

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER

May 2017

Creation Care and Climate *Submitted by Henry Slack*

In their history, Friends have a long tradition of caring for those who some in society hated, including helping refugees and the Civil Rights movement. With this in mind, let's recall the effects of climate change on the only planet we have.

The vast majority of scientists (97%) are convinced, based upon the evidence, that our climate is already changing due to greenhouse gases. Carbon dioxide (CO₂) from burning coal, oil, and natural gas, is responsible for 80% of warming. Other gases include some refrigerants, but also methane (natural gas) released into the atmosphere.

Although it was called Global Warming, "Global Weirding" is a better term, because stable weather systems are thrown off kilter. Expect heat waves, which will have strong effects in parts of the globe without air conditioning. More people die of heat-related problems than cold ones, and this will get worse.

The "weirding" also means we will see more of conditions like this year, when blueberry plants in Georgia began to flower ahead of normal. Many of those blossoms were ruined by the mid-March freeze. On average, spring-like weather has moved 2.9 days a decade for the past 50 years. In 50 more years, at this rate, Georgians will be a full month ahead of 1967's spring. It's not unseasonably warm; this is the new season.

In addition, we will see both more droughts and more floods. We have had more places flood in the U.S than ever before, including Columbia SC; Ellicott City MD; Baton Rouge, LA; and San Jose', CA. Both the droughts and the floods will be bad for the billions of global citizens who grow their own food, and millions of these will become refugees.

Millions more coastal dwellers will become refugees from rising sea levels and accompanying storm surges. Salt water can ruin soil for decades, but the loss of buildings, roads and bridges to coastal communities will also have serious effects. Already Miami is raising the level of major roads to better cope with storm surges! Norfolk VA, the home of the biggest shipyards in this



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.

QUERY

Do you use and perfect your gifts for the benefit of others? Do we regard our time, talents and wealth as gifts to be shared? Do we respect the balance of nature? Do we act to preserve the natural world rather than seek dominance over it?

- Sidwell Friends School Stewardship <http://www.sidwell.edu/about-sfs/quaker-values/testimonies/stewardship/index.aspx>
- Quakers speak out about the Environment and Justice <https://petersontoscano.com/quakers-speak-out-about-the-environment-and-justice/>

country, is also affected, and while the ships can float, workers have more trouble getting around their communities.

Despite all of this, we have good news and hope. "Transition towns" are helping to bridge the gap between our current oil-dependent ways and the fuel-free future of photovoltaics and batteries. (Quaker Ruah Swennerfelt talked about this at our Meetinghouse in March.) Zero Energy Homes are built and sold by some of the nation's largest homebuilders. Many Atlantans already drive electric cars; the electricity costs less than gasoline, and your money no longer goes to an oil company. Wind energy is cheaper than coal, and has much less risk of lost lives.

Some of the Green Friends have lobbied Congress with Citizens' Climate Lobby to take action with a market-friendly, revenue-neutral solution, Carbon Fee and Dividend. By taxing carbon fuels, people figure ways to use less. If we then send the collected funds as a dividend to all households, the poorest among us will have the money to pay for the increased prices. Most will have even more; in one study, the Dividend could create 2 million jobs in 10 years.

Other surprising actions can reduce global weirding. A vegetable-rich diet and reduction of food waste can lower carbon fuel use. Education for girls, accompanied with family planning, is important for the future, along with planting trees.

We remain surrounded by insurmountable opportunities, but to summarize in 8 words:

It's real.

It's bad.

It's us.

There's hope.

2016 Ministry Report for 2015

Ashley M. Wilcox

One of the roles of Ministry and Worship is to take under its care "Anchoring Committees" (sometimes called Spiritual Care or Accountability Committees). A member or attender asks for an Anchoring Committee when he or she wants to name and support a personal ministry. They're a bit like clearness committees with a focus on the calling but long term with a stable committee willing to meet as often as the member needs - usually monthly. As a way of sharing these pilgrimages, M&W has asked permission to share a few of the annual reports with the meeting. This one is from Ashley Wilcox's 2016 report to M&W. Enjoy.

Looking back over this year, it is helpful for me to separate it into three seasons. In the spring, I finished my second year of Contextual Education through Candler—eight hours a week of being involved in the life of Atlanta Friends Meeting. My main focus was on the meeting's Gathered Meeting Retreat, which took place the last weekend of March. The theme was "How Friends Worship." I was glad to have the opportunity to lead this retreat; it felt like a good use of my gifts. I continued to facilitate monthly mid-week worship at Candler. I also served on various committees at Atlanta Friends Meeting, including the Worship and Ministry committee, an anchoring committee, and clearness and wedding committees. I finished my time as the chaplain of Sacred Worth (the LGBTQ Candler student group), and helped organize the Sacred Worth week on Trans*forming Christianity, where we celebrated the gifts of trans Christians.

Over the summer, I worked for ten weeks as the pastoral intern of First Friends Meeting, an FUM meeting in Greensboro, NC. I was able to experience many aspects of pastoral ministry, including helping with four weddings, a memorial, and two baby blessings. I also preached in programmed worship, worked in the office, went on pastoral visits, and organized Quaker Eights groups. I was surprised by how much I enjoyed pastoral

ministry, and how it brings together my gifts of vocal ministry, pastoral care, and administration. It was also wonderful to connect with Friends from other meetings during my time in Greensboro.

In the fall, I returned to Atlanta for my final year at Candler. Now that I have finished my Contextual Education obligations in the meeting, this has been a good time for me to discern what I feel called to do and what to let go. I joined the Friends Journal Board of Trustees and traveled to Philadelphia for my first board meeting. I took some interesting and challenging classes, including Ecclesiology, which gave me an opportunity to think about Friends' practices and structures, and a class on Religion, Sexuality, and Reproductive Health, which was cross-listed with Emory's school of public health. I experienced a lot of changes in my life: I started a new relationship, had to leave my apartment, and I got a car. The changes have been mostly very good, but I am still adjusting.

Letting things go has continued to be a good spiritual practice for me. I withdrew from a class this year for the first time in my academic career, and I am not planning on taking the second semester of Hebrew; instead, I plan to focus on my thesis. My support network is good: I meet monthly with a spiritual director and am part of a spiritual nurture group that meets twice a month. I met regularly with members of my anchoring committee in the spring, but have not been as consistent this past fall. I have found self-care practices that work for me, including exercise, drawing and coloring mandalas, and singing in choirs, and I have recently started playing more board games.

Looking ahead, the biggest thing on the horizon is graduation in May. I am actively seeking employment for after graduation. In December, I spent a weekend interviewing and preaching for a semi-programmed FUM meeting that is looking for a full-time pastor. The search committee and I are in discernment, and I should know more in January. I feel like my classes this semester are preparing me for pastoral ministry: I am taking classes on Conflict Transformation, Preaching, and a practica on Weddings, Funerals, and Confirmation. I am trying to be open and embrace the new things ahead in the coming year. Thank you for your support and prayers.

Gathered Meeting Retreat – May 5-7th

AFM's Gathered Meeting Retreat is May 5 - May 7th at beautiful Charlie Elliot Retreat Center; 1 ¼ hours east of Atlanta. Come enjoy community and discover wider, deeper Friendships in this intergenerational weekend. Laura MacNorlin will be our facilitator as we explore our retreat theme: "Deeper, wider waters, discerning who we want to be in this moment in time." Family registrations and scholarship requests were due April 23. Adult registration deadline is April 30. Questions? dwight.harriman@gmail.com.

Lives and Callings: the Spiritual Journey – May 7th

On May 7, during our Adult Religious Education class, Elise Riley and Claire Hannapel will offer their leadings and light growing up in Quaker meeting. Their spiritual journeys led them to serve as QVS fellows this year. Come hear more from 9-9:55. On June 4, our Friend Katie Smiley will share her spiritual journey.

Invitation to those with Leadings Related to Peace and Social Justice – May 14th

Have you been wondering how to put your faith into action but are not sure what that would look like? Do you want some Friendly company as you become ready? Would you like to link up with others with similar leadings? Social Concerns Committee is the group in our Meeting where you can get support in following your leadings to work for peace and social justice. The Committee assists Meeting members and attenders with discernment for their social concerns leadings through a clearness process. A clearness process may result in a recommendation for a request for funding. We also welcome willing hands and hearts for the leadings currently being pursued by the Social Concerns Committee. Everyone is invited to come to the next meeting

on Sunday, May 14, at 11:45 am in the High School classroom. For more information, contact Chris Kohler (ck@mailc.net or (404) 493-0182) or Bert Skellie (bertskellie@gmail.com or 404-378-5883).

Green Friends' Film Screening - May 14th

Green Friends' next screening will be Sunday, May 14, at 11:45 in the Meeting Room, with snacks provided. We will see and discuss several short films, some funny and some not; some on climate change and its contribution to Syria's disaster; on neat ways Nature can help us deal with climate change; and on vegan diets.

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Youth – May 21st

Join us on May 21 for our celebration of our children. This semi-programmed Meeting for worship will introduce you to the children of our Meeting and the First Day School teachers who have worked with them every First Day this past year. If you have children, please make an effort to come to Meeting on this day, so that we can honor all of our Meeting's children!

Empty Bowls Dinner – May 21st

Come fight hunger by joining us May 21st after Meeting for the Empty Bowls dinner. The middle school class, helped by the upper elementary class, will serve Stone Soup in beautiful clay bowls made by the young artists. \$5 buys soup and a bowl to keep. All proceeds will go to support the UN World Food Programme.

George Lakey Book Talk and Workshop – June 9-10th

George Lakey will hold a book talk and signing of his latest book Viking Economics: How the Scandinavians Got It Right – And How We Can, Too, Friday, June 9, 7:30 pm at the Atlanta Friends Meeting, 701 West Howard Ave., Decatur 30030. Discussion will extend beyond the book based on audience questions. Light refreshments and childcare will be available. For more information, contact Susan Firestone, susanfires@gmail.com.

A Nation Divided – Where do we go from here? Strategic Planning Workshop with George Lakey. Saturday, June 10, 9 am – noon, at Oakhurst Baptist Church, 222 East Lake Drive, Decatur 30030. For information and to register, contact Leslie Withers: leslie@ML1945.com.

Both events are free and open to all.

Get Involved in Atlanta Friends Meeting – First Day School Teachers

First Day School Teachers wanted! Are you interested in what happens on the other side of the Meetinghouse on First Days? Are you excited by the possibility of an adventure in Spirit that only our youngest members can inspire? Would you like to help our Meeting's children find inspiration and navigate the world of Friends and the stories of God's people? Then join us as a First Day School teacher next year. Teachers work together in teams to plan lessons and teach once or twice a month. Training is provided and support is ongoing. Contact Jennifer Dickie for more information at michaeljen@bellsouth.net or [404-313-8770](tel:404-313-8770).

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business – April 16th, 2017 **Recorded pending approval**

Attendance: Michael Allison, Don Bender, Steve Collins, Linnis Cook, Jennifer Dickie, Mary Ann Downey, Julia Ewen, Sally Ferguson, Susan Firestone, David Foster, Waman French, Nicolina Hansen-Neff, Bill Holland, Kathy Johnson, Lissa Place, Karen terHorst Morris, Liz Nicholson, Aaron Ruschetta, Rebecca Sullivan, Penny Summers, Elizabeth Tolmach, Myrna Trapp, Sarah Walton, Mark Watson, Austin Wattles, Pat Williams, Betsy Eggers (Clerk), Bethany Morrison (Recording Clerk) (28 Friends).

Query: Elizabeth Tolmach presented the query for Fourth Month: Do I look into the nature and meaning of peace? What keeps the world from realizing peace? What keeps me from realizing peace?

Announcements: As the result of some serious technical problems affecting the meeting's website, Aaron Ruscetta announced that the website has been moved to a new URL: AtlantaQuakers.org. He and Jonah McDonald have also registered related domain names to ensure that web searches for the meeting lead to our website.

Discernments

Nominating Committee: On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Waman French brought forward the following addition to the AFM handbook's description of the Care and Counsel Committee:

The Care and Counsel Committee will address future complaints of harassment at Atlanta Friends Meeting. The statement "Nurturing Trust in Our Community and Addressing Harassment" will be added to the AFM Handbook, included in the newcomers' packet, and posted on the AFM website. If anyone in our Meeting feels harassed by another member or attender the Meeting needs to be informed, usually through Care and Counsel, in order to act to support all concerned, prevent further occurrences, and avoid the isolation of any person.

- *Minute 4-16-2017-01:* Atlanta Friends Meeting approves this addition to the AFM handbook.

Ad Hoc Committee On Proposed Gifts to SMEFC (Lissa Place, Asst. Clerk, Clerking this item): On behalf of the Ad Hoc Committee on Proposed Gifts to the Stone Mountain Evangelical Friends Church, Waman French read the committee's second report. In this report, the committee presented the following minutes for consideration:

- *Minute 4-16-2017-02:* As Atlanta Friends Meeting and the Stone Mountain Evangelical Friends Church are the two Quaker congregations in the metro Atlanta area, we ask Ministry and Worship Committee to suggest a process by which these congregations can periodically consult with each other regarding our continuing spiritual development. Such periodic consultation recognizes that we can learn from each other by continuing to share insights and concerns gained from our respective spiritual searching. The concerns we will raise with our friends and fellow Quakers in the Stone Mountain Evangelical Friends Church will include our sadness and disagreement regarding their Yearly Meeting's policies toward LGBTQ individuals and couples.
- *Minute 4-16-2017-03:* The Administration Committee and the Finance Committee shall work together to lead a threshing process, within the next calendar year, for the Meeting community to consider the standards the Atlanta Friends Meeting applies in considering any requests for financial and/or "in kind" assistance, with particular attention to whether recipient groups or individuals must share our views regarding some or all of the Testimonies. In preparation for this Threshing Session, each committee of the Meeting and the Meeting's staff are asked to consider the financial support and/or "in kind" payments they administer, the criteria that they have applied in the past (whether formally or informally), and what criteria they feel would be best to use moving forward.
- *Minute 4-16-2017-04:* The Atlanta Friends Meeting shall make an "in kind" gift to the Stone Mountain Evangelical Friends Church, consisting of an electric keyboard, an electric bass guitar, and audio-visual and craft supplies for First Day School. Funds, not to exceed \$3000, will be drawn from the AFM 2016 budget surplus for these purchases. A letter will accompany these gifts that expresses our love and care for both Friends at SMEFC as well and LGBTQ Friends, along with our deep and abiding disagreement with EFC-ER's Faith and Practice testimonies on homosexuality and marriage equality. The text of this letter is attached.
- *Minute 4-16-2017-05:* The Ad Hoc Committee recognizes that some in our community may feel hurt or even betrayed by our decision to provide "in kind" support for a congregation affiliated with a Yearly Meeting that expressly discriminates against LGBTQ people. Members of the Ad Hoc Committee are

therefore asked to reach out in comfort to any in our Meeting community who may be feeling hurt, angry, or vulnerable in the wake of the recent discussion and offer them comfort and a listening ear. With much appreciation for the hard-work of the committee and the quality of this report, the Atlanta Friends Meeting approved these four minutes. The complete report is archived with the recording clerk.

Ministry & Worship: On behalf of Ministry & Worship, Steve Collins brought forward the following name for membership:

- *Minute 04-16-2017-02:* On the recommendation of the Ministry and Worship Committee, we approve Mark Watson as a member of the Atlanta Friends Meeting.

Reports:

Ministry & Worship: On behalf of Ministry & Worship, Steve Collins reported a membership request from Penny Summers. A meeting for clearness was held, and the members of the committee felt that she was clear for membership. Steve read Penny's letter requesting membership to the business meeting. The letter concluded by saying "I don't usually consider myself one who joins, but I feel led to pursue being a member of this Quaker Meeting. It feels like it would make a place in my heart feel settled." A copy of the complete letter is archived with the recording clerk. Penny's name will be brought forward next month for final approval.

Religious Education: On behalf of Religious Education, Jennifer Dickie gave the committee's end of the year report. The annual Meeting for Worship with attention to youth will take place on the third First Day in May. Following this semi-programmed worship, the middle school young Friends will invite AFM to participate in the culmination of their year-long Empty Bowl service project. After Meeting, in exchange for a donation to the Empty Bowl Project that feeds hungry people locally, participants will receive one of the young Friends' handmade ceramic bowls filled with a simple meal of beans and rice.

In the fall, AFM will need at least five teachers to fill in for those who are laying down their service at the end of this First Day School year in May. The meeting is in need of MANY door keepers--especially for the 3-4 year old class which will expand from three to thirteen! In particular, Jennifer encouraged those who were active nursery volunteers to consider moving up to serve in this new role.

Care & Counsel: On behalf of Care & Counsel, Elizabeth Tolmach reported that the committee is moving forward on the forum in June addressing "Our Ministry to visitors and newcomers." The committee is continuing its work on the Visitors Packet and beginning work on the "Next Steps" information.

Administration Committee: On behalf of the Administration committee, Steve Collins reported the installation of the new naturally rusting steel identity sign, the new brighter and more energy efficient LED parking lot lighting, and the partial installation of the street sign. He reported repairs to the greeting room tables.

The committee has re-started the bidding process for the landscape lights project. Repairs to the gutters are still in progress, in particular, the problem with overflowing on the rear patio.

Art in the library had been stored during the library renovation. A few framed items of art will be re-hung and the remainder will be auctioned at the Meetinghouse in May, with Sue May coordinating.

Minutes of March 2017:

- *Minute 4-16-2017-06:* The Minutes of the March 2017 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business were approved with one typographical correction.

Meeting closed with Silent Worship.

Respectfully submitted by: Bethany Morrison, Recording Clerk; Betsy Eggers, Clerk



Please Hold in The Light:

Joe Glenn; Eric Glenn's father
Doug Unfug

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

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Calendar for Fifth Month (May) 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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