

Southeastern Yearly Meeting

Gathering & Annual Sessions

March 30 to April 4 and April 6 to April 11

Via videoteleconference

DOCUMENTS IN ADVANCE

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our 57th Annual Gathering of Southeastern Yearly Meeting!

You are invited to join us in the annual renewal of our ties of fellowship, both within this yearly meeting, and as we welcome visitors from afar and first-time attenders to our blessed gathering community!

This SEYM Annual Gathering while virtual, will provide opportunities to greet Friends from throughout our Yearly Meeting and for deep listening for the guidance of the Spirit in all we are led to undertake together.

We are especially pleased to bring you Emily Provance as our Walton Lecturer and facilitator for two retreat sessions. The theme for this Gathering is "What Now?" where we will explore the many issues and questions that present themselves as we recover from a turbulent year of pandemic and disruptions.

There will be a few changes to our order of business for these sessions. My intent is to move the usual housekeeping matters along more efficiently to leave more time to share and explore how spirit moves among us in our Meetings and organizations.

Part of this effort will require your assistance in paying closer attention to these Documents in Advance so that acceptance of the Minutes from EC and IBM will not require re-reading to the body. Other routine matters will hopefully rely heavily on these documents with committee clerks only speaking to any changes from the written materials or particular areas in need of deeper discernment.

The success of our Gathering will depend on your participation. After our experience in 2019 and 2020 we will expand a Meeting and Worship Group forum at plenary 1. I encourage you to come prepared to speak to how your Meeting or Gathering looks forward to recovery as the pandemic subsides and we return to In-person meetings.

Again, welcome to our 57th Yearly Meeting Gathering. You are invited to have some fun, learn something new, and be renewed as we love each other in the Spirit.

In Friendship,



Bill Carlie, clerk, SEYM

TO SEYM CLERKS, OFFICERS, & REPRESENTATIVES:

We are continuing our format for yearly meeting business sessions. Please remember that:

- **ALL reports from SEYM Officers, Committee Clerks and Representatives need to be shared with SEYM Friends in written form.**
- **If any report is late please email the original report to the YM Secretary (office@seym.org) and the YM clerk (ymclerk@seymquakers.org) so it can be distributed electronically, screen shared as needed, and attached to the minutes of Yearly Meeting.**

Written reports are important, to inform SEYM Friends, to include in our minutes, and for our archived records. The DIA is created for that concern and is then posted on the website and emailed to all the meetings and worship groups of SEYM. This allows time for worship, as well as seasoning and discernment of any action minutes brought to SEYM. Please hold us in the Light as we continue this process.

Southeastern Yearly Meeting

Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

AGENDA

30 Third Month to 4 Fourth Month and 6 to 11 Fourth Month 2020

“...do not strive about outward things; but dwell in the love of God, for that will unite you together and make you kind and gentle towards one another; and to seek one another’s good and welfare, and to be helpful to one another, and to see that nothing is lacking among you, then all will be well.”

George Fox 1676

Executive Committee Meeting • 30 Third Month 2021 • 2:30 – 3:45 pm

First Plenary Session (Week 1) • 31 Third Month 2021 • 7:00 to 8:30 pm

- Open, centering worship
- A Reading from a Yearly Meeting Epistle, the Bible, and/or a Friend’s writing
- Welcome
- Open Forum Meetings and Worship Groups, our recovery, traditions and changes
- Open Worship

Second Plenary Session (Week 1) • 1 Fourth Month 2021 • 2:30 to 3:45 pm

- Agenda
- Centering Worship / Reading of inspirational quote
- Calling of Epistle Committee
- Treasurer’s Report
- Finance Committee, First reading of the SEYM budget
- Roll Call of Meetings and Worship Groups
- Acceptance of EC and IBM Minutes..... 5
(please note that the clerk intends to call for acceptance of the Minutes as published)
- Nominating Committee, First Reading of Nominations Report..... 10
- Trustees Report
- Review of the Minutes
- Closing Worship

Third Plenary Session (Week 1) • 2 Fourth Month 2021 • 2:30 to 4:00 pm

- Open, centering worship.
- A Reading from a Yearly Meeting Epistle, the Bible, &/or a Friend’s writing.
- Welcome of Friends and Visitors not previously introduced
- Worship and Ministry Committee Report
- Youth Committee Report (Joint report with CMOR)..... 13
- Committee for Ministry on Racism Report (Joint report with Youth Committee) 13
- Earthcare Committee Report
- Peace & Social Concerns Committee Report
- Havana Unprogrammed Worship Group..... 26

Review of Minutes
Closing Worship

Fourth Plenary Session (Week 2) • 8 Fourth Month 2021 • 2:30 to 3:45 pm

Opening Worship

Welcome of Visitors

Representatives to Organizations & Visitors from Organizations

- American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)
- Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) see DIAs page 34
- Friends General Conference (FGC)
- Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC)
- Friends Peace Teams (FPT) (new report) 21
- Florida Council of Churches see DIAs page 32
- Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, & Queer Concerns (FLGBTQC)
- Palmetto Friends Gathering
- Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW)
- Quaker House
- Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO)

Observers to Organizations

- Friends United Meeting (FUM) General Board Observers

Reading back the minutes

Closing worship

Fifth Plenary Session (Week 2) • 10 Fourth Month 2021 • 2:30 to 3:45 pm

Open, centering worship

A Reading from a Yearly Meeting Epistle, the Bible, &/or a Friend's writing.

Welcome of Friends and Visitors not previously introduced.

Peace and Social Concerns Committee Report

Field Secretary for Earthcare Report..... 16

Publications Committee Report

Archives Committee Report

2nd Reading of Committee Minutes

Review of Minutes

Closing Worship

Sixth Plenary Session (Week 2) • 11 Fourth Month 2021 • 1:00 to 2:15 pm

Open, centering worship.

A Reading from a Yearly Meeting Epistle, the Bible, &/or a Friend's writing.

Welcome of Friends and Visitors not previously introduced.

Nominating Committee Report, final reading

Finance Committee Report (budget) final reading

Gathering Committee Report

Epistle

Review of Minutes

Closing Worship

Gathering will close with Meeting for Worship

Executive Committee Meetings

Numbered Minutes

Summer Executive Committee Meeting

8 Eighth Month 2020, via videoteleconference

- 20SEC-01** Upon the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, the Executive Committee records the resignations of Friends Nancy Fennell (Ft. Myers) from Worship and Ministry Committee; Richard Frechette (Ft. Myers) as YM Recording Clerk; and Stephanie Preston-Hughes (Orlando) from the YM Gathering Committee. We thank them for giving their time and effort to SEYM. **APPROVED**
- 20SEC-02** Upon the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, the Executive Committee appoints Peter Ackerman, Gainesville, as a SEYM Representative to Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) for a term beginning August 8, 2020 to Yearly Meeting, 2023. **APPROVED**
- 20SEC-03** The Executive Committee approves the request of Kody Hersh, the Youth & Young Adult Coordinator, to suspend his service from September 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020, or longer if the public health situation dictates, an extension to be determined by a called meeting of Executive Committee on December 12, 2020. **APPROVED.**

Fall Executive Committee Meeting

16 Tenth Month 2020, via videoteleconference

- 20FEC-01** Friends approve Bill Carlie serving as Clerk Pro Tem for this evening. **APPROVED**
- 20FEC-02** Executive Committee request that the *ad hoc* Care Committee (consisting of Liz Dykes, Jean Larson, Heidi Lowey-Ball, Mike Shell, and Susan Taylor), created to work with Jacksonville Monthly Meeting's transition to Worship Group, continue in its role and to inform SEYM how it can be of further assistance to the committee. **APPROVED**
- 20FEC-03** Executive Committee recommends to Fall Interim Business Meeting that steps be taken to once again place the Faith and Practice document on the SEYM website as a .pdf file accessible to all and asks the Publications Committee to determine how this can best be done. **APPROVED**
- 20FEC-04** Recognizing that the report presented by the Susan and Dan Vaughen on the matter of a potential Quaker Retirement will be reviewed in a threshing session following the FIBM we feel that any action on the part of the Executive Committee at this time is premature. **APPROVED**

Specially Called Executive Committee Meeting

12 Twelfth Month 2020, via videoteleconference

- 20SpCEC -01** Southeastern Yearly Meeting will hold the Winter Executive Committee meeting (WEC), Winter Interim Business Meeting (WIBM), and the Michener Lecture as virtual events. **APPROVED**
- 20SpCEC -02** Southeastern Yearly Meeting will hold its annual sessions as virtual events. We will contact the Life Enrichment Center about our deposit, hoping to move it to 2022. **APPROVED**
- 20SpCEC -03:** Southeastern Yearly Meeting agrees to continue the suspension of Kody Hersh's work as Youth and Young Adult Coordinator until the Annual Sessions Executive Committee Meeting when the decision will be reviewed again. **APPROVED**
- 20SpCEC-04** Southeastern Yearly Meeting is not ready to commit to hosting the 2022 Friends General Conference Gathering. An *ad hoc* committee of Bill Carlie, Liz Dykes, Susan Taylor, and Susan Wade will meet with Michelle Bellows, clerk of FGC LRCP as soon as possible and bring a report to Winter Executive Committee. **APPROVED.**

Winter Executive Committee Meeting

15 First Month 2021, via videoteleconference

- 21WEC-01** Executive Committee unites with the recommendation of the *ad hoc* FGC Gathering Request Committee that we decline the invitation to host the 2022 Gathering. SEYM is grateful to be asked, and would consider hosting or co-hosting in the future, perhaps at a locale nearer our meetings. **APPROVED**

Interim Business Meetings Numbered Minutes

Fall Interim Business Meeting

17 Tenth Month 2020, via videoteleconference

- 20FIBM-01 Friends approve Bill Carlie, YM Clerk, serving as Clerk for today's FIBM session.
- 20FIBM-02 Friends accept the minutes from the Summer Executive **Committee Meeting**.
- 20FIBM-03 Friends accept the minutes of Fall Executive Committee.
- 20FIBM-04 Friends approve the Nominating slate presented in the Documents In Advance.
- 20FIBM-05 Friends approve the nomination of Lynn Newsom as the SEYM representative to Quaker House.
- 20FIBM-06 Friends accept the Treasurer's Report, with thanks.
- 20FIBM-07 Southeastern Yearly Meeting would like to express appreciation to Clara Diaz for her loving and informed leadership as clerk of SEYM Worship and Ministry over the past 6 years.
- 20FIBM-08 Friends accept the Committee on Ministry on Racism's report as published in the [Documents In Advance](#).
- 20FIBM-09 Friends accept the Field Secretary for Earthcare Report.
- 20FIBM-10 Friends accept the Florida Council of Churches Report
- 20FIBM-11 Friends accept the Earthcare Committee Report
- 20FIBM-12 Friends accept the Gathering Committee report, with thanks.
- 20FIBM-13 Friends accept the Half Yearly Meeting Report
- 20FIBM-14 Friends accept the Peace & Social Concerns Report with thanks.
- 20FIBM-15 Friends express our gratitude to Fort Myers Monthly Meeting for their Statement on Police Violence and Accountability. We recommend the statement to Meetings and Worship Groups, and encourage them to write their own statements or to adopt this statement for their Meeting.
- 20FIBM-16 Friends recommend that SEYM adopt Fort Myers Monthly Meeting's Statement on Police Violence and Accountability. We ask Clerk to send the statement to Monthly Meetings for discernment, not only for adoption by SEYM but to encourage them to adopt this or similar statements as their own.

- 20FIBM-17** Friends express our gratitude to St. Petersburg Monthly Meeting for their Statement in Support of the Black Lives Matter Movement. We recommend the statement to Meetings and Worship Groups and encourage them to write their own statements or to adopt this statement for their Meeting.
- 20FIBM-18** Friends recommend that SEYM adopt St. Petersburg Monthly Meeting's Statement in Support of the Black Lives Matter Movement. We ask Clerk to send the statement to Monthly Meetings for discernment not only for adoption by SEYM but to encourage them to adopt this or similar statements as their own .
- 20FIBM-19** Friends accept the AFSC Report with thanks.
- 20FIBM-20** Friends accept the FCPJ report.
- 20FIBM-21** Friends accept the FCNL report with thanks.
- 20FIBM-22** Friends accept the QEW report with thanks.

Winter Interim Business Meeting

16 First Month 2021, via videoteleconference

- 21WIBM-01** On the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, the Interim Business Meeting approves the report as attached and the following individuals to serve in positions that were unfilled:
 YM Recording Clerk – Liz Dykes (2021)
 Worship and Ministry Committee - Edward Abraham (2021-2023)
 Representative to FGC Central Committee – Bonnie Zimmer (2021-2023)
APPROVED
- 21WIBM-02** Southeastern Yearly Meeting would like to express great appreciation to Susan Wade and Vicki Carlie for their amazing work and organization that has helped us continue to gather as a Blessed Community during this time of COVID-19. **APPROVED**
- 21WIBM-03** Southeastern Yearly Meeting, meeting as Winter Interim Business Meeting, approves distributing to Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups the Joint SEYM Youth Committee and Committee for Ministry on Racism's invitation to join together on one way forward towards removing White supremacy from SEYM, as presented in their report to Winter Interim Business Meeting. The suggested way forward would add to the faithful efforts Friends are already making to confront racism. **APPROVED**
- 21WIBM-04** Winter Interim Business Meeting approves the immediate appointment by the YM Clerk of a new, *ad hoc* SEYM committee to begin work as soon as possible to support and work with partners who might be interested in constructing or acquiring a retirement community to be managed by Quaker principles in Florida to meet the retirement needs of seniors of moderate means, by providing advice on local conditions and markets, and by otherwise assisting such partners in the planning of such a project. The new committee may designate its name, identify its Clerk, and initiate communication with

Meetings, Worship Groups, potential retirement community partners, and other interested parties. All members of the committee shall be uncompensated volunteers, who shall pay for their own expenses. It shall report its progress to the Executive Committee at its regular meetings.

APPROVED

Nominating Committee Report

Southeastern Yearly Meeting

2021 Gathering, via videoteleconference

SEYM Officers, Committees, Representatives, & Appointees

March 2021 – YM Preliminary Report

OFFICERS

Yearly Meeting Clerk.....	Bill Carlie.....	St. Petersburg.....	2023
Interim Business Meeting (IBM)			
& Executive Committee (EC) Clerk.....	Phoebe Andersen.....	Tallahassee.....	2023
YM & IBM Assistant Clerk.....	Jack Bradin.....	Palm Beach.....	2023
YM Recording Clerk.....	Liz Dykes.....	Gainesville.....	2021
Recording Clerk, IBM/EC.....	Liz Dykes.....	Gainesville.....	2022
Assistant Recording Clerk(s).....	Susan Wade.....	St. Petersburg.....	2024
Treasurer.....	Joel Cook.....	Palm Beach.....	2023
Membership Recorder.....	Ed Lesnick.....	Orlando.....	2023

TRUSTEES

Neil Andersen, <i>Clerk</i>	Tallahassee.....	2023
Chris Laning.....	Orlando.....	2022
Jack Bradin.....	Palm Beach.....	2023
Mike Flanery.....	Clearwater.....	2023
Liz Dykes.....	Gainesville.....	2023

COMMITTEES

Archives	Bill Rapp, <i>Clerk</i>	Lake Wales WG.....	2024
	Neil Andersen.....	Tallahassee.....	2024
	Phoebe Andersen.....	Tallahassee.....	2023
Earthcare	Brian Humphrey, <i>Co-Clerk</i>	Ft. Lauderdale.....	2023
	Bill Carlie, <i>Co-Clerk</i>	St. Petersburg.....	2022
	Jack Bradin.....	Palm Beach.....	2023
	Mike Flanery.....	Clearwater.....	2023
	Hollyn Green.....	Savannah.....	2023
	Brad Stocker.....	Miami.....	2023
	Gary Crosby.....	St. Petersburg.....	2023
	Jim Koopman.....	Ft. Myers.....	2022
	Catherine Price.....	Lake Wales WG.....	2022
	Beverly Ward.....	Tampa.....	2022
	Bonnie Zimmer.....	Gainesville.....	2022
Faith & Practice (Committee on sabbatical)	Phoebe Andersen, <i>Clerk</i>	Tallahassee.....	2024
Facebook Page	Mike Flanery.....	Clearwater.....	2024
Finance	Peter Schmidt, <i>Clerk</i>		2022
	Steve Donachie.....	Miami.....	2024
	Shawna Doran.....	Gainesville.....	2024

	Carl Hersh	Miami.....	2024
	Asst. YM Clerk (ex officio)		
	SEYM Treasurer (ex officio)		
	Clerk of Trustees (ex officio)		
	SEYM Administrative Secretary (ex officio)		
Half-Yearly Meeting	Brian Olson, <i>Clerk</i>	Miami.....	2024
	Beeg Camarota, <i>Registrar</i> for 2021	Deland WG/Orlando...	2024
	Caroline Kaufman, Food Coordinator	Clearwater	2022
Ministry on Racism	Susan Taylor, <i>Co-Clerk</i>	Tallahassee.....	2023
	Wendy Clarissa Geiger, <i>Co-Clerk</i>	Jacksonville WG.....	2023
	Minerva Glidden.....	Orlando.....	2024
	Kathy Hersh	Miami.....	2024
	Beverly Ward.....	Tampa.....	2024
	Jane Westberg	Miami.....	2024
	Jean Larson.....	Gainesville	2022
	Cheryl Demers	Gainesville	2023
	Katie Green	Clearwater	2023
	Mainus Sultan.....	Savannah.....	2023
Peace & Social Concerns	Phil Stone, <i>Clerk</i>	Clearwater	2023
	Peter Harrell	Gainesville	2024
	Eileen Zingaro	Clearwater	2024
	Cece Yocum.....	Tampa.....	2022
	Helen Fox	Ft. Myers	2022
	Willie Hager.....	Jacksonville....	2022
	Warren Hoskins.....	Miami.....	2022
	John Heimburg.....	Orlando.....	2022
	Mercedes Soca	Havana WG.....	2022
	Caroline Kaufman	Clearwater	2023
Publications	Phoebe Andersen, <i>Clerk</i>	Tallahassee.....	2024
Worship & Ministry	Nancy Triscritti....	Tampa.....	2024
	Nancy Rose Logan.....	Sarasota.....	2022
	Richelle Ogle	SAWG/Orlando.....	2022
	Ellie Caldwell.....	Palm Beach	2023
	Jan Dahm	Tampa	2023
	Eduardo Diaz.....	Miami.....	2023
	Lisa Erasmus.....	Tampa.....	2023
	Edward Abraham	Miami.....	2024
YM Gathering	Andrea Hoskins, <i>Clerk</i>	Miami.....	2022
	Susan Wade, <i>Registrar</i>	St. Petersburg.....	2023
	Caroline Kaufman, <i>Bookstore</i>	Clearwater	2022
	Brian Olson, <i>Asst. Program Coordinator</i>	Miami.....	2023
	Vicki Carlie, <i>Program Coordinator</i>	St. Petersburg.....	2022
Youth Committee	Jennifer Mendoza, <i>Co-Clerk</i>	Sarasota.....	2024
	Cecelia Yocum, <i>Co-Clerk</i>	Tampa.....	2022
	Aurelio Anderson	Tallahassee.....	2021
	Mira Tanna.....	Orlando.....	2022
	Rachel Dellinger	Orlando.....	2023

REPRESENTATIVES TO ORGANIZATIONS

American Friends Service Committee Corporation, AFSC/Philadelphia

Kathy Hersh..... Miami.....2022
Beverly Ward..... Tampa.....2022

Friends Committee on National Legislation, FCNL

Karen Putney..... Tampa.....2024
Pete Akerman..... Gainesville.....2023
Under Discernment

Friends General Conference, FGC Central Committee

Susan Taylor..... Tallahassee..... 2022
Susan Wade St. Petersburg..... 2022
Bonnie Zimmer..... Gainesville.....2024

Friends World Committee for Consultation – FWCC

Nancy Rose Logan..... Sarasota.....2023
Clara Diaz Miami.....2024
Eduardo Diaz Miami.....2024

Friends Peace Teams

Cecilia Yocum Tampa.....2022

Florida Council of Churches

Beverly Ward..... Tampa.....2024

Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Queer Concerns – FLGBTQ

Under Discernment

Palmetto Friends Gathering

Phoebe Andersen..... Tallahassee.....2023
Neil Andersen..... Tallahassee.....2023

Quaker Earthcare Witness

Jack Braden Palm Beach.....2022
Brad Stocker..... Miami.....2022

Quaker House (Fayetteville)

Lynn Newsom..... Bluffton SC WG.....2023

APPOINTED OBSERVERS TO ORGANIZATIONS

FUM General Board Observer

Under Discernment

Ellie Caldwell, *Alternate*..... Palm Beach.....2024

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Ed Lesnick, *Clerk*..... Orlando.....2022
Beverly Ward..... Tampa.....2022
Shawna Doran Gainesville.....2022
Brian Olson..... Miami.....2023

Committee for Ministry on Racism Report In Cooperation with the Youth Committee

Southeastern Yearly Meeting
2021 Gathering, via videoteleconference

Quakers—and the world—need constant reminders and evolving 21st century interpretations of Quaker testimonies, values, and principles, including Truth/Integrity, Peace, Equality, Community, and Justice, and their application in witness.

Dr. Harold (Hal) Weaver, founder, BlackQuaker Project
www.theblackquakerproject.org

No one ever talks about the moment you found you were white. Or the moment you found out you were black. That's a profound revelation. The minute you find that out, something happens. You have to renegotiate everything.

Toni Morrison, as quoted by Resmaa Menakem, *My Grandmother's Hands*, 2017

Loving Greetings, Friends:

(Please see, “Clarifying Definitions,” accompanying our Winter Interim Business Meeting (WIBM) 2021 DIA Report, for many of the terms used in this Report.)

The Committee for Ministry on Racism (CMOR), in cooperation with the SEYM Youth Committee, joyfully invite you all to our workshop to be held during the Gathering: **MIRRORS OF IDENTITY: Personal Reflections on Racial Experience**. The workshop, another step in removing White supremacy from SEYM, will offer a Spiritually grounded, welcoming and safe place for all Friends to reflect together and be heard, mainly through worship sharing. Members of CMOR will facilitate.

We are also working with the Gathering Committee to make available affinity (support) groups or spaces for, (1) solely Friends who are Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC) and (2) solely Friends who are White or of European Descent. Whether these spaces can be offered daily, and whether an affinity space can be offered for Biracial Friends, will depend upon the technical support available. CMOR will be helping the Gathering Committee to find tech support. We are grateful to the Gathering Committee.

Why are these separate spaces important? Having these safe spaces in which to debrief, held in God's love, is essential for developing a whole Blessed community, together. Most of us within SEYM, regardless of race, were socialized into the U.S. White supremacist culture and need a place to help deal with that.

BIPOC and Biracial Friends need respite from repeated oppression from both the implicit and explicit biases they experience from structural and systemic racism. They need a place where they can relax and simply be who they are, feel affirmed, act, and share feelings and thoughts without leaving parts of themselves at the door. Biracial Friends have sometimes expressed feeling marginalized by people of other racial identities.

People who are White or of European Descent also require respite because they usually have a very hard time talking about race, either among themselves or especially with BIPOC, for fear of saying the wrong thing and being seen as a morally bad person should they say or do something

labeled racist. A person is not a bad person when the latter happens. It is bound to occur because of their socialization. They need space to learn from each other about their White frame of reference and its effects - a space to feel affirmed, act, simply be, share feelings and ask questions. A place to learn that racism is not about the duality of being a good or bad person, it's structural and systemic. We all are of God, Source, Spirit.

We celebrate that Meetings and Worship Groups are beginning to implement at least one way forward together to remove White supremacy from SEYM, as reported in the WIBM Documents in Advance and at WIBM. Miami Meeting, Deland Worship Group and a member of Ft. Lauderdale Meeting met together by Zoom on February 7. Kathy Hersh reported:

“Miami Friends Meeting hosted a Zoom worship sharing session on white supremacy on Sunday, February 7, at 1 pm. They extended the invitation to the Deland Worship Group and any other SEYM Quakers. Four members of the Deland Worship Group attended, as well as a member of Ft. Lauderdale Meeting. After a review of the worship sharing guidelines and queries developed by Friends of Color at Friend’s General Conference, the participants were divided into 3 breakout rooms, providing time for each person to share their answers to the queries, if they so chose. The queries focused on 3 aspects: 1) what personal spiritual leadings Friends might be engaged in addressing ongoing racism on monthly meeting and yearly meeting levels, 2) how to keep members engaged in the struggle for true equality in health, education, wealth, and against state sanctioned violence and 3) the means of supporting Friends of Color in Quaker worship and meetings around the world. (These are paraphrases of the actual queries.)

After the break out time, Friends came back together to share their feelings about the process. “It was hard.” One Friend was impressed with the depth of feelings shared and the amount of work still needed. One friend was struck by how much white people are conditioned and that we have to decondition ourselves to become equals... The Zoom meeting closed after an hour and a half with much conviviality and a desire for more.”

Orlando Meeting will have a threshing session in March, and Tallahassee Meeting will have either a threshing session or worship sharing in March. Tallahassee has begun their second racial justice series, open to other organizations and faith groups. In past reports CMOR has mentioned the antiracist efforts of St. Petersburg and Ft. Myers Meetings. Other antiracist activities are reported in the SEYM eNews. Thank you, Vicki Carlie. Thank you, Susan Wade for all the Zoom support for our committee meetings.

We look forward to spiritual nourishment and growth with all of you at the Gathering!

Trusting in the Spirit, with Love,

Susan Taylor, Tallahassee, co-clerk, CMOR and Joint Youth, CMOR Committees
For CMOR and Youth Committee

Youth Committee: Aurelio Anderson. Regrets for Feb. meeting: Cecelia Yocum, clerk and co-clerk of Joint Committee Youth and CMOR, Tampa; Jennifer Mendoza, Sarasota; Mira Tanna, Orlando; Kody Hersh, SEYM Youth and Young Adult Coordinator.

CMOR: Wendy Clarissa Geiger, co-clerk (regrets), Jacksonville; Beverly Ward, Tampa; Minerva Glidden, Orlando; Kathy Hersh, Miami and Deland WG; Jane Westberg, Miami; Jean Larson

(regrets), Gainesville; Cheryl Demers, Gainesville; Katie Green, (regrets) Clearwater; Mainus Sultan, Savannah.

Field Secretary for Earthcare (FSE) Report

Southeastern Yearly Meeting

2021 Gathering, via videoteleconference]

Overview

Provide focus and coordinate efforts on environmental work in the Southeastern Yearly Meeting (SEYM) region.

This report provides an update on field secretary activities since the written and oral reports submitted for 2021 Fall Interim Business Meeting. The report also includes planned activities. A summary of 2020 activities is included.

Communication with the Anchoring Committee

I continue to communicate with the Anchoring Committee remotely. We continue to seek and find ways during the crises facing the world to do the work. As described below, despite the challenges, we have found opportunities to make community.

Meeting with Monthly Meetings (MMs), Worship Groups (WGs), and Others

Perform visits to Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups within SEYM to help them discern their leadings in care of the Earth, and to provide information and coordination among Meetings.

As a reminder, “Meetings can issue invitations to the [SEYM] administrative secretary, FSE, or the Anchor Committee [for FSE visits]. We will all conference over the invitation and subsequent planning” (Phoebe Andersen, 3 Tenth Month 2016). This includes virtual visits.

Contact Information

- Email: fsEarthcare@seymquakers.org.
- Facebook: @fsearthcare
- Twitter: @fsearthcare.
- Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/7545638812>.
- Skype: phdant
- Telephone number: 813.928.8823.
- Snailmail: 13705 Lazy Oak Drive, Tampa, FL, 33613.4923.

A Google calendar showing requests for visitation and FSE has been created and shared with the Anchoring Committee and the Co-Clerks of the Earthcare Committee. All prior and upcoming visits are shown below. MMs and WGs continue to request visits, particularly in conjunction with retreats and AVP workshops.

Suggested workshop/event topics:

- Angelic Troublemaking: Beyond Bystander Training;
- Climate Justice in Our Community (Location specific climate justice issues);
- Discerning Earthcare Leadings;
- Earthcare audits (baseline assessment of individual or community activities and discernment);
- Equality or Equity? What is Our Testimony?;
- Permaculture is Not Just Agriculture;
- Transportation, migration, and climate;
- Underwater Homeowners Association;
- Water: Sea Level Rise, Flooding, and Water Quality;

- Waterline Communities: Displacement and Gentrification and Why Quakers Should Care; and
- Kody Hersh and I also plan and work together.

Lake Wales Worship Group, to be scheduled

This e-visit is still in the planning stage. Consideration is being given to the potential for positive changes in the proposed project with the change in the federal administration. For example, some of the environmental protections that were removed have been replaced. These protections will require consideration of the potential adverse impacts to humans, other animals, and life forms. The draft working paper on the social or community impacts of the proposed project is being updated. The visit will be online.

St. Augustine Worship Group, to be scheduled

I plan to worship with St. Augustine Worship Group prior to the 2021 Annual Gathering. I continue to worship virtually with various Meetings and Worship Groups, the SEYM, and other Quaker groups.

Yearly Meeting Gathering, 31 Third Month – 11 Fourth Month

I am working with the Committee for Ministry on Racism to plan a workshop for the Annual Gathering. I also will either provide a workshop with the Earthcare Committee or develop a stand-alone session. (Being sensitive to Zoom fatigue, the Earthcare offering(s) will be resolved with the Gathering Committee.) Cece Yocum and I have also considered developing a session for the SEYM Youth.

Interactions or Collaborations between and among other SEYM committees

These interactions between and among SEYM committees help to facilitate communication and collaboration of our regional concerns with national organizations and to be a Quaker Presence at specific events.

- The Committee for Ministry on Racism (CMOR): I continue to serve as a member of CMOR and provide support, especially in identifying resources. I am particularly interested in helping to make the connections between the impacts of systemic and structural racism and climate degradation;
- Earthcare Committee: I serve on the the Earthcare Committee and work closely with the two representatives, Brad Stocker (Miami MM) and Jack Bradin (Palm Beach MM). Brad Stocker and I are working with Quaker Earthcare Witness to make available a screening of the film, Sweet Home Monteverde. More information on this will be coming soon.
- Florida Council of Churches (FCC): the 2020 Florida Clergy Convening was held 7 First Month 2021. It was a very powerful virtual assembly. A separate report is provided.
- Peace and Social Concerns: I continue to remain in contact with the SEYM Peace and Social Concerns Committee and some Monthly Meetings Peace and Social Concerns Committees, again, as a resource.

- Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO), AFSC: Kathy Hersh and I share an SEYM appointment to AFSC. More information about QUNO and AFSC is detailed below.
- Right Sharing of World Resources: I continue to share information through the QEW United Nations Working Group, AFSC, and Quaker United Nations Committee.
- Youth Committee: I continue to work with the Youth Committee and, as mentioned above, am assisting with content for the Annual Gathering.

The Wider Quaker World, Interfaith Groups, Other Environmental Organizations

To communicate and collaborate our regional concerns with national organizations including Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW), Earth Quaker Action Team (EQAT), Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), and Friends General Conference (FGC). To be a Quaker Presence at specific events, including those arranged by others.

In the wider Quaker World, interfaith groups, and other environmental organizations, I have listed existing memberships, partnerships, or collaborations that have been a part of the outreach effort. These include, but are not limited to:

- Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP), there are now online AVP workshops. I have not been able to participate in any offerings to date, but hope to be available in the future as a facilitator. A group AVP facilitators in Florida has begun holding monthly virtual meetings.
- American Friends Service Committee (AFSC): I continue to serve as a corporate member of AFSC and as part of that work am a member of the Quaker United Nations Committee (QUNC). I also am part of AFSC's Third World Coalition. AFSC has a resource page, Caring for each other during COVID-19, <https://www.afsc.org/content/caring-each-other-during-covid-19>. A number of Friends within SEYM and beyond also have participated in AFSC's "Changing Systems, Change Ourselves" self-study e-course, <https://www.afsc.org/resource/self-study-changing-systems-change-ourselves-e-course>:
 - o The 2021 Annual Meeting of the AFSC Corporation will be held virtually 11 - 16 Fourth Month.
 - o Both Quaker United Nations Offices (QUNO), New York and Geneva will soon be recruiting new directors. I will share more information about these positions as it becomes available. The Quaker United Nations Committee will meet 18 - 21 Third Month 2021.
- Decolonizing Quakers, <https://www.decolonizingquakers.org/>, is planning follow up activities from the virtual "Working Towards Right Relationship with Indigenous Peoples" conference. An outcome of this work was the opportunity to facilitate a group session on "Decolonizing Quakers and Angelic Troublemaking" with Friends from Lake Erie Yearly Meeting Peace and Social Concerns and Earthcare Committees.

- Florida Interfaith Climate Actions Network (FL-iCAN): Jan Booher continues to work with the Florida Disaster Resilience Initiative, (<https://resiliencesystem.org/dashboards/florida-disaster-resilience-initiative/>) and share health and environmental information, including COVID-19. To receive alerts regarding the upcoming Florida Legislative session, sign up at <https://fl-ican.org/action-alerts/>. We continue to work on some activity for 2021:
 - o I will participate in the “Welcome To WE!” Show, 16 Second Month 6:00 PM EDT, as part of the by the Climate Collaboratory. The Climate Collaboratory is a pilot project of We, the World and the University of Florida Extension. It will be broadcast via social media in the [MLK 40 Days of Peace Program](#).
- Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL): Brad Stocker and I continue to share a slot as representatives to FCNL for QEW. This includes participation in monthly telephone conference calls with FCNL staff, Clarence Edwards and Mariah Shriner.
- Friends General Conference: I continue to work with FGC, particularly with the Fellowship of Friends of African Descent and FGC’s Institutional Assessment 2017-2018, <https://www.fgcquaker.org/deepen/help-your-meeting-challenge-racism/fgcs-institutional-assessment-2017-2018>.
- Friends Peace Teams (FPT): I continue to work with members of FPT linking FPT to QEW UN Working Group and Towards Right Relationship.
- Friends United Meeting (FUM): I continue to work with Jim Kessler, Grinnell Friends Church, through Quaker Earthcare Witness and on Grinnell Friends support of low-income and minority communities in and around Grinnell (IA).
- Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC): I continue to work to strengthen links to FWCC through QEW and AFSC. I will participate in the FWCC Section of the Americas (SOA) Meeting.
- National Academies of Sciences, Transportation Research Board (TRB), Equity in Transportation and the Women’s Issues in Transportation Committees. I am co-chair of the transportation equity conference in 2021. I will submit an abstract for a faith-based session on equitable transportation for the conference.
- Organize NOW, Climate Justice Committee: I continue to assist the local committee.
- The Pachamama Alliance: I continue to work with members through the FL-iCAN network.
- QEW: I continue to co-clerk the QEW United Nations Working Group with Jack Bradin. I am scheduled to join Brad Stocker as co-clerk of QEW, Fall 2021.

- Tri-City NAACP Branch: I will be working with the Environmental and Climate Justice Committee.
- Unitarian Universalist Fellowship: Jan Booher, Unitarian Universalist Justice Florida (UUJF), and I continue to collaborate through FL-iCAN.
- University of South Florida, Institute on Black Life (IBL), Advisory Committee and the Patel College of Global Sustainability (PCGS): I continue to work with the University and am planning for the 2021 Weather, Climate, and Science National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates this summer.
 - o I also participated in an online meeting of the Environmental Futures Program at the University of Colorado Boulder with Jacqui Patterson, NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Program. When the recording and slide deck become available, I will share them.

Social Media

I continue to blog for the SEYM website, <http://seymquakers.org/faith-in-action/field-secretary-for-earthcare/>. I also share “eField Notes”, short pieces on activities, with SEYM Monthly Meetings, Working Groups, the wider Quaker world and others. Please send suggestions for topics, research, etc.

2020 In Review

The last face-to-face visit in 2020 was an FWCC SOA Meeting hosted by Miami Friends and Iglesia De Los Amigos. That was at the beginning of Second Month. By Third Month, I was well into convening online special events, meetings, consultations, visits, etc., with a lot of help from f/Friends. I had the special joy of helping Kody Hersh provide Family Devotionals, an activity arranged by Friend Emily Provance. As the corona virus pandemic spread, I began to curate articles on health care, disparities, and health and safety guidance. The ongoing pandemics of systemic and structural racism, climate degradation, and poverty have tried us. Many of us have shared our frustration with not being able to “do something!” I also have been reminded during this period of the Spiritual, “Peace, Be Still.” The “do something” has been more than the online presence. It is listening, preparing, sharing, caring, and loving. It is remembering to grieve, but not be in despair. It is finding ways to share joy.

Thank you.

May we all be safe.

May we all be healthy.

May we all know joy.

May we all know happiness.

May we all live lives of wellbeing.

Love and Peace,
Beverly G. Ward

Friends Peace Teams: Peacebuilding en las Americas Report

Southeastern Yearly Meeting
2021 Gathering, via videoteleconference

December 2020: Four-Part Response

Dec 13, 2020 by PLA Coordinator

The Peacebuilding en las Américas (PLA) team is implementing a four-part response to the destruction of Hurricanes Eta and Iota, which added to the suffering in the region already created by the multiple pandemics of Covid, hunger, domestic violence and militarization. The Hurricanes hit Honduras and Guatemala particularly hard, affecting more than 5.5 million people in these two countries alone.

First, PLA is offering **immediate relief to Hurricane victim-survivors** in Guatemala and Honduras who have not been reached by larger NGOs or government aid. In Guatemala, PLA is collaborating with the Friends Church to offer stoves and ponchos to the Playitas Community in Alta Verapaz, Chisec where 150 families lost everything, are without communication and currently accessible only by boat.

In Honduras, PLA is working with the Peace and Justice Office of the Mennonite Church to provide construction and cleaning supplies to families whose homes have been destroyed at the outskirts of the coastal city of La Ceiba and the industrial valley of San Pedro Sula.

PLA is also supporting Mercy Dream Weavers to bring food to isolated, indigenous Tolupan women of rural Locomapa, Yoro and to provide home items and cleaning supplies to families made homeless in a destroyed village near Puerto Cortés, also accessible only by boat.

Second, PLA is providing **psychological and spiritual support** through online AVP workshops to Hurricane survivors, as well as to women and adolescents living in situations of domestic violence, and to others suffering from the stress of pandemic confinement, unemployment, and militarization of civil society.

To date, national coordinators and colleagues have facilitated eight Basic online workshops and one Advanced, with 106 participants from 14 countries. Those participants who are AVP facilitators now plan to replicate the virtual workshops with others. The enthusiasm and demand for the online workshops continues to be high.

As one participant of the Basic commented, "What I liked about the workshop was the respect and warmth. Despite the virtual modality, we felt close like a family. I really liked that everyone shared; we all felt taken into account. The topics have been marvelous. I am grateful... to the facilitators for having taken the risk to offer it online."

Participants of the Advanced shared, "I congratulate you for your effort and dedication. Despite being online, the workshop was carried out with great professionalism." "A super team! Awesome organization! Thank you for giving the best of yourselves. Personally, this workshop arrived at a difficult moment and was a complete blessing."

Third, PLA continues the **Peace Baskets Project** with emergency food, hygiene items and messages of peace to communities most affected by the hunger pandemic. The third round of Peace Basket deliveries was completed in Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, with 100 baskets delivered in El Salvador alone to families employed in the informal sector, most of whom were infected with Covid. The fourth round is now nearing completion.

Over 1,000 families in all have benefitted. Due to the extreme suffering caused by the Hurricanes, Guatemala and Honduras will implement a fifth round of Peace Baskets to families affected most by hunger and to AVP facilitators in prison.

Fourth, the Peace Baskets Project will move into its second phase of **Planting Sustainable Peace**. In Ecuador, a collective garden of high-protein Andean beans, chochos, has been planted on three hectares in Cotacachi by 15 indigenous Kichwa families, motivated by indigenous women leaders of Jambi Mascari, the women's arm of an indigenous confederation of 43 villages. The women have been dedicated to food sovereignty programs for decades so they moved quickly into this sustainable peace phase after just one round of Peace Basket deliveries. A percentage of the harvest will be for food consumption of the 15 families involved, another percentage given to other indigenous families in need, and a final percentage sold in order to create income to reinvest in the project.

In Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, Planting Sustainable Peace will begin in January and involve promoting home gardens and family micro-enterprises.

January 2021

The Peacebuilding en las Américas (PLA) team continued implementing its four-part response to the suffering caused by Hurricanes Eta and Iota, Covid, hunger, domestic violence and militarization. Lockdowns across the region accompanied a surge in Covid infections with the public health system overwhelmed and intensive care over capacity.

Manifestations of the widespread desperation became clearer with a tragic spike in suicides among children and adolescents. In northern Honduras, PLA partner Ondina Murillo reported five youth suicides in her area, including an 8-year-old.

Another indicator of the crisis was the formation of two new Caravans of adults and children headed to the US on foot from San Pedro Sula, Honduras, despite severe national and regional restrictions on mobility. Among the estimated 3,000 people setting out in search of a new life was a woman in a wheelchair.

Relief to Hurricane victims began in Honduras and Guatemala with a focus on those overlooked by the government and large NGOs. Nelly Delcid at Mercy Dream Weavers in Honduras provided humanitarian assistance to women land rights defenders who have participated in AVP: indigenous Tolupan women of rural Locomapa whose food supply was cut off, and Garifuna women of the northern coastal town of Tornabé whose communities were devastated. She is also providing basic household and cleaning supplies to homeless families in a destroyed village near Puerto Cortés, accessible only by boat.

Ondina Murillo is working with the Peace and Justice Office of the Mennonite Church to provide construction and cleaning supplies to families whose homes have been destroyed in the coastal town of La Ceiba and the industrial valley of San Pedro Sula.

In Guatemala, Lorena Escobar, in collaboration with the Friends Church, is providing stoves and ponchos to 50 families of the Playitas Community in Alta Verapaz, Chisec, completely flooded but now accessible by land.

Psychological and spiritual support is expanding through ever proliferating **online AVP workshops**. Participants include Hurricane survivors, women and adolescents living in situations of domestic violence, and others suffering from the stress of confinement, unemployment, and militarization of civil society.

With new workshops in January, national coordinators and colleagues have been involved in facilitating 10 Basic online workshops and 3 Advanced, with 170 Spanish-speaking participants from 15 countries: El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Ecuador, Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, Peru, Nicaragua, Panama, Cuba, USA, Spain and Germany.

Participants who are AVP facilitators plan to replicate the workshops with others, including a new team of AVP virtual facilitators in Cali, Colombia. The enthusiasm is contagious with demand soaring.

The Peace Baskets Project has reached 1,100 beneficiaries in Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras with emergency food, hygiene items and messages of peace.

Given the deepening crisis of hunger aggravated by the Hurricanes, a fourth round of Peace Baskets was completed during this period, reaching 30 families in Guatemala, 25 families in Colombia, and 15 families and 11 men living in prison in Honduras.

The Planting Sustainable Peace Project has moved forward in Ecuador, where a collective garden of high-protein beans, chochos, is flourishing on three hectares of land cultivated by 15 indigenous Kichwa families in the Andean highlands; leading the project are indigenous women leaders of Jambi Mascari of Cotacachi who are dedicated to food sovereignty.

A percentage of the harvest will be for food consumption of the 15 families, another percentage given to other indigenous families in need, and a final percentage sold with profits reinvested in the project.

In Colombia, Patricia Duque is happily harvesting and sharing abundant vegetables from her stunning home garden. Her shining example has inspired others; now, there are four Sustainable Peace gardens in Antioquia. Planting Sustainable Peace will expand in 2021, promoting more home gardens as well as family micro-enterprises.

February 2021

by PLA Coordinator Monica Maher

Social movements in the Andean region celebrated results of the first round of Presidential elections in Ecuador where the indigenous party leader came close to second among 16 candidates. It was a historic moment for the indigenous movement in Ecuador, which has strongly opposed the recent signing of an agreement with the International Monetary Fund and concessions to transnational extractive industries, which destroy ancestral lands and cultures.

In Central America, still reeling from Hurricanes Eta and Iota, the Caravan of an estimated 5,000 people from Honduras was stopped in Guatemala by brutal police repression; the desperation to migrate is driven by increasing poverty which now affects a shocking 70% of the Honduran population, with 45% living in extreme poverty.

In the face of such challenges, our Peacebuilding en las Américas (PLA) partners continue with amazing stamina and dedication. The Peace Basket Project and Hurricane relief efforts advance, community gardens expand and Alternatives to Violence (AVP) online workshops proliferate, creating ripples of resilience and hope from individuals to families to neighborhoods to transnational communities.

Peace Baskets and Hurricane Relief

In Honduras, shelters took in 37,000 people in Honduras made homeless by the hurricanes, while many others went to live in make-shift tents on the streets or under bridges.

Ondina Murillo of the Mennonite Church delivered Peace Baskets of food and hygiene items to 13 families who lost everything in San Pedro Sula and to seven families who live along the river's edge of La Ceiba. She also provided construction materials to four families in La Ceiba to rebuild their roofs. Finally, she reached out to homeless families in San Pedro Sula with used clothing, as well as new mattresses, chairs, cleaning supplies, stoves and kitchen utensils. In all, 28 families benefitted.

The Mencia Dubón family responded: "We want to thank you for not leaving us alone in these difficult moments; your donation brought great joy to our family since we had to leave our house with empty hands. Upon receiving your donation, we became motivated to return to our house and begin again, because before we had nothing, absolutely nothing to return with. We are enormously grateful. May God repay you."

In Guatemala, Lorena Escobar provided stoves and ponchos to 50 families made homeless by the hurricanes in the community of Limón in Chisec, Alta Verapáz. She also delivered Peace Baskets of basic food stuffs and messages of peace to 30 families suffering from the hunger pandemic in Amatitlán, just outside Guatemala City.

Planting Sustainable Peace: Food Sovereignty

In Ecuador, the community garden of Andean, lupine beans in the indigenous community of Cotacachi are flourishing. The women leaders of Jambi Mascari chose the beans not only for their high-protein content but also for their ability to withstand long dry spells. In addition, the beautiful purple lupine flower has important healing properties. The next step is completion of a fence around the 4 hectares in order to keep out animals. The harvest will be done in March and April through collective volunteer labor by the families involved, including youth. In addition, Jambi Mascari leaders plan to provide fruit trees (lemon, orange, avocado) to 30 women for their home gardens.

In Colombia, Patricia Duque has promoted the creation of vegetable gardens in four households of Antioquia and has launched online workshops in order to strengthen the AVP community locally in preparation for working together on sustainable peace projects.

In Guatemala, the work on planting sustainable peace began with a meeting between women of the Peace Schools with agronomist, Ricardo Estrada, in order to expand understanding of vegetable gardening and prepare for the purchase of seeds.

Virtual AVP Workshops: Creating Community/Improving Health

AVP online continued to strengthen community nationally and transnationally. Facilitators from throughout the region began the seventh and eighth online Basic in Spanish, and finished three Advanced workshops on assertive communication and forgiveness.

Two Central American teams simultaneously co-facilitated two Advanced workshops for 24 participants from eight countries: **Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama**. Participants stated the workshop was “an immense contribution” to their lives, affirming the online workshops have “helped their mental and spiritual health and also reduced levels of violence and stress.”

In Colombia, the Franciscans Sisters very successfully completed the online Advanced with 14 participants from throughout Colombia; participants expressed much gratitude for the environment of “great confidence and trust,” “spontaneity and solidarity” which allowed for a profound process of “inner liberation and inner healing,” “empowerment” and collective bonding.

According to one participant, the workshop cultivated “certainty that we can create spaces of fellowship, group connections that favor peaceful and sane co-existence.” Another affirmed that the positive changes can be felt at home: “my family participates much more in dialogue in order to know and express how they feel.”

Future Goals

One of the next goals is to begin online AVP workshops on Trauma Healing and Overcoming Domestic Violence.

In person workshops are also being planned and would take place outside with social distancing and are being planned in Ecuador and Colombia.

Become Part of the Long Term Solution for Peace (see that section on our website)

For more information about all the work of Friends Peace Teams, please go to <https://friendspeaceteams.org/> Check out the peace activities with our partners from around the world- African Great Lakes, Asia West Pacific, Peacebuilding en las Americas, and Toward Right Relationships with Native Peoples. Also we have a worldwide program “The Friendly Book Collaborative.”

You can donate online and subscribe to our email news and read articles from all over the world. FPT is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.

Talk to Cecilia Yocum (ceceyocum@aol.com) about how you can get involved.

Friends Peace Teams Office
1001 Park Avenue
St. Louis Mo 63104-3720, USA

HAVANA UNPROGRAMMED WORSHIP GROUP

Southeastern Yearly Meeting

2021 Gathering, via videoteleconference

Dear Friends,

The Havana Quaker Unprogrammed Worship Group (HUG) has not held meetings during the 2019-20 years but has kept the community in contact.

As reported in 2018: Alejandro Castellanos, the clerk, told us he definitely does not have the skills to call to meeting, but he can guide the group when it is already in meeting. As one of the founders, he has experience in the silent worship of the unprogrammed Quaker tradition.

So Mercedes decided to help Alejandro by calling a meeting from abroad.

She has been contacting the attenders who are in Havana and those currently living in other countries, and as well as international Friends who visited and worshiped with HUG in different decades. Also there are some possible newcomers.

All this would not have been possible without the driving spirit of Teresa Doval Page, one of the founders of HUG in 1994 and the advice of Friend Jack Bradin.

THE WORSHIP:

Because of the pandemic, those who live in Havana cannot worship in person.

A meeting to worship remotely is currently being planned and organized using Zoom for those outside the country. Those who are in Cuba will use WhatsApp or phone calls if they don't have Internet access.

In order to test the technological structure for this international meeting, Mercedes has had to help financially those in Havana who needed a cell phone. She has also paid for their Internet access so they can use WhatsApp and for long-distance calls to Cuba for those who only have landlines.

LIST OF FRIENDS INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING TO DATE:

In Cuba:

1. Alejandro Castellanos
2. Margarita Gonzalez
3. Marlene Iturralde
4. Mercedes Gimenez
5. Others

Other Countries:

6. Teresa DovalPage, (HUG's) New Mexico
7. Jack Bradin, Palm Beach MM
8. David Culver, Fort Myers MM
9. Harvey Gilman, UK
10. Renato Lings, Denmark
11. Fela Rodas, (HUG's), Spain
12. Mercedes Soca, Sarasota MM, Florida

NEEDS:

HUG maintains the 2018 requests to this Annual Meeting for the creation of a committee that formally and officially supports and continues this work.

It is important for Cubans to experience the unprogrammed Quaker worship tradition.

THE SPIRITUAL STATE OF THE INDIVIDUALS

Those in Havana, like all Cubans on the island, are suffering the effects of the pandemic, and of the harsh measures that the government is taking to control the infection. In this month of February when this report is written, the island is in lockdown, and free traffic between places is not allowed.

However, the lack of food, sanitary products and medicines is affecting people even much more. Some say the reasons for this shortage are from internal problems. Some others think that it is the result of an increase of political actions taken against Cuba.

Despite their current situation, our friends in Havana remain spiritually strong and willing to worship, as is the HUG way, holding Nature and the entire planet in the Light.

Alejandro Castellanos Gonzalez, clerk
+(53)55118179
Hospital #468
E/ San Miguel y Neptuno
Centro Habana,
C.P.10300

Mercedes Soca Gil
SEYM representative
(239) 529-0895
mercedes.soca@gmail.com