

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2019

ADULT FIRST DAY SCHOOL – DECEMBER 2019

Each first Sunday of the month, we listen to how a 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 not, and what they believe now. We call these stories of spiritual journeys, stories where Friends describe their understanding of God and religion in their life.

December 1, at 9:00 in the Library, we will hear Emmett and Melanie Fuller's spiritual journeys. They have been attending Friends Meeting for about 32 years. They were married under the care of the meeting 29 years ago when Emmett moved to Atlanta from Birmingham. Emmett has a full Marriage and Family Therapy practice in Marietta where they live. Melanie teaches elementary music at two Montessori schools, has a full after school piano studio and plays flute professionally. Their 27-year-old daughter, Hannah is finishing nursing school in December and starting her first job at Northside Hospital in January. They have two Vizslas (dogs) who are a major part of the family!

To hear a recording of Alex Zinnes' spiritual journey from November, visit <https://tinyurl.com/y4jcwcf7>.

SIMPLICITY IN THE HOLIDAYS

by Mark Yates

“May we look upon our treasures, and the furniture of our houses, and the garments in which we array ourselves, and try whether the seeds of war have nourishment in these our possessions, or not.”

John Woolman 1720-1772

In the months prior to formally joining Atlanta Friends Meeting, I read about the lives of early Friends. One thing that struck me about Lucretia Mott, John Woolman, Benjamin Lay and others was the connection they made between simple living and social change. Previously, I assumed that not buying specific goods produced under exploitive or environmentally destructive conditions was a modern construct. However, the accounts of many early Quaker lives are filled with awareness of the link between common consumer products and the slave trade, war, animal cruelty and other ignoble acts. In today's world, with its growing population and shrinking resources, the very act of consumption itself can have a negative effect. Greta Thunberg, the young climate activist who has made the connection and buys only absolute necessities, has said “...we need to change almost everything. We need to start living within the planetary boundaries.” Inspiration from the new generation of activists, as well as from our Quaker ancestors, has led me to reexamine the dynamic between wants and needs in my



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 Avenue
Decatur, GA 30030

QUERY FOR DECEMBER

Do we practice simplicity in our manner of living, avoiding waste and ostentation?

Does our commitment to simplicity bring beauty and harmony to our surroundings?

– Pittsburgh Friends Meeting

own consumptive practices. At no time is this dynamic a greater challenge for me than during the Christmas holidays.

While historically Quakers did not recognize religious holidays because all days are sacred, many of today's Friends celebrate Hanukah, Kwanza, Christmas and other holidays with gift giving. I too see the holidays as a season of sharing: meals, time and most of all (in my mind) the giving of presents. I love gift giving. Starting as early as August, I would be on the lookout whenever I happened to be in a store for that "perfect" present for a loved one. To the consternation of my wife Jackie, who is much more a natural Quaker than I, our closets would start filling up with consumer goods. Books, CDs, calendars and so on – each one carefully picked out with the personality and assumed needs of the loved one in mind. It did not matter that, months later when I asked about how the recipient liked the gift, the initial response was often a blank look followed by a faint recollection and then "Oh yes, I have not had time to [listen to, read, use, play] it yet." No worries, that was their problem, not mine. Not any more. It is now my problem as I struggle to figure out how to maintain the "holiday spirit" that I enjoy so much (and can bring joy to others) and my increasing commitment to try to live in a less exploitive, more future focus manner. As I have contemplated this conundrum, I have come across some ideas to share with my fellow Atlanta Friends. Here are a few ideas:

1. Charity gift card such as TisBest. Nonprofit gift card charities work like any other gift card, except that instead of buying more stuff, the recipient of the charity gift card donates the amount on the card to a choice of charities on the online donation page. The 150 listed charity options for Tisbest tend to be progressive and include the AFSC, Greenpeace, Oxfam, ASPCA, Planned Parenthood and the Children's Defense Fund. www.tisbest.org
2. Make art, a poem or record a song for the recipient. If you are reticent to create something on your own, enlist the help of an artistically-minded family member or friend.
3. Gift card to a grocery or health food store. Fulfills a basic need that is guaranteed to become part of the person – literally (we are what we eat!).
4. Kids. OK, this is tough as anyone with children probably knows. In this case, it may be alright to give something on their list. But, in addition to a gift of their choice include a TisBest card as a stocking stuffer. It will help foster a culture of giving, particularly since the child has some choice of what charity they want to give to. In addition to these ideas, children can be recruited to help with #2 above. Kids tend to be very creative and while they are helping with the project you are also giving your child the greatest gift of all – time together.

I imagine many of my fellow Atlanta Friends have considered and addressed this query much longer than me. I invite you to share your suggestions with me at yates77@bellsouth.net.

FROM THE MEETINGHOUSE

HEARING SYSTEM UPDATE

The hearing assistance system has been tested and given new batteries and is ready to use. You can pick up a receiver and headset or earbuds from a greeter and then return it after meeting. We also have induction loops for those people with induction loop hearing aids. ***Please let the office know how the system is working for you.***

If you are speaking, please remember to speak loudly and clearly so the sound reaches the microphones.

EMERGENCY DEFIBRILLATOR & FIRST AID

The meeting now owns an emergency defibrillator, which is mounted on the wall near the office door and the door to the apartment for the Friend in Residence. There is also a First Aid kit there.

For instructions for the defibrillator, see the Members and Attenders page of the website:

http://atlantaquakers.org/_videos/heartstart_AED-04min_usage_how_to.mp4.

PRONOUN BUTTONS

Care and Counsel Committee has realized that an increasing number of attenders and visitors prefer not to be identified with traditional gender specific pronouns and has therefore purchased buttons for use by anyone inclined to identify their pronouns (they/them/theirs, she/her/hers, he/him/his) or wishing to show their support for trans and genderqueer/non-binary/genderfluid people and help make the Meeting more open and welcoming. These buttons are for use while at the meetinghouse. If you want to purchase your own, you'll find them at Charis Books and More, 184 South Candler Street, Decatur, where they also carry a variety of resources about being trans and/or genderqueer/non-binary/genderfluid. If you have questions, speak with Bill Hooson or Karen Skellie of Care and Counsel or Nina Gooch with Friends for LGBTQ Concerns.

Mary Ann Downey also shared a NY Times article about the connections between the changing use of *they* as a pronoun and the early Quakers' use of *thee* and *thy*:

<https://tinyurl.com/pronouns-Quakers>

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING ASSISTANCE FUND FOR MEMBERS AND ATTENDERS

Have you ever had a financial emergency and wondered if the Meeting could help? Did you know that among its other duties, the Care & Counsel Committee administers an assistance fund for members and attenders for this purpose?

The Meeting is a community of Worship and Spirit. Quakers have a long tradition of attending to the needs of Friends in keeping with our testimonies of community and equality. Some Atlanta Friends Meeting members and attenders occasionally have an acute need for financial assistance and turn to the Meeting. The purpose of the Assistance Fund for Members and Attenders is to provide these members and attenders with short-term, emergency help. Examples might be assistance with a utility bill until their first paycheck arrives, help paying for special tools or job training, paying for a one month MARTA card to assist them in their job search, or help with a bill or living expense during a medical emergency. Assistance from the Meeting may take the form of a loan, grant, or help with finding other resources for meeting financial needs. Applicants should be members or regular attenders with the Meeting for a minimum of 6 months and participate in the life of the Meeting through worship and other activities such as First Day School and volunteering, as they are able.

If you are in need of temporary financial help, you can contact the clerk of the Care & Counsel Committee or designated point person for the Care and Counsel Committee. Bill Hooson is the Care & Counsel clerk through 2019, and Karen Skellie is the incoming C& C clerk starting in Jan. 2020. You can also send an email to afm.care.counsel@gmail.com. To apply for financial assistance, you can fill out a request form. Then the Clerk of Care and Counsel and/or a group assigned by Care and Counsel will meet with you to consider the request. In an emergency situation, the Clerk of C&CC shall contact one or two other members to seek immediate approval for funding.

Care and Counsel Committee members are glad to help you when you have a personal concern – whether about an important decision, a life event, an illness – or a financial need. Feel free to talk with one of us after meeting for worship or email the C & C clerk.

“A threshold is very important. It divides, but also invites one to come through. At one time Jesus called himself a door, the way into a deeper reality.”

– Jerome W. Berryman, Teaching Godly Play

Who is a Doorkeeper?

Friends who

- Wish to grow in their relationships with the youngest members of our Meeting.
- Wish to share in the richness of worship as it happens in the religious education classrooms.
- Want to support the dedicated adults who teach First Day school throughout the year.
- Are looking for a way to serve our community in a new and special way.

What does a Doorkeeper do . . . and why to they do it?

Doorkeeper: “Good morning Graham. Are you ready to join the circle for the story today?”

Graham: “Yes.”

Doorkeeper: “Okay, walk in quietly and find a place in the Circle.”

The doorkeeper is the first person a child encounters when coming to First Day School. This is the person who gently guides the child from parent to story teller, the person who slows down the child who is in a hurry to be “done” with silence and get on to play, the person who welcomes all with a friendly smile and a focused interest in each child who crosses the threshold into the story circle. This single interaction sets the tone for the rest of the class. To welcome and ask a child if she is ready to join the circle allows each child a sense of belonging and sets the stage for a thoughtful lesson.

Doorkeeper: “Good morning Anna. Are you ready to join the circle for the story today?”

Anna: “I need a drink.”

Doorkeeper: “Okay, get a drink, and when you are ready you may join the circle.”

The role of the doorkeeper continues within the classroom. The doorkeeper listens to the story and is available to sit with a child who is unable to manage quietly through the lesson. If a child doesn't seem ready to listen to the story she joins the doorkeeper outside of the circle. The two sit together and listen. This allows the child to continue to be part of the storytelling, without disrupting the other children or the storyteller. The story is for everyone even those who have trouble listening all the time.

Following the story, the children choose their reflective work. The doorkeeper helps the children “help themselves” to get out their reflective work—drawing, journaling, gluing and “stickering,” building, etc. When the work is done, or time is up, the children work together to clean up the space with the doorkeeper. Children who wish to continue interacting with the story, may stay with the storyteller. When they are ready, the doorkeeper and storyteller dismiss children to their parents who have come to pick them up, or walk them together into meeting.

How old are the children?

We have two classrooms that need doorkeeper support most weeks: Preschool Class, ages 3 to 5 and Lower Elementary Class: Kindergarten through 2nd grade.

Do I sign up, or can I just show up?

If you can, please sign up because this allows us to know in advance that our doorkeeping needs are met. If you don't have a chance to sign up, you may check to see if a doorkeeper is needed in any class any First Day. Doorkeepers are requested to join the teacher/storyteller at the start of Meeting at 10:00 a.m. so that they can read the doorkeeper guidelines, meet the teacher/storyteller for the day, and prepare for their work and worship with the children.

If I still have questions, who should I talk to?

Jennifer Dickie is coordinating doorkeepers for the Religious Education committee and would be delighted to speak with anyone who has questions about the role of the doorkeeper (404-313-8770, or michaeljen@bellsouth.net).

WAYS TO ASSIST ASSYLYM SEEKERS

Would you like to find a meaningful way to be in solidarity with asylum seekers? To transform your outrage at our administration's policies toward immigrants into supportive action?

Since January of 2019, Atlanta Friends Meeting, the Friends School of Atlanta, and Innovation Law Lab have partnered to create once-a-month Pro Se Legal Workshops for Asylum Seekers to assist dozens of participants in completing the paperwork to initiate the asylum process or obtain a work permit.

One way is as a Workshop host. Anton Flores (Friend in Residence), Alex Zinnes, and Hannah MacNorlin, Meeting members, have supported this valuable work by hosting asylum seekers, volunteer lawyers, food donors, childcare providers, IT helpers, and translators and creating a Friendly and productive experience at the Meeting. We would like to invite AFM members to join us, and become Workshop Hosts.

Workshop hosts will:

- Sign up to be on site during once-a-month, Saturday legal workshops (from 8:30-3:00).
- Represent the Meeting and offer hospitality.
- Be a Friendly and helpful presence to Innovation Law Lab, Asylum Seekers, and Volunteers by:
 - 1) greeting people and orienting them to the space;
 - 2) troubleshooting and problem solving as needed;
 - 3) helping with set up as needed;
 - 4) answering questions;
 - 5) setting up/cleaning up donated food and beverages;
 - 6) tidying the Meetinghouse at the end of the day

Other thoughts to consider:

- Flexibility, good cheer, and a willingness to pitch in are valuable qualities in a Workshop Host.
- A pair of adults can certainly host at the same time. Kids who need minimal supervision are also welcome to come with parent hosts; they can help play with workshop participants' kids or help with childcare.
- A little Spanish is helpful, but not necessary. Lots of people who are fluent or competent are on hand to assist as needed.
- This is a one day volunteer job! Obviously you are welcome to provide other support like food or beverages, but what we need are Hosts from the Meeting to hold the space in support of this valuable work.
- You are invited to volunteer at a workshop beforehand to get a feel for the experience.
- I will communicate with you a day or two beforehand to give you some more details about what needs to happen when and answer any remaining questions.
- **Next Legal Workshop Date: Sat. December 14**

Are you interested in joining our team? Do you have questions? *Want to volunteer in other ways, including food provision, childcare, IT support, translation, transportation/errand running?* Please contact Alex Zinnes at 404-822-11349 or azinnes@friendsschoolatlanta.org to follow up.

REQUEST FOR HELP WITH FUNDRAISING PROPOSAL FROM PONCHELLIS JACKSON

“Many of you know Ponchellis Jackson, who is Executive Director of Uplifting People, a non-profit which helps formerly incarcerated people stay out of prison. Social Concerns Committee has helped support Uplifting People with an annual donation for a number of years.

Ponchellis is drafting a fundraising proposal to increase resources for this work. He will be happy to have help from Atlanta Friends to make sure the proposal is clear and effective. Please contact him at 404-536-3343 (mobile) or PJackson@upliftingpeople.org if you are interested. Thanks!”

(Posted by Bert Skellie, Clerk of Social Concerns Committee)

SINGING IN DECEMBER

Meet at the piano at rise of meeting each Sunday in December to sing Christmas carols.

INTERGENERATIONAL CHAT – Tuesday, December 3

On Tuesday December 3, we're continuing a series of loosely structured "intergenerational chats" over potluck dinners. We'll meet at the meeting house at 6:30pm. Our hope is to bridge intergenerational divides and foster meaningful conversation around important topics like identity, decision-making, love, and life. Our query for the December 3 potluck is: How do Quaker values (simplicity, peace, integrity, etc.) inform our present and future financial decisions and priorities? We invite Friends to bring a dish to share and an open mind. We encourage all ages and life experiences to attend! Questions? Contact Alicia Rabideau at aprabideau@gmail.com for more information.

BOOKS BY AND ABOUT PEOPLE OF COLOR BOOK GROUP – Thursday, December 5

The book group reading works by and about people of color will meet again on Thursday, December 5, at 1:30 in the Meetinghouse library. The book for discussion is Toni Morrison's *Beloved*. We will meet again on January 2, same time and place, to discuss *The Yellow House*, by Sarah Broom. Everyone is welcome. Questions? Contact Karen Morris (karenth.1415@gmail.com) or Susan Cole (cole2544@bellsouth.net).

AFM ANNUAL HOLIDAY BAZAAR – Sunday, December 8

Join us on December 8 at the rise of Meeting for the annual AFM holiday bazaar. It's an opportunity to support our local artist and crafting Friends as you prepare for the holiday. SELLERS, please contact Jennifer Dickie (404-313-8770; michaeljen@bellsouth.net) if you have hand crafted items you would like to sell at the Holiday Bazaar. Sellers keep all proceeds, but we invite them to make a donation to AFM this year in exchange for the table space provided. BUYERS please bring cash or checks on December to make your purchase.

SUPPORTING FRIENDS SCHOOL OF ATLANTA – Deadline Sunday, December 15

Support the Friends School of Atlanta's Scholarship fund without taking any money out of your pocket! If you or your business pays Georgia income taxes, you qualify to participate. This program, administered for FSA through Apogee, has become a crucial component to the financial aid offered by the school. If you pay income taxes to the state of Georgia, you can redirect all or part of what you owe to a pot of financial aid money designated for FSA. To learn more about the program, the allowed tax credit amounts and how to participate, just go to the Apogee Scholarship Fund website at apogee123.org and fill out your application for a tax credit. The deadline for applying is December 15, 2019. **Once your application is approved in January, you'll have 60 days to pay the money to Apogee. Then when you file your 2020 state income tax return, the money you would have owed to the state is now a tax credit that has gone to support diversity at The Friends School of Atlanta.** Thanks to our friends who have participated in the past and/or have already participated this year! For more info, contact Nancy Bent, Director of Advancement at the Friends School, 404-373-8746 x8135 or nancy.bent@friendsschoolatlanta.org; [404-373-8746 x8135](tel:404-373-8746). Or see Betsy Eggers at the rise of Meeting or email betsyeggers@gmail.com.

WORSHIP AND FIRST DAY SCHOOL ON DECEMBER'S FIFTH SUNDAY – Sunday, December 29

When there are five Sundays in a month, instead of young Friends in Preschool thru High School leaving for First Day School classes, Friends of all ages worship together. This gives our younger Friends the chance to experience meeting for worship as it deepens throughout the hour and gives all of us the chance to worship together.

We invite families to experience Quaker worship for as long as they are able. We welcome children being children, but when the meeting room is no longer right for them, they can head out to experience some **moving meditation** practices. David Kano, one of our lower elementary teachers, has had experience leading children in a number of simple games to help them practice **mindfulness meditation**. If you are interested in helping him lead this some 5th Sunday, or have children that you think would enjoy giving this a try, please let him know: davidgkano@gmail.com or 603-298-9882. We would like to trial this idea on December 29th to see if we would like to repeat it in March and/or May 2020.

The Nursery will be open as usual on 5th Sundays.

WATCH NIGHT SERVICE – Tuesday, December 31

On December 31, 1862, Americans of African descent gathered together on "Freedom's Eve" to await the news that the Emancipation Proclamation had become law. At midnight, according to Lincoln's promise, all those enslaved in the Confederate States were legally free. Atlanta Friends participate in this tradition each year with a worship service at the Meetinghouse at 11:15 PM on New Year's Eve, after a light potluck of finger food snacks starting at 10:30 pm. Please join us on New Year's Eve! For more details, contact Bert Skellie at bertskellie@gmail.com or 404-378-5883.

LETTER REQUESTING MEMBERSHIP IN ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING FROM GLENN B. PLYLER

Saturday, July 27, 2019

TO: Clerk of Meeting Atlanta Friends Meeting

SUBJECT: Request Membership in Atlanta Friends Meeting

I, Glenn B. Plyler, request membership in Atlanta Friends Meeting. During my 77 years of life I have had many spiritual experiences and contact with various religious traditions Protestant, Catholic, First Nation, and Eastern. I have spent over 40 years trying to adjust to and understand the traditions that most reflect American culture. After 20 plus years of military service including combat, I became angry with God, myself, and all religious traditions. I finally rejected based on experience and intuition the concept of original sin proposed by main stream protestant and catholic churches. Additionally, I have found the religiously supported centuries old practices of subjugation and destruction of indigenous peoples and people of color to be morally wrong. The falsely supported concept of manifest destiny that accepts genocide, slavery and wars is repulsive to me.

Fifty years of struggling to live the American Dream left me completely demoralized and with a lost soul due to trauma from combat. In 1982 trying to reconcile my life of violence and lost personal morals I was further defeated when told by a Catholic priest that killing was OK if you are in the military. Detached from others and overwhelmed with remorse I continued to attempt to drink the pain away.

After 30 years of self-medicated drinking on New Year's Day 1991, while walking along the North Sea in Northern Germany, I was blessed with clear thoughts which included a desire to seek a sober life. After that day in 1991 with grace of memory of childhood values I contacted others who have shown me how to not drink, to seek a god of my understanding, to clean house and amend for harm done, and then work to help others. These guides for living I have found to be mostly embraced in the testimonies of Society of Friends.

During the past 27 years I have been blessed with access to professional medical care and spiritual support necessary for daily living. At the suggestion of a close friend, in 2004, I became involved with Alternatives to Violence Program (AVP) which has been vital in my efforts to seek nonviolent solutions in my life. My work in Maine with AVP included both prisons and community workshops brought me into contact with members of the Quaker community of Maine. These associations led to my attendance, starting in 2005, to Damariscotta Monthly Meeting in Maine and since then I have attended Sarasota Monthly Meeting in Florida and Atlanta Monthly Meeting here in Georgia. While attending Friends meetings I have been able to work with AVP and First Day children in both Maine and Florida. I have been on Social Concerns Committees at all locations during past 14 years.

After 14 years as an attender to Friends' meetings, I am now asking to be a member of Atlanta Friends Meeting. I have reviewed my understanding of Friend's testimonies (Attachment: Views on Testimonies) and my clearness of intent to be a member here in Atlanta.

Respectfully,

Glenn B. Plyler

ATTACHMENT: Views on Testimonies

INTEGRITY: During my life I have experienced so much situational ethics and dishonesty that I better understand my father's belief that to lie was a most harmful act. I have worked years to be honest in word and action but find that AVP's suggestion to seek the truth the best reminder on how to deal with life. Accepting the truth is difficult at times since it may require personal actions that are difficult and not favorable to others. Much of my daily information about events is not based on facts and often outright lies. I attempt to speak to truth based on the best facts and intuitions in a fearless manner.

PEACE: My experiences with war and violence are many. War has had a direct relationship to my soul. After time in combat and duty on dangerous international borders, I view killing and violence against others as the basic disruption of mental, physical and spiritual well-being. Both the victim and the perpetrator are damaged and placed in a state of disconnection from society. I do not hold that wars are justified nor that other forms of violence are acceptable. Training to kill or inflict violent damage to others I find difficult or perhaps none repairable or reversible behaviors. Friends' advocacy of non-violence is most important to me.

SIMPLICITY: Freeing myself from the unnecessary in our consumer addicted society is difficult but I have childhood examples of moderation and conservation to remember. My years through college were lived in rural environment of sustainable living. With the exception of condiments and manufactured household items we could sustain ourselves with gardens, orchards, livestock, poultry, hunting and fishing. We produced and prepared/processed our foods and stored them. I am continually working to live a simpler life which includes being involved in community activities for social justice and spiritual growth. Justice to me includes moral treatment of all of the results from billions of years of creation and looking for that of God.

EQUALITY: I was born and grew up in a rural area where everyone was white and either protestant or catholic. Class structure was present but few individuals had extensive wealth. Those 3 or 4 individuals that appeared wealthy were mostly self-made individuals involved in coal mining, logging business or dairy farming. My first experience of racial segregation was when I traveled south in 1995 for Army training in Georgia. I was shocked by all the examples of racial mistreatment. Additionally, many of the draftees in the Army were people of color who did not have access to draft avoidance. In the 60's to late 70's racial tensions in the military was a serious problem. While in the Army for over 20 years I personally served with more trust worthy black sergeants and officers than white soldiers of similar rank and responsibility. I am an advocate for justice in all areas that impact equality. I am saddened by our continual failure in the USA to be considerate of poor, homeless, strangers, and weak. I am ready and willing to do whatever I can to restore our moral treatment of each other. I feel that without amendments for genocide of first nation indigenous Americans and hundreds of years of slavery in America that there can not be any equality in our nation and the world.

COMMUNITY: My understanding of community is based on family support for needed daily needs and community support for essential services in greater community such as fire department, sheriff/police, emergency medical services, and welfare assistance to needy. In rural areas where I have lived churches, benevolent societies, and NPO coordinate with citizen to help provide help to individuals of community. Since 1970's, the free market economic policies advocated by USA have cut into most of the New Deal social programs. In the free market economy now being used by American government privatization, reduced social services, union busting, tax cuts for wealth and corporations, increased police and military, and low wages has disrupted the nation with most inequality since depression era of 20's. Until we correct injustices of race, poverty, health, environment, immigration, militarism, and White-Christian fundamentalism our nation and the world are in danger of destruction. There needs to be a revival of moral behavior in the US.

SAVE THE DATES FOR SAYMA YEARLY MEETING AND FCG GATHERING

SAYMA: Thursday, June 11th thru Sunday June 14th at Warren Wilson College, about 25 miles East of Asheville, NC

Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA) is our yearly meeting and includes unprogrammed monthly meetings in Georgia, Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Kentucky. Yearly Meetings are part of the original organizational structure of the Religious Society of Friends. They conduct business and provide oversight and support to the activities of Monthly Meetings, like Atlanta. SAYMA, like most Yearly Meetings, has created a book of Faith and Practice, which describes how the yearly meeting operates (Practice) and talks about what we believe (Faith). One of SAYMA's major programs is Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF), and Atlanta Young Friends are very active in SAYF. As the name implies, the Yearly Meeting gathers annually to conduct business, though there are quarterly representative meetings, which anyone may attend, but to which each meeting appoints at least one representative charged with attendance. The yearly meeting gathering is comprised only partly of business sessions, and also includes workshops and other activities for both children and adults designed to foster fellowship and to build or share knowledge on topics of interest or concern to the community. This year's theme is climate change and our responses to it.

For information about SAYMA: www.sayma.org

For SAYMA's Faith and Practice: www.sayma.org/online_documents.htm#F&P

FGC: Sunday, June 28th thru Saturday, July 4th at Radford University in Radford, VA

Friends General Conference (FGC) serves unprogrammed Friends Meetings across North America, hosting an annual gathering for Friends of all ages, by providing religious education materials and by encouraging spiritual depth and best practice. FGC's Vision Statement states: *"We envision a vital and growing Religious Society of Friends—a faith that deepens spiritually, welcomes newcomers, builds supportive and inclusive community, and provides loving service and witness in the world."*

For information about FGC Gathering: FGCgathering.org

For information about Friends General Conference and links to other resources: www.fgcquaker.org

Atlanta Friends Meeting offers partial scholarships to SAYMA Yearly Meeting and to FGC Gathering.

ELEVENTH MONTH MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS

November 17, 2019

Recorded Pending Approval

Attendance: Judith Greenberg, Susan Cole, Georgia Lord, Lynn Leuszler, Austin Wattles, Kathy Johnson, Anton Flores-Maisonet, Alison Mawle, Myrna Trapp, Elizabeth Lamb, Kellie Divis, Michael Allison, Steve Collins, Karen Morris, Mike Chapman, Caroline Morris, Mike Aland, John Michael, Julia Ewen, David Small, Glenn Plyler, Clive Gordon, Chris Ian Wells, Mark Yates, Kiana Beasley, Lissa Place, Betsy Eggers, Brent Wolff, Susan Firestone, Rebecca Grant, Mary Ann Downey, Bill Holland (Clerk), Claire Hannapel (Recording Clerk) (33 Friends)

Friends gathered near the appointed hour with opening worship. A member of Ministry and Worship shared the Eleventh Month Query out of the worship from North Pacific Yearly Meeting: "How do we make our homes places of friendliness, peace, and renewal, where God is real for those who live there and those who visit?" Friends shared out of the silence.

Discernment Items

Social Concerns: Susan Cole and Karen Morris presented recommendations from Social Concerns Committee to become a supporting member of the Dekalb Remembrance Coalition and a partner organization with Second Chance Georgia.

Minute 11-17-2019-01: On the recommendation of the Social Concerns Committee, the Atlanta Friends Meeting (Quakers) approves becoming a supporting member of the DeKalb Remembrance Project.

Minute 11-17-2019-02: We will release a public statement affirming the importance of remembering and honoring victims of lynching in DeKalb County, Georgia. We ask the Social concerns committee to share information about the DeKalb Remembrance Project with the meeting. We ask Susan Cole and Nick Beyers to serve as our representatives to the monthly meeting of the DeKalb Remembrance Project Coalition.

Minute 11-17-2019-03: On the recommendation of the Social Concerns Committee, Atlanta Friends Meeting approves becoming a partner organization with Second Chance Georgia: Unlocking Opportunity Through Expungement. We ask that our name be listed with other partner organizations who support this project. We ask Social Concerns to keep the meeting further informed.

Nominating: The Clerk asked for the meeting discernment of nominations presented 10th month:

- **Minute 11-17-2019-04:** On the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, we approve Lissa Place to serve as AFM clerk for a two-year term beginning January 2020 and ending December 2021.
- **Minute 11-17-2019-05:** On the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, we approve Judith Greenberg to serve as AFM Treasurer for a two-year term beginning January 2020 and ending December 2021.
- **Minute 11-17-2019-06:** On the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, we approve Georgia Lord to serve as AFM assistant clerk for a two-year term beginning January 2020 and ending December 2021.
- **Minute 11-17-2019-07:** On the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, we approve Paul Mangelsdorf as Finance Committee Clerk for a three-year term, beginning January 2020 and ending December 2022.
- **Minute 11-17-2019-08:** On the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, we approve Karen Skellie to serve as Clerk of Care & Counsel for a three-year term beginning January 2020 and ending December 2022.
- **Minute 11-17-2019-09:** On the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, we approve Alberta Guise to serve as the AFM appointment member of Care and Counsel for a three-year term beginning January 2020 and ending December 2022.
- **Minute 11-17-2019-10:** On the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, we approve Myrna Trapp to serve as Landscaping Committee Clerk for a three-year term beginning January 2020 and ending December 2022.
- **Minute 11-17-2019-11:** On the recommendation of Nominating Committee, we approve Brent Wolff to serve as Database Manager for a one-year term beginning January 2020 and ending December 2020.
- **Minute 11-17-2019-12:** On the recommendation of Nominating Committee, we approve Brent Wolff to serve as Membership Recorder for a one-year term beginning January 2020 and ending December 2020.
- **Minute 11-17-2019-13:** On the recommendation of Nominating Committee, we approve Brent Wolff to serve as Directory Editor for a one-year term beginning January 2020 and ending December 2020.

- **Minute 11-17-2019-14:** On the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, we approve Aaron Ruscetta to serve as Webmaster for a one-year term beginning January 2020 and ending December 2020.
- **Minute 11-17-2019-15:** On the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, we approve Mark Bryant to serve as Clerk of the Ferguson Cabin Stewards Committee for a 3 term, beginning January 2020 and ending December 2022.
- **Minute 11-17-2019-16:** On the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, we approve Bill Hoosen to serve as a member of the Ministry and Worship Committee for a three-year term beginning January 2020 and ending December 2022.
- **Minute 11-17-2019-17:** On the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, we approve Tina Bovermann to serve as the Co-Clerk of the Religious Education Committee for a three-year term beginning January 2020 and ending December 2022.

Reports

Nominating: Clive Gordon reported on behalf of nominating committee to bring forward a first reading of Nominations that will start January 2020. They recommend Herb Edwards to serve as a member of Ministry and Worship Committee, and Dee Debra to serve as Assistant Treasurer. Clive announced that Ministry and Worship Committee has several openings as current members complete their term and rotate off. Friends must be members of AFM to serve on M&W. Friends interested in service are encouraged to speak with the nominating committee.

Social Concerns: John Michael presented the proposed Social Concerns budget on behalf of the committee. The committee is requesting \$14,000 for the next year. The clerk reminded the meeting that this budget will be imbedded into the meeting's budget. Copies of the committee's detailed proposal are available from Social Concerns Committee.

Finance: Lynn Leuszler presented the 2020 Initial Budget proposal. Lynn reviewed budget and highlighted the budget notes. Copies of the proposed budget are available from the Clerk or Finance Committee. Friends are encouraged to share with the finance committee questions or concerns over the next month, In twelfth month, the committee will ask for the meeting's second consideration of the 2020 Budget.

QVS Local Support Committee (LSC): Kiana Beasley, the Quaker Voluntary Service Atlanta Coordinator, presented a report on behalf of the QVS Local Support Committee:

Throughout the month of November, as city coordinator, I will be meeting with Fellows and their site placement supervisors to have evaluation conversations pertaining to work performance, goal-setting, and professional development. Additionally, on behalf of QVS and the Fellows, I would like to express profound appreciation for the Atlanta Friends Meeting for donating use the Ferguson Cabins to us so that we could convene for our fall retreat this past month. We all felt immensely nurtured in the space and wholeheartedly connected to nature and our spirituality.

Kiana requested the meeting's identifying potential QVS site placements for the upcoming service year. Please share any resources or ideas of potential sites you think would be beneficial in supporting this work and thanks in advance!

Finally, QVS staff members are frequently traveling around the country and visiting various Quaker meetings consequently. She encouraged Friends to welcome QVS visitors and their experience. Members of meeting offered to provide home hospitality for QVS staff, volunteers and families who may be travelling.

Ministry & Worship: Elizabeth Lamb presented a report on behalf of the committee. Glenn Plyler has applied for membership in AFM. A clearness committee has met with him and finds him clear. His name will be brought forward next month for discernment. In the interim please get to know him if you haven't already.

Ministry and Worship has been asked to make a recommendation concerning the use of microphones at the Meetinghouse after a concern was brought forward that many members have difficulty hearing messages and announcements, even when using the hearing assistance system.

Before making a recommendation about using microphones during worship, Ministry & Worship asks that the Administration research the following questions: *Exactly what is our current system? (How old is it? Has it been updated? When? What are its capabilities regarding input, output and whatever other variables are measured?) Can the current drop-down microphones be updated or replaced to enhance the output to the headphones sufficiently and to feed into a sound amplifying system for the entire room? If this is possible, what would be the cost?* Ministry and Worship recognizes that not only those using the current headphones have difficulty hearing the spoken words and that many do not feel comfortable or worshipful using headphones and that simply telling everyone to speak up does not work. There are a number of worshippers who feel that using handheld microphones would be disruptive to worship. We would like to honor their concern. But if it is not possible to amplify speech sufficiently with "hidden" microphones and amplifiers we will consider an alternative method to make worship accessible to all. Ministry and Worship asks Administration to determine the cost of a system using one or two hand-held microphones and an amplifier.

Ministry and Worship supports a proposal brought by the Quaker Life Committee of the Friends School of Atlanta to honor all teachers and administrators in private and public schools (all levels). We envision an event of some kind, possibly next spring, to recognize the service and ministry provided by these wonderful people. To make this happen, we suggest that the Clerk of the Meeting form an ad hoc committee of 5 to 7 people.

- **Minute 11-17-2019-18:** On the recommendation of Ministry and Worship, we approve working with the Quaker Life Committee of the Friends School of Atlanta to plan an event recognizing and celebrating the ministry of those serving as teachers and administrators. We ask Karen Morris to clerk this ad hoc committee to plan this event in early 2020. We ask interested Friends to contact the clerk if they are interested in serving and Karen for more details.

Laura MacNorlin has requested the formation of an anchoring committee for her calling to the ministry of working with Quaker youth and their parents. At present she is working with Quaker Religious Education Collaborative and Quaker Parenting Initiative, at the Friends School of Atlanta, and parenting and partnering in her family with young triplets. Ministry and Worship recommends forming an anchoring committee for Laura composed of Jim Tolmach, Kelsey McNicolas and Liz Yates (also with QREC). The committee will meet monthly or quarterly (virtually with Liz who does not live in Atlanta) and report back to Ministry and Worship. At this point, the committee is not a ministry under the care of the meeting, which requires discernment by the body. Further discernment may lead to a recommendation from Ministry and Worship in the future.

Administration Committee: Steve Collins, Clerk of Administration Committee, reported on behalf of the committee:

- Property Coordinator Work – Kevin Wong, Property Coordinator, has been working with the Meeting heating and air conditioning contractor to get the Nursery heat back on.
- Solar panel study requested by Green Friends – Green Friends' request to work with Georgia Interface Power & Light (GIPL) to conduct an energy audit of the Meetinghouse was approved by Administration. One result of this audit may be to begin a project to evaluate and possibly

install solar panels on the roof of the Meetinghouse. To facilitate this analysis, we suggested the formation of ad hoc committee comprised of Green Friends, Administration committee members, and others interested Meeting attenders.

- **Landscape work** – Myrna Trapp has been clearing the low area at the rear of the Meetinghouse, a part of the grounds that few people have been visiting. Now, with a repaired stairway to the area and the removal of undergrowth and kudzu, the area is becoming usable again.

Directory Editor: Brent Wolff, Directory Editor, brought forward a report regarding AFM's Directory. The directory will come out once a year in January. The directory will be available by email as well as hardcopy.

- Brent requested the meetings response on the addition of a few elements to the standard listing:
 - Should we add photos to the directory?
 - Should we offer a stretch membership list (beyond state of Georgia)?
 - Should members' status be listed? Should *all* members be listed?
 - Should we make the Directory's disbursement celebratory by adding vital events that happened this last year?
 - Should pronouns be listed? And should they be optional or required?
 - Should there be a list of children? What's the age cut-off?
 - Should we include optional contact information (mediums beyond email and mailing address)?
 - Should we include a space for interests?

Friends shared comments and suggestions. The clerk encouraged Brent to consider these recommendations and bring back to meeting a specific proposal for further consideration.

Minutes of 10th Month:

- **Minute 11-17-2019-19:** The Minutes of Tenth Month 2019 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business were approved.

Clerk's Items:

- SAYMA Finance committee has revised their travel reimbursement and financial contribution opportunities. Interested Friends are encouraged to review these documents and share comments with Karen Morris, who serves on the SAYMA Finance Committee or with our SAYMA representatives Free Polazzo, and John Adams.
- Bill Holland reported through the efforts of Friend Larry Spears, the meeting clerk had been contacted to participate in an interfaith roundtable exploring the religious community's response to Opioids and mental health issues.
 - **Minute 11-17-2019-20:** Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Bill Holland continuing to represent the meeting at the interfaith roundtable discussions on Opioids and Mental Health hosted by the Morehouse School of Medicine and Clinton Foundation. We ask Bill to bring back information and inform of opportunities for service.
- The clerk requested submissions the annual State of the Meeting Report. The clerk will present a first draft of the report next month.

Events in the Life of Meeting:

- Friends are asked to hold Bill Hoosen in the Light during his heart surgery on Monday, November 18th.

HOLDING IN THE LIGHT:

Eric Glenn
Anna Hutto and family
Katie Smillie
Daniel Gold-Hopton
Suzan Kenworthy
Don Bender
Harriet Unfug
Jane and Peter Walsh
Bill Hooson
Peg Geronimo
John Gooch, Nina's father, and family
Lynn Leuszler

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

Atlanta Friends Meeting Contacts

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Area Meetings for Worship

Every First Day (Sunday) 10:00 a.m. – Meetinghouse (AFM), with a smaller group in the Library.
10:30 a.m. – Peachtree Friends Meeting (Christian-friendly, affirming, open to all), 3980 Florida Ave, Norcross GA, peachtree.quaker.org
1:30 p.m. - Stone Mountain Friends Church (Evangelical), at St. Timothy United Methodist Church 5365 Memorial Dr, Stone Mountain, GA 30083

Every Second & Fourth First Day 2:30 p.m. – Macon Friends Worship Group.
Contact Kellie Divis at MaconQuakers@gmail.com; maconquakers.org

Every Third First Day 11:45 p.m. – Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, Meeting room
12:30 p.m. – Carrollton Friends Worship Group.
St. Andrew's UMC Youth Center, 1106 Maple St.; contact Jean Hudson, jhudson30116@yahoo.com or 678-378-3368; carrolltonfriends.org .

Fourth Day (Wednesday) 8:30 a.m. Morning Worship, Library
First and third Wednesdays: 7:00 p.m. Worship at David & Freer Jarvis' home

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.

Other Regular Events at the Meetinghouse

First Day (Sunday) 9:00 a.m. - Adult First Day School, Library
10:00 a.m. - Meeting for Worship
Third Sunday of every month, 11:15 a.m. - Listening Ear for those with a concern about racism
Third Sunday of every month, 11:45 am, Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
5:00 p.m. - Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship, Meeting Room

Second Day (Monday) Every other Monday at 7:00 p.m. - Spiritual Nurture Group, Library

Third Day (Tuesday) 6:00 p.m. - Alex Zinnes Yoga, Nursery
Second & fourth Tuesdays at 7:00 - Deep Waters Center for Prayer & Exploration, Meeting Room

18th of Each Month Newcomers Welcome Dinner, rotating location (No Welcome Dinner in December)

Atlanta Friends Meeting
701 W. Howard Avenue
Decatur, GA 30030-2902

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING

Office: Mon-Thurs 10 am to 1 pm and Friday by appointment

phone: 404-377-2474 – web and email: atlantaquakers.org, atlantaquakers@gmail.com

Clerk: Bill Holland, afmclerk1@gmail.com

Treasurer: Lynn Leuszler, afmtreasurer1@gmail.com

Are you a newcomer to the Atlanta Friends community and would like a nametag?

We would be happy to make you a permanent nametag. You can leave a request in one of the baskets on the front table. When Carol Gray has made one for you, it will be placed in the black file box on the greeting table.

Atlanta Friends Meeting has three email lists:

To receive the announcement sheets and other announcements relating directly to the life of the meeting, send a blank email to

afmannouncements-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

To receive announcements AND posts about a broader range of topics relating to being a Quaker, send a blank email to afmdiscussion-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

To receive the newsletter by email, send a blank email to afmnewsletter-subscribe@yahoo.groups.com

Would you like to receive the Newsletter by snail mail or appear in future AFM Directories? Send your name and contact information to Brent Wolff at

afmdirectory@gmail.com. Please indicate if you want to be in the directory, receive the newsletter by mail, or both.

What does investing in your spiritual community look like for you and your family?

Atlanta Friends Meeting accepts contributions of your time, resources, and money! You can place a financial contribution in the slot marked “Contributions” in the greeting area of the Meetinghouse or mail to the Treasurer at our mailing address.

To donate online with a credit card, visit atlantaquakers.org/contact.htm. Thank you!

Want to submit an announcement, letter, article, and anything else of interest to Friends for the newsletter?

Send items to atlquakerltr@gmail.com. Submissions may be edited for length and format. THE DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS IS THE 20TH DAY OF EACH PRECEDING MONTH.

This newsletter is a publication of the Atlanta Friends Meeting. Views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily that of the Meeting.