ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2020

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.



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

QUERY FOR SEPTEMBER

What is my understanding of grace working in my life? In what ways do I feel Held during times of trouble as well as times of joy or peace?

-- SoutheasternYearly Meeting

For those who prefer to worship in person, we are holding a small, in-person worship group on Thursdays at 2 pm at the meetinghouse and, beginning after Labor Day, are trying another on Monday evenings. 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.

WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT QUAKERISM?

Two sites with descriptions of unprogrammed Quaker worship: quakerinfo.org/quakerism/worship and www.fgcquaker.org/resources/silent-worship-and-quaker-values, plus two more with more general information: quakerinfo.org/quakerism/index and quakerinfo.org/quakerism/index and quakerinfo.org/resources/index and <a href

INTRODUCTION TO QUAKER VOLUNTARY SERVICE

Quaker Voluntary Service (QVS) began in Atlanta in 2012 and is now in five cities across the US. The QVS website (https://quakervoluntaryservice.org/) describes QVS "as an experiment, living at the intersection of transformational spirituality and activism." QVS Fellows work full-time in professional positions at community based organizations addressing a wide range of issues, while living in intentional community, sharing day to day life and supporting each other throughout the year. Fellows receive support from QVS staff, spiritual nurturers and local Quaker meetings.



Tiauna Lewis she/her/hers Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Tiauna Lewis grew up in Lincoln, Nebraska, where she got her start in social justice. She is a recent graduate of Swarthmore College, a historically Quaker institution, where she majored in history and minored in Black Studies and Religion. Tiauna has a long history of social justice advocacy through poetry. Tiauna was a member of multiple award-winning slam poetry teams and writes primarily about life as a queer, fat, Black woman. As a college student, Tiauna was active in the Black student community and the First-Generation, Low-

Income community. Tiauna is a Mellon Mays Fellow and hopes to continue her education in a cultural studies field (undecided). Tiauna had a strong presence in the humanities research community at Swarthmore, completing long-term research projects on the Egyptianization of Ancient Nubia, the Intellectual History of US Black Feminism, and the historical impacts of the Thomas v. Hill Judiciary Committee hearings. Tiauna is passionate about creating communities and fostering meaningful relationships in her work. During her year with the Quaker Voluntary Service, Tiauna will work with the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence in Atlanta, Georgia.



Anna O'Driscoll she/her/hers Partnership for Southern Equity

Anna O'Driscoll is originally from Takoma Park, Maryland, and is a recent graduate of McGill University, double majoring in geography and international development studies. In her time at McGill, she volunteered in conflict resolution workshops in local elementary schools and as a conversation monitor at a community center providing language classes to recent immigrants to Montreal. Through her participation in a research group looking at Canadian mining operations in Latin America, and a field study semester in Panama, she

grew passionate about the intersections of social and environmental activism. She loves to play soccer, go for bike rides, and cook meals with friends. Anna grew up going to a Quaker summer camp, which contributed to her love of the outdoors and introduced her to Quakerism and spirituality. She is excited to learn more about service, social justice, and community this year, and looks forward to serving with the Partnership for Southern Equity.



Evelyn Wilson she/her/hers Southern Education Foundation

Evelyn Wilson grew up in Kansas City, Kansas. She is a recent graduate of the University of Kansas where she majored in psychology and minored in business. During her time in school, Evelyn worked in lab studying the psychological basis of prejudice and discrimination. This was an important experience which shaped her views on why people engage in prejudicial thinking and how it can be changed effectively both in the lab and in the real world. Evelyn's senior thesis focused on creating an online classroom intervention to reduce religious

discrimination among students. Evelyn is passionate about making social justice initiatives a reality by enacting structural changes, especially within the field of education. She became interested in Quaker beliefs while in high school, attracted to the faith' strong commitment to social justice, and is excited to be able to explore how Quaker spirituality intersects with advocacy work. In her free time, Evelyn enjoys spending time her family, going on road trips and reading. She is excited to be working with the Southern Education Foundation as a research fellow.



Asa Kramer-Dickie he/him/his Furniture Bank of Atlanta

Asa Kramer-Dickie was born and raised here in Atlanta and grew up attending the Atlanta Friends Meeting. He has been profoundly impacted by the Quaker communities he has been a part of over the last decade and a half, and recently graduated from Earlham College with a degree in Peace and Global Studies and a minor in History. Over the past four years, Asa has been involved in a number of organizations/movements both on- and off-campus, ranging from workplace justice and labor organizing in Indiana, to Palestinian

solidarity work on campus, to anti-racist work with white folks across the country, to issues of border justice, militarization, and migration. Asa is passionate about issues related to racial and economic justice, and the work of envisioning and creating a more just world. More than anything, though, Asa has a deep love for people, whether it is being in and building community, meeting new people, seeing the power people have when we come together, existing in communal space, or even walking through busy streets. In his free time, Asa enjoys reading, baking, late-night conversations, drinking too much caffeine, singing (when absolutely no one is around), biking, and eating sweet things. He is excited to be working at the Furniture Bank of Metro Atlanta.



Reva Kreeger she/her/hers Georgia Conservation Voters

Reva Kreeger spent her childhood in Oxford, Mississippi, Silver Spring, Maryland, and Los Angeles, California – and has brought together bits and pieces of each place to create her own home. Most recently, she spent the past four years in Greensboro, North Carolina at Guilford College studying history and community studies. In college, Reva developed a passion for the power and liberatory potential of the stories we tell about ourselves and our communities. Through studying in Cuba and writing a thesis on the black freedom struggles in Greensboro in

the late 20th century, she has found deep hope and inspiration in the ways people have and continue to build radical communities and social movements. Reva has been transformed with her work in southern racial and economic justice organizing, particularly with Beloved Community Center of Greensboro and Ignite NC. She also finds intense love, care, community, and growth in the Baltimore Yearly Meeting Quaker Camp world as a counselor and playmate. She is excited to continue with Quaker practice with QVS. Reva loves to frolic in the woods, dance wildly, be surrounded by her friends, and get really sweaty. She is very excited to be working with Georgia Conservation Voters this upcoming year.



Elizabeth Fosler-Jones She/her/hers Purpose Built Schools

Elizabeth Fosler-Jones was born and raised in Portland, Oregon, and recently graduated from Bowdoin College. She majored in Africana Studies and during her time in college, worked at the on-campus grill, helped run the radio station, and spent two years writing for the newspaper. She co-founded and is now secretary of Yo Ghana!, a non-profit that helps connects students in the Pacific Northwest to students in Ghana through letter writing. This past summer, she worked as a legal intern in

the Immigration Legal Services Department at Catholic Charities where she helped with legal research and put together client applications to send to USCIS. In her free time, she can be found reading, watching tv, writing letters, or going on walks. She is incredibly excited about exploring Atlanta and working with Purpose Built Schools this coming year.



Ava Thornton she/her Southern Center for Human Rights

Ava Thornton is an abolitionist from Hoboken, New Jersey, and a recent graduate from Wesleyan University. She is invested in mutual aid and solidarity tactics for social change, and is curious about implementing restorative and transformative justice practices on a broader, more widely accepted level. Though not particularly spiritual or religious, Ava is a certified yoga instructor and sees movement and breath-work as an avenue for personal growth.

While at Wesleyan, she double-majored in African American Studies and Feminist, Gender and Sexuality Studies and volunteered with Wesleyan's Center for Prison Education as a tutor at a maximum security men's prison in Connecticut. For her senior capstone project, she wrote several essays over the course of two semesters which focused on envisioning a future beyond capitalism through re-imagining our relationships with one another. The essays highlighted a special focus on radical friendship, prison abolition, Indigenous activism, Black feminism and her personal reflections on trauma, family and belonging. She is excited to be working with the Southern Center for Human Rights for the upcoming QVS year.



Amanda Wessel she/her/hers ACLU

Amanda Wessel is from Takoma Park,
Maryland, and recently graduated from Bryn Mawr
College outside of Philadelphia where she majored
in Spanish and Geology. She got connected with
the Quaker community during her summers
attending and working at Catoctin Quaker Camp.
In college she developed her spiritual community
while working on a Baltimore Yearly Meeting group
focused on racial justice in the summer camp
programs as well as forming an independent anti-

zionist jewish community on campus. She is also passionate about co-operative living and enjoyed living in Bryn Mawr's environmental justice food co-op during college. She is very excited to get to know Atlanta and work with the ALCU of Atlanta on access to voting rights this coming year.

NEW ATLANTA LOCAL COORDINATOR FOR QVS

Note from QVS: "Amidst the welcoming of incoming Fellows, we're so pleased and glad to welcome also our newest staff member, QVS Alum, Rachael Carter! Rachael will be leaning into this work as the Incoming Atlanta Coordinator -- we are so glad to welcome her to this role and our staff team, welcome Rachael!"

Rachael Carter is a recent alumnae of QVS as a Fellow in the Atlanta house which was her primary introduction to Quaker practice. She is honored to be able to deepen her work with QVS and the Atlanta community as the Local Coordinator while continuing to stay connected with The Partnership for Southern Equity, which is a racial equity organization in Atlanta. Rachael came into interfaith work in her years in undergrad at Ursinus College studying Politics, Peace and Social Justice. International Relations and Africana. African American Studies. Since then, Rachael has spent time researching ecotheology in the Black community and learning to understand its connections to other faith and spiritual practices. Rachael is passionate about plants and the natural world, cooking as a healing practice and understanding various systems. She is interested in further exploring the intersection of religion, food, and employment and is hoping to continue this exploration with further study. She also enjoys biking, taking care of her many plants and listening to podcasts.



QVS HOUSE NEEDS - GARDENING HELP AND ADDITIONAL LINENS

The new 2020-2021 Quaker Voluntary Service (QVS) Fellows will be here in Atlanta on September 30th. Getting the house ready for them is well underway, but there are a few things that are in need of some energy. First, there is a small garden in the front area of the house that could use some tending. It is a divided bed by the street. If you would like to bring seeds, help with making the beds clear and make the garden presentable, this is a great way to say hello and see the new house at a safe distance. This is a job that can be done over multiple days. Also, if you have any linens such as cloth napkins and large rectangular tablecloths that could be used in the house, please let us know. We would like to attend to these needs before September 15. For more information, please contact Rachael Carter, Atlanta QVS coordinator at rachael@quakervoluntaryservice.org or at 215-605-7920.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION UPDATE AND SURVEY

Hi Families of Atlanta Friends Meeting,

Sending Light and love from our families to yours, from your AFM Religious Education Committee and first day class Teachers!

The Atlanta Friends Meeting (AFM) Religious Education (RE) committee is working to imagine and implement ways to nurture the spiritual lives of our young Friends during these challenging times, and we need your input. The RE committee has created the survey below for parents/guardians and children to check in about your needs, hopes and dreams! Help us discern ways forward, please check out this survey, and expect a call from our committee members.

Click here to fill out the survey, and add responses from both guardians/parents and children at: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAlpQLSfl-yXsxli24lh6PdnzSf7SVz4TmZXxqTGtqCHsUp148Ttxnw/viewform?usp=sf_link

This is especially important as we have been told, by the committee on re-opening the meeting house, that Meetings for Worship will continue to be held *virtually* for the foreseeable future, and therefore First Day School will not take place in-person at least through the rest of 2020.

We also have a message from AFM Ministry and Worship: Calling All Families:

We would like to issue a special invitation to all families with children to attend the first 15 minutes of worship, as usual. If your mike is muted, your children will not be distracting to others. And we really miss seeing you! Of course, if you wish to stay longer, that's fine too. But please join us. We miss you!

Friends far and wide are finding ways to continue building Quaker beloved communities with parents and children in this unique time! Our grief and collective understanding unite us. Our capacity to hold one another in the Light and find ways to connect is expansive.

In Faith,

Your Religious Education (RE) committee

A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM LAURA MACNORLIN, NEW RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLERK

originally written and shared the weekend of August 16, when Laura's name was brought to meeting for worship with attention to business for approval

Hi Quaker Families.

This weekend, my name has been brought forward for approval to become the next RE Committee Clerk. I've been greeting many of you at our classes in-person and by Zoom. In my heart for years but even more this summer, I've held the queries, "How is the Light moving in our AFM families lives? How are our spiritual lives deepening and our faith practices growing? I trust that there is always deep movement of the Spirit amongst us, and even more so in this unprecedented time.

For the last dozen years, our meeting has been intentionally focused in efforts to create beloved intergenerational community and programming. The RE committee and I are connecting with wider Quakers circles to learn what is happening for Friends' families and children. We hear that many meetings have just a few families in their area. Yet- our meeting has many many children, and an incredible bunch of people invested in the lives of our meeting's parents and children. Let's cherish and celebrate, and continue to build our beloved multi age community.

Nationally, Friends are sharing resources in exciting ways. Your family can join! Daily Quaker Family Devotional zoom meetings are being offered mornings and evenings (message me for details). My mentor Friend, Melinda Wenner Bradley, Youth Religious Life Coordinator for Philidelphia Yearly Meeting is offering intergenerational programming for Friends to be together at home! https://www.pym.org/religious-education/together-at-home-and-online-during-covid-19/ Melinda speaks my mind with her words;

"I'm holding these questions and wondering how in our vision and planning for the coming year we might consider shifts and changes that speak to new possibilities in how we approach youth religious education that sustains families, young people, and communities of Friends. Three images emerge: a **tether**, a **seesaw**, and **concentric circles**."

https://www.pym.org/religious-education-planning-connection-and-new-directions/.

This weekend I joined the Quaker Religious Education Collaborative (QREC) at an international zoom conference, to explore queries like: "What is growing in you and in your community? What potential do you sense in this moment? What would support you, your community, and the RE community of practice?" I'd like to give you a few takeaways messages from the conference;

- Kaleidoscopes shift patterns. Friends, that is what we are all learning to do now! Let's create new patterns, and form creative ways to continue Lighting up each other's lives!
- We are in turbulent waters. In this boat, we are together, and we don't know the way, but we have an Inward Guide. The Light is in us, and God is in the boat!
- Since research shows that children develop their spiritual lives at a very early age, we need to
 accept that the home is the core of where children gather their understanding of spirituality
 and religious lens. How can Friends accompany one another as a family in these shifting
 times?

Last year, before the COVID epidemic, our classes focused on Quaker testimonies, and this would normally be the curriculum year to explore the *old testament with a Friends Lens*. Our committee is centering in these Hebrew Bible passages brought forward by a teacher, as we discern ways forward. They may be of use for your family too, speaking to all our conditions.

Psalm 46 verse 1 : God is our refuge and strength, an ever- present help in trouble. Psalm 46: verse 10 : Be still and know that I am God.

Genesis 31:49, May God watch between you and me when we are absent one from the other.

With this in mind, know you are held in our hearts. And our hearts and minds need *all* the wisdom of *all ages*, for the Life of our Friends Meeting to continue!

We *will* be in touch, Laura MacNorlin Atlanta Friends Meeting, Clerk, Religious Education Committee

INTERESTED IN MEMBERSHIP IN ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING?

Ministry and Worship Committee (M&W) wants you to know that we are open for business. If you're are interested in membership in Atlanta Friends Meeting, see the meeting's guidelines for membership at www.atlantaquakers.org/_site_pdf_docs/AFM_Membership_guidelines-201703.pdf. The first step is to write a letter requesting membership. (These days you will need to email it to the office at atlantaquakers@gmail.com.) M&W will then arrange a clearness committee to meet with you (via Zoom). Since we won't be able to hand you a copy of the SAYMA (Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association) Guide to Our Faith and Practice to read in preparation for your clearness meeting, you can find it at

http://www.sayma.org/online_documents/faith_and_practice/F&P2012final.pdf. You can also purchase a printed copy in book format at https://www.lulu.com/shop/southern-appalachian-yearly-meeting-and-association/fp2012/paperback/product-20122494.html. The membership process via Zoom will be a new experience for us all, but especially during this time of uncertainty and possible feelings of isolation, we want you to know that we're here and we're glad that you are. (If you have questions about finding the online resources listed above, please contact the office.)

SOCIAL CONCERNS MINUTE ON VOTING

This minute was approved by the Social Concerns Committee on August 12, 2018 and was not submitted for approval to Meeting as a whole.

Within its testimony of truth, peace and justice, the Social Concerns Committee of the Atlanta Friends Meeting (Quakers) bears witness to a call for action based upon the following concerns:

In its long history, our country has faced many challenges in fulfilling its stated goal of liberty and justice for all. Real advances have been made through the hard work and sacrifice of women and men down through the centuries. However, recently, the prospect of a truly democratic nation based on the human rights of all has been under attack like never before. In a wide ranging assault, gains in the rights of people of color, women, the differently abled and the LGBT community are eroding. Economic and social justice in areas such as access to healthcare, criminal justice, environmental and immigrant rights have steadily crumbled.

These changes have been facilitated through the rise of cultural and political demagogues who have taken advantage of people's fears and insecurities to gain support for ideologies and policies that are ultimately detrimental to all. White supremacists and their sympathizers espousing a shameful mixture of racism, misogyny, homophobia and xenophobia have gained access and influence in the halls of government to a degree unparallel in recent history.

Looking back through time the rise of fear mongering demagogues is not unique to this era or to this country. Furthermore, in our nation their power has tended to wax and wane in political cycles. This cyclic tendency may lull good people into complacency - a complacency born from the belief that our nation will inevitably swing back toward freedom and justice. However, there is concrete evidence our current social and political state is unprecedented. Adding to the erosion of progressive policy has been the decline in the means to effect change through democratic processes.

Our nation is experiencing a marked and accelerated regression in civil rights. The ability to cast a ballot is a cornerstone of individual expression in a democracy. In recent years this right has been made more difficult through a coordinated effort to legislatively disempower low income Americans, particularly people of color. These laws include allowing barriers to voter registration and purges of registered voters. This kind of legislation is often pushed by economically elite interests facilitated by the Citizens United decision which allowed the influence of concentrated wealth on the electoral and legislative process at an unprecedented level.

In the past these changes may have been ameliorated by an independent press, but the corporate takeover of media, the general decline of local newspapers and the growing prominence of influential right-wing media outlets have softened opposition. This trend has gained greater import through an attack on journalism and science as means of ascertaining facts. The efforts to discredit the scientific consensus on climate change by claiming it is a hoax is evidence of this phenomenon.

While a spontaneous reversion to a more enlightened government may very well happen, we would be remiss to believe there is something inherent to our nation making it immune to the rise of a long-lasting totalitarian state.

The 2016 election was a wake up call for many as it opened eyes to the power and influence of a segment of society whose actions appear driven by self-interest and hate. The most vulnerable in society (the poor, sick, elderly and children) have borne the brunt of the new agenda. In the time since the election, those in power have refused to moderate their hard-line agenda even in the face of the suffering these policies have caused.

The negative changes in society have come at an accelerated pace that can be overwhelming. Given the dark times we are in, it would be easy to succumb to despair and apathy and shut out the world. It is important to listen to the gentle voice within and recognize it is during the darkest hour that the Inner Light is most bright. We need to open up to the world around us and allow the Light to shine as we take immediate and vigorous action for the greater good of all.

This Minute is a call to action. The Atlanta Friends Social Concerns Committee calls upon Meeting members and the community at large:

To understand that the Inner Light exists in all people and to recognize that pain and suffering exists in all, even within those who cause suffering in others. We understand that peoples' hearts can change.

To demonstrate loving-kindness toward those in power who inflict pain. With the guidance of the still, small voice within them, they have the potential for positive growth in time. Until that time, we should use nonviolent means to gently, but vigorously remove access to the levers of power so they can no longer inflict suffering on others.

To recognize anew the value of participatory democracy and the role of the electoral system in enacting positive change.

To understand how excess leisure and consumerism, that can arise from privilege, can impede us from recognizing the greatest value of time and money - to enact change that benefits all, particularly the most vulnerable in society.

To support with time and financial resources the organizations and candidates with values that can build the basis for a compassionate, inclusive and sustainable world.

VOTE!!

Registration deadline - October 5, 2020 for Tuesday, November 3 General election.

Got questions about voting? Check out these facts.

- Georgia Secretary of State Voter Website: check to see if you're already registered, register to vote, and make changes to your current registration record: https://registertovote.sos.ga.gov/
- 2. Fulton County Voter FAQ's: polling locations, absentee ballots, voter ID, poll workers, voting after completing a felony sentence, and much more. https://www.fultoncountyga.gov/services/voting-and-elections/voting-fags
- 3. DeKalb County Voter FAQ's: requirements to register to vote, name and address changes, voter ID, registering for a political party, how to vote by mail and more. https://www.dekalbcountyga.gov/voter-registration-elections/frequently-asked-questions-0
- 4. Georgia Voter FAQ's:
 - Registration deadlines, sample ballots, overseas and military voting, time off to vote, provisional voting, etc. https://www.vote411.org/georgia
 - Help register voters, help get out the vote, contact elected officials, etc. https://www.rockthevote.org/how-to-vote/georgia/
 - League of Women Voters-Georgia(non-partisan, non-profit): Citizen's Handbook, educate voters, know the issues, get out the vote, educate the next generation, etc.
 https://my.lwv.org/sites/default/files/leagues/georgia/citizens_handbook_final_2019_-2020.pdf
- 5. Amercian Civil Liberties Union: English and Spanish for most of the services above. https://www.acluga.org/en/voting-and-elections-2020
- 6. Election protection hotline: 866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683)
 - Advocate for voting access in general: https://secureourvote.us/state/ https://www.aclu.org/issues/voting-rights/promoting-access-ballot

WEEKLY ZOOM FORUM: Let's Talk About Race - Wednesdays, September 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

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. For Zoom information, check announcement sheet at http://www.atlantaguakers.org/ announcements/Announcement Sheet.pdf

READING BOOKS BY AND ABOUT PEOPLE OF COLOR - Thursday, September 3

The book group reading works by and about people of color continues to meet at 1:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month via Zoom. On September 3, the group will be reading and discussing poems selected by group members. On October 1, the book for discussion is *Another Country* by James Baldwin. For questions or the Zoom link, contact Susan Cole (cole2544@bellsouth.net).

SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS AND ADULT FIRST DAY SCHOOL - September 6

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 September 6, Rachael will share her spiritual journey. Rachael is a recent alumnae of QVS as a Fellow in the Atlanta house, which was her primary introduction to Quaker practice. She is honored to be able to deepen her work with QVS and the Atlanta community as the Local Coordinator while continuing to stay connected with The Partnership for Southern Equity. 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 journey of Diane Rowley, heard August 2, visit: https://tinyurl.com/y4m4f8m5

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE – Sunday, September 20

Please send articles, announcements, information about October events, and other submissions to atlquakerltr@gmail.com by September 20. Word or other text format please.

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. If you have questions or if you have pictures or documents that need to be scanned, please call or email Nina.

LEARN ABOUT WORK WITH THOSE ON DEATH ROW - September 15

The Macon's meeting offers monthly Third Day educational sessions with September's being a session with Sister Mary Catherine Johnson, who works with people on death row and leads the vigils that happen at the actual execution site, Jackson State Prison. She has lots of stories and experiences to share, and it will be an evening not to miss! Mark your calendars now for September 15 at 8:00 P.M. More details to come in upcoming Announcement sheets.

MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS - Sunday, September 20

Meeting for business will be online again this month. Simply stay in the Zoom Meeting for Worship after worship ends.

An excellent overview of meeting for worship over Zoom is "Can You Gather With God Over Zoom?" at https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/22/arts/quaker-meeting-zoom.html

See the most recent announcement sheet in your email inbox or on our website at http://www.atlantaquakers.org/_announcements/Announcement_Sheet.pdf 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 SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN

For details, see Announcement Sheet at

http://www.atlantaquakers.org/_announcements/Announcement_Sheet.pdf.

FIRST DAY MEETING FOR WORSHIP

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.

Calling All Families:

We would like to issue a special invitation to all families with children to attend the first 15 minutes of worship, as usual. If your mike is muted, your children will not be distracting to others (even if we see them wiggle). And we really miss seeing you! Of course, if you wish to stay longer, that's fine too. But please join us. We miss you!

Suggestions for Meeting for Worship on Zoom:

"Worship is our response to an awareness of God. We can worship alone, but when we join with others in expectant waiting we may discover a deeper sense of God's presence. We seek a gathered stillness in our meetings for worship so that all may feel the power of God's love drawing us together and leading us." (From Advices and Queries, Britain Yearly Meeting.) Some things to keep in mind as we adjust to "the new normal" of worshiping via zoom: Even though it is different and may feel strange, remember that this is a worship service. To help create the kind of shared space that allows all of us to listen for the Divine within us, please keep your mic muted unless speaking to us. If you're eating or having a lengthy conversation with another member of your household, please also turn off your video temporarily or step away from the camera, to avoid distracting others. If your children are joining us for meeting for worship, please do not feel the need to turn off your video. We welcome their presence in meeting for worship.

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 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.

AFM ANTI-RACISM MINUTE NOW ONLINE - PLEASE SHARE WIDELY

The Atlanta Friends Meeting Anti-Racism Minute approved 7/19/20 is now posted on the Atlanta Friends Meeting website homepage in the section titled, "Atlanta Friends Meeting stands with Black Lives Matter." This statement is our public witness and calls for 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. Please share widely. Direct link to text of the minute: http://www.atlantaquakers.org/_site_pdf_docs/AFM_Anti-Racism_Minute-aprvd20200719.pdf

ANTI-RACISM RESOURCES

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 to suggest additional resources, email atlantaquakers@gmail.com

COVID-19 UPDATES AND OTHER USEFUL AND FUN LINKS

Links for kids and adults range from the latest information about COVID-19 and how to prevent it to voting information to links for kids and parents to links to museums, digital performances and Quakerism are collected at https://tinyurl.com/afm-ftoti. New links added weekly. Email Nina at atlantaquakers@gmail.com if there are problems with any of the links or to suggest additional links.

NEED A TUTOR OR NANNY?

If you need to hire a tutor or nanny, but need contacts, get in touch with the Office Coordinator. In her other life, she works in the theatre, where many, many people are unemployed and many people have experience and references as a teacher and/or nanny. atlantaquakers@gmail.com.

FGC's SPIRITUAL DEEPENING E-RETREATS

Friends General Conference's Spiritual Deepening Program eRetreats and Online Offerings invite newcomers and Friends to build an online spiritual community through an exploration of Quaker thought and practice: https://www.fgcquaker.org/deepen/spiritual-deepening/spiritual-deepening-eretreats-and-online-offerings

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. 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 and afmbookkeeper1@gmail.com

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)

<u>http://www.atlantaquakers.org/members.htm#CARINGCONNECT</u> (under Members and Attenders) or contact Karen Skellie at 404-680-4524 or kskellie@gmail.com.

EIGHTH MONTH MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS August 16, 2020 Recorded Pending Approval

Attendance: Steve Collins, Bill Hooson, Teri Key-Hooson, Georgia Lord, Karen Skellie, Bert Skellie, Elizabeth Lamb, Lynn Leuszler, Alberta Guise, Alison Mawle, Anton Flores, Becky Lough, Beth-Ann Buitekant, Clive Gordon, Diane Rowley, Henry Slack, Jay Roache, Jennifer Dickie, Jennifer Thompson, Judy Lumb, Julia Ewen, Karen Morris, Mary Ann Downey, Bill Holland, Myrna Trapp, Nina Gooch, Free Polazzo, Caroline Morris, Carolyn Coburn Allen, David Small, Lissa Place (Clerk), and Rebecca Cole Sullivan (Recording Clerk)

Friends gathered near the appointed hour with opening worship. A member of Ministry and Worship shared the Sixth Month Query out of the worship: "How do my actions and words show that God works in me and through me? How do I take my sense of God and bring it into a tangible form of hope for others?"

Discernment Items:

Working Group on Reopening the Meetinghouse: The working group on Reopening the Meetinghouse continues to meet. This month they bring forward the following minute that sets the guidelines for tenants to be able to use the space.

Minute 08-16-2020-01: For the duration of the COVID-19 Pandemic emergency, the Meeting authorizes the Working Group on Reopening the Meetinghouse to determine whether each tenant may use the Meetinghouse or grounds, and to establish conditions for such use by each tenant.

In this context, tenants shall include any Meetinghouse 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.

Nominating Committee: Clive Gordon, clerk of Nomination, reported on behalf of the committee. Nominating Committee recommends the approval of Laura MacNorlin to be the clerk of Religious Education Committee for 3 years from August 2020 through July 2023.

Minute 08-16-2020-02: On the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, the Meeting approves the appointment of Laura MacNorlin as Clerk of the Religious Education Committee for a period of three years, beginning August 2020 to July 31, 2023.

Reports:

Working Group on Reopening the Meetinghouse: Alison Mawle, clerk of the committee reported. The Ad hoc committee on reopening the meeting house was established at the May MFB, and held its first meeting on May 27. We have met twice a week since that time, and have discerned that our first phase of work is complete. This report summarises that work. We divided the areas that we needed to address into 3 groups; those that are worship-related, including meeting for worship and committee work, those related to our renters, and those related to the cabin at Lake Burton. We reviewed the public health data on the COVID 19 pandemic in the State of Georgia, and we also sought information from other churches on how best to handle worship. That led to the recommendation that First Day worship be virtual for the foreseeable future.

We sent out 2 surveys, one to meeting attenders, and one to our renters. From the responses we received, we found that there was interest in a small in-person worship group, and that there was a potential need for committee groups to hold in person activities at the meeting house. None of our renters are interested in returning until January 2021. We also determined that cabin rental could continue as usual, with the specification that only one group at a time was present, and that they followed CDC guidelines.

The committee has developed specific guidelines for any group using the meeting house, based on CDC recommendations. These include wearing masks at all times, social distancing, and frequent hand sanitizing. The Meeting has bought supplies to enable this. We are currently holding weekly worship on Thursday afternoons, at 2pm, and we plan to add an evening worship group in September. Green Friends and the sign-making group have used the outside space for their work.

We have reported our work to the meeting weekly after Meeting for Worship, and also at Meeting for Business. We have brought 2 minutes to the Meeting outlining how the committee will handle use of the meeting house, including the guidelines. The first was approved in June and updated in July, and the second presented in July and approved at today's meeting.

Our work going forward will continue the oversight of meeting house use, and development of new uses for the meeting House as they arise. Currently we are supporting its use as transitional housing for immigrants released from detention, as part of the ministry of our Friend in residence, Anton Flores.

Many thanks to all members of the committee who have provided their wisdom and expertise to this work.

Committee Members: Georgia Lord, Elizabeth Lamb, Karen Skellie, Steve Collins, Clive Gordon, Brent Wolff, Nina Gooch, Anton Flores, Jennifer Dickie, Lissa Place

Administration: Nina Gooch, Office Coordinator, asked to be made an Administrator for the meeting's Facebook group for logistical reasons, to make it easier to post information about meeting for worship via Zoom. Shortly after that, Nina became the only Admin for the group, and about that time. Nina realized that the purpose listed for the group was vague and that there were no guidelines for how the group was used. Nina has been thinking about what the description and guidelines should be, using the guidelines approved for the discussion list as a starting place as well as guidelines for another Facebook group that Anton shared with Nina. Nina has asked those in the Facebook group what purposes they would like the group to serve. Nina also realized that many new people were using the Facebook group as a way to get to know us and that the page on Facebook was not set up to do that well and that the Facebook group was an avenue for communication within the meeting that we were not using to its fullest potential. So, there are two things Nine would like to look at: one, creating a set of guidelines and clearly written purpose for the Facebook group and two, figuring out how to use Facebook better as a communication tool for the meeting. Nina will be asking for input for those in the Facebook group, but Nina welcomes thoughts and questions now as well as volunteers to work with Nina on an ad hoc committee on one or both of these issues. Jennifer Thompson and Free Polazzo volunteered to help Nina with the Facebook Group.

SAYMA Threshing Meeting: Atlanta Friends Meeting held a Threshing Session on March 1, 2020, after Meeting for Worship, in the meeting room. We met in response to an email received from SAYMA's Ministry and Nurture Committee in which they asked each monthly meeting "to address feelings of tension and conflict that had come before them around SAYMA Uplifting Racial Justice Committee (SAYMA URJ)".

The threshing session was attended by 23 Friends including several who had previously served as members of SAYMA URJ committee as well as a current member of SAYMA URJ's Support Committee. The session opened with background information and sharing of the 8 guidelines on holding a "Threshing Session" that are discussed in SAYMA's Guide to our Faith and Practice (pages 18-19).

A planning committee met to help the AFM to hold a threshing session. The committee added a second question that Friends were encouraged to also respond to, in addition to the one asked by SAYMA's M & N committee:

- How do you feel about how SAYMA Uplifting Racial Justice committee (SAYMA URJ) is currently functioning with Sharon Smith as clerk?
- How can SAYMA URJ accomplish the goal of making SAYMA more anti-racist and welcoming to People of Color?

Responses:

- The threshing session showed that there was a wide range of feelings, opinions, and hopes including confusion, sadness, surprise, anger, support, worry, and joy about the way SAYMA' Uplifting Racial Justice committee (SAYMA URJ) has been functioning.
- 2. The threshing session expressed support for the goal of helping SAYMA learn how to be more welcoming to People of Color. Many felt that the SAYMA URJ committee would be more successful in accomplishing its goals if the committee were appointed and clerked "In the manner of Friends".

Note that there was no attempt to discern a "sense of the meeting" as the last Guideline for holding a threshing session states that "Corporate decisions are not made during a threshing session."

Social Concerns: Bert Skellie reported on behalf of the committee. Last month we approved a group of people finalizing the wording of the following minute. The committee is now bringing the final wording to record it into the minutes. The final wording is as follows:

Minute of concern approved the Atlanta Friends Meeting on July 19, 2020
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. Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and other People of Color have experienced higher infection and death rates. These communities along with undocumented immigrants and other underserved groups 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 advice on ways to contain the spread of the virus.

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

We urge the Governor and State Legislature to increase healthcare access for all low-income Georgians through an expansion of Medicaid.

We call for the U.S. President to open a special enrollment window to allow the uninsured to enroll in the Affordable Care Act's health insurance exchange. Further, under the Public Health Service Act, provide free Covid-19 care in response to this public health emergency.

We urge the U.S. Congress to increase and immediately disperse funding for Native Americans, fully fund the Indian Health Service, and cooperate with tribal nations on collection of COVID-19 data.

We call for state and federal leaders to rely heavily on advice from the scientific community when making decisions about which measures should be taken to reopen the economy along with the need for pandemic remediation.

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.

Ministry and Worship: Elizabeth Lamb, clerk, reported on behalf of the committee. Ministry and Worship is submitting an announcement in the announcement sheet and newsletter rather than making an announcement at the beginning of worship service each week about staying muted, not eating during meeting, etc. Most of the distracting behavior seems to have stopped or at least lessened, so we feel that this along with an invitation to worship at its beginning will perhaps feel for worshipful to all. Secondly, the meeting misses seeing the children in worship, so Ministry and Worship is sending out a special invitation to families with children to attend the first 15 minutes as has been our practice.

Announcements:

Religious Education Committee is doing outreach to families. They are not sure they have a list of all families and children, so please reach out to Religious Education Committee with name of any children in the meeting you know.

Approval of Minutes July 2020

Minute 08-16-2020-03: Friends approved seventh month minutes.

Events in the Life of the Meeting

Peter Sederberg died July 31, 2020. Hector Black died August 8, 2020.

Closing Worship

Friends closed with a moment of worship.

Submitted by Lissa Place (clerk) Rebecca Cole Sullivan (recording clerk)

HOLDING IN THE LIGHT:

Angie Love and family (Angie's mother died in late August)
Daniel Gold-Hopton and family (awaiting kidney transplant)
Cathy and Michael Amanti
Deborah Uwimana and family

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

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ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING

Office Coordinator working from home while meeting house closed voicemail/phone: 404-377-2474 – web and email: 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 announcemnt sheets and other announcements relating directly to the life of the meeting, send a blank email to

afmannouncements-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.
To receive announcements AND posts about a broader range of topics relating to being a Quaker, send a blank email to afmdiscussion-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
To receive the newsletter by email, send a blank email to afmnewsletter-subscribe@yahoo.groups.com. 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.

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. 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. Submissions may be edited for length and format. THE DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS IS THE 20TH DAY OF EACH PRECEDING MONTH.

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