

# ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER



Meeting for Worship  
Each First Day (Sunday)  
In Person & via Zoom  
10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

## SEPTEMBER 2021

Current and back issues of the newsletter are always available at <http://atlantaquakers.org/archive.htm>

### SUNDAY MEETING FOR WORSHIP RETURNS TO MEETINGHOUSE & ZOOM WORSHIP CONTINUES

Meeting for Worship in person will resume at the Meetinghouse on Sunday, August 29 at 10:00 am. In-person Adult First Day School, First Day School for children and teens as well as nursery care for children under three will also resume on August 29.

Each Sunday thru the end of September, we plan to combine in person and Zoom meeting for a blended worship so that everyone is included. The blended meeting experience will be re-assessed following this one month trial. **(We will have new Zoom information beginning September 5).**

Children can continue to join Meeting for Worship for the first 15 minutes or can go directly to Religious Education, as they and their parents / guardians prefer.

While we had originally hoped to begin in person worship sooner, we postponed that decision due to recent updates to CDC guidance on masks and to weigh concerns we heard from members of the AFM community.

If you have questions about Meeting for Worship, please contact Lissa Place, Clerk of the meeting ([afmclerk1@gmail.com](mailto:afmclerk1@gmail.com)); Alison Mawle, Clerk of the Working Group on the Use of the Meetinghouse ([zumilla@gmail.com](mailto:zumilla@gmail.com)), or Nina Gooch, Office Coordinator ([atlantaquakers@gmail.com](mailto:atlantaquakers@gmail.com)).

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ATTENDERS

- Please wear a **mask** inside the meetinghouse, even if you are vaccinated. Children under two do not need to wear a mask.
- Please do not come if you do not feel well, have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 10 days, or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the previous 14 days.
- If you are led to speak during worship, please leave your mask on. We will have a microphone so that everyone in the Meetinghouse and on zoom can hear you.
- There will be no **coffee hour** or potluck at this time. You are welcome to socialize after Meeting for Worship, but please bring your own beverage in your own container. (The kitchen and water fountain are still closed.)
- Committees and groups, please check with your Clerk or other group leader to see if your group will be meeting virtually or in person.

### QUERY FOR SEPTEMBER

How does the meeting's committee structure allow for and encourage the expression of gifts from those in the meeting community?

– source: Atlanta Friends Meeting

## INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

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AFM welcomes families with children of all ages. Our tradition is for all children to join in the large Meeting for Worship for the first 15 minutes of worship (10:00 to 10:15). Gathering together as an inter-generational meeting gives children the opportunity to experience open worship among Friends and adults the opportunity to enjoy the richness that children bring to the worship setting.

For the fall, Families are welcome to join Meeting for Worship with their children. At this time AFM religious education will also open the doors to the First Day School [FDS] rooms early so that parents and guardians who do not wish to bring their children into Meeting for Worship may drop them off for childcare from 10:00 to 10:15 prior to the start of FDS. August 29 will be an informational meeting for parents and students, with regular classes beginning September 5.

A virtual First Day school class for younger ages will continue to be offered via Zoom at 9:30 am for those who are not ready to return to in-person worship. Watch for the link in your email. The teens will meet in person with an option for a blended FDS class from 10:15 to 11:00. Teens who wish to remain virtual should watch email for a link to Sunday FDS starting in September.

All children over the age of 2 years will be required to wear a mask while in the Meetinghouse and on the grounds. All nursery caregivers, FDS teachers, and other volunteers in the FDS rooms will be required to wear masks regardless of vaccination status.

For further information, you may see the "Guidelines For Childcare And First Day School For Children Under 12 At Atlanta Friends Meeting" at <https://tinyurl.com/childcareFDSguidelines>.

If you have questions about First Day school, please contact Laura MacNorlin, Clerk of Religious Education ([laura.norlin@gmail.com](mailto:laura.norlin@gmail.com), 404-762-3540).

## DETAILS FOR WORSHIP AND FIRST DAY SCHOOL AT ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING

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*For the most up to date information, see the most recent announcements each week at [www.atlantaquakers.org/\\_announcements/Announcement\\_Sheet.pdf](http://www.atlantaquakers.org/_announcements/Announcement_Sheet.pdf) or check your email inbox.*

### **Sundays:**

ADULT FIRST DAY SCHOOL will meet at 9:00 am to 9:50 am

In person and Zoom combined. For general info about Adult First Day School, see below.

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86063665797?pwd=Nms0Vm5MSW91UXdWRGJSOXA5NWRjZz09>

Meeting ID: 860 6366 5797

Passcode: 013191

FIRST DAY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS

Zoom First Day School for younger children at 9:30 am.

Link: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/7279961727>

Meeting ID: 727 996 1727

Passcode: 679898

In person First Day School for children and teens begins at 10:15 for younger children and teens.

SUNDAY MEETING FOR WORSHIP will begin at 10:00 am

Combined in-person and Zoom

Link for August 29: <https://zoom.us/j/908004190>

Meeting ID: 908 004 190

Passcode: 842962

*See announcement sheet for Zoom information for September.*

*this article by Mary Ann Downey originally appeared in the August [Friends Journal](#)*

Anniversaries are often a mixed bag of joys, surprises, and regrets, as well as a time for reflection on what has changed since the last anniversary. On March 22, 2021, I realized that it had been a year since the pandemic required us to stop our usual gathering for worship at the meetinghouse of Atlanta (Ga.) Meeting and begin observing the CDC guidelines for pandemic lockdown. At the time of this one-year anniversary, I celebrated that many in our meeting were vaccinated and in good health.

In worship sharing at the end of 2020, a small group in our religious education class had reflected on the year with queries addressing unexpected joys, things we learned about ourselves, hope-giving observations about those around us, and something new we tried during the year. I appreciated these queries and enjoyed sharing my reflections and hearing from the other Friends who were present that day. In daily journaling afterwards, the questions continued to guide me to deeper truth.

### **Worship on Zoom**

At the top of my list of truly unexpected joys was meeting for worship on Zoom. Our meeting began Sunday morning worship on Zoom on March 22, after missing only a single First Day. Despite my initial doubt that I could possibly find looking at a computer screen worshipful, I haven't missed a meeting on Zoom.

Over the last several years, I had avoided the computer, cell phones, and all electronic connections on Sunday in order to "keep Sabbath." But what I discovered after the first few months of the pandemic was that although I rarely felt deeply centered in the way that I had when worshipping in our meetinghouse, I was grateful to see the faces of beloved friends and to feel held by this community in an online environment. When I struggled to settle, I offered a prayer of thanks for each face and name. I came to think of this hour of worship on Zoom as a hard walk up a steep trail, one step at a time and with frequent stops for rest. Isaac Penington's advice became a mantra: "Give over thine own willing; give over thy own running." And when I repeated those words, I could rest in the Spirit and open to the help I needed.

The need to spend more time meeting family and friends online instead of face-to-face continues to be a challenge—one that has helped me remember that I like challenges, and am resilient. Even with eye strain and headaches from the glare of the screen, I looked forward to staying connected this way. And I am grateful for the ability to meet online, realizing this is a privilege that many are denied.

### **Gratitude and Grief**

It is a strange paradox, that when we are open to deep gratitude for what we have now, we see more clearly what we have lost. Even as we adapt and compensate with connections by phone, email, or Zoom meetings, we feel the loss of the physical energy that we exchange in hugs, handshakes, or just a touch. Living with uncertainty about what was safe presented a special kind of loss. How do I protect myself and others?

I've been thinking about how I learned to grieve, and how I am relearning those lessons now. Like many others, I was taught to be grateful for what I have but not taught to grieve loss. "Count your blessings," my mother said, and her favorite Bible verse was "A merry heart does good like a medicine" (Prov. 17:22). My father believed that God does not ask nor require more than we are able to bear.

I was in high school when my father died, and 25 when my mother died; both died from heart attacks. At age 25, I was married with a young daughter and working on a master's degree in counseling. A few months after my mother's death, I was in a psychology class when I heard the professor say, "Life is a series of losses." I was stunned by the truth of this simple and profound statement.

Life is a series of losses, and grief is the price we pay for love. Healing is a process that may never feel complete, because we are all individual threads woven into a web of family and community that holds us, and loss leaves a hole in this web. Grieving helps us honor and mend the torn places, but some holes may remain. The process of grieving is like *kintsugi*, the Japanese art of putting broken pottery pieces back together with gold or precious metal, transforming the broken pot into one that is unique and beautiful: highlighting, not hiding, the broken places. When I embrace my loss and the resulting imperfection, I create an even stronger, more beautiful life of courage and resilience.

### **Strangers Are Neighbors**

When Jesus was asked "Who is my neighbor?" he told the story of the Good Samaritan. As a child in my Southern Baptist church, I was taught that Jesus called us to see our neighbors as those in need, whether or not they lived nearby, looked like us, or practiced our religion.

What gives me hope now are the many stories of good Samaritans during this year of COVID-19: daily news about people giving time, food, money, blood, and plasma donations. Volunteers hand out food from food banks to people in long lines of cars. The Freedge Movement is a grassroots effort to fight food insecurity through neighborhood refrigerators used to share food. There are many examples like these in the news, and they have been a needed counter to the daily death toll. This pandemic crisis, like 9/11 and other disasters, has helped many of us see beyond the boundaries of our own community and become more generous and willing to do our part. We all depend on the kindness of strangers.

### **Growing Where We're Planted**

A recent May morning reminded me of a past walk with friends in the Burren, looking for spring wildflowers along the rocky west coast of Ireland. It was a cold, windy morning, and I wondered how this dry, hilly ground could be a home for wildflowers. Then we found a tiny, lavender-blue gentian growing out of a narrow crevice in a rock. What an unexpected joy to see a flower like that thriving in such harsh conditions! I wondered what allowed it to grow.

Looking more closely, I noticed that the crevice in the rock provided shelter from the constant wind. I realized that it was the wind that had blown seed and soil into this opening in the rock. The same opening had allowed in enough sun and rain to encourage growth. While at first glance it seemed that the gentian had grown there in spite of these harsh conditions, in fact it had grown because these natural forces had provided all that was needed. As our morning walk continued we found other wildflowers, confirming this was a field of many that could be seen, if you were willing to slow down and look for what was easily hidden.

The pandemic year forced me to slow down and look more closely at the space around me, my home and neighborhood within a daily two-mile walk. I discovered that slowing down and looking more closely allowed me to see much that I've missed in the 27 years I've lived here. Like the gentian, I grew this year, not only despite challenges but because those same challenges encouraged growth, and I found the resources I needed to find another way. I'm grounded in the faith that my father taught me: God does not ask more than we are able to bear.

## BECOMING A FRIENDS MEETING: A LOOK BACK AT ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING'S HISTORY

*What became the Atlanta Friends Meeting held its first meeting in February 1943 (see notice published in the Atlanta Journal to the right). In 1951, the group formally organized as a Friends meeting, as described below in an excerpt from As Way Opened: A History of Atlanta Friends Meeting, 1943-1997 by Janet Boyte Ferguson and Janet Adams Rinard. Copies are available in the meeting library, or if you would like to purchase a copy (\$15 plus postage if needed), please contact the Office Coordinator.*

Throughout the spring of 1951 Friends were discussing the formation of an official meeting and examining the queries of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's Faith and Practice. Frequently, visitors were present on Sundays: traveling Friends; attenders from Spelman and Morehouse Colleges; sympathetic individuals from the University of Georgia at Athens; or guests from Macedonia community in north Georgia, where the Atlanta Friends group had established contacts. Business meetings regularly took place in private homes, often with Caroline Forman, with the Vias, or with Bruce and Winnie McDuffie.

The Atlanta Friends group asked the American Friends Fellowship Council (later absorbed by Friends World Committee [on Consultation]) in Philadelphia to help establish a Friends meeting in Atlanta. The council agreed to send someone for special meetings for worship and business the second weekend in May 1951 to discuss procedures. Among those who signed the register on that eventful weekend were (in the order of the signatures): Caroline Forman, Bruce and Winifred McDuffie, Ernest and Claudia Ferguson, Elizabeth and George Hendricks, Emily Calhoun, John and Phern Stanley, Emory and Margaret Via, Robert Scharf, Bill Houston, O. M. Hadley, Betty Shouse, David Hoble, Roy and Elva Berg, Dorothy Chew, Fannie Ruth Gilbert, H. D. and Adaline Lawson, Lawrence Forman, Joe Watkins, B. J. Marbut, and John Eaves. Caroline Forman, who had been such a leader in the Atlanta Friends group since 1945, moved back north with her husband and children in June.

In July 1951, Friends received a letter from the Fellowship Council authorizing them to organize as the Atlanta Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. They held lengthy discussions regarding membership and began to formulate their own statement of Faith and Practice. Various individuals wrote different sections. Those involved gathered at members' homes to discuss and revise their statement. It was completed soon after the Meeting was formally organized. Later, the Meeting adopted the *Faith and Practice* statement of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Still later, when Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA) published its own *Faith and Practice* statement, Atlanta Friends adopted it.

Although the formation of Atlanta Monthly Meeting can be dated from May 12 and 13, 1951, it was September 30 when the official organization was finalized. The following notice appeared in The Atlanta Constitution on Saturday, September 29, 1951:

The Society of Friends (Quakers) Sunday will organize a monthly meeting in Atlanta at a session slated for 10:30 A.M. at the YMCA. The meeting marks the first affiliation of local Friends group with the larger body of the Society of Friends.

Six persons are expected to become members and two persons are to become affiliate members on Sunday. The meeting will follow the traditional Quaker method of silent worship.

### **AGNES SCOTT PROFESSOR TO ADDRESS QUAKERS**

The Atlanta Quaker Group (Society of Friends) will meet for supper and a worship program Sunday at 6 p.m. at the Central Y.M.C.A. 145 Luckie Street. The Public is invited.

Professor George Hayes, of Agnes Scott College, will speak on "The Doctrine of the Inner light in the Soul of Man."

*A notice in The Atlanta Journal February 6, 1943 invited interested persons to the city's first Quaker gathering.*

There is no planned service and no minister. Any member who feels that he has a message of value to the group speaks briefly on that subject.

Emily Calhoun, chairman of the organizational committee, announces the Atlanta Monthly Meeting group will continue to welcome persons of all races and creeds to its meetings for worship. The meetings are to be held at 11 A.M. each Sunday at the YMCA.

A biographical sketch of Meeting members written in 1958 names Emory and Margaret Via, John and Phern Stanley, Bill Houston, and Ernest Ferguson as charter members. Ernest Ferguson transferred his membership from High Point, North Carolina, however, and the transfer may have arrived somewhat later. Elizabeth Hendricks, who held dual membership in Atlanta and Haverford Meetings, was another charter member, as was Emily Calhoun. George Hendricks was an affiliate member.

## WHAT EACH OF US CAN DO ABOUT CLIMATE

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*from Henry Slack, Clerk of Green Friends*

Most Quakers are aware that climate has changed around the world. Fires in Greece, California, and Siberia; flooding in Belgium, China, Germany; and record-breaking temperatures in too many places to name.

The cause of all this: added gases to the atmosphere (called “greenhouse gases”) that hold heat close to the surface. Two of the worst are carbon dioxide from burning fuels, and methane, also called natural gas.

The U.N.’s Intergovernmental Panel on the Climate Crisis announced a “Code Red for Humanity” August 9, saying we have very little time to make changes to reduce the gases we keep adding to the air. I have been wearing a red shirt to Meeting all year, as a sign of the climate emergency we face.

We are in for a world of hurt. Global warming will worsen the problems of hunger, homelessness, education, immigration, mental illness, racial equity, social justice, and every other issue on which Quakers have worked.

Meanwhile ad campaigns have promoted the idea that cutting fossil fuel use to reduce greenhouse gases means that we will suffer, lose jobs, hurt the economy, and be unable to live life as we wish. This is false: we will suffer much more if we do not create large-scale change. The actions below are all important, but require no change in your daily life.

What can Quakers do? I want to suggest three actions for every one of us:

First, we must **talk about the need to act on climate change**. Although most people favor action, fewer than a third of Georgians had a conversation about climate last week. So please, make it a point to discuss it with someone every day. Call up a friend or relative. Post something on social media. Bring it up when you’re standing in line. Don’t be silent.

Second, we must **share our concern with elected officials**. Again, talk about it with these public servants. Write a letter or email. Call their office. A state legislator once told me, “If three people in my District call me about the same issue, that becomes my issue.” When they don’t hear from us, they only hear from lobbyists.

Finally, we must **join a larger group to take action together**. Although we all benefit by reducing fossil fuel use in our daily lives, the actions of corporations and governments that employ millions

have a larger impact on overall carbon emissions. We must all work together to influence their decision makers.

I volunteer with Citizens' Climate Lobby ([cclusa.org](http://cclusa.org)) and can recommend it; it has values that match Quaker values. The Atlanta Chapter meets on 3rd Saturdays at 11 AM. Other climate groups here include 350 ([350Atl.org](http://350Atl.org)), Sunrise ([sunrisemovement.org](http://sunrisemovement.org)), Extinction Rebellion ([XRAtlanta.org](http://XRAtlanta.org)), and Climate Reality ([climaterealityatlanta.org](http://climaterealityatlanta.org))

Many other actions can help us reduce our emissions. Go to [drawdownga.org](http://drawdownga.org) for a list of 20 different ways Georgia can cut greenhouse gas emissions in half in just ten years, including building improvements and large-scale solar projects. Every step can help, but think as large as you can.

I want to close about the need for immediate action. What's at stake is not nature, but people; remember, this is Code Red for humanity.

A Climate Change Lobby member recently wrote, "If there are children in a burning building and I have the ability to save some of them, I have a responsibility to save as many as I can."

## GREEN FRIENDS REQUESTS LEGISLATIVE ENDORSEMENT

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*from Henry Slack, Clerk of Green Friends*

Green Friends has asked that the Meeting endorse a particular bill, the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act (H.R. 2307), one of several bills with a "carbon price" that would raise the cost of fossil fuels. This bill can bring the US to Net Zero by 2050 while putting money into everyone's pocket and creating affordable clean energy.

Under the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, the IRS will collect a steadily-rising fee on fossil fuel companies' products at the mine, the wellhead, or the port. The fee would go up every year. As a result, these firms are expected to raise the price of fossil fuels every year. For gasoline, the price would rise roughly 10 cents per gallon per year.

All this money would then be returned to households in equal shares as a "carbon dividend". The dividend would start at around \$20 per month per person, and rise every year as the fee gets higher, thus putting money into everyone's pockets to spend however they wish. In the tenth year, the dividend for a family of four of these funds would be almost \$3,000.

CCL is working to get many different groups and prominent people to endorse this legislation (along with many other actions). Presently 80 House members are co-sponsors of this bill, including Rep. Hank Johnson of GA's 4th District. This specific bill has also been endorsed by Saratoga Monthly Meeting (NY), Birmingham Friends Meeting (AL), Lehigh Valley Friends (PA) Flagstaff Friends (AZ), Bucks Quarterly Meeting (PA), and Chester River Friends (MD), along with 300 other faith groups and over 1200 businesses.

I see an endorsement of this bill as a step for this Meeting to acknowledge our climate emergency. I trust Friends will want to discuss this further at the September Meeting for Business. Here is the draft Minute:

*On the recommendation of Green Friends, Atlanta Friends Meeting endorses H.R. 2307, the "Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2021." We encourage friends to communicate with decision makers in support of this legislation. We authorize the Citizen's Climate Lobby to list our meeting as a faith community endorsing this legislation. We ask Green Friends to report back regularly on the progress of this legislation.*

## HOUSING NEEDED FOR AFGHAN REFUGEE ATTENDING GEORGIA STATE

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Note from Bob Nechal of Twin Cities Friends: "Housing needed for an Afghan refugee. Neamat Achekzai is an Afghan refugee who has been accepted for a master's program at Georgia State. His family has experienced both death threats and kidnapping from the Taliban. He is in need of housing while he is in the US for his studies. I, Bob Nechal (member of Twin Cities Friends, St Paul MN), know Neamat via his brother who we received 6 years ago and is now a part of our family. If called to consider this service, please contact me for further information and background. Telephone: 651-357-7140 Email: [bnechal@gmail.com](mailto:bnechal@gmail.com)" You can also talk to Anton Flores, Friend in Residence.

## SLIDES AND RESOURCES: TRUTH-TELLING IN SCHOOLS

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On July 25, Quakers for Racial Equality (QRE) had a highly informative, engaging, and emotional discussion on Educating Students about System Racism: Truth-telling in Schools. Special thanks to Folami Prescott Adams, Tracey Nance Pendley, and all who made this a very meaningful event. Please find resources including the presentation slides and URLs from the chat in the Google Drive link below. As Folami says, "Use this information to spread the truth and stand up for the truth." <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JloiAHna8kwwPyfxHGwZn5-x6Ol4te9Z/view?usp=sharing>

## RECORDING FROM "DECOLONIZING EDUCATION: LIBERATION THRU ACTION"

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In July, the Beacon Hill Black Alliance for Human Rights presented a webinar on "Decolonizing Education: Liberation Through Action!" It features excellent speakers and action ideas. The recording below begins with a brief clip of Nina Simone, and then the land acknowledgment and introduction of speakers' bios begin about 4 minutes in. Visit: <https://tinyurl.com/2a6a9mxr>.

## REACHING OUT TO OTHERS IN THE MEETING – DO YOU NEED A MEETING DIRECTORY?

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If you would like to connect with others in the meetinghouse and **need a directory**, please email [atlantaquakers@gmail.com](mailto:atlantaquakers@gmail.com) or leave a message on the office phone with your email address and we can email a copy to you. If you need a printed copy, please let us know that. In addition, if you would like to be in the directory or need to change or correct your information, please send an email to the office and to [afmdirectory@gmail.com](mailto:afmdirectory@gmail.com).

### **HOLDING IN THE LIGHT:**

Cindy Berg  
Beth-Ann Buitekant  
Kellie Divis  
Jeremiah Gold-Hopton  
Bill Hooson and family  
Beth Ruddiman

*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

Clerk of the Meeting: Lissa Place, [afmclerk1@gmail.com](mailto:afmclerk1@gmail.com)  
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Webmaster: Aaron Ruschetta, [arxaaron@gmail.com](mailto:arxaaron@gmail.com)  
Bookkeeper: Jonah McDonald, [afmbookkeeper1@gmail.com](mailto:afmbookkeeper1@gmail.com)

## BOOKS BY AND ABOUT PEOPLE OF COLOR – Thursday, September 2

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The book group reading works by and about people of color meets at 1:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month via Zoom. On September 2, the group will discuss poems selected by group members and on October 7, *Transcendent Kingdom* by Yaa Gyasi. For questions or the Zoom link, contact Susan Cole (cole2544@bellsouth.net)

## MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR MICHAL AMANTI – Saturday, September 4

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A small memorial service celebrating the life of Michael Amanti, husband of Cathy Amanti, will be held at Atlanta Friends Meeting on Saturday, September 4, 2021 at 3:00 pm for family and friends. Masks are required.

## HECTOR BLACK's CELEBRATION OF LIFE – Saturday, September 4

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This is now a virtual event only. His daughters Rose, Aggie and Annie invite us to join them by Zoom on Saturday, September 4 at 3:00 pm Eastern time for a Quaker service. Hector Black was a part of AFM in the mid 1960's.

<https://sfu.zoom.us/j/67773946922?pwd=RE9sWFJ0b3JERktjQUdhejJ3Tmh6UT09>

Meeting ID: 677 7394 6922

Passcode: 656781

## SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS AND ADULT FIRST DAY SCHOOL – Sundays, September 5, 12, 19, 26

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Adult First Day School will meet in person at the meetinghouse beginning August 29. People will continue to be able to join us via Zoom. (See above for Zoom details.)

Each first Sunday of the month in Adult First Day School, 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 spiritual journeys, stories where Friends describe their understanding of God and religion in their life. On September 5, we will hear the spiritual journey of Dee DeBra.

(To hear Eugene Jennings's spiritual journey from August 1, visit <https://tinyurl.com/sfxy365f>.

If you'd like to hear other past Spiritual Journeys, please contact Mary Ann Downey.)

On third Sundays, Adult First Day School will have worship sharing, usually on that month's query. On other Sundays, we will be discussing *The Great Conversation, Nature and the Care of the Soul* by Belden C. Lane. Please join us, even if you haven't read the book.

## MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS – Sunday, September 19

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Meeting for business for August will be a blended meeting, combining in-person and Zoom. Simply stay after Meeting for Worship, whether you attend Meeting for Worship in person or via Zoom. See announcement sheet for Zoom details. Minutes from August are below. For more information about meeting for business, see these guidelines approved by Atlanta Friends Meeting in 1996: [http://atlantaquakers.org/\\_site\\_pdf\\_docs/Guidelines\\_for\\_Meeting\\_for\\_Business.pdf](http://atlantaquakers.org/_site_pdf_docs/Guidelines_for_Meeting_for_Business.pdf)

## NEWSLETTER DEADLINE FOR NEXT MONTH – Monday, September 20

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Please send articles, announcements, information about upcoming events, and other submissions to [atlquakerltr@gmail.com](mailto:atlquakerltr@gmail.com) by September 20. Please send as an email or in Word or other text format.

## 2022 FRIENDS GENERAL CONFERENCE GATHERING July 3 to 9, 2022

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The 2022 Friends General Conference (FGC) Gathering will be held in-person at Radford University in southwestern Virginia, from July 3 to July 9, 2022. The theme will be “. . . and follow me.”

The four clerks for the 2022 Gathering introduce the Gathering at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sF6j\\_vCzJk0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sF6j_vCzJk0).

## EIGHTH MONTH MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS

August 15, 2021, held via Zoom

Minutes Recorded Pending Approval

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**Attendance:** Steve Collins, Bill Hooson, Teri Key-Hooson, Mary Ann Downey, Bill Holland, Aaron Ruscetta, Alberta Guise, Alison Mawle, Anton Flores-Maisonet, Becky Lough, Brent Wolff, Bert Skellie, Karen Skellie, Caroline Morris, Mike Aland, Carolyn Coburn-Allen, Cathy Amanti, David Small, Don Bender, Donna Roberts, Emma Bingham, Erin Schroder, Elizabeth Lamb, Glenn Plyler, Georgia Lord, Henry Slack, Herb Edwards, Jay Roache, Jennifer Dickie, Jennifer Thompson, Julia Ewen, Karen Morris, Larry Foster, Mark Yates, Myrna Trapp, Micheal Allison, Nina Gooch, Robin Biro, Ronald Nuse, Sallie Carpentier, Sue May, Susan Frestone, Waman French, Lissa Place (Clerk), Coryn Murphy (Recording Clerk)

Friends gathered near the appointed hour with opening worship. A member of Ministry and Worship shared the Eighth Month Query out of the worship: “How do you endeavor to recognize your personal biases regarding race, class, gender, sexual orientation, or any other prejudice you hold? How do you seek to overcome these?”

### **Discernment:**

**Ministry and Worship:** Bill Hooson reported the proposed minute for reopening the meeting for worship.

**Minute 08-15-21:01** Ministry and Worship is laboring with a query we share with the entire meeting “How can we support and help deepen worship for all?” As a committee and as a meeting we are divided. Some friends find virtual meeting to be an enriching and nourishing experience. Others find it a cheap substitute for in-person meeting. Some friends find technology to be liberating, creating new possibilities for enlarging our community of faith. Other Friends find technology in the meeting room to be distracting from that deep stilling center and they come to meeting to get away from technology. We are in a time of change with much uncertainty. No way we choose is without risk or will be perfect – it will be messy. We encourage all Friends to keep that hopeful faith alive that way will open, as we explore experiments in worship.

The structure of worship we accept in this pandemic period will be a temporary adjustment. We are not united that this is the way forward post-pandemic.

Ministry and Worship Committee recommends that at whatever date we return to meeting for worship in-person on First Day, worship will be held in a hybrid format for the first month as a trial. At the end of the one-month trial, Ministry and Worship will assess how to go forward and bring a recommendation to Meeting for Business.

**The Working Group on the Use of the Meetinghouse:** Allison Mawle reported for the working group on the use of the meetinghouse.

**Minute 08-15-21:02** The working group on the use of the meeting house recommends that AFM move forward with opening in person worship on Sunday mornings as outlined by M&W. Our COVID guidelines include the latest CDC recommendation that vaccinated individuals wear a mask indoors in public spaces if local case numbers are substantial or high. We recommend 8/29 as the opening date.

**Green Friends:** Henry Slack reported for the Green Friends after much deliberation the meeting decided to continue further discernment and bring the minute back next month.

We have received the recommendation of Green Friends to endorse H.R. 2307, the “Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2021” and need to have more information on which to base an informed decision. We ask Green Friends to hold an educational forum to review this legislation and share information on the desirability of this particular approach to address climate change and respond to questions. We ask Green Friends to publish information in the newsletter. After further education and discernment with the community, we welcome Green Friends bringing back their proposal for consideration in the Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business if it is in the right order.

**Minute for Reparations:** Bill Hoosen reported for Ministry and Worship.

**Minute 8-15-21:03** The Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the Minute on Reparative Justice and Reconciliation. We believe there is the light of God in each person, and we are connected to God and to each other by this light. We separate ourselves from God and each other by our prejudices which are the root of destructive conflict. We acknowledge our need for forgiveness and grace. We are called to be involved in the work of reconciliation and reparations to the descendants of formerly enslaved Africans.

Reparative justice refers to compensation, which may include a national apology; educational, housing and health care programs; and financial redress from the U.S. government to African Americans to eliminate, to the extent possible, the badges, incidents, and relics of slavery and involuntary servitude which only perpetuate and deepen past injustices and effect society. More specifically, reparations are a system of redress for injustices since 1619.

Reconciliation requires acknowledging and atoning for the wrong done —asking those harmed for forgiveness while resolving never to repeat the wrongs and working to ensure their rights as fellow citizens. This focus on restorative justice and reconciliation for African Americans in the 21st century calls for us to confront racist aspects of Quaker history as well as continue the work against racial injustice by the Religious Society of Friends. Throughout its existence, the Religious Society of Friends has worked to transform its relationship with African American people as it receives guidance from the Inner Light to work to correct historic wrongs committed by Friends of European descent. With gratitude to the work of Donna McDaniel and Vanessa Julye and others, we note the following: Until 1781 Friends in America struggled with the issue of enslavement. During the 1600s and early 1700s some Friends in the Americas were slaveholders. In Britain, Quakers were involved in the slave trade as ship owners, ships captains, as investors and as iron-masters made chains and

shackles for use in the slave trade. But Quakers ultimately became the first organization to end slavery among its members. In 1790, Quakers petitioned the U.S. Congress for the abolition of slavery. Quakers of African and European descent were pivotal in the Abolitionist Movement and the Underground Railroad network. During that time, Quakers of European descent did not customarily consider African Americans to be their equal, as reflected in segregated seating in meetings and the reluctance to accept African Americans into membership or to socialize with African Americans. Even as late as the 1950s, some Quaker schools and colleges were hesitant to accept African American students.

However, during the 20th century, Quakers worked as allies of African Americans in the civil rights movement through the American Friends Service Committee, Quaker monthly meetings, and the action of many individuals. Bayard Rustin's Quaker/Gandhian principles led him to become both a close adviser of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and one of the two organizers of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom on August 28, 1963.

At this march, Dr King, in his speech, "I Have a Dream" stated: "We have come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. ... It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked 'insufficient funds'. But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt."

A recent article by the Brookings Institution on reparations noted this statement by Dr King and concluded, "Given the lingering legacy of slavery on the racial wealth gap, the monetary value we know that was placed on enslaved Blacks, the fact that other groups have received reparations and the fact that Blacks were originally awarded reparations only to have them rescinded provide overwhelming evidence that it is time to pay reparations to the descendants of enslaved Blacks."

The Atlanta Friends Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) is called to work for reparative justice to redress the evils of centuries-long oppression and to bring about equity and reconciliation. Atlanta Friends Meeting will engage in reconciliation and healing within our Meeting, communities, and country. Friends of European descent acknowledge and atone for wrongs committed in the past and present against people of African descent. Friends of European descent acknowledge that we are the beneficiaries of slavery and that the enslavement of Africans contributed to the accumulated wealth we have today. Friends of European descent apologize for not acknowledging these truths sooner, and we atone for past and present oppression in the hope of healing justice. The Atlanta Friends Meeting as a whole celebrates our racial diversity and will actively engage with organizations at the local, state, and national level to generate and implement policies for reparative justice.

**Memorial Minute for Beth Garrettson-** Mary Ann Downey reported the memorial minute for Beth Garrettson.

**Minute 8-15-21:04:** Memorial Minute for Beth Garrettson 1937–2020

Our beloved Friend Beth Garrettson died on November 18, 2020. She was 83 and had been responding well to treatment for lung cancer. She died quickly and unexpectedly, but she was surrounded by her husband Lorne, their three daughters, and her son-in-law Michael. She died, to the sound of their singing, in the same hospital where she was born. She began her career in pediatric nursing there, as a 14-year-old nurses' aide. Her father had helped to found the hospital, and she had served on its Women's Board, as had her mother and both

grandmothers. Just a few days earlier, she had been as active as Friends here remember, cheering on her granddaughter's soccer team and baking cookies.

Many in this Meeting were the beneficiaries of Beth's extraordinary kindness, good cheer, and energy. She stood tall, spoke plainly, and gave the air of a free person. Her eyes twinkled with fun, though, and her directness was the steadiness of love. She was unhesitatingly generous as well as courageous. She looked at life clearly, experienced it thoroughly, and found joy, without avoiding sorrow.

Beth was born Elizabeth Stabler Miller in 1937, in Sandy Spring, Maryland, a community her Quaker great-grandparents had helped to establish over two hundred years earlier. She was the daughter of Robert and Mary Reading Miller and an eleventh-generation Quaker. Beth and her two sisters were raised on the farm founded by her paternal grandfather, where her father was also born. She left the expectations of that tightly knit community for college at Emory University (where she was elected student body president) and then nursing school at Columbia University School of Nursing in New York City.

Beth met Lorne, who is a physician, while working as a nurse at Boston Children's Hospital. After their marriage, Beth and Lorne lived and served over the years in Ghana; at a Quaker camp in Maryland over many summers; in Buffalo, New York; in Richmond, Virginia, where Beth was a professional and nurturing presence in a home for boys. Beth was active in the Meetings in all the places they lived, as well as the larger communities. In Richmond, for example, she founded a food cooperative, a babysitting cooperative, and a gourmet supper club. Beth and Lorne came to Atlanta with their daughters Mariana and Linda. The Garrettsons acted in a myriad of roles at AFM, serving on multiple committees, opening their home for welcome dinners and musical evenings, and teaching parenting classes. Those classes in particular benefited the Meeting in profound ways, knitting together a community of parents and families. We who took the course (alumni include Linda and her husband Michael) found ourselves better able to work through problems creatively, laugh at themselves, and navigate difficult times. We made friends, and our children grew and now pass on the lessons we learned.

Beth was active in women's groups and loved to travel, having adventures that included counting endangered wolves in Yellowstone National Park. She loved music, singing and playing the piano to accompany family and larger sing-alongs. She especially loved choral music. She and Lorne were members of community choirs in Buffalo, Atlanta, and Sandy Spring, and she sang in a small a capella group in Richmond.

In 2000, after Lorne retired, the Garrettsons moved to Sandy Spring, drawn back to the place of Beth's deep family roots. Beth was active in the Sandy Spring Meeting, on the Board of the Sandy Spring Friends School and Friends House retirement community, on the Women's Board of the Montgomery General Hospital. She was also active in the Women's Mutual Improvement Society of Sandy Spring, the oldest women's club in the country.

Friends in Atlanta were blessed by Beth and Lorne for many years, and they stayed close to many of us. Besides extended family and grieving friends, Beth is survived by her beloved Lorne; her three daughters and their husbands, Elizabeth Brooke Carroll (and Brian), Linda Janney Garrettson (and Michael Minnig), and Mariana Garrettson (and Jordan Taylor); and five wonderful grandchildren, ages 14 to 26 (Greta, Molly, Andrew, Terran, and Sage). All live in the Sandy Spring area surrounding the Sandy Spring Friends School. Beth lived adventurously and well, and many of us live more richly because we knew her.

**Administration:**

Steve Collins reported for the Administration Committee.

At the July 2021 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, we reported Aaron Ruscetta's decision to step down as the Meeting's Young Friends Program Coordinator (YFPC) and thanked him for his years of service. Friends asked that we prepare a formal minute of appreciation. Below is a minute of thanks to Aaron for his years of service as YFPC.

**Minute 8-15-21-05:** Aaron Ruscetta, the Young Friends Program Coordinator (YFPC) for the Atlanta Friends Meeting since 2009, laid down his role as coordinator, effective July 1, 2021. Since mid-2020, he has been performing this role as an unpaid coordinator and has offered to continue doing so until a new YFPC is hired by the Meeting. The Meeting sincerely thanks Aaron for his twelve years of dedicated service to Young Friends, the Atlanta Meeting, Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF), and the Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA).

**Reports:**

**Administration:** Steve Collins reported for the Administration Committee.

Jennifer Dickie, a former clerk of the Religious Education committee, has agreed to clerk an ad hoc group to review the current job description for the Young Friends Program Coordinator (YFPC) and the current committee description for the YFPC Support Committee (both of which are in the Meeting Handbook). Members of this ad hoc committee, in addition to Jennifer, thus far are Brent Woolf, Stoph Hallward, and Lisa Kruse. Those interested in contributing should contact Jennifer or me. Once the committee completes its work, a YFPC search committee may be formed.

The Harmony School resumed classes at the Meetinghouse on Monday, August 9. In recent weeks, Kevin Wong, Property Coordinator, has been busy with several Meetinghouse projects. Classrooms C, D, and E, the shower room, and the quiet entry way were repainted, and classroom carpets were cleaned. He repaired the playground sliding board, and mulch has been spread in the playground area.

Later this year, the HVAC system will be serviced per the annual vendor agreement (\$1,300), and seasonal gutter cleaning will be done in the late fall (\$500). Additional metal patio furniture is on backorder (\$700). Other less urgent repairs include replacement blinds for all classrooms (\$1,500) because the existing ones are in very poor condition; replacement of dripping shower fixture (\$500); and painting of atrium walls, ceiling, and rafters (\$1,300).

In order to take advantage of 0% interest loans from Georgia Interfaith Power & Light (GIPL), the Meeting is preparing to enter into an agreement with a contractor to install the solar panel array on the Meetinghouse roof.

**Quaker Voluntary Support Committee:**

Quaker Voluntary Service (QVS) Local Support Committee Steve Collins reported for the QVS Support Committee. After their year-end retreat in late July, the 2020-2021 Fellows moved out of the Grant Street QVS house on July 31. Orientation for the Local Support Committee and Spiritual Nurturers for the coming year was held August 7 at the QVS house.

As the Local Support Committee helps ready the house for the 2021-2022 Fellows, there will be opportunities for others in the Meeting to help with meals, rides to and from the airport, last minute cleaning and yard work, restocking the food pantry, and household items such as furniture,

linens, bedding, bicycles, a bike rack, etc. If you would like to help in any way, please contact Steve (shcollins75@gmail.com).

After national QVS orientation at Pendle Hill, the incoming group of Fellows will arrive in Atlanta on the evening of September 2. Their first AFM Meeting for Worship will be September 5, and their first day at work will be September 8. There are currently six (6) incoming Atlanta Fellows, with the possibility of adding one more to the group.

Our committee is always looking for new members to join in our mission of supporting QVS and the Local Coordinator. This role looks like attending our monthly meeting and supporting QVS activities as capacity allows. Are you interested in learning more? Reach out to Jillian Eller at [eller.jillian.k@gmail.com](mailto:eller.jillian.k@gmail.com).

### **Friend In Residence Report:**

Casa Alterna at Atlanta Friends Meeting is a ministry of hospitality started by our Friend-in-Residence, Anton Flores-Maisonet. Casa Alterna offers lodging, accompaniment and assistance at no cost to individuals and families fighting for asylum and against deportation.

August 2021 marks the one-year anniversary of offering hospitality to asylum seekers at the Meetinghouse. In that first year, 275 guests from 45 countries were welcomed to the meetinghouse. Scores of folks from the Meeting and beyond were involved in this ministry via providing food, clothing, airport/bus accompaniment and other tangible ways.

There are still many ways to get involved hands-on in this ministry of the Meeting. Some of the more pressing opportunities include airport accompaniment and cleaning and preparing the meetinghouse. While multilingualism is not required we're also seeking some Haitian Creole interpreters.

To read stories of how, as Anton says, love crosses borders, please visit [casaalterna.org](http://casaalterna.org). And for more information or to get involved, please contact Anton at [anton@casaalterna.org](mailto:anton@casaalterna.org)

### **Approval of Minutes for July 2021**

**Minute 08-15-2021-06:** The Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the Minutes from July 2021.

### **Events in the life of the Meeting**

Renda McCaughan died 7-26-21

### **Meeting ended with closing worship.**

### **QUOTES FROM FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL LEGISLATION**

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"What God requires of us is that we not stop trying."

-- Bayard Rustin, (1912-1987)

"We are a people that follow after those things that make for peace, love and unity."

-- Margaret Fell (1614-1702)

"True peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice."

-- Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968)

"If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor."

-- Desmond Tutu (1931- )

Atlanta Friends Meeting  
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#### ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING

Office Coordinator working from home while meeting house closed

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#### Atlanta Friends Meeting email lists & facebook group:

- You may receive the announcement sheets and other announcements relating directly to the life of the meeting. This is the announcement list. (The announcement sheet is also posted online.)
- You may receive announcements AND posts about a broader range of topics relating to being a Quaker. This is the discussion list. (You do not need to belong to both the announcement list and the discussion list.)
- You may receive notification that the newsletter is online. This is the newsletter list.
- To join any of these email lists above, please email the office at [atlantaquakers@gmail.com](mailto:atlantaquakers@gmail.com)
- To receive weekly emails about Zoom and in-person meetings for worship, email [atlantaquakers@gmail.com](mailto:atlantaquakers@gmail.com)
- To join the meeting's Facebook page, search for Atlanta Friends Meeting & click the + **Join Group** button.

#### Would you like to appear in future AFM Directories?

**Do you need to correct your directory information?** Send your name and contact information to Brent Wolff at [afmdirectory@gmail.com](mailto:afmdirectory@gmail.com).

**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 or paypal, visit [atlantaquakers.org/contact.htm](http://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](mailto:atlquakerltr@gmail.com). Submissions may be edited for length and format. THE DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS IS THE 20<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF EACH PRECEDING MONTH.

*This newsletter is a publication of the Atlanta Friends Meeting.  
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