

Southeastern Yearly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends

Post Office Box 1062, St. Petersburg FL 33731-1062

www.seym.org ☒ office@seym.org ☒ (407)739-4150

Winter 2025 Executive Committee Meeting

Friday, 24 First Month (Jan.) 2025, 6:30 pm, Eastern Time

and

Winter 2025 Interim Business Meeting

Saturday, 25 First Month (Jan.) 2025, 8:30 am, Eastern Time

Documents In Advance

We will be gathering via Zoom and in person at
Orlando Monthly Meeting, 316 E Marks Street, Orlando, Florida

WEC, WIBM, and Michener Lecture, *use the same zoom login information*

Topic: WEC, WIBM, and Michener Lecture

Time: Jan 24, 2025, WEC: 6:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Jan 25, 2025, WIBM: 8:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Jan 26, 2025, MICHENER LECTURE: 1:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82036130104?pwd=znfTREV8bujz9Op7jXddSabOUGPY7q.1>

Meeting ID: 820 3613 0104

Passcode: 281706

One tap mobile

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Dial by your location

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Schedule, Agenda, and Reports

Friday, 24 First Month 2025

WINTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

7:00 pm Executive Committee meeting, all are welcome
Opening Worship
Announcements
Review of Agenda
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Nominating Committee Report
Treasurer's Report
Ad hoc Committee on Organizational Documents
YM Secretary's Report
Gathering Committee Report
Field Secretary for Earthcare Report
Trustees Report
Half Yearly Meeting Committee Report
Peace & Social Concerns Committee Report
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Ad hoc Committee on Quaker Call..... 13
Committee on Ministry for Racism Report
Earthcare Committee Report
Representatives to Organizations (if required for a proposed EC action minute)
Reading back the minutes
Closing Worship

Saturday, 25 First Month 2025

WINTER INTERIM BUSINESS MEETING

8:30 am Fellowship, coffee and snacks, all are welcome
9:00 am Opening Worship
Nominating Committee preliminary report
Announcements
9:30 am Committee meetings: All are welcome to attend (breakout rooms)
11:00 am Meeting Open Forum: How does Spirit fare with Thee?
12 noon Lunch served by Orlando Friends

1:00 pm Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business
AGENDA:
Opening Worship
Spiritual/Inspirational Reading
Agenda Review and Correction
Roll call of Meetings and Worship Groups
Welcome of Visitors
Announcements

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Finance Committee Report	
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Reading back the minutes	

4:30 Closing Worship

5:00 Fellowship, then Dinner at a local restaurant

Southeastern Yearly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends

Fall Interim Business Meeting

5 Tenth Month 2024

Saint Petersburg Friends Meetinghouse
and Online

NUMBERED MINUTES

- 24FIBM01** Beverly Ward’s nomination to the Archives Committee is accepted.
APPROVED
- 24FIBM02** Funds set aside for SEYM representative travel to international Quaker gatherings may be used to send a young adult representative to the Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas, gathering in Arizona in March 2025.
APPROVED.
- 24FIBM03** Southeastern Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends of Truth responds to the call from the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition and the Decolonizing Quakers Working Group as presented by the Committee for Ministry on Racism. We further realize that we have an obligation to this process of investigation and amends regardless of any monetary support we historically may or may not have provided. Beverly Ward, a member of SEYM’s Committee for Ministry on Racism, will coordinate the research and report any pertinent findings.
APPROVED
- 24FIBM04** Friends authorize the creation of a new accounting fund for the purpose of supporting the establishment of an independent Quaker School at Fort Myers, Florida, as described in the Covenant between Fort Myers Monthly Meeting and the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fort Myers. The fund is authorized to receive donations from Southeastern Yearly Meeting, individuals, monthly meetings, and/or outside organizations. Distribution of those funds will be made upon approval of, and direction by, the SEYM Executive Committee, or its designees.
- 24FIBM05** Friends authorize the Trustees to transfer to the new accounting fund the amount of \$15,000 from the unrestricted funds managed by the Trustees.
APPROVED

24FIBM06 Southeastern Yearly Meeting and its Executive Committee thank Saint Petersburg Friends for their warm hospitality during the 04-05 Tenth Month, 2024 meetings.
APPROVED

Yearly Meeting Clerk's Revised Call for Discernment

SEYM Winter Interim Business Meeting

25 January 2025

On November 11, 2024, the Yearly Meeting (YM) clerk sent out a call for Discernment over entry into a covenant between Fort Myers Monthly Meeting, the Unitarian Universalist (UU) Congregation of Fort Myers and SEYM to open "Watershed Friends School" on the campus of the UU Congregation of Fort Myers near the site where the Meetinghouse of Fort Myers Monthly Meeting has been proposed to be constructed.

At Fall Interim Business Meeting (FIBM), the following Minutes were approved related to this proposal:

24FIBM04 Friends authorize the creation of a new accounting fund for the purpose of supporting the establishment of an independent Quaker School at Fort Myers, Florida, as described in the Covenant between Fort Myers Monthly Meeting and the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fort Myers. The fund is authorized to receive donations from Southeastern Yearly Meeting, individuals, monthly meetings, and/or outside organizations. Distribution of those funds will be made upon approval of, and direction by, the SEYM Executive Committee, or its designees.

APPROVED

24FIBM05 Friends authorize the Trustees to transfer to the new accounting fund the amount of \$15,000 from the unrestricted funds managed by the Trustees.

APPROVED

In response to a proposed contract forwarded by the *ad hoc* Quaker Call Committee, a called Executive Committee Meeting was convened on November 24, 2024, to discern way forward with this proposed contract. During the course of that discernment, it was reported by representatives of Fort Myers Monthly Meeting that the "Watershed Friends School" proposed in the covenant will not proceed as the facilities on the UU campus are no longer available to the project.

In that the accounting fund and the \$15,000.00 to be transferred into that fund were specifically premised to be in support of the "Watershed Friends School" project to be established on the UU Congregation of Fort Myers Campus as detailed in the proposed Covenant, and with the news that this school will no longer be opened, the clerk laid the matter aside, and will the approval of Friends closed the Called Executive Committee Meeting (Minutes Attached).

The *ad hoc* Quaker Call Committee, through its clerk, has requested further discernment on this matter and the proposed contract and Covenant.

As YM clerk, I feel that the questions for discernment have changed in light of recent events. I would offer a few observations and revised queries:

Observations from FIBM and Fall Executive Committee (FEC) Meetings

- The sense of both FEC and the body gathered at FIBM was clear that Friends support and hold in high regard Friends Schools and their mission.

- The sense at FIBM was clear that Friends would support a reasonable proposal from a constituent Monthly Meeting to open a Friends School both spiritually and financially given available resources.
- There was no unity at either FIBM or FEC on SEYM committing as a partner in the formation of a Friends School.
- There is no current viable proposal to open a Friends School in SEYM from any constituent Monthly Meeting and no such proposal is expected at this time.
- The proposed consulting contract brought to Executive Committee was to assist the *ad hoc* Quaker Call Committee (QCC) to develop the plans, corporate structure, and promotional materials for a hypothetical Friends School that may or may not be opened at some future date at no named location.
- The proposed consulting contract had included fees of \$15,000.00.
- The QCC has no budget to fund the proposed consulting contract. At the called Executive Committee Meeting, the QCC was apparently proposing to repurpose the donation from SEYM Trustees made for the specific support of the once proposed “Watershed Friends School” to fund this more generic purpose.
- This proposed repurposing of the accounting fund and donated funds was inconsistent with the Sense of the Meeting that approved the Minutes of FIBM to set up this funding. Given the lack of clarity over the appropriate use of these funds in the absence of a viable proposal to open the “Watershed Friends School”, and that there being no pressing need to meet the academic calendar to open this school, the Queries
- Should SEYM promote and seek to actively partner with a Monthly Meeting or other similar partnership to open a Friends School that would be in some manner under the care of SEYM?
- Should SEYM maintain its role as described in Faith and Practice of offering Spiritual and occasional financial support to its constituent Monthly Meetings when requests for such support are received and Friends are in unity?
- Should Minutes 24FIBM04 and 24FIBM05 be laid down and any funds transferred under 24FIBM05 be transferred back to the Trustees for management given the new understanding that the proposed Friends School described in the covenant will not proceed?
- Entry into the proposed Covenant between Fort Myers Monthly Meeting, the UU Congregation of Fort Myers and SEYM was distributed for Meeting discernment. In that we now understand that Fort Myers Monthly Meeting and the UU Congregation of Fort Myers are no longer working to open the proposed Friends School, should all further discernment on this Covenant be laid down?

Scheduling:

Under the normal order of business, a budget request by any Yearly Meeting Committee for this size of expenditure should be brought to Winter Interim Business Meeting, before the body, for discernment. If

approved, it may then be forwarded to the Finance Committee for their use in preparing the budget for 25/26. This will allow the proposal to be reviewed by the Yearly Business Meeting in context with the other Yearly Meeting programs. Faith and Practice specifically reserves approval of the budget to Yearly Business Meeting.

Discernment of the proposed covenant, if not laid down at WIBM, would be a decision that could have implications on future budgets and Yearly Meeting programs or resources for years to come. Consistent with Faith and Practice, decisions of this magnitude are reserved to Yearly Business Meeting.

Winter Interim Business Meeting will be held on January 25, 2025.

Yearly Meeting will be held April 16-20, 2025

Faithfully submitted for your discernment,
William Carlie, clerk

Southeastern Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Specially Called Executive Committee Meeting 24 Eleventh Month 2024

MINUTES

Interim Business Meeting clerk, Bil Carlie, welcomed Friends and opened the meeting from the silence with the following quote:

For Friends the most important consideration is not the right action, but a right inward state out of which right action will arise. Given the right inward state, right action is inevitable. Inward state and outward action are parts of a single whole.

Howard Brinton 1943

The only item on the agenda tonight is from the *ad hoc* Quaker Call Committee for approval of a contract with SEYM for a start up coordinator.

Bill summarized the actions to date. At the Fall Interim Business Meeting, we approved providing an accounting fund to accept donations for and an SEYM donation of seed money to a proposal from Fort Myers Monthly Meeting and the Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Fort Myers to establish an independent Friends school in Fort Myers (Watershed Friends School).

We are now requested by the Ad-Hoc Quaker Call Committee to approve a contract with Benjamin Collins, a start up coordinator, to study the feasibility of the school and create organizational structures to support it. The contract and other documents were circulated. Questions were asked about the scope of the contract and the reasoning for SEYM being the contracting entity.

Dan Vaughn explained that the funds that were approved at FIBM would be used for this consultant. Friends had other questions about the relationship between SEYM and the school project, as well questions about scope of work of the consultant.

Friends raised questions about process. SEYM at Fall Interim Business Meeting did not agree to enter into the covenant for the project. The yearly meeting clerk did send materials to all monthly meeting clerks for discussion in monthly meetings but only two weeks ago. It was clear from FIBM that there is a lot of interest in the idea of a Friends School. The question remained over what role SEYM should adopt in such a project.

The proposed consulting contract would put no further obligation on SEYM. The *ad hoc* Quaker Call Committee is not a legal entity. Fort Myers Monthly Meeting (FMMM) could legally sign the contract and SEYM can simply transfer the funds to FMMM. Joel Cook, treasurer, said that we can sign the contract as the financial supporter, but we are not the entity with which the consultant should contract.

We are still in discernment. We are still gathering information. Tonight, we are determining a path forward that doesn't outrun our process.

Over an hour into the meeting, a Friend reported that the dream of the Watershed Friends School in Fort Myers seems to have run into some stops and that it is not moving forward at this time. It was reported that the space for the proposed school on the Fort Myers UU campus has been leased to another school. However, some Friends still a desire to research the possibility of Friends education in Florida. The clerk of the Quaker Call Committee reports that the covenant between Fort Myers Monthly Meeting and the UU Congregation of Fort Myers is still in place.

After further discussion, the clerk suggested that we lay this matter aside for this evening. In that the actions taken at FIBM were in support of a specific proposed project that will not proceed at this time. Further the called EC meeting was premised on the need for immediate action to move forward with this specific project that apparently will no longer proceed. Given this understanding, there is no reason that this matter cannot return to the normal order of business at this time. This return to normal order will allow time for a more fulsome discernment and presentation of matters at Yearly Business Meeting. The *ad hoc* Quaker Call Committee can bring forward a request for a budget to fund consultation, or other business, to Winter Interim Business Meeting. Under the normal order of business, matters related to the budget are prepared at Winter Interim Business Meeting for inclusion in the Documents in Advance for Yearly Business Meeting where all matters of the budget are discerned. Friends agreed to lay this matter aside.

Friends closed with silent worship and in gratitude.

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Dykes, Recording Clerk

<p>Participants:</p> <p>Clearwater Monthly Meeting Eileen Zingaro</p> <p>Deland Friends Meeting Ed Chew Cheryl Demers-Holton Carl Hersh Dan Vaughen Beverly Ward</p> <p>Fort Lauderdale Monthly Meeting Brian Humphrey</p> <p>Fort Myers Monthly Meeting Suzanne Frechette</p> <p>Jacksonville Worship Group Dan McLoughlin</p>	<p>Gainesville Monthly Meeting Liz Dykes Jean Larson</p> <p>Quaker Meeting of Melbourne Hope Ascher</p> <p>Miami Monthly Meeting Brian Olson Brad Stocker</p> <p>Orlando Monthly Meeting Rachel Dellinger Ed Lesnick</p> <p>Others in attendance: Marcia Carlson Benjamin Collins (Consultant) Bill Petrarca (UU Church of Fort Myers)</p>	<p>Palm Beach Monthly Meeting John Palozzi</p> <p>Saint Petersburg Quakers Bill Carlie Susan Wade</p> <p>Sarasota Monthly Meeting Eva Hersh</p> <p>Tallahassee Monthly Meeting Neil Andersen Phoebe Andersen</p> <p>Tampa Monthly Meeting Jan Dahm Lisa Erazmus</p> <p>Treasure Coast Worship Group Joel Cook (Palm Beach MM) Amy Richards</p>
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Youth and Young Adult Coordinator Report

SEYM Winter Interim Business Meeting, Jan 2025

25 January 2025

Youth and young adults made up over half the attenders of Half-Yearly Meeting. This group was faithful to the traditions handed down to them from older SEYM adults: kayaks in the spring, s'mores around a fire, hikes in the forest, and long conversations over meals. Youth contributions to Saturday night's talent show included a charismatic MC (Nova), a song sung completely in Russian (Jason), and a poem about the meaning behind a name (Kasper).

Young adults at OMM are currently led to explore their spiritual gifts and use them for the betterment of the wider community. One member recently attended a spiritual gifts workshop at Pendle Hill, where he was given a questionnaire as a guide to discerning one's gifts. Several young adults at HYM completed this questionnaire, and the youth were given a simplified version in FDS. They look forward to hearing our Michener lecturer speak on spiritual gifts in January. Other leadings of our young adults include participating in local mutual aid groups and helping the homeless. To this end, we have begun exploring partnerships with Central Florida Mutual Aid, the Christian Service Center, and Hope Community Center's new Hope CommUniversity.

The youth at OMM have continued in their curriculum of Bible literacy and studied the history and traditions of Christmas and the winter solstice. They have a deep need for a spiritual home where they feel accepted just as they are. A youth serves as clerk of the hospitality committee, and two of the other four members of hospitality are also under 16 years old.

It was my great pleasure to worship with the St. Augustine, Gainesville, and Jacksonville meetings. As of the reading of this report, I also will have visited the meeting in Savannah, Georgia. The St. Augustine and Jacksonville meetings are small but mighty, and both are eager to welcome young people into their fellowships. The Gainesville meeting is blessed with several young children and a dedicated First Day School teacher. On the day I visited, a group of college students were greeted with joy as they experienced their first Quaker meeting. Spirit is clearly at work in Gainesville.

We celebrated Kira, Daniil, and Cassie's birthdays. Please send names and birthdays of your meeting's youth and young adults to yyacoordinator@seymquakers.org so we can celebrate with them, as well.

The first YYA project of the new year will be the launching of two book clubs. Young adults will read a novel by our upcoming Yearly Meeting speaker, Rashid Darden. Youth will read *The Sapling Cage* by Margaret Killjoy. (The youth program was pleased to receive 12 free copies of this new release from Firestorm Books in Asheville, NC, an ally in SEYM's work against book banning.)

Also in 2025, the youth program looks forward to sending a representative to the Friends World Committee for Consultation Section of the Americas Section Meeting in Phoenix, Arizona. Youth also will be traveling to the Friends General Conference YAY Gathering, attending a youth and families retreat, and strengthening friendships at Yearly Meeting.

In gratitude for the privilege of serving SEYM and the next generation of Quakers,

Rachel Dellinger

Youth and Young Adult Coordinator December 14, 2024

Worship and Ministry Committee Report

SEYM Winter Interim Business Meeting

25 January 2025

The SEYM Worship and Ministry Committee continues to do God's work of bringing Spirit to any and all in the SEYM community and beyond. In our committee meetings and in other venues in which committee members participate, we have tried to be a listening ear and spiritual presence, especially during these uncertain times.

Joel Cook's workshop, *The Friends We Are Becoming: Stories of Transformation* was enjoyed by those who attended in November. He had initially postponed his workshop and offered an informal session of sharing among SEYM Friends regarding the hurricanes.

Cheryl Demers-Holton continues to hold the bi-weekly Seekers Book Club where discussions on the current book are lively, deep, and always grounded in Spirit. Seekers of all experience are welcome to share in a time both thoughtful and joyful.

Queries for the Journey are still offered weekly, providing spiritual consideration in the manner of Friends for individuals, small groups, and Meetings/Worship Groups.

We held our quarterly Extended Worship on 14 Twelfth Month 2024 and it was attended by several Friends who brought their hearts to worship over a three-hour period. Some Friends took advantage of the idea of hubs set up so Friends who wished to have the "face-to-face" experience, could gather with other Friends at their meetinghouse or elsewhere and still be a part of the online worship.

We welcome Adria (Gulizia) DiCapua as our 2025 Michener Lecturer for the WIBM and Michener Lecture weekend. Adria is a member of Chatham Monthly Meeting (NYM) and is a lawyer, mediator, teacher, and mother. She carries a concern for how Friends' traditional faith and practice translates into an increasingly unstable, atomized, and uncertain world. Her topic is **As the Good Shepherd: Leading and Being Led as Friends**. More information is available on the SEYM website.

Overall, the Worship and Ministry Committee continues to seek new opportunities for Spirit to engage with Friends and bring peace and nurture to all. We hold the spiritual deepening of all SEYM Friends as our concern and keep an understanding in our hearts that the transition into the new year may be unsettling for so many. We ask that all be tender with one another and find strength by listening deeply in the spaces provided.

Jan Dahm, Lisa Erazmus, Richelle Ogle,
Co-clerks of SEYM Worship and Ministry Committee

Ad hoc Quaker Call Committee Report

SEYM Winter Interim Business Meeting

25 First Month 2025

The Ad Hoc SEYM Call Committee meets faithfully and in search of Spirit as it responds to the charge from SEYM which was given to us in October 2023 at Fall Interim Business Meeting. The charge reads as follows:

The SEYM ad hoc Quaker Call Committee is charged with discerning whether, and if so, how SEYM might now be called to encourage and empower SEYM Monthly Meetings to actively, but non-violently, resist political pressures emanating from governmental entities in Florida intended to counter the principles and values of the Religious Society of Friends. In their discernment, consideration may be given to establish one or more Quaker Schools, Interfaith Conference Centers, or other multiple-Meeting sponsored educational projects likely to benefit the wider community.

The Call Committee, after much time in discernment and extensive research, recognizes a special leading which is to establish a Quaker School or schools in Florida. We all agree on the importance, if not absolute necessity, of bringing educational opportunities founded in Quaker principles and values to our communities. During our discernment we keep the Executive Director of the Friends Council on Education informed of our various activities and remain encouraged by the Quaker support.

When presented to Friends and non-Friends, we are overwhelmed by the enthusiasm of the idea of making available any and all such programs and varying genres possibly available for both children and adult education. Our research and minutes are recorded and can be used readily. We believe this information provides an excellent foundation for continuing the formation of Quaker educational programs.

We remain excited that many Friends although not on this Committee have a strong desire for continuance as we foresee the creation of one or more Quaker Schools in Florida. This vision is foremost in our hearts as we present to Executive Committee a suggested minute(s) for approval by SEYM.

We are proposing SEYM draft minutes to include:

- SEYM will lay down the *ad hoc* Quaker Call Committee effective immediately and seek the establishment of a SEYM standing committee that will be charged to report in greater detail the establishment of a Quaker school or schools in Florida.
- The \$15,000 seed money from unrestricted funds, which was originally directed during the Fall Interim Business Meeting 2024 to be used for a Quaker School in Fort Myers, be directed to support the activity of the standing “school/education committee”.*
- SEYM will hire a coordinator to provide SEYM with recommended options offering educational programs to the general public that promote the principles and value of the Religious Society of Friends.

**Minute: The Southeastern Yearly Meeting Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 is amended by the addition of a new Line 9000 Expense, “Out To Other Classes,” in the amount of \$15,000, for the purpose of starting an Independent Quaker School in Fort Myers, Florida. That amount shall be initially funded by the Trustees. It shall be disbursed or increased by donations from*

monthly meetings, other public and private entities, and individuals, upon the approval, and at the direction, of the Executive Committee, or its designees.”

Any standing committee should recognize that these programs may require establishing corporations and naming a Board which should include, at minimum, one member from a Florida Monthly Meeting as recommended by the Friends Council on Education. The standing committee should be aware that most educational programs require charging for services while making available scholarship or low-cost programs. The schools may choose to accept available State or Federal funding and outside donations in order to remain financially stable.

It is the request of the *ad hoc* Quaker Call Committee to lay down our Committee as it believes it has fulfilled its original charge and discerned the path to which it has been lead as well as providing a strong foundation for Friends to continue this mission aimed at academic freedom in the State of Florida. This Quaker Call Committee has made many Friends and friends who are encouraged by the vision of having a Quaker School in Florida and hope Friends will reach out to all who offer to participate in the effort to open one or more Quaker Schools in Florida.

Friends Committee on National Legislation Representative's Report

SEYM Winter Interim Business Meeting

25 January 2025

Annual Meeting and Quaker Public Policy Institute, 13-17 Eleventh Month 2024
"ADVOCACY THAT NEVER GIVES UP"

As only one of the three Representatives from SEYM to Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), I along with my husband, George, flew to Washington to participate in this very meaningful time for Friends, hosted by FCNL's incredible, energetic, and dedicated staff. This report is focused on the Public Policy Institute portion of the Annual Meeting which occurred over the first day and a half period.

Through the Quaker Public Policy Institute hundreds of advocates lobby their federal officials to advance just public policies. On November 14th representatives from FCNL collectively visited over 100 offices of their Congressmen. The participants from Florida to the Quaker Public Policy Institute included Aurelio Anderson, Tallahassee MM; Youme Nguyen Ly, Miami MM; Eileen and George Zingaro, Clearwater MM; and one other Friend (un-named). We spent a couple hours over lunch laying out our visit before going to the congressional offices.

Every year, FCNL determines the "ASK" they hope we will make on our visits. This year, we asked the Senator to "Co-sponsor and vote in favor of Joint Resolutions of Disapproval to block the sale of offensive weapons to Israel". In Representative Gus Bilirakis' (12th District) office we asked him to "make a public statement that opposes more offensive weapons for Israel". (Only Senators could co-sponsor this resolution.)

We were scheduled for two Lobby visits on 11/14: the first one in Senator Marco Rubio's office to meet with Will Green, Legal Assistant, and Cole Ireland, Legal Correspondent; the second in Representative Bilirakis's office to meet with Nathan Stamps, Legal Assistant. Although it is not often that we are able to meet directly with our senators or congressmen we were kindly received. Nevertheless, as we were leaving we met Rep. Bilirakis in the hallway who remembered me from our many visits over the years and we, of course, made our "ask" again. It is a tough "ASK", as we all knew, but the impact of these visits does not fall on deaf ears. In our Florida meetings we included emphatically the need to allow aid into Gaza which received agreement in both offices.

Each year FCNL presents two awards during the Annual Meeting and Quaker Public Policy Institute (QPPI). Each goes to an outstanding member of Congress who has displayed leadership in advancing legislative priorities consistent with those advocated by FCNL. The Snyder Peace Award was given to Senator Rand Paul (KY) and the Justice Award to Senator Cory Booker (NJ). Neither could accept in person but each recorded a video accepting the award and giving a message.

At the end of the plenary, we received a very special surprise when Representative Barbara Lee from California spoke to us about her history as a Congresswoman. She is retiring at the end of this term and has truly been an inspiration to not only her constituents but to all Americans.

FCNL Annual Gathering is always wonderful, and I encourage Friends to make it part of their future plans.

Eileen Zingaro,
SEYM FCNL Representative