

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
Asheville Friends Meeting
Fifth Month 11, 2025

Draft

Present in the Meetinghouse: Barbara Esther, Interim Presiding Clerk, Elliott Jarrett, Recording Clerk, Pat Johnson, Suzanne Friedrichs, Ellie Cox, Steve Livingston, Ethan Johnson, Kitti Reynolds, David Pudlo, Rob Emigh, Margaret Normile, Katherine Kowal, Laura Maynard Lane, Adrienne Weir, Sarah Jane Thomas, Rylin Hansen, Robin Wells, Rusty Maynard. Bobby Carter
Present via Zoom: Margaret Farmer, Gita Larson, Satchel Loftis, Nick Mimken

The Meeting opened with a period of Silent Worship.

The Clerk shared the following reading out of the silence:

*Every year I go to a New York Yankees game with my old friend Jeffrey.
He and I met in fourth grade, but we didn't become close until fifth grade.
That means we've been friends for sixty years.
We watch the game mostly without speaking. The silence between old friends
is like a wind stirring willow branches.*

by Sparrow, Humorism. From The Sun Issue 592

Approval of the Draft Agenda

Minute #1: Friends accepted the agenda.

Approval of Fourth Month Business Meeting Minutes Draft

Minute #2: The Meeting approved the Fourth Month Business Meeting Minutes.

Announcements: Barbara Esther

- A wedding is going to take place at the meetinghouse Saturday, May 17.
- June 1 is our day of the annual Youth Celebration.
- Yearly meeting registration is now available for the Annual Retreat and Sessions on June 20-23 in Berea, Kentucky. Friends needing financial assistance from the meeting in order to attend our Annual Retreat and Sessions should contact one of the members of the Scholarship Committee: Kitti Reynolds, Scotti Utz, and Elizabeth Davis.
- We have received a letter of thanks from Orange Grove Meeting. (Attached)
- Raw Tools will have a gun to garden tools safe surrender event at First Baptist Church on June 7 at 12:30 to 3:30.

Update from the Ad Hoc Furnace Committee Pat Johnson

The ad hoc committee which is working toward a new furnace for the west side of the house has been gathering estimates and information. They will make a report at a later date.

Recommendation from Tuesday Night Discussion Group for a new committee to be called the Beneficial Committee: Steve Livingston

Report from Tuesday night discussion group regarding proposal to form a standing committee to be named the "BENEFICIAL" Committee

As we discussed and decided in last month's business meeting, our standing Racial Justice Committee has been inactive for over a year, during which time the Meeting engaged with Dr. Melchor Hall, under whose guidance we committed to undertake certain Reparative Justice actions over the course of calendar year 2025. The shepherding of these actions fell upon individuals within the Meeting community rather than to the Racial Justice Committee. Meeting agreed to lay down the Committee last month.

Some of the other work that might have been performed by the Racial Justice Committee has been taken up by the Peace and Earth Committee, some has been informally taken up by the regular Tuesday night attenders, and some has simply not been attended to. The Tuesday night discussion group attenders are resolved that this work is vital to our progress in our journey to becoming a more anti-racist, multicultural faith community, and that it is in good Quaker order for it to be guided by a standing committee. In order to provide a launching pad for a proposed committee, we set about discerning the nature of the work that leads us toward this goal but is not currently being done by a standing committee. Through this process, we developed an acronym that suggests a vision, hence the proposed name "BENEFICIAL" Committee.

B for Building relationships
E for Engaging the community
N for Nurturing awareness
E for Educating one another
F for Following Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color's guidance
I for Inspiring transformation
C for Collaborating with Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color
I for Internal work, and
A for Aspiration to equity and
L for Liberation

We look forward with hope that the Friends will agree to launch the new BENEFICIAL Committee and we may resume our previous practice of reading, studying, watching, listening to, and discussing books, videos, podcasts, and other media to help us understand, recognize, and address our internalized white supremacy. All are welcome to join in our Tuesday night discussions, we will provide the zoom link upon request. We are currently reading "Threads: A Tapestry Of Life In the Black Community Of Shiloh and Beyond" by Tanya Davis. Friends who are led to serve on the committee should contact Kitti Reynolds, clerk of Nominating Committee.

A Friend shared that they think it is important that committee names indicate their purpose without having to know the acronym. Otherwise, it can be misleading to people who are not members of our community. It seemed to them a little strange to set up a committee named for its goals and not for a clear purpose.

One Friend said that when we looked at the original vision and goals of the Racial Justice Committee they did not seem to fit anymore, steering us toward development of this acronym which feels more aligned with our current leadings. The word beneficial says it all, in a way: we will try to benefit our community and communities of color. We are definitely not rejecting racial justice, we are evolving onto a clearer path of reparative justice action.

One Friend stated that we should hear this and be concerned about perception.

Another Friend saw the proposed committee as a place to take the work we did with Dr. Melchor Hall and other Racial Justice work under one umbrella as a Meeting.

It was suggested that creating a tagline for the end of the acronym to indicate the purpose of the committee "the Committee for Liberation" for example, would be helpful.

Minute #3: The Meeting approved the formation of a new committee that will be named the "BENEFICIAL Committee" the acronym for Building Relationships, Engaging the Community, Nurturing Awareness, Educating one another, Following the guidance of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and other People of Color), Inspiring Transformation, Collaborating with BIPOC, Internal Work, Aspiration to equity, and Liberation. The committee will work on a shorter tag name to indicate its primary purpose.

Standing Committee Reports:

Ministry and Counsel Committee Robin Wells

Hurricane Relief Fund Disbursement

Our total Hurricane Relief donations to our Meeting as of 05/03/2025 are \$18,603.44 and we have distributed \$18,037.21. We recently received a very thoughtful donation of \$200 from Bridge City Friends Meeting in Portland OR. This brings our current balance to \$566.23. Ministry & Counsel would like to recommend sending \$250 to Habitat for Humanity for hurricane relief and \$250 to Beloved. Both are currently involved in ongoing hurricane relief efforts. Habitat is currently providing replacement housing for hurricane survivors and has had to replace their ReStore truck fleet and fork lifts.

Minute #4: The Meeting approved the proposed donation of \$250 to Habitat for Humanity and \$250 to Beloved for continued Storm Relief

Nominating Committee: Kitti Reynolds

Nominating Committee would like to submit the following names for membership on the new BENEFICIAL Committee:

Sara Jane Thomas
Robin Wells
Nick Mimken
Pat Johnson
Adrienne Weir.

It was noted that the current committee memberships list can be consulted on the website.

Minute #5: Meeting approved the appointment of the proposed members: Sarah Jane Thomas, Robin Wells, Nick Mimkin, Pat Johnson and Adrienne Weir to the newly formed BENEFICIAL Committee.

Finance Committee: Pat Johnson

Summary of our income and expenses.

In June 2024, SAYMA approved increasing monthly meeting assessments to \$85.00/adult member or attender for fiscal year 2024/25, \$93.00 for fiscal year 2025/26 and \$100.00 for fiscal year 2026/27.

SAYMA's Fiscal Year is October 1-September 30.

When we prepared our calendar year 2025 budget in late 2024, we didn't take the increase into account. Apologies from the Finance Committee for this oversight. The Recorder calculated that we have 55 active adults or attenders so that means our assessment for 2025 is \$4,675.00 (55 X \$85.00). However, we approved only \$4,125.00 so we need to add \$550.00 to meet our full 2025 assessment.

We ask for your approval to add \$550.00 to our SAYMA assessment line in our 2025 budget.

[Note: When we prepare our 2026 budget, we need to remember that based on 60 active adults counted in our meeting for 2025 census numbers, we would owe \$5580 to the yearly meeting at the \$93 rate. In the following year it is planned that the assessment rate rise to \$100 per active adult]

Our Recorder, Barbara Esther has offered the following statement:

-Therefore: in the future, to avoid confusion, each December, beginning in 2025 the Recorder will create a list of active members and attenders **over the previous year** in preparation for an accurate census (which SAYMA generally requests in March or April). This will contribute to a better prediction of the monthly meeting's assessment due the yearly meeting as we develop our budget for the **calendar year**. It is hoped that aligning the budget planning and census development will be helpful to our treasurer and Finance Committee as well as to SAYMA..

Minute #6 The Meeting approved the addition of \$550 to our SAYMA assessment line for our 2025 budget

One Friend stated that we want the numbers to come out even. It does raise the question of where the \$550 will come from.

Another Friend noted that adding \$10 to our donations per active adult member or attender covers this cost.

Treasurer's Report: Satchel Loftis

The income from donations and rental fees is in line with the budget, generally speaking. We will have a detailed mid-year update in June. See Updates Table at end of Agenda. .

House & Grounds: Tim Burgess

New lawn mower and tree removal update.

Pat J talked with Southern Mutual Insurance Company on 04/15/25. Christy, the company representative, confirmed that the AFM current rate is locked in until May of 27. Pat told her that we wanted to be clear about our coverage for possible injuries while doing landscaping and yard work. She explained that some of our folks have experience maintaining their own personal landscapes and would like to volunteer for tasks at the Meetinghouse property. Christy said they generally cover volunteers (as long as they're not being paid) but they don't recommend doing anything considered hazardous. That includes things like climbing trees and climbing up on roofs. Pat asked if one of our volunteers got hurt while taking a skinny tall tree down, would that be covered. She said they would pay for it but might not renew our policy the next year. She said again that they don't recommend climbing trees or getting on a roof.

Minute #7 Friends approved seeking bids for a tree removal from arborists with their own insurance to cover safety hazards of such work.

House and Grounds Committee proposes to replace our gas powered motor with a new electric one. This would both solve the problem of a broken lawnmower and move us closer to our goal of being fossil fuel free. The proposed budget is \$750.

Minute #8 The Meeting approved the purchase of an electric lawnmower to better align with the Meetings leading to move away from fossil fuels. Friends approved the use of \$750 for this purpose.

Other:

We received the following thanks and reminder from SAYMA's (Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association) Uplifting Racial Justice Committee.

Dear Friends:

SAYMA.URJ wishes to thank SAYMA Friends for your contributions to URJ's Racial Justice Fund. Your contributions make it possible for URJ to provide emergency mutual aid to Friends of color in need. We are grateful that in April, we were able to pay a self-employed Friend's \$6 Thousand medical deductible, and \$1600 June rent for a family of 8 that would have been evicted without our help. URJ and the Friends of color who benefited are grateful for your generosity.

Please continue to support URJ's Racial Justice Fund. At this moment, there are Friends of color who may not make it to the yearly meeting without your support. One family needs transmission work done on their vehicle to the tune of approximately \$2000. We also anticipate that other Friends of color will need travel money to get there. Some may just need gas money, while others may need to fly. And, that family of 8 will still need our help to pay their \$1600 rent for June--the good news is, they will be alright after that. Please give generously, as all people of color in the country are more vulnerable than usual during these times.

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 Contribution form: PDF

For finance questions about URJ, please email treasurer@sayma.org.

For questions about URJ's operations, contact the URJ clerk at urj@sayma.org.

A statement from CIMA, Compañeros inmigrantes de las montañas en acción, regarding opposition to the use of tactics such as family separation and fear; and a call for solidarity in support of the immigrant community to be treated with the dignity they deserve was received just last night. It seemed appropriate to act in solidarity with the wishes expressed in the statement without any delay or customary seasoning through a committee. Please find the statement below in the attachments. The interim clerk will draft a letter in response and make sure it gets to CIMA.

Minute #9: The meeting approved our support of CIMA's (Compañeros inmigrantes de las montañas en acción) letter and declares that we are in solidarity with them and support them. We agreed to bring this to the attention of FCIJ and continue to share as opportunities arise.

The Meeting closed at 3 pm with a period of silent worship until way opens for our Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business on the Eighth Day, Sixth Month, 2025.

Attachments

Thank You letter from Orange Grove Meeting:

We Thank You

Greetings Friends,

The fires which broke out in Los Angeles county in January were devastating. We are thankful that no lives were lost among our worshippers. We mourn the loss of others. We are thankful that our Meetinghouse campus was spared beyond windfall and smoke damage. We mourn the loss of members' and attenders' homes, and those of tens of thousands of others.

We are thankful that among the chaos, confusion, and communication outages that we were eventually able to find all our evacuated people wherever they had found sanctuary and ascertain their conditions and needs. We are thankful that Friends have reached out in generous support of our efforts to ameliorate some of our financial loss. Other losses can never be remedied - scenes of family memories forever erased, along with documents, photographs, and heirlooms destroyed.

Fire, as well as rain, falls upon the just and the unjust alike, and we let love rather than circumstantial judgement of any kind be our guide towards disbursement of Friends' generous donations. The concerns of distant Friends that their succor not simply be passed through us on to impersonal organizations of relief kept us mindful that our responsibilities lay closest to home. Through deep and thoughtful discernment we sorted our options, discarding airy notions of being able to accomplish more on a wider scale than our time and talent allowed. We focused on immediate relief to those most severely affected among our community whether member, attender, or employee.

The school on our campus founded by one of our members acted quickly to perform smoke and toxic ash remediation and reopened a week later. We made a prompt contribution to help with their expenses and our standing committees are looking at ways to provide further assistance. A food bank founded by Friends which we've supported modestly in normal times was adjacent to the fire perimeter and spared by the flames, and we made a donation to help their vital work continue unabated through

these times. Much of the remaining funds will be spent repairing damage to our cemetery, and we will then meet again to discern the best use of the remainder to mitigate other damage.

The usual work of our meeting needed to continue throughout all this of course, and there were times when we were overwhelmed and unable to respond to your questions in a timely fashion. We apologize for our tardiness in expressing our gratitude for your concern and support, but please know that it is heartfelt and that your love, light and largesse were cherished and continue to help us through this time of unexpected change.

Orange Grove Monthly Meeting of the RSOF
Pasadena, CA
Sharing Fund Fire Committee

CiMA official statement:



**Official Statement: We say NO to family separation!
Asheville NC 05/8/2025**

- Today we raise our voices in outrage and deep sorrow at the unjust detentions that are directly affecting our hard working immigrant community in the Nashville Tennessee area. This administration has intensified its policy of persecution against the people who day by day sustain the local economy with their effort, honesty and dignity. The recent raids and arrests are not isolated acts. They are part of a systematic strategy that criminalizes our families, that tears fathers and mothers away from their children, and that sows fear in our neighborhoods.

We say NO to family separation.

We say NO to the use of fear as a political tool.

We say YES to a united, protected and dignified community.

Our families are not illegal. Our dreams are not a crime. Every worker, mother, student and immigrant worker has the right to live without the constant fear of being uprooted from their home. We demand an immediate end to unjust detentions and demand that local and state authorities speak out in defense of human rights.

We call on the solidarity of the entire city: churches, community organizations, unions, students and conscientious citizens. The fight for immigration justice is everyone's responsibility.

The immigrant community is not alone. We are standing up. And we will not be silent.

Justice for our families now!

Finance Report

[2025 Updates as of 04/30/2025](#)

