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Report to SAYMA on Anti-Racism Work by Atlanta Friends Meeting, July 2020 - Feb. 2021

During this critical period, Atlanta Friends Meeting (AFM) has recommitted to uprooting systemic racism and white supremacy both externally and internally. We have seen broader participation in anti-racism work among Atlanta Friends at the Meeting, committee, and individual levels.

Pandemic Response: In response to racial disparities during the pandemic, Quakers for Racial Equality (QRE) and the Social Concerns Committee supported local Black-led organizations and others providing direct assistance and/or working for racial justice. Atlanta Friends Meeting also approved a Minute urging legislators to focus on access to healthcare, the disparate effects of COVID on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, and a global ceasefire.

Black Lives Matter Movement: In the wake of racist killings of Black people, Atlanta Friends Meeting approved a statement on the homepage of its website [supporting Black Lives Matter](#) and approved the [AFM Anti-Racism Minute](#). The Committee on Undoing Racism in Atlanta Friends Meeting (CURAFM) provided Black Lives Matter signs, and a great many AFM Friends participated in wide range of racial justice activities

Engagement and support opportunities: Quakers for Racial Equality, the Committee on Undoing Racism in Atlanta Friends Meeting, a new book group, and the Atlanta Friends of Color group have offered frequent ways to engage about racism:

- “Let’s Talk about Race” (a brave space to talk about race weekly July-Sept. 2020, monthly since then)
- Virtual Literature Table on Racism (weekly) and Listening Ear for Concerns about Racism (monthly)
- Quakers for Racial Equality meetings (monthly -including topics such as Gullah Geechee culture, Right Relations with Indigenous Peoples, Voting Rights, Criminal Justice Reform, and Stolen Wealth Returns (grassroots reparations)
- AFM book group on works by and about People of Color (monthly - read 6 books plus poetry in 7 months.)
- Atlanta Friends of Color group (supported each other virtually and collaborated with various committees on anti-racism work)
- A number of AFM Friends also participated in the *Me & White Supremacy* book study group and many Friends took part in the “Listening 4 Justice” interactive course led by Folami Prescott Adams.

Social Concerns Committee projects: Social Concerns Committee members had an extensive Get Out the Vote project making and donating large banners to be used by non-partisan groups working in Black and Latinx neighborhoods or along public transportation lines in underserved areas. They also worked with groups such as Restorative Justice Advocates of Georgia, End Money Bail, End New Jim Crow Action Group, and Uplifting People on criminal justice reform or assisting people transitioning back into society after incarceration.

Hospitality for immigrants and asylum seekers: In the past seven months, Atlanta Friends Meeting Friend-in-Residence Anton Flores-Maisonet and his spouse, Charlotte Flores, have offered temporary housing/hospitality to over 90 guests from 30 counties at the meetinghouse as the guests transition from detention or seek asylum. More than 20 AFM households as well as volunteers from Casa Alterna and elsewhere have helped.

Other Committee and Ad Hoc Group work on Institutional racism: Following up on a successful workshop on “Addressing Racism Among Friends,” the Committee on Undoing Racism in Atlanta Friends Meeting (CURAFM) has encouraged all other committees to work on dismantling institutional racism.

- **Ministry and Worship held a forum on queries** about openness to different forms of vocal ministry and about having a clear process for addressing racist incidents or institutional racism.
- **Ministry and Worship also initiated an Ad Hoc group with Friends of Color, QRE, and CURAFM to plan two forums on Reparations and Right Relations in February and May of 2021.** The first forum on Feb. 28, 2021 focused on history, with guest panelists Dr. Joseph Reidy, Dr. K. Melchor Quick Hall, and Dr. Althea

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Sumpter, with moderator, Herb Edwards. The May forum will focus on policy, truth, and reconciliation models.

- **An Ad Hoc Anti-Racist Policies and Procedures group has been formed** with representatives from CURAFM, QRE, Friends of Color, Administration, Ministry & Worship, Care & Counsel, and Religious Education. The purpose of this Ad Hoc group is to develop and publicize policies and procedures to address racial bias and institutional racism and to proactively promote equity in Atlanta Friends Meeting. The first priority is development of appropriate policies / procedures to clarify who to contact and what procedures to follow if racial discrimination or a racist incident occurs. This Ad Hoc group will also review existing AFM policies on inclusive hiring of employees and contractors or service providers. Policies and procedures must be vetted by Friends of Color.

Response to the assault on the U.S. Capitol: Members of the Social Concerns Committee, Friends of Color, and Quakers for Racial Equality drafted a [Minute on Hatred, Racist Violence, and Domestic Terrorism](#), which was approved by Atlanta Friends Meeting on Feb. 21, 2021. A direct link is on the Atlanta Friends Meeting home page.

We recognize that our efforts for racial equity, whether in our country or in our own Meeting, must be constant, and that there is much more we need to do. We look to the rest of 2021 with renewed commitment to working for racial justice.

See below for a full version of this report:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TWVVqmK0EomXh2qihEmx8Gff83UAVXpb/view?usp=sharing>