

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER

May 2016



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

**Bridging Beloved Communities:
Friends School of Atlanta and Atlanta Friends Meeting**
Submitted by Laura MacNorlin

Building Bridges Quaker Visitor Program is a project between Atlanta Friends Meeting (AFM) and the Friends School of Atlanta (FSA). I was awarded a grant in 2014 from the ***Pickett Endowment for Quaker Leadership fund*** to help begin this volunteer project. My vision for this opportunity grew out of a yearning to bridge more connections between these two beloved communities that mean so much to me. Beginning fall 2015, I invited Quaker guest visitors to FSA to share personal experiences, Quaker education themed lessons, and curriculum support. ***The goal of the project is to deepen the students' grounding in Quaker ways and also to broaden the sharing of local Friends' spiritual gifts beyond our meeting community.***

This work has cheered my soul, given me a bouncing joy in my heart and a spring in my step. I've felt a gathering of Light and peace in facilitating this project. I experience a profound feeling of beloved as we learn about the Quaker way, gathering in the quiet for lesson planning, in the whole school Silent Meeting, and with our visitors and classes for lessons.

The project has also empowered Friends from the local community to offer their wisdom, knowledge and presences at FSA. Each visitor comes to FSA for a Friday morning, beginning with a tour of the building to get an impression of the values and genuine Friends education offered by the school. Visitors then attend the whole school Friday silent meeting. They are always impressed by the children's grounded participation, and quickly join in the experience of children and adults listening together in beloved community. Each visitor plans a lesson with my guidance. Each lesson is beautifully informed by the visitor's perspective on Quakerism.

The Building Quaker Bridges lesson themes have been wide-ranging, and all anchored in Friends values and testimonies as well as the visitors own personal interests. Each lesson begins with a mindfulness bell and silent moment, a welcome introducing students and visitors, a story told by the visitor, and a working time with several options for reflection.

Some visitors have shared their personal gifts and leadings as Friends. Lisa Kruse presented about her work here in Georgia to care for endangered ecosystems (with cart of live native plants!), touching on the

QUERY

Are love and unity maintained among us? When conflicts exist, are they faced with patience, forbearance, and openness to healing? Are avenues for exploring differences kept open? To what extent does our Meeting ignore differences in order to avoid possible conflicts?

– Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

Friends testimonies of stewardship, community and simplicity. Ron Nuse shared his artwork, several photographs that convey his understanding of the Light, and invited the students to look through the lens of their own perspective, and a camera at times, to notice how they experience Light outwardly *and* inwardly. Georgia Lord shared a storybook about discovering personal gifts, and shared about her journey becoming an advocate lawyer for families and communities. Kelsey McNicholas offered a lesson on active silence, leading students on a meditative walk outdoors to explore the silence using all five senses. FSA parent Heather Wurtzel led a class on the practices of mindfulness and yoga. Last but not least, our very own Quaker Voluntary Service fellow CJ Green has been helpful during Discovery every other Friday, sharing storybooks about personal gifts and the goodness within.

Some visitors have used Godly Play curriculum stories from the Atlanta Friends Meeting Religious Education classes. Betsy Eggers, Mary Jahntz and I have led these lessons. For these themes, the teacher narrates the story from heart using manipulative materials from the story box, and concludes by inviting students to wonder over the story with open-ended queries. This is followed by time for each student to work with the story box materials in their own way. The story themes introduced have all been familiar to FSA students, and have included The Inner Light, Holding in the Light, Friends Meeting, Centering in the Silence, and Gifts. I have also created a story box for Building Quaker Bridges to introduce this visitor project to the students and help students understand the ways they are participants in the project. Students have connected deeply with Friends values, and reflected on these themes in project work.

This project has deepened a sense of beloved community for both the visitors and the students, allowing us to consider the power of the Quaker way during our day. Visitors have met with parents at Quaker coffee meetings for great discussions of Quaker education. Students and teachers have witnessed the joy and power of lessons offered by our visitors, and felt very inspired. The Quaker way offers us the incredible experience of building community. When we open our self to being in beloved community with others, to listening intently to the Light and the uniqueness of a person of any age, we can exclaim, "Oh wow, Getting to know you and glimpsing your inner beauty I understand beloved community...I feel what that kingdom is like in the here and the now!"

Over the last decade I've acted on a leading to nurture children's integral place in the Religious Society of Friends. With Friends this was through FGC gathering as a counselor, at our meeting as the Young Friends coordinator, on religious education committee and in intergenerational committee work. I began working at the Friends School of Atlanta in 2009, and from those first days I've felt led to ask how we can deepen the Friends education being offered at this school. The project has been one of many chances to "get my feet wet" in Quaker education, and it pushed me to "growing edges" in God's path for me as a Friend led to work with youth.

Now, I invite Friends to help me continue this calling. You can contact me regarding financial donations to support the project's continuation or by attending the ***Building Bridges Quaker Visitor Program***. More information or to read about the project's beginnings: Imacnorlin@friendschoolatlanta.org
<http://pickettendowment.blogspot.com/>

Ten Life Lessons in A Quaker Book of Wisdom, Submitted by Mary Ann Downey

On March 10 this year my granddaughter Zoe celebrated her 14th birthday. The older she gets, the more challenging it is to find a gift for her, something more than the requested clothes. How can I share the insights and gifts I've found among Friends? I was considering this question as I read "A Quaker Legacy: Ten Life Lessons", the last chapter in A Quaker Book of Wisdom by Robert Lawrence Smith, written

especially for his grandchildren. It is a wonderful summary of important lessons, and while not unique to Quakers, they are the ones I want to teach and pass on to her and others. I created my short version of his summary and sent her this:

1. **Seize the Present.** Make the most of your time every day of your life. Everything we do matters.
2. **Love yourself, whatever faults you have, and love the world, however bad it is.** When you learn to love the world, you see it anew, as the imperfect home of everybody and everything in nature, the place where we all live together trying to do the best we can.
3. **Stop talking and listen to what you really know.** You know far more than your parents or anyone thinks you do. You know a lot of big and important things in your heart and through common sense.
4. **Play soccer!** (Or whatever team sport you love). Some of the things team sports can teach you: Be ready for anything, knowing that there's only so much you can control.
1. **Function at your highest level, knowing that you are only one person in a company of equals.**
2. **Remain composed under pressure.**
3. **Get to know and enjoy the variety, uniqueness, and humanity of people who may be very different from you.**
4. **Experience the happiness that comes from doing your best and from performing well.**
5. **Learn to keep going despite overwhelming odds.** Learn to win and lose gracefully.
6. **Accept the fact that our lives are only partly in our own hands.** Luck, the actions of other people, and a host of circumstances beyond our control will invariably affect the outward shape of our lives.
7. **Believe in the perfectibility of yourself and society.** Plato said "The strangest of all the mysterious thing within us is our unceasing preference for the best."
8. **Make your love visible in the world through your work.**
9. **Seek justice in the world, but not in your own life.** Don't get hung up by the unfairness you may perceive in your own life. Work with what you have and never look back.
10. **Look for the light of God in every person.** The challenge that defines our humanity is seeing the divine in other people.
11. **Let your life speak.** Have the courage to let the best that is in you direct your actions.

Lives and Callings: The Spiritual Journey – May 1st

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 AM on May 1st to hear from Kelsey McNicholas. Save the date for Bob Lough on June 5th and John Adams on July 3rd. 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.

Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) Workshop – May 14th-15th

The AVP model is a two-day workshop where participants learn via interactive exercises, games and role-plays new ways to find alternatives to violence. Lunch is provided. Workshops are open to all; the suggested donation is \$20 but no one is excluded for lack of funds. Upcoming is May 14-15 in Atlanta (facilitator level, for those who have already completed an AVP workshop). Visit "AVP Atlanta" on Facebook, www.avpusa.org, or contact Heather - (315) 263-1502, Heather@georgiaavp@gmail.com.

2016 Global Peace Event - May 21st

The 2016 Global Peace Event is May 21st 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm in the AFM Hall. Commemorating Buddha's birth, death and enlightenment, the event will include speakers from different spiritual and secular traditions and incorporate peace prayers, chanting and intentions for peace. Please contact Shahina Lakhani at [678 994 1843](tel:6789941843) for details and to volunteer your talent for the event.

Membership Forum – May 22nd

If you are interested in exploring membership in AFM, consider attending the May 22nd forum in the Meeting Room at 11:45. For specifics on membership, see page 58 in our Meeting handbook (http://atlanta.quaker.org/site_pdf_docs/AFM_Handbook-rev_201512.pdf). Two members will share personal stories of their road to membership followed by questions. See Mary Ann Downey or Sally Ferguson for details.

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business – April 17, 2016

Recorded pending approval

Attendance: Folami Adams, John Adams, Mike Aland, Cathy Amanti, Paul Baker, Don Bender, Rebecca Burley, Steve Collins, Jennifer Dickie, Julia Ewen, Sally Ferguson, Julie Foster, Larry Foster, Waman French, Annie Mae Goldman McDonald, Clive Gordon, Roland Heath, Kathy Johnson, Lynn Leuszler, Georgia Lord, Paul Mangelsdorf, Susan May, Jonah McDonald, Kelsey McNicholas, Liz Nicholson, Rebecca Sullivan, Brittney Thornbury, Jim Tolmach, Myrna Trapp, Sarah Walton, Austin Wattles, Betsy Eggers (Clerk), Elizabeth Lamb (Recording Clerk) (33 Friends).

Query: Sally Ferguson presented the query: “How does our Meeting recognize, develop, and nurture the gifts of our members and attenders of all ages? How do we teach about Quaker practices in business and worship and their importance to the functioning of our Meeting community?”

Discernment

Ministry and Worship Committee: On behalf of Ministry and Worship Sally Ferguson brought forward two attenders for membership, noting that the children of Kelly Callaway-Singer will thereby become Associate Members.

- **Minute 04-17-2016-01:** *On the recommendation of the Ministry and Worship Committee, we approve John Adams as a member of the Atlanta Friends Meeting.*
- **Minute 04-17-2016-02:** *On the recommendation of the Ministry and Worship Committee, we approve Kelly Callaway-Singer as a member of the Atlanta Friends Meeting.*

Administration Committee: On behalf of the Administration Committee Steve Collins brought forward the Meetinghouse Greeting Room vision statement.

- **Minute 04-17-2016-03:** *The purpose of the greeting room is to be a gathering space that is welcoming and conveys what we believe, who we are as a Meeting community, and how that is practiced in the world.*

Nominating Committee: On behalf of the Nominating Committee Waman French brought forward the proposed change to the handbook description for the Naming Committee. The words in italics would be added to the current statement of purpose. “Purpose: To Present the Meeting with recommendations for persons to serve on the Nominating Committee, ***including the Clerk of the Nominating Committee.***”

- **Minute 04-17-2016-04:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the above change to the description of the Naming Committee.*

Reports

Ministry and Worship Committee: On behalf of the Ministry and Worship Committee Sally Ferguson reported that Linda Hoopes has requested that Atlanta Friends meeting lay down her membership.

Next Sally read a letter from Vassalboro Friends Meeting in Maine regarding Sarah Walton’s status here as a Sojourning Friend. “We at Vassalboro Friends Meeting send you a long overdue thank you for welcoming Friend Sarah Walton to your meeting community in September 2012 and giving her such loving support.

She has asked to have a more formal status as a Sojourning Friend from our meeting to yours as she continues to pursue her leading to work on criminal justice issues in Georgia. We heartily commend her to your meeting. She has been such an inspiration to many of us in her cheery way of teaching others and speaking the truth in ways that we can't help but embrace."

Steve Collins then reported that the Burundi community plans for establishing an Evangelical Friends Church is moving forward with support from EFC representative, Rusty Savage. Dieudonne Ntibayazi met recently with Louisville KY Friends for training and will be meeting again on May 21 with Rusty Savage. The Burundi community will then move forward with finding a place to meet. Three churches have been identified so far as potential sites for worship. The Burundi community is leading this, and Ministry and Worship is helping as they ask.

Finally, Sally reported that the new format of giving introductions, then joys, then announcements at close of meeting would continue since there had been no feedback about it. A discussion followed about the pros and cons and Sally asked that additional suggestions be given to Ministry and Worship for consideration.

Religious Education: Jennifer Dickie reported that the First Day classes are full to capacity every week and that they are still struggling to find doorkeepers. She asked that everyone consider volunteering. The Celebration of Youth Service will be on May 22 during which the Meeting recognizes all of our children and honors those students moving up from their current classes. The Religious Education Committee is already looking forward to the start of a new year in August, using the Faith and Play curriculum on Quaker values. Due to the number of children in the program, next year there will again be five classes rather than four. They hope to have two-teacher teams for each level thus providing greater continuity for the students. Each teacher would teach twice a month. If you are interested in teaching, please see Jennifer. A summer workshop for teachers will be held in July to prepare for the fall. With the large number of children (10 – 16 babies every Sunday) Religious Education would like to find more classroom space. If you have any ideas, please let them know.

Administration Committee: On behalf of the Administration Committee Steve Collins reported that Jim Williams, Meetinghouse Committee clerk, is currently getting quotes for the exterior repair and maintenance. Currently the estimates are \$7000-\$8000 for siding, trim and windows; \$3000-\$7000 for gutters and fascia boards; and \$8000 - \$10,000 for painting. They will begin considering the need for more classroom space at their next meeting.

Friends Committee on National Legislation: On behalf of FCNL Sue shared the seven priorities that arose from the Worship Sharing April 3. These are 1) Racial, Economic and Criminal Justice Systems; 2) Climate Change; 3) Education; 4) Women's Rights; 5) Drones; 6) Gun Violence; 7) Immigration and Refugees. Other issues arose, but we are limited to seven proposals. For more detail, see Sue May.

Finance Committee: The Treasurer, Lynn Leuzler, presented the Income Statement and Balance Sheet for the first quarter of 2016, stating that we have taken in about 25% of what was budgeted for the year and to keep up the good work. Paul Mangelsdorf then reported that SAYMA is running a deficit every year. Their income is almost entirely from what the individual meetings pay through the assessment process, which has not been increased in many years. SAYMA has asked for suggestions from the member meetings on how best to increase their income to meet the rising expenses. The Finance Committee seeks any suggestions to supplement their ideas of raising the assessments and/or actively soliciting funds.

Paul Mangelsdorf presented a Policy on Donations to be discerned next month. This policy outlines acceptable forms for donations and conditions on them. The meeting has received a bequest of \$132,107.28 from Frank Cummings to be used through the Suchitoto Scholarship Fund. Since this is already an established fund in the Meeting, this is not a problem, but there is still concern about administering such a large fund. Lynn Leuszler and Paul Mangelsdorf met with Frank Cummings shortly before his death and he agreed that should it become politically or legally impossible to administer the fund as is currently done, AFM would be able to give it to a different charity. It was suggested that the requirement of including a sunset or exit strategy with large donations made to special purpose funds be made a part of the policy. The policy presented was the following:

Policy on Donations. Atlanta Friends Meeting (AFM) relies on financial donations from members, attenders and others to support the meeting and its operations. AFM accepts donations by check, cash, credit or debit card, bank transfer and donations of marketable securities. All donations unless specifically identified by the donor at the time of the gift are assumed to be made to the general fund of the meeting. AFM will also accept donations to special purpose funds that have been created by the meeting. As AFM is a 501(c)3 charitable organization under the Internal Revenue Service code, donations by individuals are tax deductible in the tax year they are made.

In addition, contributions to AFM are subject to the following conditions:

- All donations must be unrestricted (except for designation to an approved AFM special purpose fund) without limitations on the use of funds or the investment of funds*
- All donations to special purpose funds are accepted with the understanding that any interest or investment income earned from money held in AFM special purpose funds is deemed to be unrestricted and placed in the meetings general fund*
- No goods or services will be provided in exchange for, or as a result of, a contribution to AFM*
- AFM will accept donations of tangible assets to the extent the meeting needs such assets. AFM will not accept donations of tangible assets for which it has no specific need and which the meeting would be required to sell the asset in order it to benefit from the donation*
- Donations of marketable securities will be valued as specified by IRS regulations. Donated marketable securities may not have any restrictions on their sale, as it is the policy of AFM to promptly sell all marketable securities after receipt.*
- AFM will not accept donations for the benefit of a specific individual or individuals. AFM will accept donations to support an individual's special leading to the extent that that leading has been recognized and is supported by the meeting.*
- AFM will only accept donations that are permitted by Federal and Georgia law.*

Any question about this policy or about any unusual planned donation should be brought to the AFM Treasurer or the AFM Finance Committee.

Minutes of March 2016:

- Minute 4-17-2016-05: The Minutes of the March 2016 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business were approved as submitted.*

Announcements

Liz Nicholson said that Atlanta Quaker Voluntary Service expects to have 8 fellows next year. They are seeking a larger (4 or 5 bedroom) house near public transportation. Please let them know of any reasonably priced possibilities.

Meeting closed with Silent Worship.

Respectfully submitted by Elizabeth Lamb, Recording Clerk; Betsy Eggers, Clerk



Please Hold in The Light:

Bob Repoley, father of
Christina Repoley.

Millard Benner, brother in law of
Don Bender

*Those wishing to have requests for
Holding included in this monthly
newsletter may give the names to a
member of Care & Counsel.*



Atlanta Friends Meeting Contacts

Clerk of the Meeting: Betsy Eggers, afmclerk1@gmail.com
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Treasurer: Lynn Leuszler, afmtreasurer1@gmail.com
Ministry & Worship: Sally Ferguson, sallyferguson@earthlink.net
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Calendar for Fifth Month (May) 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

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

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

Clerk: Betsy Eggers, 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 afmannouncements-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.