

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER

December 2015



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

Membership Request Letter from Waman French

Dear Friends,

I respectfully request membership in the Religious Society of Friends and the Atlanta Friends Meetings. I make these requests after a long association with both groups and with a humble heart. It has been a great gift to have lived and worked among Friends for nearly 30 years both in New York and here in Georgia, where for the past 25 years I have been Head of the School at The Friends School of Atlanta. So, like many others I have spoken with, I have come to learn it is never too soon to make such requests. Thank you for your patience!

Last spring, I approached Friends and asked about how to become a member of the RSF, and in turn I was asked if I would be willing to share my spiritual journey with a group that meets monthly to learn more about others' personal pathways to Meeting. After agreeing to share, I began to worry that my personal path was a brief one, without much heft in the backpack, so to speak. I had never been asked to speak so specifically about my spirituality and though I've had lots of interior dialogues about my beliefs, few of these had been spoken aloud to others. In preparing for this conversation with Friends, I found that there was most certainly a path that had led me to Meeting for Worship over the past few decades and to this letter requesting membership.

That path begins with my lack of formal religious education. My mother was a Unitarian and I was christened in that church. My father was agnostic or atheist; he never claimed a label and both my parents didn't believe that church attendance was very important.

Education was our religion. I was brought up surrounded by many generations of teachers and administrators, 'school people' as my father would say. As a child, I listened to my grandparents' generation speak about the issues that shaped their professional lives during the first half of the twentieth century. Grandad was a

QUERY

Are you alert to practices here and throughout the world which discriminate against people on the basis of who or what they are or because of their beliefs? Bear witness to the humanity of all people, including those who break society's conventions or its laws. Try to discern new growing points in social and economic life. Seek to understand the causes of injustice, social unrest and fear. Are you working to bring about a just and compassionate society which allows everyone to develop their capacities and fosters the desire to serve?

– *Britain Yearly Meeting*

Progressive educator and my father's world view reflected that upbringing.

My father and mother were hands on in their approach to building schools that moved society forward. They believed that education was of the highest importance and that there was no better way to commit their lives than to building communities that create schools in which every student was honored and could live, learn, and grow in peace. They both recalled growing up in segregated schools and both were acutely aware of the inequities that divided them from their peers. When they met in New York in the late 1940's they combined a writer's passion and an administrator's vision and organizational skills into activism that inspires me to this day.

My parents worked to bring Head Start programs and school breakfasts to schools and A Better Chance homes to our community. They selected locations for building new schools that forced integration of large public school systems and then worked hard to bring people along with their vision of justice and equality. They began technical and junior colleges with the recognition that education is a life-long pursuit. In their retirement, they recalled stories of inequality and injustice and more often stories of hope and progress that unfolded in schools. Their message to me has been clear. Schools can embody either vision of society. Actions speak louder than words.

By the time I began my training as an educator, my beliefs about how schools should serve students and their communities were nearly fully formed .in the mid-1980's, I lived, taught, and attended university in Brooklyn, New York. At this time, New York was at a low point. It seemed clear to me that society was losing momentum in the slow march toward equality and justice for all and it was against this back drop that I committed to my life's work as an educator. Then, and still today, my work is cradled in the belief that schools can be one of the most hopeful society structures in place and schools can change the world.

As I went on to lead my own classroom at Brooklyn Friends School I began to incorporate service and community activism in to my program for students. I believed in the importance of experiential learning, and I n the understanding the development of children's cognitive, physical, social and emotional beings. My students taught me the importance of modified instruction to meet their individual approaches to learning. Together, we created classroom practices and routines that fostered the democratic habits of cooperation and social activism.

The communal Meeting for Worship at BFS, held each Friday, was my first introduction to Friends practices of worship and I found my spiritual home. Listening inwardly, in the company of my community, I am connected to goodness and that goodness emanates outwardly affirming the miracle e of our shared humanity and our connection to the divine. My work in Friends education continually forms my experience and belief that in our "higher moments" we truly see our full potential as humankind. I believe in the God within and the thread of humanity that runs through us all. I believe in the Light, which I think of as hope and is sustaining and optimistic. I love sharing time with other Friends in Meeting for Worship because I grow and connect with my goodness. Worship gives me a vessel where goodness resides and from which I am able to share that goodness in the world.

Thank you for reading my letter. Thank you for allowing me so much time to grow into this request and make it with such joy.

In peace,

Waman French

Membership Request Letter from Carol Gray

Dear Ministry and Worship,

I have been attending Atlanta Friends Meeting since 2000 and it is time for me to request membership. Why now? I have found plenty of excuses not to! I needed to attend more Adult First Day classes, I needed to take the Quaker 101 classes over again, I needed to attend more Business meetings, I have never attended an FGC gathering, and I haven't been to SAYMA in quite a while. I know I am a work in progress and will continue to learn and grow, but I cannot imagine my life without this community. I feel such affection and admiration for so many friends I have gotten to know over the years. You often inspire me to be a better person. I felt supported all those years ago when I was undergoing treatment for cancer, I feel supported now when I ask for hospitality help, when I have questions about racism, or Quaker processes. This meeting has truly enriched my life and I will always feel that it is my spiritual home.

My dear friend suggested that it might be false modesty that was holding me back and that was exactly what I needed to hear. I am also at a point where I want to make some significant changes in my life and becoming a member is one of them. Thank you for considering me.

Carol Gray

Lives and Callings: The Spiritual Journey – December 6

If you are new to our meeting, considering membership or a long-time member who enjoys hearing a story, you are invited to the meeting library at 9 a.m. on December 6, to hear member Larry Foster. You are also invited to tell your story and can call Mary Ann Downey at 678-938-8030 to volunteer or to get more information. Save the date for member Jack Hondred (January 3, 2016).

New Friend in Residence

The Administration Committee is very pleased to announce the selection of **Kelsey McNicholas** as the new Friend in residence (FiR) for the Atlanta Friends Meeting. She follows **Erica Schoon**, who has been serving so admirably as FiR for more than three years. Kelsey's expected move-in date is January 30th. She will formally take on her FiR role in mid-February upon her return from Peru, where she will be serving as SAYMA representative to the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC), Section of the Americas.

A 2011 Guilford College graduate and former Quaker Voluntary Service Fellow in Atlanta, Kelsey was selected after a rigorous search and interview process by the FiR search committee. Many of you already know her and may have worked with her or participated in various forums with her; her resumé is extensive and her interests deep and varied.

She shared that her ministry as FiR will have as its heart "building bridges or being a connector and being truly present and available." Please welcome Kelsey in her new role, and thank Erica for the wonderful job she has done serving the Meeting.

Please let Karen Morris or me know if you have questions. Thanks!

In peace,
Steve Collins

Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) Going Strong in Atlanta

Want to learn how to solve conflicts non-violently? Interested in helping others do the same? Quakers began the Alternatives to Violence Project 40 years ago. Now people from all over are involved. Read on.

Alternatives to Violence Basic/Advanced Workshops

- **When:** See calendar below for dates; all workshops are Saturday-Sunday 9:30am-5:30pm
- **Where:** Athens, Atlanta, and Kennesaw.
- **Why:** To learn how to respond nonviolently to situations where injustice, prejudice, frustration and anger can lead to violent behavior.
- **What:** Learn proven strategies and methods for implementing nonviolent alternatives in your life.
- **How:** Two day workshop where participants learn via interactive exercises, games and role-plays new ways to find alternatives to violence. (Lunch is provided)
- **Who:** Open to all.
- **Cost:** Suggested donation: \$20.00 (No one excluded due to lack of funds)
- **More detailed information:** On the Web: Facebook at “AVP Atlanta” and www.avpusa.org
- **Contact:** Heather at 315-263-1502. To register: Heather@georgiaavp@gmail.com

All facilitators at AVP workshops are unpaid volunteers. The AVP Workshop series consists of 3 workshops: Basic, Advanced, and Training 4 Facilitators. We offer Basic/Advanced hybrid workshops. Those attending their first AVP Workshop will earn their Basic certificate and those attending their second AVP workshop will earn an Advanced certificate. Those who complete all three workshops are eligible to apprentice on workshop facilitation teams and to become AVP facilitators. Become an AVP Facilitator and start leading workshops with us in prisons, schools, and the community!

AVP Upcoming Workshop Calendar

December 5-6 2015	Atlanta GA	Basic/Advanced, open to all
January 30-31 2016	Atlanta GA	Basic Advanced, open to all
February 21-22 2016	Kennesaw GA	Basic/Advanced, open to all
March 19-20 2016	Atlanta GA	Basic/Advanced, open to all
April 16-17 2016	Kennesaw GA	Basic/Advanced, open to all
May 14-15 2016	Atlanta GA	Training for Facilitators, open to those who have completed at least one AVP workshop

Childcare During Second Hour Activities

To allow parents to participate more actively in committee meetings, Meeting for Business, and Forum Sundays, a paid caregiver will be in the nursery after Meeting for Worship (11:45 - 1 pm) on 2nd, 3rd and 4th Sundays to care for children from nursery age through 9 years. The Meeting continues to provide paid childcare for nursery-aged children every Sunday during Worship. For more information, see Karen Morris, ([404-797-8079](tel:404-797-8079)).

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business – November 15, 2015

Recorded pending approval

Attendance: Mike Aland, Paul Baker, Don Bender, Kelly Callaway-Singer, Nylgia Callaway-Singer, Steve Collins, Dee DeBra, Mary Ann Downey, Betsy Eggers, Julia Ewen, Sally Ferguson, Waman French, Sheila Garrett, Clive Gordon, Carol Gray, Roland Heath, Bill Holland, Greg Johnson, Kathy Johnson, Lynn Leuszler, Georgia Lord, Paul Mangelsdorf, Beth Martinson, Rick Martinson, Susan May, Kelsey McNicholas, Caroline Morris, Karen terHorst Morris, Ron Nuse, Erica Schoon, Peter Sederberg, Henry Slack, Rebecca Sullivan, Jim Tolmach, Myrna Trapp, Sarah Walton, Nan O'Connor (Clerk), Elizabeth Lamb (Recording Clerk) (38 Friends).

Query: Bill Holland presented the query: "How do you try to live simply, knowing that a simple lifestyle freely chosen is a source of strength? Are you able to not be persuaded to buying what you do not need or cannot afford? Do you keep yourself informed about the effects your style of living is having on the global economy and environment?"

Discernment Items

Nominating Committee: On behalf of the Nominating Committee Carol Gray brought forth the following names for approval:

- **Minute 11-15-2015-01:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Betsy Eggers as Clerk of Meeting beginning January 2016.*
- **Minute 11-15-2015-02:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Lissa Place as Assistant Clerk of Meeting beginning January 2016.*
- **Minute 11-15-2015-03:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Judith Greenberg and Perry Treadwell as co-Archivists beginning immediately.*
- **Minute 11-15-2015-04:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Sally Ferguson as Clerk of the Ministry and Worship Committee beginning January 2016.*

Carol Gray then brought forward the change to the Clerk's job Description.

- **Minute 11-15-2015-05:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves revising the job description for the Clerk of Meeting by adding "12. Provides instructions in the Clerk's role to the Assistant Clerk, to enable him/her to feel more comfortable in filling in, should the need arise." to the existing description.*

Reports

Finance Committee: On behalf of the Finance Committee Paul Mangelsdorf and Lynn Leuszler presented the proposed budget for 2016 along with the actual (to date) and projected (final) 2015 budgets. If you would like a copy, please see a member of the Finance Committee. Lynn Leuszler added that his efforts to encourage giving more and earlier in the year has been somewhat successful, but that we still need considerable donations before the close of 2015 in order to meet our budget and be able to sufficiently fund the Permanent Improvement Fund.

Ministry and Worship Committee: On behalf of the Ministry and Worship Committee Bill Holland reported that Ministry and Worship has received applications for membership from Carol Gray and from Waman French. Clearness committees have been formed and have met with these attenders, finding them both clear. Portions of their letters were then read to those assembled and will be published in the newsletter. Ministry and Worship unites with these requests and will bring recommendations for approval next month.

Administration Committee: On behalf of the Administration Committee Steve Collins brought forward the issues of the library renovation, the bookkeeper position and the position of Friend in Residence. Erica Schoon then reported that two subcommittees have been working on the library renovation. One committee has been working on redesigning the space and has sold existing furnishing, is in the process of purchasing more appropriate furnishings and will be dry-walling and painting soon. The other committee has been culling books to be more relevant to our needs and is digitalizing the card catalogue to make it available online.

Personnel Liaison Mike Aland reported that we have reached the end of the two-year trial contract with Jonah McDonald to serve as bookkeeper and have offered him the position “at will.” He has accepted and agreed to give a six-month notice should he wish to cease serving in that position in the future. He currently performs his bookkeeping duties on Wednesdays and asks that anyone seeking a check please let him know by 9 AM on Wednesdays.

Karen Morris, as co-clerk of the Search Committee, reported that, after receiving and reviewing a number of applications from worthy candidates, the committee has chosen Kelsey McNicholas to serve as our next Friend in Residence and asks that Ministry and Worship establish a support committee for her. Kelsey, who was a Quaker Voluntary Service fellow previously, sees her calling in the areas of bridge building and peace making. Her ministry will be in Alternatives to Violence. She will move into the residence in mid-February.

Nominating Committee: On behalf of the Nominating Committee Carol Gray brought forward the following names: Jim Williams, as Clerk of Meetinghouse; Bob Lough, David Foster, Cindy Berg, Suzan Kenworthy and Tom Kenworthy as members of the Ministry and Worship Committee. These names will be brought for discernment next month.

Naming Committee: On behalf of the Naming Committee Carolyn Morris brought forward Paul Baker to serve on the Nominating Committee. His name will be brought forward for approval next month.

Minutes of October 2015:

- **Minute 11-15-2015-06:** *The Minutes of the October 2015 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business were approved as submitted.*

Meeting closed with Silent Worship.

Respectfully submitted by:
Elizabeth Lamb, Recording Clerk
Nan O’Connor, Clerk.



Please Hold in The Light:

Kathie Klein and her family
Tom Bartlett, brother of Mary
Bartlett

*Those wishing to have requests for
Holding included in this monthly
newsletter may give the names to a
member of Care & Counsel;
Chris Lahowitch is the point person
for December.*



Atlanta Friends Meeting Contacts

Clerk of the Meeting: Nan O'Connor, afmclerk1@gmail.com
Office Coordinator: Jonah McDonald, atlantaquakers@gmail.com
Treasurer: Lynn Leuszler, afmtreasurer1@gmail.com
Ministry & Worship: Bill Holland, 404-892-2358
Finance: Paul Mangelsdorf, 770-677-4280
Social Concerns: Michael Allison, 770-832-3539
Administration Clerk: Steve Collins, shcollins75@gmail.com
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Religious Education: Jennifer Dickie, michaeljen@bellsouth.net
Library Clerk: Cal Gough, calgough@bellsouth.net
Newsletter Editor: Kate Swett, atlquakerltr@gmail.com
Webmaster: Aaron Ruschetta, arxaaron@gmail.com

Calendar for Twelfth Month (December) 2015

Area Meetings for Worship

Every First Day (Sunday)	10:00 a.m. – Meetinghouse, with a smaller group in the Library.
Every Third First Day	12:30 p.m. – Carrollton Friends Worship Group. St. Andrew's UMC Youth Center, 1106 Maple St.; contact Jean Hudson, judson30116@yahoo.com or 678-378-3368; carrolltonfriends.org .
Every Second First Day	10:30 a.m. – Macon Friends Worship Group. Contact Diana Day, 478-227-8892; maconquakers.org
Every Fifth Day (Thursday)	12:10 p.m. – East Lake Commons, Decatur. Contact Bert Skellie at bertskellie@gmail.com or 404-680-4799.
Sixth Day (Friday)	(Mid-August through May), 9:00 a.m. – Friends School of Atlanta. Community Meeting Room, 862 Columbia Dr., Decatur, 404-373-8746.
<i>Currently on hiatus</i>	Canton Friends Worship Group. Contact Roy Taylor at 770-720-4669 or wrltpeas@mindspring.com .

Weekly Events at the Meetinghouse

Every First Day (Sunday)	9:00 a.m. Adult Religious Education, Library 9:30 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, Classroom A/B and playground
Every Fourth Day (Wednesday)	8:30 a.m. Morning Worship, Library First and third Wednesdays: 7:00 p.m. Mid-Week Worship at David & Freer Jarvis' home
Every Fifth Day (Thursday)	7:00 p.m. Bible Study, Library

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING
701 W. Howard Ave.
Decatur, GA 30030-2902

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING

Office: MWF 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.; 404-377-2474

Web: atlanta.quaker.org atlantaquakers@gmail.com

Clerk: Nan O'Connor, afmclerk1@gmail.com

Treasurer: Lynn Leuszler, 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 Emily Lawson at elawson7@gmail.com or 404-200-8479. Please indicate if you want to be in the directory, receive the newsletter by mail, or both. Emily Lawson is also the contact to request mailing list removal.

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.

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 (Word, not PDF). Pictures should be in .jpg format. Submissions may be edited for length and format.

THE DEADLINE FOR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS IS THE 20TH DAY OF EACH PRECEDING MONTH.

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 afmannouncement-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.