

Celo Friends Meeting
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
Third Month, 19th Day, 2023

Attendance: Joanna Flynn (Co-Clerk), Gib Barrus, Catherine Peck, Joyce Johnson, Jo Ann Fernald, Jennie Boyd Bull, Marilyn Cade, Donna Idol, Lucy Perry, Jim Stockwell, David Johnson (Recorder)

1. The meeting opened with a period of worshipful silence preceded by the co-clerk reading how the Quaker method satisfactorily discerns Truth.
2. The minutes of Second Month, 19th day, having been electronically distributed, were read aloud by the Recording Clerk and were **APPROVED** as read.
3. **Review of the Draft State of the Meeting Report:** The originally planned called meeting (March 5) for editing a draft document having been canceled because of several conflicting circumstances, the Co-Clerk and Ministry and Care Clerk created a document which was reviewed in its entirety in this meeting. Following a collaborative discussion by many Friends, the modified report is **APPROVED** and will be forwarded by the co-clerk to SAYMA. (A copy is attached to this report.)
4. **Ministry and Care Report:** The committee welcomed Annie Barrus and Anne Maren-Hogan as new members of the committee. The query for the coming month is *Where do I find joy in these troubled times?*

The committee recommended having a second “Blessing of the Animals”. The Business Meeting **APPROVED** the event with the recommendation that Alma Rouse and family, with Becky Gray’s help and Marilyn Cade’s offer as backup, coordinate the event. Marilyn will contact the Rouse’s. The meeting also agreed to combine Meeting for Worship with the Blessing as a single worship service. The service will be planned for either late April or early May.

5. **FCNL Called Meeting:** A called meeting was held on March 5th to address comments on Reproductive Health Care related to a request by FCNL regarding word changes associated with abortion in III 2.6 of its *The World We Seek*. At issue was the concern that the inclusion of direct references to abortion may adversely influence health legislation in other areas. The committee settled on adding the phrase “*reproductive health care*” to the FCNL health proposal. The **APPROVED** full document is attached. Two Friends shared how deeply felt and worshipful this meeting was.
6. **Nominating Committee Report:** The clerk reported that a list of committee members, clerks, representatives and responsibilities will shortly be available on the website.

Two individuals were presented for the second time and **APPROVED** for committee membership: Lucy Perry (ARE) and Matt McGuire (Finance).

The committee accepted Anne Maren-Hogan’s resignation as the Death and Grief Liaison with CCI. The committee will wait until there is clarity on the relationship between CCI and CFM’s End of Life Committee before identifying a new representative.

Racial Equity Committee: The committee, for the present time, is paused until several of its members complete a SAYMA Racial Affinity workshop in June. Then the CFM Nominating Committee will bring back to the business meeting how to go forward with this committee.

The meeting affirmed the nominating committee’s seeking another member for the Welcoming Committee.

The following individuals are **APPROVED** as adult FDS volunteers: James Roeder, Astra Coyle, Peggy Tibbits, Bob and Geeta McGahey, Drew Perrin, Carly Todd, and Meg Guzulescu.

AMS students Bastian Clemmons, Eloise Brooks, Bri Fishman, Amaya Cunningham-Jones, and Bodhi were **APPROVED** as paid teen childcare helpers with AMS receiving their pay during the school year. AMS teen helpers will not be compensated although there will be direct payment to AMS for their service. If these teens work in the summer, they will be compensated directly. Those attending this meeting felt appreciative of this creative way of supporting teens, AMS and FDS.

The FDS coordinator, Marilyn Cade, brought up showing a film featuring a Mark Twain short story: *A Short Campaign That Failed*". Marilyn will get with her committee to arrange the showing possibly during mfw and utilizing the AMS facilities.

7. **SAYMA:**

The meeting received and accepted a report by Jennie Boyd Bull on the recent SAYMA representatives meeting. Her sense was that the meeting was conducted in a warm and friendly spirit. Because of the comprehensive nature of the report, it is not reported here but is attached as a document.

SAYMA requests each monthly meeting identify someone to be on the SAYMA nominating committee. Joanna will send this need out on the CFM listserv. Any interested individuals will be referred to our nominating for review and decision making.

SAYMA has expressed a need to know an updated version of our committees, their function, and clerks. This information is nearly complete and will be on our website for anyone to review. In addition, there will be a dynamic calendar so that anyone can reference the day-to-day happenings of the meeting.

8. **Biennial Clerks/Reps Meeting**

This meeting was held on March 12th via zoom. Worship sharing regarding hopes and dreams for the meeting and/or committees occurred followed by discussions regarding communication and financial matters. One outcome was a desire to use a dynamic calendar on our website which Lisa Rose, Joanna Flynn, Anne Maren-Hogan and Rachel Weir are currently able to edit. The clerks of committees will now take their work back to their committees including review job descriptions.

9. The meeting ended with a period of silence.

David Johnson, Recorder

STATE OF THE MEETING ATTACHMENT

State of Celo Friends Meeting in 2022
Approved on March 19, 2023

Community was a theme for our meeting in 2022. This past year, our meeting has been filled with technological and in-person connections, rebirth, loss, suffering and growth. Challenges with technology and conflicts over Covid protocols, a worship with animals, the tentative and then wholehearted return to worshiping in person, the rebirth of our First Day School program, a new Ukraine Crisis/Refugee ad hoc committee, worship sharing groups, a birth, two tragic deaths, and the return of singing all brought us together in Spirit.

At the beginning of the year, we invited Friends to worship inside the meetinghouse, and several did while we continued a well-attended Meeting for Worship via Zoom. We tried using a device called the OWL that enabled Friends at home on Zoom to see and hear Friends in the meetinghouse. In a fairly short time it became evident that the OWL was, for many, detrimental to the quality of worship, and so we accepted that we would continue to have two separate Meetings for Worship. When the weather was nice, we worshiped outside, and more adult Friends felt comfortable attending in person.

As Covid restrictions eased and people felt more confident about attending in-person worship, we experienced a rebirth in our meeting. In the fall we sang outside without masks and then sang inside with masks once the weather turned cold. Individuals chose whether to wear masks during Worship. Marilyn Cade and Mari Ohta, determined to re-start First Day School, garnered the support of parents and volunteers so that our benches have been filled once again with children at the start of every meeting. The youngest children enjoy playing together, while the school-aged children have lessons with Quaker themes. FDS performed Christmas Carols from around the world and in different languages, including American Sign Language. We are tremendously grateful for the children's return.

Our dedicated Catherine Reid, who had lovingly seen the meeting through the worst of the pandemic, ended her term at the end of April. Her co-clerk, Joanna Flynn continued as the solo clerk for the rest of the year with the help of the entire community. She began to send an email "Saturday Update" each week, which provided information about Sunday's Meeting for Worship, upcoming events, and shared resources.

As we anticipated the challenge of bringing our families with children back to the Meeting for Worship, and in the spirit of fun, we held a "Meeting for Worship with Attention to Animals" event in April. We had a joyful worship experience with a horse, goats, a guinea pig, rabbits, and many cats and dogs. Adding to our joy as we slowly began to reassemble, Magnolia Rouse was born in June; she literally brought new life to our meeting.

Throughout the year, many of us were involved in worship sharing groups sponsored by the Adult Religious Education committee. At the end of the year, we focused on nurturing our spiritual roots and strengthening unity in our meeting. Some worship/sharing groups re-formed and contemplated queries drawn from Peter Blood's online curriculum "Deepening Meeting Life." In October our focus was on "Our Meeting as a Beloved Community," and in November we focused on "Deepening Our Shared Worship."

Celo Friends Meeting continued to support and learn through SAYMA. We supported our own Bob McGahey, who ended his term in June. He served as the clerk of SAYMA during tumultuous times. Seven of our members and attenders are participating in the Racial Transformation worship-sharing affinity groups sponsored by SAYMA, which began in Fall 2022. Geeta McGahey serves as one of the facilitators.

Acting on our testimonies of community, stewardship and peace, an ad hoc Refugee Committee began in April, 2022 as a response to the humanitarian crisis created by the Russian invasion of the Ukraine and the resulting war. That committee raised money for the European-Middle East section of the Friends World Conference for Consultation and the Friends Peace Teams. Through direct contributions to Catholic Charities of Asheville and the purchase of a bicycle and tricycle, committee members supported a newly arrived Ukrainian family. In July the committee sponsored a talk on refugees by Stephen Zunes, PhD., professor of International Studies at the University of San Francisco. Locally the committee offered help to a newly arrived Ukrainian

family and provided news updates on psychosocial support teams in Lyiv, Ukraine sponsored by Friends Peace Teams.

Our Nominating committee went above and beyond the call of duty by arranging for all the positions to be filled according to our two-year cycle. We met in the Spirit using the Strawberry Creek method to raise up Friends who can bring their gifts into the meeting. Celo Friends continue to be grateful for this way of finding folks to serve.

Thanks to the work of several Friends, the poet Jacinta White, author of *Resurrecting the Bones* (Press 53, 2019), made a sojourn to our cemetery in September while she was in town presenting at the Carolina Mountains Literary Festival. She led a group to the part of our cemetery that we believe holds graves of enslaved people, and she composed a poem to commemorate their lives.

Beloved sons in two families died during this year. The deaths of Zane Thomas, 31, and Julius Polgar, 15 were, and are, a deeply felt wound to the meeting and to the broader community. Our Meeting gave support to family and friends, attended memorial services, and Julius' home burial. Community engagement in end-of-life matters continued the rich legacy of meeting member Ernest Morgan who wrote *Dealing Creatively with Death*, which continues to be a formative guidebook more than 60 years later. Our annual Day of the Dead was an intergenerational gathering to lovingly care for our cemetery and to honor those who are no longer living.

During 2022, community deepened in the ways we worshiped, sang and gathered together. Covid policies continue to be challenging, and we have yet to find a perfect balance that satisfies everyone. But listening together in the Spirit, we discerned together the best way forward during the fall and early winter allowing our community to grow in the Divine.

FCNL ATTACHMENT: REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE

Celo Friends ad hoc Committee on Reproductive Health Care Report to March 19, 2023 MFWAB The Celo Friends ad hoc committee on Reproductive Health Care met in Margithaus from 9:30-10:30 a.m. on Sunday, March 5, in response to a Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) request for wording changes related to abortion in its current policy statement on Health Care III.2.6 in *The World We Seek*. During heartfelt worship-sharing, Friends expressed similar and varied understandings of the complex issue of abortion, and each proposed new policy wording, including the following:

- ● Unrestricted education and personal decisions on reproduction.
- ● Personal medical decision with doctor and family
- ● Women make decisions for themselves, including right to die
- ● Right to bodily autonomy is not infringed; the violence of forced pregnancy of the unwanted. ●
- Reproductive health care respects a woman's wishes until later in pregnancy (months undefined), then abortion performed only to preserve life and health of the mother.
- ● Retain current FCNL policy.
- ● Personal conscience and decisions by individuals.
- ● Ambiguity and varied views on when life begins.

Following the sharing, we came to unity on the following proposed wording addition, in red. We did not reach unity on when life begins or medical decisions on viability.

*"III.2.6: Health Care. Universal access to affordable, effective, comprehensive health care is a right and is necessary to allow all people to fulfill their potential. Comprehensive health care includes primary, acute, and long-term care, including prescription drugs, as well as **reproductive health care**, mental health and substance abuse treatment. To ensure access, health services should be provided where an individual's needs can best be met. Our country can only maintain and improve the physical and mental*

health of its population with affordable health care that covers the entire life span, from prenatal to end-of-life care. Public health services, which protect us all, require robust federal support." III.2.7. NOTE: Members of the Society of Friends are not in unity on abortion issues." The ad hoc committee requests that Celo Friends Meeting adopt a minute approving the above proposed change in wording, for submission to FCNL by May1.

In the Light,
Danny Blose
Jennie Boyd Bull, convenor Joyce Johnson
Geeta McGahey
Molly Rouse
Judy Scheckel
Jim Stockwell, FCNL rep Lydia Wexler

SAYMA REPRESENTATIVE REPORT ATTACHMENT

To: Celo Friends Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business (MFWAB) From: Jennie Boyd Bull, CFM SAYMA Representative, March 13, 2023
Re: Report on SAYMA Representative Meeting #150, March 11, 2023

The Spring SAYMA Rep Meeting #150 was held on Saturday, March 11, 2023, from 8:30 am to 5:15 pm by Zoom, co-clerked by Daryl Bergquist and Margaret Farmer with clarity and gentleness. After a opening worship, the clerk called the roll of over 40 participants representing 13 monthly meetings and 1 worship group. Bob McGahey (assistant clerk and Ministry and Nurture), Geeta McGahey (Finance Committee and FGC rep) and I attended from Celo. In sum, the meeting was more orderly and positive than in recent years. SAYMA is growing and I appreciated the inclusive, positive contributions by all.

The following report is a summary of committee reports, acceptances, approvals, actions and action requests to monthly meetings. It represents my understanding and does not speak for other Celo participants or the approved SAYMA minutes of the meeting, which are posted on the SAYMA website at www.sayma.org, along with full committee reports.

Nominating Committee presented the first reading of nominees, for consideration in the afternoon session, at which all were approved.

- Charlie Wilton as Website Manager and clerk of Wider Quaker organizations. • Tribal Raine as Finance Committee member
- Rose Black and Kim Soderheim as Junior Yearly Meeting members.
- Rob Collins and Wood Bouldin as Ministry and Nurture members, and Barb

Ester as M&N co-clerk through Yearly Meeting 2023.

The question of self-selection or Nomination approval was referred to the committee for seasoning, with wider consultation.

- The Nominating Committee requests members from all monthly meetings; currently only 9 meetings are represented. *See CFM action request at end.*

Ministry and Nurture Committee

- As charged by the Fall 2022 Rep Meeting, M&N committed "to exploring harms that were and continue to be perpetrated by Friends in SAYMA and how exclusion and racist power dynamics by those in leadership positions have affected SAYMA URJ and Friends of Color.... Our goal is to draft a list of those harms to use for discernment [through reflection sessions] at Yearly

Meeting 52 [2023]....After the Yearly Meeting we will draft an acknowledgment of the harm....as an initial step toward right relationship.”

- M&N reported that 73 Friends are participating in the monthly SAYMA racial transformation affinity groups. Seven Celo Friends are participating.

- In support of a “culture of appreciation,” M&N presented minutes of

appreciation for the 2022 Yearly Meeting Planning Committee, the Technology Team, and Susan Phalen, SAYMA administrative assistant. All were accepted.

Yearly Meeting Planning Committee reported that plans for Yearly Meeting 52 at Berea College are proceeding well, with hopes to continue in that location. The meeting is scheduled for 1pm Friday, June 23 through 1pm Tuesday June 27, three full days. Pat Gailey and Shannon R. Smith are the local coordinators. The theme is “Why Are We Here?” The cost will increase slightly. For more information, contact ympc@syma.org.

Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) Steering Committee reported that gatherings for young Friends continue to be active, including a SAYF gathering in Celo on March 24-26. Ten new FANs (Friendly Adult Nurturers) have been trained. To accommodate nongender and trans young Friends, sleeping areas have been expanded to include to early and late areas, in addition to gendered sleeping areas as requested. SAYF has lost funds the past three years due to the SAYMA hiatus in 21-22 and is requesting funding in the 23-24 SAYMA budget.

Earth Justice Committee reported that only two Friends attended its recent meeting and requested that Yearly Meeting lay down the Committee.

Discussion of lack of accessibility to meeting announcements and website information on committees resulted in requesting that monthly meetings send their directory information to the SAYMA office. See *CFM action request at end*. **Outreach Committee** announced they will send invitations to Active Worship Community (AWC) events to monthly meetings, as introductory events to support retention of new attenders. Junior Yearly Meeting has also sent out information. **Handbook Committee** is working on revising the 2013 edition, requesting updates from officers and committees, to also update Faith and Practice 2021. Yearly Meeting will gather updates in process and content, due by end of July 2022.

Worship-sharing groups met in breakout rooms during and after lunch, addressing the queries: “*What binds us together as Friends? What weakens or strengthens us on our path towards being a community of integrity?*”

Morning Session Narrative Minutes were approved with minor corrections. **Chattanooga Monthly Meeting** presented two minutes:

- Minute expressing sadness at the withdrawal of the Swannanoa and Charleston Monthly Meetings from SAYMA was accepted.
- Minute requesting that SAYMA be removed from the name of the SAYMA anti-racism networking email list. The email list of 63 SAYMA Friends and their friends was created at Yearly Meeting 2015 as an informal forum. A statement that opinions expressed do not represent SAYMA will be added to the list. The minutes was received, with no unity of discernment.

- The discussion around these two minutes was the most extended and challenging of the meeting and was referred to Yearly Meeting Planning Committee for a session of further reflection.

Acknowledging the extended meeting time, the following reports were accepted without discussion, since they required no action. See www.sayma.org.

- **Treasurer's Report**
- **Finance Committee Report**
- **Ad Hoc Faith and Practice Review Committee** report will be considered at

Yearly Meeting. It identifies inconsistencies in wording and process.

- **Ad hoc Racial Justice Working Group** draft committee charge will be

presented for approval at Yearly Meeting.

o The proposed committee will collaborate with SAYMA-URJ and will have a clerk and up to four members, either self-selected or recommended by Nominating Committee, to be appointed by Yearly Meeting.

o Uplifting Racial Justice Committee (URJ) did not present a report. **Afternoon session narrative minutes** were approved with minor corrections. The meeting concluded at 5:15 pm, with closing worship.

Rep Meeting Action Requests for Celo Friends Meeting:

- CFM Nominating Committee bring to MFWAB the name of a Celo Friend to serve on the SAYMA Nominating Committee, to be approved and sent to SAYMA office, attention Susan Phalen, to forward to Nominating Committee.
- CFM Ministry and Care send a current Celo Directory of committees and clerks to SAYMA office, attention Susan Phalen, to forward to Handbook Committee.