

**Southeastern Yearly Meeting**  
*of the Religious Society of Friends*  
**Summer Executive Committee Meeting**  
22 Sixth Month 2024

**MINUTES**

Clerk Bill Carlie opened the meeting at 9:30 from silent worship at 9:49 a.m. with the following quote:

Our life is love, and peace, and tenderness; and bearing one with another, and forgiving one another, and not laying accusations one against another; but praying one for another and helping one another up with a tender hand.

Isaac Pennington, 1667

Clerk expressed gratitude to Nil Wilkins, clerk, and Tampa Friends for hosting the meeting.

Vickie Carlie announced that Andrea and Warren Hoskins asked that Tallahassee Monthly Meeting be held in the Light, having suffered significant property damage from the recent tornadoes.

The Clerk added that Carl and Kathy Hersh were both suffering from COVID contracted during a Juneteenth Celebration on June 15, 2024, in DeLand. The Meeting paused to hold both concerns in the Light. There were no visitors in the Meeting House or online in need of introduction.

**Yearly Meeting Administrative Secretary Report**

Susan Wade reported that the SEYM Membership Directories were expected to be completed by the middle of July 2024.

**Friends accepted the report with gratitude.**

**Nominating Committee Report**

Ed Lesnick reported in lieu of Brian Olson, committee clerk, who was traveling. The Nominating Committee was working with high priority on the 2025 Gathering Committee. They asked to be kept informed about any other vacancies upon which they also needed to focus.

**Friends accepted the report with gratitude.**

**Open Forum on monthly meeting concerns:**

At 10:00 a.m., after centering in silence, the forum was opened.

Cecelia Yocum, **Tampa Friends Meeting**, spoke about Tampa Monthly Meeting's concern for Friends Peace Teams. Peace building in Latin America was an urgent concern. Conditions of poverty and violence have been getting much worse in Cuba. Havana Unprogrammed Worship Group was asking for additional help. Cece offered a packet of information available upon request. One specific thing that Friends in Cuba need is sustained Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) training and services. Women were being especially targeted for violence and sexual abuse. They urgently need SEYM's support for ongoing training. Persons may contact Cece either directly (ceceyocum@aol.com), or through the SEYM Administrative Secretary (office@seym.org). Gifts can be made through Friends Peace Teams, [Peacebuilding en las Americas](#) or through SEYM. [If you are donating through SEYM's online donation platform, please add a note that the donation is for "FPT AVP".] Cecelia added that Spanish speakers were especially necessary and very hard to find for AVP. She said that AVP training and service will "change your life."

Regarding AVP in U.S. prisons, Cece reported that it has become especially difficult to access prisons because administrators did not want AVP volunteers interfering with their violence toward inmates. They, themselves, were involved in much of the sexual violence that is occurring. Prison administrators also talk openly of privatization, hoping to be able to make money from privately owned prisons.

Bill Carlie, clerk of **St. Petersburg Monthly Meeting**, reported that St. Pete Quakers are participating in the Pride Festival this weekend. Greg Stemm, a member of the Meeting, was one of the original founders of Pride in St. Petersburg. The Meeting has not seen so much energy and joy since before the Pandemic. It is an exciting time. It was so good to see that Spirit rising again. Two new young adult attenders, Erin Childs and Brandon Coldicott, are helping to update, modernize, and make more relevant, their literature and guest handouts. Vicki Carlie added that this energy has led to the establishment of an Outreach Committee to better focus on specific projects.

Susan Vaughn reported on **DeLand Worship Group's** distribution of over half of the more than 1,000 donated "banned" books during DeLand's Juneteenth Celebration on June 15. Community celebrities also read from some of those books to children and adults in a small reading area. Many parents, adults and children browsed through the donated books and took many of them home in book bags hand-made by DWG attender Lynn Peterson. It was noted that any Meeting or Worship Group one who would like start a banned-book give-away contact DeLand Worship Group or visit the SEYM web page: [How To Do A Banned Book Give Away](#).

Eileen Zingaro reported on **Clearwater Monthly Meeting's** additional outreach efforts. Their members have attended School Board Meetings, hosted a forum on Earthcare, and addressed real estate development issues with local government. They regularly appear in downtown Dunedin giving out information on current issues.

Joel reported that **Palm Beach Monthly Meeting** was struggling. Last Sunday, he was the only one in the Meeting House. There were just a few more people online. Their Clerk is facing some major health challenges. They had hired a Media consultant but with little positive result. They are considering underwriting programming on NPR. Those announcements might direct listeners to a single web page where they could find their closest meeting. They are also considering coordinating their efforts with other organizations to introduce more people to Quaker testimonies, e.g., organizations supporting Earth Day, National Women's Day, and the like. More discussion about those topics will occur when their Clerk has regained his health. In the meantime, Joel asked that we hold Palm Beach Monthly Meeting, and clerk John Palozzi in particular, in the Light. Amy Richards asked that the work of Joel Cook in single-handedly keeping both Palm Beach Monthly Meeting and **Treasure Coast Worship Group** in operation be especially recognized. She expressed her personal gratitude and commended him for doing so; a sentiment in which she was joined by all who were present.

Many other concerns were discussed, among them: Lack of volunteers, especially among younger people, and lack of interest by young people.

Cece expressed a concern about nutrition for women and children, based on her background in Developmental Disability. Florida is among the lowest of the States in its provision for Child Nutrition. She urged Friends to lobby U.S. Senator Rick Scott who represents that he is a child advocate. She wondered if we could get some help from FCNL.

Dan Vaughn suggested that SEYM help coordinate the efforts of several Monthly Meetings in undertaking and working together on specific projects that might otherwise be beyond the capability of a single Monthly Meeting.

The Open Forum of Monthly Meetings then closed with Silent Worship at 10:44 a.m.

Summer Executive Committee Meeting resumed at 11:05 a.m. from silent worship.

Clerk summarized his Report (attached) on the request by DeLand Worship Group (DWG) to become a monthly meeting. The request is widely supported but in accordance with SEYM's Faith and Practice only a yearly meeting, *i.e.*, the body of the whole of Southeastern Yearly Meeting, can approve such a request. The clerk then proposed that a Specially Called Yearly Business Meeting (YBM) be convened to address DWG's request as expeditiously as possible. The matter was then opened for general discussion.

Many spoke in support of DeLand Worship Group becoming a monthly meeting.

Jim Cain, convener of DWG, spoke about the history and purpose of the request. DWG has always been blessed with several attenders with deep roots in Quakerism. They have already adopted a monthly meeting structure and have been operating as much as possible as a monthly meeting, consistent with the limitations set out in SEYM's Faith and Practice. As the YM clerk had said, a change in their status would indeed assist them in completing their current efforts and projects.

Joel Cook, Palm Beach Monthly Meeting, spoke with great joy in support of the clerk's proposed minute, as published in the clerk's written report. To be consistent with good order, however, he suggested that the proposed Specially called YBM not be called any sooner than 31 Eighth Month 2024 to give SEYM monthly meetings two full months within which to hold DWG's request for a change in status in the Light, before being asked to consider approving it.

Eileen Zingaro also spoke in favor of the proposed minute. She congratulated DWG on accomplishing as much as they had already accomplished, without having that status.

Cheryl Demers-Holton clarified that DeLand was unable to handle its own money, or take any action, or even to make decisions, given their status as a worship group under the care of Orlando Monthly Meeting, because of the express limitations on worship groups set out in SEYM's Faith and Practice.

After adding Joel Cook's requested amendment, the Clerk then re-read the proposed minute. Vicki agreed with Joel's amendment, but suggested adding an additional requirement that the Specially Called YBM should happen before Fall Interim Business Meeting.

Jan Dahm expressed concern about the effect of a delay on DeLand's momentum. Jan did not want to dampen DWG's leading.

Amy Richards said "When a woman is in labor, let's not attempt to delay the birth."

Cheryl Demers-Holton reported on the meeting at which DWG made its decision. The topic had come up for discussion many, many times over the years. Friends had not reached unity. When unity actually happened, however, it was like Lightening in the room. It was accompanied by a very real sense of urgency.

Susan Wade agreed that there was a sense of urgency, yet she also found wisdom in following the protocol as set out by Joel Cook, in allowing time for reflection and seasoning. Taking at least two business meetings for a monthly meeting to decide important matters was prudent and in good order.

**24SEC01** SEYM Executive Committee requests the clerk of SEYM call a special session of Yearly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business to address the request of DeLand Worship Group in unity with Orlando Monthly Meeting that DeLand Worship Group be established and recognized as a Monthly Meeting affiliated with SEYM in a manner consistent with the clerk's report received on June 22, 2024. The Specially Called Yearly Business Meeting will be held on 31 Eighth Month 2024.

**Approved.**

**Friends accepted the report.**

The morning session of SEC 2024 then closed with Silence at 11:52 AM.

Clerk reconvened Summer Executive Committee Meeting and opened from the silence at 1:05 p.m. with the following quote:

Our life is love, and peace, and tenderness; and bearing one with another, and forgiving one another, and not laying accusations one against another; but praying one for another and helping one another up with a tender hand.

Isaac Pennington, 1667

Joel Cook requested a travel minute as SEYM's representative to Friends World Committee for Consultation 2024 World Plenary Meeting.

**24SEC02** The Clerk is authorized to prepare and deliver to Joel Cook a travel minute in standard form.

**Approved.**

### **Treasurer's Report**

Joel Cook reported that properly closing the SEYM financial books of account on an annual basis has not been done for several years. A consultant who is an expert in Quickbooks was engaged to help with that task and with several related issues. The Treasurer requested authority to transfer approximately \$600 from the Contingency Fund to pay for the services of the consultant and for auditing any entry in excess of \$2,500.

**24SEC03** The Treasurer requests that \$600.00 be transferred from the Contingency Fund to pay the consultant who is assisting SEYM to properly close its financial books of account dating back several years and related issues, and who will audit any financial entry in excess of \$2,500.00 going forward.

**Approved.**

**Friends accepted the report.**

### **Ad Hoc Youth and Young Adult Coordinator Search Committee Report**

The committee consisting of Mira Tanna, Susan Vaughen, and Kathy Hersh, recommended that SEYM employ Rachel Dellinger, a member of Orlando Monthly Meeting, for the position (report attached). The Clerk read their report out loud. Cecelia Yocum concurred with the Search Committee's recommended choice. Susan Vaughen added that the committee was very impressed with Rachel and with the work that she had the ability and desire to undertake.

- 24SEC04** The *ad hoc* Youth and Young Adult Coordinator Search Committee recommends that SEYM employ Rachel Dellinger to fill the position of Youth and Young Adult Coordinator, at the salary previously set for the half-time position by at Yearly Business Meeting minute 24YBM05.  
**Approved.**

The Clerk noted that a Support Committee should be appointed, and a Memorandum of Understanding drafted for the signatures of the Yearly Meeting clerk and of Rachel Dellinger. He understood that she would be available to begin work as soon as SEYM was ready for her to do so.

- 24SEC05** A Support Committee for the Youth and Young Adult Coordinator consisting of William Carlie, YM clerk, Cheryl Demers-Holton, CAPP Coordinator, on behalf of the Executive Committee, and Susan Vaughn and Amanda Farrar, on behalf of the Youth Committee, is appointed.  
**Approved.**

- 24SEC06** Having completed its work, the *ad hoc* Youth and Young Adult Coordinator Search Committee is laid down.  
**Approved.**

**Friends accepted the report with gratitude.**

**Peace and Social Concerns** had no report at this time.

#### **Worship and Ministry Committee Report**

Lisa Erasmus referred to the committee's report (attached) and noted there was to add to their published report.

**Friends accepted the report with gratitude.**

#### **Committee on Ministry for Racism Report**

Kathy Hersh referred to the committee's published report (attached) and noted that their next meeting is on 8 Seventh Month 2024, at 4:00 p.m. All are welcome; please contact Kathy ([hershkathy@gmail.com](mailto:hershkathy@gmail.com)) for information on how to join the meeting.

**Friends accepted the report with gratitude.**

#### **Half Yearly Meeting Committee Report**

Susan Wade gave the report on behalf of Brian Olson, committee clerk, who was traveling with his son to visit colleges and relatives. She reported that a serious issue has arisen. SEYM signed a contract with Wekiva Springs State Park in December 2023. The Supervising Ranger has recently said, however, that notwithstanding the language of that contract, SEYM would not be allowed to use the kitchen to prepare their own meals, including the use of the refrigerator or sanitizing dishwasher that, in fact, the kitchen would be "locked down" and SEYM would not have any access to the kitchen. The committee is waiting for further information from the Ranger and reviewing its options. The committee welcomes any suggestions. Please make them as soon as possible to Brian Olson ([brianolson64@gmail.com](mailto:brianolson64@gmail.com)) or to Susan Wade ([office@seym.org](mailto:office@seym.org)), using the subject line "HYM" or "Half Yearly Meeting" and to keep all emails to one subject. The committee has not been given contact information for the park's concessionaire but speculates that the fee for 3 meals a day would approximate what SEYM pays for meals at Dayspring Conference Center, *i.e.*, about \$40/day per person.

Neil Andersen, clerk of Trustees, noted that HYM is an important SEYM meeting and that Trustees might see it as an emergency need. The Clerk requested that the Committee continue its work on these issues. There was no written report.

**Friends accepted the report with gratitude.**

### **Gathering Committee Report**

Vickie Carlie reported that Rashid Darden had been selected and had agreed to serve as the Walton Lecturer for 2025. He has been employed by Friends General Conference since 2021. He is a published novelist and publishes the FGC e-newsletter “Vitality”. He comes well recommended by those who have heard him speak.

It was important to remember, she added, that If we have no registrar, we will have no Gathering. The Gathering Committee also needs a co-clerk-in-training.

**Friends accepted the report with gratitude.**

### **Field Secretary for Earthcare Report**

Beverly Ward’s report is attached.

**Friends accepted the report with gratitude.**

**Earthcare Committee** had no report.

### **Publications Committee Report**

Phoebe Andersen, responding to a question about the function of the Publications Committee, said the committee was converting from print publications to electronic format all lectures and to digitize or post all videos on the SEYM website. The Committee is also working to develop Point of Sale tools to allow interested persons to purchase any publication online. Susan Wade added that SEYM pamphlet, “How Do You Know It’s a Leading” by Ruth Hyde Paine, was now being used as a resource by Christopher Sammond, previous Walton Lecturer and current core leader with the School of the Spirit.

**Friends accepted the report with gratitude.**

### **Archives Committee Report**

Phoebe Andersen report that the Archives Committee is still active and still needs minutes and other publications from monthly meetings. She pointed out the importance o the archives as historical documents for research. Chris Laning said that Orlando Monthly Meeting’s minutes are published on its website and that the minutes are available to the public.

**Friends accepted the report with gratitude.**

### **Quaker Call Committee Report**

Dan Vaughn, clerk, report that the committee meets regularly and continues to discern was issues are relevant to SEYM meetings and members. There was no written report.

**Friends accepted the report with gratitude.**

Representatives to Friends Organizations:

### **Friends Peace Teams**

Cecelia Yocum again reported on the Friends Peace Teams Peacebuilding *en las Americas* AVP program. There were significant problems getting into Latin America. Travel is costly, difficult, and dangerous. Yet there is a great need for AVP teams. Friends Peace Teams are looking for further funding from yearly meetings and individuals. Money will help do the training, and to obtain the training for additional volunteers. Please visit [FriendsPeaceTeams.org](https://FriendsPeaceTeams.org) to learn more and donate. The clerk asked that information related to those needs be provided to Susan Wade for distribution to monthly meetings. Susan suggested

that SEYM e-News would be a good tool for that purpose. Send information to her about 3-4 weeks in advance of any events. Then she will send it out to everyone.

Vickie Carlie added that Friends should send information and requests to be published on the website as well, as far in advance of the event as desired. Both resources, e-news and website, were underutilized.

**Friends accepted the report.**

### **Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC)**

Joel Cook reported as SEYM Representative to FWCC. He and Brian will be flying to South Africa to attend the FWCC World Plenary. Present there will be representatives from most, in not all, yearly meetings around the world. It will be the very first hybrid World Plenary. Anyone can register to participate in the plenary by Zoom. There will be a major time zone difference, but the sessions will be recorded and can be watched at a more convenient time. The dates are 8 through 12 Eighth Month 2024. There will be daily Focus Groups and Bible Study. There will be unprogrammed and other worship opportunities. Further information is available at <https://fwcc.world/event/world-plenary-meeting-2024/>. Cecelia Yocum asked whether there was YM funding for that travel. The answer was yes. Joel has been reimbursed. Neil asked what the default language was. Joel believed it was English, but it would be interpreted into other languages simultaneously. The Report was accepted with gratitude.

**Friends accepted the report.**

### **Friends Committee on National Legislation**

Eileen Zingaro reported there is FCNL activity in Florida. Advocacy Teams are now working on State and local issues. Locate your advocacy team on the FCNL website and contact them directly. The FCNL annual meeting is in November every year. She encourages Friends to attend. Cecelia suggested that an appointment with a congressional representative should be arranged by groups of concerned persons, as well as through FCNL. It was important to “do what you can”. Kathy Hersh asked about Sen Rubio’s availability. Eileen had met with his staff once, arranged by FCNL, but had never met with him personally. She found his staff to be “brilliant, fabulous”. They knew everything and were very helpful. They were very interested in the issues presented, but the approach to them must be “low key”.

**Friends accepted the report.**

### **Friends General Conference**

Susan Taylor, Co-opted representative from SEYM on FGC Central Committee asked Friends to hold the FGC Gathering, from 6/30-7/6, in the Light, as well as those who were traveling to and from it. She reminded Friends that SEYM is co-host for the 2025 all-virtual Gathering. FGC is still looking for a co-host of that Gathering with us.

**Friends accepted the report.**

**24SEC07** The Executive Committee of Southeastern Yearly Meeting thanks Tampa Friends for their warm hospitality during the 22 Sixth Month 2024 meeting.  
**Approved.**

The action minutes were read back and approved.

The meeting closed with silent worship at 3:08 p.m.

**Participants (in person and online):**

**Clearwater Monthly Meeting**

Robin Peacock  
Eileen Zingaro

**DeLand Worship Group**

Cheryl Demers-Holton (Tampa MM)  
Jim Cain (Orlando MM)  
Carl Hersh (Miami MM)  
Kathy Hersh (Miami MM)  
Dan Vaughen (Orlando MM)  
Susan Vaughen (Orlando MM)

**Gainesville Monthly Meeting**

Shawna Doran  
Jean Larson

**Miami Monthly Meeting**

David Landowne

**Orlando Monthly Meeting**

Christine Laning  
Ed Lesnick

**Saint Augustine Worship Group**

Amanda Farrar  
Dianne Langan (Saint Petersburg MM)

**Saint Petersburg Monthly Meeting**

Bill Carlie  
Vicki Carlie  
Lynn Carol Henderson  
Ann Martin  
Susan Wade

**Tallahassee Monthly Meeting**

Robert (Bob) Allenson  
Neil Andersen  
Phoebe Andersen  
Andrea Hoskins  
Warren Hoskins  
Susan Taylor

**Tampa Monthly Meeting**

Jan Dahm  
Lisa Erazmus  
Dustin Lemke  
Karen Putney  
Nil Wilkins  
Cece Yocum

**Treasurer Coast Worship Group**

Joel Cook (Palm Beach MM)  
Amy Richards (Palm Beach MM)



# Clerk's Report

## SEYM Summer Executive Committee Meeting

22 Sixth Month 2024

On June 9, 2024, the clerk received a Minute from the clerk of Orlando Monthly Meeting to indicate their approval of a request from DeLand Worship Group seeking recognition from SEYM as a Monthly Meeting. On June 11, 2024, the clerk received the request from DeLand Worship Group for recognition of DeLand Worship Group as a Monthly Meeting within SEYM (documents attached).

After review of this request and the relevant sections of SEYM Faith and Practice, the clerk responded to Orlando Monthly Meeting and DeLand Worship Group on June 13, 2024 (document attached).

DeLand Worship Group is an active Friends Community that has existed for many years and is attended by several seasoned Friends who have and continue to contribute substantially to the life of the SEYM community. They are carrying forward important witness to Friends Testimony in DeLand that involves collecting financial contributions as well as physical contributions of books to be distributed at events like Junteenth and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, as well as supporting other local witness to Friends values and testimonies.

As stated in their request and easily understood, a corporate presence and independent financial presence consistent with Monthly Meeting status would help facilitate the continued growth and sustainability of their active witness. The text of the DeLand request calls for either the SEYM Executive Committee or Interim Business Meeting to take up and approve their request and create a Minute of recognition of the Worship Group as a Monthly Meeting.

Page 239 of the SEYM Faith and Practice specifically states that the formation and recognition of Worship Groups, Preparative Meetings, and Monthly Meetings, may be approved by Yearly Meeting. Faith and Practice does not delegate this authority to approve the formation of these meetings to Executive Committee (EC) or Interim Business Meetings (IBM), (SEYM Faith and Practice, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed., pp 239 to 244). Page 241 of SEYM Faith and Practice under the topic of Interim Business Meeting reads, "When need arises, interim business meeting may also ask the clerk of yearly meeting to call special sessions of yearly meeting." Page 244 of SEYM Faith and Practice under the topic of Executive Committee reads, "The committee acts for interim business meeting between sessions."

My reading of SEYM Faith and Practice indicates that neither EC nor IBM can approve the establishment of a Monthly Meeting, but that either meeting can request the YM clerk call a special session of Yearly Business Meeting that then could discern and potentially approve this request.

How I would proceed as YM clerk should EC or IBM approve a request that YM clerk call a special session YM Business Meeting:

- I would schedule an entirely virtual session of YM Business Meeting for the specific item(s) requested by minute of EC or IBM.
- This session would be scheduled for convenience of members to attend and announced no less than 4 weeks in advance with documents in advance for the specific discernment requested by EC or IBM.
- The agenda would be limited to those items that EC or IBM has indicated warrant a special called YBM session.
- All other matters of business will remain in the normal process of seasoning through IBM in

preparation for YBM sessions in 2025.

- Scheduling of a special called session would be publicized on the YM website and through SEYM e-news.

A proposed Minute:

SEYM Executive Committee requests the clerk of SEYM call a special session of Yearly Meeting for Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business to address the request of DeLand Worship Group in unity with Orlando Monthly Meeting that DeLand Worship Group be established and recognized as a Monthly Meeting affiliated SEYM in a manner consistent with the clerk's report received on June 22,2024.

Faithfully submitted  
Bill Carlie, EC/IBM clerk

June 9, 2024, e-mail message to YM clerk from Orlando Monthly Meeting:

Dear Bill,

The Orlando Monthly Meeting approved the following minute at our Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business today:

DeLand Worship Group, now under the care of Orlando Monthly Meeting, wishes to apply to SEYM for a change in status from worship group to monthly meeting. More than thirty years ago, DeLand Worship Group formed under the care of Orlando Monthly Meeting. DeLand Worship Group then progressed from worship group to preparative meeting status, only to be laid down for a time. It resumed operation in 2019, soon again acting as a preparative meeting in all but name.

Deland Worship Group has thrived, with the attendance of many seasoned Friends, some new and some who attended the original group. It has attracted national attention among Friends, and the media, for its efforts to give books to children and students; books which affirm Friends' testimonies but offend those holding political power who mandate differing views about those testimonies.

Its attenders have taken an active role in both Orlando Monthly Meeting, and SEYM, lending their time, talents, and energy in support of the objectives of these organizations.

In accordance with the Special Circumstances outlined in SEYM's Faith & Practice (p. 223), and recognizing the number of seasoned Friends active in the DeLand Worship Group, Orlando Monthly Meeting approves, and recommends that SEYM also approve, the application of the DeLand Worship Group for a change of status from that of a worship group to that of a monthly meeting.

Please let me know if you need anything else from me in order to place this on the executive committee agenda for the June 22 meeting.

Warmly, Mira

--- Mira Tanna  
Orlando Monthly Meeting Religious Society of Friends

## June 11, 2024, e-mail to YM clerk from DeLand Worship Group:

Dear Bill,

I believe you have already received the email and Minute I have attached from Mira Tanna regarding DeLand Worship Group's request to become a Monthly Meeting. We were delighted to receive Orlando Monthly Meeting's approval. There is great enthusiasm in our group for this development. Our proposed change of status will help us maintain that momentum.

For example:

1. We have a 900-book reading and give-away event planned for the Juneteenth Celebration in DeLand on June 15, 2024. We anticipate having related follow-up activities subsequent to that event. MM status would facilitate our responses to those potential activities and opportunities.
2. There are potential funders of projects presently under consideration by DWG. MM status would avoid the need to filter any grant applications through OMM's financial structure.
3. There are pending negotiations between Stetson University and the SEYM's Quaker Call Committee, that would be facilitated by DeLand's change in status;
4. There are several attenders at DWG who have patiently waited for its change of status, in order to request membership, or the transfer of membership, to DeLand Friends Meeting.

The normal path for a change of status from worship group to monthly meeting according to SEYM's Faith and Practice, is its existence for a period of time as a worship group under the care of an affiliated monthly meeting, followed by another period of time in existence as a preparative meeting, under the care of an affiliated monthly meeting, followed by another period of time, then followed by a request for a change of status made first to the monthly meeting's care committee, then, by them, to that monthly meeting. If approved by that monthly meeting, it then forwards the preparative meeting's request to SEYM. for its consideration at the following YBM. With the exception of the care committee, DeLand has moved through all of those steps over the last thirty plus years.

This quote from the Elders at Balby Meeting, written in 1656, seems particularly apropos:

Dearly beloved Friends, these things we do not lay upon you as a rule or form to walk by; but that all, with a measure of the light, which is pure and holy, may be guided: and so in the light walking and abiding, these things may be fulfilled in the Spirit, not in the letter, for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.

The issue DeLand Worship Group now wishes to present to E.C. is whether the "Special Circumstances" provision on page 223 of Faith and Practice, allowing worship groups to "request a different path to becoming a monthly meeting affiliated with SEYM," authorizes the SEYM Executive Committee, or, if not, then the SEYM Fall Interim Business Meeting, to adopt a minute FINALLY approving a change in status from DeLand Worship Group to DeLand Friends Meeting, in order to allow DeLand Friends Meeting, once approved as such, to immediately incorporate, accept and manage its own funds, and receive applications and transfers of membership.

We are hoping that the SEYM Executive Committee will either itself, FINALLY approve DeLand Worship Group's request for a change of status to DeLand Friends Meeting at its June 22nd meeting, expressly authorizing DeLand Friends Meeting to immediately incorporate, open bank accounts, and accept new and transferred memberships, or, if not, that it will then recommend to SEYM's Fall Interim Business Meeting, that it FINALLY approve DeLand Worship Group's requested change of status to DeLand Friends Meeting, authorizing DeLand Friends Meeting to immediately incorporate, create and manage its own bank accounts, and accept applications and transfers of membership.

If you are able to add this item to the June 22, 2024, EC agenda, Dan Vaughen will present our request in person at the appropriate time.

Thank you very much for your consideration. Sincerely,  
Jim Cain, Clerk DeLand Worship Group

June 13, 2024, response e-mail from SEYM clerk to OMM and DeLand Worship Group:  
Friends,

It is wonderful to read this news from DeLand Friends. I have also received the Minute from Orlando Monthly Meeting that confirms your request to move to Monthly Meeting status is consistent with the sense of OMM. DeLand Friends have long been under the care of OMM, long enough that I served as clerk of OMM years back and had the pleasure of visiting with DeLand Friends as a Worship Group and Preparative Meeting.

I have read the news of your testimony in DeLand with pleasure and believe it has had some role in re-awakening Friends to what is possible in this post pandemic world. I will be attending the St. Pete Pride festival next weekend to share our testimony and man our booth at the festival. There is great energy in our movement to get back out in the world and I am clear as the current clerk of SPMM that news of your work in DeLand played at least a small part in this inspiration. I personally feel that your request is timely and spiritually sound.

I have reviewed your thoughtful request and also the relevant sections of Faith and Practice. I do not want to sound like a compliance officer, even though that is how I made a living, but getting process correct is the job I am not getting paid for, so I will go there for a bit.

I generally concur with your reading of the 'special circumstances' section for recognition of Monthly Meetings. I think it is applicable here, and beyond that, DeLand Friends have been working toward Monthly Meeting status for a very long time. I think the writers of that section were expecting to encounter a very expedited process for seasoned Friends who might form a Meeting quite quickly and wanted to accommodate that should it happen. I do not think the authors expected a 30-year journey. So, it seems to me that this language is easily applicable to this request. We know DeLand Friends and have appreciated their contributions to the life of the SEYM Community.

Now that I have addressed the easy lift, there is a complication. Faith and Practice specifically reserves the authority to recognize Worship Groups, Preparative Meetings and Monthly Meetings to the YM Business Meeting. This authority has not been delegated to the SEYM Executive Committee (EC) or SEYM Interim Business Meetings (IBM). Consistent with Faith and Practice neither EC nor an IBM can adopt a Minute to recognize DeLand Friends as a Monthly Meeting as neither body has the authority to do so.

There is however a path forward. Faith and Practice provides that the EC/IBM clerk and YM clerk can call a special session of Yearly Business Meeting. Now I do not imagine that authors of Faith and Practice had this use in mind, given the logistics of finding a place for an in-person gathering, the travel expense and such, this authority would have been very unlikely to ever be used short of a crisis. I know of no occasion where it has been used in our past. That said, the provision to allow for it exists. In these times where YM Business sessions can and have been conducted entirely on-line, I think the hurdle we need to clear is lower. While I think the business should be significant to the life of the Meeting and the use of the authority should be rare, I think the purposes proposed here are sufficient, given, that it is the sense of EC for the clerk to call a special YM Business Meeting. If it is the sense of the Meeting at EC I would be most happy to facilitate such a Special YM Meeting.

I will place that discernment of the agenda for EC.  
In Peace, Bill Carlie, EC/IBM and YM clerk

## Ad hoc Youth and Young Adult Coordinator Search Committee Report

### SEYM Summer Executive Committee Meeting

#### 22 Sixth Month 2024

The SEYM *ad hoc* Youth and Young Adult Coordinator Search Committee has concluded its search and has united in selecting Rachel Dellinger, an active attender of Orlando Monthly Meeting, for the position.

After an extensive interview with Rachel, we are convinced that she has the desire to serve the Yearly Meeting, will be a positive role model, has a range of experience teaching and organizing youth and adult volunteers, and has a deep commitment to the values that Quakers hold dear.

Rachel has been a high school science teacher for the past eight years. She brings a strong sense of earth stewardship to her work with young people. She has been a Girl Scout leader and has extensive experience supervising literacy programs for a library system. Her philosophy of teaching is to be a “guide on the side” rather than “a sage on the stage,” as she put it.

She has been an attender of Orlando Monthly Meeting since 2018 and has participated actively in First Day School activities and projects. She is the mother of three, a daughter Esme, now in high school; a son, James, now 18; and a son, Will, now 20. She says she often relies on them to help her better understand their peers.

Her humility and willingness to work with the SEYM Youth Committee and confer with monthly meetings within SEYM convinced us that she is well-suited for the job.

Mira Tanna  
Susan Vaughen  
Kathy Hersh

# Worship and Ministry Committee Report

## SEYM Summer Executive Committee Meeting

### 22 Sixth Month 2024

Dear Friends,

The Southeastern Yearly Meeting Worship and Ministry continues to be faithful in providing for SEYM Friends and others far and wide opportunities for deep spiritual nurture and community building. We meet as a committee monthly and more often when situations necessitate it. Our meetings are steeped in Spirit and Light with worship and worship sharing flowing throughout.

We have begun the discernment process for speakers for the Michener Lecture and a few names have arisen for seasoning. We are working with the Committee for Ministry on Racism to bring forward names of BIPOC individuals who can bring their unique perspective to our Yearly Meeting.

We continue to provide Extended Meeting for Worship quarterly. Our next scheduled one being 3 Eighth Month 2024 from 1-4 PM. Our weekly Queries for the Journey are ongoing, providing ways for Friends to reflect on their Quaker heart. The Queries for Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Month are being discerned by Lisa and Jan along with Anne Pomeroy and their elders to coincide with the Anne Pomeroy retreat sessions: *Wading in the Water*. Lastly, our Bi-weekly Seekers Book Club Continues. The next selection is *Abuelita Faith*, by Kat Armas. The first meeting for this book is 6 Sixth Month.

We just recently had an online workshop by Tim Gee (FWCC) on 4 Fifth Month – *Growing Faith in Spirit-Led Action*. It was well-attended, and Friends were inspired by Tim’s message from across the pond.

We had the first of our three Anne Pomeroy retreat sessions: *Listening Deeply to Spirit, to Each Other, and to Our Souls* on 11 Fifth Month. The online session unfortunately coincided with tornadoes in Tallahassee, a widespread internet outage in the state, and possible interference from the solar flares, which made the session only accessible to eight attendees other than the presenter and their elders. We pray that the remaining sessions will not be similarly inundated with challenges and Friends can experience the true gift of Anne Pomeroy and their message. We encourage Friends to attend the other two sessions: *Opening Our Hearts to Continuing Revelation* (15 Sixth Month 1-3 PM) and *Walking Forward in Faith* (20 Seventh Month 1-3 PM).

Plans are being made to have a second presentation of Joel Cook’s Yearly Meeting workshop: *The Friends We Are Becoming: Stories of Transformation*. It was recognized that the time given for this workshop during Yearly Meeting was not sufficient and so this online version of the workshop will take place sometime in Ninth Month.

The Worship and Ministry Committee welcomes Friends to visit the SEYM website for information on all spiritual programs and opportunities and to encourage Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups to sign up and participate in any and all online programs that are available.

In faithful service,  
Jan Dahm, Lisa Erasmus, and Richelle Ogle,  
co-clerks of the SEYM Worship & Ministry Committee



## Committee for Ministry on Racism

### SEYM Summer Executive Committee Meeting

#### 22 Sixth Month 2024

The SEYM Committee for Ministry on Racism (CMOR) is following closely the status of **HR 7227/S.1723**, the **Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies Act of 2024**. FCNL's Spring Lobby Weekend made these bills one of their legislative priorities and their Congressional visits resulted in more co-sponsors for a total of 32 co-sponsors in the Senate and 52 co-sponsors in the House, including Rep. Maxwell Frost, D, Orlando, and Rep. Darren Soto, south of Orlando. The bill was referred to the House Subcommittee on Health on 02/09/24. There has been no further action.

Please let your Congressional reps know that we consider this bill long overdue, and would they please make it a priority to see that it gets to the floor this session.

Please note that neither Florida Senators Scott nor Rubio are co-sponsors. In an email response to CMOR member Kathy Hersh dated 05-30-24, Senator Rubio stated that he has developed over the years a meaningful relationship with the Seminole Tribe of Florida regarding the sale of their real estate to create generational wealth. He also stated that he has advocated for a bill which would increase benefits for Native American veterans, still pending in committee. **A good question to pose to Sen. Rubio would be why he is not a co-sponsor of S.1723, given his past advocacy for Native American issues.**

An article in the **May 6, 2024, issue of The New Yorker magazine featured Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland, [the first Native American cabinet secretary](#)**. If this link doesn't work, Friends who have subscriptions to The New Yorker, might consider sharing this issue with others in your monthly meetings who may not have read this fascinating profile of this remarkable woman who is leading the effort to create the Truth and Healing Commission. She is also calling for a national investigation of the unsolved numerous disappearances of Native American women.

CMOR also recommends reading Ta-Nehisi Coates' article, **A Case for Reparations** which originally appeared in the June 15, 2014, issue of The Atlantic magazine. [This article, as well as a series he did for The Atlantic, are reprinted in his book WE WERE EIGHT YEARS IN POWER: An American Tragedy. There are numerous YouTube videos of him discussing the topic.](#) This is a subject which CMOR suggests that Quakers raise up in their monthly meetings, listening to reasoned arguments rather than hear-say on this controversial but essential topic.

CMOR welcomes ideas from Friends regarding future workshop topics on overcoming racism and recommendations of books and articles which are enlightening on the issue of white supremacy and racial reconciliation.

# Field Secretary for Earthcare (FSE) Report

## SEYM Summer Executive Committee Meeting

### 22 Sixth Month 2024

#### Overview

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

This report provides information on activities since the 2024 Southeastern Yearly Meeting Gathering. Also included are plans for the upcoming year. As mentioned in the FSE report submitted for the annual gathering, work has begun on succession planning as I am considering retiring as the Yearly Meeting's field secretary for Earthcare at the rise of the 2025 Fall Interim Business Meeting with a Concern for Business. Thank you, Friends, for your accompaniment on this journey!

#### Communication with the Anchoring Committee

Communications with the FSE Anchoring Committee members through email, telephone, or other remote means, and, at times, in person as opportunities and needs arise.

#### 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). I continue to create opportunities to work with monthly meetings and others through online and in-person visits.

#### **Contact Information**

- Email: [fsEarthcare@seymquakers.org](mailto:fsEarthcare@seymquakers.org).
- Facebook: @fsearthcare
- Instagram: @fsearthcare
- Snailmail: P.O. Box 1614, Umatilla, FL 32784
- TikTok: fsearthcare
- Twitter: @fsearthcare
- Telephone number: 813.928.8823.
- WhatsApp

A Google calendar showing requests for visitation and FSE has been created and shared with the Anchoring Committee.

## **SEYM Community Preparedness Discussion Continues!**

**Purpose:** To develop suggestions for Meetings, Worship Groups, and other communities on responding to various needs that may come about to due extreme events, economic hardships, etc.

**Date:** 27 Sixth Month (June) 2024 **Time:** 7:00 P.M. (EDT)

**Zoom:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/9830112433?pwd=NCtrenlZMVQwWlpwbzNjbXBt-NU8oUTog&omn=83960944029>

Meeting ID: 983 011 2433

Passcode: 706983 One tap mobile

+13052241968,,83059327001#,,,,\*503729# US

+16469313860,,83059327001#,,,,\*503729# US

### ***Suggested Workshop/Event Topics***

- Angelic Troublemaking: Beyond Bystander Training - explores anti-racism/decolonization work with emphasis on local concerns and means of accompaniment.
- Climate Equity/Climate Justice in Our Community: identifies specific local social justice and equity concerns. Participants identify actions to address concerns.
- Decolonizing Earthcare: explores the intersectionality of gender, race, extraction, and harmful economic systems and the adverse impacts to the Earth.
- Discerning Earthcare Leadings: listening and sharing experiences to reach individual and group decisions on Earthcare actions.
- Earthcare audits: baseline assessment of individual or community activities and discernment.
- Equality or Equity? What is Our Testimony?: examines Friends' equality testimony, the concepts of equity and justice, and the relationship of these to Earthcare.
- Permaculture is Not Just Agriculture: introduces permaculture design and domains and ways to bring these practices into Earthcare.
- Project Drawdown, Introduction and more: presents information on actions that "drawdown" carbon emissions and ways to promote drawdown choices as individuals and communities.
- Quakers and Climate Collapse: shares and builds on a Woodbrooke course led by Jackie Carpenter from 2021 Fifth Month (May), including review of the latest science, worship sharing, and discernment.
- Racial Wealth Gap Simulation: an exercise that helps "... people understand the connections among racial equity, hunger, poverty, and wealth".
- Transportation, migration, and climate: explores access and mobility issues from the local to global perspective and the impacts of climate change.
- Water: Sea Level Rise, Flooding, and Water Quality explores local, national, and global water issues.
- Waterline Communities: Displacement and Gentrification and Why Quakers Should Care drills

down to the county or community level on the impacts of displacement.

- **What the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs AND Inflation Reduction Acts Mean to Me and My Community?** This workshop looks at how funds from the two acts are being dispersed at the local level and provides suggestions on how to get involved in the decision-making process. Special emphasis is given to working with local implementing agencies and collaborating with advocacy groups to address adverse climate and environmental impacts.

#### **Workshops or other Activities since 2024 Yearly Meeting with a Concern for Business**

The majority of efforts during this period have centered on the community planning discussions as mentioned above. The notes and slide decks from these discussions are made available on the SEYM website, <https://seymquakers.org/faith-in-action/earthcare/>, along with a YouTube narrated video.

I also am making available more video content on the SEYM website.

#### **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 am working with Toward Right Relations with Native Peoples and CMOR to bring offerings to SEYM. Many Friends may not have seen or participated in the Roots of Injustice, Seeds of Change: Toward Right Relationship with Native Peoples or “the blanket exercise.” Other presentations are available.
- **Earthcare Committee:** members of the SEYM Earthcare Committee and others are help with the SEYM Community Preparedness planning.
- **Florida Council of Churches (FCC):** the FCC is in the process of electing new officers. I will be working with the executive director, Russell Meyer, to reconvene the Florida Interfaith Climate Actions Network (FL-iCAN).
- **Half Yearly Meeting (HYM) Committee:** As an ex-officio member of the HYM committee, I continue to participate in planning activities.
- **Peace and Social Concerns (P&SC) Committees:** I continue to meet with or otherwise support the Yearly and Monthly Meeting P&SC committees. Several Yearly Meeting and Monthly Meeting P&SC members have been participating in the community preparedness discussions.
- **Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO), AFSC:** I continue to serve as an AFSC representative on the Quaker United Nations Committee (QUNC) and participated virtually in the Fourth Month meeting of QUNC. I will provide a separate report of this meeting. Of note, the QUNO New York office has an opening for an UN representative, [QUNO UN representative](#).
- **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: The community preparedness discussion group encourages youth participation in our discussions!

### **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.*

I continue to work with the wider Quaker World, interfaith groups, and environmental organizations. These interactions have been virtual and in person during this period.

- Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP): I am working with Kathy Hersh to plan AVP workshops with Volusia County youths. Kathy Hersh has submitted a proposal to for approval.
- American Friends Service Committee (AFSC): I continue to serve as a corporate member of AFSC, QUNC and AFSC's Third World Coalition.
- Decolonizing Quakers, <https://www.decolonizingquakers.org/>: The working group continues to meet monthly. tom kunesh, a member of the working group, will be a plenary speaker during the 2024 Friends General Conference, [sounds of \(friends\) silence: quaker tales of the dakota intifada of 1862](#).
- Earth Ethics Institute (EEI), <http://earthethicsinstitute.org/>, Miami Dade College: The advisory group will meet in Miami mid-summer.
- Fellowship of Friends of African Descent (FOFAD): the work of Decolonizing Quakers overlaps with the FOFAD activities, the Black Quaker Project, <https://www.theblackquakerproject.org/>, and Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW).
- Florida Interfaith Climate Actions Network (FL-iCAN): As mentioned above the Florida Council of Churches is planning to resume convening FL-iCAN assemblies.
- Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL): Brad Stocker and I continue to share a slot as representatives to FCNL for QEW. Through the QEW, I have participated in discernment of a number of legislative issues, e.g., reproductive rights, armed conflict, etc.
- Friends General Conference (FGC): I continue to work with FGC, particularly with the Fellowship of Friends of Color, FOFAD, and Quakers Uprooting Racism. The proposal that John Heimburg and I submitted for the 2024 Gathering workshop, "Bring Your Whole Self" has been accepted. We are busy developing course material, promoting, and otherwise preparing for the workshop. Hold us in your hearts!
- Friends Peace Teams (FPT): I continue to work with members of FPT and link FPT to QEW UN Working Group and Towards Right Relationship/Decolonizing Quakers.

- Friends United Meeting (FUM): I continue to work with Jim Kessler, Grinnell Friends Church, through Quaker Earthcare Witness.
- Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC): I continue to work to strengthen links to FWCC through QEW, FGC, and AFSC.
- National Academies of Sciences, Transportation Research Board (TRB), Equity in Transportation and the Women’s Issues in Transportation Committees. This effort is focused on the 2024 Conference on Advancing Transportation Equity which will be convened 15-18 Seventh Month (July) 2024 in Baltimore, MD.
- Nurturing Faithfulness (NF) program: , I was invited by Marcelle Martin and Jennifer Hogue to be interviewed about Earthcare work, climate justice, environmental witness, and other ways of helping communities to prepare for the changing times to come. (NF is a collaboration between New England Yearly Meeting, Woolman Hill, Hilary Burgin and Marcelle Martin.) The recording is being prepared for distribution and will be shared with SEYM. Continue to stay tuned!
- QEW: If you’re not familiar with the offerings of Quaker Earthcare Witness, here you go!
  - Sign up for an online event at <https://quakerearthcare.org/events/>.
  - Invite QEW to offer a workshop for your community. <https://quakerearthcare.org/workshops/>.
  - Share BeFriending Creation, <https://quakerearthcare.org/befriending-creation/>.
  - Apply for a Mini-Grant for an Earthcare project, <https://quakerearthcare.org/mini-grants/>.
  - Volunteer as a contact for your monthly meeting or church, <https://quakerearthcare.org/get-involved/>.
  - Talk with SEYM representatives to QEW, Brian Olson, Brad Stocker, or Beverly G Ward.
  - Start an Earthcare group, <https://quakerearthcare.org/for-environmental-concerns-committees/>.
  - Use Quaker Earthcare Witness materials in your First Day school, <https://quakerearthcare.org/resources/earthcare-for-children/>.
  - Support QEW by making a tax-deductible contribution.
- Quaker House at Chautauqua (NY), Friend of the Week (Chaplain): I continue to prepare for the chaplain week, 10 through 17 Eighth Month. Please feel free to share thoughts, information, etc., related to the themes, “Water: Crisis, Beauty and Necessity – A Week in Partnership with National Geographic” and Interfaith Lecture Theme – A Metaphor for Life. Thank you for your accompaniment!

- Tri-City NAACP Branch: I continue with the Environmental and Climate Justice Committee.
- University of South Florida: I continue to work with various colleagues at the University and will provide lectures this summer in the National Science Foundation Weather, Climate, and Society program.

**Social Media**

I welcome suggestions for short pieces on activities, topics, research, etc., to share.

Love and Peace,

Beverly G Ward  
SEYM Field Secretary for Earthcare