



Atlanta Friends Meeting

Guide for Sunday Volunteers

Originally compiled by Care and Counsel Committee 2007
Updated March 2025

It takes many hands to make Sundays run smoothly, and we are grateful for our volunteers!

You provide so many joyous hands when help is needed – to greet attenders at the door with a welcoming smile as they come to worship; to provide care for the smallest of our attenders in the nursery; to help in First Day School as a Doorkeeper; to set up refreshments (coffee, tea, juice) as we break after that hour of sitting in expectant silence; to clean up after the hubbub of hospitality; and contribute to the success of our monthly potluck lunch. Thank you a million times over!

This booklet is intended as a handy reference for Sunday Volunteers. It describes each of the positions and its responsibilities.

Volunteering is not restricted to a particular age or length of time in the Meeting. We welcome help from young people and newcomers. In fact, volunteering is an excellent way to meet members of the meeting and learn about them and their spiritual journeys.

If you have questions, please contact the Office Coordinator at atlantaquakers@gmail.com or 404-377-2474.

GREETERS

Before Worshipers Arrive

- Arrive by 9:30 a.m.
- Delegate who will be at front door, at greeting table, or at main doors to Meeting Room.
- Put out name tag rolling bulletin board stored at the far end of the greeting room)
- Put on your name tag.
- Look around and see if anything needs to be tidied up. Make sure there are enough name tag stickers; extra stickers should be in small file cabinet under greeting table. Check on Meeting Room set-up.

As Worshipers Arrive

- At 9:40 or when Greeting Room gets noisy, close main Meeting Room doors. Re-open main doors temporarily for those who need easier access to the Meeting room than the soundlock allows..
- Be welcoming when people arrive—smile, shake hands if you'd like! Include children in your welcome.
- Encourage quiet; speak softly; and if needed, say that people are beginning to worship.
- Remind those setting up coffee/potluck to speak softly.
- Offer people Assisted Listening Devices if needed. Instructions are with the devices.
- Let people know there is a smaller meeting for worship in the library for those who'd like a more intimate experience.
- As of 2024, masks are not required but are available for those who would like them.

Greeting Newcomers

- Welcome all newcomers equally, and let them know we are glad they are here. (See FGC's guide for Greeting Diverse Newcomers on the next page.)
- Avoid making assumptions about who may be new to Quakerism based on their appearance.
- Show everyone where they can make a temporary name tag or request a permanent name tag.
- Give them a Welcome Brochure which has more information about AFM or one of the flyers that explain Quaker worship and testimonies from the table by the front door.
- If they have children, direct those with babies to the nursery (through the doors to the restrooms), or tell them that First Day School begins at 10:15 for older children, though children can go directly to First Day School as well.
- If Meeting Room doors are closed, direct them to the small side door entrance to the Meeting Room. Reopen main doors temporarily for those that would find that easier than the side door.

9:55 to 10:15

- Remain outside the Meeting Room till 10:15.
- Direct latecomers to the small side door.
- Monitor the noise volume of people in greeting area.
- Collect announcement sheets located on the table by the front door.
- Open doors at 10:15 to let children out to go to class. Enter thru the sound door to listen first to make sure no one is speaking, then close doors again.
- Choose which Greeter will remain outside for the remainder of meeting for worship to be welcoming and helpful to latecomers and to monitor noise. Other Greeters may join meeting for worship (one needs to stay close to the doors). The person staying outside may wear an Assisted Listening Device to hear what is happening in Meeting for Worship.

At Rise of Meeting

- At Rise of Meeting, remain at doors with the announcement sheets. If anyone is worshipping in the library, inform them that meeting has risen.
- Person closing meeting will identify the Greeters and mention that they have the announcement sheets.
- **UPDATE: Leave doors closed until announcements are over so everyone can hear.**
- Stand at doors and hand out announcement sheets

Thank you for volunteering!

Transforming Quaker Welcoming

Advice for Greeting Diverse Newcomers

As we engage with newcomers, let's approach them with an open heart and mind, asking questions that invite them to share their experiences and build relationships.

If you're an older Friend encountering a young adult:

Avoid saying

- Our meeting needs more young people.
- Are you new here?

Say instead

- Glad to meet you.
- I don't believe we've met. I'm Susan.

Why it matters?

- Everyone likes to be seen as an individual in their wholeness, not as a token member of a group.
- The younger Friend may have been worshipping with you for years; you just hadn't noticed.

If you're a Friend of European descent encountering a person of African descent:

Avoid saying

- This must have been a very different kind of service than the ones you're used to.

Say instead

- How did you experience the worship this morning?

Why it matters?

- The person of African descent might be, for example, a Quaker from another meeting — or from any number of other backgrounds. The open-ended question invites the possibility of a conversation about your shared experience of worship.

If you're a more able-bodied Friend approaching a person in a wheelchair:

Avoid saying

How can I help you?

Say instead

- May I grab you a cup of coffee? I'd love a chance to chat with you, if you'd like.

Why it matters?

- The initial question focuses on a disability. The other is helpful, but says, "I'd like to talk with you, but I can understand if you have another agenda."

If you're a politically progressive Quaker making an announcement:

Avoid saying

- We are circulating a petition to recall the governor over his anti-union activities. I know that as Quakers, you are all with me on this, so please sign it at the rise of meeting.

Say instead

- I believe that supporting unions strengthens our democracy. I have a petition to recall the governor because of his anti-union policies, and I invite people to talk to me about it at the rise of meeting.

Why it matters?

- Our civil society needs full participation of all citizens, and our Meetings benefit from a diversity of political opinions.

If you're connecting across class differences:

Avoid saying

- What is your major, or Where did you go to college?
- What do you do for a living?

Instead say:

- So tell me about yourself. What interests/excites you/makes you curious these days?
- What brings you here?

Why it matters?

- Not everyone's adult life trajectory matches yours. 30% of Americans have a college degree. Some people choose to join a skilled trade.
- Many people who work in the service industry are proud of their contribution.

Welcoming a person whose gender is not readily apparent to a Friend:

Avoid saying

- Hi, we have a very active lesbian community in our meeting. Let me introduce you to Beth.

Say instead

- Hi, my name's Jack, what's yours?

Why it matters?

- You cannot tell someone's sexual orientation or gender based on their appearance. Making assumptions emphasizes a perceived "otherness" or difference rather than the whole person.

When in doubt, remember to:

- Introduce yourself
- Make friends.
- Be interested.
- Reach out.
- Respect Boundaries.
- Ask open-ended questions like "Hi! I'm _____. How was meeting for you?"

Recreated from an FGC flyer, which was adapted with permission from the Unitarian Universalist Association,

POTLUCK SET-UP

- Arrive at 9:15 am.
- **See more detailed instructions in kitchen.**
- *Please be aware that those with pace makers, etc, should not be around the new induction stove when it's on.*
- If needed, set up three conference-type tables in the Greeting Room, end-to-end to receive food dishes, plus one under the windows between the Meeting Room and the patio door for desserts.
- There should already be a table to the left of the kitchen pass-through window (for juice and coffee cups).
- Follow **Coffee Instructions in the kitchen to make a pot of coffee and a pot of hot water.**
- Put out coffee cups, paper cups, sugar, sugar substitute, tea bags, spoons for stirring, receptacles for discarded spoons and tea bags, cream substitute. All these go on the table near the kitchen pass-through window.
- Put out flatware (in their containers) and napkins on the end of the three conference tables nearest the patio doors.
- Put out stacks of plates (at least 60) on the other end of the tables.
- Hot pads and serving utensils should be scattered on the tables near the plates.
- Try to do all this before 10:00 am, so that the noise does not bother worshipers. Also TRY to keep down the noise from people bringing in their dishes.
- If needed, turn on convection oven to keep food warm, using the directions on the wall behind the stove.
- In general, the order of dishes is:
 - On main conference tables left to right facing Meeting Room:
 - Hot casseroles
 - Salads, cold dishes
 - Bread, chips
 - On table near patio
 - All desserts
 - Sometimes fruits are considered dessert, sometimes main dish. Use your discretion.
 - On table near kitchen
 - Beverages
- As dishes come in, place them in their proper place, or if they need to be kept hot, put them in the oven. Don't forget to take them out at 11:15 or so! If dishes have to be kept cold, try to fit them in the refrigerator. If items need slicing, slice them.
- At 11:15, take off plastic wrap, covers, etc. (Keep lids and covers near food if possible. If not, put lids together in the kitchen.) Remove from oven or refrigerator, place on tables. Place serving utensils in or near each dish. If applicable, stick a label (vegetarian, vegan, etc) in dish.

Thank you for volunteering!

POTLUCK CLEAN-UP

General Instructions

- Eat your meal promptly and start your work right away.
 - Plan to stay a little later than usual, if necessary, to finish cleaning up.
 - Organize the kitchen to receive dirty dishes. Assign volunteers to wash, rinse, dry. Plastic wash bins and extra detergent may be under the sink.
 - A wash bin with hot soapy water to receive dirty (but scraped) dishes,
 - A sink of hot soapy water to wash dishes in
 - A sink (or two) of hot water to rinse dishes in
 - A rack to place clean dishes in
 - Wash the Meeting's plates, cups, glasses and cutlery, rinse them, dry them, and put them away.
 - Work with set-up people to remove completed dishes from the serving tables.
 - Keep the juice table in order.
 - As potluck ends, wipe off the eating and serving tables and recruit attenders to fold them up and put them away in the Meeting Room closet, plastic tables on top.
 - Clean the Meeting's coffee pots, serving dishes, and utensils.
 - Wash any serving dishes not picked up and put them together in one corner of the kitchen.
 - If necessary, vacuum the Meeting Room, sweep the Greeting Area, and mop around the juice table.
 - Be sure the chairs and benches in the Meeting Room are back to the arrangement in the diagram on the door to the closet where the tables are stored, using the tape marks on the carpet.
 - Make sure the kitchen is in order, all the counters clean, dishes put away, towels and washcloths on top of the washing machine (sliding door next to classroom B) for washing, etc.
 - Take out the trash. (The dumpster is in the parking lot.)
 - Put recyclables in the labeled container in the kitchen, but if it is overflowing, transfer items to the bins on the patio towards the playground.
 - Glass recyclables go directly to red bin on the patio.
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- **Thank you for volunteering!**

Walking through the door: A guide to Doorkeeping in First Day School.

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

--Jerome W. Berryman, Teaching Godly Play

Who is a Doorkeeper?

Friends who

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

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

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

Sage: “Yes.”

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

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

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

Anna: “I need a drink.”

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

The unspoken story the Doorkeeper is sharing is:

- You are safe, you are respected, you are trusted, your voice and work are valued, you are important to us
- This is a special place, it is different than the place you just came from
- This story is important and it is for everybody

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

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

Thank you for volunteering!