

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

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