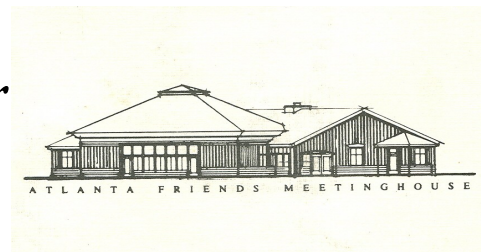


Atlanta Friends Meeting Newsletter

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

October 2013

Query: Do we work for peace in the world? Do we nurture peace within ourselves? Do we seek consistently to carry out this testimony for peace in all our relationships, including family, community, and work life?

A Message from Beth-Ann Buitekant

Hello Friends and friends. Two weeks ago I felt moved to speak at Meeting for Worship. I learned later that perhaps my words were not heard as intended and some thought I was leaving this spiritual home. I am writing this for clarification.

I have been attending Atlanta Friends Meeting since I came to Atlanta in 1981. I had never been exposed to a Quaker Meeting but found that I was running into people from Meeting at many of the activist functions I was attending. This was intriguing to me. I witnessed Quakers acting upon their true beliefs and I was inspired. My journey with Meeting began then and built even stronger with the birth of my daughter, Ruby-Beth. Eventually, we were led to my daughter's attendance at The Friends School of Atlanta and a bit later my position as Counselor at The Friends School of Atlanta. Along with my private psychotherapy practice, I simultaneously worked at FSA for many years. Last year, I decided it was simply time to leave my beloved position at FSA and just continue with my private practice.

While my spiritual life has been nurtured in so many ways at AFM, it has also been fed by my attendance at Bet Haverim, a Reconstructionist Synagogue which I first learned about when it met in its early days at the Meeting House. My path seems to run in simultaneous fashion because both the AFM and Bet Haverim have mutually been my spiritual homes. The focus for me two weeks ago at Meeting was the Jewish High Holy Days...Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, and Yom Kippur, Day of Atonement. These are holidays that hold a great deal of meaning for me...especially, Yom Kippur which encourages one to contemplate the past year by paying meaningful attention to choices, relationships, compassion, forgiveness of self and others, and so much more. At Meeting I spoke of my spiritual journey which has been centered around my relationship with Judaism and Quakerism. I have found that still, small voice deeply intertwined in both.

Recently, I became a member of Bet Haverim through much contemplation over a long period of time. Something very deep within my core informed this decision along with being "born" Jewish. I am writing this, however, to share that my intention is to continue as a "long time attender" at Quaker Meeting and am grateful for the term. Quakerism is a strong and gentle "force" in my life and I am always grateful that way opened for this to take place. My daughter, Ruby-Beth was "raised" in the Meeting from the moment of her birth and attended The Friends School of Atlanta. I am so very grateful to these dedicated and loving communities where doors are open to all persons. I hope for the continuation of this never-ending loving relationship.

Shalom&love, namaste,
beth-ann buitekant

Atlanta Friends Meeting
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
September 15, 2013
Recorded Pending Approval

Attendance: Micheal Allison, Paul M. A. Baker, Mary Bosserman, Muireann Brennan, Steve Collins, Linnis Cook, Mary Ann Downey, Betsy Eggers, Julia Ewen, Clive Gordon, Judith Greenberg, Roland Heath, Bill Holland, Jack Honderd, Kathy Johnson, Chris Kohler, Chris Lahowitch, Lynn Leuszler, Justin Leverett, Georgia Lord, Angie Love, Beth Martinson, Rick Martinson, Alison Mawle, Karen terHorst Morris, Nan O'Connor, Peter Sederberg, Bert Skellie, Karen Skellie, Rebecca Sullivan, Jim Tolmach, Myrna Trapp, Perry Treadwell, Sarah Walton, Austin Wattles, Ashley Wilcox, David Foster (Clerk), Elizabeth Lamb (Recording Clerk) (30 Friends).

Clerk's Readings and Reflections: The clerk led a reflection about conducting the business of the meeting by e-mail, noting that while this method is fine for scheduling or setting agendas, it is not a good practice when discernment is needed or emotional issues are involved.

Query: Bill Holland presented the query: "Do we share our deepest beliefs and values with each other and with our children, while leaving them free to develop as the Spirit may lead them? Does the Meeting give the children loving care, and promote their spiritual life through religious education and other activities? Do we encourage our children's participation in the Meeting's work and cultivate their desire for service to others?"

Administrative Committee: On behalf of the Administrative Committee Rick Martinson brought forward a proposal they had received from the Finance Committee to hire a bookkeeper. The Finance Committee had recognized that the treasurer's job has become more complicated and more time consuming than it once was, thus becoming more than one volunteer can readily handle. The Administrative Committee concurred and with a few modifications brought the proposal before the Meeting for discernment. Numerous questions were raised mainly about the logistics and the sense of the Meeting was that a threshing session would allow for more discussion and contemplation of the matter.

Minute 9-13-01: Atlanta Friends Meeting has considered the initial Proposal to Hire a Bookkeeper brought forward by the Administrative Committee. While there is general support for this in principal, AFM requests a threshing meeting to discuss details and implications of this change.

At their next meeting the Administrative Committee will consider scheduling this threshing meeting, possibly after Meeting for Worship on the last First Day of this month. They will bring forward the proposal, as it may be modified by this threshing meeting, at the next business meeting. [A copy of the current proposal follows these minutes. -- Eds.]

Ministry and Worship Committee: On behalf of the Ministry and Worship Committee, Bill Holland brought forward the following items:

1. *Recommendation for Membership.* Ministry and Worship recommends that Mary Bosserman be approved for membership. We will bring this recommendation back for discernment in 10th month.
2. *Report of Interfaith 9/11 Service.* Atlanta Meeting hosted an interfaith service that was held at the meetinghouse on Wednesday, September 11. People representing a range of religious traditions and congregations attended it. One of the principle goals of the gathering was to highlight the Compassion Charter. Individuals and organizations are encouraged to read the charter, endorse the charter and live the charter. Bill brought copies of the charter (also available at charterforcompassion.org) and encouraged members of meeting to read and consider endorsing it. Ministry and Worship has not yet considered the charter and may bring a recommendation to Meeting at a later time.
3. *Ministry and Worship is working on identifying and recording the support committees* in the meeting that have been formed to assist ministries. We already have taken a number of individuals led to

ministry under our care – Mary Ann Downey, Christina Repoley, and others. We are working on finding ways to better support individuals who are carrying ministries forward. We are working with an FGC document entitled “Guidelines for Care of Friends Led to Various Forms of Ministry” which describes a process for nurturing, recognizing and supporting individuals under the weight of leadings and ministries.

Religious Education: On behalf of Religious Education committee, Betsy Eggers brought forward a concern for the safety of children in the Meeting and those attending functions sponsored by the Meeting. She presented “Guidelines for Child Safety.” Within these guidelines is stated that when a child discloses neglect or abuse to an adult working with the child, that adult is legally obligated to report it to the authorities. A recommendation that the “designated reporter” role be assigned to the Young Friends Coordinator is herein given to the Administrative Committee, who will review it and bring their recommendation to a future business meeting for discernment. [A draft of the Guidelines are attached after these minutes. -- Eds.]

Clerk’s Items: The clerk read a letter from the clerk of Freedom Friends Church in Salem, Oregon, introducing Ashley Wilcox, who is a student at Chandler Theology School and will be worshipping with AFM during her three years there. The clerk stated that he will be appointing members to the Naming Committee in October and would welcome suggestions.

The clerk reported that the State of the Meeting report draft needs to be ready no later than January and asked that committees begin thinking about this now.

Playground/landscaping: Rick Martinson reported that work has been held up on the playground/landscaping project. The necessary permits have not yet been issued due in part to the long response time the contractor is taking to answer the city’s additional requests and in part to the increased volume of work for the city planning committee since the economy has begun to recover. He told the Meeting that the Administrative Committee and the Finance Committee are considering how best to deal with this delay.

Minutes of August 2013:

Minute 9-13-02: The Minutes of the August 2013 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business were approved as submitted.

Meeting closed with Silent Worship.

Respectfully submitted, Elizabeth Lamb, Recording Clerk; David Foster, Clerk

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Proposal to Hire a Bookkeeper

At its meeting of August 11, the Finance Committee agreed that bookkeeping responsibilities of the Meeting have become increasingly complex and time consuming for a volunteer treasurer. Consequently, we recommend the following division of duties: The Treasurer would remain the primary advisor on the Finance Committee with respect to financial status of Meeting. This position would remain voluntary, and the term would be limited to three years. The bookkeeping functions would be split off into a part-time, paid position, much like that of office coordinator. Both such positions are typically filled by part-time paid employees, or by the same paid employee, at congregations of our size and complexity.

We agreed on the following points:

1. After the bookkeeping functions were split off, the Treasurer would remain a volunteer, identified by the nominating committee, and would serve on the Finance Committee to participate in policy making, communicate with and oversee the operations of the bookkeeper, and attend and report as necessary to the Monthly Meeting for Business. The Treasurer would also represent Finance on the Administration Committee.

2. The bookkeeper would be responsible for all the current routine business operations and obligations of the Meeting and for communicating with the Treasurer on matters of policy affecting the responsibilities of the bookkeeper.
3. We made a preliminary estimation that the routine bookkeeping operations of the Meeting will average 20 to 25 hours per month, and we recommend a salary of \$500/month for this position.
4. The position of bookkeeper could be folded into an expanded definition of Office Coordinator. This makes sense for a number of obvious efficiencies including that the Office Coordinator already tracks and records all rental income, collects and distributes the mail, manages the relationships with vendors, and is familiar with the routine operations and needs of the Meeting House.
5. If this proposal is approved, the goal would be to hire the bookkeeper effective no later than January 1, 2014 and preference would be given to members of Meeting.
6. Recognizing that the transition of the new bookkeeper will require some months of training with the current treasurer, Administration recommends that some portion of the agreed monthly compensation (to be determined, but not to exceed \$250/month) be given to the candidate during this training period.

Duties: The bookkeeper does not have a defined weekly schedule of duties. The position does not require set office hours although, given the coordination required with the Office Coordinator (OC), it may prove useful for the Bookkeeper to work from the AFM Office with some hours overlapping with those of the OC. The best way of outlining the activities/responsibilities of the Bookkeeper is on the basis of day, week, month, annual, and recurrent, but unscheduled, tasks.

Daily: Check email(s) daily for queries and requests that need to be addressed or processed.

Weekly: Collect, deposit, and record contributions; receive, deposit, and record rental information from OC; pick up and pay bills and requests for reimbursements.

Monthly: Report payroll to Payroll Professionals; Enter Payroll Journal into Quickbooks; Reconcile checking on QB; Attend Finance meeting or prepare requested materials for Treasurer.

Quarterly: Prepare information for Treasurer's quarterly report; Update saving and investment on Quickbooks; Transfer quarterly budgeted allocation to Gifts and Affiliations Fund and Permanent Improvements Fund.

Annually: Provide data for annual budget planning; Assist in developing annual budget; Prepare W-2 forms for employees; Assist in development of year-end reports; Assist in preparation and mailing of year-end contribution letters; Submit employee report to Church Mutual Insurance by August 15.

Continuously: Maintain and update database of members (customers) and vendors; Maintain good communication with the Treasurer on matters of financial concern; Maintain continuous communication with Office Coordinator on overlapping activities, especially rentals, repairs, and office operations, etc. that may impact the finances of the meeting; Learn the functions and operational budgets of the Programs and Special Funds of Meeting and maintain good communications with their clerks; Research and respond to various accounting/financial questions, policies, data requests, etc.; Submit new employee forms; Maintain financial records and reports on Quickbooks; Update Manual as needed; Identify areas of AFM financial operations that need clarification, or revision (e.g., Ferguson cabin rent does not count as a contribution); Become familiar with the business operations of Meeting; Assist in identifying areas for improvement and clarification.

Hours: The bookkeeper position is a part-time, paid position averaging 20 to 25 hours a month. The weekly/monthly schedule is flexible, as some weeks may entail more than 4 to 5 hours, others less. Year-end activities often require additional investment of time and energy beyond the routine of weeks/month, though the Treasurer and members of the Finance Committee also assist with these.

Qualifications:

1. Strong integrity and commitment to maintaining confidentiality.

2. Good oral and written communication skills
3. Basic computer skills (word processing, spread sheets, etc). Familiarity with Quickbooks desirable, but not required.
4. Ability to work independently with little or no supervision.
5. Ability to work cooperatively with the Office Coordinator, the Treasurer, the Finance Committee, the other Officers of Meeting, and the leaders (clerks) of the various program committees.
6. Basic skills in managing financial accounts, developing budgets, maintaining good records.
7. Attention to matters of detail.
8. Capacity to evaluate revenue and expenditure data, identify emerging patterns and trends, and advise the Treasurer as needed or requested.
9. Capacity to become proficient in answering questions having to do with the diverse business activities of meeting, its programs and funds, and its material operations and needs.

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Atlanta Friends Meeting Guidelines for Child Safety

[This is a draft approved by the Religious Education Committee on 9/8. Editing continues. -- Eds.]

Introduction: In building a safe environment for children, we also develop policies that train and protect the adults who work with them. Strong communities that support children have clear guidelines that are followed and keep safety awareness for children at the forefront rather than as an afterthought. As we teach the children and adults in the community about protecting one another, the meeting becomes less attractive to those seeking to harm children.

1. All adults should meet the following criteria to work with children under 18 years:
 - a. be active with the Atlanta Friends Meeting for a minimum of one year
 - b. pass the security clearance through the Young Friends Coordinator (YFC)
 - c. sign "Guidelines for Child Safety" and read "Disclosure: What to do When a Child Discloses" from Prevent Child Abuse Georgia (available through the YFC).
 - d. Parents or adults who are working occasionally in First Day School are not required to meet this criteria if an approved Friendly Adult Presence (FAP) is present.
 - e. Occasional teenage babysitters will have completed criteria a. and c. above.
2. The YFC will post in the meeting office his/her own contact information and on an ongoing basis, the names of adults who have completed these requirements successfully and the dates completed, culling and updating the list every 5 years for inactive FAPs. The YFC should keep abreast of the legal issues around child safety and insurance company requirements and routinely share updated information with the Religious Education and Administrative Committees and the AFM clerk.
3. In all Meeting activities, the preference is that there be two FAPs with the children with the exceptions of the RE classrooms during First Day School. Additional FAPs should be arranged for hikes, larger groups, and overnight retreats, per SAYF guidelines and based on the ages of the children.
4. In Religious Education classes, children should use the restroom before they come to class, while their parents are still with them, if necessary. Only in an emergency should children be allowed to leave the classroom and in that case, a child should not be alone with an adult; a second child can join them; the adult should stand in the hallway outside the bathroom.
5. Best practices when working with children include easy visibility for passersby: windows in the classroom or gathering room or a mirror mounted to see around outside buildings or corners for exterior classroom spaces. If there is no glass in the door, the door should be kept open.
6. If a child discloses neglect or abuse, a volunteer working with the child ("mandated reporter") is legally obligated to report to the authorities. The child's right to confidentiality and quick action to protect the child are the top priorities. The volunteer should either A.) Immediately contact the designated reporter, the Young Friends Coordinator who will then report the necessary authorities OR

B.) Immediately contact the Department of Family and Children Services (DeKalb County Child Protective Service) at (404) 370-5066.

7. If a teacher, youth group leader, or other volunteer has reason to suspect that a child would be endangered by returning home, and they cannot reach the YFC, the adult should contact the police or Child Protective Services immediately, and then leave an emergency message for the YFC and the Clerk of the Meeting.

8. *Stop It Now!* has a confidential toll free hotline for assistance on what to do if you are concerned about potential abuse but are unsure how to proceed: 1-888-PREVENT.

9. *Know the Possible Signs* of an adult (or child) being an abuser: Do you know an adult or older child who refuses to let a child set any of his or her own limits? Insists on hugging, touching, kissing, tickling, wrestling with or holding a child even when the child does not want this affection? Is overly interested in the sexuality of a particular child or teen (e.g., talks repeatedly about the child's developing body or interferes with normal teen dating)? Manages to get time alone or insists on time alone with a child with no interruptions? Spends most of his/her spare time with children and has little interest in spending time with someone their own age? Regularly offers to baby-sit many different children for free or takes children on overnight outings alone? Buys children expensive gifts or gives them money for no apparent reason? Frequently walks in on children/teens in the bathroom? Allows children or teens to consistently get away with inappropriate behaviors?

Keep Child Safety a priority in the AFM Community:

1. The Nominating Committee has been charged with screening candidates who they nominate as teachers and on Religious Education.
2. This policy will be added to the Meeting Handbook as one of the "Meeting Guidelines."
3. Religious Education should incorporate an annual orientation for teachers, doorkeepers, parents and students regarding the Guidelines for Child Safety.
4. AFM Retreat Committee leaders and others leading intergenerational activities read, understand, and comply with Guidelines for Child Safety.

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Welcome Camille Jackson!

Friends, please welcome Camille Jackson as the new caregiver in the nursery. Camille has been associated with Atlanta Friends Meeting for a few years as a neighbor and friend of Jonah Macdonald and Dana Goldman. She has also been a substitute for our nursery during the past year as needed. Ask her about her interests and work life in dance and working with children and youth. The nursery is available during Meeting for Worship for infants or 8 weeks through three years. To express interest in childcare for ages 5 – 12 during Meeting for Business or Committee meetings, contact Karen Morris.

AND . . . *On Sunday October 27th, from 11:30 to 1:00PM, Care and Counsel will sponsor the first Forum (in a series) on the topic of "The Elder Years."* This first Forum will focus on financial planning and its associated legal issues and will include a presentation by Cynthia Mead, an attorney specializing in Elder law, following which the floor will be opened for questions and discussions. During the Forum, those attending will also be encouraged to submit written questions and/or concerns (in confidence) for consideration at future Fora. If you need any assistance to attend such as a ride, please contact any member of Care and Counsel.

We encourage members of all ages of the Meeting community to attend as these issues touch or will touch us all one day. If you have any questions, please contact Don Bender djbender76@gmail.com or Beth Ann Buitekant babuitekant@gmail.com.

Calendar for Tenth Month (October) 2013

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 Second and Fourth First Day, 10:00 a.m. – Canton Friends Worship Group.
360 E. Marietta St.; 779-720-4669 or wrldpeas@mindspring.com.
Every Second First Day, 10:30 a.m. -- Macon Friends Worship Group.
Contact Diana Day, 478-227-8892; maconquakers.org.
First Fifth Day (Thursday) -- 12:10 p.m. AFSC office, 60 Walton St. NW, Atlanta.
Every Fifth Day (Thursday) (except 1st of the month), 12:10 p.m. – East Lake Commons,
Decatur. Contact Bert Skellie, 404-378-5883, bertskellie@gmail.com.
Sixth 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, Library
9:15 a.m. Singing, Classroom A/B
10:00 a.m. Meeting for Worship
Every Second - Fifth Day (Monday-Thursday)
8:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m. Smart Toddlers, Nursery playground
Every Third Day (Tuesday)
7:00 p.m. Silent Meditation, Library
Every Fourth Day (Wednesday)
7:00 p.m. Mid-Week Worship, Library
Every Fifth Day (Thursday)
7:30 p.m. Bible Study, Library

Clerk of the Meeting: David Foster, afmclerk1@gmail.com
Office Coordinator: Jonah McDonald, atlantaquakers@gmail.com

Treasurer: Peter Sederberg, afmtreasurer1@gmail.com
Ministry & Worship: Bill Holland, 404-692-2358
Finance: Paul Mangelsdorf, 770-677-4280
Social Concerns: Michael Allison, 770-832-3539
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ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING
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Clerk: David Foster, afmclerk1@gmail.com
Treasurer: Peter Sederberg, afmtreasurer1@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.

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**DEADLINE FOR 11TH MONTH NEWSLETTER:
OCTOBER 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.**