

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING

NEWSLETTER

July 2019



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 Avenue
Decatur, GA 30030

WHY WAIT? – by Mary Ann Downey

In Isaiah 40:28-31, we find these words:
“... they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength: they shall mount up with wings as eagles: they shall run and not be weary: and they shall walk and not faint.”

We gather in worship to follow this instruction from Isaiah, and I love the grace and reassurance that his message gives us. These verses lead me to reflect on why and how we wait upon the Lord.

Some years ago, I remember sitting on a flight from Atlanta to River Falls, Wisconsin and I noticed that there was a message on the back of the seat in front of me: a GTE Airphone with the message “Why wait?” It was a funny and ironic question to consider since I was on my way to Friends General Conference and a weeklong workshop, “Contemplative Living and Prayer.” My intent was to make this a spiritual retreat, seven days of waiting. But why wait?

I was reminded how often in many different ways we are encouraged, even pushed by messages like this to move quickly, not to wait, and how seldom these pressures are balanced by messages to wait, to move slowly, be still, turn inward. We need waiting and time out. Life is like any game, the pace can become so fast that it is not only hard to keep up, it seems impossible to think about what has happened, what it means and where to go now. I need these time outs, and I’m sure we all do.

We come to worship like travelers in a desert looking for a spiritual oasis seeking welcome and community, rest from struggle, thirsty for the living source of life, and renewal to continue the journey. Although we come from many different paths, we come to the same source for the living water, the God of many names.

The question, ‘why wait?’ led me to consider the silent waiting worship that we practice in a Quaker meeting for worship, as well as the word worship. The word worship comes from 2 words meaning the giving of worth, adoration, an intense and loving focus on that which deserves attention, ‘waiting on the Lord.’ And we can do this in many ways: singing, prayers, messages and in silence. For me, worship in silence is a journey we make in three steps: the experience of listening in stillness, the experience of faith, experience of at-oneness.

Experience of Stillness:

When I enter the room for meeting for worship, I settle into the experience of stillness, expectant waiting, and centering prayer. I want to still the body and mind, and turn to the light of the divine that we each have within. The Quaker, Issac Pennington gave these instructions: “Give over thy own

QUERY FOR JULY

How do our lives testify to our convictions as Friends?
What are we doing to share our faith?
How do we practice listening to the Truth which may be revealed by others?

- North Pacific Yearly Meeting

willing, give over thy own running, give over thy own desiring to know or be anything, and sink down to the seed that God sows in the heart.”

The challenge is, how do I make my will thy will? I believe that we are born with the light of God within, an inner teacher who can lead us to right action. We come to tend this inner light that gets diminished by the world around us. The minister Howard Thurman wrote, "You must wait and listen to the sound of the genuine. When you hear it that will be your voice and the voice of God."

When my daughter Lisa was a teenager, she told me that when she sat in meeting for worship she often thought about her favorite hit songs on the radio, and asked me what she was supposed to be doing. I did my best to offer an explanation but didn't think I was being helpful until she said, "Do you mean that it's like finding the right channel on the radio?" What a perfect explanation! The Light of God, the Spirit within is a channel that is always present but we tune out. Waiting worship is a time to tune in to the voice of the Spirit in order to be guided in our life and work all the time. This inner guide is a compass, a personal GPS that can help us find the right way to live and redirect us when we get lost. This takes a willingness to be still and find the right channel. If I can do this, and I can't always manage, I can take the next step: the experience of faith renewed.

Experience of Faith Renewed

Psalms 46 tells us that "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble...Be still and know that I am God." When we are still and open to the Light, we can experience deep peace, but we may also be troubled by doubts, problems, and grief that emerges to fill the space. It is a challenge to accept and hold our problems lightly with the faith that they might become diminished or less overwhelming. Answers may come to difficult questions, but even when no answer comes there is a sense of being at peace with the questions, and perhaps faith renewed. The poet Rilke wrote "You must learn to love the questions until you can live your way into the answers." One of my favorite Quaker expressions is "way will open", much like the line in John Lennon's song, "there will be an answer, let it be." This is faith renewed.

Experience of Oneness

When I am still and renew my faith, I move to the experience of being one in the spirit, also called "at oneness." We reconnect to the Light within and feel a sense of inner peace. I feel at one within, with the many parts of my head and heart. The Quaker Thomas Kelly wrote that we don't have a single self, but are troubled by a whole committee of selves who don't always agree with each other. Inner peace gathers all our parts into one.

I may also feel a deep connection to all those who gather in worship, a sense of oneness with my faith community and with the larger community. When I know God in a direct and personal way, our differences become less significant, less important. And a gathered self and community helps me feel one with God. Friends speak of a *gathered or covered* meeting when there is a shared sense of the Divine presence within us and among us.

My image is that we are all held in God's hands and by resting there in worship we are given the strength to be God's hands, to live in the way that Jesus taught us to live. William Penn wrote, "True godliness does not turn men out of the world, but enables them to live better in it; and excites their endeavors to mend it; not to hide their candle under a bushel, but to set it upon a table in a candlestick." In one of my favorite hymns, we sing, "We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord, and they'll know we're God's children by our love."

Why do we wait upon the Lord?

We wait to reconnect to the light of the divine within;

We wait to renew our faith in God;

We wait to be at one with our community and by God.

MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO MARRIAGE: Cate Hilenski and Jason Cochrane – Saturday July 6th

All are welcome! Cate Hilenski and Jason Cochrane will be married under the Care of the Meeting on Saturday, July 6, at 4 pm at the Atlanta Friends Meeting. Members and attenders are encouraged to attend to show support for this couple and their life together. Marriages under the Care of the Meeting are a Meeting for Worship and a celebration for the entire community! Finger foods are welcomed, if you are so inclined, but this is not a potluck event. If you have questions, or would like to help, please contact Marriage Committee convener, Betsy Eggers, at Betsyeggers@gmail.com.

LIVES AND CALLINGS: Spiritual Journey Sharing – Sunday July 7th

On the first Sunday of each month, in Adult First Day School we listen to how a Friend in our meeting answers questions of God's leadings as well as questions about what brings them to this meeting, what led them to become a member or not, and what they believe now. We call these stories of spiritual journeys, stories where Friends describe their understanding of God and religion in their life.

On July 7, Sandra Kliuvers and Rachel Carter, two of our current QVS fellows, will share the time to tell us the spiritual beliefs and service values that led to the QVS program and to this meeting. Come hear more: 9:00 -9:50 am on 1st Sundays in the library.

In May, Brent Wolff and Margaret Nagawa shared their Spiritual Journeys. You can hear a recording of it here: <https://tinyurl.com/y5a8b43x>

NEWCOMERS WELCOME DINNER – Thursday July 18th

July's Newcomers Welcome Dinner will be Thursday, July 18 18th. Newcomers are invited to be our guests, and others encouraged to bring a potluck dish. See the Announcement Sheet for details.

If you would like to host a Newcomers Welcome Dinner, held the 18th of each month, please contact Jim Tolmach at jimtolmach@icloud.com

BOOK GROUP Meeting — Thursday August 1st

The book group reading books by and about people of color will not meet in July, but will meet on Thursday, August 1 at 1:30 PM in the Meetinghouse library. The book for discussion is *The Hate U Give*, by Angie Thomas. Everyone is welcome. For questions, contact Karen Morris (karenth.1415@gmail.com) or Susan Cole (cole2544@bellsouth.net).

FORUM: Report on "Parliament of World Religions" – Sunday August 25th

In November of 2018, a few days before the midterm election and a few days after the shooting at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Alex Zinnes, 7th and 8th grade World Studies teacher at the Friends School of Atlanta (FSA) and Meeting member, attended the Parliament of World Religions in Toronto, representing her Kashi Ashram community. The Parliament is an interfaith gathering of

nearly 10,000 people from all over the world who come together to share ideas and fellowship, to celebrate our common humanity and to be in solidarity.

Alex will present her experiences at the Parliament as someone who embodies an interfaith path. She will speak to how this work has informed her curriculum at the Friends School of Atlanta and the ongoing challenges and leadings ultimately inspired by attending the Parliament. Progressive faith communities are more essential than ever, and the larger takeaways Alex will share from her experience of the Parliament are inspiring, thought provoking and urgent.

Please join Alex in the Library following the rise of Meeting for Worship at 11:45 on Sunday, August 25. Childcare and snacks will be provided. This Forum is jointly sponsored by the Ministry & Worship and Quakers for Racial Equality committees of AFM, as well as FSA's Quaker Life Committee

SIXTH MONTH MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS – June 16, 2019 Recorded Pending Approval

Attendance: Teri Key-Hooson, Bill Hooson, Myrna Trapp, Elizabeth Lamb, Muireann Brennan, Lynn Leuszler, Albert Guise, Lissa Place, Judith Greenberg, Michael Allison, Allison Mawle, Steve Collins, Sean O'Neil, Bailey O'Neil, Terri O'Neil, Julia Ewen, Clive Gordon, Free Polazzo, Brent Wolff, Sara Patenaude (Recording Clerk), Bill Holland (Clerk)

Friends gathered near the appointed hour with opening worship. A member of Ministry and Worship shared the Sixth Month query in worship: "How do we exercise our respect for the balance of nature? Are we careful to avoid poisoning the land, air, and sea and to use the world's resources with care and consideration for future generations and with respect for all life?"

Discernment Items:

Ministry and Worship: Elizabeth Lamb, Clerk of Ministry and Worship, brought forward Terri O'Neil, Patrick O'Neil, and Bailey O'Neil's names for membership with Atlanta Friends Meeting.

Minute 06-16-2019-01: On the recommendation of Ministry and Worship Atlanta Friends Meeting joyfully approves Terri O'Neil for membership in Atlanta Friends Meeting. We already know Terri and we look forward to deepening our relationship with her.

Minute 06-16-2019-02: On the recommendation of Ministry and Worship Atlanta Friends Meeting joyfully approves Patrick O'Neil for membership in Atlanta Friends Meeting. We look forward to growing with him as he continues his spiritual journey with us.

Minute 06-16-2019-03: On the recommendation of Ministry and Worship Atlanta Friends Meeting joyfully approves Bailey O'Neil for membership in Atlanta Friends Meeting. We look forward to getting to know her better as we deepen our relationship with her.

Ministry and Worship received a request from Caitlin McLeroy and Eric Stribling to be married under the care of them meeting on August 24 at the meetinghouse. A clearness committee has met with them and finds them clear for marriage. After the discussion last month around the marriage of Eric Stribling and Caitlin McLeroy, Ministry and Worship realized that we do not have a definition or guidelines for what it means to be "under the care of the Meeting." We met briefly last Sunday (in order to leave before the street was closed) and agreed that it would be good to explore this topic in greater depth. We do not want to make "rules" since every couple and every marriage is different, but rather to set out suggestions and to be sure that each couple is asked what they would like in the way

of support. If anyone would like to be part of this exploration, please let me (or someone on M&W) know and we will include you when we put together an ad hoc committee at our next committee meeting.

Of immediate concern was the question of how to care for a couple that lives halfway around the world. In our brainstorming we agreed that a committee be formed to act similarly to an anchoring committee. They will develop an agreement with Eric and Caitlin about what they need or want from Atlanta Friends Meeting and how they will be an active (although mostly absent) part of the meeting, including regular contact with members of AFM through the newsletter, emails, and attendance when they are in town. This committee will “meet” (electronically) with the couple at least twice in their first year of marriage to check in. Sara Patenaude and Mary Ann Downey will be part of this committee along with others from their clearness committee or marriage committee or volunteers from the Meeting. M&W will begin forming this committee immediately.

Both Eric and Caitlin consider AFM to be their spiritual home. As there are no Quakers in Cameroon they are currently dependent on AFM for their guidance and support in Quakerism as well as for their upcoming marriage. Eric has just been accepted into a PhD program in Arizona beginning in the fall. After their wedding they will therefore be moving to Arizona. Since there are Quakers in Arizona it is our hope that they will find a spiritual home closer to their home, but in the meanwhile we wish to continue our support and encouragement. Their “support committee” will remain in contact whether they are in Cameroon or Arizona.

Discussion during Meeting for Business took place regarding the broader question of the role Atlanta Friends Meeting should play in caring for marriages, even those who reside in Atlanta. We want couples to know there is care available, and that we are also loving and caring for same-sex couples. Concern was raised to ensure the current guidelines regarding care are incorporated into whatever the ad hoc committee discusses. The Clerk confirmed that any suggestions for changes to the guidelines will come before the meeting through Meeting for Business.

Minute 06-16-2019-04: On the recommendation of Ministry and Worship Atlanta Friends Meeting takes the marriage of Eric Stribling and Caitlin McLeroy under our care.

Minute 06-16-2019-05: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the following marriage/joining committee for the marriage of Caitlin McLeroy and Eric Stribling: Sara Patenaude, convener, Mary Ann Downey, Sally Ferguson, Jim Tolmach and Georgia Lord along with several non AFM friends who will help with the reception and with assuring that the ceremony reflects the personalities of Caitlin and Eric.

Administration: Steve Collins, clerk of Administration, brought forward the following minutes, read by Clerk of Meeting Bill Holland:

Minute 06-16-2019-06: The Meeting thanks Teri Key-Hooson, Jack Honderd, Carolyn Coburn-Allen and Steve Collins for their service in 2019 on the Property Coordinator and Office Coordinator search committees.

Minute 06-16-2019-07: The Meeting thanks Beth Ruddiman, Carolyn Coburn-Allen, Jim Tolmach, Suzanne Cole Sullivan and Steve Collins for their service in 2018 and 2019 on the Friend in Residence search committee.

Reports:

Administration: Steve Collins reported on behalf of the Administration committee. Paul Mangelsdorf coordinated a group of volunteers (Aaron Ruscetta, Jim Tolmach, and Steve Collins) in cleaning the atrium tile floor. Years of built-up wax and dirt were removed by hand, the tile was then cleaned, and several coats of wax were applied. This work, while time and labor intensive, postponed the need for more costly tile replacement.

Minute 06-16-2019-08: Atlanta Friends Meeting thanks Paul Mangelsdorf, Aaron Ruscetta, Jim Tolmach, and Steve Collins for offering their skill and talents and providing the labor in preserving the meetinghouse in arranging the cleaning of the atrium floor in 2019. They helped our Meeting live our testimonies of simplicity, community, and stewardship.

Suchitoto Fund Committee: Lynn Leuszler read the Suchitoto Fund Committee Quarterly Report for 6-16-2019:

The Suchitoto Fund Committee was established in July 2016 as a result of a large bequest by Frank Cummings to the Meeting's existing Suchitoto Fund. The purpose of the fund is to support youth development in the Suchitoto, El Salvador, area. A further goal is to turn over the funds to an El Salvador-based entity before 2021.

Since March 2019, the youth-led Suchitoto non-profit, "The Association of Current and Graduated Scholarship Students from Suchitoto" (ABESUCHI), has purchased office equipment and moved into their offices in the former home of Frank and Carol Cummings. They have reached agreement with the two scholarship programs in Suchitoto to both review and make decisions as well as to handle day-to-day financial and administrative management. They called a general assembly of their members to present their work report and plan for 2019. They have begun organizing the annual University fair.

Our contractor, IDEAS, inc., has been working with the ABESUCHI coordinator to move forward on the activities planned for employment and entrepreneurship. IDEAS has been in touch with an official of the El Salvador government organization responsible for small business development. She thought there would be good possibilities for cooperation.

The Suchitoto Fund has about \$42,700 as of May 30, 2019. In April our committee replenished IDEAS' contingency fund with a payment of about \$3,000. At our meeting on May 23, we agreed to use new money from Frank's retirement account for new scholarships. The AFM Treasurer estimates that there will be about \$5,000 more available each year for seven years. We agreed, that after the dissolution of this committee, that as new funds become available each year, the then Treasurer should send those funds to the scholarship fund in Suchitoto.

Members of the Committee include Don Bender, Andrew Cummings, Lynn Leuszler, Judy Lumb, Paul Mangelsdorf, and Bert Skellie (Clerk). Our next quarterly meeting is scheduled for August 15, 2019.

Care and Council: Bill Hooson reported that Care and Council has received a request for financial assistance that would take the recipient beyond the \$600 limit authorized for distribution by the committee. Care and Council would like to extend an additional gift of \$250 to the person in need.

Minute 06-16-2019-09: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the request to extend an additional \$250 in financial assistance to the person designated by Care and Council.

Minutes of Fifth Month:

Minute 06-16-2019-10: Friends approved the minutes from Fifth Month pending minor corrections for spelling and the incorporation of the additions suggested in the minute of memorial for Bill Jenkins.

Events in the Life of the Meeting:

Tom and Suzan Kenworthy moved into a retirement facility.

Steve Collins' mother and brother are experiencing life changes, and Atlanta Friends Meeting was requested to hold them in the light.

Steve and Bethany Morrison and their sons Sendak and Jay Harper are moving to North Carolina. Chris Lahowitch has moved to North Carolina.

PLEASE HOLD IN THE LIGHT:

Steve Collins' mother and brother
Carolyn Manley
Teri Key-Hooson

Those wishing to have requests for holding included in this monthly newsletter may give the names to a member of Care & Counsel.

Atlanta Friends Meeting Contacts

Clerk of the Meeting: Bill Holland, afmclerk1@gmail.com
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Ministry & Worship: Elizabeth Lamb, gslpc@bellsouth.net
Finance: Paul Mangelsdorf, 770-677-4280
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Bookkeeper: Jonah McDonald, afmbookkeeper1@gmail.com

Area Meetings for Worship

- Every First Day 10:00 a.m. – Meetinghouse (AFM), with a smaller group in the Library.
(Sunday) 10:30 a.m. – Peachtree Friends Meeting (Christian-friendly, affirming, open to all),
3980 Florida Ave, Norcross GA, peachtree.quaker.org
1:30 p.m. - Stone Mountain Friends Church (Evangelical), at St. Timothy United Methodist Church
5365 Memorial Dr, Stone Mountain, GA 30083
- Every Second & Fourth First Day 2:30 p.m. – Macon Friends Worship Group.
Contact Kellie Divis at MaconQuakers@gmail.com; maconquakers.org
- Every Third First Day 11:45 p.m. – Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, Meeting room
12:30 p.m. – Carrollton Friends Worship Group.
St. Andrew's UMC Youth Center, 1106 Maple St.; contact Jean Hudson,
jhudson30116@yahoo.com or 678-378-3368; carrolltonfriends.org .
- Fourth Day (Wednesday) 8:30 a.m. Morning Worship, Library
First and third Wednesdays: 7:00 p.m. Worship at David & Freer Jarvis' home
7:00 - 8:30 pm: Semi-programmed worship at AFM.
Contact Ashley Wilcox: ashleymwilcox@gmail.com, 206-300-5836.
- Sixth Day (Friday) 11:00 a.m. – East Lake Commons, Decatur. Contact Bert Skellie at
bertskellie@gmail.com or 404-680-4799.
(Mid-August through May), 9:00 a.m. – Friends School of Atlanta. Community Meeting Room,
862 Columbia Dr., Decatur, 404-373-8746.

Other Regular Events at the Meetinghouse

- First Day (Sunday) 9:00 a.m. - Adult First Day School, Library
Every second Sunday, 9:30 a. m. - Singing, Classroom A/B
10:00 a.m. - Meeting for Worship
Third Sunday of every month, 11:15 a.m. - Listening Ear for those with a concern about racism
5:00 p.m. - Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship, Meeting Room
- Second Day (Monday) Every other Monday at 6:30 p.m. - Spiritual Nurture Group, Library
(contact Lewis Fuller for info on how to join)
7:00 p.m. Bible Discussion, High School Classroom
- Third Day (Tuesday) 6:00 - Alex Zinnes Yoga, Nursery
Second & fourth Tuesdays at 7:00 - Deep Waters Center for Prayer & Exploration, Meeting Room
- 18th of Each Month Newcomers Welcome Dinner, rotating location

Atlanta Friends Meeting
701 W. Howard Avenue
Decatur, GA 30030-2902

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING

Office: MWF 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.; 404-377-2474

web and email: atlantaquakers.org, atlantaquakers@gmail.com

Clerk: Bill Holland, afmclerk1@gmail.com

Treasurer: Lynn Leuszler, afmtreasurer1@gmail.com

Are you a newcomer to the Atlanta Friends community and would like a nametag?

We would be happy to make you a permanent nametag. You can 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.

Atlanta Friends Meeting has three email lists:

To receive the announcement sheets and other announcements relating directly to the life of the meeting, send a blank email to

afmannouncements-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

To receive announcements AND posts about a broader range of topics relating to being a Quaker, send a blank email to afmdiscussion-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

To receive the newsletter by email, send a blank email to afmnewsletter-subscribe@yahoo.groups.com

Would you like to receive the Newsletter by snail mail or appear in future AFM Directories?

Send your name and contact information to Brent Wolff at

rbkwolff@gmail.com . Please indicate if you want to be in the directory, receive the newsletter by mail, or both.

What does investing in your spiritual community look like for you and your family?

Atlanta Friends Meeting accepts contributions of your time, resources, and money! You can place a financial contribution in the slot marked "Contributions" in the greeting area of the Meetinghouse or mail to the Treasurer at our mailing address. To donate online with a credit card, visit <http://atlantaquakers.org/contact.htm> >. Thank you!

Want to submit an announcement, letter, article, and anything else of interest to Friends for the newsletter?

Send items directly to atlquakerltr@gmail.com. Submissions may be edited for length and format. THE DEADLINE FOR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS IS THE 20TH DAY OF EACH PRECEDING MONTH.

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