

Atlanta Friends Meeting Newsletter

Atlanta Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). All are welcome.

Meeting for Worship
Each First Day (Sunday)
10:00 -11:00 a.m.
701 W. Howard Ave.
Decatur, GA 30030
404-377-2474
afmquakers@hotmail.com

July 2008

Query:

Does the spirit of our worship, the very spring and source of dynamic living, flow into our listening, really listening, to that of God in others as we share hurt and pain, joy and thankfulness, anger and frustration? Are we always sensitively aware of the tender feelings of those friends on the fringe? - **Australia Yearly Meeting Epistle, 1975**

Advice:

To 'listen another's soul into a condition of disclosure and discovery may be almost the greatest service that any human being ever performs for another...For in penetrating to what is involved in listening do we not disclose the thinness of the filament that separates people listening openly to one another and that of God intently listening to each soul?"

Douglas Steere, Where Words Come From

Submitted by Mary Ann Downey Member of Ministry and Worship Committee

"Be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations wherever you come; that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people, and to them; then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in everyone; whereby in them you may be a blessing, and make the witness of God in them to bless you." - *George Fox*

Yes, the quotation is quite famous and used today for environmental support. But, are we as the Religious Society of Friends good examples? Are we cheerful in our Meetings for Worship?

Recently, a serious attender at Atlanta Friends Meeting gently confronted me about how unhappy the Meeting felt. I could understand even though the messages for the worship were not the usual "ain't it awful" variety.

These messages, when given, slop over into Holding in the Light when the troubles of the person seem to be unbearable. Naming the person is sufficient for the Spirit to hear.

A few weeks earlier a first time visitor observed that the Meeting for Worship appeared similar to an Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting with personal testimonies and a Higher Power.

I'll admit that the picture that I, and perhaps many others, have of Quakers is that of a very serious and staid group. Today we live in very traumatic times. Maybe not as traumatic as the possibility of going to prison for our religious practice.

May we come to Meeting as children in happy expectation for the Spirit within us and among us to help us walk cheerfully in our daily lives.

- *Submitted by Perry Treadwell*

Clerk of the Meeting
Steve Collins

Assistant Clerk of the Meeting
Georgia Lord

Recording Clerk
Bill Holland

Treasurer
Pete McCaughan

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Care & Counsel
Dwight Harriman

Ministry & Worship
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John Adams &
Folami Prescott-Adams

Social Concerns
Julia Parker Ewen

Newsletter Editor
Stoph Hallward

Young Friends Coordinator
Laura Norlin

Office Coordinator
Jonah McDonald

Young Adult Friends' Conference
Living as Friends, Listening Within
Richmond, Indiana
May 23-26, 2008

Dear Friends Everywhere,

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.” - Romans 12:2 NRSV

In worship, in small groups, in conversation, we have been transformed. Friends affirmed their love for one another again and again. The act of coming together physically was a first step to enacting loving unity. We are hungry for connection and growth in grace with one another, and the healing of our divisions. We heard sermons and joined voices in song. Friends had opportunities to experience and participate in unfamiliar forms of worship. We felt the support of seasoned Friends who provided pastoral care and the many Friends that held the gathering in prayer.

Formal small groups gathered every day for checking in and more personal discussion of the challenges and joys of the conference. Small informal groups treasured free time where we found the space to address other concerns. These informal discussions created a foundation for the depth at which we arrived in worship. Earlham School of Religion professors, students, and alumni led workshops, while conference participants held interest groups on various topics. On Sunday, participants could choose between programmed (First Friends), semi-programmed (West Richmond) or unprogrammed (Clear Creek) worship in the community.

In Spirit-led worship we found that Friends spoke to the necessity of continuing in conversations about our similarities and differences. Friends were asked before the conference to consider the cultural norms of others present, and whether certain choices may impact our ability to find common ground. We began exploring scripture together in workshops, Bible study and programmed worship. This invited new challenges and opportunities to engage with texts important to the experience of Friends. We were reminded by Mark Walker that living in unity as a Religious Society of Friends will make us more effective in our work in the world. The discernment of corporate and individual leadings is one of the obligations we have to one another as a Society. We hear the need to acknowledge diverse leadings, such as Gospel, traveling, vocal, and eldering ministries. Recording these gifts is one way of making individuals and meetings accountable to leadings.

Friends heard a call to find ways to share the good news that has been revealed to us at this gathering. We strive to carry this light with us when we return to our home meetings and churches. We have invited one another to our respective yearly gatherings and to explore ways of opening our spiritual homes. May we share with the world the light and love that was a presence at this gathering.

In peace,

The YAF Conference Participants

Dear AFM Friends:

I read recently in the minutes from the AFM Business Meeting that there was some discussion about whether membership should be granted to someone who does not live in Atlanta, since distance would limit their direct participation. I am writing to emphasize how important membership at a distance can be.

First, it is really significant that I was reading those minutes, given that it will be 11 years in August since I moved away from Atlanta and from the Atlanta Friends Meeting. I am truly thankful for the email versions of the weekly announcements and monthly newsletter. I read both regularly and with envy, wishing I could be there for many of the events.

There are probably many of you now who don't know me. I attended the Meeting from 1984 until 1997, when I moved to Colorado to marry my husband, Tom Webb. I became a member of the Meeting in 1995, and believe that my membership is still active. During my years in Atlanta, I served on Ministry and Worship, Finance, and Administration committees and clerked the Landscape Committee when the building was new and we had no more than hard-scraped red clay to work with.

My direct participation in the Meeting over the past 11 years has been limited to occasional financial donations and a visit or two to Meeting for Worship. But my membership has been much more than that. It is something that I cherish, and do not want to give up even though after searching many faith communities (the closest unprogrammed Friends Meeting is very small and 40 miles away), my husband and I are finally settling in to a non-traditional Disciples of Christ Church. As much as we feel connected to that church, I will not apply for membership there because I want to maintain my membership in AFM.

The most active connection I have with Quakers is through the American Friends Service Committee; I currently co-clerk the Central Region Executive Committee. Beyond that, in ways that are very difficult to explain, it is really important to me to maintain my membership in the Atlanta Friends Meeting as my major tie to the larger Quaker community.

To me, being a part of the Quaker community is not a matter of meeting under the same roof on First Day, or being on a million committees or cleaning the Meeting House and yard. It is a spiritual connection that helps to ground our shared sense of values and efforts to embody the testimonies in our lives. I took a long time to become a member, but when I did, it was a public statement of my commitment to live Quaker values. I may not be physically present in Atlanta, or living those values through involvement with the meeting, but I strive to have my life embody Quaker values. My current work as the Executive Director of a Child Advocacy Center, serving children who have been physically or sexually abused, is one embodiment of that commitment.

Tom and I carried our AFM connection with us in March of this year when we renewed our marriage vows at our current church. We brought with us the marriage certificate from our marriage in the manner of Friends that was conducted at AFM on March 21, 1998. Upon seeing that certificate, our new church created a similar certificate to commemorate our tenth wedding anniversary. They were quite impressed with the Quaker custom of marriage certificates, and I would not be surprised to see that custom spreading to our new church.

I am relieved that membership was granted to the college student who requested it. I hope this will encourage further connections between AFM and Friends at a distance.

Ellen Cooney

Pueblo West, CO ekcooney@earthlink.net

Announcements

Adult First Day for July

Erika Fitz will offer her spiritual journey on 7/6 and Bert Skellie on 8/3. For July, we will be reading and discussing Thomas Kelly's **Testament of Devotion**. Books for available from Bill Holland and all are welcome to meet with us in the Library from 9-9:50.

Friends General Conference News

Planning has begun for the 2009 Gathering of the Friends General Conference

(FGC), and a Gathering Committee has been formed. The first meeting of this committee was held in May, and three more meetings are planned prior to the 2009 FGC gathering, which will be held in Blacksburg, Virginia. For more information on how you to participate in one of the Gathering subcommittees, please send an email to gathering@fgcquaker.org or go to www.fgcquaker.org/gathering.

Thank You Notes

Atlanta Friends Meeting recently received thank you notes for contributions we made to The Friends School of Atlanta and Quaker House (Fayetteville, NC).

Requests for Donations

The Meeting has also received has also requests from two Quaker groups – one in Virginia and one in Kenya – asking Friends to consider donating to help build new Meeting houses. The Blacksburg (Virginia) Friends Meeting (www.blacksburgfriends.org) may break ground soon on their new Meeting house, and the Friends Church in Nairobi, Kenya (quakerk@yahoo.uk) also has ambitious plans for a new center.

FCNL EVENT A GREAT SUCCESS

Honors were abundant at the Meetinghouse recently. Atlanta was honored to welcome Joe Volk, Exec. Secretary of the Friends Committee on National Legislation, as he spoke to a large crowd about how he shows legislators ways to find common ground and take practical, positive steps to reduce the threat of war and create a just and secure society in America.

He also honored Jack Honderd for his expert advice on renovating the FCNL office building in Washington, DC as the first "green" building on Capitol Hill.

Those of us who receive the weekly "Action Alerts" from Kathy Guthrie were delighted to meet her in person. She played a different role that evening, however, as she joined Joe Volk in honoring her brother, Tim Ralston, as project manager for the building renovation.

Check out the FCNL website to learn more about this Quaker initiative on Capitol Hill: www.fcnl.org (submitted by Sue May)

Volunteer to help with Meeting-Supported Voter Registration & Gentrification Education Project

The East End Neighbors Voter Registration and Gentrification Education Project needs volunteers in July, August and September most Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday evenings from 6 to 8:30 PM. Most opportunities will be at the Faith Center of Greater Piney Grove Baptist Church, 1879 Glenwood Ave., S.E., Atlanta, GA 30316 (about 3 miles south of the Meetinghouse). Please come out and join us for a brief instruction followed by 1 – 2 hours of canvassing in the neighborhood. We will go out in pairs to register voters and connect folks with resources to help them if they are having trouble paying their taxes or their mortgage. The Meeting has supported this project through a grant of \$6,000 from the Social Concerns Fund. East End Neighbors has engaged a "dream team" of three consultants to help organize this effort. Pastor Melody Johnson is a community organizer with years of experience working in the neighborhood. John Fortuin is a resident of the area who is an activist for making our votes count and has excellent computer skills. Vernetta Nuriddin has led many voter registration drives. Austin Wattles and Bert Skellie serve on the Steering Committee for the project, along with two other residents of the area. Contact Bert at bertskellie@gmail.com or 404-378-5883 for more details and to let us know when you will come.



AFM Young Friends Program

The AFM Young Friends Program provides activities and retreats to youth grades 3rd-12th, helping our youth grow in Quaker community, learn about Quaker process and leadership, and experience deep fellowship. The program endeavors to help the meeting nurture the gifts of our youth, and finds the gifts of our youth to be integral to the life of our meeting. Young Friends Program Coordinator Laura Norlin helps organize and plan activities and retreats, and assists the 12-18 year old teens of the Meeting in attending eight Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) retreats a year around the southeast. Laura has recently accepted a two-year term co-clerkship of the yearly meeting adult SAYF Steering Committee that she already sits on as AFM youth coordinator. Three AFM teens, Alise Trapp, Samantha Tippin, and Nia McCalla, are on the yearly meeting's Nurturing Committee of SAYF teen. These committees work jointly to serve the SAYF program.

Young Friends Program Spring 2008

AFM Young Friends had several Young Friends Program activities this spring. The teens enjoyed visiting Nashville Friends Meeting and Hard Labor State Park/Athens Friends Meeting for two weekend retreats with SAYF. In March, the teens had a Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business to plan upcoming events and learn about Quaker process together. The 3-6th graders enjoyed their own Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, ate mac-n-cheese and brainstormed great ideas. Young Friends from 3rd grade to 12th grade volunteered for an Earth Day cleaning up on Dekalb AVE and Adair Street/Park, with help of many adult Friends. Youth from the program also visited the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) to learn about this amazing organization, its programs, and how youth can be involved. Many AFM Young Friends are excited to visit AFSC more, and we plan to have future volunteer and educational activities with AFSC.

In June a dozen teens from Atlanta went to SAYMA Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting for a four day SAYF retreat, and had time with their peers and with Friends of all ages during the weekend. Many attended the annual piano concert workshop by AFM's Richard Allen, and hope he will offer it next year! Along with Friends of all ages, the teens of AFM enjoyed a talent show, and the mountain views at Warren Wilson College where yearly meeting took place.

Friendly Adult Presences (FAPs)

Thanks to all those adults who helped this spring with transportation and who were Friendly Adult Presences at these activities and retreats. Training on becoming a Friendly Adult Presence (FAP) will be offered early August. We will discuss the ways to be a great FAP, the application process, and prepare for upcoming activities and retreats at AFM and in the southeast. For information contact Young Friends Program Coordinator Laura Norlin, norlila@earlham.edu, home 404-762-3540, or cell 865-806-3226.

August Newsletter: Watch for the next article on the Young Friends Program activities and retreats for the fall, including a meeting for worship to honor our wonderful AFM Seniors of 2008.

Atlanta Friends Meeting Meeting for Worship with an Attention to Business As Recorded Pending Approval June 15, 2008

Daphne Clement read the query submitted by William Holland, member of Ministry and Worship Committee: "Do not assume that vocal ministry is never to be your part. Faithfulness and sincerity speaking, even if briefly, may open the way to fuller ministry from others. Pray that your ministry may arise from deep experience, and trust that words will be given to you. Do you come to meeting prepared to speak or not to speak?"

In attendance: Don Bender, Daphne Clement, Susan Firestone, Nina Gooch, Roland Heath, Suzan Kenworthy, Tom Kenworthy, Harry Lefever Georgia Lord, Adrienne N. Lowe, Hannah MacDermont, Pete McCaughan, Renda McCaughan, Henry Slack, Jim Tolmach, Myrna Trapp, Perry Treadwell.

1. **Approval of Minutes of Fifth Month Meeting for Worship with an Attention to Business. Minute 08-06-01**
Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the minutes for Meeting for Business with an Attention to Business of Fifth Month, 2008 with an amendment

2. **Ministry and Worship.** Suzan Kenworthy reported the preliminary recommendation for membership of Beth Martinson.

She also reported that a clearness committee has met with Jonah McDonald and Dana Goldman regarding their request to be married under the care of the meeting. This was reported with a preliminary recommendation for marriage under the care of the Meeting.

There have been 3 requests for scholarships to FGC and 7 requests for scholarships to SAYMA. All were approved for a total cost of \$1795.

A forum on Quakers and Money was announced for July 27, 2008. Don Bender is coordinating this forum.

A correction to the April, 2008 is needed. They do not record that Morgan McDonnell was presented with a preliminary recommendation for membership. She was approved for membership in May, 2008 as recorded.

3. **Treasurer.** Pete McCaughan reported that May contributions continued to be below our 5 year average. He had to shift funds from savings to checking to meet expenses. In our year to date the meeting carries a deficit of \$22,074.30.

Minute 08-06-02 Atlanta Friends Meeting accepts the Treasurers report of May 30, 2008.

4. **Nominating Committee**

The Nominating Committee announces Karen Morris as nursery liaison to the RE Committee; Folami Adams as liaison between RE and Nominating; the lead teachers are also on the RE Committee.

Jennie Foster will join Care and Counsel.

Minute 08-06-03 Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Gina Herring to be the lead teacher for lower elementary

Minute 08-06-04 Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Terri O'Neil to be the lead teacher for upper elementary

Minute 08-06-05 Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Jennifer Dickie to be the lead teacher for junior high

Minute 08-06-06 Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Maggie Hasbrouk-Lay to continue as the lead teacher for senior high

Isabel Werber was brought forward as co-clerk of Hospitality

It was announced that we need someone to be representative to Decatur Co-operative Ministries. The main task is to organize meals and overnight care at Hagar's House twice a year and to share news of what is going on with the Co-operative Ministry.

5. **Administration Committee:** The Administration Committee has hired Jonah McDonald as the Office Coordinator. He began work on 6-4-08. Karen Morris and Renda McCaughan have helped to orient him, including writing up a work plan. Jonah's hours are 9-12, Monday through Friday and once a month, an hour after Meeting for Worship. He also attends the monthly Administration Committee meetings and takes minutes. When we made the job offer we knew that Jonah had already arranged for a backpacking trip to take place beginning in late June and lasting for 6 weeks. During the period that he is away, Ceal Wutka will serve as a paid substitute for him. Thanks to both of them for helping in this important position.

6. **Young Friends Program:** A complete quarterly report is attached to the minutes. The following is a summary of some of the highlights: On March 14-16 there was a SAYF Retreat on the theme of the environment at Nashville Friends Meeting with 7 Young Friends (YF) and 2 Friendly Adult Presences (FAPS). On March 23 there was a Meeting with an Attention to Business to plan program activities for spring and summer, 2008 with 5 YFs and 2 FAPs. On March 30th there was a 3-6 Grade Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business with 4 YF's and 2 FAP's

There was a SAYF retreat on April 18-20 at Hard Labor State Park which included a presentation on AFSC and High School military recruitment by AFM attender Christina Repoly. There were 12 YF's and 5 FAP's in attendance. On April 26th Grades 3-12 and families participated in an Earth Day Trash Clean Up. After the clean up, which was joined by some neighborhood kids near Adair Park, Dan May led the group in a discussion about reducing, reusing and recycling. There were 7 YF's and 7 FAP's.

On May 4th there was a 3-12 Grade Field Trip to AFSC to learn about its program and history. There were 3 YF's and 2 FAP's.

Respectfully Submitted

Georgia Lord, Asst. Clerk

Don Bender, substitute Recording Clerk

Calendar for Seventh Month, 2008

Area Meetings for Worship

Every First Day, 10:00 a.m.— In the Meeting Room and a small meeting in the Library.

Every First Day, 2:30 p.m.— Friends Community Worship Group, Call M.J. Robinson, 678-217-4098.

Every 2nd and 4th First Day, 10:00 a.m. — Canton Friends Worship Group, 360 E. Marietta St, Canton, 770-720-4669 or wrldeas@mindspring.com.

Every Fifth Day, 12:10 p.m.— First Thursdays at AFSC office, 92 Piedmont Ave., Atlanta 30303, other Thursdays at East Lake Commons, 404-378-5883 or bertskellie@gmail.com.

Every Sixth Day, 8:45 a.m.— Friends School of Atlanta, 121 Sams Street, Decatur, 404-373-8746.

Weekly Events

Every First Day (Sunday)

9:00 Adult Religious Education

9:15 Singing, Classroom

10:00 Meetings for Worship

Every Third Day (Tuesday)

7:30 Silent Meditation, Meeting Room

7:00 Bible Study, Library

Every Fourth Day (Wednesday)

7:30 ORAIHARH (*childcare available*)

Every Sixth Day (Friday)

12:00 Vigil at Colony Square

Other Events

7/1, Third Day (Tuesday)

8:30-12:30 Smart Toddlers, Nursery/playground

7/2, Fourth Day (Wednesday)

8:30-12:30 Smart Toddlers, Nursery/playground

7:30-10:00 Administration Committee, Library

7/3, Fifth Day (Thursday)

7:30-9:00 Meeting for Peace, Library

7/6, First Day (Sunday)

11:15- Potluck

11:15-1:30 Green Friends, AB

7/7, Second Day (Monday)

7:00-10:00 Spiritual Nurture Group, Mtg. Room

7/10, Fifth Day (Thursday)

7:30-9:30 Social Concerns Cmte, Library

7:00-9:00 Action Planning for Death Penalty Abolition Meeting, Teen Jr. High Room

7/12, Seventh Day (Saturday)

10:00-2:00 AFGE, Library

7/13, First Day (Sunday)

11:15 Listening Ear, Atrium

11:30-2:00 Care and Counsel, Jr. Teen Room

11:30-1:30 Ministry and Worship, AB

11:45-1:30 Finance Committee, Library

7/14, Second Day (Monday)

7:30-9:00 Meeting for Healing, Teen Jr. High Room

7:00-9:30 Present Moment Awareness Center, AB

7/17, Fifth Day (Thursday)

7:00-9:45 Teaching in Silence, Meeting Room

7:00-9:00 Friendly Adult Presence (FAP) Training, AB

7/18, Sixth Day (Friday)

6:00 Newcomer's Welcome dinner at Steve McLaughlin and Meredith Reynolds' home. 404-683-3096

/ 678-596-6386

Newsletter Deadline

7/19, Seventh Day (Saturday)

10:00-1:00 FAP Training, Meeting Room, Kitchen

7/20, First Day (Sunday)

11:45-2:00 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, Meeting Room (*childcare available*)

7/21, Second Day (Monday)

7:00-10:00 Spiritual Nurture Group, Mtg. Room

7/24, Fifth Day (Thursday)

6:30-9:30 Green Friends-Decatur Cool Cities, AB

7/26, Sixth Day (Saturday)

10:30-2:00 Democratic Socialist of America, Kitchen / Library

7/27 First Day (Sunday)

11:15 Listening Ear, Atrium

11:30-2:00 Ministry and Worship Cmte, Mtg Rm.

11:45-2:00 Forum – Friends & Money, Meeting Room

7/31, Fifth Day (Thursday)

7:00-9:00 Young Friends Planning Meeting, Library

Please confirm unique events by checking the announcements sheets and or contacting the Meeting.

Special Announcement:

Jonah McDonald has accepted the position as Office Coordinator, providing 20 hrs/wk of administrative supportive to the Meeting.

Atlanta Friends Meeting
701 West Howard Avenue
Decatur, GA 30030-2902
Phone: 404-377-2474

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING

701 West Howard Avenue, Decatur, GA 30030

Clerk: Steve Collins, 404-687-8715; shcollins75@hotmail.com

Treasurer: Pete McCaughan, 770-730-0872; afmtreasurer@yahoo.com

Newsletter Editor: Stoph Hallward, 703-946-0229; grasstoe@gmail.com

Office: Hours M-W-F 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; E-mail address: afmquakers@hotmail.com

NAMETAGS: If you would like to have a permanent nametag made, leave a request in one of the baskets on the front table. Indicate whether you prefer one that hangs around the neck or that pins. When Carol Gray has made one for you, it will be placed in the black file box on the greeting table.

If you would like to be included in the AFM database and receive the Newsletter by mail and/or appear in future AFM Directories, please send your name, address, phone, e-mail address, etc to Nina Gooch by e-mail at nina-gooch@mindspring.com or by phone 404-371-9873. Please indicate if you want to be in the directory, receive the newsletter by mail, or both. This also applies to any change in existing database information, e.g. change of address.

To receive the AFM newsletter via e-mail, simply send a blank e-mail to afmnewsletter-subscribe@yahoo.com from the address where you want to receive the newsletter. You will receive a note back from Yahoo asking you to confirm your subscription; simply hit reply and you will be added to the list. There is no subscription fee for the newsletter.

To receive general announcements and participate in discussion, follow the same instructions only address the note to afmdiscussion-subscribe@yahoo.com. To receive announcements relating directly to the life of the meeting, send the same note to afmannouncements-subscribe@yahoo.com.

Contributions to the Atlanta Friends Meeting can be placed in the slot marked "Contributions" in the greeting area of the Meetinghouse, or mailed to the Treasurer at the above address. Thank you!

DEADLINE FOR 8TH MONTH NEWSLETTER: 7TH MONTH 18

Readers are encouraged to submit letters, articles, poetry, calendar notices and anything else of interest to Friends.

Items should be sent directly to:

Stoph Hallward
grasstoe@gmail.com
703-946-0229

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