

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER



Atlanta Meeting of the Religious
Society of Friends (Quakers)
All are welcome

April 2017

PE+ACE Initiative Launched Next Workshop April 15th

Friends leading the newly formed Policing Education and Active Civic Engagement (PE+ACE) initiative celebrated the organization's formal incorporation as a non-profit and pending 501(c)(3) application with Friends and other interested persons at the Atlanta Friends Meetinghouse on Saturday, March 11, 2017. President of the PE+ACE Board Cheryl Cowherd introduced Project Manager Emmy Mathis, officers Susan Firestone (Secretary) and Don Denard (Treasurer), and Executive Director Sarah Walton.

Susan Firestone explained that supporting an effort like Policing Education and Active Civic Engagement grows naturally out of the history of Atlanta Friends Meeting. With its Quaker testimonies for equality, peace, and community, Atlanta Friends Meeting has been active in working for racial equality and concerns about criminal justice since it first held integrated meetings in segregated Atlanta during the 1940s. In recent years, many Atlanta Friends have addressed systemic racism in the criminal justice system by working to end mass incarceration, help formerly incarcerated people, or offer workshops with the Alternatives to Violence Project. Since as Quakers, we see that of God in every person, it's essential for us to listen to all points of view and find ways to communicate across differences. PE+ACE brings a similar approach to offering people tools to help build safe thriving communities with fair treatment for all.

Don Denard posed a series of questions to Sarah Walton to illuminate the mission and guiding principles of PE+ACE. Sarah emphasized that the practice of deep listening and the belief in radical equality and wisdom coupled with compassion are central to the PE+ACE initiative. Goals include making information available at public libraries for use as a starting point in identifying local policing policies,

Meeting for Worship
Each First Day (Sunday)
10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
701 W. Howard Ave.

QUERY

Do I look into the nature and meaning of peace? What keeps the world from realizing peace? What keeps me from realizing peace?

- Three Queries on Peace:
<http://www.quakerquaker.org/profiles/blogs/three-queries-on-peace>
- An Introduction to Quaker Testimonies (American Friends Service Committee):
https://www.afsc.org/sites/afsc.civicactions.net/files/documents/AFSC_Testimonies_Booklet.pdf

finding ways to communicate across barriers, and identifying forms of active participation to address those policies.

PE+ACE needs volunteers for their financial support, their organizational and development skills, and their wisdom and knowledge. Volunteers may also be able to provide specific help in creating everyday peoples' guides to policing in local communities, and people with legal expertise may help with legal research and writing.

Want to learn more about PE+ACE, experience a community dialog with deep listening, and expand your knowledge of materials for learning about policing and civic engagement? Come to the next PE+ACE event on Saturday, April 15 from 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. at Atlanta Friends Meeting. Childcare will be provided. For more information or to RSVP, contact info@4peace.us.

Donations would be very helpful to support the development, distribution, and presentation of educational materials to support the organization's vision: PE+ACE, P.O. Box 170288, Atlanta, GA 30317. Upon IRS approval of 501(c)(3) status, which may take several months, donations would become retroactively tax-deductible back to November 4, 2016.



Photo by Art Jones, professional photographer/ filmmaker and regular AFM attender

Lives and Callings: the Spiritual Journey – April 2nd

Building on NPR's *Story Corps* and *This I Believe*, the Atlanta Meeting began our own version of these programs in 2007. On the first Sunday of each month, we listen to how one Friend in our meeting answers questions of God's leadings as well as questions about what brings them to this meeting, what led them to become a member or why not, and what they believe now.

If you are new to our meeting, considering membership or a long time attender or member who enjoys hearing a story, you are invited to come to the meeting library at 9 am, on the first Sunday in each month to hear these stories. You are also invited to tell your story and can call Mary Ann Downey at [678-938-8030](tel:678-938-8030) to volunteer or to get more information. Come hear these Lissa Place on April 2nd.

Easter Egg Hunt - April 16th

Join in the spirited tradition of the Meeting's Easter Egg Hunt! April 16, at the rise of Meeting. On Easter Sunday please bring hard boiled eggs, plastic eggs filled with goodies, or other wrapped, hideable tokens for children to find. We will collect these in the lobby as you enter the Meetinghouse. The Middle School class will hide the goodies for the younger children to find.

Preschool & toddlers will search in the fenced playground area; Lower & Upper Elementary kids will seek all around the Meetinghouse grounds! Contact Lisa Kruse with questions: [706-540-1680](tel:706-540-1680).

Gathered Meeting Retreat – May 5-7th

Save the date for the Gathered Meeting Retreat, from Friday May 5th to Sunday May 7th, 2017 at the Charlie Elliot Conference Center.

Get Involved in Atlanta Friends Meeting

Our Meeting relies mostly on volunteers. Over a dozen committees carry out our spiritual, community, caring and social action work. If you are new to Atlanta Friends Meeting or just want to get more involved, working on a committee is an excellent way to apply your talents and get to know others. We are especially in need of those with IT knowledge and abilities.

For more information contact one of the members of the Nominating Committee:

Ron Nuse (ronnuse@gmail.com)

Waman French (waman.french@friendsschoolatlanta.org)

Carolyn Coburn-Allen, (cccoburn55@gmail.com)

Elizabeth Lamb (gelds@comcast.net)

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business – March 19th, 2017

Recorded pending approval

Attendance: Mike Aland, Richard Allen, Michael Allison, Paul Baker, Rebecca Burley, Steve Collins, Linnis Cook, Jennifer Dickie, Julia Ewen, Sally Ferguson, Susan Firestone, David Foster, Julie Foster, Larry Foster, Waman French, Eric Glenn, Clive Gordon, Dwight Harriman, Roland Heath, Bill Hooson, Chris Kohler, Elizabeth Lamb, Chris Lahowitch, Lynn Leuszler, Georgia Lord, Becky Lough, Emmy Mathis, Ronald Nuse, Nan O'Connor, Lissa Place, Bert Skellie, Karen Skellie, Henry Slack, Rebecca Sullivan, Elizabeth Tolmach, Jim Tolmach, Myrna Trapp, Sarah Walton, Mark Watson, Pat Williams, Brent Wolff, Betsy Eggers (Clerk), Bethany Morrison (Recording Clerk) (42 Friends).

Query: Sally Ferguson presented the query for Third Month: Are your meetings for church affairs held in a spirit of worship and in dependence on the guidance of God? Remember that we do not seek a majority decision nor even consensus. As we wait patiently for divine guidance our experience is that the right way will open and we shall be led into unity.

Approval of Agenda: One person asked about the placement of the report and discussion about an "in-kind" gift to Stone Mountain Evangelical Friends Church on the agenda in the discernment portion. As a result, the committee report and discussion were moved to the first item in the report portion of the meeting. The question as to whether it belonged as a discernment, report, or something in-between was left open to Spirit.

Discernments

Nominating Committee: On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Ronald Nuse brought forth the following name for approval:

- **Minute 3-19-2017-01:** Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Cal Gough as Clerk of the Library Committee for one year, an extension of his service in this role.

Reports:

Ad Hoc Committee On Proposed Gifts to SMEFC: On behalf of the Ad Hoc Committee Appointed to Consider the Proposed Gifts to Stone Mountain Evangelical Friends Church, Georgia Lord stated that the Committee was in agreement that an “in kind” gift should be made to SMEFC, and were in agreement about what that gift would be, but still had two primary questions: first, whether the gift should be made from the Meeting itself, or from funds donated separately by individuals; second, whether a statement of concern about the policy of SMEFC’s Yearly Meeting toward LGBTQ people should accompany the gift. She read the report compiled after two meetings of the committee. The report included a list of 14 concerns and questions that developed over the course of the Ad Hoc Committee’s meetings. The committee wrote that “at the conclusion of [the second] meeting, we determined that the best way to move forward would be to give Meeting for Business a summary of the primary competing concerns presented by this situation, and seek further input from the Meeting. We plan to listen carefully for the input of others in the Meeting, continue our process of individual discernment, and then meet again as a committee to see if the Spirit leads us to a sense of unity on how we should proceed.” The complete report is archived with the recording clerk.

After sharing the report, the attendees of Meeting for Business shared their own experiences, imagery, insights, metaphors, and concerns on the issue of an in-kind gift to SMEFC. Highlighting only a few, these include concerns about a litmus test tied to gift-giving; the implications of going back on a perceived commitment; and concerns about white supremacy, colonialism, and applying a stricter standard to an organization comprised of mostly Black immigrants. In addition, many contributions about the feelings of love, friendship, and family between members and attenders of AFM and SMEFC rose up from the discussion. To many present, the Spirit spoke to move forward with a gift from AFM and some spoke of this sense of the Meeting.

Some Friends voiced concerns about a gift from AFM, given the position of the Evangelical Friends--Eastern Region Faith and Practice on LGBTQ issues, and two of those Friends asked to be on the record as standing aside if the meeting decided that day to move forward with a corporate gift. One major concern was related to giving a gift on behalf of the AFM as a whole, when some people who regularly attend AFM and contribute financially to the meeting would not themselves feel comfortable making a gift to an organization connected the Evangelical Friends--Eastern Region.

The meeting determined that we were not clear to move forward with this gift, but generally agreed with the committee's conclusion to give the items specified in Susan Firestone's February report. The Ad Hoc Committee will continue to consider the two questions of whether the gift should come from individuals or the Meeting and whether a statement of some kind should accompany the gift.

Care and Counsel Committee: On behalf of Care and Counsel, Bill Hoosen reported the following:

- Care and Counsel will no longer have someone outside of the library at rise of meeting to greet newcomers. Instead, we are recommending an invitation to be announced after the last newcomer/visitor introduces themselves for folks to welcome our visitors at rise of meeting and invite them to share refreshments with them.

- Care and Counsel would like to conduct a forum on 6th month, 4th Sunday, June 25 with attention to welcoming visitors and new members.
- Care and Counsel are working to revise the description of "pastoral" duties of Care and Counsel to be more accessible to those who might be seeking help.
- As discussed in Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business in January, Care and Counsel updated the Care and Counsel Handbook Description to reflect that C&C is the standing committee for concerns regarding sexual harassment. These updates were submitted to Clerk of Nominating Committee, Ron Nuse.

Ministry and Worship Committee: On behalf of Ministry and Worship, Sally Ferguson brought forward a letter of appreciation from Lisa Hendricks Ogletree, the daughter of AFM founding member Elizabeth Hendricks, giving her thanks for the recent memorial service held for Elizabeth Hendricks at AFM. In one excerpt, she writes that “Elizabeth’s life was blessed by her association with Atlanta Meeting. She wrote in her notes that the Meeting made her feel hopeful in her first years in Atlanta.” A copy of the complete letter is archived with recording clerk Bethany Morrison.

Sally Ferguson also reported that Ministry and Worship received a membership request from Mark Watson. A meeting for clearness was held and the members of the clearness committee felt he was clear for membership. She read his letter requesting membership to the business meeting. He concluded his letter by saying that “Having studied and visited religious services from many traditions--Native American, Chan Buddhist, Hindu, Catholic, various Protestant--my sense of belonging to Quakerism remains the truth as I understand it.” A copy of the complete letter is archived with recording clerk Bethany Morrison.

Mark’s name will be brought forward next month for final approval.

FGC Long Range Conference Planning Committee: Rebecca Sullivan read a letter of appreciation from the Friends General Conference Long Range Conference Planning Committee, following their recent meeting in Atlanta.

Dear Atlanta Friends Meeting,

We are grateful for the spirit of love and light that created this community and your openness in sharing that love and light with us all. We appreciate the ease and joy with which the Community took us under their care so we could be free to do the work we needed to do this weekend. We are grateful for the gracious, graceful space that is grounded and filled with vibrant energy both inside and in the grounds. Some of us returned to the image of putting cares on the train and letting them go down the track so we could orient ourselves to the work at hand. We are grateful for Rebecca Sullivan’s kindness and organizational skills. We appreciate the careful matching of guests and hosts. Thank you for the food, snacks, coffee, and fresh fruit. Thank you for the care that was given to various dietary needs. Thank you for the ease with which you accommodated last minute requests for rides from the airport. We are grateful for the opportunity to reconnect and to build new connections.

Thank you for your love and care.

FGC Long Range Conference Planning Committee
March 4, 2017

Minutes of February 2017:

- **Minute 3-19-2017-02:** The Minutes of the January 2017 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business were approved with revisions. Bill Hooson's name was added to the attendance list. Two paragraphs of the discussion of an in-kind gift to Stone Mountain Evangelical Church was revised to the following (changes are underlined):

Gift to Stone Mountain Evangelical Friends Church: In the January Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, the meeting discussed an "in-kind" gift from the 2016 budget surplus to the Stone Mountain Evangelical Friends Church. There was a lot of support for offering a gift to Friends in the new congregation, but concerns had been raised regarding SMEFC's affiliation with a Yearly Meeting that has discriminatory policies regarding LGBTQ persons, particularly regarding same-sex marriage. These concerns prompted the suggestion that an "in kind" gift be given in lieu of a contribution of money [In March, perceptions of those in attendance in January are mixed over whether and what decisions were made.] Over the course of this January discussion, we asked Susan Firestone to reach out to the leadership of the church about their needs and potential gift ideas and to report back to us. At the February Meeting, Susan Firestone reported the results of her conversation with the leadership of the Stone Mountain Evangelical Friends Church about their needs as the meeting considers an in-kind gift to the Stone Mountain Evangelical Friends Church from the 2016 budget surplus. She shared a detailed list with prices for First Day School materials and musical instruments, which totaled to \$2997.01. She reported that the AFM ad-hoc committee had consulted with the finance committee and the clerk and found persuasive reasons for giving all the needed items.

Given strong concerns regarding the position of the Evangelical Friends-Eastern Region Faith and Practice on LGBTQ issues, the meeting determined that, at present, we are not clear to move forward with this gift.

Meeting closed with Silent Worship.

Respectfully submitted,
Bethany Morrison, Recording Clerk
Betsy Eggers, Clerk



Please Hold in The Light:

Paul O'Connor
Derek; neighbor of Tara Doyle
Liz Grant Hilton; friend of Karen Morris

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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Ministry & Worship: Sally Ferguson, sallyferguson@earthlink.net
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Calendar for Fourth Month (April) 2017

Area Meetings for Worship

Every First Day (Sunday)	10:00 a.m. – Meetinghouse (AFM), with a smaller group in the Library. 1:30 p.m. - Stone Mountain Friends Church (Evangelical), at Rock of Ages Lutheran Church, 5135 Memorial Dr, Stone Mountain, GA 30083
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 Hensley, 478-227-8892; maconquakers.org
Sixth Day (Friday)	11:00 a.m. – East Lake Commons, Decatur. Contact Bert Skellie at bertskellie@gmail.com or 404-680-4799. (Mid-August through May), 9:00 a.m. – Friends School of Atlanta. Community Meeting Room, 862 Columbia Dr., Decatur, 404-373-8746.

Regular Events at the Meetinghouse

Every First Day (Sunday)	9:00 - Adult Religious Ed, Library 9:30 - Singing, Classroom A/B 10:00 - Meeting for Worship 5:00 - Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship, Meeting Room
Second Day (Monday)	Every other Monday at 6:30 - Spiritual Nurture Group, Library (contact Lewis Fuller for info on how to join)
Third Day (Tuesday)	6:00 - Alex Zinnes Yoga, Nursery Second and fourth Tuesdays at 7:00 - Deep Waters Center for Prayer & Exploration, Meeting Room
Fourth Day (Wednesday)	8:30 a.m. Morning Worship, Library First and third Wednesdays: 7:00 p.m. Worship at David & Freer Jarvis' home 7:00 - 8:30 pm: Semi-programmed worship at AFM. Contact Ashley Wilcox: ashleymwilcox@gmail.com , 206-300-5836.
Fifth Day (Thursday)	7:00 p.m. Bible Discussion, Library
Sixth Day (Friday)	Every third Friday, Meeting for Business, Meeting Room
18 th of Each Month	Newcomers Welcome Dinner, rotating location

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: 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.

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