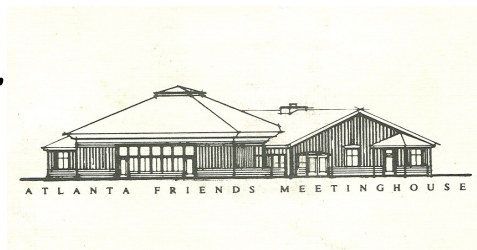


# Atlanta Friends Meeting Newsletter

Atlanta Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). All are welcome.



Meeting for Worship  
Each First Day (Sunday)  
10:00 – 11:00 a.m.  
701 W. Howard Ave.  
Decatur, GA 30030

## March 2012

**Query:** Are our Meetings for Worship held in expectant waiting for Divine Guidance and openness to the Inner Light? Is there a living silence in which we feel drawn together by the power of God in our midst?

### Stories of Spiritual Journey

Mary Ann Downey

Courtney Siceloff was one of the first to greet me when I began coming to the Atlanta Friends Meeting. After he learned of my summer internship with AFSC, we began exchanging stories about work camps and AFSC. Courtney and his wife, Elizabeth, became close friends. I gradually learned more about the many ways they found to translate faith into practice. But only many years later, at our Yearly Meeting's evening plenary, did I hear Courtney speak about his spiritual journey among Friends that I felt I knew him in 'that which is eternal'. I realized then that our meeting did not often provide the opportunity for Friends to share their spiritual journeys and that I could miss the life experience, the beliefs, and the core truths that made them Friends. I also realized that Courtney and many Friends in the Atlanta Meeting were 75 or older and that we risked losing their stories.

"Stories of the Elders" project was born from this concern, and I began recruiting our oldest Friends to speak to our weekly Adult Religious Education class. They were offered class time to tell their stories. After some asked for guidelines, I developed the following list of questions:

- What were your early experiences with religion and lessons about God?
- How did your concept of God or religion change as you reflected on these early lessons?
- What turning points brought you closer to or away from God?
- What influence did education, career, marriage, or children have on your faith and practice?
- How did you learn about Friends? What led you to this meeting?
- How has the meeting supported your spiritual journey?
- What do you believe now?

Since we began this project in 2007, we've heard and recorded the stories once each month of more than 50 Friends and there are more scheduled. We now have stories from all of the 'elders' who were able and willing. Some Friends have been reluctant to speak, and I know from the experience of talking about my spiritual journey that it is hard.

On November 5, 2011, our meeting enjoyed a day-long Quaker Quest workshop led by Friends from FGC and I heard two meeting Friends speak about their experience with the testimony of simplicity, along with opportunities to speak and hear from others in meeting on several issues. What touched me was our shared struggle to say what we believe. In addition to sharing spiritual journeys, we are also experimenting with a Quakerism 101 class in which Friends speak about their experience with one of the testimonies. This is proving to be a good way to not only introduce newcomers to our beliefs and practice, but also for all of us to get to know more about each other.

This experience of sharing our deepest self guides us to live up to the light that we have, and to realize the gift of more light. Everyone who speaks tells me that the challenge of articulating their spiritual journey or speaking about a testimony enriches them, giving them new insights. Recording Friends who speak allows us to build an archive that can be shared among us and with other seekers. Perhaps the greatest benefit is that the more we know each other in that which is eternal, the deeper our meeting for worship becomes, and the further we extend William Penn's "holy experiment."

## Books Recently Purchased for the Meetinghouse Library

*Absence of Mind: The Dispelling of Inwardness from the Modern Myth of the Self.*

Marilynne Robinson. Yale University Press, 2011. In this ambitious book, acclaimed writer Marilynne Robinson applies her astute intellect to some of the most vexing topics in the history of human thought—science, religion, and consciousness. Crafted with the same care and insight as her award-winning novels, and drawn from her 2009 Terry lectures at Yale, *Absence of Mind* challenges postmodern atheists who crusade against religion under the banner of science. In Robinson's view, scientific reasoning does not denote a sense of logical infallibility, as thinkers like Richard Dawkins might suggest. Instead, in its purest form, science represents a search for answers. It engages the problem of knowledge as an aspect of the mystery of consciousness, rather than providing a simple and final model of reality. By defending the importance of individual reflection, Robinson celebrates the power and variety of human consciousness in the tradition of William James.

*Abundant Simplicity: Discovering the Unhurried Rhythms of Grace.* Jan Johnson, 2011. Simplicity is about choosing the engaging, relational life we were meant to live. It means shedding obligation and pretension. It means spending time, energy, and money in ways that help us become clear-headed. It means being intentional about what we do and how we live. These choices allow God's power to move through us and bless others as we have space to do good. In each chapter, Johnson provides small experiments with simplicity as well as posing questions for discussion or reflection.

*Imagination and Spirit: A Contemporary Quaker Reader.* Ed. Brent Brill. Friends United Press, 2002. From essays about the "mystery at the core of all being" to a murder mystery by Irene Allen, *Imagination and Spirit* offers some of the "best of the best" of contemporary Quaker nonfiction and fiction, with a brief biography of each author. Includes selections from writings of popular 20th and 21st-century Quaker writers Thomas Kelly, Douglas Steere, D. Elton Trueblood, James Michener, Jessamyn West, Jan de Hartog, Daisy Newman, Tom Mullen, Richard Foster, Phil Gulley, Scott Russell Sanders, Elizabeth Gray Vining, Elfrida Vipont Foulds, and David Yount.

*In Praise of Doubt: How To Have Convictions Without Becoming A Fanatic.* Peter Berger and Anton Zijderveld. HarperOne, 2009. As a culture and as individuals, we find it much easier to articulate what we are against than what we are for. In this book the authors show how we can have confidence in our convictions - in such ideals as democracy, human rights, equality under the law -- without succumbing to the radical doubts of relativism or the false certainties of fundamentalism. With new lenses for seeing the influence of modernism, relativism and fundamentalism, Berger and Zijderveld explore the roles of humor, doubt, and social norms that let us have convictions without grasping them so tightly that we become fanatics.

*I Love Dirt! 52 Activities to Help You and Your Kids Discover the Wonders of Nature.* Jennifer Ward and Susie Ghahremani. Trumpeter Press, 2008. Packed with activities to help kids discover the wonders of nature, this collection offers alternatives to electronic games and gets kids and caregivers outside. Each activity presents a project meant to promote exploration, stimulate imagination, and heighten a sense of wonder.

*If the World Were a Village: A Book about the World's People.* David Smith, illus. Shelagh Armstrong. Kids Can Press, 2002. "To make the idea of a world of 6.2 billion people more understandable, Smith suggests that children imagine the population of the world as a village of just 100 people. Each double-page, picture-book spread relates a few consciousness-raising facts about such topics as nationalities, food, language, and religion. . . . This highly informative book will get kids thinking and asking questions." -- Booklist

### Creation Care Begins at Home

Georgia Interfaith Power and Light (GIPL) is a nonprofit organization that has been working with faith communities in Georgia over the past nine years on creation care, more specifically on issues of energy conservation and renewable energy, climate change being the overarching concern. Many congregations in Georgia have had a GIPL-provided energy audit of congregational buildings. An energy audit is a wonderful way to help a congregation understand how it uses energy and how it can improve efficiency. GIPL is now offering training on **home** energy audits for interested members of congregations. This training will cover patterns of energy use, the building envelope, heating and cooling systems, lighting, appliances, and water use. This is a good opportunity for members of the congregation to become educated on energy usage.

Dan May will present GIPL's Home Energy Audit Training at AFM on Saturday, April 21, from 9:30 to 12. (Includes a free goodie bag!) Sign up at <http://gipl.org/Content/HEAT.asp>, or contact Dan May (sdmay@mindspring.com, 404.377.6326).

---

Aaron Ruscetta and Sally MacEwen invite all Members, Attenders and Friends to witness and celebrate the renewal of our June 1983 Life Partner Vows as we join in marriage under the care of Atlanta Friends Meeting.

Eleventh day, third month (March 11), 2012  
Atlanta Friends Meeting House  
701 West Howard Avenue, Decatur GA

12:45 pm light lunch; 1:30 ceremony begins; 2:30 cake and celebration  
We desire nothing but your presence!

If you wish to give us a gift, please send a donation to the Founders' Fund at  
The Friends School of Atlanta  
862 South Columbia Drive  
Decatur, GA 30030

---

### Plan now for the Gathered Meeting Retreat, April 13-15

Each year, the Atlanta Friends Gathered Meeting Retreat is held to support spiritual growth and deepen our sense of community. All are encouraged to attend, whether you are new or seasoned in our Meeting. This year, our retreat will be held from April 13-15, 2012. There will be separate activities for children with opportunities for them also to fold into the adult program at times. **Partial scholarships are available -- please don't let funding keep you from being part of this wonderful experience.** Vonn New, from New York, has been leading workshops at FGC and around the country for several years at Quaker Meetings.

The retreat is being held at the **Charlie Elliott Center in Mansfield, GA**, about one hour east of the perimeter. Cost, **including meals**: single room (**\$220**); two people per room (**\$140/person**); three per room (**\$133/person**); four per room (**\$130/person**). The cost per person **includes all meals** from Friday night dinner through Sunday lunch.

**Retreat registration deadline: March 30<sup>th</sup>; Family registration deadline: March 11<sup>th</sup>**

The retreat registration form is on the Greeter's table and on the website.

**Atlanta Friends Meeting**  
**Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business**  
**February 19, 2012**  
**Recorded Pending Approval**

Meeting opened with a period of silent worship.

**Clerk's Reading and Reflections:** David Foster read a selection from *Listening Spirituality (Volume 2): Corporate Spiritual Practice among Friends* (Patricia Loring, 2009).

**Query:** On behalf of Ministry & Worship, Steve Collins presented the query, "Is the vocal ministry in our Meeting exercised under the leading of the Spirit, without previous planning, and in simplicity and sincerity of Truth? Before speaking, do you consider whether the message that comes to you results in your clearness and is solely for yourself, or whether it will be helpful or edifying to others in the Meeting?"

**In attendance were:** Mike Aland, Jason Barone-Cichocki, Julia Barone-Cichocki, Muireann Brennan, Mark Bryans, Steve Collins, Lili Crymes, Mary Ann Downey, Betsy Eggers, Julia Ewen, Sally Ferguson, Oliver Ferrari, Jenny Foster, Clive Gordon, Judith Greenberg, Bill Holland, Kathy Johnson, Elizabeth Lamb, George Lamb, Lynn Leuszler, Georgia Lord, Sally MacEwen, Laura Norlin, John Roberts, Beth Ruddiman, Aaron Ruscetta, Peter Sederberg, Bert Skellie, Karen Skellie, Mark Smith, Eleanor Soler, Jim Tolmach, Myrna Trapp, Perry Treadwell, Pat Williams, Maggie Wise, Caroline Noyes (Recording Clerk), David Foster (Clerk) (38 Friends)

**Matters for Discernment**

**Ministry and Worship:** On behalf of Ministry and Worship, Bill Holland brought forward for approval the marriage of Sally MacEwen and Aaron Ruscetta. A clearness committee has found them clear for marriage, and Ministry and Worship recommends Atlanta Friends Meeting take this marriage under our care. Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the following minute:

**Minute 12-02-01:** On the recommendation of the Ministry and Worship Committee, we joyfully approve taking the marriage of Sally MacEwen and Aaron Ruscetta under our tender care.

Ministry and Worship also recommends the Meeting approve the following Friends to serve on the marriage committee for Aaron and Sally: Caroline Noyes, Elizabeth and Rick Martinson, Georgia Lord and Lynn Leuszler. The Meeting for Worship for Marriage is scheduled for Sunday, March 11 at 1pm. Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the following minute:

**Minute 12-02-02:** On the recommendation of the Ministry and Worship Committee, we ask Elizabeth and Rick Martinson, Georgia Lord, Lynn Leuszler and Caroline Noyes to serve as the marriage committee for Aaron and Sally.

**Newsletter Editor Support Committee:** On behalf of the committee, Bill Holland presented a Minute of Appreciation for Perry Treadwell for his work as newsletter editor. Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the following minute:

**Minute 12-02-03:** Perry Treadwell served the Atlanta Friends Meeting as Newsletter Editor from June 2009 until December 2011. During his tenure as editor, Perry faithfully produced the newsletter in a timely manner. Drawing on his wide experience among Friends, Perry included in the newsletter information and new insights from across the Society of Friends, and diligently solicited submissions from members of the Meeting to make the newsletter a vital and living part of our community life. Perry challenged us to find ways to provide greater support for the newsletter

editor. He encouraged the formation of a Newsletter Advisory Committee to assist the editor with both editorial direction and gathering content. Perry also asked us to consider if the newsletter remained a living record of our life together. By doing so, he highlighted the important role of the newsletter as a vehicle for engaging in deeper discussion with one another. Atlanta Friends Meeting thanks Perry Treadwell for his service to the Meeting.

**State of the Meeting Report:** Georgia Lord read a draft of the 2011 State of the Meeting Report. Friends offered comments and suggestions, and expressed appreciation for Georgia's efforts in preparing this clear articulation of the life of the Meeting during 2011. The amended Report will be brought forth for approval in Third Month, with Georgia circulating a revised draft prior to that meeting.

**Friend in Residence:** on behalf of the ad hoc Friend in Residence Search Committee, Jim Tolmach presented a minute on the extension of John Robert's role as Friend in Residence. Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the following minute:

**Minute 12-02-04:** We support the continued residency of John Roberts through August 15 to allow time for a smooth transition for a new resident, possibly as early as Sept 1. The committee is open to extending the stay into September if a new resident is not yet in place to begin Sept 1. John's ministry will continue to be focused on Social Concerns and Green Friends, and John is working now on plans for a forum that he will present to the Meeting soon.

**Quaker Quest:** on behalf of the Quaker Quest ad hoc committee, Bert Skellie brought forth a Minute on Public Sessions. Quaker Quest practice sessions have been occurring, and currently 10-12 Friends are actively involved in the planning process. This minute addresses the Meeting's willingness to have public Quaker Quest sessions. Atlanta Friends Meeting has \$1,000 in the 2012 budget for Quaker Quest. In addition, Social Concerns has \$500 for publicity, and donations will be sought for any additional funds that are needed.

There was an extended period of worshipful discernment with numerous messages that spoke of concerns for the Meeting's readiness to undertake this new outreach, that articulated strong faith in the Meeting's ability and willingness to grow into this expanded ministry, and that gave voice to felt needs for the benefits it would bring to the Meeting and the large community. Out of this discernment process, a clear sense of the Meeting emerged. Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the following minute:

**Minute 12-02-05:** Atlanta Friends Meeting will conduct Quaker Quest public sessions as early as the Fall of 2012. The Meeting's ad hoc Committee on Quaker Quest and Outreach will be responsible for organizing these sessions, including planning, internal preparation within the Meeting, and publicity.

## **Reports**

**Ministry & Worship:** on behalf of Ministry and Worship, Bill Holland reported on the request for marriage by Lissa Place and Glen Satell. The clearness committee has found them clear, and Ministry and Worship will bring forward a recommendation to approve the marriage under the care of the Meeting in Third Month.

**FCNL Forum** – on behalf of Sue May, Caroline Noyes summarized the worship-sharing forum on January 29th. Mary Jahntz clerked the forum, and 25 Friends responded to the query: "How are we led by the Light of the Spirit to witness for good government, peace, and justice? What issues are we led to bring forth as priorities for FCNL in its lobbying and public education work in the next session of Congress?" Four themes emerged: a) addressing the adversarial, often toxic environment of public discourse; b) concern for children and their future; c) working to counteract the dehumanization and

demonizing of individuals, cultures, and countries; and d) protecting the earth. These concerns will be offered into the FCNL process by which they establish their priorities for attention during the next Congress, which convenes in January 2013.

Diane Randall, the Executive Secretary of Friends Committee on National Legislation will be visiting with Atlanta Friends Meeting on February 26, 2012.

**Green Friends:** on behalf of Green Friends, Peter Sederberg presented a letter of support for the "Save our Climate Act" introduced by Representative Pete Stark (D-CA). The Citizens Climate Lobby authored the letter, and further discernment as to whether Atlanta Friends Meeting endorses the legislation and signs on to this letter will be sought in Third Month.

**Clerk's Items:** 2011 Census:

Births/Adoptions: Arlie Rose Hallward (7/13), Evan Wuichet

Deaths: Ceal Wutka (2/26), Ann Byrne (11/11), Alex Horsley (12/1)

Transfers In: Peter Sederberg (4th month), Laura Norlin (5<sup>th</sup> month), David Foster (11<sup>th</sup> month)

Transfers Out: Peter McCaughan, Renda McCaughan, Anthony Smith

New Members: Dana Goldman (3<sup>rd</sup> month), David Payne (6<sup>th</sup> month), John Day (9<sup>th</sup> month),  
Diana Day (9<sup>th</sup> month), Alex Zinnes (12<sup>th</sup> month)

**Approval of Minutes of First Month Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business:**

**Minute 12-02-06:** Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the minutes of First Month Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business without corrections.

Meeting closed with silent worship.

Respectfully Submitted,

David Foster, Clerk

Caroline Noyes, Recording Clerk

---

## AFM Adult Religious Education

On March 4, Cal Gough will speak about his spiritual journey. During the rest of March, we will continue our Quakerism 101 series using the book **A Light That is Shining: An Introduction to the Quakers** by Harvey Gillman. Gillman describes our beliefs, manner of worship, how faith guides action, the meaning of membership and other topics. Copies are available from Bill Holland. All are welcome to join the class any Sunday from 9 - 9:50 am in the meetinghouse library. See the April newsletter for more sessions.

### Watch Quakers as they Eat

This month's Newcomer's Dinner will be held at 6:30 pm on Sunday, March 18 at the house of David Payne and Audrey Goodman, 552 Page Avenue, Candler Park. Newcomers and oldtimers are welcome. RSVP for directions and more to [dpayne83@gmail.com](mailto:dpayne83@gmail.com).

### From the Directory Editor

If you haven't already done so, please check the draft of the 2012 directory, which is on the table by the front door in the greeting room at the meeting house, for any changes, corrections, additions, or deletions. -- Nina Gooch

## Calendar for 3rd Month (March) 2012

### Area Meetings for Worship

- Every First Day (Sunday), 10:00 a.m. – Meetinghouse, with a smaller group in the Library.  
Every First Day, 12:30 p.m. – Carrollton Friends Worship Group.  
St. Andrew's UMC Youth Center, 1106 Maple St.; Margaret Bray, 770-830-8705.  
Every 2d and 4th First Day, 10:00 a.m. – Canton Friends Worship Group.  
360 E. Marietta St.; 779-720-4669 or wrldpeas@mindspring.com.  
Every 2d First Day, 10:30 a.m. -- Macon Friends Worship Group.  
Contact Diana Day, 478-227-8892; maconquakers.org.  
Every Fourth Morning (Wednesday) Worship, 8:30 a.m. – Library.  
Contact Jonah McDonald, 404-377-2474; afmquakers@hotmail.com.  
Every Fourth Evening (Wednesday), 7:00 p.m. – Meeting Room.  
Contact Christina Repoley, 404-840-3005; christinarepoley@gmail.com  
First Fifth Morning (Thursday) – AFSC office, 60 Walton St. NW, Atlanta.  
Fifth Day (Thursday) (except 1st of the month), 12:10 pm – East Lake Commons, Decatur.  
Contact Bert Skellie, 404-378-5883, bertskellie@gmail.com.  
Sixth Day (Friday) (2d week of August through May), 8:45 a.m. – Friends School of Atlanta.  
Community Meeting Room, 862 Columbia Dr., Decatur, 404-373-8746.

### Weekly Events at the Meetinghouse

- Every First Day (Sunday)  
9:00 a.m. Adult Religious Education  
9:15 a.m. Singing, Classroom A/B  
10:00 a.m. Meeting for Worship  
Every Fourth Day (Wednesday)  
8:30-9:00 a.m. Morning Silent Worship, Library  
Every Second-Fifth Day (Monday-Thursday)  
8:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m. Smart Toddlers, Nursery playground  
Every Third Day (Tuesday)  
7:30 p.m. Silent Meditation, Meeting Room  
7:30 p.m. Bible Study, Library  
Every Fourth Day (Wednesday)  
7:00-8:30 p.m. Semi-Programmed Worship, Meeting Room

---

Clerk of the Meeting: David Foster, 404-941-7337

Recording Clerk: Caroline Noyes

Treasurer: Peter Sederberg, 404-968-9309      Ministry & Worship: Bill Holland, 404-692-2358

Finance: Paul Mangelsdorf, 770-677-4280      Care & Counsel: Laura Norlin, 404-762-3540

Religious Ed.: Alison Mawle, 404-944-9142      Office Coordinator: Jonah McDonald

Social Concerns: Michael Allison, 770-832-3539; Bert Skellie, 404-378-5883

Newsletter Editor: David Payne, atlquakerltr@gmail.com

Webmaster: Aaron Ruscetta, arxaaron@gmail.com

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING  
701 W HOWARD AVE  
DECATUR GA 30030-2902

**ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING**  
**701 West Howard Ave., Decatur, GA 30030**  
**atlanta.quaker.org**

**Office: MWF 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.; afmquakers@hotmail.com**  
**Clerk: David Foster, 404-941-7337; dfoster45@gmail.com**  
**Treasurer: Peter Sederberg, 404-968-9309; afmtreasurer@yahoo.com**  
**Newsletter Editor: David Payne, atlquakerltr@gmail.com**

If you would like to have a permanent nametag made, leave a request in one of the baskets on the front table. Indicate whether you prefer one that hangs around the neck or that pins. When Carol Gray has made one for you, it will be placed in the black file box on the greeting table.

If you would like to be included in the AFM database and receive the Newsletter by mail and/or appear in future AFM Directories, please send your name and contact information to Nina Gooch at ninagooch@gmail.com or 404-371-9873. Please indicate if you want to be in the directory, receive the newsletter by mail, or both.

Contributions to the Atlanta Friends Meeting may be placed in the slot marked "Contributions" in the greeting area of the Meetinghouse or mailed to the Treasurer at the above address. Thank you!

*This newsletter is a publication of the Atlanta Friends Meeting. Views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Meeting.*

To receive the Newsletter via e-mail, send a blank e-mail to afmnewsletter-subscribe@yahoogroups.com from the address where you want to receive the newsletter. You will receive a note back from Yahoo asking you to confirm your subscription; hit reply and you will be added to the list at no charge. To receive general announcements and to participate in discussion, follow the same instructions, but address the note to afmdiscussion-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. To receive announcements relating directly to the life of the meeting, send the same note to afmannouncements-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

**DEADLINE FOR 4TH MONTH NEWSLETTER:  
MARCH 18**

Readers are encouraged to submit letters, articles, notices and anything else of interest to Friends. Items should be sent directly to atlquakerltr@gmail.com **in plain text in the body of the email. Texts may be edited for length and format. Pictures should be submitted in .jpg format.**