

**Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business**  
**Asheville Friends Meeting**  
**Sixth Month 11, 2023**

**Present:** Pat Johnson, Clerk, Barbara Burke, Recording Clerk, Margaret Normile, Katherine Kowal, Steve Livingston, Bob Lackey, Zoe Wallace, Kitty Reynolds, Jim Cavener, Margaret Farmer, Wanda Guokas, Robin Wells, Barbara Esther, Sarah Jane Thomas, Jim Barham, Rusty Maynard.

**Present via Zoom:** Satchel Loftis, Gita Larson, Mike Eddy.

The Meeting opened with Silent Worship.

The Clerk shared a reading out of silence.

***The Fourfold Path to Wholeness A Compass for the Heart***

*Cultivating Love, Compassion, Joy and Peace for All Our Kin* By John G Sullivan, PhD.

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**Opening Words**

You are a ruby embedded in granite,  
How long will you pretend it isn't true?

We can see it in your eyes,  
Come, return to the root of the root of your Self.

— Rumi

There is a teaching — very ancient and ever new: If you would dwell more fully in the present moment, cultivate four powers: *love, compassion, joy and peace*. Doing so will lead to a surprising recognition: They are intertwined in such a way that all four arise together. Practicing any one with open heart and mind leads to practicing the others. Each enhances each. Each balances and corrects the others, bringing the quartet back into harmony when disharmony threatens. Together, these powers constitute a Fourfold Path to health, wholeness and holiness.

**Minute #1:** The Meeting approved the agenda.

**Minute #2:** The Meeting approved the Fourth Month Business Meeting Minutes.

**Minute # 3:** The Meeting approved the Fifth Month Business Meeting Minutes.

**Announcements:** Pat Johnson

SAYMA Planning Committee is happy to announce that the workshop schedule has been finalized and is available in the [Advance Program](#) at SAYMA.org.

SAYMA needs an Assistant Treasurer. This person will be our next Treasurer and work in tandem with Kendall Ivie until sure about the job, which will officially begin in September. The SAYMA treasurer will need to be conversant with Quickbooks online, be good at writing procedures, work with the Finance Committee, present annual financial reports to yearly meeting and interim reports at representative meetings, receive and deposit yearly meeting funds, make or supervise all disbursements as approved by the yearly meeting and representative meetings or by the clerk of SAYMA, and maintains records supporting these transactions. More information can be found in the SAYMA handbook on the SAYMA home page, pages 5-8.

[https://sayma.org/online\\_documents/Handbook\\_finance.pdf](https://sayma.org/online_documents/Handbook_finance.pdf)

Please contact the Nominating Committee via Annie Black, [rablolly5@gmail.com](mailto:rablolly5@gmail.com), if you have any questions.

Robin Wells expressed thanks to all the adults who worked with our First Day School this past year and helped with the Southern Appalachian Young Friends program.

**Morgan Murray email:**

Pat,

I am no longer able to fulfill my duties as Asheville rep. I have so much going on, too much going on, and I just don't have the time or mental energy for all of it.. I won't be able to make the SAYMA yearly Meeting, and I was not able to make the last Rep meeting. I feel awful about not being able to meet the responsibility. Do you think

Barbara Esther would be willing to do it for the upcoming meeting, until Asheville Friends can discern a new Rep?

Morgan

**My Response:**

Hi Morgan.

Thank you so much for your service over many years as our Meeting's Rep. You have been outstanding & I so appreciate the time, energy & discernment you have given to this position. We can ask Barbara if she can fill in but I've also forwarded your message to M&C so we can discuss this at our meeting tomorrow. Thanks again for all you've done & please take care of yourself with all you have on your plate right now.

Pat Johnson

Barbara Esther is unable to fill in as a representative at the SAYMA gathering, but she is willing to give a report to the Meeting.

**If you feel led to be our next Representative to SAYMA, please contact me or Kitti Reynolds, Nominating Clerk.**

**Minute #4:** The Meeting expressed appreciation to Morgan Murray for representing the Asheville Friends Meeting at Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association and for his role on the Nominating Committee. Several Friends stated that he served the Meeting admirably in his role as SAYMA representative and asked transformative questions as a member of the Nominating Committee.

**Committees:**

**Membership:** Barbara Esther, Meeting Recorder

Correspondence from Sue Stigleman & Lynnora Bierce

The Meeting has received two requests. The first is from Sue Stigleman requesting a transfer of membership from AFM to Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting, where she now attends. Sue has sent a request to Pat Meehan, Clerk of SVFM to transfer her.

**Minute #4:** The Meeting approved Sue Stigleman's membership transfer from AFM to SVFM. Members fondly remember when Sue and her son, Ghilman Brock, attended AFM and extend best wishes to her at SVFM.

The second communication is from Lynnora Bierce who requested a release from membership with AFM and also asked AFM to release holding the marriage between Lynnora and Steve Livingston under care.

**Minute #5:** The Meeting approved releasing Lynnora Bierce's membership from AFM at her request, as she has not attended for a long time and no longer lives in the area. The Meeting also approved the request to release the care of the marriage between Lynnora and Steve Livingston.

A member asked that when a letter is sent to Lynnora, we thank her for her past service to the AFM.

The requests are included at the end under attachments.

**Rental Coordinator:** Zoe Wallace

Revised rental fees

A program coordinator for a youth program called "Word on the Street with the Arteria Collective" has been in touch with Zoe and asked to rent the Meetinghouse during the day, from Monday-Thursday for two weeks in July. For this event they will be inviting

teens and artists who are Black, Indigenous and People of Color. At our current rental rates, the cost for the rental would be \$1100, but the program has budgeted \$700 for space rental. Zoe asked that the Meeting approve a rent reduction so that this event can take place on our grounds. Several Members voiced support for this proposal. A Friend said that the Zen Center of Asheville uses the Meetinghouse some of those same days, though at different times. He asked that items used by the Zen group be taken care of and returned to their proper places. Zoe said she will speak to the program coordinator about moving the items to a safe place while the artists are here, and replacing them to their proper places when they depart each day.

Another Friend mentioned the condition of our plumbing and asked if materials used for art projects could be disposed of in a safe manner, and not poured down drains, so as to protect our system. Zoe indicated she has spoken to the coordinator about this and will do so again. The group is requesting the use of the first floor, and 3 rooms on the second floor, and they will be providing their own material. The rental coordinator, Zoe, will be the contact person for the Meetinghouse for any problems that may arise, and will be here on the day they arrive.

A different Friend would like to see AFM make our space more accessible to groups in the BIPOC community. Our established policy is to offer groups a half price rental fee if a Member or Attender is involved in the group.

A Friend suggested that we offer the Word on the Street group a half price rental fee.

**Minute #6 :** The Meeting approved a revised rental fee of \$550 for rental for the group.

**Finance:** Satchel Loftis

Satchel mentioned that our rental income is up, but so are our utilities costs.

Contributions appear to be low, but it often seems that way until the year is nearly over.

A Meeting member mentioned that some contributions received have not been credited yet.

See full report at end under attachments.

**Minute #7:** The Meeting accepted the Finance Committee Report.

**Ministry & Council:** Robin Wells.

**Liability Concerns Surrounding the Meeting's Playground**

Some concerns have been raised about the use of our playground by people in the surrounding neighborhood and teens visiting with the SAYF program. This presents a liability issue that could impact the Meeting. Ministry & Counsel was asked to look into our present insurance and also to consult an attorney to see if our protection is adequate. I want to report that we have communicated with our insurance broker, (who is contacting the underwriter) but we have not spoken with an attorney. We will need a little more time to prepare before contacting an attorney. Friends who have concerns about this issue are encouraged to contact a member of Ministry & Counsel while we are in this early phase of our investigation.

The insurance broker stated we will always have liability just by people being present but some things can be improved upon, mostly items on our playground. Please address any concerns to M&C.

**Minute #8:** The Meeting accepted the playground report

**Racial Justice Committee:** Steve Livingston



We currently have a Black Lives Matter sign on our property but it is small and at ground level and not easily seen. The RJC is suggesting the Meeting purchase a 3'x2' flag to be hung on the porch and they are asking the Meeting for approval.

A Friend asked if the flag would be destroyed by the weather if hanging from the porch but Steve responded that it would be protected by the roof.

Another Friend is in favor of purchasing the flag and asked that it be hung in a manner that will allow the playground to still be visible from the porch. She also asked if the Meeting wants the prayer flags that are currently hanging to be removed, but another Member said that in other countries prayer flags are left hanging until they disintegrate and blow away, and the Meeting supports this idea.

**Minute #9:** The Meeting approved displaying a Black Lives Matter flag from the porch

**Peace & Earth:** Steve Livingston

Revised Minute of Support for Indigenous Peoples

**Minute of Support for Indigenous Peoples**

The Asheville Friends Meeting with leading from Spirit adopts this Minute. Spirit calls us toward truth, racial healing, and transformation, following the Indigenous wisdom of respect for the earth and all its beings.

We affirm the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We repudiate the Doctrines of Discovery, the religious basis for European colonization around the world. We endorse the formation of a federal Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies.

We commit to the following actions and call upon the Meetings and Worship Groups of SAYMA to similarly commit as led:

... to uphold the self-determination and sovereignty of Native nations. We acknowledge that it is not the place of non-Indigenous people to define or decide the priorities or realities of Indigenous people, and that "right relationship" requires respect for Indigenous people's autonomy and leadership.

... to act in solidarity with the reinvigoration of local Indigenous cultural knowledge and wisdom, such as: language restoration; environmental stewardship; Native craft and art; food and medicine; wildfire management techniques; spirituality; mental and physical healthcare; programs for youth; and Native-led healing work.

... to create awareness and advocate for missing and murdered Indigenous women.

... to support Native treaty rights, ecological protection movements, and legislation repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery.

... to compassionately listen to and establish rapport with Indigenous people.

... to establish relationships that guide us to thoughtful, grounded actions opposing the ongoing systemic dehumanization and material dispossession of the original peoples of the land on which we live and worship.



... to courageously face the learning required to comprehend settler colonialism.

... to provide opportunities for collective lamentation: times and/or spaces to acknowledge, grieve, and integrate these truths, with the guidance of Spirit and our Indigenous advisors.

... to compensate Native people who provide us with their expertise from our Reparations Fund.

**... to study, learn, and thoughtfully consider the following queries:**

- What was the history of Indigenous life before European contact?
- How was indigenous life affected by the arrival and incursion of settler colonial people?
- What was the nature and extent of Quaker involvement in the ensuing genocide, land theft, and forced assimilation of the peoples indigenous to this continent?
- What was the nature and extent of Friends' role in operating and legitimizing compulsory day and boarding schools for Native children, where language, religious, and cultural assimilation were violently enforced, and where kidnapping, torture, and preventable child death were common?
- What are the current effects of colonization specific to our region?
- To what extent is our current property and wealth derived from land and resources appropriated from Native peoples? To what extent are we led to compensate Native peoples through investment in Native nations or Native-led projects that support Indigenous rights, health, or autonomy, such as sharing property, paying rent as suggested by Native people, or returning the land?
- How do we interrupt anti-Indigenous behavior and language?

... to identify ways in which these commitments are honored within each annual State of the Meeting report.

A Member stated that she feels the proposed minute is very effective and appreciates the work that went into it.

Another Friend asked what the next step is. Steve answered that there are two paths that this will go on. The first is within our Meeting, and the journey will continue. The other path is, after it is approved by our Meeting, it will be sent to Peace and Social Concerns Committee at SAYMA for dissemination to other Monthly Meetings and to ask them to consider approving a minute of support for Indigenous Peoples.

A Member asked if this will be shared with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, and the Clerk said we will have to discern how we will communicate this to them. There is also a seminar scheduled in September at UNCA with local Indigenous speakers and this may be an opportunity to share with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

**Minute #10:** The Meeting approved the Minute of Support for Indigenous Peoples.

The Meeting closed with silent worship until the way opens for our next Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business in the Seventh Month, 2023.

**Attachments:**

[05-31-2023 Finance Report](#)

Email from Sue Stigleman

From: **Sue STIGLEMAN** <[ssigleman@bellsouth.net](mailto:ssigleman@bellsouth.net)>

Date: Thu, May 4, 2023 at 4:49 PM

Subject: Transferring my AFM membership

To: [ashevillefriends@gmail.com](mailto:ashevillefriends@gmail.com) <[ashevillefriends@gmail.com](mailto:ashevillefriends@gmail.com)>

Hello! I am a member of AFM. I now live in Black Mountain, and I'd like to have my membership transferred to the Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting. What is the procedure for doing that?

Thank you!

--sue

Hi Sue,

Thanks for getting in touch. I don't believe I've had the pleasure of meeting you. Perhaps others on our Ministry & Council (M&C) know you. You'll notice that I'm copying them on this email.

Generally, the membership transfer process is that you send your request to AFM and to SVFM. We will consider this email your request to AFM and as Clerk I am forwarding your request to M&C. At the next M&C meeting, we'll consider your request and then I'll forward our recommendation to SVFM. Then SVFM will consider your request and our recommendation & let you know their decision.

Since you've already sent your request to AFM, I suggest that you go ahead and send your request to Pat Meehan, Clerk of SVFM. His email is [patmeehan1603@gmail.com](mailto:patmeehan1603@gmail.com). Please let him know that we at AFM are in the process of sending our recommendation to him.

Thanks for your membership at AFM and we wish you all the best in BM. Take care.

Pat Johnson

AFM Clerk

[patmeehan1603@gmail.com](mailto:patmeehan1603@gmail.com).

Hi Pat,

It's Pat J from AFM. Hope all is well down the road in Black Mountain.

I'm delighted to report that our Meeting considered the request from Sue Stigleman to transfer her membership to SVFM and we wholeheartedly recommend her to you. Many in our Meeting have fond memories of her and her children when they attended. We're very glad that she wants to continue her membership with Friends. We wish her and all of you all the best as you continue in your faith journey. Take care.

Pat Johnson

Clerk, Asheville Friends Meeting

[patmeehan1603@gmail.com](mailto:patmeehan1603@gmail.com).

Thanks Pat. I got your email on Sue. I assume that this constitutes AFM's recommendation and shall pass it onto our business meeting for discernment.

AS I mentioned, Sue is already fitting into our community.

 Lennora Bierce.pdf