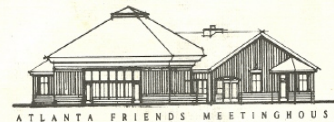


Atlanta Friends Meeting Newsletter

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

December 2010

Query: “Do you foster reverence for life, finding ways to understand and remove the causes of misery and suffering? Do you in loving concern, stand with the abused and persecuted without fanning the flames of hatred and division? Do you offer support, refuge and comfort to the oppressed and ostracized while extending a loving hand to those who engage in oppression, calling them into loving unity?” SAYMA Faith and Practice Queries



AN INSPIRING ENCOUNTER contributed by Alex Horsley

A few weeks ago I was privileged to spend two hours in the home of Kancha Ilaiah, a person who made an enormous impression of me and deeply enriched my spiritual being. First let me explain how it is I came to meet such a person.

I had been invited to spend time in India working for the Aga Khan Academies who are in the process of establishing schools in several parts of the world. (Note: The Aga Khan is the spiritual leader of the Ismaili sect of Islam, a small but very progressive branch of Islam which is not recognized by most Muslims.) These Academies are designed to offer a “means-blind” education to worthy children from all over their respective countries and help them develop into leaders of their countries with a genuine world perspective. The schools will all be dual language using English and the local national language, and will offer International Baccalaureate programs. As my fields are dual language education and the IB I have been engaged on an ongoing basis for these academies to help set up their programs. So far only one school, in Mombasa, Kenya, is up and running with a dual language English-Kiswahili program.

The next school will open in 2011 in Hyderabad, India and we are currently developing language and IB programs there. Problems relating to language in India have been endemic since independence in 1948, sometimes resulting in violent rioting. The problem centers on the central government’s 1968 decision to mandate a so-called “Three Language Policy” across a country in which there are over 1,000 languages spoken. This requires all schools to teach Hindi (the “national language”), English and a local language. The problem is that Hindi is not spoken at all across much of the south and east of the country, and there is widespread opposition to its imposition. In Hyderabad, the main local language is Telugu, spoken by about 50% of residents, with significant minorities speaking Urdu (33%) and Hindi (12%).

Our first task, therefore, was to decide which language to use as the second language of instruction of the school alongside English. When my colleagues in Hyderabad were researching local sources they contacted Kancha Ilaiah to see if we could meet with him, and he agreed, inviting us to come to his home for tea. Before going there I googled him and was able to peruse two of the books for which he is most famous: *Why I am not a Hindu* and *Post-Hindu India*. To say the least, these two books are controversial in a country racked with religious divisions. However, the reason for which we wanted to meet with him is that he is also well known for his advocacy of using English as the language of instruction in Indian schools.

Kancha Ilaiah was born into an extremely low caste Hindu family in a rural part of southern India. His family eked out a living as shepherds, and he had no formal schooling until the age of 12. When he was finally able to gain some access to education (in Telugu) he toiled long and hard and finally earned his PhD. Along the way he came to understand the iniquities of the Hindu caste system, and has spent much of his professional life trying to find a means to break down and eliminate the system from India. As he admits, it will be a long and arduous task, with attendant dangers. Indeed he has been the target of many death threats from Hindu nationalists. (Continued on page 3)

Announcements

Hello to AFM, I am writing from Napa California where I am visiting for several weeks with my children and new baby, Gus before coming back east to my new home in Durham Maine, where I will be the pastor of the Durham Friends Meeting. Established in the 1780's DFM is the largest & oldest Meeting in the area. It is semi-programed. I will carry the community here at Atlanta Friends Meeting with me in Spirit.

Also, to anyone who travels up to New England as far as So ME, please, stop in and if you have time to stay a while, I have plenty of room. My new email is

Hi friends,

Here's a news story you might want to read. One of our new Friends here, from the Limerick Meeting, is the mother of one of the members of a couple quoted in the article about the Equal Love campaign in Britain. Talk about a variant on the "mother of the bride" business: Anne's very excited that her son Ian and his partner Kristin will be turned away from the registry office this week, because in England gay couples can't marry and straight ones can't be domestic partners. She's giddy! the only problem that I can see in the whole business is that she doesn't get to wear a MOB, or is that MOP, dress. Now that's discrimination.

Rick and I went to a very interesting talk at the Meeting House this evening, from a guy who has spent a lot of time in Gaza and working on behalf of Palestinians. He's from the Galway Meeting, which has a huge membership of about 3 people. Any of you who want to move over here, come ahead.

Love, Meg

DIRECTORY DRAFT AND PHOTOS

A draft of next year's directory will be available in

the greeting room during December and January for you to check your information. Look under the window by the patio or on the greeting table. Please check your information even if nothing has changed. Typos sometimes sneak into the computer! If you would like to add a photo to the directory, please email it to Nina Gooch at ninagooch AT gmail DOT com or look for Nina after meeting in December and January to have your picture taken. If you will not be able to check your information at the meeting house, please email Nina or call or at 404-371-9873. If you have questions after the directory or photos, please let Nina know.

Movie Nights

Are You Interested In Helping The Meeting Host Movie Nights? Pitching in to help greet those attending, set up and tidy up the meeting room, facilitate the discussion, pop the popcorn, and select the movies? We have almost all the equipment needed and will be ready to proceed as soon as we know that there will be 2-4 people available to staff each event. If you are interested, please contact Georgia Lord, H 770/934-7523.

Save the Date for the Next **Gathered Meeting Retreat** the first weekend of March 2011 at the Charlie Elliot Retreat Center Pat Loring of Friendships Meeting , Greensboro, N.C., author of Listening Spiritually will be our retreat leader. Look for Registration Material and more details in January.

Please donate to El Sitio Higher Education Fund

I encourage you to donate to the El Sitio scholarship fund for supporting youth in El Salvador as they seek higher education. Our

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Office Coordinator
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John Roberts
917-902-3719

Friends Carol & Frank Cummings helped connect our Meeting to a refugee resettlement village in El Salvador in 1991, and we continue to have a sister community relationship with El Sitio Cenícero. I visited El Sitio in 2001 for their 10th anniversary as a community. I appreciate having this connection to a group of people who live more like the majority of the world. I appreciate Frank's ongoing work, and I'm happy to be able to support the youth in a positive alternative to heading north to work for the U.S. minimum wage.

We especially encourage pledges of 3-5 years, since that's the amount of time it takes for advanced education. We welcome any amount – please write checks to “Atlanta Friends Meeting,” “El Sitio Fund.” from Bert Skellie, bertskellie@gmail.com or 404-378-5883.

Adult Religious Education in December

Dwight Harriman will offer the story of his spiritual journey Dec. 5. During the rest of December, we will read and discuss the book, *Soul of a Citizen: Living with Conviction in Challenging Times*, by Paul Loeb. *Soul of a Citizen* is "the handbook for budding social activists, veteran organizers and anybody who wants to make a change in the world around them." Topics include: Making our Lives Count, We Don't have to be Saints, and Coping with Burnout. Copies of the book are available from Bill Holland and the class meets in the library every Sunday from 9:00-0:50. All are welcome.

AN INSPIRING ENCOUNTER continued)

What I found inspiring about him was both his lifestyle and his spirituality, although, of course, these are deeply intermingled. As a highly successful college professor and author he could have easily become a part of a rapidly-growing upper-middle class India. However, he chooses to live in inner city Hyderabad in a run-down apartment block, with no elevator and no air-conditioning. He talked at length about his spiritual journey, describing himself as a kind of Indian deist. His work to abolish the caste system comes from the twin roots of spirituality and desire for justice and equality. The fact that all this sounds distinctly “quakerish” is the reason why I was so taken by his testimonies. After I met Kancha Ilaiah I went to my (somewhat luxurious) hotel where I had about two hours before my evening meeting. I had intended to use the time to do some report-writing, but found myself unable to do anything but reflect upon what I had just experienced. I was able to do something that I have often sought, but never really accomplished – a personal Meeting for Worship in which I could sense the Spirit in me giving me support and encouragement in the knowledge that people like Kancha Ilaiah can really make a difference in our violent and challenging world.

Two Sisters – How Place of Birth Changed their Destinies By Priscilla Padrón

One sister was born in Mexico just before her mother came to the United States; the other in the U.S. Both are good students. Both grew up mainly in DeKalb County.

But there the differences stop and fate takes over. Supported by scholarships and grants that pay her way, Elena, who prefers not to use her real name, attends a prestigious women's college. She graduates this year and plans to go on to law school. Bubbly and extroverted, Elena is positioned for a superb career and leadership roles, which she already practices in her position as vice president of the college's Latina organization.

Elena's older sister, María, who also prefers anonymity, has been struggling to attend a community college, where her progress is slowed by work to pay out-of-state tuition. As an undocumented immigrant, she is not a legal resident of Georgia, even though she graduated from a local school; full-time enrollment for non-resident students costs a shocking \$4,638 per semester. With the recent Board of Regents decision to prevent undocumented students from attending many Georgia colleges, her chances of finishing are further dimmed, as are her chances of getting a legal job.

Stress and distraction stray her from the path to success her younger sister has been able to navigate.

When the state legislature reconvenes, lawmakers plan to introduce a bill to bar undocumented students from all public colleges -- the 35 institutions in the University System of Georgia and the 26 in the Technical College System of Georgia.*

Their case illustrates the urgent need to pass The DREAM Act and make it the law of the land.
What is The Dream Act?

The Development, Relief and Education of Alien Minors Act, called the DREAM Act, was introduced to the 111th Congress in March of 2009 as S. 729 and H.R. 1751. It would give individuals who meet certain requirements a chance to enlist in the military or go to college and to pursue a path to citizenship.** The ability of these young people to contribute to the economic growth of the country and to attain self-sufficiency depends largely on their ability to further their education. To qualify for the current version of the DREAM Act, students must have entered the United States before the age of 16 (i.e. 15 and younger) have been present in the United States for at least five (5) consecutive years prior to enactment of the bill have graduated from a United States high school, or have obtained a GED, or have been accepted into an institution of higher education (i.e. college/university) be between the ages of 12 and 35, and have good moral character. Keep your eyes open for more information from FCNL.org.

*AJC, Wednesday, October 13, 2010: "Regents ban illegal immigrants from some Ga. colleges"
<http://www.ajc.com/news/regents-ban-illegal-immigrants-680750.html>

Speaking Truth "We slipped into this country like thieves, onto the land that once was ours." from *The Madonnas of Echo Park* p 1, by Brando Skyhorse 2010

GAVE GROCERIES!

Many thanks to everyone who donated to the October food drive for the Decatur Emergency Assistance Ministry. While we collect throughout the year for DEAM, they ask us to make an extra effort in October. And, we really came through!

Here is a breakdown of our donation: 59 cans of soups, fruits and vegetables; 35 packages of pasta and rice; 14 boxes of cornbread and muffin mix; 13 boxes of cereal; 12 packages of beans and peas; 6 containers of almond milk; 4 packages of coffee and tea bags; 3 containers of spaghetti sauce; 2 packages of macaroni and cheese; 2 packages of Jell-O; 1 bottle of juice; 3 bottles of Ensure; 12 full-size bars of soap and many travel-size bars; 4 packages of toilet paper; 1 tote bag; 1 toothbrush and 1 tube of toothpaste.

Twenty-three faith groups support DEAM, which provides non-perishable food, rent assistance, utility assistance and prescription medication assistance to those who qualify. The main DEAM number is (404) 373-2300. The DEAM locations are:

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, 515 East Ponce de Leon Avenue (across from Glennwood Academy), Decatur Hours: Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 9 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

First Baptist Church of Avondale Estates, 47 Covington Road, Avondale Estates Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Beth Ruddiman Representative to DEAM

P.S. Special thanks to Nina Gooch for helping to deliver food to the DEAM pantry.

Sandra Beer, former member and clerk of AFM, wrote the editor recently to let us know that she was on CNN with an interview about her new energy efficient, module home she had built. Come visit. New address: 217 Bradleys Crossing Rd, East Chatham, NY 12060 Same phones: 518-392-1971 home / 518-929-8663 (cell...and I now have texting). Video below.

<http://www.cnn.com/video/data/2.0/video/bestoftv/2010/11/17/exp.am.eco.friendly.housing.cnn.html>

Atlanta Friends Meeting
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
11th Month 15, 2010
Recorded Pending Approval

Georgia Lord presented the query: “Do you cherish your F(f)riendships, so that they grow in depth, understanding, and mutual respect ?” (Philip Gulley) She also shared the Pacific Yearly Meeting’s Advice and Query on “The Meeting Community.”

In attendance were: Muireann Brennan, Steve Collins, Lili Crymes, Julia Ewen, Nina Gooch, Judith Greenberg, Kathy Johnson, Suzan Kenworthy, Tom Kenworthy, Lynn Leuszler, Sally MacEwen, Paul Mangelsdorf, Alison Mawle, Karen terHorst Morris, Laura Norlin, Ronald Nuse, Lissa Place, Free Polazzo, Marguerite Rece, John Roberts, MarthaJane Robinson, Aaron Ruscetta, Bert Skellie, Karen Skellie, Jim Tolmach, Myrna Trapp, Perry Treadwell, Cecilia Wutka, Caroline Noyes (Recording Clerk), Georgia Lord (Clerk) (30 Friends)

SAYMA Faith & Practice: Atlanta Friends Meeting examined and offered comments on the proposed revisions to the SAYMA Guide to our Faith & our Practice monograph. Each paragraph was read and commented on, and our comments and concerns will be submitted to SAYMA. Atlanta Friends Meeting approves each of the following minutes:

Minute 11-21-01: Education: The first sentence in paragraph four should be examined for sentence structure; and in the sentence “...advocates for schooling that reflects Friends values...” ‘Friends’ should have an apostrophe indicating plural possessive.

Minute 11-21-02: Harmony with Nature: Our meeting cannot unite around the language proposed for paragraph two. There is particular disquiet regarding the statement concerning birth control. We agree that Friends should be mindful that our manner of living, including the rate of overpopulation and overconsumption, has distinct consequences for our planet. We encourage the committee to labor further with this section.

Additionally, in paragraph four, our meeting recommends that the first sentence be removed, and the second sentence modified to read: “Friends adopt a variety of approaches....”

Minute 11-21-03: Meeting for Threshing: In the first paragraph, a grammatical error should be corrected to the following: ‘Friends believe that the Light is accessible and within each of us; thus, they....’ Additionally, our meeting cannot unite around the guidelines as currently drafted, and encourage the committee to further refine the Guidelines for Threshing Meetings. We offer some suggestions for consideration (to be attached to submission). For example, in guideline #6, the meaning of word “elder” needs to be elaborated on and clarified.

Quaker Quest: Sally MacEwen sought approval for the formation of an ad hoc committee to examine issues related to Atlanta Friends Meeting outreach activities, and Quaker Quest, an FGC-sponsored Quaker outreach program in particular. The committee will be comprised of MJ Robinson, Susan Firestone, Bert Skellie, Karen Morris, and Sally MacEwen (Clerk), as well as others who wish to participate. This committee will host a forum on Quaker Quest in February, and if there is sufficient interest in this program, representatives of the program will be invited to Atlanta. The fee for bringing the Quaker Quest representative will be covered through the Committee on Undoing Racism and donations. Inviting Quaker Quest representatives to make a formal presentation does not commit Atlanta Friends Meeting to using Quaker Quest.

Minute 11-21-04: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the formation of an ad hoc committee to examine Quaker Quest and outreach in general.

Social Concerns: on behalf of the Social Concerns Committee, Bert Skellie presented the proposed Social Concerns Committee budget for 2011, with only minor modifications from 2010 to 2011.

Nominating: on behalf of Nominating Committee, Steve Collins presented initial nominations for members on three committees. Final approval for these nominations will be sought in 12th Month.

Ferguson Cabin Stewards Committee: Mike Aland, John Carpentier (Clerk), Sally Mykel Carpentier, Emmett Fuller, Melanie Fuller, Kathy Johnson, Caroline Morris, Fred Stevens, Joan Thompson (scheduler).

Ministry & Worship: MarthaJane Robinson, Jenny Foster, Ron Nuse, Steve Collins

Social Concerns: John Roberts (co-clerk) and Al Natanagara (co-clerk)

Ministry & Worship: Lynn Leuszler reported on a request of transfer of membership for Anthony Smith to New Brunswick Monthly Meeting. Georgia Lord will draft the letter.

Nina Gooch reported on the status of the AFM Yahoo discussion list. As list manager, Nina is seeking approval for the formation of an ad hoc committee to help her design the guidelines for the discussion list, provide clear definitions, and design a process to follow in case the guidelines are not followed. Nina invites persons interested in serving to contact her, and hopes to bring members of the ad hoc committee forward for approval in 12th Month.

Minute 11-21-05: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the formation of an ad hoc committee for the Atlanta Friends Meeting Yahoo discussion list.

Finance: Paul Mangelsdorf presented the preliminary budget for 2011. Currently, rental income is well above what was budgeted, and both the utility bills and childcare are under budget. Maintenance and building is a cost that has been rising as a result of undertaking deferred maintenance tasks. Under the budget currently drafted, contributions for 2011 will need to be \$123,000 to balance the budget. The final budget proposal will be presented in 12th month.

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

Minute 11-21-06: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the minutes of Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business of Tenth Month with no 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.

Calendar for 12th 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, 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, 60 Walton ST. NW, Atlanta, 10303 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

11:45–2:00 Religious Ed, Nursery

11:30-12:30 Holiday Bazaar, Greeting Rm

12/17, Deadline for 1st Month newsletter

12/18, Newcomers Dinner, place to be announced

12/19, First Day (Sunday)

11:45 Meeting for Worship with attention to business

12/26, First Day (Sunday)

11:45-1:15 CUR-AFM, Jr High Room

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

Other Events

12/2, Fifth Day, (Thursday)

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

12/5, First Day, (Sunday) Potluck

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

12/8, Fourth Day (Wednesday)

7:30-9:30 ORAIARH, library

12/11, Seventh Day (Saturday)

3:38-7:00 Intergenerational Christmas Party

12/12, 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

Watch Night Service & Breakfast 12/31 at 11 PM
On December 31, 1862, Americans of African descent gathered together on “Freedom’s Eve” to await the news that the Emancipation Proclamation had become law. At midnight, according to Lincoln’s promise, all slaves in the Confederate States were legally free. For the last several years, Atlanta Friends have joined in this tradition with a worship service at 11 PM on New Year’s Eve, followed by a potluck breakfast. Please join us this year! For more details, contact Bert Skellie at bertskellie@gmail.com or 404-378-5883.

Atlanta Friends Meeting
701 West Howard Avenue
Decatur, GA 30030-2902
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ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING

701 West Howard Avenue, Decatur, GA 30030

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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 11TH Month newsletter: 10th Month 19

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