

SEYM Annual Sessions 2013

Agenda & Documents-in-Advance (YBM-DIA)

at the Florida United Methodist Life Enrichment Center, Fruitland Park, FL

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our 49th Annual Gathering of Southeastern Yearly Meeting. As we experience our blessed community of Friends, join with me in renewing our ties of fellowship and lovingly extending our community to our visitors from afar and among the new attenders to our gathering. The expectations for this gathering include lots of hugs, plenty of smiles, outright laughter and singing from our hearts, as well as opportunities for deep listening for the guidance of the Spirit.

We are continuing our new format for yearly meeting business sessions. Please remember that, **ALL reports from SEYM Officers, Committee Clerks and Representatives are shared with SEYM Friends in written form.** It is my hope that all reports have already been prepared for the 2013 Documents in Advance (DIA). **If any reports are missing from the DIA, then please bring 50 copies of each missing report to share with Friends and the clerks table.** I know that all reports are important to inform SEYM Friends and that our Archive Committee needs written reports for our archived records. The DIA is created for that concern and is then mailed to all members of SEYM. As a result, **no time will be allotted on the agenda for oral committee and representative reports.** This frees business sessions to adequately discern in the Light any action minutes brought forth to the Yearly Meeting business sessions. It is my leading to hold the Yearly Meeting business sessions as a true Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business. This will allow time for worship, as well as seasoning, and discernment of any action minutes brought forth to SEYM. Nominating, Treasurer, Finance, Worship and Ministry, and ProNica will report briefly. Please hold us in the Light as we continue this process.

I also expect that the Youth Committee will be the catalyst for some fun with the young Friends and in intergenerational activities for everyone. So, welcome again to our yearly meeting gathering. You are invited to have some fun, get some rest, learn something new, and be renewed as we love each other in the Spirit.

In Loving Friendship,



Phoebe Andersen, clerk, SEYM

EC Meeting 03/27/2013, 2:30 -5:15PM**Presiding clerk of EC and IBMs, Ann Jerome****Assistant clerk, Joel Cook****Recording clerks, Jan Dahm & Lisa Erazmus**

AGENDA

Southeastern Yearly Meeting Executive Committee

March 27, 2013

Life Enrichment Center

4991 Picciola Road, Fruitland Park, FL 34731

- 3:00 Opening Worship
 Clerk's report
 YBM gathering preview
 Secretary's report
 Committee reports
- 4:30 Closing Worship

**SEYM Yearly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business****Agenda**

March 27 - 31, 2013

To follow the highest purpose always involves the setting aside of many things which in themselves are good, whether by the individuals or by the Yearly Meeting as a whole. To find the purpose of God in a gathering such as this involves bringing together of every one of our differing points of view to that place where they may be united in the power of God. If in our hearts as individuals we maintain barriers between ourselves and other Friends, we cannot be finders; and if we maintain such barriers between ourselves and our fellow men we shall not find our part in working out God's will in the world. It has been the experience of this Yearly Meeting in the past to know that Friends have met in division and uncertainty, and that then guidance has come, and the light has been given to us, and we have become finders of God's purpose. This gives us ground for confidence. We shall not be held back by the magnitude of the questions which are to come before us, nor by a sense of our own unworthiness.

London Yearly Meeting, 1936

*Christian Faith and Practice in the Experience of the Society of Friends,
 London Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, 1960*

Agenda, First Plenary Session 2013**Thursday, March 28, 4:00-5:15 pm.**

Open, centering worship.

A Reading from a Yearly Meeting epistle, Friends writing, or the Bible.

Welcome.

Roll call of Meetings and Worship Groups with milestones.

Introduction of visitors.

General announcements – (Please bring written announcements to the clerk prior to session.)

Agenda review with corrections as necessary.

Appointment of Ad hoc Committee for SEYM Epistle 2013.

Nominating Committee preliminary report, Susan Taylor, clerk.

Review of Minutes for approval.

Open Worship.

Agenda, Second Plenary Session 2013

Thursday, March 28, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Open, centering worship.

Finance Committee Discernment Session #1 – Discernment on the Charitable Donations of SEYM to Quaker and non-Quaker organizations.

Review of Minutes for approval.

Open worship.

Agenda, Third Plenary Session 2013

Friday, March 29, 9:45-11:45 a.m.

Open, centering worship.

A Reading from a Yearly Meeting epistle, Friends writing, or the Bible.

Welcome of Friends and Visitors not previously introduced.

General announcements – (Please bring written announcements to the clerk prior to session.)

Review and approval of SEYM Executive Committee Minutes – Ann Jerome, Executive Committee clerk.

Review and approval of Interim Business Meeting Minutes – Ann Jerome, Interim Business Meeting clerk.

Treasurer's report – Neil Andersen.

First Reading of 2013-2014 budget – Finance Committee.

First Reading of Action Minutes from SEYM committees and representatives.

Review of Minutes for approval.

Open worship.

Agenda, Fourth Plenary Session 2013

Saturday, March 30th, 9:45-11:45 a.m.

Open, centering worship.

A Reading from a Yearly Meeting epistle, Friends writing, or the Bible.

Welcome of Friends and Visitors not previously introduced.

General announcements – (Please bring written announcements to the clerk prior to session.)

ProNica Report, Melissa Ajabshir, stateside coordinator; Laura Hopps, Coordinator Nicaragua.

Worship and Ministry Report, Nancy Triscritti, clerk.

Second Reading for approval of Action Minutes from SEYM committees and representatives.

Second Reading & Approval of Budget, 2013-2014 – Finance Committee.
Review of Minutes for approval.
Laughter Yoga.

Agenda, Fifth Plenary Session 2013

Saturday, March 30, 1:00-2:15 p.m.

Open, centering worship.
Finance Committee Discernment Session #2 – Discernment on the Need for a SEYM Development Committee.
Review of Minutes for approval.
Open worship.

Agenda, Sixth Plenary Session 2013

Sunday, March 31, 9:00-10:45 a.m.

Open, centering worship.
A Reading from a Yearly Meeting epistle, Friends writing, or the Bible.
General announcements – (Please bring written announcements to the clerk prior to session.)
Second Reading for approval of Nominating Committee report – Susan Taylor, clerk
Gathering Committee report – Ellie Caldwell, clerk
Epistles – Wee Friends, Young Friends, Teen Friends. (This will occur whenever these Friends arrive in the auditorium.)
SEYM Epistle – reading and approval.
Minutes of appreciation.
Review of Minutes for approval.
Open worship.

Our Gathering will close with First Day Meeting for Worship at 11:00 a.m.

A Reminder to assist Recording Clerks:

As you prepare the reports for YBM, we want to ensure the records of our Yearly Meeting's business sessions are accurate. This is also important for historical records and any items to be preserved for the archives. Anything that is expected to be recorded properly in the minutes will need to follow these guidelines:

- 1) Friends who propose formal minutes should provide them in electronic form sent to the email below.
- 2) Similarly, committee clerks, representatives, and those who report on their activities should provide electronic versions of their reports ahead of time as well.
- 3) If Friends have an extended minute of concern that will be presented for consideration, please e-mail these to us the week prior to the business meeting so we have the opportunity to get the items in accessible documents prior to the meeting. This allows time to receive, format, and adjust (as needed) documents from various electronic formats.
- 4) Friends who wish to have milestones from their Monthly Meetings properly recorded should

provide these either electronically prior to YM or in written form at YM. We are very grateful for this assistance and reiterate the importance of accuracy for historical records.

With deep gratitude in the Light,
Jan Dahm and Lisa Erazmus
SEYM Recording Co-clerks
ljerazmus1@verizon.net

Locating IBM- and YBM-Minutes; IBM- and YBM-DIAs:

For your convenience SEYM Minutes and DIAs are posted on the SEYM website <seym.org>. See Archived Library Folder, the SEYM's file drawer!

Numbered Minutes Approved by Fall and Winter Interim Business Meetings

NUMBERED MINUTES FROM FALL INTERIM BUSINESS MEETING 2012

12FIBM01 - SEYM meeting at FIBM approves the appointment of :

- ⊙ Dustin Lemke of Tampa MM as SEYM representative to the Florida Council of Churches with a term ending in 2015.
- ⊙ Dustin Lemke of Tampa MM as Half-Yearly Meeting clerk for a three-year term ending in 2015.
- ⊙ Cecelia Yocum of Tampa MM as a continuing SEYM representative to Friends Peace Teams for a three-year term ending in 2015.
- ⊙ Reinstatement of Lyn Cope of Space Coast MM as member of the Pro-Nica Board with the term ending in 2013.
- ⊙ Johannes Werner of Sarasota MM as a Board Member of Pro-Nica for a three year term ending in 2015.
- ⊙ Ellie Caldwell from Palm Beach MM to Trustees to fill the unexpired term of Herb Haigh ending in 2015.

12FIBM02 – Finance Committee requests the SEYM membership recorder provide the monthly meeting statistics (as received by January 31) to Finance Committee clerk no later than the end of February.

12FIBM03 - Youth Committee expresses profound gratitude to Miami Monthly Meeting for hosting out 2012 Labor Day Service Weekend. The experience opened the hearts and minds of the SEYM Youth Program to the Coalition of Immokalee Workers Campaign for Fair Food.

12FIBM04 – SEYM at FIBM agrees with the Quaker Youth on their proposals for supporting the fair practices and penny-a-pound-more Campaign for Farmworkers. We ask that monthly Meetings minute their support. We also ask that Friends sign the letter to Publix and submit it locally to Publix, and commit to learning more and acting to improve the conditions affecting farmworkers.

12FIBM05 – FIBM wishes to express our gratitude to St. Petersburg Meeting for hosting this year's FIBM. Thank you for your support, effort, caring, and warm hospitality that created a welcoming sense for all.

Numbered Minutes from Winter Interim Business Meeting 2013

13WIBM01 – SEYM as WIBM accepts, with three additions, the report from SEYM Subcommittee on Personnel Issues and the Work of the Yearly Meeting and expresses its gratitude for the Subcommittee's faithful work. This committee is hereby laid down.

13WIBM02 – SEYM as WIBM accepts Executive Committee's process for the formation of a Search Committee for the positions of Administrative Secretary and Bookkeeper. A minimum of three Friends will serve on this committee. Andrea Walsh and Ellie Caldwell volunteered to serve. SEYM as WIBM accepts these volunteers with gratitude. EC Clerk is charged with appointing additional members of the Search Committee.

13WIBM03 – SEYM as WIBM approves the formation of an ad hoc committee appointed by EC Clerk to envision SEYM publications, including web and electronic. The committee is to be appointed in time to report at YBM sessions.

13WIBM04 – SEYM as WIBM approves the formation of an ad hoc committee appointed by EC Clerk to search for a contract worker to handle completion of 2013 publication of Michener Lecture, Walton Lecture, and Faith & Practice. The committee is to be appointed in time to report at YBM sessions.

13WIBM05 – SEYM as WIBM supports the Youth Committee's decision to redirect the committee's funds from a proposed trip to Washington DC to work with FCNL to attendance at FGC Gathering at Greeley, CO. We celebrate the youth and representatives of the committee attending FGC Gathering and presenting a workshop, "Invisible Walls: Advocacy, Strategies, and Skills." This workshop will bring the work of the Fair Food Campaign and a representative of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers to the 2013 FGC Gathering.

13WIBM06 – Southeastern Yearly Meeting wishes to express thanks and appreciation to the Orlando Monthly Meeting for hosting the Winter Interim Business Meeting and the Michener Lecture. Your love, warmth and many kind deeds carry us through a wonderful time of gathering as a community. We are especially thankful for your graciousness when things do not go as planned.

13WIBM07 – SEYM as WIBM approves the nomination of Barbara Wolfe (Tampa Monthly Meeting), to serve on the Nominating Committee for a term ending at the rise of Yearly Business Meeting in 2014.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Archives Committee:

Committee for Earthcare:

SEYM Earthcare Committee report
Winter Interim Business Meeting
January 19, 2013

Present: Mary Jo Klingel, Jack Bradin, Suzanne Frechette, Barbara Letsch. We were joined by Peace & Social Concerns Committee toward the end of the meeting. The meeting opened with a period of silent worship.

There were no Minutes from Fall Interim Business Meeting.
Minutes from Yearly Meeting 2012 were read and approved.

The Earthcare Committee approved going forward with a project to plant a native butterfly garden at the LEC during Yearly Meeting. The intent is to have the children and teens involved. It will provide inter-generational opportunities. Suzanne Frechette has generously agreed to do the co-ordination. The Gathering Committee is excited about this committee activity. It has been approved through the LEC. Their staff are part of the planning process and the follow up maintenance. We are applying for a QEW mini-grant to fund this project. We have commitments for funds if needed.

The Earthcare Committee approved use of the Earthcare Committee budget to use for the YM planting project.

We are providing two YM workshops. The first is on sea level rise and its effects in Florida. It will be based on the work of John Englander's High

Tide On Main Street. The second is on Active Hope. We will use the book Active Hope by Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone as a basis for the call to transformation for those working to care for the Earth.

We are working on a Minute on climate change to bring to YM for seasoning.

The meeting ended with a period of silent worship.

Prayerfully submitted,

Barbara Letsch, clerk
From: Barbara <bjletsch@gmail.com>
SEYM Earthcare Committee

Committee on Ministry for Racism

A report from a member of the SEYM Committee for Ministry on Racism...
trying to keep wounding and healing regarding racism in our heart-minds...

Dear SEYM Friends,

What follows is a section of an unpublished open letter I wrote to fellow Caucasians/
European Americans/White folk. The following two paragraphs are reflections that were
included in the worship sharing sessions material for Southeastern Yearly Meeting Gathering
at Eastertime 2011.

Joan Chittister, a European American Catholic (Benedictines of Erie, PA) nun, wrote of
sexism, which I have made into a "zipper quote" by changing it to reflect racism: "Isn't
the problem with racism, in fact, not what it says about Black people but what it says
about God? Doesn't racism really imply that God is all powerful - except when it comes
to Black people, at which point the God who could draw water from a rock and raise the
dead to life is totally powerless to work as fully through a Black person as through a
White person?"

I've often heard a variant of the statement: "I, as a Caucasian, am racist because of the
dark color of your skin." I'm glad I have heard this often, because this tells me we're
trying to convince ourselves of it, yet we don't quite yet believe it - which is a good thing.
Because: it is not true. If I'm racist because your skin is dark brown, that implies that if
only your skin were not dark brown, then I would not be racist. It implies that I cannot
change my belief unless and until you change the color of your skin from dark brown to
pink. The onus or responsibility is on you, not me. It implies that you have to do all the
impossible changing (of skin color), and I have to do none of the possible changing (of
belief). This does not make sense, but it seems ingrained in us. We need a revolution
of belief: from "I base my racism on YOUR skin color" to "I base my racism on what's
going on in MY head and heart."

An ever-present need is for European Americans to work with European Americans in racism
awareness work. For, I know I want men to work on sexism with other men and not depend
on womyn to address sexism in order for men to address it. An ever-present need is for
European Americans to take responsibility for racism in this country. Period. No excuses.
No waiting/desire for People of Color to lead European Americans by the hand in this work
or even do this work "together: Black & White." Assuming that Whites and Blacks worked
separately at some point.

With my profound experience of sexism, I can say: healing the wounds of racism for
People of Color would go a long way when European Americans take responsibility and heal
European Americans and our European American family members and neighbors of racism
- wherever we European Americans are. This work may be extremely uncomfortable the first
time (or the tenth or thirtieth time), yet with practice, it becomes more and more familiar.
And, European Americans' discomfort in this work is much more welcome than the
discomfort of racism felt by People of Color. The more European Americans practice racism
awareness work - with ourselves, our families, our co-workers, etc. - the more People of
Color may experience less racist wounding, crippling. It's our responsibility as European
Americans. None of us are immune to racist tendencies, however noble we think we are.
Remember: no excuses. Just do it. Search yourself relentlessly and watch it spread from
your heart to others.

In the Struggle,
Wendy Clarissa Geiger, Jacksonville Monthly Meeting

Faith and Practice Committee

The Faith and Practice Committee has some exciting news to share with SEYM Friends! The *Faith and Practice* is finished!!! It is going to the printers and we hope to have about 100 copies to sell at Yearly Meeting. In addition, we hope to have it on the Amazon/Kindle and the Barnes and Noble/Nook websites for Friends electronic browsing at the same time. It has always been available on the SEYM website in PDF format.

The Faith and Practice Committee of Carol Bechtel and Harold Branam and myself, have been proofreading and correcting the grammatical errors over the last year. We are tired and glad that it is finished!!

Please hold the committee in the Light as we finalize the details for the *Faith & Practice* of SEYM. Thank you all for your patience during this extended process.

Phoebe Andersen, clerk
Faith and Practice Committee

Nominating Committee

SEYM Nominating Committee Report for Yearly Business Meeting

March 28-31, 2013

Documents in Advance

*We're gonna keep on loving boldly/gonna keep on loving boldly
Never turning back/Never turning back...*

*We're gonna weave our lives with shining thread/We're gonna weave our lives with shining thread
Never turning back/Never turning back*

(Pat Humphries. **Never Turning Back**, 1985)

Members of the SEYM Nominating Committee: Gary Arthur (Gainesville MM), Martha Morris (Orlando MM), Barbara Wolfe (Tampa MM) and Susan Taylor, Clerk (Tallahassee MM)

Greetings Friends,

Since the Nominating Committee prefers to discern nominations in person whenever possible, this report has not changed much since the report given at Winter Interim Business Meeting. However, names have been coming forward. We have been in conversation with Friends and are prayerfully holding Friends and the Committee's process in prayer. We ask all Friends to join us in holding all that we do, and Friends who make up SEYM, in tenderness and wholeness as we seek to be faithful in what we have been called to do.

The Nominating Committee continues in discernment on Friends to fill the following positions:

Treasurer:

Finance Committee: Clerk and one member

Archives Committee: one member
Committee for Earthcare- two members
Faith and Practice- two members
Peace and Social Concerns- two members
Worship and Ministry-one member
Youth Committee-two members
ProNica Board Appointees- one
Florida Impact Contact Person- one
Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) representative- one
Friends United Meeting (FUM) General Board Observer- one
Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC)- two

The SEYM Nominating Committee recommends that the following Friends be approved for serving in various positions of the Yearly Meeting:

- ❖ **Trustees:** Jean Larson, (Gainesville MM)- 2016
- ❖ **Archives Committee:** (Cathy Gaskill and Mark Grantham laid down their committee memberships. The Nominating Committee thanks them for their faithful service)
 Peter Day, clerk (Clearwater MM)- extended to 2014
 Sybil Brennan (Gainesville MM)- 2016
 Bill Rapp (Lake Wales WG)- extended to 2015
 Connie Ray (Gainesville MM)- extended to 2015
- ❖ **Committee for Earthcare-**Serrin Anderson (Palm Beach MM)-_extended to
- ❖ **Faith and Practice Committee,** Clerk: Phoebe Andersen (Tallahassee MM) extended to 2016
- ❖ **Peace and Social Concerns Committee:**
 Warren Hoskins (Miami MM), Clerk, extended to 2016,
 Andrea Walsh- (Miami MM) extended to 2016
 Al Geiger- (Jacksonville MM) extended to 2016
 Michael Canney- (Gainesville) extended to 2016
 Shawna Doran (Gainesville) extended to 2016
- ❖ **Worship and Ministry Committee:**
 NancyRose Logan (Sarasota MM)- extended to 2016
 Mimi McAdoo (Sarasota MM)- extended to 2016
 Ann Kelley (Palm Beach MM)- extended to 2014
- ❖ **Yearly Meeting Gathering Committee:** Andrea Walsh (Miami MM)- extended to 2016

Representatives to Organizations

- ❖ **American Friends Service Committee Corporation (AFSC), Philadelphia:**
 Sandy Branum (Savannah MM)- extended to 2016
 Harold Branum (Savannah MM)-- extended to 2016
- ❖ **FCNL:**
 Jack Bradin (Palm Beach MM)- extended to 2016

❖ Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW):

Jack Bradin (Palm Beach MM) extended, 2016

Mary Jo Klingel (Ft. Lauderdale MM) extended, 2016.

In other business, the Nominating Committee brought forward to Ann Jerome, Clerk of both Executive Committee (EC) and Interim Business Meeting (IBM), the name of Joel Cook, (Palm Beach MM) to serve as the fourth member of the Ad Hoc Committee on Apportionments. His name does not require approval by the Yearly Business Meeting. Other members of the committee are Neil Andersen (Tallahassee MM), Chuck Deneen (Orlando MM) and Jean Larson (Gainesville MM).

The Nominating Committee looks forward to being with all of you at our Yearly Meeting Gathering.

In God's Love,
Susan Taylor, Clerk, Nominating Committee
For the Nominating Committee

Peace and Social Concerns

YBM Gathering Committee

Youth Committee

SEYM Youth Committee Report

Seven of our SEYM juniors and teens (representing Tampa, St Petersburg & Sarasota) presented the Fair Food Campaign to the Historic Peace Churches Conference in Sarasota on January 26th. Drawing on the training in political street theater they learned from the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW)/Interfaith Action at HYM, they communicated the relevant information through a tableaux (human pyramid) and spoken word (including a call and response with the audience). They also handed out packets which included a letter to the youth of the historic peace churches. (attached) They look forward to reprising their performance at YM.

The final SEYM junior/teen activity before Yearly Meeting is a backpacking trip in the Ocala Wilderness Area over Presidents weekend. Excitement is building for that trip!

We received approval from the FGC youth program for the middle school component of the Fair Food campaign for the 2013 gathering in Greeley CO. We now officially have a teen workshop and a parallel middle school program to raise awareness about the working conditions faced by farmworkers in Florida.

WIBM executive committee supported our proposal to redirect our approved advocacy trip from Washington DC to the FGC gathering in Greeley CO. As the youth have become more involved in the Fair Food campaign, we have learned that the CIW is not seeking a legislative solution, rather they are going directly to consumers to pressure the local outlets of food corporations to create change. Therefore the youth desire to bring this campaign to a national Quaker audience is best realized at the FGC gathering. We have already identified a King Sooper Grocery Store in Greeley CO that is within walking distance of the campus hosting the FGC gathering. We plan on delivering a letter urging their parent corporation (Kroger Foods) to sign the Fair Food Agreement. CIW has Fair Food campaigns going all over the nation (ie. Safeway, Kroger, Publix corporations) so there is a very real opportunity to spread this campaign through the many Monthly and Yearly Meetings that will be represented at the FGC gathering.

WIBM executive committee also supported our proposed budget to meet the expense of bringing a delegation of 4 adults and 6 juniors/teens to the FGC gathering. After deducting work grants and the 50% scholarship from FGC (which the FGC gathering coordinator told me is well funded this year) Youth committee proposed a three way split on the remaining expenses: 1/3 SEYM youth committee, 1/3 Monthly Meeting of the individual who is attending, 1/3 individual responsibility. Already several monthly meetings who do not have a junior/teen attending have offered to help individuals meet their 1/3 responsibility. These offers are very much appreciated! Please contact me if your Monthly Meeting wishes to support the youth program in this way and we will pair you up with one of our juniors/teens.

The youth committee remains energized and excited about the positive momentum of our youth programming this year. We deeply appreciate the many ways (spiritual, organizational and financial) our Yearly Meeting is supporting our work with our young people.

peace,
Ann Sundberg
Clerk of Youth Committee

Join Us in the Fair Food Campaign



Dear Youth of the Historic Peace Churches,

We are the Florida Quaker Youth and we would like to discuss the Fair Food Campaign with you. The Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) is asking consumers to pressure major food companies to pay one additional penny per pound for tomatoes, as well as to commit to fair working conditions. These conditions include bathroom breaks, water, shade, and fair hours. Additionally, if a crew leader abuses a worker, then any company who has signed on to the Fair Food Agreement can no longer buy from that grower.

The reason for this movement is because of the hardships that tomato pickers in Florida face. They have to carry 32 pound buckets of tomatoes on their shoulders and run them to a moving truck. They get 50 cents per bucket, so they have to fill a bucket every 4 minutes to make minimum wage. Sometimes the crew leaders make them “top off” their buckets with extra tomatoes and they don’t get paid for the extra amount. They don’t have enough money to pay for fair housing and some live in cramped trailers with up to 15 people.

Since the start of this campaign 10 years ago, Yum Foods (KFC, Pizza Hut, Taco Bell), McDonalds, Chipotle, Trader Joe’s, and Whole Foods have all signed The Fair Food Agreement. Right now Publix is a big focus of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers because Publix is such a dominant corporation in Florida. By gaining Publix’s support, other competing supermarkets (i.e. Sweetbay, Wal-Mart) will be more likely to sign on to the agreement.

We, the Quaker Youth, got involved after we visited Immokalee and learned first-hand about the Fair Food Campaign. We heard about the appalling working conditions and witnessed the living conditions of farmworkers and spent time with an Immokalee worker who helped us understand the issue more thoroughly.

When we asked the coalition “What can we do to help the cause?” They suggested that we write to Publix. As a group of concerned youth, **we wrote a letter to Publix** asking them to sign on to the Fair Food Campaign, in hopes that a letter from kids would capture their attention. Next we

brought the issue to our Fall Interim Quaker Business Meeting, hoping to gain Minutes of support from Meetings belonging to the Southeastern Yearly Meeting. So far we have gained **eight Minutes of support from Quaker Meetings all over Florida**. Finally, we took a **street theatre workshop** from a worker from the Immokalee Coalition and a translator from Interfaith Action and learned how to effectively publicize the issue in a more creative manner.

We plan to use everything we have learned so far to continue bringing this issue to our wider Quaker Community. We’ll look for support at our Southeastern Yearly Business Meeting this spring and then will share this issue at Friends General Conference, a national gathering of Quakers, in Colorado in July. **There is still far more work to do on this issue.**

We urge you to start to consider what your faith calls upon you to do. You could start with a visit to Immokalee to learn more, followed by a letter to Publix. We stress the importance of getting as many fellow members of your faith involved in this process. By following the proper procedures in your church it becomes more likely to gain the full backing of your local community of faith. We thank you for your time and consideration regarding the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of farmworkers.

With your support we all should be able to make a more significant difference in this movement.

Sincerely,
The Quaker Youth

January, 2013

Worship and Ministry, Religious Education, Michener Committee:

“Francis Hole (late European American soil scientist, poet and Friend)...has said, ‘Our bodies are disposable, biodegradable containers for the spirit.’ We are worms and granite, oak trees and robins, sea spume and mica; we are stardust...we are each as old as the universe.” Lisa Lofland Gould, 1999, quoted in *PLAIN LIVING, A QUAKER PATH TO SIMPLICITY*, by Catherine Whitmire, 2001:

Dear SEYM Friends,

The SEYM Worship & Ministry Committee hopes you will consider including the SEYM Gathering at Eastertime in your and your family’s plans. Wendy thinks this coming Easter will be her 41st or 42nd Yearly Meeting Gathering: a time of growing, being held in Tenderness & Wholeness, and testing leadings; welcoming new and old F/friends into your life; celebrating and learning about Quakerdom with more Friends than attend your meeting or worship group; learning what Friends in other parts of Quakerdom are doing and where Spirit is leading SEYM Friends and Friends elsewhere; worshipping, playing, and singing with Friends; and, enjoying deep (or shallow) conversations on all manner of matters with Friends from youth to elders. You may arrive lonely and leave fulfilled: having made soul friends; having bought a pamphlet, t-shirt, & book; and, having felt listened to at the YM Gathering. And, don’t you want to experience “the Julia Geiger Memorial Chicken Dance” Friday night?

We invite those who feel led, to join us for the Worship and Ministry Com. Meeting on Thursday of the Gathering from 1:15-2:30 pm (mtg. place tba). The following areas of discussion are on the agenda at this time:

- Gathering details that involve W & M
- Michener Lecture 2014
- Inter-visitation Report
- Orange City WG visits
- Spanish Speaking Worship Sharing
- Pendle Hill Scholarship for the fall of 2013 through the spring of 2014
- Michener Lecture 2015

Friends are welcome to suggest to the SEYM W&M Com. names and information about Quakers who may possibly be future Michener lecturers, remembering the Michener Lecture is for the spiritual nurturing of Friends and our Yearly Meeting.

In the Light of Christ’s Heart,

Nancy Triscritti and Wendy Clarissa Geiger, co-clerks, SEYM Worship & Ministry Committee

OFFICER REPORTS

Clerk of Southeastern Yearly Meeting (Please see page 1 for Welcome Letter)

Clerk of Interim Business Meeting and Executive Committee

Assistant Clerk

Membership Recorder/Database

Trustee's Report

Treasurer's Report:

SEYM REPRESENTATIVES TO ORGANIZATION REPORTS

STATE OF THE MEETING REPORTS

Charleston MM...

Clearwater MM...

State of the meeting report – Clearwater Friends Meeting 2012

The end of 2012 finds Clearwater Friends Meeting a growing meeting with 16 Members and 11 steady Attenders. Regular potluck lunches, fellowship meetings in each other's homes, our joy in the marriage of two Friends under our care, thoughtful birthday cards, a lively email newsletter, meaningful conversations, and our willingness to share sorrows and delights, have brought us together and strengthened the bonds between us. There is a sense of connection and belonging in the meeting. We feel a need to be there each First Day to prepare for the week to follow.

In meeting for worship with a concern for business we take the time to reach agreement in a harmonious way that reflects our commitment to a corporate search for truth. Our newly formed Peace and Social Concerns Committee has helped to focus our community concerns.

Monthly retreats, generally on Saturdays in our homes, to discuss topics chosen by the host, or drawn at random from questions placed in a basket, have been rewarding. A retreat at a lakeside park shelter sparked our interest in hosting an Alternatives to Violence Program workshop.

We continue to support the Shepherd Center soup kitchen in Tarpon Springs, and Religious Community Services in Pinellas. The meeting has also provided modest financial support to meet other needs. Individual Friends continue to work as volunteers outside the meeting in a variety of ways that we do not need to catalogue. Our contacts with Friends Committee on National Legislation have led us to visit the local offices of legislators, to help with voter registration, and to write to our representatives.

A proposal to host a series of public meetings (Quaker Quest) was at first met with some skepticism but our preparations for 6 meetings in January and February 2013 have forged new relationships and heightened our awareness of the rewards of the meeting working together in a creative process.

We meet in the Scottish American Society Hall in Dunedin, but hope some day to have our own Meetinghouse and be a more stable part of the local community. We want to attract young families with children to worship with us and to have a first day school.

During the year we celebrated the marriage of Kathlene Harmon and Rick Brice under the care of our meeting, and welcomed them, and Barbara Finkelstein, as Members of the Meeting. We were saddened by the death of a former long-time member Peg Cowdrick.

Ft.Lauderdale MM...**Annual State of the Meeting Report for 2012**

We continue to meet at the Ft. Lauderdale Second Presbyterian Church, now known as the "Sanctuary Church". Last year there were a number of changes in the church administration, with the Korean Presbyterian Church moving out, and our group and the Presbyterians getting to know each other better in both fellowship and friendship.

We completed the installation of a "Peace Pole" in front of the church. Our meeting initiated and organized the project, and cooperated with the Second Presbyterian Church in carrying it out. We invited the church congregation to join us at the dedication ceremony. For many from our host congregation community this may have been their first exposure to us and to Friends in general, and we enjoyed a small dedication ceremony together.

We enjoy our association with the Miami Friends Meeting and the Palm Beach (Lake Worth) Friends Meeting. Friends from both meetings joined us at our annual winter Tri-County picnic, held in a forested park in Ft. Lauderdale. In addition to great food and fellowship, we held a small yard sale and had a spirited panel discussion on topics related to outreach and visibility. Our next picnic is scheduled for March 2013 and we plan to include a panel discussion on climate change and the environment.

We participated in the FWCC-sponsored discussion on global climate change, which we video-filmed. Our video was one of many worldwide contributions to the FWCC World Conference of Friends in March 2012, where FWCC came to unity on the Kabarak Call for Peace and Eco-Justice. We offered Quakerism 101, and had an adult education program on the Gospel of Thomas. We continue to have "movie nights" to watch a film together and have fellowship and discussion.

Our members are involved in SEYM, Quaker Earthcare Witness, FCNL, and other Quaker and non-Quaker organizations. We always welcome visitors from other Meetings to join us on First Day.

We often have seasonal visitors who are here on vacation, and some seekers looking for a new spiritual home. We recognize the gifts of a small meeting in our friendships and our care for one another. Our meetings for worship, while often attended by a small number, continue as faithful to expectant waiting on the work of the Spirit.

Ft Myers MM...**Spiritual State of Fort Myers Monthly Meeting, 2012**

This year a group of members and attenders from FMMM gathered together in worshipful silence to discern the spiritual state of our Meeting. Friends spoke from the silence in response to the following queries:

How do we support each other as members of this beloved community?

During the year we have had one member who has passed away and others who have suffered from ill health, resulting in an outpouring of love and support from members. In fact, the commitment to support one another seems to have grown in strength this year. We fall short in this when members and attenders do not share with us when they need support, maybe due to concerns for privacy. Our pot luck lunches have created a sense of family and this feeling has been nurtured as friends get together more out of Meeting. We have really enjoyed welcoming many newcomers and are absolutely delighted to have many becoming regular attenders. This year there is an energy that feels spirit-led and miraculous!

How well do our meetings for worship with concern for business lead to a corporate search for and revelation of God's truth?

Although it is sometimes difficult to remember that business should be conducted in a worshipful way, it does seem that we are making good progress in that direction. At our September meeting in particular, during the discussion concerning Publix and the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, F/friends spoke, listened and reflected, resulting in spirit-led insight and discernment leading to corporate action—a letter to Publix urging them to pay the extra penny per pound on tomatoes picked in Immokalee. F/friends have appreciated hearing the queries and advices for the month at the beginning of the business meeting, although some wish that they had them earlier so they could have more time to contemplate them. Lastly, all agreed that partaking of soup and bread leads to a better meeting!

What was our Meeting's witness in the wider community in the last year?

Our Peace & Social Concerns Committee has been picked up again and given new life, and we are grateful to those members who have been challenged to put their faith into action. There was a letter in the local newspaper supporting the Occupy movement. An interest in social action has radically increased and we are so pleased that several of our regular attenders are getting involved. Some members worked as a group to support the voting rights of the residents of Charleston Park by helping them with the voting process. The committee has also been involved in a variety of issues, such as education on immigration problems. A guest speaker from Veterans for Peace encouraged us to become involved in a new VA clinic by volunteering services. F/friends also supported Hurricane Sandy victims in a timely fashion, sending funds to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to be distributed to individual Quakers in need. The Properties Committee has labored hard to improve the safety and appearance of the Iona House, our beloved meeting place, and many of us assisted with the projects. This benefits the Calusa Nature Center and all those who use the Iona House. A major portion of our funds goes to charitable groups in the community to help those in need. Many F/friends volunteer in very worthy causes for example, ECHO, market gardens for the needy, the Literacy Council, and the Calusa Nature Center. However, there seems to be a general feeling that, while individuals do many things for the benefit of the wider community, we want more corporate commitment. The tragedy in Newtown, Connecticut, has inspired us to put more effort into our most treasured testimony, PEACE.

Has there been a deepening and strengthening of the sense of the Divine Presence in our Midst during the past year?

Although there is always a focus on the Divine Presence in our Meetings for Worship, some feel that the Meeting lacks outward acceptance of Christianity and they miss references to Holy Scripture. This is due to the wide diversity of beliefs in our Meeting. Some Friends believe that Jesus is a Supreme Being but do not express this in spoken ministry, knowing that not everyone shares their belief. It is important to express our personal messages from God as we hear them. God's presence is in our words and actions, we see evidence of that, and it has moved us towards the Divine this year—God's doing through people. It is important also for us to focus on finding God's presence in ourselves.

Do we feel a sense of our individual spirits fusing into an undivided group as we worship?

During Meeting for Worship, sometimes we sense that others are meditating individually, but sometimes there is a unity of movement together and we are experiencing "gathered meetings"—we seem to be all in the same Divine stream. Our vocal ministry has been meaningful but we wish F/friends felt freer to express the messages they hear in the Light. Sometimes, F/friends have felt this fusing of our spirits during committee meetings while they are working together in the spirit of collaboration. Several mentioned a feeling of worshipful togetherness on the days we gatherer to clean and beautify our place of worship.

Do we leave our meetings filled with a sense of love and peace and courage to meet the challenge of Spirit-filled living?

This query was answered with a resounding YES! Friends expressed that participating in Meeting for Worship and being a part of our group helped us feel the collective corporate body while participating in daily life activities. When gathering hands at the close of Worship, we feel the warmth of love circling through—that unified warmth that glows in our group. Worship binds us together as a community.

Gainesville MM...**Golden Isle WG...****Hilton Head WG...****Halifax...****Jacksonville MM...****Spiritual State of the Meeting Report for 2012**

1/6/2013

Attendees: Al Geiger, Bonnie Hall, Kenneth Hall, Wendy Clarissa Geiger, Elaine Martin (Clerk), Mike Shell (Recording Clerk)

Worship sharing

On 6th Day, First Month, 2013, following a meeting for worship which included two visiting Friends from Virginia Beach Friends Meeting, six Jacksonville Friends remained at our Evergreen Cemetery location for a brief lunch followed by worship sharing. Friends settled into a deep, gathered meeting. While all but one chose to speak, much of the 1 ½ hours of worship was spent in a profound silence which none seemed troubled to interrupt or eager to end.

The speakers each recognized a hopeful paradox about Meeting's experiences of 2012. On the one hand, we are increasingly active toward goals we identified a year ago. On the other, we have become more comfortable with expectant waiting, willing to sit patiently in each other's presence while we test alternative approaches to our goals.

One Friend noted that we are developing more internal strength and solidity in each other's presence, giving more attention to taking care of each other, making Meeting more accessible for adults and children, even though we have not extended ourselves much into the larger community.

Another Friend observed that we are less fearful, more able to express ourselves freely. What appears to be increased disunity actually reveals that we are letting each other express differences while still forging bonds to help us go forward. We are learning to deal with what we have—including the distractions of poor acoustics, trains passing during worship and insufficient space for First Day School—rather than waiting until we find “perfect” solutions to our needs.

Yet another Friend echoed the theme of becoming able to “forgive Meeting for not being perfect.”

We are “dealing with the inconveniences of being impoverished in meeting for worship in a dirty place where *real* non-middle class work happens.” This Friend spends all week preparing for meeting for worship, sits at home during meeting when not able to attend, and wonders of early Friends: “What of their lives did they take into meeting, and what did they take into their lives from meeting?” Of the growth of this Meeting in its quiet cemetery setting, this Friend says, “Come seek the living among the dead.”

Finally, a Friend noted that most of our outreach is done outside of Meeting by individual Friends, rather than collectively. We continue to grow in many ways which need not be broken down into categories.

Milestones

Location

In response to a request to address certain accessibility issues, we explored a number of options and, on 2/5/2012, agreed to move from our longtime home on the Bolles School, Bartram Campus, to the employee lounge of Jacksonville’s historic Evergreen Cemetery.

This space and location are convenient, yet the acoustics are poor for those with hearing challenges, a train passes loudly during meeting for worship, there is no space for First Day School, and the dirt from cemetery work is often present. Meeting continues to seek a better—even if still temporary—alternative location. We agree that we need to be more deliberate about long-term planning for meeting space.

Finances

Addressing a goal from last year, we have given fuller attention to financial matters. We agreed to pay most of our 2012 SEYM apportionment and to cover the 2013 amount in quarterly payments. We communicated with SEYM our concerns about the amount of yearly meeting budget designated for organizations which Jacksonville Meeting or individuals already support. We agreed to start a savings account toward long-term building needs.

Membership

We recorded three new members: Bonnie Hall, Wendy Clarissa Geiger and Mike Shell (by transfer from Columbia SC Meeting). Friends from Jacksonville, Gainesville and Tallahassee Meetings joined in a clearness committee for Bonnie and Wendy. Due to long-time lack of contact, we laid down the membership of Hans Fletcher.

We were also joined by several attenders, including Bonnie’s husband Kenneth and their children, Hope (Bess) Wilson, who is co-leading our First Day School effort, along with her family, Brooke Stephens, who has offered her home as an alternative meeting place, and Brit Webwell, who visited during the summer to learn Quaker decision-making process for the local chapter of the Occupy Movement.

First Day School (FDS)

We are in unity that we want to welcome young people by providing FDS, yet we have stumbled over logistics this year. The primary issue is space separate from meeting for worship. Regardless of location, we have agreed to begin twice-monthly FDS session, one of them being an

intergenerational session. Linda Wilson and Bess Wilson are leading the FDS effort.

The Jacksonville Meeting Newsletter

After over a decade, Friend Bettie Freel has passed on responsibility for the Meeting newsletter to new member Bonnie Hall. Friends minuted their appreciation to Bettie for newsletters of “cohesiveness and depth that often opened the reader to vast spiritual inner vistas[...] due in large part to [her] diligent search for pithy Quaker quotes, queries, advices, and more quotes.”

Outreach

Meeting joined a number of outreach efforts both within and beyond the Quaker world. In February, Elaine Martin, Sue Watson and Barbara Vanderhoff spoke for us during an Interfaith Dialogue at Episcopal School of Jacksonville. In April, eleven Friends met for lunch and worship sharing in order to craft a statement identifying the five legislative priorities which Jacksonville Meeting recommended to Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) for its lobbying agenda during the 113th Congress (2013-2014).

In July, Brit Webwell attended the Occupy Movement’s national convention in Philadelphia and brought Meeting a report on the event. In November, Friend Stuart Smith passed along to Mike Shell his decades-long role as Meeting representative to the Jacksonville Interfaith Council. Also in November, Meeting minuted its willingness to join SEYM Quaker Youth in their effort to convince Publix Super Markets, Inc., to participate in the Fair Food Campaign.

Fellowship

Friends found various ways to share increased fellowship with each other during 2012, culminating in a well-attended Christmas potluck hosted by the Hall family in St. Augustine.

Submitted by
Mike Shell, Recording Clerk
1/24/2013

Key West WG...**Lake Wales WG...**

Lake Wales (FL) Worship Group
State of the Meeting Report 2012-3

We continue to meet at Ridge Audubon Center in Babson Park where we enjoy the presence of local birds and wildlife outside of the large picture window during meeting. Examples of such attenders are cardinals, woodpeckers and a number of other birds, a fox, snakes and an occasional gopher tortoise. The "Quaker Tree," a picturesque Live Oak tree covered with Spanish Moss, is often the facing bench for our wildlife Friends. We have a small Worship Group, particularly during the summer when a Meeting may consist of two to three people. Occasionally, meeting is cancelled when numbers are lower. There is still a strong sense of community among us, including moral support for peace and social justice activities outside of meeting. We continue to have discussions and shared readings after meetings for worship. Several times a year we meet for a potluck or to go out to lunch following meeting.

We welcome Tracy Castellon and Cindy Rowland who started attending last year. Winter attender, Tim Farley, was active in recent years but will be staying near Clearwater for the winter months in the future. We will miss him. Other seasonal attenders: Palma Richardson, Bob and Liz Webber, Barbara Vahanian and new attender, Joan Fisher, are expected and appreciated. Our year round members are Elizabeth Rapp, Bill Rapp (attender), Caroline Lanker, Catherine and David Price. Over the past three years, we have been blessed with the participation of our newest members, Jim Upchurch and Virginia Spencer. They were active in the Frederick (MD) MM before moving to Sebring and transferring their memberships to St. Petersburg MM. Continuing his previous work on housing, Jim has recently been photographing homeless people to help the Highlands County Commission become more aware of their plight. We greatly appreciate occasional visitors. We broke our meeting for discussion of the State of the Meeting Report with our now traditional "Group Hug."

Note: "members" in this report refers to members of SEYM who attend Lake Wales Worship Group.

Managua WG...**Miami MM...****Ocala...****Orange City WG****Orlando MM...**

Palm Beach MM...**PALM BEACH MONTHLY MEETING
SPIRITUAL STATE OF THE MEETING 2012**

Friends met to discern the Spiritual State of Palm Beach Monthly Meeting on 4 Eleventh Month 2012. Five queries were considered.

How is God's presence being experienced in our Meeting?

God is love, a loving presence. We see evidence of God's loving presence reflected as people in the Meeting accept one another unconditionally, caring for one another both in and outside of Meeting. For the most part, people are kind. One Friend shared this reflection: I have seen, during my 30 years in the Meeting that people care. This is certainly shown in my life. I know I can count on the Meeting for caring and help.

A Friend shared that she has felt God's presence in the Meeting through the anchoring committee that supports her leading in Kenya and that holds her accountable. God's presence is evident in the trust that the Meeting has in the committee's discernment.

It is often easier to see the strengths of our Meeting through another's eyes. God's love is often made apparent when people come back from the north. They seem especially joyous to be back at Meeting and we are joyful to see them. It is a wonderful time. Returning Friends often articulate what we have taken for granted.

This year we have been blessed with some families with young children (ages 3-6) that attend fairly regularly. The children come upstairs at the rise of worship to share what they have learned. The little ones show such joy sometimes. In those moments God's presence feels particularly vibrant.

How well do our Meetings for Worship with a Concern for Business lead to a corporate search for and revelation of God's truth?

The word "corporate" is very important. We count on corporate energy to bring God's presence among us. We are looking for unity, not occasions where one person's opinion seeks to prevail. Palm Beach Monthly Meeting Friends have sought to develop trust in our committee process over the past several years.

The fruits of these efforts have become evident in our MWCB. We have learned to trust our committees and to send things back to committee, when we discern that further light is needed. We no longer push for immediate answers.

Friends seem to exhibit more self-discipline and patience with one another. Committees usually submit printed reports, which free the clerk and recording clerk to join in holding the Meeting in the light for discernment. Our business meetings rarely devolve into a "committee of the whole." Through process, we learn to love and respect one another.

Our previous clerk began the practice of formulating and distributing through e-mail the MWCB agenda. This practice has led to Friends coming to business, prepared to seek God's guidance. Friends now know in advance generally what is to be considered. Trust is enhanced when Friends feel confident that all Friends' light is truly sought.

Are there places where the Meeting isn't reaching fully for the light?

This Meeting is reaching for the light, it is trying. We do well to be reminded that, "Friends are required to be faithful, not to be successful." It's not a matter of keeping a list of things we aren't doing, but keeping a list of things we could do better. We have been reflecting on our testimonies. In fact we are reaching for the light in all of them.

One Friend reminded us that we need to let old grievances die, so that we can move forward. It's easier to see "that of God" in our faith community, when we know one another superficially. The better we know each other and learn one another's foibles, the more we find to judge. We always have to keep reaching for the light as we live in community.

We could acknowledge a larger definition of "community" and of our "neighbor." We are concerned about our numbers and about the amount of diversity in our Meeting. We are pretty homogenous in color, education, economic status, and class. We could explore ways of coming together with neighbors in fellowship. Our neighbors may have different ways of worshiping, but share with us a common humanity.

Meeting needs to be more attentive to the Treasure Coast Worship Group. We mourn the recent passing of Dana Stetzer and Jacquie Moll. The group is in the process, perhaps, of transition.

Do you have other reflections on the current condition of the Meeting-- places where you see new life emerging, loss or sadness that you want to share?

"There is an incredible level of caring in the Meeting. I know absolutely that I could call people in the Meeting if I need help. Many folks don't have a similar community; they are lonely and alone."

"I have a very active life through the Meeting. I feel blessed."

"Persons who have the opportunity to help, are also blessed."

"Quakerism offers a way of life. It is wonderful and unique."

"Meeting offers a multi-generational experience."

"The Meeting may grow incrementally through young people. Lots of people don't wish to follow our worship but value knowing Friends. We have a number of fairly regular young adult attenders now."

Where do you find hope in the meeting and in our spiritual life?

"I find hope in the community experience, in the children, and the Quaker process. Meeting is a safe place, and a place of trust."

"We have learned to be tender with one another. There has been healing."

"I feel gratitude that Meeting abides with us through all our trials and tribulations."

"I have enjoyed the presence of children with their parents and our coming together in celebrations (Joel and Brian's reception, the graduation party and Ruth's birthday.)"

Sharing in the Light of God's love,
Shauna Coolican, Clerk

Sarasota MM...**Savannah MM...****Spiritual Growth of Savannah Monthly Meeting, 2012**

During 2012, our meeting experienced joy and sadness, thus bringing our core attenders and members closer together. At the same time, we were drawing in more visitors who were becoming regular attenders, and three loyal attenders became members: Janie Brodhead, Sarah Schenkman, and Doug Hahn. It was a shock to lose Ila Scholla, our quiet yet active attender, to cancer on November 28, 2012.

Our meeting for worship and other meeting activities nurtured our spiritual growth. Thanks to Joe Guy, Jerry Knutson did a two-day workshop in February that included Tai Ji, then centering prayer, more Tai Ji, and then a session on experiment with light followed by a potluck dinner. We had invited Jacksonville Meeting, and Elaine Marin, clerk, came and brought Barbara Vanderhof with her. On Sunday we met in the morning to discuss a George Fox quotation and ended with silent worship. Robin Noll and Liz and Frank Perch provided hospitality for our guests.

In March Liz Perch held a three-day meeting for the FGC nominating committee, and members of our meeting provided sleeping arrangements for the ten FCG members as well as a potluck at the Perches. Every time we connect with those outside our meeting, our spiritual growth is nurtured. The same is true for our book group. In 2012 the diversity of our books had spiritual tones as well as individuality: Geraldine Brooks's *March*, T.R. Reid's *Confucius Lives Next Door*, Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient*, Lewis Thomas's *Late Night Thoughts on Listening to Mahler's Ninth Symphony*, and Kay Ryan's *The Best of It*. Although we discussed Ryan's poetry in January of 2013, Lois Bendler read this poetry to her sister Ila Scholla at Ila's request as she lay dying at Hospice Savannah.

We also supported each other as members of this beloved community. Jane Palfery, a Fulbright teaching scholar from Scotland, arrived in Savannah in August and in late September came to meeting and to the book group. She doesn't have a car but has found our members willing to pick her up and also help her find a new apartment on a quiet street. Jane said she did not feel lonely here as a result of our friendliness. After Ila's passing, Ila's sister asked me to completely clean out her studio. It was an overwhelming task that took many days and that I could not have done without the help of attenders Mary and Jeff Sanders, an artist friend, and next-door neighbors who have a truck. These are examples of how, when someone is sick or needs a comforting ear or a shoulder to lean on, there will be someone from our meeting to help out.

What was our meeting's witness in the wider community? In August, Mary and Jeff Sanders and Sandy and Harold Branam went to the Holy Family Catholic Church to take the training workshop for the "Deferred Action for Dreamers" program sponsored by Catholic Charities Immigration Services of Hilton Head Island. The paperwork was long and confusing; if one mistake was made by an undocumented student or worker who had been here since childhood, their request would be denied. Several days later we were notified we were not needed because they had more volunteers than they could use. Nevertheless, we understood the frustrations and fears that these young people face when they are undocumented. We became informed and enlightened.

At the beginning of the college year, our meeting joined other religious groups to welcome Savannah

College of Art and Design students and invite them to join us if they wished. We gave out homemade oatmeal cookies and pamphlets to anyone interested. Robin, Frank, and Ila represented our meeting. Ila made our signs, and Jeff, Sandy, and Robin made cookies.

On Christmas morning we joined the Trinity United Methodist Church in providing everything from bottled water to personal hygiene items for almost 400 homeless people. A large healthy breakfast with plenty of coffee, hot chocolate, and orange juice was served by our members working next to Methodist and Jewish volunteers. Volunteers helped clean up and took leftovers to the Inner City Shelter also, but perhaps most importantly for many of us was the interaction with people who are living under bridges and in tents under trees just outside of the city. It was a joyous morning. Tired afterwards? No! Rejuvenated and ready to expand next year? Yes!

Serving outside of our meeting but joining it to the greater Quaker family were Frank Perch on the FGC central committee; Liz Perch on the FGC nominating committee and SEYM gathering committee; Joe Guy on SEYM's youth committee and committee for ministry on racism; Sandy and Harold Branam as SEYM representatives to AFSC; Harold Branam as one of two copyeditors of SEYM's *Faith and Practice*, 3rd ed.; and Jeff Sanders as liaison between our meeting and AFSC.

How does love manifest itself in our meeting, in our communities, and in the world? Tracey Dolan, a member of Valley Friends Meeting west of Philadelphia who began attending our meeting in the winter, told us about a school for girls in Tanzania. We listened with interest: This school is for vulnerable girls, many orphaned, who have dropped out of school due to poverty. Tracey and her sister, Polly Dolan, cofounded Nurturing Minds and Segal Girls School (www.nurturingmindsinafrica.org) to provide a safe home and school for these poor Tanzanian girls and teach them how to become self-sufficient. Three women in the meeting—Mary Sanders, Sandy Branam, and Sarah Schenkman—were so moved they decided to pool their money and pay for one girl's tuition for the year. The Savannah Monthly Meeting became interested as a whole and last year began planning a unique fundraiser: an ice-cream social and sale of *papier-mâché* bowls that Ila had shown people how to make and then decorate. The mounds of colored rice paper and other types from Ila's studio are being used to help the girls in Tanzania, rather than being disposed of as trash. Ila believed in recycling for art, and now we will do that as girls in Africa are being helped. This is *agape* love that our meeting can help to spread.

There has been a deepening and strengthening sense of Divine Presence in our meeting during the past year, and never so strongly as when we all came together for our first memorial service in our young meeting. There were many things to consider, and we included Ila's sister in the process by asking her to write something that would celebrate Ila's life. Ila Scholla was a spiritual person and was there for anyone who wanted an unjudgmental ear, a place to stay, or a helping hand. During SEYM yearly gathering at Easter time, she was always at our meeting to greet anyone looking for a Quaker meeting as they traveled. As faithful as she was, she said, "I am not a joiner. Don't try to get me to become a Quaker." Ila didn't have to "join"; she was a true seeker and a Quaker at heart.

On the day of the memorial Sarah Schenkman played movements from Bach's *Cello Suites* for solo cello to encourage people to come in quietly and settle into prayerful silence. Gradually, non-Quakers began to

stand and speak as they saw that it was acceptable. There were close to fifty people in attendance, and more than half had never attended a Quaker unprogrammed worship service before. Many said it was the most inspiring memorial they had ever attended.

The third floor of the church is divided into three rooms. One room has been turned into a museum, since it is a historic church, and Ila's art was shown there for the memorial. The middle room was set in a huge circle for our meeting, and the third room was set for a reception with cookies, coffee, and punch. Only cookies were served, in memory of Ila's practice of always taking cookies with her into a room when she went to see a patient during her years as a volunteer at Hospice Savannah.

The year had a variety of spiritual challenges and experiences.

Written by Sandy Branam, Clerk, with input and editing from other members and attenders.

Space Coast MM...

Space Coast Friends Meeting Religious State of the Meeting Report 01/06/2013

Five members/attenders of Space Coast Friends Meeting met on Jan 6th as a committee-of-the-whole following meeting for worship to consider the Spiritual State of our meeting.

We expressed concern one to another regarding our support for one another and for our meeting as a whole. Although we perceive ourselves to be good listeners, we need to not only listen, but to provide greater opportunity for growth for ourselves and for our meeting. Unstated, perhaps, was a need for a worship and enrichment committee, and/or easier access to clearness committees. Growth could include greater outreach.

In our discussion, one member used the phrase, "We don't just come to meeting to 'get' something. We come to 'bring' something to others." Several mentioned appreciating a deeply "gathered meeting" and wished that this occurred more regularly. Comments included, "We need to act and not just to listen."

We considered the question: "What makes it difficult to attend meeting?" The secular conclusion was that we are not using modern technology, other than our website, and currently lack the greater communication to make the greater community aware of our presence. We need to consider having a Facebook account and to have a published phone number. The spiritual sense was that we are not as cohesive as we wish we were. We wonder what would encourage Friends to attend more regularly. We understand that personal demands remove some of us from our community, and perhaps in our acceptance of their absence, we are not as vocal as we might be indicating we miss them. This led us to note that we need a permanent location for both outreach and personal convenience in the broadest sense so that Friends know where and what time we are meeting for worship. This would enable all members of the meeting to contribute equally and not to be dependent on one or two for hosting meetings.

One Friend encouraged us to allow time prior to meeting for Enrichment and Preparation for Worship. Another Friend stated that he would find it helpful if we had moments of Worship Sharing following meeting for worship where we would go around the circle to describe what worship meant to us during this particular meeting for worship. We found these two suggestions to be powerful. Another Friend noted that the questions from SEYM's Worship and Ministry Committee could be queries for us to consider throughout 2013.

As we parted, we sensed that this small committee came together in a desire to strengthen our community.

St. Petersburg MM...

The State of the Meeting Report 2012. The year as marked by the deaths of some of our elders: Charles Smith, Jim Carlson, Gary Fullerton, Lydia Willits, Barry Knobloch, Roy Lippincott and, belatedly mentioned, Peg Rigg. Also, Gerri Groupe is in Hospice at 97 years old. We stay in touch with Ruth Hyde Paine and Jean Schendel. Barbara Mahal gets visits every week from Quakers.

Marty Walton said the health of the Meeting is measured by how long people hang around afterward, so we seem to be in good standing with ourselves. Attendance has grown over the past six months by about 50 people.

Carl Henderson and his wife had a baby. Maurice Kurtz' daughter Jennifer got married. Herb Snitzer had a milestone 80th birthday.

We have a budget now.

For those who do not have email, we reinstated the phone tree and Martha Pihaylic is handling it.

COMMITTEES

Nominating Committee: Peter Schmidt brought his knowledge from San Francisco Meeting and is doing a great job as bookkeeper.

Worship and Ministry: Thoughtfully composed their report on the Spiritual State of the Meeting.

Hospitality Committee has been happily reintroduced to the Meeting.

Property has started looking at renovating the 146 cottage .

Library Committee: Friends of the Library led a project to renovate and brighten up our library.

Peace and Social Concerns is actively working with the homeless community, Operation Attack and SOA. They promote marching in the Gay Pride and MLK parade.

Caretaker Committee was very active this year with supporting Martha through Barry's short illness and death.

First Day School Adult is thriving and First Day School Young Friends is starting to grow, with about five or six regular young Friends attending.

Circus McGurkis celebrated its 41st year and is continuing to grow under the care of the committee. Although it's becoming more difficult as costs have increased due to the participation of the city of St. Petersburg as a co-sponsor of Circus McGurkis, Meeting continues to carry on the tradition.

Pronica: After a wonderful productive and spiritually rewarding 11-year tenure with Lillian Hall, she has been replaced by Laura Hops. She's following her spiritual leadings and we're excited about supporting her in her journey.

And last but not least, people from the Meeting are starting to open up their homes for gatherings.

Tallahassee MM...**Tallahassee Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends
2012 State of the Meeting Report**

This has been a year of deepening for the Tallahassee Friends Meeting, deepening in the level of commitment to the meeting community and deepening of our worship together. We welcomed six new adult members this year and one youth into adult membership. This means that many of us had the joy of participating in membership clearness processes and the rich sharing of spiritual experience that these involve. One of the new members relayed that extra meetings for clearness were very helpful, and expressed deep appreciation for the listening process focused on the individual's spiritual journey in which "others listen you into deeper spiritual awareness". We are also grieving the recent death of a longtime member, Paulette Bond. She is remembered for her gentleness and empathy with everyone she met, and her kind and loving spirit.

Friends recall a number of gathered meetings this year where messages came from a very deep place; when we gather, we feel a spiritual energy that could move us even more profoundly if we opened ourselves fully to it. Friends value the sense of peace that comes from this spiritual centering, and keep it with them throughout the week. There is a sense that the individual testimony shared in messages creates a bonding between us and expands our spiritual lives. However, some among us who are hearing-challenged wish that those offering vocal ministry would speak up!

The Worship, Ministry and Oversight committee reports being energized by the meeting's new practice of nominating a non-member to serve on the committee; this gently challenges the old-timers on the committee and at the same time nurtures them through new relationships; and it provides non-members an intimate view of how the meeting works. The meeting supported youth travel to Yearly and Half-yearly meeting this year and helped support one of our young adults' participation in the Quaker Leadership Studies Program at Guilford; the meeting community was much enriched by the increase in youth and young adult attenders in our community this past year. We are both delighted and challenged by the wide range of ages of the children and youth in our First Day School.

Quarterly workdays continue to be important to the community, and the Peace & Social Concerns committee provided gentle leadership for the meeting's witness to the wider community. Of particular note this year were the meeting's assistance for a recently released prisoner, an outgrowth of its ongoing prison ministry at Marianna FCI, and a very informative and enjoyable visit from FCNL's Tim Barner and his wife, Kathy Guthrie. Tim is Director of Leadership Development for FCNL, with a special interest in the peaceful prevention of deadly conflict.

This year has seen lots of reaching out for rides, visits, and other kinds of mutual support as members age. Some of us also had the joy of attending the naturalization ceremony of a new Haitian-American who attends our meeting with his family. We wonder however whether we are reaching out enough to those who drift away; there is always the concern of not wanting to impose. We would like to be thinking more about the needs of aging members and responding proactively.

In the Light,
Vicki Mariner, clerk

Much of the material for this report was gathered in a Second Hour worship-sharing in December 2012. The questions we used to guide us were:

- 1) How has Meeting for Worship nurtured my spiritual growth?
- 2) How has Meeting for Business and other meeting activities both nurtured and challenged my spiritual growth?
- 3) How have we supported each other over the past year as members of this beloved community?
- 4) What was our Meeting's witness to the wider community in the last year?

Tampa MM...

**TAMPA MONTHLY MEETING
SPIRITUAL STATE OF THE MEETING REPORT 2012**

Our Spiritual State of the Meeting report arose from a discernment in which we were asked to consider how Spirit has moved among us in the past year, both as a Meeting and as individuals. This report tries to faithfully record both our current understanding as well as the questions that underlie our continuing journey as a community of seekers.

Has there been a deepening and strengthening of the sense of the Divine Presence in our midst during the past year? Do we feel a sense of our individual spirits fusing into an undivided group as we worship? Do our meetings for worship with a concern for business lead to a corporate search for and revelation of God's truth? Do we leave our Meeting filled with a sense of love and peace and courage to meet the challenge of Spirit filled living?

Friends voiced concerns regarding the corporate worship – “somewhat scattered rather than gathered” – the hope being toward realizing the potential for a more gathered meeting. An observation was made that any lack of depth might sometimes originate with what was brought to Meeting in the way of personal concerns, stresses, situations. It was noted that there was a real need, want, and effort being made toward more depth and strength of the Divine Presence in addition to a heightened awareness of Spirit working amongst us.

Regarding the fusing of individual spirits into one, some felt they experienced it at times but wish it happened more often. The idea of corporate worship is new to some and the experience of it not clear to all; this forms a body of individuals sometimes focusing too much on self rather than giving over to the expectant waiting of the group.

Meetings for worship with a concern for business were seen this year as somehow lacking in weight – not much of consequence was considered in these Meetings. This was primarily a reflection of the state of energy of the members of the Meeting, this year having been filled with many challenges for several individuals. Still, there has been a greater sense of truly listening to the wisdom of others even if topics of discussion are mundane. This listening spirit has included less side conversation or talking over one another during the meeting for business. There is more trust in the committees and their discernment – allowing the Spirit to work through them; we are doing what is needed and doing it the best we can.

Without question, yes, Meeting for Worship leads to a sense of love and peace – those who struggle with even coming to Meeting find that they indeed made the right choice to come because without fail the week is more approachable after having attended. One Friend found it “difficult to be courageous when they are in pain” but “shudders to think where I would be if I had to deal with this past year on my own.”

Do we find our vocal ministry Spirit led?

We continue to struggle with the definition of “Spirit-led”. There is a dichotomy between messages focusing on personal thoughts and feelings about things and messages based in the Spirit speaking through the person to the group. There was the recognition that one cannot really know what is leading another to speak and so we try

to assume that they are. We try to hear the Truth even if it comes out awkwardly. We trust that the messages are ‘tested’ by the vocal minister before speaking. They may not be a message on a “small lightning bolt from the Divine” but they are still from God. Most messages shared are not just opinions of the day nor criticisms. “Non-Spirit-led” messages or those that are given outside of a leading tend to come from visitors or those new to Friends’ ways. Despite any of these, the Meeting can be anchored by the weight of the body when the body has weight.

How do we support each other as members of this beloved community?

There has been deep support of members this year, especially those who have faced great personal challenges. Some of this support has come as a body but much of it has come from individuals in the Meeting. We have done everything as best we can with as much commitment as we can bring to bear. The support tends to be organic – perhaps even “Spirit-led” – rather than directed; this care is recognized as a responsibility. One Friend stated that she felt enormous support from Friends who genuinely care about her and she in turn supports others by putting concerns into words and holding Friends in the Light.

Are all of our members and regular attenders engaged in the work of the Meeting according to their gifts and capabilities?

Friends have been engaged as they can within their abilities and as their situations allow. Financial support of Meeting is not as broadly shared as it might be but this too depends on each person’s capability to contribute and must be personally discerned. There is a recognition that a small group does a great deal of the work. It was advised that we need to do a better job at inviting people to get involved and be on committees. The same stresses and challenges spoken to previously affect Friends’ abilities in this as well.

What was our Meeting’s witness in the wider community in the last year?

For the most part, our energies this year have been spent on care for each other rather than on big projects. That being said, we were able to:

- Through the work of a teacher, initiate a book drive and program to provide books and activities for children in underprivileged situations
- Adopt a Family for Christmas
- Have a Food Drive through First Day School for Metropolitan Ministries
- Support our Yearly Meeting by supporting individual members who serve SEYM in many capacities including financially supporting the sending of first-time attenders to Yearly Meeting.
- Support members who are representatives to organizations in the wider Quaker world: FGC, FCNL and Friends Peace Teams.
- Support members who have been called to witness with the Occupy Tampa movement.
- Sign an Anti-Domestic Violence Statement with a community of churches at the Jus-

tice Center

- Hosted a Quarterly Meeting out of our deep desire to be responsible and effective in how we operate in the realm of peace and social concerns. To help us explore these areas, Mary Lord, long-time Friend affiliated with FCNL and AFSC, led interactive workshop sessions with us.
- Have a Quaker Meeting for Marriage for Cece Yocum and Tom Maciocha – a witness to the larger community of Quaker worship and practices
- Sponsor the Epoch, a local community newspaper that helps to support the homeless
- Provide ongoing financial support to Quaker and other like-minded organizations

Where do you find hope in the Meeting and in our Spiritual life?

We find hope in the experiences of Quaker witness listed above. Hope lies in our children's First Day School in the topics being studied by them (Scripture, Friends Testimonies, and Quaker teachings). We experience hope and joy in increased attendance and therefore continue the process of building a new worship space by engaging the architect.

Our worship experience is full of hope. Hope is clearly seen in our care for one another and encouragement not to give up for integrity lies in our efforts and speaks to our living in the manner of Friends. We recognize our need for community in order to keep going, to impact change, and to be Light in the midst of our world. We have hope that in being faithful to each other and to God, way will open.

Treasure Coast WG...

Winter Park MM...

Annual Report to SEYM for 2012

Winter Park Monthly Meeting continues to be strong in spirit although small in numbers.

Many of our original members are no longer able to attend meeting due to failing health and moves from the area. We continue to hold them in the light as our small core group grows spiritually.

It became necessary this Spring for us to move from our Rollins location of 30 years due to increased financial burdens and space constraints with major renovations at Rollins taking place.

Our new meeting space is at the Crosby Wellness Center of the YMCA. Though not ideal, we are thankful to the "Y" for the space. It has been a transition but we have learned that we desire to remain a meeting.

One Sunday a month, following worship, we are doing a book study on Paul combining this with a potluck lunch which gives us a nice opportunity to socialize informally with our small group. On occasion several of our members will attend Orlando Meeting for lectures and meals. WPMM would like to thank Martha Morris for all her many years of service and support. She transferred her membership recently to Orlando Meeting but will always be a part of our community.

We feel a strong spiritual bond with those of us attending here at WPMM.

Jan Hansen, Clerk

Friends Meeting of Ocala...