

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER



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.

August 2017

Request to Post a Black Lives Matter Sign Outside the Atlanta Friends Meeting House

*Bought by Jennifer Dickie to Meeting for Business July, 2017
Will come before Meeting For Business (August) for discernment*

This year Elizabeth Tolmach and I and several other Friends are working to create an AFM Religious Education curriculum for our children. We are being attentive to the stories we bring into the classrooms--making sure all children see themselves and their families represented in the stories as well as those who look and are different from them. We want all children and families to feel welcome. We would like the diversity of our classrooms to broaden--we can only do this if all people feel invited to cross the threshold into our space.

For the past two years at SAYMA we focused on race and racism. One of the workshops I attended this year, led by Vanessa July, was about how Quaker Meetings are working on the issue of racism. We talked about welcoming and how welcomed people of color might feel in an all or mostly white Quaker Meeting such as ours (and most). It can be a hurdle for people who don't identify as white to enter an all or mostly white space for the first time. Even if they are moved to come to Quaker Meeting, they may be uneasy about entering a space they know or have heard is mostly white.

A Friend of color in my workshop said--A Black Lives Matter sign right out front of a building might give her courage to check out a space, she might otherwise go past. A Black Lives Matter [BLM] sign in front of AFM would say--"We see you. We believe that there is racism in the world that affects your life. We welcome you here." This sign is just a first step, of course. It doesn't mean that the work is done. Anyone entering our building for the first time would get to judge us on the integrity of our work. I believe as a Meeting many of us are working hard to be attentive to equity in many places and attentive to the concerns of our Friends of Color--it doesn't mean we are 100% there, but to see for oneself that this is a place where anti-racism work is happening, means one has to cross the threshold first.

I also believe that a BLM sign would stand as a reminder to all of us who enter this building every First Day (and other days too), that there is racism in our midst and despite Friends' long standing testimony to equality, the world is not equitable. While we would like to believe that equity exists at least in our Meeting, the sign reminds us that we must constantly be working against racism--even in our sacred spaces, every day.

Lives and Callings: the Spiritual Journey – August 6th

All are invited to come to the meeting library at 9 am on the first Sunday in each month to 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,

QUERY

SIMPLICITY

How do I maintain simplicity, moderation, and honesty in my speech, my manner of living, and my daily work? Is the life of our Meeting so ordered that it helps us to simplify our lives? Do I recognize when I have enough?

- **Some (Borrowed) Quaker Queries on Simplicity** - C. Wess Daniels
<http://gatheringinlight.com/2006/09/25/some-borrowed-quaker-queries-on-simplicity/>

what led them to become a member or why not, and what they believe now. Caroline Morris will share her journey on August 6th. 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.

Women's Weekend at the Ferguson Cabins – August 10th-13th

Consider joining the group overnight or just for the day at Lake Burton in the north Georgia mountains August 10-13. We will be swimming, canoe/kayaking, playing games, hiking, reading, eating and talking in the rustic setting gifted to the Meeting by Dwight and Irene Ferguson years ago. For more information, email or call Karen Skellie: kskellie@gmail.com or 404-378-5883.

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

Attendance: Paloma Ackroyd-Isales, Mike Aland, Michael Allison, Paul Baker, Cheryl Couherd, Dee DeBra, Jennifer Dickie, Julia Ewen, Eric Glenn, Clive Gordon, Bill Holland, Jack Honderd, Kathy Johnson, Michael Kramer, Suzan Kenworthy, Tom Kenworthy, Elizabeth Lamb, Lynn Leuszler, Carolyn Manley, Caroline Morris, Karen terHorst Morris, Bert Skellie, Karen Skellie, Jim Tolmach, Myrna Trapp, Sarah Walton, Mark Watson, Austin Wattles, Pat Williams, Betsy Eggers (Clerk), Bethany Morrison (Recording Clerk) (31 Friends).

Query: Bill Holland presented the query for Seventh Month: How are decisions regarding meeting location, comfort, accessibility, esthetics, financial practices and meeting tasks fundamental to creating and supporting community? Where do I find love and joy in my meeting community?

Discernments

Nominating Committee: On behalf of Nominating Committee, Elizabeth Lamb brought forward the following names for approval:

- **Minute 07-16-2017-01:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Jeff Evans for the position of appointed member, Administration Committee, which is a one-year extension of the three-year position to begin January 2018.*
- **Minute 07-16-2017-02:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Jennifer Dickie and Mary Jahntz for the positions of co-clerks, Religious Education Committee for June 2017-May 2018.*
- **Minute 07-16-2017-03:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Meredith Reynolds for the position of religious education teacher (preschool) for July 2017-June 2018.*
- **Minute 07-16-2017-04:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Lisa Kruse for the position of religious education teacher (preschool) for July 2017-June 2018.*
- **Minute 07-16-2017-05:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Elizabeth Valera for the position of religious education teacher (lower elementary) for July 2017-June 2018.*
- **Minute 07-16-2017-06:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Liz Nicholson for the position of religious education teacher (lower elementary) for July 2017-June 2018.*
- **Minute 07-16-2017-07:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Elizabeth Tolmach for the position of religious education teacher (lower elementary) for July 2017-June 2018.*
- **Minute 07-16-2017-08:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Julia Ewen for the position of religious education teacher (upper elementary) for July 2017-June 2018.*
- **Minute 07-16-2017-09:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Terri O'Neil for the position of religious education teacher (upper elementary) for July 2017-June 2018.*
- **Minute 07-16-2017-10:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Kacy Brubaker for the position of religious education teacher (middle school) for July 2017-June 2018.*
- **Minute 07-16-2017-11:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Beth Ensign for the position of religious education teacher (middle school) for July 2017-June 2018.*
- **Minute 07-16-2017-12:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Maggie Hasbrouck for the position of religious education teacher (high school) for July 2017-June 2018.*

- **Minute 07-16-2017-13:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Brittney Thornburley for the position of religious education teacher (high school) for July 2017-June 2018.*

Reports:

Nominating Committee: On behalf of nominating committee, Elizabeth Lamb brought forward Carolyn Coburn-Allen for the position of Personnel Liaison, which is a three-year term beginning in January 2018. For the July 2017-June 2018 term, Elizabeth Lamb brought forward Laura MacNorlin for the position of religious education teacher (preschool) and Angie Love for the position of religious education teacher (lower elementary).

The names above will be brought forth next month for discernment and approval.

Administration Committee: On behalf of the Administration committee, Karen Morris shared a change to the new AFM street-side sign. The committee will move the existing three renter signs down one row each. This will create an empty row just below the AFM web-site address for the addition of the following or similar wording: "All Are Welcome" and "Worship Service - Sundays, 10:00 a.m."

Karen also shared the committee's recent discussion on a new *AFM Signage Policy*, which the committee is in the preliminary stages of drafting. Some ideas have been proposed, but not finalized:

- Administration will ask that all signs be reviewed by the committee -- for size, general design, location, length of time to be installed, etc. -- before they are placed on Meeting grounds.
- Signs should comply with the current City of Decatur sign ordinance.
- For new signs that renters wish to install, the renters should pay for them.
- The signage policy would also cover signs placed on a planned new AFM "sandwich board" sign holder.

As the meeting has maxed out permanent signage square footage, Administration plans to order a new sandwich board sign to accommodate removable or temporary signs, such as a Church of Mary Magdalene (CofMM) sign or signs for forums, memorial services, and weddings.

Finance Committee: On behalf of the Finance Committee, Lynn Leuszler presented the 2nd quarter financial statements for 2017. He reported that, as of June 30, 2017, AFM is running a \$13,739 deficit year-to-date. In addition, year-to-date net income is \$15,842 less than net income in the same period last year. Revenue YTD is \$7,746 behind the prior year as well. Finally, Lynn explained why expenses are \$8,006 higher than the prior year. The details behind these figures are found in the 2nd quarter financial statement and its accompanying note.

Care & Counsel Committee: On behalf of Care & Counsel, Clive Gordon shared some outcomes and thoughts from the forum for welcoming new attenders, which took place at the rise of meeting on June 25th, 2017. Clive shared feedback from the forum on successes on this front. Participants discussed the resonance of Spoken Ministry in Meeting for Worship. They discussed the announcements period after Meeting for Worship, in which visitors learn about Friends involvement in the community and social justice work. They also discussed how Friends reach out and engage in conversation after Rise of Meeting and the efficacy of personal invitations to lunch, the newcomers' dinner, and other events.

Participants in the forum discussed challenges facing visitors. On one hand, these challenges include "feeling like no one wanted to talk with me", a lack of connection with people, and the feeling like they came and left without meeting new people. On the other hand, some participants mentioned the experience of going through a "gauntlet" of greeters when arriving and feeling overwhelmed by Friends' exuberance or "The Quaker Pounce." On a different note, some visitors face challenges related to the Quaker form of worship, including a feeling of not knowing the rules. Finally, concerns were raised about sexual harassment, a lack of organized LGBTQ presence, the lack of an ungendered bathroom, and a musty/moldy smell in Meeting Room.

The forum generated some ideas about way to improve. These included moving general Meeting Business before Meeting for Worship and reserving Rise of Meeting for fellowship time. In addition, the forum suggested reviving

Friendly 8's and similar interest groups. They discussed whether specific people should be appointed to minister to new attenders on a rotating basis or whether everyone should accept the responsibility to welcome new members. They discussed options for answering new attenders questions including the current Rise of Meeting library session, Quaker 101 program, and a mentor system. Some final suggestions included writing personal invitations to events, work days, update the website to make it more "new attender friendly," and sending a welcome letter.

Some of these ideas may later come before the meeting as proposals.

Black Lives Matter Sign: Jennifer Dickie brought a request to the meeting about planting a Black Lives Matter sign in the front yard. She read a letter voicing this request, which is reprinted in this month's newsletter for consideration.

Friends followed up with the request by sharing their thoughts, questions, and suggestions. While there was much support, some Friends had concerns. Friends followed up with the request by sharing their thoughts, questions, and suggestions. While there was much support, some Friends had concerns. One concern was that a sign might seem unwelcoming to other members of the community, such as political conservatives. Other concerns centered around using our own wording to express the same or similar message. Other voices discussed how we could express our support of more than one group facing injustice. In the end, the meeting decided that the next Quakers for Racial Equality meeting would be a good opportunity to discuss the request. Quakers for Racial Equality meets next Sunday, July 23rd, at the Rise of Meeting.

Suchitoto Fund: Bert Skellie shared a draft minute regarding the Suchitoto fund:

"Atlanta Friends Meeting agrees to hire IDEAS (<http://www.ideasnet.org>) as the financial and project manager for youth development work in the Suchitoto, El Salvador, area. IDEAS will report to the Suchitoto Fund Committee, which is responsible for stewardship of the fund established by a gift from Frank Cummings."

The minute will be brought forward at next month's meeting for worship with attention to business.

Minutes of June 2017:

- **Minute 07-16-2017-14:** *The Minutes of the Sixth Month 2017 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business were approved with no corrections.*

Announcements:

Maria Ladd, 91, who attended the Atlanta Friends Meeting from 1973 until she moved to an apartment at Friends House in Sandy Spring, Maryland, died Wednesday, June 28th, 2017. A memorial minute will be offered for Maria at a later date.

Betsy Eggers announced that she was seeking feedback about the process of writing the State of the Meeting Report for 2016, which took a different approach than previous years.

Julia Ewen announced that August 26th is the anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote. She is looking for Friends who are interested in coordinating a celebration on Sunday, August 27th.

Meeting closed with Silent Worship.

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



Please Hold in The Light:

Shirley Sapp-Hall's daughter Joy Davenport-McNeil.
Grand daughter, Kasey Davenport Sharel Henderson.

Family of Maria Ladd.

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 Seventh Month (August) 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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