were scattered. Gil Johnson, Joyce's husband of 65 years, died in June, at the age of 93. Gil was able to remain home until his death and receive loving care from family, friends and home health care. A Memorial Service in the Manner of Friends was held for Gil at Arthur Morgan School. Philip Mitchell's beloved wife Beca was able to die peacefully at home as well, after a nine-year journey through frontotemporal dementia. Many meeting members brought singing, laughter, and worship and shared in the deep joy of their home where love was ever present.

The End of Life Committee reported that the Day of the Dead gathering in November, when we came together at the Celo Cemetery to tend the graves and memorial stone wall, was a highlight. We warmed ourselves around a fire tended by our teen friends and remembered the 95 known people, as well as those unknown, who reside in the Celo Cemetery. This year was

especially significant as we named our neighbors who had died in the flood from Hurricane Helene just a few weeks earlier. A friend who had recently returned to the area shared a beautiful memory of the very short life of her baby who was buried in the cemetery 24 years earlier. In this gathering, we experienced one of the silver linings arising out of the flood devastation—a leap in community spirit and outreach—and so it was especially good to welcome several newcomers to our gathering from the local Arthur Morgan School.

Another silver lining following the devastation of Hurricane Helene was an anonymous donor reaching out to Celo Friends Meeting with an offer to help. This donor learned about Celo Meeting through a previous connection to Camp Celo. After considering this offer at a called Meeting for Business, we decided to accept a donation of \$100,000 to distribute to individuals and families who had suffered losses from the hurricane. A committee was formed to seek out those with need and make decisions about disbursement. Having a concrete way to assist our neighbors was a wonderful gift for Celo Friends Meeting. We made many heartfelt connections with neighbors we would not otherwise have had reason to connect with. Once a funding structure was established, more donations were forthcoming. In total, Celo Friends Meeting distributed \$132,950 to 72 individuals and families who had suffered losses because of the storm.

In the final months of 2024, a sense of community deepened as we came together with neighbors from a variety of backgrounds as a result of the hurricane. In this way we have used the difficulties we have faced to move forward together and grow in the Spirit.

## State of the Monthly Meeting Report - Columbia

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### Columbia Friends State of the Meeting Report for the Southern Appalachia Yearly Meeting & Association (SAYMA), 2025

Submitted by Lori Donath, Clerk, Columbia Friends Meeting

Columbia Friends Meeting continues to persevere through major disagreements both practical and ideological, bringing into 2025 an increased capacity for mending and growth...at just the time when we need resilience most. We still enjoy being a small meeting whose people for the most part rotate in attendance rather than come on the same days, but we have been seeing new faces and also some old friends. We celebrated one new member early in the year and have two friends requesting clearness committees for membership. Members and attendees have found some comfort in the Meeting as they react to the actions of the new federal administration, some of which have had effects close to home. As well, friends' participation and validation in rallies (protesting the actions of the administration) have served as acts of witness to answer that of Spirit in others.

Friends at CFM feel that, although there is room for clarifying Quaker process as regards decision-making, we're doing fairly well in terms of our practices. If not in unity, we have a unified spirit. One friend commented that hearing others with a longer history talk about what SAYMA meant to them made them feel closer to SAYMA *and* to people in our meeting—to understand our members—to nurture SAYMA and receive nurturing from SAYMA.

Friends expressed gratitude that our spiritual community recognizes the many different urgings among us. Overall, in terms of encouraging each other to answer the urgings of Spirit, friends have been navigating a perceived tension between the Quaker values of caring about one another and speaking one's truth—a tension parallel the different stances within the Meeting toward Israel and occupied Palestine, as well as meeting house maintenance matters. Whereas one friend described being in a strange and uncomfortable place when not in synchrony with other friends' leadings—not presuming to be right, but not in synchrony with others (“to be able to stand aside is a gift that Quakers give us”)-- other friends described such a lack of synchronization as an obstacle to unity in the Meeting, an obstacle to one's own leading. Addressing these and other concerns, another friend invoked the Quaker practice of *plainspeaking* by emphasizing that one must focus on one's own “sense of spirit, rather than on another person's feelings and struggle.” The Meeting will receive ministry from Atlanta Friends Mary Ann and Bill Downey in the form of a summer weekend workshop on other such practices. The workshop promises to bring the meeting closer together by providing an opportunity to spend time together, practice Quaker process, and understand more deeply.

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, as part of intergenerational worship on the fifth First Day, the Meeting held a long-planned dedication of the Meeting's pollinator garden and nature trail renovation. The garden and trail renovation resulted from several partnerships, a grant from the Richland County Conservation Commission, and labor and cooperation among the Meeting. In response to SAYMA's second query, one friend recognized the many such goals the Meeting has achieved despite its size and expressed regret at initially underestimating the power of a small meeting. The garden dedication was a welcome and joyful contrast against the global landscape, an occasion for celebrating what is possible when we see the light in one another.

### ***Summary of Responses to Queries:***

#### **How have our practices in meetings for worship and business helped move us toward or away from unity as a spiritual community?**

Friends at CFM feel that, although there is room for clarifying Quaker process as regards decision-making, we're doing fairly well in terms of our practices. If not in unity, we have a unified spirit. We have persevered and worked our way through disagreements by making an effort to adhere to Quaker process in nominations and in worship with attention to business. Also, a friend commented that hearing others with a longer history talk about what SAYMA meant to them made them feel closer to SAYMA *and* to people in our meeting—to understand our members—to nurture SAYMA and receive nurturing from SAYMA.

#### **How have we as a spiritual community encouraged each other to answer the urgings of Spirit? What kept us from encouraging each other?**

Overall, in terms of encouraging each other to answer the urgings of Spirit, friends have been navigating a perceived tension between the Quaker values of caring about one another and speaking one's truth— a tension parallel the different stances within the Meeting toward Israel and occupied Palestine, as well as practical maintenance matters at home. Friends expressed gratitude that our little spiritual community recognizes the many different urgings among us, such that our urgings do not exert pressure on others but make us clear about what we are called to do. One friend described her leading toward collective advocacy for social change as necessarily calling in others to join her: "We must but be very clear about what we are called to do, what our tradition encourages us to do." Another friend described feeling they are in a strange and uncomfortable place when they are not in synchrony with other friends' leadings—not presuming to be right, but not in synchrony; they affirmed that "to be able to stand aside is a gift that Quakers give us." One friend described such a lack of synchronization as an obstacle to unity in the Meeting—and even to one's own leading: "When someone has a strong feeling about an issue, I think it affects the rest of the group; we temper our response out of concern that we will disturb a member of our Meeting." Another friend echoed a sense of often "holding back" out of concerns about negatively affecting the Meeting as a whole. Addressing these and other concerns, that same friend invoked the Quaker practice of *plainspeaking* by emphasizing that one must focus on one's own "sense of spirit, rather than on another person's feelings and struggle." The Meeting will receive ministry from Atlanta Friends Mary Ann and Bill Downey in the form of a summer weekend workshop; the workshop promises to bring the meeting closer together by providing an opportunity to spend time together, practice Quaker process, and understand more deeply.

April 30<sup>th</sup> the Meeting held a long-planned intergenerational dedication of the Meeting's pollinator garden and nature trail renovation, which resulted from several partnerships, a grant from the Richland County Conservation Commission, and labor and cooperation among the Meeting. In response to the second query, one friend recognized the many such goals the Meeting has achieved despite its size and expressed regret about initially underestimating the power of a small meeting. The garden dedication was a welcome and joyful contrast against the global landscape, an occasion for celebrating what is possible when we see the light in one another.

#### **How have we as a meeting and as individuals used our worldly activities as acts of witness to answer that of Spirit in others?**

One friend described how the concepts in SPICES helped her stay connected to Quaker practice.

Others shared their participation and validation in rallies protesting the actions of the new federal administration. A group of friends at the rallies holds a banner that reads *Love thy neighbor, no exceptions*. “I can’t tell you how many people approach us and thank us and acknowledge that ‘oh it’s right that the friends should be here.’ It’s a source of strength to me and hope it is for others.”

Friends spoke of other acts of witness, from a pilgrimage to India to volunteering with the SC Advocacy Team of the Friends Committee on National Legislation. “When the Advocacy Team talks online with Sen Graham’s staff person virtually they are witnessing to the spirit of that person with what’s happening in Washington.” One friend remarked on how the Meeting had been increasingly bearing witness through attentiveness to one another routine interactions, being present with the light of another person, resting into ease, grace, sharing light.



## State of the Monthly Meeting Report - Cookeville

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### Cookeville Monthly Meeting

State of the Meeting report February 2025

#### **How have our practices in meetings for worship and business helped move us toward or away from unity as a spiritual community?**

Cookeville friends continue to show up, try to have patience and tolerance for each other, and struggle to find unity when we disagree. We find that having potlucks, an annual retreat together, and doing projects with each other moves us closer to unity. Together we exceed our personal capacities and are encouraged to be more respectful of others needs and concerns. We could be better at listening to each other and sometimes cannot move past the flow of words to understand what a concern is really about. Our technical issues don't help matters(some of us are quite technically challenged), and being unable to all be in person when we worship prevents deeper understanding on occasion. We are striving to be more of a light in the world at a time when it's really hard to shine. We still experience a mostly quiet worship together and one of us questions that lack of vocal ministry and is led to try to deepen our meetings with a concern for business.

#### **How have we as a spiritual community encouraged each other to answer the urgings of Spirit? What kept us from encouraging each other?**

Because we all live quite some distance from each other and the majority of us are older, our lack of energy and ability to drive after dark impedes our answering of spiritual nudges at times. Despite this we do show up as often as possible and we share information about events and leadings. Some of us are puzzling out exactly what Spirit is urging us to do. Finding our larger world in such chaos can distract from listening more closely to the inner light, but our worship together draws us deeper and reminds us that we are all of God.

#### **How have we as a meeting and as individuals used our worldly activities as acts of witness to answer that of Spirit in others?**

We participate in and support local organizations and events that match our values and help create a more just and peaceful community. We communicate those values, let others know they are seen(acknowledging that of God), pick up trash in our neighborhoods, reuse and repair instead of buying new, wear our Quaker t-shirts and answer questions about our faith traditions when asked, care for abandoned animals, help our neighbors, listen, use preferred pronouns, act kindly, and do what we think of as "subversive Quakering".

Although we feel that we are lacking in many ways, and are not doing enough to create a better world, we keep showing up, persevering and persisting. We love and miss our younger attenders when their lives get too busy or they need to sleep in on a Sunday. We are rejuvenated when we are lucky enough to experience that energy in person together.

## State of the Monthly Meeting Report - Huntsville

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### State of the Huntsville Area Friends Meeting 2024

March 2025

The Huntsville Area Friends Meeting (HAFM) engaged in a year of sharing, study, service, concern and change. 2024 was the first full year of in person meeting (with hybrid online also available) since prior to Covid. The meeting gathers at the Tree of Life behavioral health center and recently moved into their Autism Resource Center meeting room. The meeting sits in silence in a place of healing and acceptance.

Our numbers remain about the same as years prior. A couple of our meeting have moved or work kept them from meeting, but HAFM had a few new attenders show up this year at meetings. So HAFM remains a small monthly meeting but has not shrunk appreciably during 2024.

HAFM currently does not form many organized committees doing the good work of Friends, but is rather strong in individual action that is communicated and shared within meeting. HAFM members and attenders routinely share information about the service, organization work, volunteerism and general knowledge to all in the meeting. Most of this sharing occurs after silent worship in discussion, announcements, 2nd hours or during the monthly attention to business portion of the meeting. Several Friends send emails with items of interest or events out to be communicated across HAFM. Sharing of ideas, interests, life events and support is held at meeting in discussions not only after meeting but throughout the year at a few social events amongst members. So, HAFM valued appreciation amongst the group and sharing during the meeting this past year.

The Meeting spent some time discussing and pondering on the SAYMA suggested queries and the responses were as follows:

#### **How have our practices in meetings for worship and business helped move us toward or away from unity as a spiritual community?**

We are holding onto our HAFM unity even when we discuss divisive issues like SAYMA's difficult and troubling issues with racial justice committee and its effects on SAYMA and multiple monthly meetings, and on the ongoing devastation in Gaza, history of Israel and Palestine, Ramallah, the Quaker school in the West Bank. and other recent news events. Typically, the meeting allows for individualism and expression in a safe space. One member noticed the spirit of communal support as we had a faith sharing around the Gaza tragedies—a mutual offering of personal experiences and heart-opening for compassionate listening with each other. HAFM's history appears to maintain respecting what members and

attenders bring to the meeting and highlight the positive, the care of the world around us within our control.

Moving into our newer space in January, capped a year that has been very conducive to community-building and great to have the "hybrid" capacity, especially for our "long-distance" HAFM folk, all helping us move toward unity for the future.

What has brought us to a closer spiritual meeting is our getting to know each other in a deeper way. We have become more of a community by knowing what is happening in each other's personal lives. We are not only worshipers who leave at the end of the hour; we sit around after worship and share more of our concerns and joys and daily lives.

These actions have broadened our concerns outside of HAFM and led us to think what could lead to peace when there is such great tension.

### **How have we as a spiritual community encouraged each other to answer the urgings of Spirit? What kept us from encouraging each other?**

How we encourage one another...Checking in when concerns are raised. Sharing community resources, we are familiar with that address HAFM concerns. Deep listening to one another, to our individual and Meeting "joys and concerns," including following meetings for worship, by phone & email, and during gatherings outside of meeting times--especially as we've shared our stories/life-journeys during times in a long-time attender's home and our going caroling together, etc. Being grateful for our newcomers, including brief visitors, as well as those becoming parts of our Meeting. Doing book studies together. Learning about the situations between the Israelis and the Palestinians, including studying together about the Ramallah Friends' School in the West Bank.

What keeps us from encouraging one another....not lack of care, for sure. Maybe lack of time given individual concerns, given all of our respective different activities? One member sums it up nicely, "I also see our attentiveness to Spirit nudges within through corporate worship and our private devotions transforming into acts of service in our individual lives."

### **How have we as a meeting and as individuals used our worldly activities as acts of witness to answer that of Spirit in others?**

As a Meeting: with our financial support of several charitable organizations, including Friend Olo's school in the DRC; with Interfaith Mission Service involvement; with Huntsville Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion involvement; with environmental action (Hethalyn); with lobbying members of Congress via Friends Committee on National Legislation guidance and input; with State of the Huntsville Area Friends Meeting 2 Second Hours to discuss areas of concern; with HAFM activities to share our lives, concerns (Christmas caroling, snacks, and visiting) in Janet's neighborhood and in her parent's home. Inviting staff members from other community organizations to our Meeting to inform us of their work, e.g., Global Ties to learn about (and for

us to contribute to their work) with refugee resettlement. Being part of other organizations such as Interfaith Mission Service, building relationships to learn about the spiritual lives of Jewish, Muslim, and Hindu, etc., faith communities and supporting community food banks together. Teaching at the University of Alabama in Huntsville. Serving on broader initiatives, e.g., Advisory Council for the City's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Joining with friends outside, as well as inside of Meeting to witness that of Spirit within them and find courage as we "mind that which is eternal" during difficult times.

One HAFM family has been pulling away from purchasing from Walmart, Target and Amazon. They are working on buying less, buying used, borrowing or looking first to see if they already have something. They are trying to support small local vendors and or vendors that actively support diverse hiring practices. This is definitely a practice rather than a perfection that started a couple of years ago when the kids announced in the car one day that it wouldn't be right for them to eat at Chick-fil-a anymore. This is a really big conversation topic that they keep circling back to. They discuss corporate DEI policies and have dropped Amazon Prime membership in favor of Costco membership. Do we need that many gluten free pizza crusts in our freezer? Probably not but switching to Costco feels like they are doing something tangible with the resources to answer that of spirit in others.

In conclusion, HAFM continues to meet in a non-programmed environment and act in organic state of sharing. Though HAFM resides in the "Rocket City", a military, structured and conservative environment, the Meeting operates in patience, appreciation and consideration. We manifest the meeting with individualistic spirit. The members and attenders bring a wildness, a personal flavor to the spiritual stew cooked up every week in an anticipatory, yet persuasive silence.

## **State of the Monthly Meeting Report - Memphis**

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### **State of the Meeting - Memphis Friends Meeting**

A cohesive theme emerged from our worship sharing on January 19th in response to the traditional Quaker query How fares the Spirit amongst you? It was expressed in many different words, although by the end of our hour we felt we had experienced a gathered meeting. Some of those words identified challenges – transition, anxiety, accelerating change, crossed boundaries – while others spoke of our resilience as a meeting – cohesion, accepting change, moving forward, deepening our focus on caring for each other in our meeting community, feeling an abundance of gratitude, and maintaining the meeting as a haven of sanity for all who have found their way here.

For several years now, we have been experiencing an unexpected number of losses for a community our size. In 2024 alone we held memorial services for four Friends who had passed. Each memorial brought us gifts as the family and friends of the deceased joined us and shared their perspectives and stories. These were not our only losses; many of us have been grieving the absence of our former close connection with SAYMA. Happily, we have been able to provide the stability and safety of Quaker worship for ourselves and for new attenders who have joined us in worship, potluck, and meetings for learning.

Our outreach to the world has continued and even found some new avenues for connection. In addition to providing single-serve food packets and Thanksgiving baskets to the New Tyler AME Church as well as clothing and toiletries to Manna House, we have formed a new partnership with the Frayser Community Urban Garden and responded to a request from Room at the Inn for calendars. We share space in our meetinghouse with four or five local groups and each year we participate in events supporting the LGBTQ community. Our Justice Working Group is small but steady as it moves from educating us about problems to encouraging us to get involved.

As for inreach, we have found that simply being together helps deepen our sense of community. We've shared experiences about the 2024 total solar eclipse, held a spring retreat, experimented with game nights, and so forth. Hybrid meetings for worship, business, and learning have become a fixture and we've experimented with a special worship requiring masks so Friends with immunity issues can experience an in-person meeting once again. We have learned to be patient with ourselves and each other, serving as we can and sitting back when we must.

Our meeting is still adjusting to the profound shifts since the pandemic shutdown kept us out of the meetinghouse for over two years. Where once we had 30 souls in worship at the meetinghouse, now it is not quite as many as 20 divided between the meeting room and Zoom. Happily, it is also true that we have gained confidence watching our meeting survive in spite of our smaller numbers and we are heartened to watch a transition unfolding as the torch passes from those who carried so much of the responsibility for our meeting for decades to younger, newer Friends who are stepping up.

In a world thrown into chaos by a global pandemic and political retrenchment, we seek to renew ourselves in the Light and keep our options open as we go forward seasoning what is ours to do. It is clear to us that a vibrant meeting community is essential for helping us grow. Even as so much else in our world goes on changing, our meeting remains.

Seasoned in worship sharing; drafted by Mallory Woodard and Carol Ciscel, reviewed in another worship sharing, and finally brought to business meeting on February 9, 2025 for approval.

## State of the Monthly Meeting Report - West Knoxville

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### WKFM - State of The Meeting 2024

For WKFM, 2024 has been an active year filled with many positive and enlivening events. Over the year, we have been blessed to have a number of new young adults join us, bringing with them youthful energy and avid interest in Quakerism. New attenders' interest is reflected not only in their attendance for worship, but in their participation on committees, spending time with children, and contributing during work days. We have had a larger group of children with a more consistent presence. It is heartwarming to see the children enjoying each other, learning about Quaker testimonies, and becoming ever more comfortable with the adults in the meeting. While older members continue to fulfill many responsibilities for the meeting, including the First Day School, the addition of new folks has given the meeting a feeling of vibrancy and a strong sense of community.

We continue to be involved in service and outreach through Family Promise, Fun Days, FCNL letter writing, and political discussions. The Compassionate Ministries Uganda (CMU) fund continued to provide support for the education of children in Uganda. Our commitment to Interracial Wellbeing and Restorative Justice is strong and the Reparations Fund is increasing. We have been less involved in Justice Knox this year as one of our members who was a leader in this cause has moved to another state. Our committees continue to be an important part of what it takes to keep Meeting moving forward. Some of our Friendly 8's groups have been enjoying getting to know each other and sharing meals. Members share their talents with SAYMA, and WKFM was well represented at the Yearly Meeting.

Similar to last year, our WKFM property has continued to present some challenges for F(f)riends. The development taking place on land adjacent to Meeting House property resulted in damage to some of our trees as well as encroachment on WKFM property. As a result, additional expenses were incurred this year including continuing to engage an attorney. An ad hoc committee along with our Trustees have been working diligently to come to an agreeable settlement with two separate contractors. When this is complete, we will return to the discussion of whether to build a fence between our burial grounds and the backyards of the new homes.

We had increased our 4000 spending plan totals for 2024, but we were unable to make the full amount of our planned 4000 contributions to outside organizations. The Meeting incurred additional expenses, particularly in relation to property issues, and some recurring expenses also increased which led to less funds being available.

We have continued the practice of hybrid meetings for Worship as well as for second hour programs. We had memorial services for two beloved Friends. We dearly miss those who have passed this year as well as in previous years, yet they live on in our hearts and in our sacred space



## **Attachment DD: SAYMA Epistle - Yearly Meeting 2025 - 54**

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### **Epistle from Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association, SAYMA**

Berea, Kentucky  
Sixth Month 20-23, 2025

We met under clear skies at Berea College on the weekend of the June solstice and a notable heat wave, a reminder of our warming climate. Our theme was Nurturing Community in Our Broken Worlds. Word of the United States attacks on Iran came late on the second day.

These yearly sessions differed from those of past years in that our planning committee had arranged for more workshop and learning opportunities, more time for worship and reflection, and more time for meeting Friends and strengthening our community of faith. We acknowledge the movement of Spirit in both the process of preparing for this gathering and in the unfolding of events during our time together.

For the first time, we held a preparative virtual meeting for worship with a concern for business a week in advance of the gathering here in Berea. This allowed time for seasoning between the first reading of the budget and nominating slate and the meetings for worship with concern for business at yearly sessions.

We faced some unexpected challenges including the necessity of relocating all our workshops and children's activities at the last minute. It may be that the somewhat forced experience of sharing one building for all our activities during the day and one residence hall for Friends of all ages at night supported a growing sense of unity among us.

The Junior Yearly Meeting had eleven young Friends between the ages of 2 and 12. The high temperatures encouraged playing in the creek, other water play, and seeking shady spots across the campus. They also made parachutes to protect small dolls as the kids climbed up the bell tower stairway and released them down the shaft. Two children graduated to the teen program.

Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) cheerfully welcomed new members. As older teens looked ahead toward graduation, younger SAYFers stepped up to do their share of discernment of SAYF matters. Scotty Utz of Asheville Friends Meeting, a blacksmith minister, demonstrated to SAYFers his technique for converting guns into tools and beautiful objects.

Young Adult Friends (YAF) held meetings for worship with attention to business and joined the other business sessions, adding their insights and passion to our process as Quakers. They celebrated the addition of college-aged Friends just graduating from the SAYF group. Strong friendships across years were evident in the camaraderie they demonstrated in all aspects of yearly meeting.

To promote reflection on our theme, Friends were encouraged to read the book *All about Love* by bell hooks, a Berea author. She writes of the lovelessness in society that contributes to polarization, reminding us that *love* is a verb and demands action. She wrote the book "to bear witness both to the

danger in this moment, and to call for a return to love. Redeemed and restored, love returns us to the promise of everlasting life. When we love we can let our hearts speak.” Friends held a discussion of the book on the first day, and among our workshops were three sessions on putting love into Spirit-led action. Other workshops applied this call to action to supporting neighbors who face threats and attacks in our country — including people of color, immigrants, transgender neighbors, victims of gun violence — and throughout our broken world. Friends from the American Friends Service Committee; the Friends Committee on National Legislation; Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Concerns; Friends Peace Teams; and Quaker House in Fayetteville, North Carolina presented further opportunities for love in action.

SAYMA has been working for years to transform racial conflict within our yearly meeting. Sharon “Star” Smith, a Friend of color who has followed a calling to minister to white Friends about racism, led a plenary session titled “Twenty Years of Racial Justice among Friends: Star’s Story,” in which she answered questions and shared photos and stories of her white, black, and indigenous family, inviting Friends to know her better. In the second plenary, “God, Truth, and Racism among Friends,” Mathilda Navias of New York Yearly Meeting spoke and invited prayerful reflection on the importance of truth among Friends, and of discerning truth with the end goal of building trust, community, and kinship. Other special events incorporated in the program included Community Circles during which Friends practiced sharing circle processes to build community and repair harms, and affinity circles providing time for each participant to reflect on our efforts and aspirations toward becoming an anti-racist multicultural faith community. Nametag markers identified members of the Ministry and Nurture Committee who were available to be consulted in case of concern about conflict, as well as members of the Racial Conflict Transformation (RCT) Team who offered support of Friends with a concern about racism. RCT Team members also participated in the planning of these yearly sessions.

In our meetings for worship with attention to business we followed a set of guidelines on speaking, on listening, on discomfort and harm, and on self-advocacy. The guidelines helped us to handle our business with mutual respect and mindful of keeping a safe space, in spite of disagreements or delays that arise. Friends held the clerk’s table in the Light as we worked through the carefully planned agenda, feeling the Spirit moving through us.