

2010 YBM Numbered Minutes

10YBM01 The first meeting for worship with a concern for business of the 48th annual gathering of the Southeastern Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends began with open worship at 4:05 pm, April 1, 2010.

10YBM02 SEYM accepts the YM Treasurer's report.

10YBM03 SEYM approves the General Fund Budget for Fiscal Year 2010-2011, as corrected.

10YBM04 At the 5th plenary session of the 48th annual meeting of Southeastern Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends held the fourth day of April, 2010, SEYM approved the following minute on SEYM's relationship with Friends United Meeting:

Minute on SEYM Relationship with FUM

Having sought over the past five years to gain clarity over the issue of our yearly meeting's relationship with Friends United Meeting (FUM), The Friends of Southeastern Yearly Meeting (SEYM) have discerned three separate issues confronting us in our struggle to resolve this matter.

First, we acknowledge SEYM's opposition to the FUM personnel policy with its discrimination against our gay and lesbian Friends. Our core belief of that of God in every person leads us to confirm our continuing support and love for our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer Friends.

Next, we embrace our desire to honor and respect our FUM Friends and their healing work across the world. We also recognize the generous and invaluable assistance and nurturing given to us from FUM years ago in our process of organizing as a Yearly Meeting. Many have spoken of a wish to "remain in loving relationship" with FUM, supporting their ministry spiritually, materially, and practically as we aid and support those of our body who are led to work them.

Finally, with regard to the question of our membership in FUM, there is a clear sense among SEYM Friends to lay it down. There are Friends among us who continue to feel strong ties with FUM. Many SEYM Friends readily unite with FUM's work, while many SEYM Friends have difficulty with the theology implicit in the FUM purpose statement.

SEYM Friends approve this minute with a sense of peace, gratitude and resolution, while recognizing that some Friends feel sadness and loss.

As an affirmation of who we are, the Marriage and Commitment Section of our Faith and Practice defines marriage as a union between a couple before God, and deliberately does not define what constitutes a couple in terms of gender. Our experience in SEYM has been that spiritual gifts are distributed by how Friends are called and their faithfulness to that call, not by marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. SEYM affirms its continuing support for our gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer Friends

It is our deep desire to remain in a loving relationship with FUM, supporting and sharing in their efforts to carry on God's work in the world.

SEYM formerly lays down its membership in FUM. We look forward to continuing Spirit-led, loving interaction with FUM and are mindful that continuing revelation may enable us to find more common ground in the future through the power of God in work we do together.

10YBM05 Given minute 10YBM04, SEYM approves a Minute of Procedure for the SEYM/FUM Relationship:

Having affirmed the intention to remain in loving relationship with Friends United Meeting (FUM), SEYM will appoint and fund , through the Yearly Meeting's Travel process, an Observer to attend a FUM General Board meeting once a year. That person will report annually to the Yearly Meeting business sessions of SEYM.

SEYM will also fund an amount to FUM sufficient to cover the cost of their communications with our FUM Observer. Discernment regarding annual support of specific FUM projects will continue.

10YBM06 Southeastern Yearly Meeting is very grateful to our Walton Lecture and retreat leaders, Betsy Neale and Richard Mitchell. Their faithful, comprehensive sharing on the "Jesus of History" helped us to examine what it means to examine what it means to live in Jesus' "Upside-Down" Kingdom in the 21st Century and why the historical Jesus may be important to a wide variety of Friends.

10YBM07 SEYM is deeply grateful to Sylvia Graves, General Secretary of Friends United Meeting, for attending and joining wholeheartedly with the activities of our annual gathering. Her workshop on the global ministries of FUM was inspiring. Her engagement with many of us in conversation and her words during the plenary helped us to understand FUM in a deeper way. Sylvia is deeply grounded in the Spirit.

10YBM08 SEYM is profoundly grateful to Cathy Gaskill, a Friend who has been and continues to be our mother and sister of Quakerism within SEYM since our early days. She speaks the Light that has been given to her clearly so that we all remember our Quaker roots and what it means to live the testimonies with each other and the wider world. She is a faithful, joyful Quaker storyteller who opens our hearts to love and action.

10YBM09 SEYM deeply appreciates the spiritually grounded, multi-tasking leadership of Ellie Caldwell, clerk of the SEYM Gathering committee and the acting coordinator, in making our annual gathering possible. SEYM also thanks the entire Gathering Committee for their part in providing the opportunity for SEYM to gather as a blessed community.

10YBM10 SEYM approves the Nominating Committee Report.

10YBM11 SEYM approves, with gratitude to the Epistle Committee, the Yearly Meeting Epistle with corrections and refers the Yearly Meeting Epistle for further consideration by the Yearly Meeting clerk and Epistle Committee. Both minutes pertaining to the SEYM/FUM relationship are to be included.