

Atlanta Friends Meeting Newsletter



Meeting for Worship
Each First Day (Sunday)
10:00 - 11:00 a.m.
701 W. Howard Ave.
Decatur, GA 30030

August 2010

Query: How does my life reflect Friends beliefs?
Do I act on my principles even when this entails difficult consequences?
Reno Monthly Meeting

Quaker History Raises Questions For Today contributed by Susan Firestone

What can we learn from reading about Quaker efforts to end enslavement among Friends? How does this history relate to issues we face today? I considered questions like these in reading the first chapter of *Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship: Quakers, African Americans, and the Myth of Racial Justice* by Vanessa Julye and Donna McDaniel.

According to *Fit for Freedom*, in the 1780s, Friends became the 1st and only denomination in the American colonies to free itself from enslaving Africans, but it took a century to do so. In the 1700s, many Friends of European descent were involved in or benefitted from the enslavement economy although it violated their religious teachings. For example, William Penn enslaved Africans; wealthy Friends in Rhode Island were involved in the trade; Friends owned half of the enslaved people in Pennsylvania, and the Carolina Friends enslaved large numbers of people.

Friends' perspectives toward enslavement in the 1700s ranged from accepting it without question to believing that Christians should not enslave people. George Fox had not spoken directly against slavery, except to suggest that Quakers of European descent could let their enslaved people go free after a period of years, to not let formerly enslaved people go away empty-handed, and to preach the Gospel to blacks and Native Americans. However, Friends who worked to end enslavement believed that it was against God's will, a corruption of Quaker practices, against the peace testimony, and against the testimony of simplicity.

Friends who were vocal opponents of slavery were often in the minority in the 1700s, but there were courageous leaders among them. In 1676, William Edmundson was the first Friend to say that it was unchristian to enslave Africans. He was followed by 3 Germantown Friends in 1688, who asked their monthly business meeting how Quakers, as Christians, could buy and sell Africans. In the early 1700s, Farmer, Coleman, and Lay protested enslavement to their yearly meetings with mixed results. Benjamin Lay, a former enslaver, was particularly dramatic, standing in his bare feet in the snow to show the condition of enslaved people. The best-known anti-slavery activist was John Woolman, who visited Quaker homes and meetings throughout the colonies in the 1750s, using non-confrontational, one-on-one conversations with enslavers. Other traveling ministers included Patience Brayton, a former enslaver, who traveled throughout the South and to Great Britain, and Sarah Harrison, who traveled to Virginia to speak to enslavers while her husband and others took care of her 10 children. Anthony Benezet wrote and published tracts describing the horrors of slavery and was particularly effective at combining a practical understanding gained from working with African Americans with philosophical arguments against slavery.

As Friends moved toward manumission, the concern for the enslavers' souls sometimes overshadowed the valuing of enslaved people as human beings. However, starting with a minute in 1755 from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Friends moved gradually toward a unified corporate witness against enslavement. By the end of the 1700s, Friends had freed formerly enslaved people in both North and South, and enslavement became an offense punished by disownment. Manumission was difficult because of the need to post a bond assuming financial responsibility. Yet individual Friends went to great lengths to free people, including compensating formerly enslaved Africans for their past labor. Historians have noted that Friends' requirement to end

enslavement and Friends' commitment to make recompense to formerly enslaved people set them apart from other groups.

Several questions come to mind in light of this history. In what ways are we choosing our economic benefits over being truer to our religious principles today? Are European American Friends complacently accepting the status quo in relation to race, for example, not working hard enough against racism in the justice system? Are Friends falling short of envisioning and creating a fully integrated, multicultural Religious Society? How do Friends balance the need for quickly reducing suffering with the slow process of group discernment? How well do we listen to outspoken Friends with strong leadings? When does the committee process become foot dragging? How willing are we to deeply listen to those who have views different from ours? How can we follow in the footsteps of courageous individuals who had an impact on abolishing slavery? When are we motivated by a genuine concern for the humanity and dignity of all people, rather than by self-interest? What are we willing to sacrifice for our values of equality, integrity, community, and peace? What will future Friends think of our actions or inaction 100 years from now?

Announcements

WOMEN'S TIME at CABIN- AUG. 5 TO 10

Meeting women, come join in the fun at AFM's forest/lake retreat on Lake Burton, the Ferguson Cabin, for a relaxed weekend & more- Aug. 5 to 10. There's swimming, sunning, canoeing, hanging out at the dock.....Will the eagle visit this summer?

Then up the hill...sleeping on the big screen porch, in a small cabin, or tenting, sharing food, games, and good conversation throughout. On Sunday after worship a short hike to a new spot, the Coleman River area, up a beautiful mountain stream with waterfalls is planned. Several plan to stay til Tuesday. For cool mornings bring warm clothes, bedding, flashlight, & food...much is shared...big potluck Saturday night.

Contact Joan Thompson with questions & for carpooling - 404-273-3489.

The AFM Social Concerns Committee invites Friends to please join us on First Day, Sept. 26, 11:45am for a special Social Concerns Gathering: **"MANY CAUSES, ONE SPIRIT:**

EXPLORING A NEW WAY FORWARD"

The event is being planned as a celebration of Quaker activism across a broad spectrum of Social Justice, Community Concern and Environmental Stewardship issues, with a focus toward finding new and effective strategies for outreach and personal involvement among Friends. A central feature of the event will be an opportunity for several of our activist Atlanta Friends to share their passion for their favorite causes and their

personal experiences in supporting them. To keep the program informative and entertaining, all of the Active Concern talks will be formatted as 6 minute (maximum) "elevator chat" presentations with support from handouts, computer visuals and other media.

Offers of Active Concern presentations will be accepted and vetted through First Day, Sept. 19th. Friends who want to share a presentation on their cause should please contact Aaron Ruscetta to discuss details, get help with organizing materials or schedule a review. Phone: 404.315.0406 (10a -10p most any day)Email: <arxaaron@gmail.com>

To volunteer your help at the event or share ideas as we finalize the Social Concerns Gathering activities, please contact the event coordinator, John Roberts Phone: 404.377.2474
Email: <jdr325@comcast.net>

Adult First Day School

On Sunday, August 1, Georgia Lord will tell us about her spiritual journey. For the rest of the month we will discuss the book, *An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith* by Barbara Brown Taylor. This is a book on practice-centered spirituality and each chapter explores a different practice. Books are available from Bill Holland and class meets each Sunday in the library from 9:00-9:50. All are welcome.

Clerk of the Meeting Georgia Lord	Finance Paul Mangelsdorf 770-677-4280	Religious Education Mary Jahntz 404-627-7699	Office Coordinator Jonah McDonald
Assistant Clerk of the Mtg Bill Holland 404-692-2358	Care & Counsel Dwight Harriman 404-226-1232	Newsletter Editor Perry Treadwell	Friend in Residence John Roberts 917-902-3719
Recording Clerk Caroline Noyes 770-452-0736	Ministry & Worship Suzan Kenworthy 770-493-6878	Social Concerns Julia Parker Ewen 404-534-3043 John Adams 404-755-6481	Web Master Aaron Ruscotta arxaaron@gmail.com
Treasurer Meredith Reynolds			

The sixth World Conference of Friends will be held in Kabarak, Kenya, August 21-28, 2012. Around 1,000 Friends will gather on the campus of Kabarak University to consider the theme “Being salt and Light: Friends living the Kingdom of God in a broken world”. This is a rare opportunity to meet and worship with Friends from many different countries and different Quaker traditions. There will be lots of singing, inspirational speakers, sharing groups, programmed and unprogrammed worship, Bible study, and a mid-week excursion. Opportunities to visit local meetings and other Kenyan attractions will be available before and after the conference. World conferences are organized by Friends World Committee for Consultation and will occur at irregular intervals of about 5 years.

SAYMA is allowed to send up to 4 delegates to the 2012 gathering. Friends interested in applying to go as SAYMA delegates should first seek clearness through their monthly meeting. Then you will need to write a letter to the Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee which expresses your interest in making and maintaining connections with Quakers of different traditions around the world and how you might share your experience with the Yearly Meeting and its constituent meetings. Delegates will be chosen by the Nominating Committee with an emphasis on diversity in age, gender and experience among Friends. Delegates should request financial support from their local meetings and explore other ways to finance the trip, but ability to pay will not be a factor in selecting delegates. SAYMA has a fund which will be used to support delegates as needed, but it will only be sufficient to cover the full cost of sending two people unless supplemented by additional sources.

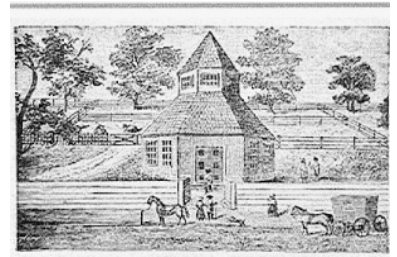
Applications should be sent to Dennis Gregg for the Nominating Committee (or to me clerk@sayma.org, and I will forward them). Applications are due by fall Representative Meeting (Sept 11, 2010). The cost of the conference (including room and board and mid-week excursion) is \$850. I estimate transportation costs to be about \$2000 from Atlanta. In addition to delegates selected by yearly meetings, other “Open Places” will be available to all Friends beginning in January 2011. Applications for these slots will go through the FWCC World Office in London. More information about the World Conference is available on the FWCC web sites www.fwccamericas.org and www.saltandlight2010.org. I have had several wonderful experiences attending FWCC events, including a Section of the Americas meeting in Guatemala and a Triennial in Ireland. The planners do an excellent job of providing participants with necessary information and insuring that your trip is safe and pleasant. I urge anyone with an interest in the wider Quaker community to consider if you might be called to go to the 2012 World Conference. Tim Lamm, Berea Monthly Meeting

A little History

When the AFM Meeting House was being designed, the architect, Geddes Dowling, wanted to design it after the round Pantheon in Rome, the great domed hall with oculus made even more famous in *The Da Vinci Code*. Construction of something rounded was going to be too expensive so the building committee compromised by cutting the corners, literally. This also allowed an opportunity to create a “sound lock” for people to enter after worship had begun.

Nevertheless, this building was not the first to cut corners. The first Friends Meeting House in Burlington, New Jersey, built between 1683 and 1692, holds that honor in this country. Burlington Quarter records the

history: “In 1677, some 200 Quakers left England for the religious freedom of America. More than one third of those originally purchasing land in Burlington had been fined or imprisoned for their beliefs in England. Even as their ship, the Kent, sailed down the Thames River, King Charles II boarded it from his royal barge and wished them a safe voyage. As the King’s own laws led to much of the abuse the Quakers received in England, today this is seen as a polite ‘good riddance.’ The Friends came to West Jersey, the southern half of what is today New Jersey, and founded the town of Burlington . . . Five years later, in 1681, the first Yearly Meetings of Friends on the Delaware River began in Burlington.”



Summer First Day School Program

The Religious Education Committee would like to extend its thanks to all those people and committees that spent time teaching First Day School this summer. Teaching about the work of Meeting committees through hands on lessons and stories we hope gives children a sense of the work of the larger community. Classes this summer included Ecology and juggling with Henry Slack, Nominating and Fundraising with Folami Adams, Ministry and Worship with Heather Jeziorowski, FCNL with Sue May, Friendly 8's refugee group with Beth Ensign, AFM-Committee for Undoing Racism with Susan Firestone and Karen Morris, Green Friends with Pat Williams, and Care and Council with Dwight Harriman. Other members of committees and parents also helped in these classes and we wish to thank them as well.

Fall First Day School

The AFM First Day School program will begin again August 15th. This year's theme is Quaker Worship and Practice: I Belong. All grade levels will be exploring what it means to worship in the manner of Friends. We will have time to practice in our classes and with the larger Meeting several times throughout the year. Additional Quaker practices that we will learn about include Meeting for Worship with attention to business, Clearness, Committee work, programmed vs. unprogrammed worship and others.

The Religious Education Committee invites members and attenders to share their experience of worship and preparing for worship with young friends of all ages. If you feel a leading to assist one time or more this year, please contact the clerk of RE Mary Jahntz 404-627-7699, maryjahntz@comcast.net.

No First Day School August 29

The fifth First Day of August (29th) there will be no First Day School for Preschool through High School. The nursery will operate as usual. On this First Day we invite families to worship together in the large Meeting. Children of all ages are invited to stay in Meeting practicing being still and listening for as long as they are able. Classrooms A&B will be set up for families to continue worshiping when children are no longer able to be still in the big Meeting.

Overheard

70 year old: “When you get to my age anything goes.”

80 year old: “When you get to my age everything goes!”

Atlanta Friends Meeting
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
7th Month 18, 2010
Recorded Pending Approval

Georgia Lord presented the Query: “Are you a dutiful citizen—informing yourself of current issues, voting, expressing your views to those in authority, and discharging jury duty—in all things keeping foremost the leading of the Spirit? Do you work for penal reform and abolition of the death penalty?”

In attendance were: Hillary Brown, Steve Collins, Mary Ann Downey, Julia P. Ewen, Judith Greenberg, Bill Holland, Mary Jahntz, Elizabeth Lamb, Lynn Leuszler, Sally MacEwen, Steve McLaughlin, Ron Nuse, Lissa Place, Margie Rece, Meredith Reynolds, John Roberts, Aaron Ruscetta, Peter Sederberg, Bert Skellie, Karen Skellie, Kirsten Smith, Myrna Trapp, Perry Treadwell, Caroline Noyes (Recording Clerk), Georgia Lord (Clerk), (25 Friends).

Treasurer’s report: Meredith Reynolds reported that at the end of the second quarter of the year, we are running a deficit of \$16,545 compared to a deficit of only \$11,801 at this point in 2009. Contributions (\$42,371) are down compared to 2009 (\$49,000) while rental income and expenses are on target. Because we are halfway through the year and total income currently represents only 36.3% of the budget, contributions need to increase in order to meet the budget. One strategy being considered is a fundraising letter of appeal in the fourth quarter.

Religious Education: Mary Jahntz reported that Chip Gooding and Elizabeth Valero are laying down their work in the lower elementary and preschool classes.

Minute 10-07-01: Atlanta Friends Meeting expresses its appreciation to Elizabeth Valera and Chip Gooding for their services as teachers in our First Day School program.

Planning for the next school year has begun, and the theme this coming year is Quaker Worship and Practice: I Belong. Attention will be paid to deepening young Friends’ practice of worship, and their sense of belonging within the meeting. On August 29th, families will be invited to worship with the larger community to help them deepen their family experience with worship.

The Religious Education Committee has formed an ad hoc committee to work with other committees concerning child safety issues. Every teacher this year will have the background check, and there are safety measures in place to ensure that in a windowless room a child is never alone with an adult. The ad hoc committee will also work with other committees to address the issue of playground safety.

Nominating Committee: Steve Collins reported that Nominating Committee is seeking two Religious Education teachers, and Clerks for the Young Friends Support Committee and the Gathered Meeting Retreat. On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Steve brought forth Beth Ruddiman to serve as Atlanta Friends Meeting’s Decatur Emergency Assistance Ministry (DEAM) contact, with final approval to be sought in 8th Month. Additionally, Steve sought final approval Karen Morris for Personnel Liaison and Bill Holland for Assistant Clerk of Atlanta Friends Meeting

Minute 10-07-02: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Karen Morris as Personnel Liaison.

Minute 10-07-03: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Bill Holland as Assistant Clerk of Atlanta Friends Meeting.

Ministry & Worship: Lynn Leuszler announced two upcoming forums. On August 29th, at the rise of Meeting there will be a forum on Silence and Speech, and on September 11, Atlanta Friends Meeting will host a speaker from the Earlham School of Religion.

Gathered Meeting Retreat: Ron Nuse provided a summary of the 2010 Gathered Meeting Retreat. The theme was Tending Our Spiritual Gardens and 27 Friends participated at the Retreat, held March 26-28 at the Charlie Elliott Conference Center. Christina Repoley and Mary Ann Downey served as facilitators, and Bill Holland served as their support. The weekend included various activities such as singing, hiking, and acting. While a new Clerk for the Committee is being sought, Denny Webster, Lissa Place, and Caroline Morris are leading the planning for the 2011 Gathered Meeting Retreat.

Clerk's items: Georgia Lord invites Friends to give feedback on the practice of holding worship on the 1st Sunday in June in Adair Park. Additionally, the Social Concerns Forum in late September will have a component that addresses the various ways that Friends address social concerns in their daily lives (e.g., prison visitation, political outreach, food bank work, etc.). The Social Concerns Committee is looking for volunteers willing to briefly share their experiences with these kinds of activities.

Approval of Minutes of Sixth Month Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business:

Minute 10-07-04: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the minutes of Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business of Sixth Month with corrections.

Meeting closed with silent worship.

Respectfully Submitted,

Georgia Lord, Clerk

Caroline Noyes, Recording Clerk

The sense of the Meeting is that the quality of our worship is noticeably strengthened when Friends arrive on time. We appreciate that this is sometimes difficult to do and recognize any extra efforts Friends make to adhere to this discipline on behalf of our community.

“Mystical experience is *not* the goal. To focus on “having one” would be a form of grasping. Mystical experiences happen, or they don’t.” From *Putting Away Childish Things* a novel by Marcus Borg p133

“Life is a pinball game in which we bounce and graze through a gauntlet of chutes and bumpers. Perhaps our history of collisions and near misses explains what made us what we are.” Steven Pinker in *The Blank Slate* p 396

Ah, love let us be true
To one another! For the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight.
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

Dover Beach by Matthew Arnold, 1870

“Pardon Me thou Bleeding Piece of Earth
That I am Meek and Gentle with these Butchers.”
Julius Caesar, III I, Antony to the dead Caesar.
Does this also fit the human destruction of the
Earth?

Calendar for Eighth Month 2010

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, 12:30 p.m. — Carrollton Friends Worship Group, St. Andrew United Methodist Youth Center, 1106 Maple St, Carrollton, lessell.bray@gmail.com or 770-830-8705.

Every 2nd and 4th First Day, 10:00 a.m. — Canton Friends Worship Group, 360 E. Marietta St, Canton, 12:00 p.m. Contact Marty Bray for more information: 770-830-8705 or lessell.bray@ gmail.com

Every Fifth Day, 12:10 p.m.— First Thursdays at AFSC office, 189A Sams Street, Decatur, GA, 30030.,

Every other Thursday at East Lake Commons, 404-378-5883 or bertskellie@gmail.com.

Every Sixth Day, 8:45 a.m.— Friends School of Atlanta, 862 Columbia Drive, Decatur, GA 30030, 404-373-8746. Beginning again August 13.

Mon-Fri Morning Worship, 8:30 – 9:00: In the library at Atlanta Friends Meetinghouse. Contact Jonah McDonald, 404-377-2474, afmquakers@hotmail.com

Weekly Events

Every First Day (Sunday)

9:00 Adult Religious Education

9:15 Singing, Classroom A/B

10:00 Meetings for Worship

Every Week Day (Monday – Friday)

8:30-9:00 Morning Silent Worship, Library

Every Second-Fifth Day (Monday-Thursday)

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

Every Third Day (Tuesday)

7:30pm Silent Meditation, Meeting Room

7:30pm Bible Study, Library

Every Fourth Day (Wednesday)

7:00-8:30 Mid-Week Semi-Programmed Worship Mt. Rm

Other Events

8/1, First Day, (Sunday) Potluck

11:30-2:00 Green Friends, A&B

8/3, Third Day, (Tuesday)

7:00-9:00 Silent Meditation, Meeting Room

8/4, Fourth Day (Wednesday)

6:45-9:45 Administration Committee, Library

8/5, Fifth Day, (Thursday)

7:30-9:00 Meeting for Peace, Jr. High Rm

8/8, First Day, (Sunday)

11:45-2:00 Finance, Library

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

11:45-2:00 Ministry & Worship, A&B

11:45-2:00 Religious Ed, Nursery

8/11, Forth Day, (Wednesday)

7:00-9:30 ORAIARH, Library

8/12, Fifth Day, (Thursday)

6:45-9:00 Social Concerns Meeting, Library

8/15, First Day (Sunday)

11:45 Meeting for Business

8/18, Fourth Day (Wednesday)

Newcomers Dinner, place to be announced

8/20, Sixth Day, (Friday) Deadline for 9th Month newsletter

8/21, Seventh Day (Saturday)

9:00 am - 3:30 pm CURAFM + ORAIARH

joint meeting Library

8/22, First Day, (Sunday)

11:45-1:45 CUR-AFM Forum, Library

8/28, Saturday (Seventy Day)

12:30-4:00 Climate Action Meet Up, Meeting

Room, Greeting Room, Kitchen

8/29, First Day (Sunday)

11:45-1:45 Silence & Speech Forum, Mt Rm

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

Georgia Lord 770-934-7523: Georgia_Lord@mindspring.com

Treasurer: Meredith Reynolds, 404-683-3096: afmtreasurer@yahoo.com

Newsletter Editor, 404-325-1504, perryt@bellsouth.net

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 ninagooch@gmail.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 AFM newsletter notices via e-mail, simply send a blank e-mail to afmnewsletter-subscribe@yahoogroups.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@yahoogroups.com. To receive announcements relating directly to the life of the meeting, send the same note to afmannouncements-subscribe@yahoogroups.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 9TH Month newsletter: 8th Month 20
Readers are encouraged to submit letters, articles, poetry, calendar notices and anything else of interest to Friends. Items should be sent directly to: Perry Treadwell perryt@bellsouth.net 404-325-1504 preferably in plain text in the body of the email.

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