

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER



March 2016

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

2015 State of the Meeting Report

This year has been one of deepening and articulating our sense of spiritual community. In the winter and spring we held two forums on vocal ministry and our experience of worship. This has allowed the meeting to continue to talk about our personal understanding of worship. Our meeting retreat was also on the experience of worship. This year our meeting has deepened and re-affirmed our support for Quaker Voluntary Service. We received three membership requests from long time attenders, had two members transfer their membership to AFM, and held three weddings under the care of the meeting. Our young adults have continued to meet monthly together and our young Friends join us for the first fifteen minutes of worship more regularly. Our worship has continued to flourish and enrich our community. We are grateful for the experience and conversations that have arisen from this year's worship. We realize that many volunteers contribute to the work of community building that our committees do.

Care & Counsel Committee continued to focus on ways to help build and maintain a community that unites all in the Meeting in a shared spiritual life expressed in caring for each other. To let AFM participants know what type of help is available and to encourage Friends to ask for assistance when needed, we published the guidelines for the Assistance Fund for Members and Attenders. In addition, we reached out to newcomers and visitors by having a person meet with them in the library after Meeting for Worship to answer questions. Caring for the Meeting community has also meant assisting individuals with ongoing concerns, remembering Friends in memorial services, continuing our attention to Conscious Aging/Mindful Dying, and sponsoring a celebration of legal marriage equality for same gender couples. Most importantly, we want the community to know that the work of Care & Counsel is love, peace, caring for one another, and lifting one another up.

The Nominating Committee was able to fill nearly 20 committee positions this past year. Most of these were matched with long time members and attenders, as it is sometimes challenging to

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

QUERY

Do I faithfully attend meeting with heart and mind prepared for worship, clear of any predetermination to speak or not to speak, and expecting that worship will be a source of strength and guidance? Does worship deepen my relationship with God, increase my faithfulness, and refresh and renew my daily life, both inwardly and in my relationship with others?

– *Philadelphia Yearly Meeting*

“A query is like a burr under the saddle of the soul.” -

A Quaker Book of Wisdom,
Robert Lawrence Smit

find younger people who are willing to serve. We will continue to search for and encourage younger Friends, as we know this is important to the vitality of the whole meeting and our future. We also asked for and received changes to the AFM Handbook job descriptions of Meeting committees and descriptions, which will be updated on the website. This had last been done in 2011. Nominating also sponsored a job fair, so that interested F/friends could learn more about positions and committees and what they do.

Much needed repairs and renovations to the Meetinghouse began with the repair and restoration of the sprinkler system, new carpeting in the Meeting Room and Library, and new Library furniture. Painting and repair of the library walls and ceiling made for a more comfortable and pleasing space. Major 2016 permanent improvements were prioritized and planned. Workdays were held to maintain the Meeting grounds, including clearing and mulching the vacant lot adjacent to the playground; the Meeting was also surveyed on potential uses for the lot. A new composting system was created, thereby helping to reduce Meeting waste. New parking signs and spaces for physically challenged Friends were installed. The Meeting continued to welcome outside renters, approving new long-term rentals and developing a new rental rate chart. The new personnel liaison joined the Administration committee, a revised custodial task checklist was created for the custodian, additional Sunday childcare was approved, and revisions to the Friend in Residence job description were approved. The creation of a search committee led to the selection of a new Friend in Residence for 2016. Everything that was accomplished in 2015 was made possible by the willing volunteer efforts of so many Meeting members and attenders.

Through the Quakers for Racial Equality group, AFM acts on an ongoing commitment to live our testimony of equality, which compels us to address racism in ourselves, our communities, and in society, especially in the criminal justice system. Quakers for Racial Equality (QRE) engaged the Meeting and Yearly Meeting through workshops, video/discussions, and personal reflections to queries about dismantling racism. At AFM, we've also offered a weekly literature table and a monthly Listening Ear for concerns about racism. We have initiated networking among Friends from Yearly Meeting and Friends General Conference who are working against racism within Friends' institutions and in the nation. QRE and other AFM Friends are involved in our communities addressing racial profiling by police, holding vigils, offering creative conflict resolution workshops, and countering systemic racism in the criminal justice system, housing, and schools. AFM and QRE continue to support a sojourning Friend in her ministry to work for racial justice in the criminal justice system with those most negatively impacted by racial inequity. We appreciate the witness of Friends, both here and physically distant, who challenge us to follow our spiritual leadings to stand up for racial equality.

The Library Committee worked throughout the year to align the library's collection more precisely with items that support specific, current Meeting interests and activities, and to do what was necessary for computerizing the library's catalog and its borrowing procedures. Among other things, the new catalog will allow Meetinghouse attendees to conveniently search the library's holdings from their home computers and allow the Library Clerk to keep more accurate records of which items have been borrowed. Dozens of no-longer-needed library items were sold at several Meetinghouse book sales to raise additional funds to replace missing items or to purchase new materials.

Religious Education is in the 2nd year of our three-year teaching cycle. In preparation for this year's New Testament teaching we continued with our practice of meeting for a retreat in July. There we acknowledged that we come to the New Testament from different experiences. Jesus and the New Testament speak to each of us differently. We all resonate with the ideas of listening for newness in the old stories and with helping children to discern Truth. Our commitment to nurturing children to find the divine within and exploring scripture in order to re-discover the stories led to this year's guiding theme:

Nurturing the Light within that we may discover the scripture anew. Led by 14 classroom teachers, we continue to use the guidance of the Godly Play curriculum in our teaching. Each grade grouping has four teachers who share the 4 teaching Sundays each month. We depend on volunteers to sign up to assist teachers with door-keeping on each First Day. The nursery (ages 0-2), has 5 to 10 babies on First Day. The lower grades class, (3 years-1st grade) has 8 to 13 children regularly. The middle grades class, (2nd – 4th grade) has 5-8 children; the upper grades class (5th – 7th grade) has 3-6 each week, and the High school group (8th -12th grade) has 10 or more teens most Sundays.

The Burundi Friends who have become such an integral part of our meeting continue to help us explore how people with different backgrounds and beliefs can come together in one gathered spiritual home. Our community is deepened by the presence of many visitors throughout the year. Atlanta Friends Meeting continues to be a vibrant, supportive community with many opportunities to participate.

Friends School of Atlanta Tours

If you know of anyone who would like to learn more about The Friends School of Atlanta, please let them know about our upcoming tours and open house. Tours are an opportunity for parents to spend two hours on campus, receiving in-depth information about the curriculum and culture of FSA as well as observing classes in session and touring facilities. Please forward this information so more folks can learn about the benefits of the values-driven education, offered in small diverse classes at The Friends School of Atlanta.

Tour Dates are: Pre-K-4th Grade (10:00 am -12:00 pm) March 2, 15; and Grades 5th-8th (9:00 am -11:00 am) March 8, 23. For more information about The Friends School of Atlanta, please visit www.friendschoolatlanta.org or contact Nancy Bent at 404-373-8746 x 8135 or nancy.bent@friendschoolatlanta.org.

Rise Up Again Tour – March 5

The *Rise Up Again* tour comes to the Atlanta Friends Meetinghouse Saturday March 5 at 7:00PM! This singalong concert celebrates the publication of *RISE AGAIN: A GROUP SINGING SONGBOOK* W/ Annie Patterson & Peter Blood, Elise Witt, Joyce Williams and & Jacqueline Howard, and Phyllis Free. The concert will benefit the Global Village Project, a school for teenage refugee girls in Decatur GA, and The Carry It On Fund, a new fund supporting projects that continue the work and mission Pete & Toshi Seeger. Tickets are \$20 in advance /sliding scale at the door <https://www.riseupandsing.org/events/rise-again-atlanta>.

Easter Egg Hunt March 27

Join in the fun tradition of the Meeting's Easter Egg Hunt, March 27 at the rise of Meeting! Adults, bring filled plastic eggs, hard-boiled colored eggs, or treats to hide (please remember the need for Free Trade chocolate.) The Junior High class will hide the goodies for the younger children to find. Preschool & toddlers will be in the playground area; lower and upper elementary kids will seek all around the Meetinghouse grounds! Sponsored by the Religious Education Committee.

2016 Global Peace Event in May

Please Mark Your Calendar! The 2016 Global Peace Event is scheduled for May 21st 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm in the AFM Hall. This event commemorates Buddha's birth, death and enlightenment. Our panel of speakers are from different spiritual traditions as well as secular background. There will be peace prayers, chanting and intentions for peace. Each participant will get a drink of water charged with the prayers and

intentions, at the end of the ceremony. Please contact Shahina Lakhani at [678 994 1843](tel:678-994-1843) for details and to volunteer your talent for the event.

Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) Upcoming Workshops

The AVP model is a two-day workshop where participants learn via interactive exercises, games and role-plays new ways to find alternatives to violence. Lunch is provided. Workshops are open to all; the suggested donation is \$20 but no one is excluded for lack of funds. All facilitators at AVP workshops are unpaid volunteers. We offer Basic/Advanced hybrid workshops. Those attending their first AVP Workshop will earn their Basic certificate and those attending their second AVP workshop will earn an Advanced certificate. Those who complete all three workshops are eligible to apprentice on workshop facilitation teams and to become AVP facilitators.

AVP Upcoming Workshop Calendar

March 19-20 2016	Atlanta GA	Basic/Advanced, open to all
April 16-17 2016	Kennesaw GA	Basic/Advanced, open to all
May 14-15 2016	Atlanta GA	Training for Facilitators, open to those who have completed at least one AVP workshop

For more information see, Facebook at “AVP Atlanta” and www.avpusa.org, or contact Heather at 315-263-1502, Heather@georgiaavp@gmail.com.

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business – February 21, 2016

Recorded pending approval

Attendance: Folami Adams, Mike Aland, Rebecca Burley, Steve Collins, Linnis Cook, Mary Ann Downey, Julia Ewen, Sally Ferguson, David Foster, Julie Foster, Larry Foster, Waman French, Clive Gordon, Gabrielle Hammons, Roland Heath, Bill Holland, Kathy Johnson, Suzan Kenworthy, Tom Kenworthy, Shakina Lakhani, Paul Mangelsdorf, Beth Martinson, Rick Martinson, Susan May, Kelsey McNicholas, Caroline Morris, Karen terHorst Morris, Ronald Nuse, Nan O’Connor, Lissa Place, Erin Schroder, Kelly Singer, Bert Skellie, Karen Skellie, Henry Slack, Rebecca Sullivan, Brittney Thornbury, Elizabeth Tolmach, Jim Tolmach, Myrna Trapp, Sarah Walton, Betsy Eggers (Clerk), Elizabeth Lamb (Recording Clerk) (43 Friends).

Query: Sally Ferguson presented the query: “Does worship deepen my relationship with God, increase my faithfulness, and refresh and renew my daily life, both inwardly and in my relationship with others? Have I experienced in worship that direct leading to listen or to speak, and have I been faithful to my own experience?”

Naming Committee: On behalf of the Naming Committee Caroline Morris brought forth the following for approval:

- **Minute 2-21-2016-01:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Ron Nuse as Clerk of the Nominating Committee.*

Caroline Morris then reported that the Naming Committee has finished their work for the year.

2015 State of the Meeting Report: Former Clerk of Meeting Nan O’Connor presented the final draft of the 2015 State of the Meeting report. Atlanta Friends Meeting appreciates the balance of spiritual growth with work done during the year and would like to see this balance strengthened and continued in years to come.

- **Minute 2-21-2016-02:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the 2015 State of the Meeting report, with a few minor amendments.* (The report is included elsewhere in the Newsletter.)

Finance Committee: On behalf of the Finance Committee Paul Mangelsdorf presented the 2015 financial reports. AFM showed a net income of \$27,573 for 2015, which has been moved to the Permanent Improvements Fund. This fund currently contains \$38,608, which is expected to be sufficient to cover the planned repairs and maintenance needed to the meetinghouse.

Paul Mangelsdorf then reported that Frank Cummings proposed to a small group that he planned to leave a large bequest to Atlanta Friends Meeting with the stipulation that it be used for the Suchitoto Scholarship Fund. He reported that he has reviewed the legal structure of the Meeting and that this type donation would be permissible, since this is a program that the meeting already supports and it is consistent with our mission. The Finance Committee has discussed their concerns about large donations, including the fact that no separate accounts are maintained for special funds, so the interest earned becomes a part of the operating budget for the meeting; the possibility that the program supported could be discontinued, requiring an alternative disposition of the funds; the special concern regarding foreign programs (such as Suchitoto) of the possibility of changing U.S. policy and the difficulty of getting the funds to their intended program. Paul Mangelsdorf and Lynn Leuszler met with Frank Cummings just prior to his death and discussed these concerns. He agreed to allow AFM discretion regarding these matters and had no objection to the interest being used in the general budget. The Meeting asked that once the Finance Committee has reviewed Frank Cummings' will and knows whether he wrote a letter following up their conversation, the committee compose a minute outlining the details and parameters of this gift in particular and of the precedent being set.

- **Ministry and Worship Committee:** On behalf of the Ministry and Worship Committee Sally Ferguson brought forward Elizabeth Lamb for approval for membership.
- **Minute 2-21-2016-03:** *On the recommendation of the Ministry and Worship Committee, we approve Elizabeth Lamb as a member of the Atlanta Friends Meeting.*

Sally Ferguson then reported that on 2/7/2016 a meeting was hosted by the Ad Hoc Committee to support the Burundian Friends' wish for an Evangelical Friends Church, clerked by Steve Collins and under the Ministry and Worship Committee of Atlanta Friends Meeting. Guests Wayne Evans and Rusty Savage, representatives of Evangelical Friends Church, Eastern Region, and representatives of the Burundi met with members of the Ad Hoc Committee. The purpose of this formal, introductory meeting was to begin to explore, assist and support setting up an Evangelical Friends Church in the Clarkston/Stone Mountain area under the care of the Evangelical Friends Church.

Sally Ferguson next reported that the forum on Spiritual Nurture Groups (SNG) held on 1/31/2016 had about 25 participants. Three have joined a preexisting SNG and there may be interest in starting a third group.

Last, Sally Ferguson reported that in their continuing effort to foster and strengthen the spiritual life of the meeting, Ministry and Worship will be separating the introduction of visitors from the sharing of joys and announcements at the close of meeting for worship. They will try this for four weeks and welcome any feedback from those attending worship.

Administration Committee: On behalf of the Administration Committee Steve Collins reported that the new chairs for the library have arrived. The few damaged chairs will be kept, at no cost, for spare parts as needed. Librarian Cal Gough continues to work on the electronic cataloging of books.

Steve Collins then reported that the new Friend in Residence, Kelsey McNicholas, officially began her term as Friend in Residence on Monday, February 15, 2016.

The next item reported was that Myrna Trapp, clerk of the Landscape Committee, has coordinated the removal of three river birches which had grown too close to the meetinghouse in front and the removal of some small trees and the trimming of bushes on the side and rear.

Finally, Steve Collins reported that Sue May is working to reorganize, redesign and de-clutter the bulletin boards.

Quaker Voluntary Service Support Committee: Steve Collins reported that Laura Hyde has withdrawn from QVS. She wrote: "After much thought, I have ended my time with QVS early. While I love and appreciate many things about the program, I have found that ultimately it is not right for me at this point in my life. Since being in Atlanta, AFM has welcomed me with open arms. I have felt a part of this strong, supportive and loving community from the moment I walked into meeting. Thank you AFM for everything. I do hope to come back and visit sometime, God willing. My e-mail is lauracatherine.hyde@gmail.com for those who feel led to stay in touch. Love, LC." The four remaining fellows will soon be participating in a retreat at Koinonia led by Erica Schoon.

Clerk: Clerk of Meeting Betsy Eggers brought forward an addendum to the Minute of Appreciation, Minute 1-17-2016-01.

- **Minute 2-21-2016-04:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting would also like to thank Bill Holland for his faithful service as SAYMA Representative.*

SAYMA: On behalf of SAYMA Bill Holland brought forward a clarification to Minute 02-15-2015-02, approved last February, supporting Quaker Voluntary Service and asking that SAYMA "recognize and support QVS."

- **Minute 2-21-2016-05:** *Atlanta Friends Meeting requests that Quaker Voluntary Service (QVS) be added to the regular rotation cycle of Wider Quaker Organizations invited to out SAYMA yearly sessions beginning in 2016.*

Minutes of January 2016:

- **Minute 2-21-2016-06:** *The Minutes of the January 2016 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business were approved as submitted.*

Announcements:

- Sue May reported that FCNL would like for AFM to participate fully in setting the priorities we would like to see FCNL pursue in 2016.
- Shakina Lakhani reported that she is organizing a Peace Program Forum to be held on May 21, 2016 from 4:00 to 8:00 PM in the meetinghouse. The forum will include several guest speakers from different backgrounds, and a time for prayers and meditation.
- Betsy Eggers reported that Jolly Elementary School, as part of the Read Across America program, is seeking volunteers to read to students on March 4, 2016. See Betsy for details.

Meeting closed with Silent Worship.

Respectfully submitted by: Elizabeth Lamb, Recording Clerk; and Betsy Eggers, Clerk.



Please Hold in The Light:

The family of Frank Cummings;
Sandy Kates, cousin of
Beth-Ann Buitekant;
Bette Turlington;
John Michaels

Those wishing to have requests for Holding included in this monthly newsletter may give the names to a member of Care & Counsel; Clive Gordon is the point person for March.



Atlanta Friends Meeting Contacts

Clerk of the Meeting: Betsy Eggers, afmclerk1@gmail.com
Office Coordinator: Jonah McDonald, atlantaquakers@gmail.com
Treasurer: Lynn Leuszler, afmtreasurer1@gmail.com
Ministry & Worship: Sally Ferguson, sallyferguson@earthlink.net
Finance: Paul Mangelsdorf, 770-677-4280
Social Concerns: Chris Kohler, chriskohler@mailc.net
Administration: Steve Collins, shcollins75@gmail.com
Care & Counsel: Clive Gordon, afm.care.counsel@gmail.com
Religious Education: Jennifer Dickie, michaeljen@bellsouth.net
Library Clerk: Cal Gough, calgough@bellsouth.net
Newsletter Editor: Kate Swett, atlquakerltr@gmail.com
Webmaster: Aaron Ruscetta, arxaaron@gmail.com
Bookkeeper: Jonah McDonald, afmbookkeeper1@gmail.com

Calendar for Third Month (March) 2016

Area Meetings for Worship

Every First Day (Sunday)	10:00 a.m. – Meetinghouse, with a smaller group in the Library.
Every Third First Day	12:30 p.m. – Carrollton Friends Worship Group. St. Andrew's UMC Youth Center, 1106 Maple St.; contact Jean Hudson, judson30116@yahoo.com or 678-378-3368; carrolltonfriends.org .
Every Second First Day	10:30 a.m. – Macon Friends Worship Group. Contact Diana Day, 478-227-8892; maconquakers.org
Every Fifth Day (Thursday)	12:10 p.m. – East Lake Commons, Decatur. Contact Bert Skellie at bertskellie@gmail.com or 404-680-4799.
Sixth Day (Friday)	(Mid-August through May), 9:00 a.m. – Friends School of Atlanta. Community Meeting Room, 862 Columbia Dr., Decatur, 404-373-8746.
<i>Currently on hiatus</i>	Canton Friends Worship Group. Contact Roy Taylor at 770-720-4669 or wrlldpeas@mindspring.com .

Weekly Events at the Meetinghouse

Every First Day (Sunday)	9:00 a.m. Adult Religious Education, Library 9:30 a.m. Singing, Classroom A/B 10:00 a.m. Meeting for Worship
Every Second-Fifth Day (Monday-Thursday)	8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Smart Toddlers, Nursery, Classroom A/B and playground
Every Fourth Day (Wednesday)	8:30 a.m. Morning Worship, Library First and third Wednesdays: 7:00 p.m. Mid-Week Worship at David & Freer Jarvis' home
Every Fifth Day (Thursday)	7:00 p.m. Bible Study, Library

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING
701 W. Howard Ave.
Decatur, GA 30030-2902

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING

Office: MWF 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.; 404-377-2474

Web: atlanta.quaker.org atlantaquakers@gmail.com

Clerk: Betsy Eggers, afmclerk1@gmail.com

Treasurer: Lynn Leuszler, afmtreasurer1@gmail.com

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 and contact information to Emily Lawson at elawson7@gmail.com or 404-200-8479. Please indicate if you want to be in the directory, receive the newsletter by mail, or both. Emily Lawson is also the contact to request mailing list removal.

Contributions to the Atlanta Friends Meeting may 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!

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

Readers are encouraged to submit letters, articles, notices and anything else of interest to Friends. Items should be sent directly to atlquakerltr@gmail.com in plain text (Word, not PDF). Pictures should be in .jpg format. Submissions may be edited for length and format.

THE DEADLINE FOR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS IS THE 20TH DAY OF EACH PRECEDING MONTH.

To receive the Newsletter via e-mail, 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; hit reply and you will be added to the list at no charge. To receive general announcements and to participate in discussion, follow the same instructions, but 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.