

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER

January 2016

Living Beyond Amid

Submitted by Mary Ann Downey

Finding ways each day to create space for meditation and prayer is a continuing challenge for me. Recently, I start the day with the book, *Meditations: On the Monk Who Dwells in Daily Life* by Thomas Moore. Here is a sample of one favorite:

“God is beyond in the midst of our life, says Bonhoeffer. The monk manages to live this beyond-amid with special gracefulness and beauty. Beauty emerges only when life has achieved radical beyondness while fully amid, or intense amidness by means of beyond. He withdraws in order to be more involved. We average persons may need daily withdrawal in order to be more fully participants in community, family and society. Pull up the cowl, eat in silence, read to be absorbed, pray without intent, chant.”

These words speak to my condition as a Friend on my role in meeting for worship, my involvement in the life of the meeting and my daily struggle to live a spirit-led life. In meeting for worship, the process of centering and expectant waiting for the Spirit can also be described as the process of achieving radical beyondness while fully amid. Unlike those who practice traditions of individual meditation, Friends seek to be gathered as a community with God in the midst of our life, our worship. We know the beauty of a gathered or covered meeting when we feel that we are one in the Spirit.

“To withdraw in the fullness of community” is what I do each first day in Meeting for Worship when I leave behind my daily struggles in order to find refuge and time for



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

QUERY

Are our meetings for worship held in stilled, expectant waiting upon God? As we worship is there a living silence in which we are drawn together by the power of God in our midst?

– Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

reflection with others who share this need. Finding the fullness of community, however, also means finding a place to offer my gifts of ministry and to accept those from others. God leads us to this spiritual place so that we can receive the blessings we need and so that we can find our unique voice and call to service.

When I enter the Meeting room on First Day, I have learned that the quality of my experience in this hour is directly related to how well I've done the past week in achieving radical beyondness while fully amid. Starting each day with centering prayer helps me move with more grace and deliberate speed, to respond from a place of love rather than anger or pain, and to feel that I am living beyond-amid. The daily struggle is also teaching me to heed the advice that the poet Rilke gave in his *Letters to a Young Poet*. I must learn to live with the questions until I have lived my way to the answers.

Lessons in how to practice centering for worship sometime come from unexpected sources. One Sunday a young woman introduced herself at rise of meeting as a first time attender and thanked us for creating a place that is about being rather than doing. I was so glad that she understood intuitively what we hope for and was reminded of the instructions of my favorite Friendly guide, Issac Pennington: "Give over thine own willing, give over thine own running, give over thine own desiring to know or be anything and sink down to the seed which God sows in the hearts, and let that grow in thee and be in thee and breathe in thee and act in thee..."

Lives and Callings: The Spiritual Journey – January 3

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 Jan 3. Christina Repoley will offer the story of her spiritual journey and the leading to create Quaker Voluntary Service. Save the date for Paul Mangelsdorf on February 7 and Jack Hondred on March 6. 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.

Green Friends Film Series – January 24

Join Green Friends to see, and then discuss, the provocative short film "Forget Shorter Showers: Why Personal Change Does Not Equal Political Change." Sunday, January 24, at 11:45 in the Meeting Room. Snacks will be served!

Learning About Spiritual Nurture Groups: Forum January 31

The silence of Quaker worship – the listening for the still voice within – is at the heart of the Spiritual Nurture Group process. At group meetings, members come together to share, listen, and give birth to a way of being in community that is sacred. It is in experiencing this silence and being able to share what it reveals that participants come to reach a new depth of intimacy within themselves, with group members, and with other people in their lives.

On January 31, 2016, at 11:45, come join members of AFM's spiritual nurture groups to experience and learn more about a spiritual practice that has deeply affected the spiritual lives of many in our community. Bring paper and pen/pencil. Childcare and snacks provided.

Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) Upcoming Workshops

Alternatives to Violence Basic/Advanced Workshops

- **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.
- **When:** See calendar below for dates; all workshops are Saturday-Sunday 9:30am-5:30pm
- **Where:** Athens, Atlanta, and Kennesaw.
- **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.

AVP Upcoming Workshop Calendar

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 – December 20, 2015

Recorded pending approval

Attendance: Mike Aland, Juan Allende, Rebecca Burley, Steve Collins, Nancy Condor, Linnis Cook, Julia Ewen, Sally Ferguson, Clive Gordon, Carol Gray, Roland Heath, Kathy Johnson, Lynn Leuszler, Georgia Lord, Paul Mangelsdorf, Beth Martinson, Rick Martinson, Susan May, Caroline Morris, Karen terHorst Morris, Liz Nicholson, Paul O'Connor, Sara Patenaude, Bert Skellie, Karen Skellie, Henry Slack, Brittney Thornbury, Jim Tolmach, Myrna Trapp, Bette Turlington, Maggie Turlington, Sarah Walton, Nan O'Connor (Clerk), Elizabeth Lamb (Recording Clerk) (34 Friends).

Clerk's Reflection: The clerk reflected on her term as clerk and how much it and the Atlanta Friends Meeting have meant to her.

Query: Sally Ferguson presented the 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? Are you working to bring about a just and compassionate society which allows everyone to develop their capacities and fosters the desire to serve?"

Discernment Items

Ministry and Worship Committee: On behalf of the Ministry and Worship Committee Sally Ferguson brought forward the names of two attenders for approval for membership.

- **Minute 12-20-2015-01:** *On the recommendation of the Ministry and Worship Committee, we approve Carol Gray as a member of the Atlanta Friends Meeting. We treasure Carol, celebrate her many gifts, and look forward to continuing to grow in spirit with her.*
- **Minute 12-20-2015-02:** *On the recommendation of the Ministry and Worship Committee, we approve Waman French as a member of the Atlanta Friends Meeting. We welcome Waman into membership, treasure his participation in our community and his contributions to Friends education.*

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

- **Minute 12-20-2015-03:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Jim Williams as Clerk of the Meetinghouse beginning January 2016.*
- **Minute 12-20-2015-04:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Bob Lough as a member of the Ministry and Worship Committee beginning January 2016.*
- **Minute 12-20-2015-05:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves David Foster as a member of the Ministry and Worship Committee beginning January 2016.*

- **Minute 12-20-2015-06:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Cindy Berg as a member of the Ministry and Worship Committee beginning January 2016.*
- **Minute 12-20-2015-07:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Suzan Kenworthy as a member of the Ministry and Worship Committee beginning January 2016.*
- **Minute 12-20-2015-08:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Tom Kenworthy as a member of the Ministry and Worship Committee beginning January 2016.*

Finance Committee: On behalf of the Finance Committee Paul Mangelsdorf presented the 2016 budget for approval. He clarified that the Assistance Fund for Members and Attenders will remain a separate fund so that Care and Counsel can draw funds as needed without needing to go through approval each time, but that it will be funded through the budget as needed.

- **Minute 12-20-2015-09:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the 2016 Budget as presented.*

Paul Mangelsdorf reported that the projection is that AFM will make the 2015 budget with funds to spare and reminded the meeting that those funds are needed for the planned capital improvements in 2016. The clerk and AFM thank Lynn Leuszler for a job well done as treasurer.

Reports

Administration Committee: On behalf of the Administration Committee Steve Collins reported that the Library Committee is still deciding about the new chairs and thanked Erica Schoon for conducting the silent auction which raised funds to offset the costs of the renovations. He then reminded the meeting that approximately \$40,000 is needed for the exterior painting, repairs and gutters. Steve then presented two minutes of appreciation.

- **Minute 12-20-2015-10:** *The Atlanta Friends Meeting expresses its heartfelt thanks to **Erica Schoon**, who has served so admirably as Friend in Residence for more than three years. She has been not only a welcoming presence in the Meetinghouse but active in and outside of the Meeting -- working on recycling initiatives, assisting with the Library renovation project (including coordination of the successful furniture auction), working with Peacebuilders Camp at Koinonia Farm, and building connections with Friends young and old. We will hold her in the Light as she continues her life journey.*
- **Minute 12-20-2015-11:** *When Nan O'Connor was asked to be clerk her initial reaction was a clear no, but she took time to talk with Friends and to discern her leading. She asked for support to take on this work and agreed to serve. Her experience and skills helped us make our meetings for worship with attention to business both worshipful and efficient. Like a good orchestra conductor, she gave and received help from our clerks and committees, as well as those who staff and volunteer every week to keep open our meeting home. We are blessed and grateful for Nan O'Connor's servant leadership in 2014 and 2015.*

Nominating Committee: On behalf of the Nominating Committee Carol Gray brought forward the following names: Rebecca Burley as Nursery Liaison and Mary Jahntz as SAYMA Representative These names will be brought for discernment next month.

Naming Committee: On behalf of the Naming Committee Carolyn Morris brought forward Waman French and Linnis Cook to serve on the Nominating Committee. These names will be brought forward for approval next month. She explained that there had been a miscommunication in bringing forward Paul Baker's name last month and that he is unable to serve on Nominating at this time.

Quaker Voluntary Service: Liz Nicholson reported that the six current fellows have been active lately with a spiritual nurture dinner, holiday party and campfire singing, and various QVS days building fellowship. They greatly appreciate the support AFM has provided. They are currently seeking site placements for next year. Applications for new fellows are due in March so everyone is asked to spread the word to their young friends. Kiera McNicholas has realized that at this point in her life the structure of QVS does not fit her needs and is withdrawing from the program on January 5, 2016. Liz Nicholson read her letter thanking the meeting and explaining her decision.

Minutes of November 2015:

- **Minute 12-20-2015-12:** *The Minutes of the November 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:

Tom Bartlett, brother of
Mary Bartlett;
Frank Cummings;
Doug Unfug and Harriet Unfug

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



Atlanta Friends Meeting Contacts

Clerk of the Meeting: Betsy Eggers, afmclerk1@gmail.com
Office Coordinator: Jonah McDonald, atlantaquakers@gmail.com
Treasurer: Lynn Leuszler, afmtreasurer1@gmail.com
Ministry & Worship: Sally Ferguson, sallyferguson@earthlink.net
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Calendar for First Month (January) 2016

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 wrlpdeas@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.

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