

# ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER

## FEBRUARY 2023



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

The most recent announcement sheet is always at [http://atlantaquakers.org/announcements/Announcement\\_Sheet.pdf](http://atlantaquakers.org/announcements/Announcement_Sheet.pdf)

Meeting for Worship each First Day (Sunday) in Person & via Zoom, 10:00 to 11:00 am  
Details page 2

### QUERY FOR FEBUARY

When pressure is brought upon you to lower your standard of integrity, how do you resist it? Our responsibilities to God and our neighbor may involve us in taking unpopular stands. Do not let the desire to be sociable, or the fear of seeming peculiar, determine your decisions.

Source: Britain Yearly Meeting, adapted

### SUMMARY OF MARY ANN DOWNEY'S MINISTRY FOR 2022

*Mary Ann Downey's ministry of ministry is under the care of the meeting. This summary was written in November 2022. For others whose ministry is under the care of the meeting, see the Minutes from Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business below.*

One of my inspirations for ministry are the words of Howard Thurman: **“Don’t ask yourself what the world needs. Ask yourself what makes you come alive, and go do that, because what the world needs is people who have come alive.”** The needs of the world are always present and can be overwhelming, but with the help of Dave Thurman, Nan O’Connor, Lewis Fuller and Bill Holland, my anchoring committee, I focus on the work that makes me come alive.

This year as we began to move from the pandemic toward fewer deaths, more vaccines, and new treatments for COVID, I considered what might help me and our meeting come alive, find renewal, and recover. I realized that the article, “Pandemic Discoveries,” I wrote for *Friends Journal* in 2021 could guide a spring retreat for Friends, and with the help of Alison Mawle, Alberta Guise, Rachael Carter, and Bill Holland, I planned and facilitated a retreat on May 28 at meeting. The retreat and our return to meeting in person has drawn new people to meeting, many who are young adults and families searching for community. I’ve enjoyed welcoming new friends at almost every meeting throughout the year and clerked four clearness for membership committees.

It has also been a joy to teach friends, especially newcomers about Quakers and to find ways to help them become a part of our community. I did this through leading a forum on “Giving and Receiving Vocal Ministry” and offering a class using the Pendle Hill pamphlet on Spiritual Nurture Groups that led 10 friends to join a group. Since 2007, I’ve enjoyed inviting friends to offer their spiritual journey on the first Sunday of each month and these are recorded and shared through our meeting announcements and newsletter. Bill and I plan to create a password protected, accessible website under the care of the meeting to archive this collection.

My work as an elder and spiritual nurturer for our meeting is to midwife the ministry of others, recognizing gifts that have not been named. Quaker Voluntary Service has been one of the ways I've done this and has been a great joy for the last 10 years. While our meeting did not have a new group of fellows in September, I am continuing to meet in person as well as through email and phone calls with QVS alums who ask for help and also find many opportunities to be on call to friends in our meeting, and in other meetings.

In work outside the Atlanta meeting, Bill and I continue to meet every Wednesday night with a few friends in the Macon worship group online and plan to meet in person on December 2 for the first time since March 2020. The Macon worship group is under the care of our meeting. I'll also lead a retreat online on two evenings for the Ministry and Nurture committee of our yearly meeting, SAYMA, on building community to help ground their work and welcome new members.

I've found special joy in planning four memorial meetings for Bette Turlington, Beth-Ann Buitekant, Peter Schantz, and Muireann Brennan and in writing memorial minutes for each of them using their words and some messages of tribute friends offered in memorial meetings. The words of Albert Camus, offered by Peter Schantz's oldest daughter, guided his life and now inspire me:

*"In the midst of hate, I found there was, within me, an invincible love.*

*In the midst of tears, I found there was, within me, an invincible smile.*

*In the midst of chaos, I found there was, within me, an invincible calm.*

*I realized, through it all, that...In the midst of winter, I found there was, within me, an invincible summer. And that makes me happy. For it says that no matter how hard the world pushes against me, within me, there's something stronger – something better, pushing right back."*

## PLEASE JOIN US ON SUNDAYS FOR WORSHIP AND FIRST DAY SCHOOL

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We will continue to worship on Sunday at 10:00 am in person at the meetinghouse in combination with worship via Zoom for the indefinite future. Please choose the option that is best for you. For the most up to date Zoom information and COVID guidelines for in-person worship, see the current announcement sheet at [www.atlantaquakers.org/\\_announcements/Announcement\\_Sheet.pdf](http://www.atlantaquakers.org/_announcements/Announcement_Sheet.pdf).

### MEETING FOR WORSHIP

10 am Sundays, combined in person and Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89686276751?pwd=M29EYlFWEhSQUtZRVVPaIFFYmVDQT09>

Meeting ID: 896 8627 6751

Passcode: 789456

### ADULT FIRST DAY SCHOOL

(see more details for each Sunday below)

9:00 to 9:50 am Sundays, combined in person and Zoom

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

Meeting ID: 860 6366 5797

Passcode: 013191

### FIRST DAY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS

10:15 am Sundays, in-person,

Children and teens 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.

**PLEASE HOLD  
IN THE LIGHT:**

Bill Holland  
Jeremiah Gold-Hopton  
Karen Gold  
Cheryll Cowherd  
Becky Lough

*If you wish to have requests for holding in the light included in this monthly newsletter, please give the names to a member of Care & Counsel.*

**Atlanta Friends Committees and Other Contacts**

Clerk of the Meeting: Jennifer Dickie, afmclerk1@gmail.com  
Office Coordinator: Nina Gooch, atlantaquakers@gmail.com  
Treasurer: Lynn Leuszler, afmtreasurer1@gmail.com  
Ministry & Worship: Bill Hooson, bhooson@aol.com  
Finance: Paul Mangelsdorf, 770-677-4280  
Social Concerns: Kevin Moran, see directory  
Administration: Steve Collins, shcollins75@gmail.com  
Care & Counsel: Jennifer Crumpley, see directory  
Quakers for Racial Equality: Susan Firestone, susanfires@gmail.com  
Committee on Undoing Racism in AFM: Lissa Place, lissaplace@yahoo.com  
Religious Education: Laura MacNorlin, laura.norlin@gmail.com  
Library: Cal Gough, calgough@bellsouth.net  
Nominating: Lissa Place, lissaplace@yahoo.com  
Newsletter Editor: Nina Gooch, atlquakerltr@gmail.com  
Webmaster: Aaron Ruschetta, arxaaron@gmail.com  
Bookkeeper: Jonah McDonald, afmbookkeeper1@gmail.com

**For information about these committees, download the AFM Handbook from <http://atlantaquakers.org/members.htm> (scroll down to the bottom to AFM Documents to Download) OR contact the Clerk of the committee.**

**UPDATES ON AFM INTERPERSONAL RACIST INCIDENT POLICY – WHERE ARE WE NOW?**

The Committee on Undoing Racism in Atlanta Friends Meeting (CURAFM) is pleased to report that the Interpersonal Racist Incident Policy is now on the Meeting's website, and can be found as a link in 3 sections: the Homepage, the "Everyone is Welcome," and the "Equality" pages.

[http://atlantaquakers.org/site\\_pdf\\_docs/AFM\\_Racist\\_Incident\\_Policy-20220918.pdf](http://atlantaquakers.org/site_pdf_docs/AFM_Racist_Incident_Policy-20220918.pdf).

Thanks to Aaron Ruschetta for making this possible.

The Committee on Undoing Racism in Atlanta Friends Meeting is looking into programs for providing the training in restorative justice circle practices for implementing the policy. The training is necessary for the Standing Racist Incident Response Group, which will handle interpersonal racist incidents under the care of CURAFM, and for others who may help in response to an incident if needed. It will also be beneficial for more people in AFM to know about restorative justice circle practices.

CURAFM invites everyone in Meeting to participate in the training, to deepen the spiritual practice of addressing interpersonal harm and lifting up that of God in each other. Those who are trained will be eligible, if desired, to be nominated and approved in a Meeting for Business to serve on the Standing Racist Incident Response Group or to be on a list of additional potential group members to serve in response to an incident if needed.

Before the training takes place, CURAFM invites participation in a reading and discussion of *The Little Book of Race and Restorative Justice*, as a way of becoming more knowledgeable about restorative justice practices in a community setting. The discussion will take place at the regular CURAFM meeting, February 7, 7:30 pm ET on Zoom. Check below or watch the announcement sheet for the link. Karen Morris has copies of the book to give out. Please contact her for more information or for a book at karenth.1415@gmail.com or by text at 404-797-8079.

## MEET ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING'S LONG-TERM RENTERS

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*AFM shares the meeting house with our community. Our renters include one time events as well as groups that rent the meetinghouse long term. Here's a little information about our current long-term renters.*

### **Aikido of Georgia**

Aikido is a non-violent martial art for all ages that teaches how to control or escape from attackers without harming them. When someone attacks, an aikidoist will move in the same direction and at the same speed as the attacker, blending with their energy without a hard impact. Through consistent training, aikido practitioners develop a heightened sense of their surroundings, the ability to resolve conflicts without injury, and an attitude of harmony that can help keep them from being attacked in the first place. Beginning in August 2022, Aikido of Georgia offers classes for children and adult in the main meeting room three times a week at AFM. Parents can train in class with their children. See [www.AikidoOfGeorgia.com](http://www.AikidoOfGeorgia.com) for more info, or contact Joel Riggs at 678-662-9237.

### **Atlanta Children's Choir**

The Atlanta Children's Choir, Inc. is a non-profit community choir whose vision is very clear. We aim to enhance the lives of youth in the city of Atlanta and surrounding communities by providing a motivational, educational, and professional choral program that would not be accessible otherwise; to empower youth with a diverse and challenging music curriculum that fosters choral excellence and musicianship; and to strengthen metro Atlanta communities by encouraging a strong and ongoing partnership through service. Simply put, we empower children in the metro-Atlanta area through the power of their united voices in song and hope that in doing so we can illuminate and uplift our community. We are accepting new students (ages 5 to 11 years old) as we expand membership to our choir for the Spring Choral Season! We meet every Thursday at 5:30pm. You can visit our website at [www.atlantachildrenschoir.org](http://www.atlantachildrenschoir.org) to find out more.

### **Atlanta Insight Meditation Community**

The Atlanta Insight Meditation Community is a Buddhist meditation, practice, and study community based in the Insight (Vipassana) tradition. We are a group of spiritual friends who are committed to the journey of living a peaceful life. We first began meeting twice monthly at Atlanta Friends in August 2021 (though we had had retreats here before that). Unfortunately the pandemic kept us away from in person meetings for much of the time thereafter. We look forward to starting again this January. Our website is <http://atlinsight.org>. The best way to contact us is through our "[contact us](#)" page.

### **Community Yoga Class at AFM in the Style of Kundalini Yoga and Meditation**

Gathering on Tuesday mornings in the Atlanta Friends meeting room since early 2022, our community yoga class is a relaxing and centering hour and a half. We engage together in deep stretching and therapeutic assistance for the joints as well as yoga sets (kriyas), meditations and breath work, followed by a period of silent rest and gratitude on our yoga mats at the end of class. We use the floor space and our own yoga mats. As an alternative, anyone is able to join us by sitting in one of the meeting's padded chairs as they prefer, or switching back and forth between a chair and mat on the floor. Class meets from 9:45-11:15 am. The first 15 minutes are usually spent in grounding ourselves and discussing any special needs for that day's class. Please join us. Yoga beginners and newcomers to AFM are welcome! Contact AFM member Ann Ritter with questions.

### **Harmony School**

The Harmony School of Decatur is a preparatory preschool serving children 2 to 5 years of age since 2008 at the AFM meetinghouse. We believe it is of the utmost importance for children to have a balanced early learning experience that prepares them for Kindergarten and beyond. Therefore, our

students enjoy arts & crafts, puppetry, games, and outdoor play each day as well as learning the fundamentals of math, language, reading, Spanish, and kid friendly science experiments. We further believe that each and every child is born with special gifts and talents. We nurture these gifts in our culturally diverse environment so our children feel free to blossom into the special individuals that they are. Website: <https://www.harmonyschoolofdecat.com/>. Contact Harmony School at 404-452-1709 or [harmonyschooldecat@gmail.com](mailto:harmonyschooldecat@gmail.com).

### **Ulysses Book Group**

The Ulysses Book Group is a book club that set out to read James Joyce's Ulysses, a goal they accomplished twice before moving on to other classic literature. With Meg Harper and Lewis Fuller as original members, they have met monthly at the meeting house for over a decade. For more info, contact AFM member Lewis Fuller.

### **SPREAD THE MEDICAID EXPANSION MINUTE**

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In October of last year, the Meeting approved a Minute addressing the issue of 600,000 Georgians who do not have health insurance coverage. These people tend to be low income and people of color. The state legislature is currently in session. The Social Concerns Committee is encouraging Meeting members and attenders to contact their state representatives and request their support of a full expansion of Medicaid to increase healthcare access. To find contact information for state representatives, go to: <https://www.legis.ga.gov>.

Here is the Meeting's Minute, which you can share as part of your email / letter:

*Atlanta Friends Meeting (Quakers) ask that members of Georgia's State Government find in their hearts and consciences the will to fully expand Medicaid to provide hospital medical care for all Georgia citizens. The recent announcement of closure in November 2022 of Atlanta Medical Center, Wellstar Level 1 trauma hospital brings sharp focus to the need to strengthen Georgia's health care systems. Additionally, eight rural hospitals have already closed over the past decade, making Georgia one of the top three states having closed rural hospitals in America.*

*There appears to be a strong correlation between states' failure to expand Medicaid eligibility and closures of hospitals. Eight of the states with the most hospital closures have not expanded Medicaid coverage. Failure to expand Medicaid coverage in Georgia leaves one in five of fellow Georgians without health care insurance. Expansion of Medicaid would provide health care access to at least 600,000 Georgians. Expansion of Medicaid would also help maintain the medical service providers within our communities and increase economic activity. It has been estimated that at least 50,000 jobs would be created annually with over 10,000 of those in rural areas. In addition, Georgia's economic output would increase over 6 billion dollars every year. Loss of hospitals and medical care reduces Georgia's economic health and social attractiveness in our present ever-changing world. Medicaid expansion would reduce costs through dependable payments to Georgia from the Federal Government.*

*The federal government pays 90% of costs of the expansion rather than the current 67% of Georgia's traditional Medicaid insurance. Since Medicaid expansion became available in 2014, concerns that states could not depend on that extra federal funding have been unfounded. The 90% payments to states that have expanded Medicaid have been reliable.*

*We believe that there is that of God in every person and that extending lifesaving care is the moral and loving thing for us to seek for our neighbors. Atlanta Friends Meeting (Quakers) ask that Georgia State Legislators fully expand Medicaid so that Georgia may be a healthier home for all.*

## STATEMENT ON THE PEACE TESTIMONY AND UKRAINE FROM 8 QUAKER ORGANIZATIONS

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This statement from October 26, 2022 was signed by the leaders of eight Quaker organizations in the US and Canada and can be found on the Friends Committee on National Legislation's (FCNL's) website at <https://www.fcnl.org/updates/2022-10/statement-peace-testimony-and-ukraine>

## HELP US UPDATE AFM WEBSITE

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The Administration Committee is looking for those in the Meeting interested in joining an ad hoc advisory group related to enhancing the Meeting's web site, [atlantaquakers.org](http://atlantaquakers.org). Those with technical skills and/or experience in developing or maintaining websites would be especially welcome. But we would also like those with input on the "look & feel" and useability of the web site. Please contact Aaron Ruscetta ([arxaaron@gmail.com](mailto:arxaaron@gmail.com)) or Steve Collins ([shcollins75@gmail.com](mailto:shcollins75@gmail.com)) if you can participate.

## SIGNING UP TO VOLUNTEER FOR CASA ALTERNA

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The new sign-up sheet to volunteer to purchase groceries and other needed items for Casa Alterna guests from January through March 2023 can be found at <http://bit.ly/3v2cXOQ>. (Scroll down to see later slots.) Your support of this work is making a huge impact on the lives of asylum seekers as they find their way in a new country. Your help is greatly appreciated. Visit the Casa Alterna website at <https://casaalterna.org/> for more updates. If you have questions, reach out to Cathy Amanti at [cbamanti@gmail.com](mailto:cbamanti@gmail.com).

## RESOURCES FROM FRIENDS JOURNAL [www.friendsjournal.org](http://www.friendsjournal.org)

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- January 2023's issue focuses on Reparations: <https://www.friendsjournal.org/issue-category/2023/reparations/>
- December 2022's issue focuses on Atonement or "at-one-ment": <https://www.friendsjournal.org/issue-category/2022/atonement/>, including this useful introduction at <https://www.friendsjournal.org/at-one-with-god-and-friends/>, this interview with Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg about her recent book, *On Repentance and Repair: Making Amends in an Unapologetic World* at <https://www.friendsjournal.org/repentance-forgiveness-atonement/>, and this article about early Quaker beliefs about atonement and how they matter today at <https://www.friendsjournal.org/facing-evil-finding-freedom/>
- December's issue also includes this list of children's books about worship: <https://www.friendsjournal.org/10-childrens-books-worship-meeting/>
- November's issue is the annual fiction issue: <https://www.friendsjournal.org/issue-category/2022/fiction/>, including "The Conduits" in which a nine-year-old starts to literally see the light connecting Friends in worship: <https://www.friendsjournal.org/the-conduits/>
- November's issue also includes a review of the Pendle Hill pamphlet *An Atheist's Guide to Quaker Process*, which also has much to say to Quakers: <https://www.friendsjournal.org/book/the-atheists-guide-to-quaker-process-spirit-led-decisions-for-the-secular/>
- October's issue has an excellent article summarizing the work of many wider Quaker organizations: <https://www.friendsjournal.org/quaker-works-october-2022/>

## CELEBRATING THE ELDERS AND ANCESTORS WHO SHAPED AFM – Sunday, January 29

On her recent album, meeting attender/folk singer Deidre McCalla's song "Endless Grace" reminds us that "we all stand on someone's shoulders, where we seek for higher ground." Atlanta Meeting has been shaped by Friends who still exist in living memory and continues to be shaped by each of us today. We stand on the shoulders of these early Atlanta Friends and their example shapes who we are as a meeting. We can remember them in stories. On January 29, at the rise of meeting, we invite you to come share stories and hear stories of these Friends and consider how they live in us today and how their example leads us to "live up to the truth we have." For more information, contact Mary Ann Downey or Bill Holland. 11:45 am to 1:00 pm. Combined in person and Zoom, using the meeting for worship zoom link (see above). You can stay in the meeting for worship link or join later.

## NEW AND UPDATED CONTACT INFO NEEDED FOR 2023 DIRECTORY by January 31

Brent Wolff, our Directory Editor, is beginning work on our 2023 AFM Directory. If you would like to be included in the 2023 directory, please email him at [afmdirectory@gmail.com](mailto:afmdirectory@gmail.com) by January 31. If you are already in the directory, please check your information and email him with any corrections by January 31. If you're not sure if you're in the directory or you don't have the most recent copy from May or June 2022, there's a copy on the greeting table near the front door or email the office at [atlantaquakers@gmail.com](mailto:atlantaquakers@gmail.com). If you'd like a copy of the current directory until the new one is completed, please contact the office or pick up a copy at the meetinghouse.

## WEDNESDAY MORNING MEETING FOR WORSHIP – Wednesdays, February 1, 8, 15, 22, etc

8:30 am. This ongoing meeting for worship is again both in person and Zoom.  
Contact Bert Skellie at 404-680-4799 for general info.

<https://zoom.us/j/92038862952>

Meeting ID: 92038862952

Password: 726229

## WED EVENING WORSHIP WITH MACON WORSHIP GROUP – Wed, February 1, 8, 15, 22, etc

The Macon Worship Group, which is under the care of Atlanta Friends Meeting, worships via Zoom every Wednesday at 7:00 pm.. They invite us to join them for this ongoing meeting for worship! For more information, contact Bill Holland and Mary Ann Downey.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85017745787?pwd=RUQ3OGJPenMrYktXemlxL1d2R3Q2Zz09>

Meeting ID: 850 1774 5787

Passcode: 22Light

## BOOKS BY AND ABOUT PEOPLE OF COLOR – Thursday, February 2 and ongoing

The book group reading works by and about people of color meets at 1:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month. They are currently meeting in person and via Zoom. On February 2, they'll discuss *Daughter of Fortune* by Isabelle Allende. For questions or the Zoom link, contact Susan Cole ([cole2544@bellsouth.net](mailto:cole2544@bellsouth.net)).

## SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS & QUAKERISM 101 IN ADULT FIRST DAY SCHOOL

Sunday, February 5, 12, 19, 26

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Adult First Day School meets in person at the meetinghouse, and people can also join 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 February 5, Rich Klima will share his Spiritual Journey. (To read the text/outline of Bill Cox's Spiritual Journey, shared January 1, visit <https://tinyurl.com/44r8476p>.)

In February and March, Adult First Day School continues its annual Quakerism 101 on second, third, and fourth Sundays. The series began in January focusing on AFM, using the meeting's history, *As Way Opened*, widening our study to our yearly meeting, Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association or SAYMA in February (using the 2021 *Guide to Our Faith and Practice*), and finally further widening our view to cover the history and current status of world-wide Quakerism (using *Quakerism: the Basics* by Margery Post Abbott and Carl Abbott). Please join us for this series, even if you have not read the books and even if you do not regularly attend Adult First Day School. Printed copies of SAYMA's *Faith and Practice* are in the literature rack near the front door of the meeting house or download a free pdf at [https://www.sayma.org/online\\_documents.htm](https://www.sayma.org/online_documents.htm). *Quakerism: The Basics* is available for purchase at online bookstores, including [quakerbooks.org](http://quakerbooks.org).

## POTLUCK – Sunday, February 5

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We have resumed our monthly potlucks. Please join us for a potluck lunch following the rise of Meeting on the first Sunday of the month. Please consider bringing not only enough food for your family, but also a little extra for newcomers and guests.

## CURAFM: *THE LITTLE BOOK OF RACE AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE* -- Tuesday, February 7

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The Committee on Undoing Racism in AFM (CURAFM) has bought copies of this book by Fania E. Davis for reading and discussion for affirming spiritual community and for repairing and restoring relationships when harm has occurred within our multiracial, multicultural home of worship. CURAFM will begin its next meeting with a discussion of this book on Tuesday, February 7, 7:30 pm. Please see Karen Morris for a copy of the book.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88572920986?pwd=Q0FHc0Jzb3Y0RmpTZk5FdnAxaCtHUT09>

Meeting ID: 885 7292 0986

Passcode: 238191

## APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR FCNL PROGRAM ASSISTANT FELLOWSHIPS apply by February 10

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Work as a full-time staff member of Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) from Summer 2023 to Summer 2024, collaborating with staff members to build expertise in advocacy from a public interest perspective. Benefits include salary, health care, paid vacation, and sick leave. Fellows work under the title "Program Assistant" and work directly with FCNL staff, gaining first-hand knowledge of the legislative process and the organizing and communications work that is necessary for policy change. Apply at <https://www.fcnl.org/act/young-adult-advocates/program-assistant-fellowship>.



## AFM WALKING GROUP – Saturday, February 12

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This group, which meets the second Saturday of each month, has been renamed the "AFM Walking Group, since they've been walking mostly on paved paths and other relatively flat trails. To receive information about each month's walk, contact Bert Skellie at 404-680-4799. For February and March, please mark your calendars for 2 pm starts. The group will change back to Saturday mornings when it warms up.

## MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS -- Sunday, February 20

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Stay after meeting for worship, whether in person or via Zoom. Meeting for Business will be held in a combined format about 11:45. Minutes from our last Meeting for Business are below.

[http://atlantaquakers.org/site\\_pdf\\_docs/Guidelines\\_for\\_Meeting\\_for\\_Business.pdf](http://atlantaquakers.org/site_pdf_docs/Guidelines_for_Meeting_for_Business.pdf) has more information about how meeting for worship with attention to business works.

Often we just say Meeting for Business. This article from July 2022's *Friends Journal* talks about the importance of those words we often leave out and about the spiritual side of Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business: <https://www.friendsjournal.org/meeting-for-business-as-spiritual-rehearsal>

## WALK FOR PEACE – Sunday, March 5

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There will be a short Walk for Peace on First Day, March 5th sponsored by Social Concerns. We will gather around 12:25 pm in the grassy field across the street from Meeting and walk along the path for about 45 minutes round trip. Please no chanting or signs. This is a contemplative, silent walk. Come walk for inner peace and for peace throughout the world. For more information, please contact Mark Yates at [yates77@bellsouth.net](mailto:yates77@bellsouth.net).

## BOOK TALK: *WAR IN UKRAINE: MAKING SENSE OF A SENSELESS CONFLICT* – Sun, March 5

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Medea Benjamin will speak about her book *War in Ukraine: Making Sense of a Senseless Conflict* at the meetinghouse on March 5 at 1:30 pm. Books will be available for sale. More details later.

## REGISTRATION NOW OPEN FOR FCNL's SPRING LOBBY WEEKEND – March 25 to 28

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This year, Friends Committee on National Legislation's (FCNL's) Spring Lobby Weekend, their annual young adult conference and day of action in Washington, DC, will be in person OR online from March 25 to 28, 2023. Gather, learn, and act to encourage Congress to support violence interruption programs. These programs support community-centered solutions that work to address the root causes of violence. Young Adult Friends can receive scholarships for this wider Quaker event through the Kenworthy bequest; contact Bill Hooson of Ministry & Worship at [bhooson@aol.com](mailto:bhooson@aol.com). Registration now open. For more details about the event and to register, visit: <https://web.cvent.com/event/e65db82d-5cb7-4372-9eea-2101f070a475/summary>. For general information on FCNL, visit <https://www.fcnl.org/> or contact Sue May.

YOUNG ADULT FRIENDS RETREAT: SAVE THE DATE (May 13 to 14)

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The Young Adult Friends will have a retreat Saturday to Sunday May 13 to 14, with the option of staying Friday night as well. It will be at AFM's Ferguson Cabins (about 2.5 hours north of Atlanta). Anyone aged approximately 18 to 35 is welcome. Mark your calendars! More info and RSVP are coming soon. In the meantime, please email [afm-yaf@googlegroups.com](mailto:afm-yaf@googlegroups.com) with any questions.

SAVE THE DATES: SAYMA (June 23 to 26) & FGC GATHERING (July 2 to 8)

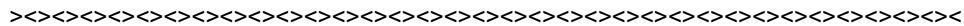
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- Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association or SAYMA (our yearly meeting) Annual Sessions and Retreat, Friday, June 23 to Monday, June 26 at Berea College in Berea, Kentucky.
- Friends General Conference (FGC) Gathering, July 2 to 8 at Western Oregon University in Monmouth, Oregon. Plenaries will be hybrid. [FGCgathering.org](http://FGCgathering.org)
- For details, see the announcement in the January newsletter at [http://atlantaquakers.org/\\_afm\\_newsletters/AFM\\_Newsletter\\_2023-01.pdf](http://atlantaquakers.org/_afm_newsletters/AFM_Newsletter_2023-01.pdf)

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR SAYMA ANNUAL SESSIONS AND RETREAT AND FOR FGC GATHERING

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As part of Tom and Suzan Kenworthy's bequest to the meeting, scholarships to wider Quaker events, including these, are available to Young Adult Friends (ages 18 to 35). Ministry and Worship also offers partial scholarships to anyone in the meeting attending these two specific events. More details later or contact the Ministry and Worship Committee via Bill Hooson.



MINUTES FOR FIRST MONTH MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS  
January 15, 2023, held in person and via Zoom in a blended meeting  
Minutes Recorded Pending Approval

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**Attendance:** Aaron Ruscetta, Alison Mawle, Anton Flores-Maisonet, Austin Watters, Bert Skellie, Karen Skellie, Bill Hooson, Teri Key-Hooson, Bill Holland, Mary Ann Downey, Caroline Morris, Mike Aland, Cathy Amanti, Clive Gordon, David Small, Elizabeth Lamb, Elizabeth Muller, Emma Bingham, Eric Glenn, Georgia Lord, Jennifer Crumpley, Jim Tolmach, Sally Ferguson, Judy Lumb, Julia Ewen, Kathy Johnson, Karen terHost Morris, Kevin Moran, Laura MacNorlin, Lissa Place, Lynn Leuszler, Mark Yates, Michael Allison, Myrna Trapp, Paul Mangelsdorf, Rebecca Cole Sullivan, Ronald Nuse, Steve Collins, Sue May, Susan Firestone, Jennifer Dickie (Clerk), Coryn Murphy (Recording Clerk)

**Opening Worship**

**Query for First Month** - Try to live simply. A simple lifestyle freely chosen is a source of strength. Do not be persuaded into buying what you do not need or cannot afford. Do you keep yourself informed about the effects your style of living is having on the global economy and environment?

*Source: Australia Yearly Meeting, Advices and Queries #45*

## **Discernment:**

### **Ministry and Worship**

Bill Hooson reported for Ministry and Worship Committee about the anchoring committees.

**Minute 1-15-23:01:** On the recommendation of the Ministry and Worship committee, the Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the following anchoring committee for the ministry of Anton Flores-Maisonet: Casa Alternativa - Cathy Amanti, Charlotte Flores, Hannah MacNorlin, Christina Repoley

**Minute 1-15-23:02:** On the recommendation of the Ministry and Worship committee, the Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the following anchoring committee for the ministry of Mary Ann Downey: Ministry - Dave Thurman, Nan O'Connor, Lewis Fuller, Bill Holland

**Minute 1-15-23:03:** On the recommendation of the Ministry and Worship committee, the Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the following anchoring committee for the ministry of Julie Hilboki: Chaplaincy - Mary Ann Downey, Ron Nuse, Caroline Morris, Bill Holland

**Minute 1-15-23:04:** On the recommendation of the Ministry and Worship committee, the Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the following anchoring committee for the ministry of Richard Allen: Music - Karen Morris, Susan Firestone, Bert Skellie, Ron Nuse.

### **Nominating Committee**

Lissa Place reported for the Nominating Committee

**Minute 1-15-23:05:** The Atlanta Friends Meeting approves on the recommendation of Nominating Committee, Teri Key Hooson to serve a three year term on Ministry and Worship starting January of 2023- December 2025.

**Minute 1-15-23:06:** The Atlanta Friends Meeting, on the recommendation of Nominating Committee, approves Kevin Moran to serve as the clerk of the Social Concerns Committee for a one year term January of 2023- December 2023.

## **Reports:**

### **Nominating Committee**

Lissa Place reported for the Nominating Committee.

The Nominating Committee would like to bring forward the name Emma Bingham for Recording Clerk for a two year term. We will bring her name back next month for approval.

The Nominating Committee would like to bring forward the name Clive Gordon for Ministry and Worship Committee for a three year term. We will bring his name back next month for approval.

### **Finance**

Paul Mangelsdorf reported for the Finance Committee

For 2022, AFM had a \$20,704 surplus. The surplus is essentially all on the revenue side, as total expenses at \$155,081 were \$734 less than budget (99.5% of budget). Contributions were \$156,900, of which \$5,000 was a bequest and \$3,094 were memorial contributions. Thus, recurring contributions were \$148,806 which is the highest level of recurring contributions ever, and slightly exceeds our 2023 budget. Rental income continued to return toward pre-COVID levels and at \$27,771 was \$12,771 greater than the \$15,000 budget. This was offset by the expected loss from our investment funds. We received \$2,886 in dividend and capital gain distributions and had a (\$12,238) unrealized capital loss.

Income for 2022 was \$100,765 less than the prior year. Last year's surplus was driven by the \$100,000 Kenworthy bequest. Further, last year's income included \$4,921 in unrealized gain on our investment account. Rental income last year was \$7,841 (or \$19,930 less than this year's rental income).

As noted above, total expenses were slightly less than the budget. Occupancy expenses were higher than the budget due to the delay in the Solar Panels going online. Occupancy expenses were higher than the prior year due to slightly higher utility costs and increased insurance costs. Employee expenses were higher than the prior year due to our filling all our positions. The \$1,645 positive variance to budget for Employees is related to timing of filling the open positions.

Compared to year-end, our balance sheet is \$19,350 smaller. This is the result of the expenditure of \$62,269,16 from various funds (primarily \$50,295.32 from Permanent Improvements, see 2022 Funds Reconciliation for details) offset by the \$20,704 operating surplus this year, the transfer of \$7,500 to the Permanent Improvement fund through our operating expense, and \$15,335 in direct contributions to the various funds.

On the asset side of the balance sheet Checking balances are \$14,777 lower while savings balances are \$50,119 higher. Net receivables (Undeposited funds and Due from Pay Pal) decreased by \$74,889. Our investment funds decreased (\$9,351.66) which is the net effect of the dividends and unrealized gains mentioned in the first paragraph above. Note that our \$47,691 investment balance was originally a \$10,000 investment.

**Religious Education** Laura MacNorlin reported for the Religious Education program at AFM.

This year AFM RE has been blessed by the ministry of four lead teachers and five regular door keepers volunteers.

Spring 2022 curriculum focused on the Old Testament with themes of God/Becoming Community/From Darkness to Light. In the fall, a new cycle of curriculum began with focus on the New Testament and theme "We Are the Family of God" and "We Are the Children of God." Each week, lessons consisted of a story from the *Children's Book of Bible Stories* by Desmond Tutu, a picture book or *Godly Play* story and arts/crafts lesson reflection. Instead of joining the end of Meeting for Worship, youth had time on the playground and nature walks in the wonderful new paths of the greenspace ravine.

Most children only interact with the wider community through First Day School, so all Friends are strongly encouraged to volunteer at least a few times a year and to come find families at potluck and fellowship time (often congregating around the outdoor tables and playground benches).

The Religious Education committee is looking for a new clerk starting in the summer of 2023. If you are interested or would like to recommend someone, please contact Lissa Place, clerk of nominating committee.

The RE Committee is also ready to welcome new teachers and doorkeepers. Laura explained that teaching in First Day School has a regular structure that includes a short lesson based around reading or telling a story with a set of queries that is provided and then allowing children to reflect using arts and crafts. For older children the discussion is guided by a set of queries provided by the young Friends.

Friends in meeting for business expressed concern about middle and high school young Friends, noting that there are fewer teenagers now than in the past. Laura shared that the new Young Friends program coordinator, Asa Kramer-Dickie, is working with Religious Education to coordinate programming for older YF.

## **Administration**

Steve Collins reported for the Administration Committee.

AFM Web Site:

Administration committee is looking for those in the Meeting interested in joining an **ad hoc advisory group related to enhancing the Meeting's web site**, [atlantaquakers.org](http://atlantaquakers.org). The first phase of the committee will be a website evaluation and members do not need technical skills for this phase. The second phase of the committee will be to develop a website and those members with technical skills and/or experience in developing or maintaining websites would be especially welcome. Members of the committee will also give input on the "look & feel" and useability of the web site. Please contact Aaron Ruschetta ([arxaaron@gmail.com](mailto:arxaaron@gmail.com)) or Steve Collins ([shcollins75@gmail.com](mailto:shcollins75@gmail.com)) if you can participate.

Solar Panels:

Georgia Power told us in late November 2022 that it would be 8-12 weeks before their technicians will be onsite again to test and approve our solar panel system. They did not contact us prior to that visit as we'd asked. We again asked to be contacted in advance, but they continue to say that's not possible. Once they do come back and find the system setup is satisfactory, that should enable them to make it operational and lower our electricity bills.

Friends expressed frustration with the GA power and asked if anyone had reached out to the Public Service Commission to express concern about this process. Stever reported that this was in the works.

## **Social Concerns Committee**

Kevin Moran reported for the Social Concerns Committee.

Kevin listed the organizations and projects that Social Concerns Committee has approved and disbursed as of January 8, 2023. (see list following) Kevin noted that the largest contribution increase was to Friends' Committee for National Legislation by sponsoring Friends to travel to DC for FCNL work at the capitol.

- Decatur Cooperative Ministry (DCM: incl. Women & Children shelter)
- Decatur-Area Emergency Assistance Ministry
- Regional Council of Churches of Atlanta
- Southern Freedmen Fund
- Beacon Hill Black Alliance for Human Rights
- Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP)
- Casa Alterna (refugee accompaniment)
- Citizens Climate Ed Corp
- Georgia Coalition for the People's Agenda
- Listening 4 Justice
- Restorative Justice Advocates of Georgia
- Uplifting People, Inc.

## **Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association Representative Report**

Alison Malwe reported as the SAYMA representative.

Alison read a letter from SAYMA as recorded below.

*"Our life is love and peace, and tenderness; and bearing one with another, and forgiving one another, and not laying accusations one against another; but praying one for another, and helping one another up with a tender hand..."*

Isaac Pennington, Aylesbury, 4th of Third Month, 1667

*Friends,*

*These queries are a guide, to help your monthly meeting look at the year behind us, to discern the "Spirit," or state of your Meeting. These are guides based on observations made by the SAYMA Ministry and Nurture Committee. They may not speak to all meetings, or in the same way. We hope that these queries open conversation, and are used for community contemplation, giving insight also on the growth of your meeting over the past year. It should be a mystical process, not rigid, or stressful. There is more than one path to take.*

*In Light,*

SAYMA Ministry and Nurture Committee

- *What challenges did our meeting face during the last year?*
- *How did we support and lift each other up?*
- *How did we breathe new life into our testimonies and responses to turmoil in our community and the world?*
- *How did we deepen together spiritually over the past year?*

*Please send your responses to SAYMA M&N Committee co-clerks Diana Masso and Barbara Esther as well as the SAYMA administrative assistant, Susan Phelan. Tentative due date March 23rd.*

Alison asked if Friends wanted to consider a called meeting for worship sharing using the suggested queries.

Susan Firestone expressed concerns about having a called meeting as there has been a lot of work done already in the meeting around these queries. She also noted that there were some concerns raised by friends in SAYMA about the Isacc Pennington quote at the start of the letter. Because it could be interpreted to be directed at SAYMA URJ. Friends expressed concerns about anti-racism and felt this was getting better in SAYMA.

Bill Holland stated that this year the AFM clerk had invited committees to respond to very similar queries and that it didn't feel like we needed to do that work a second time. He thought the AFM State of the Meeting report would likely be a good response to the queries..

The clerk agreed that these queries seemed to be offered as guidance for Meetings to consider as they constructed their annual state of the meeting reports, and that AFM started this process three months ago, so these queries came late for guidance. The clerk stated that she would hold the queries as she read and consolidated the many reports into the state of the meeting report and if any seemed to be seriously missing, she might request a called meeting later.

### **Clerk's Items**

Jennifer Dickie as Clerk of the Atlanta Friends Meeting has been asked by Social Concerns Committee to sign a short cover letter introducing AFM\_Minute 10-16-22:01 concerning medicaid expansion to Georgia lawmakers. Social Concerns Committee wants to send this letter quickly to state officials during the current legislative session. She confirmed with the meeting that she was empowered to sign this cover letter and send it with the Minute.

Suggested cover letter for mailing January 2023

*On October 16, 2022, the Atlanta Friends Meeting (Quakers) approved the attached minute concerning the need to increase healthcare access and address hospital closures by expanding Medicaid coverage in Georgia.*

*We urge you to take action this session to make healthcare available to the estimated 600,000 Georgians who will be helped by this expansion.*

*Best Regards,  
Jennifer Dickie  
Clerk, Atlanta Friends Meeting*

## **Announcements**

The Friends School of Atlanta has a program that invites Friends to come as a Quaker Visitor and interact with students about what it means to be a Quaker. Times available are Friday mornings at 8:30 during silent worship time or 2:00 pm on any afternoon. Please contact Laura MacNorlin, (laura.norlin@gmail.com) if you are interested.

## **Approval of Minutes from 12th month 2022**

**Minute 1-15-23:07:** The Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the 12th month 2022 minutes with the following changes.

- Add Bill Holland to the attendees
- CURAFM report correction - corrections in bold

Jennifer Dickie read the report for the **Committee on Undoing Racism in Atlanta Friends Meeting (CURAFM)**. The Ad Hoc Committee for Anti-Racist Policies and Procedures is being laid down. We have completed our work of having the **AFM** Interpersonal Racist Incident Policy and Procedure approved through Business Meeting. Although we learned in the process that there are various policies that still need to be reviewed and updated, they will need to be looked at by other committees.

Susan Firestone thanked the many other committees who supported CURAFM throughout this process. **CURAFM would like to publicize the policy to the rest of the meeting, and they are looking for people to be nominated to serve on the Standing Racist Incident Response Group, which is responsible for dealing with racist incidents and will be under the care of CURAFM.**

- Finance Report

**Replace** The employee line is a little lower due to inflation.

**With:** Is a little lower than the prior version of the budget, as actual inflation for the prior 12 months was lower than the estimate we used in the initial version of the budget.

## **Closing Worship**

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

#### ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING

Office Hours: Monday thru Thursday, 10 am to 1 pm and Friday, by appointment  
web and email: [atlantaquakers.org](http://atlantaquakers.org), [atlantaquakers@gmail.com](mailto:atlantaquakers@gmail.com) voicemail/phone: 404-377-2474  
Clerk: Jennifer Dickie, [afmclerk1@gmail.com](mailto:afmclerk1@gmail.com) Treasurer: Lynn Leuszler, [afmtreasurer1@gmail.com](mailto:afmtreasurer1@gmail.com)

#### Ways to communicate and receive information:

- You may receive the announcement sheets and other announcements relating directly to the life of the meeting. This is the announcement email 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 via email. This is the discussion email list.
- You may receive notification that the newsletter is online. This is the newsletter email list.
- **You may receive weekly reminders about in person and Zoom worship and First Day School via a new email list.** This is the worship reminder list.

To join any of these email lists above, please email the office at [atlantaquakers@gmail.com](mailto:atlantaquakers@gmail.com)

To join the meeting's Facebook group, search for Atlanta Friends Meeting & click the + **Join Group** button.

#### Do you need a directory, printed or electronic?

Email [atlantaquakers@gmail.com](mailto:atlantaquakers@gmail.com) or call 404-377-2474

#### 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! Place a financial contribution in the slot marked "Contributions" in the greeting area of the Meetinghouse or mail to our mailing address. Donate online at [atlantaquakers.org/contact.htm](http://atlantaquakers.org/contact.htm) with a credit card or paypal. Sign up to volunteer on Sunday morning, at <http://tinyurl.com/afmvolunteers>. Contact the Nominating Committee to serve on a committee. Thanks!

**Want to submit an announcement, letter, article, etc to the newsletter?** Email [atquakerltr@gmail.com](mailto:atquakerltr@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.  
Views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily that of the Meeting.*