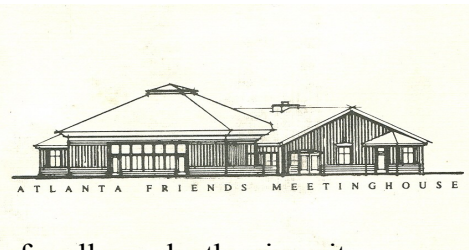


Atlanta Friends Meeting Newsletter

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

April 2012

Query: Do you express in your life the love for all people, the sincerity and simplicity, which Jesus lived and taught? Do you regularly make time for inward reflection and communion with God? Are you receptive to the Divine Light within, that its power growing in you may rule your life?

Quakers and Capitalism

Thomas Kenworthy has reminded us that a number of writers, including John Bogle, founder of the Vanguard Funds, and James Surowiecki, a frequent contributor on economics to *The New Yorker*, have recently highlighted Quakers' foundational role in the capitalist world-system. Here are two excerpts.

James Surowiecki, "A Virtuous Cycle," *Forbes Magazine*, December 23, 2002:

In 18th- and early 19th-century Britain a sizable chunk of the nation's economy was run by members of the religious sect known as the Quakers. Quakers owned more than half of the country's ironworks. They were key players in banking (both Barclays and Lloyds were Quaker institutions). They dominated consumer businesses like chocolate and biscuits. And they were instrumental in facilitating the transatlantic trade between Britain and America.

Initially their success was built around the benefits Quakers got from trading with one another. Because they dissented from the Church of England, members of the sect were barred from the professions and as a result gravitated toward business. When Quakers went looking for credit or for trade, then, they found it easy to partner with fellow believers. Their common faith facilitated trust, allowing a Quaker tradesman in London to ship goods across the ocean and be certain that he would be paid when they arrived in Philadelphia.

Quaker prosperity did not go unnoticed by the outside world. They were well known already for their personal emphasis on absolute honesty, and as businessmen they were famously rigorous and careful in their recordkeeping. They also introduced innovations like fixed prices, which stressed transparency over sharp dealing. All of this clean living, as it were, paid off. Soon, people outside the sect began to seek out Quakers as trading partners, suppliers and sellers. And as Quaker prosperity grew, people drew a connection between that prosperity and the sect's reputation for reliability and trustworthiness. In the long run, observant businessmen came to see, being trustworthy was more lucrative than being Machiavellian. Honesty was the best policy.

Or so it once seemed. In the wake of the corporate scandals of the [early 21st century], the idea that trustworthiness and business success go hand in hand now appears almost painfully naive. We've grown used to the spectacle of chief executives looting companies and walking away with tens or hundreds of millions of dollars while leaving their shareholders, their employees and their creditors with little or nothing. And the idea has taken hold that the Enrons and WorldComs are not aberrations, but rather the inevitable by-products of a system that plays to people's worst impulses: greed, cynicism and selfishness. What happened at Enron, the argument goes, was a perfect expression of capitalism and its excesses.

This argument sounds plausible, if only because capitalist rhetoric so often stresses the need to destroy the other guy and the virtues of what "Chainsaw Al" Dunlap liked to call "mean business." But this popular image of capitalism bears little resemblance to its reality, and if you wanted to find a real example of how the system works, you'd be better off picking one of those Quaker tradesmen than you would Jeffrey Skilling. Over time, in fact, the evolution of capitalism has been in the direction of more

trust and transparency, and less self-serving behavior; not coincidentally, this evolution has brought with it greater productivity and economic growth.

That evolution, of course, has not taken place because capitalists are naturally good people. Instead, it's taken place because the benefits of trust--that is, of being trusting and of being trustworthy--are potentially immense and because a successful market system teaches people to recognize those benefits. At this point, it's been well demonstrated that flourishing economies require a healthy level of trust in the reliability and fairness of everyday transactions. If you assumed every potential deal was a rip-off or that the products you were buying were probably going to be lemons, then very little business would get done. More important, the costs of the transactions that did take place would be exorbitant, since you'd have to do enormous work to investigate each deal and you'd have to rely on the threat of legal action to enforce every contract. For an economy to prosper, what's needed is not a Pollyannaish faith that everyone else has your best interests at heart --"caveat emptor" remains an important truth -- but a basic confidence in the promises and commitments that people make about their products and services.

From John C. Bogle, *Don't Count on It!* John Wiley & Sons, 2011.

[After quoting Surowiecki's article at length, Bogle continues on page 103:] Then something went wrong. The system changed -- "a pathological mutation in capitalism," as an essay [by William Pfaff] described it. The classic system -- *owners' capitalism* -- had been based on a dedication to serving the interests of a corporation's owners in maximizing the return on their capital investment. But a new system developed -- *managers' capitalism* -- in which "the corporation came to be run to profit its managers, in complicity if not conspiracy with accountants and the managers of other corporations." Why did it happen? "Because," [Pfaff] says, "the markets had so diffused corporate ownership that *no responsible owner exists*. This is morally unacceptable, but also a corruption of capitalism itself."

It is now crystal-clear that our capitalistic system -- as all systems sometimes do -- has experienced a profound failure, a failure with a whole variety of root causes, each interacting with and reinforcing the other: the stock market mania, driven by the idea that we were in a New Era; the notion that our corporations were trees that could grow not only to the sky but beyond; the rise of the imperial chief executive officer; the failure of our gatekeepers -- those auditors, regulators, legislators, and boards of directors who forgot to whom they owed their loyalty; the change in our financial institutions from being stock owners to being stock traders; the hype of Wall Street's stock promoters; the frenzied excitement of the media; and, of course, the eager and sometimes greedy members of the investing public, reveling in the easy wealth that seemed like a cornucopia, at least while it lasted. There is plenty of blame to go around. But even as it drove stock prices up, this happy conspiracy among all of the interested parties drove business standards down. Yes, the victory of investors in the Great Bull Market had a thousand fathers. But the defeat in the Great Bear Market that followed seems to have been an orphan.

Adult Education Continued

One Friend's Story; Quakerism 101; Beyond Consensus

Start April with Ron Nuse's account of his journey to Friends on April 1; continue hearing about Friends from the past and now as we discuss *A Light that is Shining* by Harvey Gillman.

On April 29, you can learn how Quakers seek Spirit-led unity in *Beyond Consensus: Salvaging the Sense of the Meeting* by Barry Morley.

See Bill Holland for books. The class meets each Sunday in the library at meeting from 9:00-9:50. All are welcome!

A Wedding among Friends

On Eleventh Day, Third Month, 2012, M. Aaron Ruscetta and Sally Anne MacEwen renewed their marriage vows in the presence of Friends and family at a Meeting for Worship with Attention to Marriage.

They had pledged their vows to one another during a 10,000 mile motorcycle trip in 1983. This time their celebration of loving commitment was officiated by their daughter, Elaine Ruscetta. She observed that it wasn't often that a child should have the opportunity to read the marriage certificate that her parents would sign. After exchanging vows, Aaron and Sally signed the certificate.

What followed during the silence was an outpouring of kind words and song. The service ended with a song by George Pettis: "Tennis Shoes." Those attending then signed the certificate and enjoyed cake and punch. It was a beautiful day made more so by the outpouring of love.

Aaron has told the Meeting that following the service, Sally's health turned for the worse. After learning of her chances for survival, she decided to forego any further treatment and died at sunrise Thursday March 15, saying goodbye to family and Friends.

Sally's memorial service is scheduled for 1 p.m. on Saturday, May 5th, at the Friends School of Atlanta, 862 Columbia Drive, Decatur, GA 30030. In lieu of flowers or personal gifts, donations in Sally's memory can be made to the FSA "Legacy of Light" Fund.

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 30th.

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

Movie Night: April 27th at 7:30 -- Let's Do the Time Warp Again!

Movie Night in April will be on Friday, April 27th and will feature the cult classic *Rocky Horror Picture Show*! This is more than a movie: it is an experience. Although attendees will not be permitted to throw rice or toast, you are encouraged to bring such other traditional props as newspaper, flashlights, and smart aleck commentary. The program will start at 7:30 with a discussion about the period that spawned the Rocky Horror phenomenon.

The movie will be shown on the big screen in the Meeting Room. Attendees will be asked to donate whatever admission price they can afford and feel to be appropriate. Free Popcorn! You are welcome to bring snacks and drinks.

Atlanta Friends Meeting
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
March 18, 2012
Recorded Pending Approval

Meeting opened with a period of silent worship, after which Clerk David Foster read a selection from *A Testament of Devotion*, by Thomas R. Kelly (1941).

Query: On behalf of Ministry and Worship, Lynn Leuszler presented the 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?”

In Attendance were: Mike Aland, Micheal Allison, Muireann Brennan, Mark Bryans, Steve Collins, Mary Ann Downey, Betsy Eggers, Julia Ewen, Jenny Foster, Nina Gooch, Judith Greenberg, Bill Holland, Jack Honderd, Kathy Johnson, Elizabeth Lamb, George Lamb, Lynn Leuszler, Georgia Lord, Paul Mangelsdorf, Frank Masie, Caroline Morris, Karen terHorst Morris, Lissa Place, Steve Provost, John Roberts, Aaron Ruscetta, Glen Satall, Peter Sederberg, Joan Thompson, Myrna Trapp, Bert Skellie, Ellie Soler, Perry Treadwell, Denny Webster, Maggie Wise, Caroline Noyes (Recording Clerk), David Foster (Clerk), (37 Friends)

Matters for Discernment

Ministry and Worship Committee: On behalf of Ministry and Worship, Bill Holland brought forth for final approval the marriage of Lissa Place and Glen Satall, the wedding planned for May 12, 2012 at Hard Labor State Park.

Minute 12-03-01: On the recommendation of the Ministry and Worship Committee, Atlanta Friends Meeting approves taking the marriage of Lissa Place and Glen Satall under our care.

Minute 12-03-02: On the recommendation of Ministry and Worship Committee, we approve the following Friends to serve on the Marriage Committee: Don and Judy Bender, Christina Repoley, Gwen Davies, Hannah McDermott and Laura Norlin, and Judy Dahlia.

Administration Committee: On behalf of the Administration Committee, John Roberts, along with Steve Provost from the landscape architecture firm of JB+A Associates presented a concept master plan for the property behind the Meetinghouse encompassing the playground and the back lot. The concept master plan provides a guide for how we can use the space and build for the future. Highlights of the plan include relocation of the playground structures for both the younger and older children, installation of a stone drainage garden, and creating a woodland path that loops from the back through the gully and into the back lot, with potential decks that can be used for observation, ceremonies, and other gatherings. An additional suggestion is an outdoor amphitheatre or outdoor classroom that takes advantage of the steep hillside on the back lot.

The Administration Committee proposes breaking ground on the small children’s play area and addressing the drainage issues by modifying the open space (phase 1), and potentially doing the foundational grading and prepping for the larger children’s play area, the development of which will be in Phase 2.

Minute 12-03-03: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves in principle the concept master plan for developing our property.

Minute 12-03-04: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves moving forward with Phase 1, and parts of Phase 2 within the limits of the funds approved, and entrusts the finance and administration

committees with continuing to shepherd the process, bringing relevant information, questions, and concerns to the Meeting as necessary.

Finance Committee: On behalf of the Finance Committee, Paul Mangelsdorf reported the Finance Committee estimates that the Permanent Improvement fund will have \$70,000 by the end of this year, and recommends allocating \$30,000 for Property Phase 1 and as far in to Property Phase 2 as funds will allow.

Minute 12-03-05: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the allocation of \$30K of the permanent improvement fund for immediate use for Property Phase 1 and towards as much of Property Phase 2 as funds will permit.

Green Friends: Citizen's Climate Lobby letter endorsement

Minute 12-03-06: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves being a signatory to the letter by Citizen's Climate Lobby. It is noted that a few Friends expressed serious concerns about the viability and advisability of some of the particulars in the letter.

Clerk's Items: Georgia Lord presented the 2012 State of the Meeting report.

Minute 12-03-07: With thanks to Georgia Lord for her work, Friends accept the 2011 State of the Meeting Report, as amended, and approves the transmission of the final report to SAYMA.

Reports

Ministry & Worship Committee: Bill Holland reported that Ministry and Worship has received a letter from Mark Wutka requesting that his membership be transferred to Nashville Friends Meeting. He is planning on being married under the care of Nashville Friends Meeting on May 12, 2012.

A Meeting for Worship for Marriage for Sally MacEwen and Aaron Ruschetta was held on Sunday, March 11 at 1:30 pm. Friends and family joyfully participated in a moving worship celebrating and witnessing the marriage.

A forum will be held on the fifth Sunday in April on Meeting for Business. We will use of the pamphlet Beyond Consensus by Barry Morley, copies of which will be provided.

Nominating Committee: Steve Collins brought forth Karen Skellie as Atlanta Friends Meeting archivist. Final approval will be sought in Fourth month.

Clerk's Items: David Foster reported that Care and Counsel will be asked to present memorial minutes for Sally MacEwen and John Morris in Fourth Month. David also recently attended the SAYMA Representative Meeting, and will share his thoughts in Fourth Month. David is also writing a letter of introduction for Mary Ann Downey and Bill Holland as they travel to Ireland.

Members of SAYMA have been asked to respond to two queries posed by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). David is asking the ASFC representative and Social Concerns Committee to take the lead on crafting a response to the two queries:

- What one or two aspects of ASFC programs speak most clearly to your discernment of Quaker witness?
- If there is a particular need or opportunity in your yearly meeting's region for work furthering Friends' Testimonies—work that Friends in your yearly meeting might support and take on—perhaps with guidance or coordination with ASFC? How are you working on this now?

Friends are reminded that in order to accommodate the Gathered Meeting Retreat, the Fourth Month Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business will be held on April 22, 2012.

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

Minute 12-03-8: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the Minutes of Second Month Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business without corrections.

Respectfully submitted,

David Foster, Clerk

Caroline Noyes, Recording Clerk

A Note from the Clerk

Fourth Month's Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business will be held on April 22 (rather than April 15). We hope to see you there.

Recent Acquisitions by the Meetinghouse Library Committee

1. *Putting Away Childish Things* by Marcus Borg. "Borg has chosen fiction as the best vehicle for exploring Christianity, important questions of career and vocation, and thorny issues within the church such as fundamentalism and homosexuality. This imaginative excursion is handled with aplomb." Fic .B15
2. *The Purpose Driven Life* by Rick Warren. A forty-day spiritual journey by the evangelical writer – one chapter a day – with the goal of answering the question “What on earth am I here for?” 284.1 .W1
3. *Black Fire: African American Quakers on Spirituality and Human Rights*. Ed. Harold D. Weaver, Jr., Paul Kriese, and Stephen W. Angell. A gathering of the voices of 18 remarkable individuals who spoke and wrote as African Americans from within the Quaker community. They testify about their viewpoints on racial justice and speak of their life in the Spirit. 289.6 .W5
4. *40 Ways to Raise a Nonracist Child* by Barbara Mathias. Provides helpful and practical ways parents can teach important lessons about racism, and contains specific advice addressing the unique concerns of both white parents and parents of color. With topics ranging from how to select toys for toddlers to how to talk with teenagers about what they see on the evening news. 649.1 .M1
5. *Overcoming Violence: the Challenge to the Churches in All Places* by Margot Kassman. What can the churches do together to overcome violence in the home, on the streets, in the media? This book explores the opportunities and difficulties linked with the vocation of non-violence. 241.6 .K1
6. *Decision Making and Spiritual Discernment: the Sacred Art of Finding Your Way* by Nancy L. Bieber. "Weaves practical insights for cultivating discernment with page-turning stories and repeatable practices. It will create . . . healthy decisions that are the ripe fruit of ongoing practices for discernment." 204.4 B9

-- Judith Greenberg
(with more to come next month)

Calendar for Fourth Month (April) 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 4th Morning (Wednesday) Worship, 8:30 a.m. – Library.
Contact Jonah McDonald, 404-377-2474; afmquakers@hotmail.com.
Every 4th Evening (Wednesday), 7:00 p.m. – Meeting Room.
Contact Christina Repoley, 404-840-3005; christinarepoley@gmail.com.
First 5th Morning (Thursday) – AFSC office, 60 Walton St. NW, Atlanta.
5th Day (Thursday) (except 1st of the month), 12:10 pm – East Lake Commons, Decatur.
Contact Bert Skellie, 404-378-5883, bertskellie@gmail.com.
6th Day (Friday) (2nd 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

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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.

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**DEADLINE FOR 5TH MONTH NEWSLETTER:
APRIL 21**

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 in .jpg format.**