

# ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2020



Virtual Meeting for Worship  
Each First Day (Sunday)  
10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

## LIFE AT ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING DURING COVID-19

---

Out of an abundance of caution and a deep and prayerful concern for the health of our entire community, Sunday meeting for worship at the meetinghouse continues to be suspended and the meetinghouse mostly closed. Our main worship will continue to be via Zoom on Sundays at 10:00 am. See below for details for this meeting for worship and other meeting activities via Zoom as well as other resources, including ways to connect to the meeting if you need help or if you can help others.

For those who prefer to worship in person, we are experimenting with a small, in-person worship group on Thursdays at 2 pm at the meetinghouse. Please stay tuned for more details each week or contact the office.

The newsletter and the announcement sheet will continue to be posted on the meeting's website. If you would like to be notified when the newsletter is posted online or to receive the announcement sheet via email, please see the final page of the newsletter for instructions. To join the meeting's Facebook page, search for Atlanta Friends Meeting and click the **+ Join Group** button.

If you are used to bringing your contribution to the meetinghouse, you can instead mail a check (see address on last page) or pay securely with Paypal or credit / debit card on our website. Visit <http://www.atlantaquakers.org/contact.htm> and scroll down to the DONATE button.

The Office Coordinator continues to work from home and checks email / voicemail each weekday.

## LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE . . . .

---

*“You are a light. You are the light. Never let anyone – any person or any force – dampen, dim or diminish your light. Study the path of others to make your way easier and more abundant. Lean toward the whispers of your own heart, discover the universal truth, and follow its dictates. . . . . Release the need to hate, to harbor division, and the enticement of revenge. Release all bitterness. Hold only love, only peace in your heart, knowing that the battle of good to overcome evil is already won. Choose confrontation wisely, but when it is your time don't be afraid to stand up, speak up, and speak out against injustice. And if you follow your truth down the road to peace and the affirmation of love, if you shine like a beacon for all to see, then the poetry of all the great dreamers and philosophers is yours to manifest in a nation, a world community, and a Beloved Community that is finally at peace with itself.”*

– John Lewis, *Across That Bridge: A Vision for Change and the Future of America*

## HAVE YOU MET OR WORKED WITH C.T. VIVIAN OR JOHN LEWIS?

---

C.T. Vivian and John Lewis, both iconic leaders in the 1960's Civil Rights movement and beyond, both died on July 17. Many members and attenders of Atlanta Friends Meeting have met or worked with one or both of these men as well as other Civil Rights leaders. If you're one of those people, Newsletter Editor Nina Gooch is collecting these stories (and pictures?), with highlights to be included in future newsletters. Please email them to [atlquakerltr@gmail.com](mailto:atlquakerltr@gmail.com). If you have questions or if you have pictures or documents that need to be scanned, please call or email Nina. (Thanks Karen Skellie for the suggestion!)

## CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF CONNIE CURRY

---

Connie Curry died June 20, 2020. She was an important American Friends Service Committee staff person during the civil rights period, travelling through the south to support black families who were mobilizing for their rights. She was also a great friend of Courtney and Elizabeth Sicheloff. She served in Atlanta City Government under both Maynard Jackson's and Andrew Young's administrations and wrote a powerful book, *Silver Rights*, describing the struggles and costs of people involved in the civil rights struggle.

Here is a link to her AJC obituary: <https://www.ajc.com/news/local-obituaries/connie-curry-atlanta-civil-rights-activist-dead/G8cXgKBi80Fi3Km1YHD0iO/>.

Information and a photo of the mural on the Freedom Trail/Beltline can be found at: <https://wanderwomenproject.com/places/journey-to-freedom-women-of-the-civil-rights/>

## WHAT IS MINE TO DO?

---

*written by Folami Prescott-Adams on June 19, one week after police killed Rayshard Brooks*

We all had some tough moments this last week or so. Many of us cried. Every time I think of my colleague laying paralyzed in bed with her 3-year-old son as she held him tight - hoping he will never be a hashtag - I want to cry. **And then I want to scream. And then I want to tear something down.**

Once I found a way to still my mind, heart, and body, I could think clearly. I asked the question, **What is mine to do?**

**Have you asked yourself that question?** I'm sure you have. Just sit with it long enough and you'll get an answer.

**What do you do well?**

**What do you know a lot about?**

**What does your family or community need?**

Match up and you will find or rediscover what is yours to do.

## DISCERNING YOUR RIGHT NEXT STEP – QUESTIONS AND RESOURCES

---

*by Liz Nicholson, written June 3 and reprinted from Quaker Voluntary Service's website*

In this moment, we are seeing protests and action rise in multitudes in this country, and around the world, demanding [justice for Black Lives](#) and calling attention to the systemic oppression of Black people.

**QVS fundamentally understands racial justice work to be spiritual work.** As an organization we are dedicated to supporting the spiritual development of young adults, *and* are in relationship with F/friends of all ages as partners in this work. We have seen many individuals, mostly white folks, feeling confused as to what their role in this moment is, and want to offer an incomplete list of ways one might consider getting involved.

This moment is also set against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, which is disproportionately impacting Black and Brown communities, and has altered the many ways individuals and communities are called to organize and gather in solidarity (e.g. economic precarity and hardship affecting the ability to contribute to organizations; concerns for health and preventing the spread of COVID-19 especially for those who are immunocompromised).

We recognize the diversity of gifts, abilities, identities, experiences, and perspectives that our QVS community holds. In this time, we invite members of our community **to take the right next step, regroup as you need, and then take the next right step, and the next.**

Below are some examples and resources of what a next right step might look like. **We encourage you to engage in this work in community** for support and accountability, and invite you to share below the right next step that you're taking. If you have next steps that further racial justice but are not on this list, please share them in the comments. *[Editor's Note: You may do so by going to the QVS website, address listed below.]*

- Is your next step personal reflection and education?
- Is your next step to learn more about Police and Prison Abolition?
- (For BIPOC) Is your next step, rest, grounding, or care?
- Is your next step at your Quaker Meeting?
- Is your next step having conversations with your family / community?
- Is your next step following and supporting BIPOC *[Black, Indigenous, People of Color]* creators, organizations, businesses, artists, and thinkers?
- Is your next step showing up at a protest?
- Is your next step advocating / calling local officials about policy, budget, and institutional change?
- Is your next step donating to an organization or solidarity bail fund?

This list is growing and incomplete, but the most important thing we are asking is for **you** to take action.

*To access the resources or to add your additional suggestions, go to:*

<https://www.quakervoluntaryservice.org/what-is-your-right-next-step/> and click on each question.

*These resources continue to be updated.*

## ANTI-RACISM RESOURCES

---

In addition to the resources at the QVS website, listed above, many of the anti-racism resources shared in newsletters, in announcement sheets and on AFM's discussion email list have been compiled here: <https://tinyurl.com/afm-arr>. If you see problems with any of the links or resources or would like to suggest additional resources, please let Nina know at [atlantaquakers@gmail.com](mailto:atlantaquakers@gmail.com)

## TO FIND OUT ABOUT WHERE AND WHEN PROTESTS ARE HAPPENING:

---

If one of your right next steps is to join a protest, you can find times and locations by joining the Google Groups "Georgia Peace and Justice Coalition" group and receive a list of protests for each day by sending a blank email to [GPJC-ActionList%2Bsubscribe@googlegroups.com](mailto:GPJC-ActionList%2Bsubscribe@googlegroups.com).

On Twitter, try the hashtags #whereprotest or #atlantaprotests. #atlantaprotests also works on Facebook

## A QUAKER BLESSING – FERGUSON CABIN

---

*submitted by Jennifer Thompson*

*Editor's Note: AFM's Ferguson Cabin is currently available for use, but due to COVID-19:*

- *Only one group at a time will be scheduled*
- *We ask that anyone using the cabin follow the guidelines of the Lake Burton Civic Association at <http://lbca.net/page-18127>, which currently states that this “may not be a good time to invite friends to your lake house, just as you would not invite friends to stay at your primary home right now.” These may change, so please continue to check the website. (NOTE: In the past and hopefully in the near future, the cabins have been used for retreats for meeting groups as well as other groups.)*
- *We also ask anyone using the cabin to bring their own sanitizing supplies and sanitize as they arrive and leave (Joan Thompson, the cabin scheduler, will have more detailed information for you)*

How many meetings . . . how many of any organization . . . has a retreat in the most expensive real estate of their state? How many can go to a wooded seven-acre hideaway with different cabin structures that also has a dock and little boathouse with a kayak, rafts, water vests, the prettiest view of mountains and lake in the state, and for less than a meal for four at a fast food restaurant?

The Atlanta meeting has this, just up the hill from Lake Burton.

But why go? After all, it's two hours away.

Because when I go there, I get back in touch with why I am a Quaker. There is an energy that comes from being connected to the land directly without the interruptions of electronic communication. The wash of the lake water over my skin. The peace of the night sky, broken by frog calls. A gentle slope into the lake that children can walk into. Hours that feel like minutes gazing at the changing light over the mountains.

At night, in the trees, is more silence. Cell phones work sporadically and there is no radio or television. You start the visit thinking, how can I get through it, and at the end you think how can I go back.

Gifted to the Atlanta meeting by Dwight Ferguson, the cabins and land are a throwback to earlier, simpler times. Dwight's intent was for fellowship, and that there is. Whether you are a single visitor, a large family, or one among several different groups, there are spaces for peace. Gathering. Contemplation and play. All sorts of play.

Word of the cabin and land float about in announcements but they seem to get missed. The Atlanta meeting has a good mix of long-time members, some experienced comers, and some brand-new attendees. Long-time members go to the Ferguson cabin, but other don't seem to know its draw. So, some clarification.



There are two cabins with full kitchens: Dwight and Irene. Both have board games and puzzles for family fun. The original hunting cabin, Dwight, has a screened porch for open air sleeping. Irene has an indoor ceiling fan and baseboard heat for winter. Dwight requires the heating of water on the stove for cleaning. Irene, the newest, has running hot water and toilet on the main level (you don't have to go outside!). Downstairs is a shower, toilet, and sink with hot and cold water, accessible to all. Both cabins have a stove and refrigerator/freezer.

For large groups, there are two more structures for sleeping: Treetops and Squirrel House. Both have electricity, and some Treetops lovers take a hot plate and coffee maker up there to have some extra independence. There are two outhouses left over from earlier times that are between these two cabins and can be used if the other facilities are in use.

The "boat house" by the lake, an easy walk down the drive, includes life vests, a kayak, oars, rafts, noodles, and a changing set of fun toys. There is a picnic table. A grill. A firepit. The shine of the moon on the water at night. It is magical.

There are 3 canoes that can be pulled out into the water. And don't forget the dock, where you can sit and look at the most beautiful place in the state (okay my opinion). Tie up your canoe or kayak, pull up the raft, have a sandwich, a water, and start it all again.

This place is a unique gift that everyone should experience. Give yourself the chance. You won't believe the gift we have. The gift you can give yourself. This is truly a Quaker blessing of simplicity, walking lightly on the earth, finding your inner light, and connecting with the light in this world.

Call or text the schedule manager, Joan Thompson at 404 273 3489 to make a reservation.

*[Editor's Note: August is already booked as are weekends in September. The cabins will close before the first hard freeze, sometime in November, and will re-open in the spring.]*

## COFFEE TABLE BOOK ABOUT LAKE BURTON

---

Lake Burton, where AFM's Ferguson Cabin is located, was created 100 years ago when the Tallulah River was dammed to create electricity. The Lake Burton Civic Association has created a large coffee table book about the lake and its history, which can be purchased at:  
<http://lbca.net/page-18112>



## FRIEND IN RESIDENCE REPORT – LOVE IN THE TIME OF CORONAVIRUS

### *Praying with my feet and a mask*

Since 2007, I have collaborated with many immigrants, allies, and organizations to call and organize for the closure of this Stewart Detention Center. During COVID-19, in partnership with Georgia Detention Watch and others, we have insisted federal and state authorities close this densely populated facility as a matter of public safety. The request has fallen on deaf ears.

Furthermore, multiple appeals have been made to the Stewart County Georgia Commission to act in the best interest of their local constituents during this public health crisis. Sadly, not even a symbolic resolution calling for the facility's closure during this pandemic.

Today, southwest Georgia where the facility is located remains a COVID-19 hotspot. Additionally, Stewart Detention Center has the highest number of guards who have contracted the coronavirus of any jail, prison, or detention center in Georgia.

Frederick Douglass is attributed as saying that, "Praying for freedom never did me any good 'til I started praying with my feet."

I've done a good bit of praying during the past two months of COVID-19. Always with a mask and always on the periphery of any crowd, it's felt important to amplify the voices of those most imperiled by the various microbial and societal viruses that have gone pandemic these days.

I've joined Black Lives Matter actions on Auburn Avenue, downtown, and at the site where Rashard Brooks was tragically killed by Atlanta police. I've even organized a few Mennonites for Black Lives vigils in East Atlanta.

We also continue to accompany immigrants released from detention and dropped off at the Atlanta airport. We've assisted over 50 such migrants since the beginning of COVID-19, mostly helping them print their boarding passes, get to their gates, and providing them with a meal and other material goods for their journey. We are so grateful for our on-the-ground team as well as our excellent remote team of [Paz Amigos](#).

We do have one man that ICE dumped at the airport. I say "dumped" because the man was unaware he was being released. He had been hospitalized with COVID-19 and because of risk factors, ICE decided to release this man who has never lived in the US and knows no one here at our airport. A volunteer couple has housed this man for a few weeks and later this week I will take him to Jubilee Partners in Comer where he'll reside until flights resume to his home country.

### *Hear their cries*

A former foster son was recently detained in the Troup County Jail. He contracted COVID-19 in the jail. He called me crying, explaining that many in his unit were sick. He felt no one cared for their plight. I felt powerless but I had an idea.



“Call me back and I’ll record everyone’s testimony about what’s happening inside the jail.” So we did just that.

That same day 200 loved ones descended upon the jail in protest. Numbers like that in LaGrange, a town of 30,000, is unprecedented, but love compels even the most unprecedented of acts.

The combination of the families’ actions and our release of the recording of the phone call resulted in the local Public Health office testing everyone in the jail. Nearly one in four of those confined at the jail tested positive for COVID-19, my foster son included.

The jail released almost half of its population and those sick have been quarantined to a separate building.

To hear the cries of my foster son and others, watch this video ([youtu.be/cyMa1eUtOT4](https://youtu.be/cyMa1eUtOT4)). The video has already been viewed over 5,500 times. Please share it until every jail is no longer a place of unjust suffering.

### *A Momentous Occasion*

It was inspiring to witness the removal of a Confederate memorial that stood in Decatur for 112 years.

### *In other news...*

I have also partnered with organizations and churches like [Innovation Law Lab](#), [Mercy Community Church](#) and [Presencia](#), accompanying housing insecure and incarcerated immigrants. I am humbled by the encounters I’ve had under bridges, on back patios, and over Zoom with these stretched but strong individuals and families.



Finally, I have been accepted as a student in Columbia Theological Seminary’s [Spiritual Direction](#) program. I also received a scholarship for which I am very thankful. Of historic note, Columbia recently announced that effective immediately, Black students attending the seminary will receive full scholarships. That’s good news!

### MATERIALS FOR VIRTUAL CELEBRATION OF CENTENIAL OF WOMEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE?

August 26 is Women’s Equality Day. It is the anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment that officially extended the right to vote to women. We can’t celebrate in person at Meeting, but we are hoping to “gather” by collecting videos and voice recordings from Atlanta members and attenders about women in our families, friends of families and our forebears, who, irrespective of color, social rank, economic advantage or disadvantage have stories in their life experiences that affirm our mutual struggles for equality and point the way to a more fully equal future for daughters and granddaughter and great granddaughters, etc. Please contact Julia Ewen for more info about how to participate. If you are media-shy, just write up a few paragraphs and email them to [jewen@bellsouth.net](mailto:jewen@bellsouth.net) and help us write women back into history! Julia 404-534-3043. See announcement sheets for laterr details.

## BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP TO MOVE TO ZOOM

---

We're moving the Bible Discussion to Zoom. Plans are to meet virtually for an hour one weekday per month. For folks whose electronic devices or technical knowledge don't support contact through ZOOM we can include you via telephone connection. There's peace, justice, strength and wisdom awaiting in the Bible. Join us! For more info contact Julia Ewen at [jewen@bellsouth.net](mailto:jewen@bellsouth.net) or 404-534-3043 (landline, no text messages accepted).

## SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS AND ADULT FIRST DAY SCHOOL – August 2

---

Each first Sunday of the 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 August 2, Diane Rowley will share her spiritual journey. Diane grew up in Atlanta and was a member of First Congregational Church and a daughter of professors at Morris Brown College. Although she has lived other places, she always returns to Atlanta. She began attending Atlanta Friends Meeting in the 1990s and became a member in 2000. All are welcome.

On other Sundays, Adult First Day School is discussing *Order of the Sacred Earth*, a collection of writings about how we care for our souls and the Earth at the same time. We will meet via Zoom and close the class in time to be in meeting for worship in the separate zoom link. See below for Zoom details.

To hear the spiritual journeys of Linnea Halsten, Erin Hazlett-Norman and Jillian Eller, all current Quaker Voluntary Service fellows, heard July 5, go to <https://tinyurl.com/ybfdw44h>.

## WEEKLY ZOOM FORUM: *Let's Talk About Race* – Wednesdays, August 5, 12, 19, 26

---

The Committee on Undoing Racism in Atlanta Friends Meeting (CurAFM) is continuing the weekly open forum conversation via Zoom for "Let's talk about Race." Example topics: "What is my Racial Identity?" and "How can I have meaningful conversations about race with others who do not look like me?" Feel free to invite a friend every Wednesday at 7:30! Looking forward to seeing you there! If you have any questions, please contact Alberta Guise, Lissa Place, or Alicia McGill.

Zoom link for recurring meeting every week on Wed. at 7:30 p.m. until further notice:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82894149680?pwd=L1ZlclBMR1p2ZWVxWjB1SmJ3a2xGZz09>

Meeting ID: 828 9414 9680

Password: 623280

## READING BOOKS BY AND ABOUT PEOPLE OF COLOR – August 6

---

On August 6 at 1:30 p.m., the book for discussion will be *The Hidden Light of Northern Fires*, by Daren Wang. At the August meeting, the group will also discuss books for late 2020 and early 2021. On September 3, they will share poems brought by those attending. The group meets on the first Thursday of every month. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Susan Cole ([cole2544@bellsouth.net](mailto:cole2544@bellsouth.net))



## MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS – August 16

---

Meeting for business will be online again this month. Simply stay in the Zoom Meeting for Worship after worship ends. Minutes and other matters to be considered for approval in August are listed in the Minutes for July's Meeting for Business below.

## MEETING VIRTUALLY THIS MONTH: WORSHIP AND FIRST DAY SCHOOL

---

*Friends Journal* June/July issue included this article about virtual meeting for worship:  
<https://www.friendsjournal.org/transcending-geography/>

*See announcement sheet in your email inbox or on our website for the most up to date information and for more detailed instructions for connecting using Zoom. To call in using your phone, dial 1-253-215-8782 or 1-301-715-8592 and enter the meeting ID and password, if needed, when prompted. This may be a toll call from your landline. **If you have a mute button on your phone, mute it when you enter the meeting and unmute to speak.***

### *Sundays:*

ADULT FIRST DAY SCHOOL will meet at 9:00-9:50 am

Meeting ID: 862 3546 3217

Password: Quaker

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86235463217>

On the first Sunday of each month, we will listen to the Spiritual Journey of one of our members/attenders. (August 2 will be Diane Rowley) On other Sundays, we will be discussing *Order of the Sacred Earth*, a collection of writings about how we care for our souls and the Earth at the same time. We will close the class each week in time to be in meeting for worship.

FIRST DAY MEETING FOR WORSHIP will meet at 10 am

Meeting ID: 908-004-190 and Password: 842962.

Link: <https://zoom.us/j/908004190>

(closing by Ministry & Worship Committee and organized by Steve Collins)

The meeting link will remain open until about 11:45 for those who would like to chat. On the third Sunday of each month we will have meeting for business via Zoom after worship and a short break.

FIRST DAY SCHOOL for Families and Friends at 10:15 am with Laura MacNorlin.

Meeting ID: 727 996 1727.

Link: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/7279961727>

YOUNG FRIENDS/HIGH SCHOOL GROUP usually at meets at noon

For current high schoolers and students in upper middle school as well as recent grads.

Contact Emily Weyrauch at [emily.weyrauch@gmail.com](mailto:emily.weyrauch@gmail.com) for more information and Zoom details

### *Wednesdays:*

WEDNESDAY MORNING MIDWEEK MEETING FOR WORSHIP 9:30 am on Wednesday mornings

Meeting ID: 920 3886 2952

Password: 726229.

Link: <https://zoom.us/j/92038862952>

Contact Bert Skellie at 404-680-4799 for more info.

## CARING CONNECTIONS AT ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING

---

If you need help during this time, or if you can help, Care and Counsel Committee has set up an online way to connect people, using something Gordon Shippey set up earlier in the year to create a general list of those willing to deliver meals, drive people to appointments, run errands, or visit people at home or in hospital. In response to social distancing, we've also added an option to connect people via email or phone. To request help or to volunteer, go to:

<http://www.atlantaquakers.org/members.htm#CARINGCONNECT> (under Members and Attenders) or contact Karen Skellie at 404-680-4524 or [kskellie@gmail.com](mailto:kskellie@gmail.com) or Nina Gooch at 404-377-2474 (leave a message) or [atlantaquakers@gmail.com](mailto:atlantaquakers@gmail.com).

## FINANCIAL HELP THROUGH THE AFM ASSISTANCE FUND

---

This is a time to reach out and care for each other. Do you have a need for temporary financial assistance? Care & Counsel Committee maintains an Assistance Fund for Members and Attenders for providing temporary assistance with financial emergencies. If you have a financial need, don't hesitate to ask. The information about the process and an application form are on the AFM website: [Assistance Fund Description & Request Process](#) and [Assistance Fund Application Form](#). Instead of filling out the paper form, you can email the information to the Clerk of Care & Counsel, Karen Skellie, [kskellie@gmail.com](mailto:kskellie@gmail.com). Care & Counsel is meeting regularly online & by e-mail.

Would you like to help others through the AFM Assistance Fund?

**By mail** to the meetinghouse address to the attention of the treasurer. Make out the check to Atlanta Friends Meeting, but on the "for" line of the check, write "For Assistance Fund".

**Through AFM website by PayPal or Credit Card**, go to <http://www.atlantaquakers.org/contact.htm> and scroll down to the DONATE button.

To designate an online donation for the Assistance Fund, please also send an email addressed to both the treasurer and the bookkeeper:

[afmtreasurer1@gmail.com](mailto:afmtreasurer1@gmail.com) and [afmbookkeeper1@gmail.com](mailto:afmbookkeeper1@gmail.com)

## SEVENTH MONTH MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS

July 19, 2020

Recorded Pending Approval

---

Attendance: Steve Collins, Elizabeth Lamb, Alberta Guise, Alison Mawle, Aaron Ruscetta, Becky Lough, Bert Skellie, Karen Skellie, Caroline Morris, Mike Aland, Anton Flores, Claire Hannapel, Clive Gordon, David Small, Diane Rowley, Don Bender, Judy Bender, Georgia Lord, Henry Slack, Herbert Edwards, Jay Roache, Jennifer Dickie, Jennifer Thompson, Judith Greenberg, Jim Tolmach, Sally Ferguson, Judy Lumb, Karen Morris, Larry Foster, Mary Ann Downey, Bill Holland, Michael Chapman, Mike Allison, Myrna Trapp, Nina Gooch, Paul Mangelsdorf, Peg Geronimo, Rebecca Grant, Ronald Nuse, Susan Firestone, Teri Key-Hooson, Bill Hooson, Richard Allen, Laura MacNorlin, and Lissa Place (Clerk), and Rebecca Cole Sullivan (Recording Clerk)

Friends Gathered near the appointed hour with opening worship. A member of Ministry and Worship read the Seventh Month Query out of worship: "How have suffering and grief helped in my own spiritual formation? Where do I feel God at work in me during these times?"

## Discernment Items

**Anti-Racism Minute:** Jennifer Dickie presented the following minute. After a brief discussion about a few adjectives Friends approved the minute as submitted. A few Friends mentioned that they hope we might continue this work and bring a minute about reparations. The committee agreed that this minute was not the place for this concern. Friends stated thanks to the committee for all their work.

**Minute 07-19-2020-01:** Friends approved the following minute on Anti-Racism.

In the wake of recent killings of Black people by police and white vigilantes, Atlanta Friends Meeting stands with Black Lives Matter, and we work to bring about a life without fear and racism. As Quakers, we believe in the equality and worth of every person, and today we honor the sanctity of Black lives and work for justice and equity. We condemn police violence. We are deeply disturbed by the militarization of police and use of military troops. Black and interracial families rightly fear that their loved ones could be harmed by racist actions not only by police or extremist groups, but also by white people complicit with or in denial of racism. We protest the racism that results in disproportionate incarceration of Black people: disparate health, environmental, and economic impacts on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, and continued devaluing of Black lives and Black voices. The voices and agency of Black people are excluded, omitted, ignored, considered unimportant, silenced, or otherwise sidelined. In response, and in keeping with our Quaker testimonies of equality, peace, integrity, and community, we recommit to uprooting systemic racism and white supremacy both externally in our communities and nation, and internally, in ourselves, our Meeting, and the Religious Society of Friends.

Lasting change requires a long-term commitment to undoing systemic racism, and the removal of unjust policies, practices, and laws.

We urge local, state, and national leaders to immediately demilitarize law enforcement, for example, by stopping programs that give free military equipment and weapons to police departments, and by changing police training.

We call on our local, state, and federal elected officials to reimagine public safety. Although there is a need for a strong public safety response on occasion, the overwhelming problems are brutal responses of police to alleged minor offenses and police killings of Black people. So we call for officials to create a system that establishes standard codes of behavior, including use of force policies, promotes accountability, and ensures equitable treatment for all.

We call on local, state, and national elected officials to redirect many of the funds currently going to police departments and jails/prisons to public safety programs that make available unarmed social workers, health workers, mental health support, and negotiators.

We call for communities, institutions and governments to work on systemic changes that prioritize investing in young people, health, education, housing, living wages, and transformative justice.

We call for all of us to dismantle the interlocking web of structurally racist policies, laws, practices, and norms among institutions such as law enforcement, the legal system, education, housing, health, elections, and business that harm Black, Indigenous and People of Color and maintain the system of white supremacy.

Undoing more than 400 years of racism is up to all of us. Since 1660, Quakers have expressed abhorrence of violence in war and the refusal to kill or take lives. Yet white Quakers have allowed violence toward Black people in the form of enslavement and exclusion, and by being silent for too long about personal, institutional, and systemic racism. Atlanta Friends Meeting commits to continue addressing racism in ourselves and our predominantly white institutions and to working in multiracial coalitions for an equitable and racially just society for all.

**Reopening Working Group:** Alison Mawle, convener of Working Group on Reopening the Meeting House, reported on the work of the committee. They bring forward the following new minute to replace the minute approved last month (06-21-2020-01). After researching liability, the committee is clear that our insurance covers any liability that may arise.

**Minute 07-19-2020-02:** On the recommendation of the Working Group on Reopening the Meeting House, the Meeting hereby replaces Minute 06-21-2020-01 (adopted at the Sixth Month Meeting for Business) by substituting the following language for that Minute, in its entirety:

The Meeting for Business reserves the right to determine when, and under what conditions, “in person” Worship shall resume on Sunday mornings.

For the duration of the COVID-19 Pandemic emergency, the Meeting authorizes the Working Group on Reopening the Meeting House to determine whether AFM affiliated meeting(s) may be held at the Meeting House or grounds, and to establish conditions for such meetings. In this context, “AFM affiliated meetings” shall mean any meeting for which the Meeting does not charge rent.

If the meeting in question is one which would ordinarily be authorized or organized by another committee of the Meeting, such committee shall utilize its ordinary authorization or organization process, but shall, in addition, confer with the Working Group on Reopening the Meeting House and defer to that committee’s determination regarding whether the proposed meeting can be safely held.

The Working Group on Reopening the Meeting House is authorized to halt all AFM affiliated meeting(s) from being held at the Meeting House or grounds if the Working Group finds that such a halt is appropriate.

The Working Group on Reopening the Meeting House may establish practices for meetings at the Meeting House or grounds. Ordinarily, such meetings can only be held upon the condition that each group carefully follows each of the practices set out below, but the Working Group may require additional practices or excuse compliance with certain practices for particular proposed meetings.



## Standard Required Practices

### General

- Wear a mask for the entire time you are in the Meetinghouse (bring your own mask).
- Maintain physical distance (6') from others
- Do not come if you do not feel well.
- Entry doors will be propped open for entry and exit.
- The greeter will open and close main doors.
- The greeter will sanitize the entry and bathroom door handles upon arrival and departure.
- The greeter will ensure guidelines are clear and maintained.

### Arrival

- No touch greetings
- Upon entering, use hand sanitizer immediately and before picking up your nametag.
- Proceed directly to meeting location
- Sit physically distant from those not in your immediate group/family

### Meeting - speaking

- If you speak during the meeting, rise and speak from your seated location.
- Keep your mask on and speak loudly and clearly

### Informal Socializing

- Use the patio and maintain physical distancing.
- Kitchen and drinking fountain are closed. Bring your own beverage and container if desired.

### Restrooms

- One person at a time to use restroom.
- Knock and wait outside the restroom until it is clear.

### Departure

- Clean hands with hand sanitizer, before replacing your nametag
- Maintain space as you exit the building.

### Childcare

- At this time there is no childcare. Childcare rooms are closed
- If you wish to bring children, they should also follow the guidelines for physical distance and mask wearing.

**Social Concerns:** Bert Skellie, clerk of Social Concerns, reported on behalf of the committee. The Committee brings forward two minutes for the consideration. Social Concerns is asking for Atlanta Friends Meeting to unite with the Germantown Monthly Meeting's minute on the state of the world during COVID-19.

**Minute 07-19-2020-03:** Atlanta Friends Meeting unites with Germantown Monthly Meeting by approving the following Minute.

### **GERMANTOWN MONTHLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (issued May 10, 2020)**

*The entire world is now in the throes of COVID-19, a pandemic that has close to four million confirmed cases and well more than 260,000 deaths across the world. These numbers increase by the hour, with no clear end in sight. The pandemic defies quick and easy solutions, but its eradication requires concerted international attention, increased resources, and public mobilization.*

*Also **unrelenting is the scourge of continuing armed conflict**, engulfing long familiar places such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen as well as lesser-known locales such as Kashmir and the Central African Republic. Some of these are long-standing conflicts with deep roots. Others are of more recent vintage. All are destructive and wasteful in tragic degrees. The coronavirus pandemic with its global sweep and disregard for nationality and political boundaries has brought clarity to the stark choices about priorities and survival that confront the international community.*

*In the face of this moment of clarity, **Antonio Guterres, the Secretary General of the United Nations, issued a call on March 23 for a Global Ceasefire** in all theaters of armed conflict. The call is a direct effort to make eradication of the COVID-19 pandemic the major focus of the international community.*

***Germantown Monthly Meeting supports the appeal by UN Secretary General Guterres for the Global Ceasefire.** In doing so we join with 70 member nations of the United Nations, Pope Francis, the World Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches, a broad range of religious leaders from all over the earth, and scores of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). including Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR). The list of supporters is still growing. It includes a number of parties to ongoing armed conflicts.*

*As Friends we are committed to the peaceful resolution of national and international disputes. We believe that this unprecedented initiative by the UN Secretary General offers an opportunity to deal creatively and urgently with the pandemic threat posed to us as members of the human race, not as armed belligerents.*

*We commit to build upon this minute. We support broader exposition and public actions that will flow out of this initiative. We will also encourage fellow Quakers and others to join with us in support of the **Global Ceasefire** by communicating with our Representatives, Senators, and other public officials in calling for support of the **Ceasefire**.*

The second minute that Social Concerns brings forward is a minute of concern calling for increased Medicaid in Georgia, for special enrollment window for the Affordable Care Act and a call for scientific community consultation for reopening.

After discernment Friends approved the ideas behind the minute and ask the following working group to finalize the wording: Susan Firestone, Rebecca Cole Sullivan, Larry Foster, Diane Rowley, and Bert Skellie.

**Minute 07-19-2020-04:** After some discernment, Friends approved the minute while asking a small working group to finalize the wording around who we are including in the minute and adding a request around increasing the amount of federal funding being dispersed to Indigenous communities. Friends approved that after the working group finalizes these additions the minute is ready for dispersal and the final wording will be brought forward as a report next month to be added to the minutes.

*Minute as reported:*

These are challenging times. The COVID 19 pandemic has resulted in widespread devastation across our state and nation with the impact greater for some groups than for others. African Americans and Hispanics (Latinx) have experienced higher infection and death rates. These communities also tend to have less access to affordable healthcare.

Much of the devastation could have been avoided if our state and federal leaders had more closely adhered to the scientific community's advisements on ways to contain the spread of the virus.

Atlanta Friends Meeting (Quakers) calls upon our leaders to do the following:

The Governor and State Legislature should increase healthcare access for all low-income Georgians through an expansion of Medicaid.

The U.S. President should open a special enrollment window to allow the uninsured to enroll in the Affordable Care Act's health insurance exchange.

When state and federal leaders deliberate which measures should be taken to reopen the economy along with the need for pandemic remediation, their decisions should rely heavily on advice from the scientific community.

As our nation moves forward during this crisis, let all our actions be tempered by compassion borne from an awareness that all life is precious.

**Care and Counsel:** Karen Skellie, clerk of Care and Counsel, brought forward the revised guidelines for the Assistance Fund. The proposed addition is as follows:

At the discretion of the Care & Counsel Committee, assistance may be offered to people in the wider local Friends community, for example, people who have previously attended AFM regularly or are attending a worship group which is under the care of the Meeting.

**Minute 07-19-2020-05:** Friends approved the wording of the revised guidelines as reported.

## **Reports:**

**Reopening Working Group:** Georgia Lord reported on behalf of the Working Group on Reopening the Meetinghouse. They bring the following proposed minute for Building Usage by Tenants. They will bring this minute for approval next month.

Proposed Minute: For the duration of the COVID-19 Pandemic emergency, the Meeting authorizes the Working Group on Reopening the Meeting House to determine whether each tenant may use the Meeting House or grounds, and to establish conditions for such use by each tenant.

In this context, tenants shall include any Meeting House user who is charged rent by AFM.

Ordinarily, AFM tenants shall be expected to carefully follow each of the practices set out below, but the Working Group may require additional practices or excuse compliance with certain practices for particular proposed uses by a tenant.

### **Standard Required Practices for Tenants:**

#### **General**

- Persons attending must wear a mask for the entire time they are in the Meetinghouse.
- Persons attending must maintain physical distance (6') from others
- Persons who do not feel well must not attend.
- The tenant will sanitize the entry and bathroom door handles upon arrival and departure.
- The tenant will ensure guidelines are clear and maintained.

#### **Restrooms**

- One person at a time to use restroom.
- Knock and wait outside the restroom until it is clear.

**Friend in Residence:** Anton Flores, Friend in Residence, reported to the Meeting about how he is spending his time in ministry during COVID-19. Since the Meetinghouse is closed for public use, Anton has been working, with others, to meet immigrants at Atlanta Hartfield Airport as they get dropped off after being released from Stewart Detention Center. Anton wants to learn more from people in the Meeting about our history in radical hospitality. Please reach out to Anton if you want to share what you know and remember from our previous experiences in radical hospitality.

**Finance:** Paul Mangelsdorf, clerk of Finance, reported on the financial state of the meeting through the end of the second quarter (June 30). As of June 30, Atlanta Friends Meeting is running a \$24,679 deficit. The deficit was driven by a \$23,920 shortfall in revenue partially offset by expenses being \$7,916 less than budget. Revenue is \$38,028 lower than the prior year at this point, primarily driven by a \$25,541 lower rental income and \$12,411 lower in contributions. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, if we are unable to rent for the remainder of the year the rental income shortfall will be approximately \$43,000. Compared to budget, expenses are \$7,916 less. This is favorable variance is largely the result of the employee expense and many committees spending less than budget.

In 2020, we expect that certain categories of expenses may be lower during the rest of the year. Specifically, we expect: No expense for the Gathered Meeting Retreat budgeted at \$2,500; Limited expense from Ministry & Worship as their primary expenditure from the \$4,000 budget is for scholarships to SAYMA and FGC Gathering; and lower expenses for Religious Ed, Childcare and Young Friends support budgeted at \$1,000, \$2,800, and \$1,500 respectively.

**Nominating:** Clive Gordon, reported on behalf of the nomination committee. Nominating Committee brings forward Laura MacNorlin as Clerk of the Religious Education Committee. Laura has been active in Quaker education and parenting initiatives not only in Atlanta Friends Meeting and Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association but also in the wider Quaker community for several years. Nominating will bring Laura's name for approval next month. In the meantime, we encourage anyone who does not know Laura to get to know her. She is listed in the AFM directory.

**Administration Committee:** Steve Collins, Clerk of Administration Committee, reported on behalf of the committee. During the Meetinghouse closure, multiple projects have continued to happen in terms of upkeep and our solar panel project. The Georgia Interfaith Power & Light (GIPL) water, energy, and solar assessments for the Meetinghouse have been completed and shared with the Meeting's ad hoc committee for review. The ad hoc group has met once to discuss the GIPL report and plans additional discussions to define next steps. Kevin Wong has begun replacing the many Meetinghouse light bulbs with energy efficient ones.

**Quaker Voluntary Service (QVS) Support Committee:** Steve Collins reported for the committee. The QVS Local Support Committee (LSC) will recognize the current group of Fellows and their spiritual nurturers at the rise of meeting on the 4th First Day, July 26, before they leave for their end of year retreat in north Georgia. Household furnishings at the current QVS house on Hawthorne Street will be moved to a house in Grant Park which will be the home for eight 2020-2021 incoming Fellows; they will arrive the first week in September.

QVS staff and the Atlanta support committee will work together to offer orientation to QVS, the Atlanta Meeting, and the city. Once we know more about orientation plans, the committee may reach out to the Meeting for additional support.

**Clerk's Item:**

I would like to appreciate Georgia Lord for covering for me by clerking business meeting for the past two months. I was starting to get settled into my new role as a parent, and knowing that the Meeting was in good hands was a huge weight off my shoulders. Thanks for your great work, Georgia.



## Announcements

**Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA) Financial Priorities:** SAYMA has asked that we consider the financial priorities of the Yearly Meeting. This request has been forwarded to finance committee and we will consider it before the October deadline.

### Note from SAYMA Nominating Committee:

The clerk read the following notes from the SAYMA Nominating Committee:

Dear SAYMA Friends,

As SAYMA Nominating Committee we are charged with matching willing individuals with open positions of responsibility within Yearly Meeting that utilize and bring forth their gifts.

Subsequent to nominating and approving a clerk for SAYMA URJ at Yearly Meeting 2019, the current group has declared itself self-selecting because of racism within SAYMA. We as your Nominating Committee, feel strongly that any further discernment concerning SAYMA URJ must happen in monthly meetings and Yearly Meeting sessions as a whole, not in our small committee, and we hope that we can find a way forward together.

The clerk will be discussing this with our SAYMA reps to consider a way forward.

### Approval of Minutes

**Minute 07-19-2020-06:** Friends approved the Sixth Month Minutes.

### Events in the Life of the Meeting

None to record this month

**Closing Worship:** Friends closed with a moment of worship.

Respectfully Submitted by

Lissa Place, clerk

Rebecca Cole Sullivan, recording clerk

### **HOLDING IN THE LIGHT:**

Elaine North

Mike Allison

Robin Fortuna

Betsy Eggers' family

Julia Ewen

*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.*

### Atlanta Friends Meeting Contacts

Clerk of the Meeting: Lissa Place, [afmclerk1@gmail.com](mailto:afmclerk1@gmail.com)

Office Coordinator: Nina Gooch, [atlantaquakers@gmail.com](mailto:atlantaquakers@gmail.com)

Treasurer: Judith Greenberg, [afmtreasurer1@gmail.com](mailto:afmtreasurer1@gmail.com)

Ministry & Worship: Elizabeth Lamb, [gelds@comcast.net](mailto:gelds@comcast.net)

Finance: Paul Mangelsdorf, 770-677-4280

Social Concerns: Bert Skellie, [bertskellie@gmail.com](mailto:bertskellie@gmail.com)

Administration: Steve Collins, [shcollins75@gmail.com](mailto:shcollins75@gmail.com)

Care & Counsel: Karen Skellie, [afm.care.counsel@gmail.com](mailto:afm.care.counsel@gmail.com)

Quakers for Racial Equality: Susan Firestone, [susanfires@gmail.com](mailto:susanfires@gmail.com)

Religious Education: Elaine Meyer-Lee, [eemeyer87@earlham.edu](mailto:eemeyer87@earlham.edu)

and Tina Bovermann, [Bovermann@me.com](mailto:Bovermann@me.com)

Library Clerk: Cal Gough, [calgough@bellsouth.net](mailto:calgough@bellsouth.net)

Nominating, Clive Gordon, [afm.nominating@gmail.com](mailto:afm.nominating@gmail.com)

Newsletter Editor: Nina Gooch, [atlquakerltr@gmail.com](mailto:atlquakerltr@gmail.com)

Webmaster: Aaron Ruschetta, [arxaaron@gmail.com](mailto:arxaaron@gmail.com)

Bookkeeper: Jonah McDonald, [afmbookkeeper1@gmail.com](mailto:afmbookkeeper1@gmail.com)

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

#### ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING

Office Coordinator working from home while meeting house closed

voicemail/phone: 404-377-2474 – web and email: [atlantaquakers.org](http://atlantaquakers.org), atlantaquakers@gmail.com  
Clerk: Lissa Place, afmclerk1@gmail.com Treasurer: Judith Greenberg, 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). When asked to confirm, select the option to confirm by email.

#### **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 or paypal, 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.*