

# ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER

## JANUARY 2020

### ADULT FIRST DAY SCHOOL – JANUARY 2020

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Each first Sunday of the month, 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.

January 5, at 9:00 in the Library, we will hear the spiritual journey of Anton Flores, our new Friend in Residence.

To hear a recording of Emmett and Melanie Fuller's spiritual journeys, recorded in December, you can visit <https://tinyurl.com/vkftdgg>

### BUILDING THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

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*by Mary Ann Downey*

*(this article originally appeared in the AFM newsletter in 2005 and then in Friends Journal)*

The Atlanta Friends Meeting began as such a diverse group of people that one of the first attenders commented, "It seemed the only thing we had in common was a desire not to be preached at." Having been a part of this Meeting since 1978, and having visited other monthly and yearly meetings, I have often reflected on our diversity and wondered what holds us together. What keeps us struggling with our conflicts and differences? Why do we call ourselves members, attenders or Friends? I believe what holds us here is a real commitment to see that of God in each person and to work toward the kind of peaceful and just community we all yearn to be a member of. We share a deep hunger for community. It also seems that, at worst, what keeps us together is our willingness to avoid conflicts, pretend differences don't exist, stay away from those who annoy or trouble us, and just be nice. We come to enjoy the silence, and sometimes the messages, then leave, operating on one of my mother's favorite rules, "If you can't say something nice, just don't say anything."

What does it take for us to be in and to build the beloved community that was the dream of early Friends and is still my hope? As I've wrestled with this question, I've identified some of the ingredients that I need. I long for a place where we can all speak honestly about who we are and what we need, where we have realistic expectations of ourselves and of others, where we cherish our differences even as we submit to corporate discernment. Above all, I want a spiritual community that helps me live in the Spirit.

In a recent discussion, we talked about what we want as individuals from this religious community and what our vision is for this Friends Meeting. It was a wonderfully deep and rich sharing that included ways that the Meeting has not met the needs of some people. I realized later that I could not



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

### QUERY FOR JANUARY

How can we make the meeting  
a community in which each  
person is accepted and  
nurtured, and strangers are  
welcome?

-- Britain Yearly Meeting

remember any other discussion in all my years in Meeting on such a fundamental and valuable question. I hope that's because they've occurred and I've just missed them. How can we expect to build a spiritual community if our conversations stay only on safe topics like favorite movies or restaurants? As Scott Peck reminds us in his book on community building, we all need a "safe place for personal disarmament." We need the kind of time and space where we can share our most important dreams for ourselves and for a better world, without fear of being ridiculed, rejected or [called] politically incorrect.

During the same discussion, I also realized that some of us come to the Meeting with an idealized view of Friends, expecting that the beliefs espoused for more than three hundred years would create Meeting communities of perfect harmony and fairness. Even after attending for more than ten years, I confessed that I did not ask for membership because I believed that I needed to achieve some personal level of perfection or at least better daily practice of the beliefs before I could "fit in" or qualify for the title "Friend." Like me, others also held back from full participation and membership in Meeting from fear of not qualifying or being good enough. In contrast, some held back because they believed that the Meeting was not good enough. The expectations of our own personal perfection or of the perfect community are equally unrealistic and present major barriers to creating community. We need to accept our flaws and shadow side, realizing that while we espouse beliefs and work toward a peaceful and just community, we do not yet have the ability to create and maintain such a place.

If we communicate honestly and deeply about our needs for this religious community, differences will emerge. Parker Palmer writes, "In a true community we will not choose our companions, for our choices are so often limited by self-serving motives. Instead, our companions will be given to us by grace. Often they will be persons who will upset our settled view of self and world. In fact, we might define true community as the place where the person who you least want to live with always lives!"

Differences of belief, language, culture and practice have always been defining characteristics of Friends' Meetings. It was a willingness to struggle together with differences and to submit these concerns to a process of corporate discernment that helped Meetings grow strong and held early Ranters in check. Ranterism is the belief that an individual can and should act on anything that they see the Spirit leading them to do. Among many other excesses, such a belief led James Naylor in 1656 to ride through the streets of Bristol recreating the procession of Christ on Palm Sunday, casting himself in the role of Christ. The sense of unity that we seek in our Meetings for Business rests on a commitment to submit our individual leadings to the wisdom of the group as we seek God's guidance.

Why should we risk saying where we are, how we are led, and encouraging others, especially those with whom we disagree, to do the same? It is because the process of listening, understanding and appreciating differences is often painfully hard work, but essential to the life of a vital meeting which wants to become more than a collection of individuals who meet weekly in the same place. At its best, it is "learning to fight gracefully," as Scott Peck advised, in a way that builds community rather than destroys it.

During a meeting for worship, someone with a beautiful voice sang into the silence the hymn, "We are One in the Spirit." I was deeply moved because it was an affirmation of the profoundly gathered worship that we were experiencing at the moment, as well as a witness to what Friends have always believed. In the kind of beloved community that we hope to build, we are each connected as spokes of a wheel to a spiritual center and by reaching out to connect with that of God in each other, we create the strong outer rim that presses us to the center. I also sometimes picture our Meeting as a giant quilt where we offer the bits and scraps of who we are. Working together, we form patterns – beautiful designs that are stronger and more unique because of spiritual binding. The backing for the whole is the Spirit among us, and we see how the differences of color and design create the beauty of the whole.

When we say what we need, have realistic expectations of others and ourselves, embrace our differences and live in the Spirit, we have some of the building blocks for the beloved community. Together, I believe that we can find all of them, and begin to discover what love can do.

## LOBBYING FOR PEACE with PERSISTENCE and RESPECT

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*submitted by Sue May in early December*

Many Friends are aware that there is an FCNL Advocacy Team here, but may not know that four Team members – Rebecca Cole Sullivan, Cate Hilenski, Glenn Plyler and I – went to Washington, DC for the Friends Committee on National Legislation annual meeting Nov. 13-17. We were celebrating the first time in 18 years that a chamber of Congress (the House) had voted to repeal a law that gave the war powers to the president. But the bill was stuck in the Senate and needed a big push. So we and 400 other Quakers and friends were on the Hill to urge senators to take the first step toward ending “endless war” by passing the repeal of the 2002 Iraq Authorization for the Use of Military Force.

How do we lobby, and what did we learn this time?

- We ground ourselves in the Spirit.
- We involve our Meeting and our friends. (Over 20 called Congress prior to our visits!)
- We prepare thoroughly, using the [fcnl.org/team](http://fcnl.org/team) toolkit site and frequent updates from senior lobbying staff and outside experts.
- We build on relationships with staff by visiting state offices during the year.
- We build on the highly respected reputation of FCNL.
- We keep coming back.
- We were reminded that the legislative assistant we meet with today may be promoted and become the chief of staff or leave to run for office later.
- We were inspired by hearing from Rep. Barbara Lee, initiator of the repeal; Stephanie Savell, whose research on the Costs of War project at Brown University gave us the facts; Will Goodwin, of VoteVets, spoke of joining with Conservative Vets to advance this bill . . . and many other experts.
- We learned that Sen. Perdue opposes making the bill an add-on to the defense bill but has not yet taken a position on it. We learned that Sen. Elizabeth Warren was on the committee that is reconciling the House and Senate versions of the defense spending bill in closed door sessions and (this from a Perdue staffer) that much to his surprise, she is smart and effective at finding common ground!
- We heard a riveting review of the military orientation of the United States throughout our history from Diana Ohlbaum, who leads FCNL’s efforts to create a more ethical and effective foreign policy. Previously, she served as professional staff on both the House and Senate Foreign Relations Committees.
- We nodded in agreement with Glenn, who found the lobbying process to be “super organized,” especially the young staff members and volunteers. “My monetary support over the years is being well managed.”

Since 2001 FCNL has opposed war as the answer to acts of terror and has urged Congress to pursue policies to build peace. We are proud to be part of the powerful push for repeal with more than 1,500 Advocacy Team members around the country, and thank our Atlanta meeting for its ongoing support.

*Update on 12/11—Sadly, this repeal was stripped from the final version of the defense bill due to lack of support in the Senate. It will be re-introduced as a free-standing bill next year.*

## ARE YOU A VOLUNTEER WORKING WITH CHILDREN AT AFM?

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If so, please periodically check in on your background check status. Our lists of Friends with current or out of date clearance (>5 yrs. Old) are posted on the supply cabinet in the AFM office. Anyone actively involved with minors at AFM needs a current Criminal History / Drivers License (CHDL) clearance on file. The process is easy and confidential, and CHDL authorization forms can be found on the second desk in the office and returned to the Young Friends folder in the office filing cabinet below. All of our new, current, and renewing AFM youth worker volunteers are also encouraged to (optionally) apply for their clearance through the SAYMA process so they meet requirements for working with minors at Yearly Meeting and in the SAYF teen program. Please email or call our Young Friends Program Coordinator, Aaron Ruscetta, for notice or status of your CHDL authorization form, assistance with the SAYMA application process, or any other background check questions: <arxaaron@gmail.com> // 404.315.0406

## INITIAL CALL FOR WORKSHOP FACILITATORS AT SAYMA YEARLY MEETING

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*Each year our yearly meeting, Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting, gathers in June to worship together, conduct business, and fellowship with Friends across our southern region. Friends are invited to submit proposals for workshops to be conducted during the gathering. If you are interested or have something to share in a workshop format with other Friends, here is an opportunity. There are many Friends here at Atlanta Meeting who have conducted workshops and they are available for consultation.*

*Below is SAYMA's call for workshop facilitators:*

This is our initial call for our forthcoming workshop facilitators, to any wishing to lead in next summers' Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting Assembly to be held Thursday through Sunday June 11th to the 14th!

Our theme?...

Feed, Shelter, Serve: Our Bucket List Now!

Current war-making, injustice and inequality compounds or is compounded by the threat to earth's life-giving carbon-ecosystem. Within our gathering, we can examine the mitigating of environmental damage, including its effects upon those disproportionately contributing or disproportionately being affected by it.

We seek ignition of deep spiritual response within and toward these crises. We seek participation in answer to ministry urging earth-care that took place especially within our 2019 Meeting for Business.

Many are finding ways to serve in the face of urgent need. "Our bucket list now!" carries the double entendre of immediacy regarding threatening effects for life on earth, as well as the common questing of personal experiences dependent upon carbon-intensive travel.

We invite any topics reflective of the many social, economic and environmental intersections woven of such fundamental concerns. Topics reinforcing existing related Quaker testimonies and of course empowerment of ourselves and communities over choices contributing to harm are ideal to the 2020 theme.

Please share from your own light, knowledge, and best resourcing, on facing the scale of these challenges in the manner of Friends. Please email Teree Jeanne, Workshop Coordinator for the SAYMA Yearly Planning Committee and type "SAYMA workshop" at the beginning of your subject line.

## CARE QUILT?

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If you had a care quilt during 2019, please email Karen Skellie at [kskellie@gmail.com](mailto:kskellie@gmail.com). The Care and Counsel Committee is putting together a list for their end-of-year report.

## A NOTE FROM MEMBER ALEX ZINNES

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Warm wishes to you at this cold time of the year! I have an exciting change to tell you about. After TEN beautiful years at the Atlanta Friends Meeting, starting this January, I am relocating my yoga class to the **Community Meeting Room** at the **Friends School of Atlanta**.

I wanted to invite you or people (your friends, colleagues, loved ones, and neighbors) you think might benefit from a little self-care to join us.

**Our first class meets on Tuesday, 1/7/20 at (here's the other change) 5:30-6:30.**

Some of my students have been with me for the whole ten years. We've had fun, challenged ourselves appropriately, and left feeling both chill and energized. You can join the class at any time, and all levels and abilities are most welcome. Yoga feels great, and anyone can do it!

**And..here's a special offer for first timers to this class: Not sure if yoga or this class will suit you? No problem! Attend your first class for FREE , and see what you think.**

**Here are the details:**

- Yoga classes meet on **Tuesday** nights from **5:30-6:30** in the **Community Meeting Room (CMR)** at the **Friends School of Atlanta**. 862 S Columbia Dr, Decatur, GA 30030
- Park in our parking lot, and come to the main entrance on the side of the building.
- Anyone (people who are in the FSA Friends and Family universe) who needs the building code and other location details can contact me at the email listed below.
- Wear clothing in which you can move comfortably.
- Please bring an exercise mat or towel.

**Regular Class Pricing:**

- 5 class card - \$55 (\$11/class)
- 10 class card - \$100 (\$10/class)
- Drop-in class - \$12/class

Please email me at [azinnes@gmail.com](mailto:azinnes@gmail.com) if you have any questions. And of course, please share this information with your Friends.

## VOTING RIGHTS FOR THE FORMERLY INCARCERATED Thursday, January 9

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Please mark your calendar to hear Desmond Meade, President of the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition, tell about the successful struggle to regain voting rights for formerly incarcerated people in Florida. He will offer guidance for what we can do here in Georgia. Please plan to join us on Thursday, January 9, 2020, at 7:00 pm at the meetinghouse. Sponsored by Community Movement Builders, Black Voters Matter and the Atlanta Friends Meeting Social Concerns Committee, among others.

## FRIENDLY HIKE – Saturday, January 11

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All are welcome to join us for monthly easy hikes / walks! Including children! On Saturday, January 11, we will meet at the Meetinghouse parking lot at 1 pm to take a hike! (Note later time for cold weather.) Please plan to join us for a three-mile hike to the top of Little Kennesaw Mountain. We should be back by about 5 PM. For more information and where to park at the trailhead, see link below:  
<http://longlivelearning.com/2015/08/hiking-little-kennesaw-mountain-trail-in-metro-atlanta-georgia/>  
Call Bert Skellie at 404-680-4799 if you have questions, or if you have an emergency and need us to wait for you at the Meetinghouse longer than 5 minutes.

## CURIOUS ABOUT HOW FCNL MOBILIZES YOUNG ADULTS TO ENGAGE IN GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY? – Sunday, January 12

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Then take a minute to talk with Sergio Mata-Cisneros at the rise of meeting on January 12. An exceptional advocate himself, he began as a legislative fellow at Somos Un Pueblo Unido, a community-based and immigrant-led organization that promotes worker and racial justice. Later, at the Friends Committee on National Legislation, he was a summer intern and Advocacy Corps organizer. Now he's FCNL's program assistant for Young Adult Outreach.

Sergio will be in Atlanta January 11-13 at the Atlanta Friends School to help Briana prepare Greg's 6th grade class for lobbying on climate change when they travel to Washington, DC for this year's Spring Lobby Weekend March 28-31. (Some 500 Young Adults will be on the Hill, for training and lobbying on climate change.) He will also meet with our Quaker Volunteer Service Fellows to recruit them for this effort.

## NEWCOMERS WELCOME DINNER – Saturday, January 18

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August's Newcomers Welcome Dinner will be Saturday, January 18. 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](mailto:jimtolmach@icloud.com)

## BOOKS BY AND ABOUT PEOPLE OF COLOR BOOK GROUP – Thursday, February 6

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The book group reading books by and about people of color will continue to meet at 1:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month in the Meetinghouse library. All are welcome. If you have questions, contact Karen Morris ([karenth.1415@gmail.com](mailto:karenth.1415@gmail.com)) or Susan Cole ([cole2544@bellsouth.net](mailto:cole2544@bellsouth.net)).

Books for the next eight months are below:

January 2, *The Yellow House*, by Sarah Broom

February 6, *The Light of the World*, by Elizabeth Alexander

March 5, *A Place for Us*, by Fatima Mirza

April 2, *The Water Dancer*, by Ta-Nehisi Coates

May 7, *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman*, by Ernest Gaines

June 4, *There There* by Tommy Orange

July (no meeting)

August 6, *The Hidden Light of Northern Fires*, by Daren Wang

## TWELFTH MONTH MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS

December 15, 2019

Recorded Pending Approval

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Attendance: Georgia Lord, Suzie Lippold, Anton Flores, Mike Chapman, Glenn Plyler, Mark Bryans, Clive Gordon, David Small, Ronald Nuse, Larry Foster, Julie Foster, Kevin Wong, Martha McGill, Leeland McPhail, Julia Ewen, Steve Collins, Carolyn Coburn-Allen, Karen terHorst Morris, Elizabeth Lamb, Karen Skellie, Myrna Trapp, Lissa Place, Bert Skellie, Aaron Ruscetta, Lynn Lueszler, Caroline Morris, Mike Aland, Jim Tolmach, Alberta Guise, Teri Key-Hooson, Mary Ann Downey, Paul Mangelsdorf, Bill Holland (Clerk), and Rebecca Cole Sullivan (Recording Clerk).

Friends gathered near the appointed hour with opening worship. A member of Ministry and Worship shared the Twelfth Month Query out of the worship: "Do we practice simplicity in our manner of living, avoiding waste and ostentation? Does our commitment to simplicity bring beauty and harmony to our surroundings?" Friends shared out of the silence.

### **Discernment Items**

**Nominating Committee:** Clive Gordon, clerk of Nomination, reported for the committee. Nominating Committee recommends the approval of Herbert Edwards to be a member of Ministry & Worship Committee for 3 years from January 2020 thru 2022.

**Minute 12-15-2019-01:** On the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Herbert Edwards to serve as a member of the Ministry and Worship Committee for a three-year term beginning January 2020 through December 2022.

Nominating Committee recommends the approval of Dee Debra as Assistant treasurer to serve a term of 2 years beginning January 2020 through 2021.

**Minute 12-15-2019-02:** On the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Dee Debra to serve as Assistant Treasurer for a two-year term beginning January 2020 through December 2021.

**Finance:** Paul Mangelsdorf, clerk of Finance, brought the Meeting budget for 2020. Paul reviewed changes in the proposed budget since 11<sup>th</sup> month.

**Minute 12-15-2019-03:** On the recommendation of the Finance Committee, Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the 2020 Atlanta Friends Meeting Budget as proposed.

**Ministry and Worship:** Elizabeth Lamb, clerk of Ministry and Worship, reported on behalf of the committee. Last month Ministry and Worship read parts Glynn Plyler's application for membership and asked that the meeting get to know him. Today Ministry and Worship brings his name forward for approval.

**Minute 12-15-2019-04:** On the recommendation of Ministry and Worship, Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Glynn Plyler for membership. We look forward to sharing and learning with him along our spiritual journey together.

For several years, Atlanta Friends Meeting has held under our care the ministry of Sarah Walton. Earlier this year she returned to Maine and has asked that Atlanta Friends Meeting lay down our responsibility for the care of her ministry.

**Minute 12-15-2019-05:** On the recommendation of Ministry and Worship, Atlanta Friends Meeting lays down our responsibility for Sarah Walton's ministry in alternatives to violence and police-community relationships.

**Minute 12-15-2019-06:** On the recommendation of Ministry and Worship, Atlanta Friends Meeting lays down Sarah Walton's anchoring committee and thanks the members, Bert Skellie, Eric Glenn, Wendy Phillips, Austin Wattles and Maine member Holly Weidner for their long and faithful service.

## **Reports**

**Cabin Committee:** Mark Bryans, clerk of cabin committee, shared the annual report of the cabin committee. More than 70 different people used the Ferguson Cabins cover a total of at least 90 days from 11/1/18 – 10/31/19. Twenty of these people were first time users. Groups using the Cabins for retreats included Quaker Women, Quaker Men, QVS Fellows and family gatherings. There was heavy use on weekends when the weather was good. Income including rental income and donations totaled \$2490.00. Expenses for electricity and Lake Burton Civic Association totaled \$754.00. Insurance was \$954.43, which was the budgeted amount from the Meeting. Many maintenance projects took place this year and there is a long list of upcoming projects to help upkeep these lovely cabins.

The meeting encouraged the Cabin Committee to increase their work promoting the availability of the cabin through both printed information and electronic means. Friends specifically encouraged the committee to work with the AFM webmaster to publish pictures, descriptive materials and description of accessibility for the Cabins on the AFM website. The cabin committee was encouraged to prioritize projects that will make the cabins more physically accessible so that it will be a useful resource for all the community.

**Suchitoto Fund Committee:** Bert Skellie gave the quarterly report on the Suchitoto Fund. The Committee expects to complete its work next year and expects to turn over any remaining funds to a youth led Suchitoto non-profit, "The Association of Current and Graduated Scholarship Students from Suchitoto" (ABESUCHI).

ABESUCHI is now responsible for running the two scholarship funds established by Frank and supported by Atlanta Meeting. They have successfully held their second annual general assembly and completed elections for the start of their new year. The core of the leadership group continues for a second two-year term.

The Meeting's Suchitoto Fund has about \$25,000 remaining as of December 5, 2019. As requested by meeting in 8<sup>th</sup> month, the committee, working with Finance has created a detailed summary of fund expenditures to date. The document a "History of the AFM Suchitoto Fund since the bequest of Frank Cummings" was created by Paul Mangelsdorf and will be archived with these records.

*[Editor's Note: It is also included in this newsletter following these minutes.]*

**Naming Committee:** Jim Tolmach reported for the Naming Committee. This year Jim Tolmach, Betsy Eggers, and Liz Nicholson served on the committee. After connecting several times in thinking about names to bring forward for consideration to serve on Nominating Committee, the naming committee recommends Margaret Nagawa (to serve specifically as the Religious Ed liaison), and Kevin Wong, both for 3-year terms. Their names will be brought forth in January for approval.

**Nominating Committee:** Clive Gordon, reported on behalf of nominating committee. Nominating brings forward the names of Mary Ann Downey and Bill Holland to serve on the Ministry & Worship Committee for a three-year team. Nominating will bring these names back in January for approval. Nominating has two open positions still to fill for this coming year: Nursey Liaison (serves on Religious Education) and Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association Ministry and Nurture Committee Representative.



**Ministry and Worship Committee:** Elizabeth Lamb reported on behalf of the committee. The Friends School Quaker Life Committee and Ministry and Worship plan to honor teachers and administrators who are involved or have been involved in this important ministry. This includes any form of service, not just religious education. If you would like to help with this, please see Elizabeth Lamb or Karen Morris. The committee will begin work immediately after the holiday season.

Ministry and Worship has received four applications for membership: Leeland McPhail, Martha Kang McGill, Jane Lang, and Joseph Jackson (attender at Macon Worship Group). Clearness committees have met with each of them and found them clear. Ministry and Worship recommends their membership to meeting. Friends are encouraged to get to know these attenders over the next month if you don't already know them. Their names will be brought forth in January for approval. Each letter of application was read into worship.

Ministry and Worship would like to be sure remind friends that we still have four ministries under our care, each with an anchoring committee. These are Mary Ann Downey, Julie Hliboki, Richard Allen and Christina Repoley. Each year the Friend or their committee prepare an annual report on the state of their ministry to meeting. Elizabeth read the reports of Mary Ann Downey and Julie Hliboki to give the meeting an idea of some of the wonderful ministry that takes place beyond these walls.

**Minutes of 11<sup>th</sup> Month:**

**Minute 12-15-2019-06:** Friends approved the Eleventh Month Minutes with the following additions. Add "Clive Gordon, Alison Mawle, and Glenn Plyler to serve on ad hoc committee to honor teachers with Karen Morris." Add Carolyn Coburn-Allen to the list of those in attendance.

**Clerk's items:**

The draft 2019 State of the Meeting Report draft will be brought forward next month. The clerk is still taking submissions for items that should be included.

The meeting has received a call for Submissions for Workshops at Yearly Meeting Sessions this summer and this has been circulated to the discussion list and will be included in the newsletter.

Next Month, following the First Month Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, we will hold the Annual Corporation Meeting of Atlanta Friends Meeting. All Friends are invited to attend.

**Closing:**

Friends closed with a moment of open worship.

Bill Holland (Clerk)

Rebecca Cole Sullivan (Recording Clerk)

THE HISTORY OF THE AFM SUCHITOTO FUND SINCE THE BEQUEST OF FRANK CUMMINGS

In late January 2016, Frank Cummings contacted members of AFM regarding his intent to leave the residual funds from his TIAA-CREF retirement funds to the AFM Suchitoto Fund for "the purpose of enriching educational work in Suchitoto." On February 7, 2016 after meeting for worship, Frank met with Lynn Leuszler, the AFM Treasurer, and Paul Mangelsdorf, the Clerk of the AFM Finance Committee, to discuss details of the bequest. Frank's intent was clearly that all his TIAA-CREF funds would be given to the meeting for the purpose of supporting educational opportunities in El Salvador. Those notes were shared with the AFM Finance Committee and were later reported to AFM Business Meeting on July 16, 2016.

Frank died on February 19, 2016. Several months later, the meeting received paperwork indicating that as he had indicated, Frank had named the AFM as beneficiary for his accounts. After completing the paperwork AFM received three checks from TIAA-CREF totaling \$135,735.35. The funds were deposited on May 31, 2016 and added to the existing Suchitoto Fund.

In meeting for business later that year the meeting approved accepting the funds and establishing a committee to oversee the distribution of the funds in accordance with Frank's wishes. The committee's membership was to include Bert Skellie, Don Bender, Lynn Leuszler, Judy Lumb, Paul Mangelsdorf and Frank's son Andrew.

In the remainder of 2016, the committee's only financial action was to disburse \$10,000 in funds to a Suchitoto high school to honor a prior commitment made by Frank. In 2017, the committee worked with Andrew Cummings to support the development of a Suchitoto based association of former scholarship recipients to support educational development in Suchitoto. The organization ABESUCHI has subsequently been founded, created as a legal entity and has a Officers approved by its membership. The committee determined that in order to best meet the intent of Frank's bequest and to support the development of ABESUCHI we would need to contract with some agency or organization equipped to oversee our efforts in El Salvador.

The committee determined that IDEAS, a Decatur based charitable organization with expertise in Central America was the best organization to support the committee's work. The committee reached an agreement with IDEAS to provide certain services over a 30-month period for a fixed fee of \$26,800. In addition, AFM would provide \$5,000 in contingency funds for other unexpected expenses. The contingency fund was to be replenished as needed with any remaining funds at the end of the 30-month contract period to be returned to AFM.

The Committee presented the proposed agreement for approval to the AFM meeting for business for approval. Upon approval, the meeting entered into an agreement with IDEAS on September 1, 2017. AFM then transferred the \$26,800 fixed fee to IDEAS and transferred the \$5,000 to fund the contingency fund.

Additionally, the committee transferred \$31,000 for scholarships on September 26, 2017. In 2018 the committee transferred \$1,114.15 to IDEAS to replenish the contingency fund to \$5,000.00 and transferred \$2,280 to cover an approved increase to the cost of staff in El Salvador.

In February of 2019 the meeting received the first of three checks from TIAA/CREF received in 2019. These checks totaled \$10,532.25. Lynn Leuszler called TIAA/CREF to discuss the funds. They explained that the funds were additional disbursements from Frank Cumming's accounts. Further they explained that we should expect to receive at least \$5,000 each year for the next seven years.

After reviewing the ABESUCHI budget and business plan, the Committee approved a transfer to ABESUCHI to cover operational costs in the amount of \$30,000. Those funds were transferred to IDEAS on March 11, 2019 and subsequently transferred to ABESUCHI.

The fund currently has a balance of \$42,794.79 which we expect to disburse to ABESUCHI for their operations and scholarships before the end of 2020. (Update 12/15/19: Check for \$18,000 paid to IDEAS after 11/20/19, new balance about \$25,000)

As the committee expects to lay down its service at the end of 2020, we approved creating instructions for Finance and the AFM Treasurer that upon receipt of any additional funds to the meeting from TIAA/CREF after the committee is laid down, such that those funds are to be transferred to ABESUCHI, provided that ABESUCHI provides the meeting with an financial statements of their operations.

– Submitted by: Paul Mangelsdorf, Chair of Finance Committee, November 20, 2019

## HOLDING IN THE LIGHT:

Mary Bartlett's brother Tom  
Beth-Ann Buitekant  
Tara Doyle  
Eric Glenn  
Daniel Gold-Hopton  
Bill Hooson  
Anna Hutto & Family  
Joanna Rachel Reid & family  
Katie Smillie  
Harriett Unfug  
Peter & Jane Walsh  
Betty Yates, mother of Mark Yates  
David and Freer Jarvis  
Cindy Berg's sister Laurel

## Atlanta Friends Meeting Contacts

Clerk of the Meeting: Lissa Place, [afmclerk1@gmail.com](mailto:afmclerk1@gmail.com)  
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Treasurer: Judith Greenberg, [afmtreasurer1@gmail.com](mailto:afmtreasurer1@gmail.com)  
Ministry & Worship: Elizabeth Lamb, [gelds@comcast.net](mailto:gelds@comcast.net)  
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Bookkeeper: Jonah McDonald, [afmbookkeeper1@gmail.com](mailto:afmbookkeeper1@gmail.com)

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

## Area Meetings for Worship

Every First Day (Sunday) 10:00 a.m. – Meetinghouse (AFM), with a smaller group in the Library.  
10:30 a.m. – Peachtree Friends Meeting (Christian-friendly, affirming, open to all),  
3980 Florida Ave, Norcross GA, [peachtree.quaker.org](http://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](mailto:MaconQuakers@gmail.com); [maconquakers.org](http://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](mailto:jhudson30116@yahoo.com) or 678-378-3368; [carrolltonfriends.org](http://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

Sixth Day (Friday) 11:00 a.m. – East Lake Commons, Decatur. Contact Bert Skellie at  
[bertskellie@gmail.com](mailto: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  
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  
Third Sunday of every month, 11:45 am, - Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business  
5:00 p.m. - Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship, Meeting Room

Second Day (Monday) Every other Monday at 7:00 p.m. - Spiritual Nurture Group, Library

Third Day (Tuesday) Second & fourth Tuesdays at 7:00 - Deep Waters Center for Prayer & Exploration, Meeting Room

18<sup>th</sup> of Each Month Newcomers Welcome Dinner, rotating location (No Welcome Dinner in December)

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

#### ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING

Office: Mon-Thurs 10 am to 1 pm and Friday by appointment

phone: 404-377-2474 – web and email: [atlantaquakers.org](http://atlantaquakers.org), [atlantaquakers@gmail.com](mailto:atlantaquakers@gmail.com)

Clerk: Lissa Place, [afmclerk1@gmail.com](mailto:afmclerk1@gmail.com) Treasurer: Judith Greenberg, [afmtreasurer1@gmail.com](mailto: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. 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](mailto: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](mailto:afmdiscussion-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

*To receive the newsletter by email, send a blank email to*

[afmnewsletter-subscribe@yahoo.groups.com](mailto:afmnewsletter-subscribe@yahoo.groups.com)

#### **Would you like to appear in future AFM Directories?**

Send your name and contact information to Brent Wolff at [afmdirectory@gmail.com](mailto:afmdirectory@gmail.com).

#### **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 [atlantaquakers.org/contact.htm](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 to [atlquakerltr@gmail.com](mailto:atlquakerltr@gmail.com). Submissions may be edited for length and format. THE DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS IS THE 20<sup>TH</sup> 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 that of the Meeting.*