

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER



MARCH 2021

LIFE AT ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING
DURING COVID-19

Instead of holding Sunday morning meeting for worship at the meetinghouse, we are currently meeting via Zoom at 10 a.m. Sundays at <https://zoom.us/j/908004190>

(Meeting ID: 908 004 190 and Passcode: 842962).

See below for more details on this and other online worship and First Day School opportunities 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 holding small, in-person worship groups at the meeting house on Mondays at 7 pm and Thursdays at 2 pm.

A few other small groups are returning to the meetinghouse. If you are interested in this, please contact the Office Coordinator at atlantaquakers@gmail.com.

We are also considering how our worship might be organized in the coming months. Please fill out our survey at <https://forms.gle/r1AoF59t2QBTeVXh9>. The announcement just below has more details.

You can still mail a check (see address on last page) or pay securely with Paypal or credit / debit card on our website at <http://www.atlantaquakers.org/contact.htm> and scroll down to the DONATE button. You can set up monthly / recurring contributions when you use Paypal or your debit/credit card on the website. You can also set up payments through your bank's ACH bill payment system. (Please contact your bank for more details on their ACH bill payment system.)

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

INPUT REQUESTED ON SUNDAY WORSHIP – please respond by March 7

In June of 2020, the Working Group on the Use of the Meetinghouse recommended that Atlanta Friends Meeting's main Sunday worship be via Zoom for the foreseeable future. Now, along with the Ministry and Worship committee, we are looking at that question again and are asking for your input. **Until we can all return to the meetinghouse, how do we want to organize our Sunday worship?** We look forward to hearing what you have to say. Here is the link to the survey: <https://forms.gle/r1AoF59t2QBTeVXh9>. Please fill out by March 7.

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

QUERY FOR MARCH

Are you sensitive to the spiritual and physical needs of those making up the meeting community? How does your meeting lovingly respond to the needs of homebound, distant, or lonely members and attenders?

- Southeastern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association's Faith & Practice Revision committee

SUMMARY AND RESOURCES FROM FORUM ON QUERIES HELD JANUARY 31

On January 31, the Ministry and Worship committee sponsored a forum on “Queries: Shaping Active Spiritual Practices for a Welcoming Meeting.” The forum began by discussing the purpose of centering a workshop around queries: “Becoming a welcoming, inclusive, racially equitable Meeting is a spiritual endeavor. We call on Spirit, the Divine, God, through introspection and prayer, and through outward practices of group contemplation and sharing our thoughts in response to queries, which are open-ended questions for reflection. As our inner spiritual life develops, we expect our behavior to change.”

The Forum used queries to consider racially equitable, welcoming, and inclusive practices in the Meeting's culture, and the journey that we are on, as individuals and as a community. It asked those participating to be open to deep reflection and vocal sharing, as they were able, and to recognize that this work might feel uncomfortable at times. Those participating then broke into smaller groups to consider the following two queries using worship sharing: “In Meeting for Worship, are you open to various forms of vocal ministry as coming from the Spirit?” and “Is there a clear process for expressing a grievance and getting the situation resolved for someone who feels they have been the object of discrimination or bias by a person/people in the Meeting, or as a result of institutional racism or homophobia?” Small groups were also asked these two follow up questions: “How would you rewrite these queries?” and “What related queries may have come up for you during our worship sharing?”

In the last few minutes of the forum, small groups shared queries that had arisen during their worship sharing:

- “How do I allow my ego to be subservient to my Spirit to truly hear vocal ministry?”
- “How do I know when a message I receive is Spirit-led?”
- “How is your meeting open to growing as a community and as individuals through experiential input?”
- “How is God continuing to hone you to become more and more true to the Spirit?”
- “How do we align what we believe with actual practice?”
- “Are we truly open to hearing and experiencing messages in different ways, from different traditions?”
- “How can we have a more responsive process to welcome those who may have a grievance, or feel discriminated against in the meeting?”

There was agreement among those attending that the Meeting does not currently have a clear process if there is bias or discrimination within the Meeting and also that whoever is designated to receive concerns needs to be well prepared to hear / really listen to concerns and to take appropriate follow up action. They need to know what to do to have a prompt yet deliberate process. There should also be a standing place in the newsletter and announcement sheet for information about the process for grievances and other concerns including how to pursue the concern, as well as adding this information to the standard info for the person closing meeting to make in the after-meeting announcements as well as information about who serves on Ministry and Worship and on Care and Counsel and what those two committees do.

You can listen to a recording of the forum at <https://tinyurl.com/y5xradpk>.

The introduction to the forum included information about how worship sharing works: “Speak from personal experience to the query. Be brief. Leave some time for silence after someone speaks. Share a related experience and accept the validity of each sharing without challenge. Heartfelt listening is also a gift. Wait to share again until everyone has had an opportunity to share once.”

It also included more about the history of queries and how Quakers have used them:

Friends have assessed the state of this religious society through the use of queries since the time of George Fox. Rooted in the history of Friends, the queries reflect the Quaker way of life, reminding Friends of the ideals we seek to attain. From the Christian tradition, friends have taken as a standard the life and teaching of Jesus, not only as recorded in the New Testament, but even more importantly as revealed inwardly, as we seek God's truth and its expression through our lives today. Friends approach queries as a guide to self-examination, using them not as an outward set of rules, but as a framework within which we assess our convictions and examine, clarify, and consider prayerfully the direction of our lives and the life of the community.

The earliest general queries of London yearly meeting asked for specific facts and figures asking three questions: 1. What friends in the ministry, in their respective counties, departed this life since the last yearly meeting? 2. What friends imprisoned for their testimony have died in prison since the last yearly meeting? 3. How has the truth prospered amongst them since the last yearly meeting and if Friends are in peace and unity?"

A postscript to an epistle to the brethren in the north issued by a meeting of elders at Balby, 1656 talks about Advices and queries serving to engage our minds and hearts: "Dearly Beloved Friends, these things we do not lay upon you as a rule or form to walk by, but that all, with the measure of the Light which is pure and holy, may be guided; and so in the light walking and abiding, there may be fulfilled in the Spirit, not from the letter, for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life."

"An Introduction to the Queries," Spokane Friends Meeting, says: "What we are is truly seen in what we do. We may claim to be a people of faith and love, but if our actions belie our claims, the truth is not in us. Faith and works are inseparable. As James 2:14-26 so directly put it: "Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do." "As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead."

William Sloan Coffin asks: "Are you using the power that you have to do what you say you believe?"

Some other resources about queries:

1. See "History" and "Duty of Reading" in Britain Yearly Meeting's **Advices and Queries**, published by The Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends in Britain, 2010. Their 2013 Faith and Practice, including Advices and Queries, is online, but may be slightly different: <https://www.quaker.org.uk/resources/quaker-faith-and-practice>
2. **Quaker Process for Friends on the Benches**, see "Books of Faith and Practice, Books of Discipline", Mathilda Navias, 2012.
3. An Overview: The Queries As Corporate Self Discipline, by Marty Grundy, <https://www.co-intelligence.org/QuakerQueries.html>.
4. Our yearly meeting (Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association)'s Faith and Practice is online at https://www.sayma.org/online_documents/Handbook%209-2013.pdf SAYMA's proposed, but not yet approved, queries for revision to Faith and Practice are at https://www.sayma.org/online_documents/faith_and_practice/FandP_queries_March9.pdf

EDITORS NOTE: This QuakerSpeak video and written transcript (<https://quakerspeak.com/video/how-does-culture-influence-quaker-worship/>) speaks to the first query considered in the forum. The transcript includes two very relevant "Questions for Discussion" (queries!) at the end: "Do you feel inhibited by the culture of Quaker worship? What would you need in order to express yourself freely in that space?" and also "Have you ever been in a Quaker worship where someone did something unexpected? How was it received? What was your reaction?"

MORE FROM THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMMITTEE ARCHIVES

1995-1996 FIRST DAY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

NURSERY: Emily Stevens, Christopher Oglesby Evans, Avery Birthrong, Annie Horner

PRESCHOOL: Hannah Fuller, Matthew Freeman, Joseph Hopton, Clair Frances Kearns, Patrick Dodd, Lindsay Edenfield, John Slack, Kelly Eubank, Deven Dilleo

LOWER ELEMENTARY: Gabrielle Lahowitch, Eli Hungerford, Jacob Reid, Eric Foster, Laura Foster, Dan Lough, John Badovinac, John Campbell, Christopher Branscomb, Mara Karell Person, Daniel Gold-Hopton, Maika Munske, Matthew Heath, Gabe Lough, Gabriel Klein-Kuhn, Amber Schreiner, Laura Anne Geronimo, Oiver Honderd, Matthias Carpentier, Timothy Edenfield, Will Slack, Peter Heisler, Katherine Stucke, Sarah-Marie Aubin, Paul Foster, Elizabeth Snarey, Alex Birthrong

UPPER ELEMENTARY: Tully Herr, Ruby-Beth Buitekant, Elizabeth Aubin, Emmas Freeberg, Jeremy Edenfield, Julian Munske, David Foster, William Berg-Graves, Maria Montgomery, Steffen Hooson, Geddes Dowling, Jesse Helenski, Marin Sarve-Tarr, John Douglass, Julie Badovinac, Elaine MacEwen, Michael Heath, David Heath, Rebecca Tolmach, David Leuszler, Russel Honderd, Kimberly Geronimo, Joanna Reid, Noah Hungerford, Joseph Aims, Rebecca Heisler, Josh Klein-Kuhn, Phillip Gearing, Benjamin Firestone, Morgan Calalb, Irene Skipper, Susanna Rinard, Nicole Rennie, Clare Stuckey, Laura Manfredi Pettitt, Jordan Ross, Windsor Ross, Laura Badovinac, Johnny Snarey, Collin Herr

JUNIOR HIGH AND SENIOR HIGH: Kate Hilenski, Cameryn Aims, Allen Morris, Elizabeth Tolmach, Katie Honderd, Meredith Dowling, Charles Freeburg, Sarah Woodall, Montierra Yates, Tahia Moscovitz, John Kaiser, Wes Morris

READING BOOKS BY AND ABOUT PEOPLE OF COLOR – Thursday, March 4 and ongoing

The book group reading works by and about people of color meets via Zoom at 1:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month. On March 4, the group is discussing *She Would Be King* by Wayetu Moore. For questions or the Zoom link, contact Susan Cole (cole2544@bellsouth.net).

Upcoming books include:

- April 1 *Interior Chinatown* by Charles Yu
- May 6 *Giovanni's Room* by James Baldwin
- June 3 *Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett
- (no meeting in July)
- Aug 5 *Kindred* by Octavia Butler
- Sep 2 poetry selections
- Oct 7 *Transcendent Kingdom* by Yaa Gyasi

ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE PROJECT WORKSHOP – Saturday, March 6

The Social Concerns committee invites everyone in Atlanta Friends Meeting to learn more about the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) in a virtual half-day introductory workshop on Saturday March 6, from 9:00 am to 1:30 pm. You must REGISTER with Karen Morris at karenth.1415@gmail.com to receive the Zoom link. Glenn Plyler and Karen Morris will be two of the four facilitators. AVP is a national and international program focused on creative non-violent solutions to conflict.

AVP Georgia, Atlanta chapter, affiliated with AVPUSA (<https://avpusa.org/>), is dedicated to bringing people from all different walks of life together to strengthen community, affirmation, and nonviolent communication skills.

SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS AND ADULT FIRST DAY SCHOOL – Sunday, March 7 and ongoing

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 March 7, Leland McPhail will share his spiritual journey. See below for Zoom details.

On third Sundays, Adult First Day School will have worship sharing, usually on that month's query. On other Sundays, we will be discussing *A Living Faith, An Historical Study of Quaker Beliefs* by Wilmer A. Cooper, as part of our annual Quakerism 101.

IMMIGRANT / ASYLUM HOSPITALITY "OPEN HOUSE" – Sunday, March 7

In just seven months, our meetinghouse has been a welcome place of hospitality for nearly ninety guests from thirty countries, providing short-term welcome and refuge for those in need of temporary housing as they transition out of detention and/or defend themselves against deportation. More than twenty AFM households have already engaged in this work of hospitality, plus immediate neighbors of the meetinghouse and a number of others. Friends are invited to a virtual "open house" and short discussion to learn more from Anton and Charlotte and others who have been active in this work over the past year. This will take place on Sunday, March 7 at 1 pm via Zoom.

Link: zoom.us/j/4269379048

Meeting ID: 4269379048

DISPLACED AND ERASED: THE BLACK EXPERIENCE IN DECATUR – Sunday, March 7

The Episcopal Church of the Epiphany (at Ponce de Leon and East Lake) invites us to join them as historian David Rotenstein leads us on a virtual walking tour of Decatur to delve into the experience of displacement and the erasure of Decatur's Black community. Linking the threads of segregation and Jim Crow to later urban renewal and current gentrification, this tour examines the historic places of significance to the Black community and the "spatial strategies of white supremacy." There will be time for questions and discussion after the tour. Time 4:00 to 6:00 pm. Zoom registration at <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAVc-qpqjssG9YzWwzloKiuQVJvpaOVWKSF>

SAYMA SPRING REPRESENTATIVE MEETING – Saturday, March 13 (register by noon, March 12)

Registration is now open for Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association's (SAYMA's) Spring Representative Meeting #146 via Zoom, Saturday, March 13, 2021. Visitation begins at 8:30 am Eastern time, silent worship begins at 9:00 am and the meeting begins at 9:30 am. Registration is required to record attendance for meeting minutes and to deter Zoom-bombing. Please register no later than 12:00 noon on Friday, March 12 at <https://forms.gle/vZhLCpQTTGgZGoJG6>. The agenda and reports will be posted on SAYMA website (www.sayma.org) as they become available.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE FOR NEXT MONTH – Saturday, March 20

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

MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS – Sunday, March 21

Meeting for business will be online again this month. Simply stay in the Zoom Meeting for Worship after worship ends. Zoom details and minutes from February are below.

SAYMA'S JUNIOR YEARLY MEETING: CROSSING BRIDGES TO BUILD CONNECTIONS Sundays, March 21, April 18, May 16

Please join SAYMA's Junior Yearly Meeting this spring for three virtual workshops! We are excited to help the young people of Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting build connections across our region. More details: All workshops will have programming from 4:00 to 5:00 pm, with space for informal conversation and visiting from 5:00 to 5:30 pm. Programming will be appropriate for ages 2 to 7th grade, with breakout sessions available for different ages if appropriate. Join for one or all three! Check the announcement sheet later for registration information. These free workshops are made possible by a grant from FWCC.

LET'S TALK ABOUT RACE – Wednesday, March 24

Monthly online, drop-in forum meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:30 pm. Each meeting starts with a focus question on a specific topic in undoing racism in ourselves and our communities. All are invited to any monthly forum, whether you have attended previously or not. Questions and suggestions for future topics are always welcome: contact alberta.guise@gmail.com
Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84678045805?pwd=cFdhcEd4UmdLWWNldDFpMm1mOEVTQT09>
Meeting ID: 846 7804 5805
Passcode: LTAR

MEMORIAL FOR RICK MARTINSON – Saturday, March 27

There will be a Quaker meeting on Zoom to celebrate Rick Martinson's life on March 27 at 4:00 pm Eastern time. Check the announcement sheet for more details and an invitation to join the Zoom meeting closer to the date. The family asks that any memorial contributions in Rick's name be sent to San Jose Friends Meeting (www.sanjosefriends.org), Atlanta Friends Meeting, or the Friends Committee on National Legislation (fcnl.org).

FORUM: SEEING GOD IN THOSE WE DISAGREE WITH – Sunday, April 4

The Care & Counsel committee will sponsor a forum via Zoom on "Seeing God in those we disagree with" on Sunday, April 4 at 1:00 pm. The forum will be presented by Karen Tibbals, graduate of Earlham School of Religion and co-clerk of Rahway Plainfield Monthly Meeting in New Jersey. She holds a traveling minute for this work from her meeting and has been doing presentations at various Quaker meetings and regional gatherings. Karen Tibbals asks: "If Quakers have a theology that they can agree on, it is that there is that of God in each person. But what happens when we disagree with people, especially those we vehemently disagree with? How can we learn to see that of God in them? We are in that position now. The division in our country runs deep. How can we bridge the divide, and help move our country (and the world) towards peace? Quakers are called to be peacemakers. To do so, we need to develop a new spiritual practice of learning to see that of God in those we dislike. This presentation will help us move forward with this practice."

SAYMA YEARLY MEETING ONLINE THIS YEAR – mostly June 11 to 13

from SAYMA: “Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA) Planning Committee, through prayerful consideration and consultation with Friends from many monthly Meetings, has discerned to hold the 2021 yearly meeting sessions primarily virtually. This decision addresses both the deep apprehension felt by many Friends about meeting in person as well as the uplifted hopefulness that we might still join together in some way this summer after setting aside our annual gathering in 2020. We anticipate the business portion of the yearly meeting sessions will be conducted over 3 days from June 11-13, 2021 while workshops and plenary sessions as well as programming for young Friends will be less confined to the traditional Thursday-Sunday schedule. The SAYMA Yearly Meeting Planning Committee (YMPC) is meeting regularly to organize the 2021 sessions. We continue to consider details for events, including workshops, worship opportunities, plenaries and the possibility for small groups to join Yearly Meeting in a hybrid fashion.

We welcome input from the larger community as we work. Please contact Jennifer Dickie, YMPC Clerk at YMPC@SAYMA.org.”

This year's theme will be: Do Justice, Love Compassion, Walk Humbly On the Earth.

If you're asking "what's a yearly meeting?":

Atlanta Friends Meeting is a monthly meeting, a group of Quakers that worships together weekly, but meets monthly to conduct business and to make decisions as a group. (A monthly meeting is similar to what many Protestant denominations call a congregation.) A yearly meeting is a collection of monthly meetings that meets once a year to conduct business and to make decisions -- at what is also called Yearly Meeting. At this annual gathering, there are also opportunities for worship and socializing as well as programs for children and youth and workshops for adults and teens, though this programming will be slightly different this year when Yearly Meeting is virtual. Each monthly meeting sends official representatives to this annual gathering, but others are encouraged to attend and participate in decision making as well as other programming. The official representatives, along with others who are interested, meet at Representative Meetings, usually two per year, one in March and one in September, for yearly meeting business that needs to be decided between annual gatherings. See announcement above for details about the March Representative Meeting.

For general information about SAYMA, visit sayma.org.

QUAKER RESOURCES: WORSHIPPING VIRTUALLY

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>

MACON WORSHIP GROUP INVITES US TO JOIN THEM FOR WORSHIP

The Macon Worship Group, which is under the care of Atlanta Friends Meeting, invites us to join them for meeting for worship via Zoom every Thursday at 7:00 pm (except for fifth Thursdays). The third Thursday each month will be an educational program instead of worship. See later announcement sheets for details of the third Thursday educational program.

For more information, you can email: maconquakers@gmail.com.

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84095899009?pwd=SFhhOGNnWHZFbDdKRUhIVnFqdFk0dz09>

Meeting ID: 840 9589 9009

Passcode: 542278

MEETING VIRTUALLY: WORSHIP AND FIRST DAY SCHOOL AT ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING

For the most up to date information and for more detailed instructions for Zoom, see the most recent announcements at www.atlantaquakers.org/_announcements/Announcement_Sheet.pdf or in your email inbox. 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.

Sundays:

ADULT FIRST DAY SCHOOL will meet at 9:00 am to 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 or attenders. (March 7 will be Leland McPhail.) On the third Sunday of each month, we will have worship sharing, usually on that month's query, and on other Sundays, we will discuss *A Living Faith, An Historical Study of Quaker Beliefs*. We will end in time to be in meeting for worship.

FIRST DAY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN will meet at 9:30 am to 9:55 am

First Day Class for Families and Friends

Theme thru May 2021: *God is Everywhere--God works through many people, places, and times*

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

Meeting ID: 727 996 1727

Passcode: 679898

Families are invited / will have time to join meeting for worship after this ends.

Fourth Sunday is intergenerational/family worship and all members and attenders are invited to join.

FIRST DAY MEETING FOR WORSHIP will begin at 10:00 am

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

Meeting ID: 908 004 190

Passcode: 842962.

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!

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 worshipping via Zoom:

Even though it 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. However, 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 at 9:30 am

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

Meeting ID: 920 3886 2952

Passcode 726229

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

FINANCIAL HELP THROUGH THE AFM ASSISTANCE FUND

This is a time to reach out and care for each other. Care & Counsel Committee maintains an Assistance Fund for Members and Attenders for providing temporary assistance with financial emergencies. Information about the process and an application form can be found at www.atlantaquakers.org/members.htm). Look for the Assistance Fund Description & Request Process and the Assistance Fund Application Form. Or contact Clerk of Care & Counsel, Karen Skellie at 404-680-4524.

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

By check: mail to the meetinghouse address to the attention of the treasurer or if you're at the meetinghouse, leave in the Contribution slot. Make out the check to Atlanta Friends Meeting, and on the "for" line of the check, write "Assistance Fund."

By PayPal or Credit / Debit Card: www.atlantaquakers.org/contact.htm on our website.

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 practical help (meal delivery, errands run, transportation, etc) or contact with others during this time OR if you can help, Care & Counsel Committee has set up an online way to connect people. Visit our website under Members and Attenders at <http://www.atlantaquakers.org/members.htm#CARINGCONNECT> to request help or to volunteer or contact Karen Skellie at 404-680-4524 or kskellie@gmail.com.

QUAKER RESOURCES: FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL LEGISLATION

You can download / read Friends Committee on National Legislation's (FCNL's) 2019 to 2020 annual report at <https://www.fcnl.org/financials-and-annual-reports> or explore their website at www.fcnl.org. FCNL is our Quaker lobbying organization in Washington DC. See Sue May for more info on FCNL.

FEEDBACK REQUESTED ON THE DRAFT STATE OF THE MEETING REPORT

Please read the draft State of the Meeting Report in the Minutes below and send any feedback to Lissa Place, Clerk of meeting, at afmclerk1@gmail.com, before next month's meeting for business.

SECOND MONTH MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS

February 21, 2021, held via Zoom

Minutes Recorded Pending Approval

Attendance: Julia Ewen, Karen Morris, Bill Hooson, Terri Key Hooson, Alberta Guise, Nan Roark, Bert Skellie, Karen Skellie, Nina Gooch, Georgia Lord, Judith Greenberg, Sue May, Jennifer Thompson, Anton Flores-Maisonet, Steve Collins, Rachael Carter, Myrna Trapp, Jay Roache, Judy Lumb, Glenn Plyler, Cathy Amanti, Richard Allen, Cheyll Cowherd, Caroline Morris, David Small, Diane Rowley, Waman French, Susan Firestone, Mary Ann Downey, Mark Yates, Jennifer Dickie, Hannah MacNorlin, Donna Roberts, Elizabeth Lamb, Bill Holland, Becky Lough, Don Bender, John Michael, Carolyn Coburn- Allen, Folami Prescott- Adams, Lissa Place (Clerk), Coryn Murphy (Recording Clerk)

Friends gathered near the appointed hour with opening worship. A member of Ministry and Worship shared the Second Month Query out of the worship: How do you stand firmly against inequality? How do you peacefully challenge discriminatory social institutional practices?

Friends shared responses to the query.

Discernment Items

Minute on “Hatred, Racist Violence, and Domestic Terrorism”: Glenn Plyler presented the following draft minute on Hatred, Racist Violence, and Domestic Terrorism since 1/17/21, and at the direction of Business Meeting, Friends from Social Concerns Committee, Quakers for Racial Equality, and Friends of Color have helped revise this draft. The draft submitted is draft 6 for discernment by the February Meeting for Business.

Minute 2/21/2021-01: The Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the Hatred, Racist Violence, and Domestic Terrorism Minute with changes.

In light of the attempted violent overthrow of the US government on January 6, 2021, the Atlanta Friends Meeting (Quakers) calls for everyone to act to reduce fear, violence, and injustice in our community and in the wider world. As we seek peace and reconciliation, we must acknowledge our nation’s past and present use of white supremacist beliefs to justify genocide, slavery, and violence against Indigenous, Black, and People of Color. Looking to our democratic ideals, let us increase our work for justice and freedom for all.

As people of peace, we seek that of God in everyone and recognize that the hatefulness of greed, dehumanization of others, and fear are the roots of violence. We decry the white supremacist beliefs and actions of the insurgents at the Capitol, those in power who spurred them on, and the systemic racism throughout our nation that causes oppression and injustice. Evidence of this structural racism is the extreme police presence used against Black Lives Matter protesters compared to the lack of police presence at the Capitol on January 6, 2021. Credible reports of the planned insurrection by radicalized white insurrectionists seeking to execute members of Congress and the Vice President were ignored by security officials responsible for the safety of Congress.

We call on our nation and ourselves to admit our roles in systemic racism and violence, thereby contributing to the spiritual and social conditions of our country. We will work to make significant changes. The answer is not more violence. We must establish a welcoming and equitable beloved community with restorative justice for all.

We call for the following actions:

- 1) Hold the perpetrators of the insurrection accountable to the fullest extent of the law.
- 2) Use the lawful and nonviolent means available to remove from office those elected officials and others in government who planned or instigated the uprising with hateful and untrue rhetoric.
- 3) Insist that the media offer fact checks and hold accountable the purveyors of lies.
- 4) Promote the teaching of democratic ideals and practices in educational and community organizations nationwide.
- 5) Work to dismantle all federal and state laws that limit access to the vote, including statutes that disenfranchise Black, Indigenous, People of Color, non-binary and trans citizens, low-income citizens, the homeless and the formerly incarcerated.
- 6) Develop federal and state level systems of reparations for Indigenous Peoples whose land was stolen, and those of the black community who were the unpaid source of colonial capitalist wealth accumulation.
- 7) Establish systems of restorative justice to address inherent systems of racial inequity in the current justice systems.

We need Divine Assistance to succeed in making these changes in our nation and ourselves. We invite everyone to join us in seeking Divine Guidance as we work together to build a truly humane, loving, and just country for all.

Ministry and Worship:

Memorial Minutes: Mary Ann Downey read two minutes to remember Friends who died in 2020. They will be writing memorial minutes for all of them. We will start today with Peter Sederburg and Tom Kenworthy.

Minutes 2/21/2021-02: Atlanta Friends Meeting approved the following memorial minute for Peter Sederburg

Memorial Minute for Peter Carl Sederberg, 1943-2020

Peter Carl Sederberg, a member of Atlanta Friends Meeting and longtime member of the Finance Committee, died in Atlanta at the age of 77 on July 31, 2020. Peter completed his PhD in political science at The Johns Hopkins University and after two years at Wellesley College, found a home in the Government and International Studies Department at the University of South Carolina. Peter helped foster the creation and growth of the South Carolina Honors College at USC; it would become the highest ranked public honors college in the country due to his advocacy for the power of the liberal arts, interdisciplinarity, and research-based learning. As university colleague Jim Burns said, "To Sederberg, all students were important. He supported an earlier 'provisional year' program for students who weren't admitted to the Honors College their freshman year but could transfer if they made the grades and were interviewed." And he was willing to try new things, like Burns' famous Honors Motown course. "That's why we had those strange and weird and wonderful courses in the Honors College," Burns says. "He'd say, 'Let's give it a shot.'"

Peter began attending the Columbia Friends meeting in 1983 and became an active member teaching first day school and bringing his 2 children to Meeting. After moving to Atlanta in 2008 he began attending Meeting and transferred his membership to Atlanta in 2011. He was treasurer of AFM for many years and a stalwart member of the Finance Committee, not only lending his intellect and humor, but also supplying cookies for each finance meeting. Friends remember his frequent witty movie reviews during announcements after Meeting.

Peter was equally devoted to his family. Although he grew up without a father, Peter was full of love and support for his two children, Per Benjamin Sederberg and Rachel Elin Love. Peter moved to Atlanta with his wife, Jan Love, when she accepted the position of Dean of the Candler School of Theology at Emory. They modeled for their children the deep passion of a loving and equal partnership. His family's hearts broke when he was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease in July 2013. When two members visited him during the later stages of his illness, he still was able to converse and offer his wonderful sense of humor, introducing his caregiver as "my bodyguard." We deeply miss him.

Minute 2/21/2021-03: Atlanta Friends Meeting approved the following memorial minute for Tom Kenworthy.

Thomas (Tom) Lowes Kenworthy died on December 28, 2020 at Emory University Hospital in Atlanta, Georgia. He was born April 25, 1936 in Washington, DC. He attended Sidwell Friends School, graduated from Earlham College, and earned a master's degree in International Economics from the University of Pennsylvania. Tom met his wife, Suzan, in 1960 at an American Friends Service Committee work camp in Mexico. They were married in 1962 and lived in Vancouver, Toronto, and New York City before settling permanently in Atlanta in 1967. Tom was warm, easy-going, and unpretentious. He had a delightful sense of humor. His stories could light up a room and he could make the most mundane conversation topic seem fascinating.

Tom was a family man in the best sense of the term. He had a happy marriage for 58 years and was beloved by his children and grandchildren. When his children were growing up, Tom was fond of entertaining the family at the dinner table with stories of the latest goings on in the neighborhood. He attended hundreds of his kids' practices, soccer matches, swim meets, football games, basketball games, PTA meetings, board and committee meetings, banquets, and much more. He assembled and coached a youth soccer team, including his son Randy, that won several state championships and helped to broaden the sport's popularity in DeKalb County. He involved his children in a seemingly endless stream of home and yard projects, from weekly chores to repainting the house to digging out a new storage room under the kitchen. Family vacations were typically spent visiting relatives in Washington DC, New York, or Arizona. Later in life, Tom and Suzan loved hosting extended family gatherings at their home on Lake Lanier.

In 1967, after managing sales teams for Colgate and Macmillan Publishing, Tom started a joint venture selling playground equipment to school systems. In 1968, he founded School Media Associates, selling educational audio visual materials to elementary and secondary schools and colleges. Together with Suzan and later their sons Randy and Owen, Tom grew School Media from a small, home-based business to an office with 20 employees and multiple regional locations. The business thrived for half a century, evolving to meet media industry advances from film strips to VHS to DVD to digital while surviving the economy's ups and downs. School Media's affiliates included over 200 producers like A&E Video, Discovery Channel, PBS Video, Disney Educational Productions, and National Geographic.

Tom enjoyed traveling across the South and the Midwest through myriad cities and towns. Most of all, he loved engaging in conversation with the customers and other people he met. He could tell you the name of the librarian in a particular high school in any number of small towns, and long after he "retired" he continued to work at the School Media offices making phone calls to stay connected with clients. Tom was a devoted Quaker. He and Suzan were longtime members of the Atlanta Friends Meeting. He served as the Meetings clerk, on a

number of its committees, on the central committee of the Friends General Conference, and on the board of the Friends School of Atlanta. He enjoyed reading books on Quaker history and philosophy, to complement his regular stack of volumes on history, economics, politics, society, and foreign affairs. Tom is survived by his wife Suzan, brother Lee, children Lane (Kim), Randy (Ellie), Owen (Marti), and Lauren Jarrell (Jonathan), and 10 grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, Mary and Carroll Kenworthy, brother David, and grandson Noah.

Facebook Moderator Position:

Minute: 2/21/2021-04: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the new positions of moderators for the Meeting's facebook group. There will be two moderators, both to be selected by the Nominating Committee and approved by Meeting for Business. The moderators will serve three year terms and can be reappointed. The terms of the two moderators should end in alternating years.

The position description is as follows:

1. The moderators of the facebook group are available to help with questions about the group, including technical issues.
2. They approve new members to the group.
3. The moderators also have the responsibility to see that the AFM facebook group remains a place where people feel safe sharing their ideas and experiences. Should moderators recognize that posts do not fit within the purposes of the group or do not follow the guidelines listed above, they will decide on an appropriate response. Posts or comments may be removed. The person sharing the inappropriate post or comment may be warned, muted or, as a last resort, removed from the group, in any order. After 30 days, a member who has been removed may appeal to rejoin the group.

Moderators can consult with the Clerk of the Atlanta Friends Meeting or with the Clerk of the Ministry and Worship committee, as needed. Members of the group who have concerns about the way an issue is being handled and who can not resolve these concerns with the moderators may also consult the Clerk of the meeting or the Clerk of Ministry and Worship.

Minute 2/21/2021-05: Atlanta Friends Meeting lays down the Ad Hoc Committee on the Facebook Group. We would like to thank Nina Gooch, Free Polazzo, and Jennifer Thompson for their work.

Naming Committee: Cheryll Cowherd brought forth for discernment the name of Eugene Jennings for Clerk of Nominating Committee.

Minute 2/21/2021-06: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Eugene Jennings as Clerk of Nominating Committee for a term of 3 years 1/2021- 12/2024.

Laying down Naming Committee:

Minute 2/21/2021-07: Atlanta Friends Meeting lays down the Naming Committee for 2020. We would like to thank Cheryll Cowherd (clerk), Donna Roberts, Julia Ewen, and Jillian Eller for their work.

Reports

State of the Meeting Report: The Clerk read the state of the meeting report and asked for edits by email before approval at next Business Meeting.

State of the Meeting Report, Atlanta Friends Meeting 2020

Atlanta Friends Meeting continues to be a supportive spiritual community in the midst of a global pandemic. We have struggled and we have soared, but in the end we have done the best we could to carry on in 2020. We are working with the challenges of present conditions to care for our members and attenders, finding new ways to support Friends, to pull together as a community, and to continue our mission to be a welcoming spiritual home for all.

Our work to forward Quaker ideals looked different under these circumstances. We could not have casual conversations during coffee hour, and that has affected the ways that many committees function. Our office coordinator worked with committees to help them get information to the community, using the announcement sheet and newsletter, website and Facebook group, and our Meeting's Listserv and emails to communicate. We improved in our ability to use technology as a Meeting, which will benefit us beyond COVID, and created an environment where the whole Meeting worked in unity while we were all dealing with similar challenges created by COVID. For this reason, this report will be more about general work in the Meeting, and less about what each committee is doing.

There are ways in which our spiritual depth brought new meaning during these trying times. We have seen each other through a mass movement for racial justice, an election and its troubling aftermath, Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, and endless ups and downs that we have all experienced during this pandemic. Messages in Meeting became an important source of support. Once message spoke of this time as a "unique Sabbath." Another message spoke of the brokenness many of us feel as a place for the light to shine in. There were messages of environmental rejuvenation, and gratitude for a slower way of life, along with others of anger, frustration, isolation, and fear. We were reminded to come to Meeting however we are. This has truly been a time that we have relied on each other for our very substance, and we have been there.

We began our Sunday Meeting for Worship via Zoom on March 22. Although there are some Friends for whom technology is a deterrent, we have had an average attendance of 80 for Sunday worship. Meeting online allows us to accommodate people who are unable to attend Meeting for health reasons or distance and also provided the opportunity to worship with Friends who have moved across the globe. We cherish the opportunities that virtual worship has provided us, and we hope to find a way to permanently welcome these Friends to our worship. While marriages are on hold, we welcomed two new members, two transfers in, and four transfers of members to new spiritual homes this year. We held a hybrid (in-person and virtual) memorial Meeting for Worship celebrating the life of Woody Woodall in October, and a second virtual memorial meeting in December celebrating the life of Beth Garrettson. Sadly, due to the pandemic, we have not yet been able to hold memorial services for several other people who died during 2020: David Jarvis (d. February 12, 2020), Peter Sederberg (d. August 3, 2020), Priscilla Padron (d. September 26, 2020), and Tom Kenworthy (d. December 28, 2020). We held a forum in November to help us deal with our many and varied forms of grief. Ministry and Worship continues to work to find ways to support the community while we meet virtually, including weekly messages that welcome newcomers to what could be perceived as a new and unusual form of worship, and offers instructions that help to deepen the quality of worship for all. They continue to hold both monthly spiritual journeys of members and attenders and Adult First Day school virtually.

To meet the spiritual needs of our Young Friends, Religious Education has met with elementary age students online in the 1/2 hour before worship. They have hosted 3-4 families each week to enjoy check in, songs, and read aloud books. The children continue their Godly Play curriculum and enjoy the opportunity to virtually "invite each other in" to their homes. Teens and young adult friends met weekly for a much appreciated discussion and fellowship. Over the year, they met with 35 youth

in person, and 20 on Zoom calls. They continue to reach out to National Quaker Organizations to problem solve teaching during the pandemic.

In order to deal with the volume and intensity of changes required to use the Meetinghouse safely during COVID, a new committee called the Ad Hoc Committee on the Use of the Meetinghouse was formed during Business Meeting in May. On the committee are two Centers for Disease Control representatives from our Meeting, as well as the Clerks of many committees in Meeting. They have wrestled with the technicalities of what it means to be safe in a COVID world, wanting to provide opportunities for connection when people want it, while keeping ourselves and those that enter our building safe. They worked on how to handle renters as well as ways that the Meeting would use the space. Following a survey, they determined interest in having two in person midweek worship services which started in July and September. Approximately 5-10 people have been attending each service, and found it meaningful. For worship services as well as for renters, they have determined guidelines that include sanitizing, social distancing, closing the kitchen, signing in to allow for contact tracing if needed, and wearing masks. Right now, our renters have showed little interest in returning to the Meetinghouse, but we have hosted a few small groups. The committee has come up with a protocol for what to do if someone who has been in the Meetinghouse has a positive Coronavirus test. In addition, to make the building more safe, they have worked with the Administration Committee to upgrade all HVAC filters in the building to improve air quality. This committee is basically in charge of how the building is used until the time that the committee is no longer needed.

While we are having Meeting for Worship via Zoom, a new ministry at the Meetinghouse has arisen among us. Although we are not using the Meetinghouse for typical uses, it is not closed, and in some ways is carrying out our vision for peace and social justice. Anton Flores-Maisonet, our Friend in Residence, has started to use the Meetinghouse for radical hospitality for immigrants seeking asylum. He and Charlotte have partnered with other organizations, attenders of Meeting, and even neighborhood residents to help asylum seekers find their way from detention centers to their final destinations. In the Meetinghouse, hospitality is being offered in the form of overnight accommodations, meals, clothing, and other items necessary for travel to our guests' final destination, usually in the United States. In 2020, this ministry provided a place to stay for nearly 60 guests from 20 countries. Typically our guests need just one night's accommodations before catching a bus or plane to their home. This has been a heart-filling ministry under the guidance of Anton and Charlotte that has involved over twenty households of the Meeting. There is so much that we are unable to do at this time that it is uplifting to hear about what is being done. We are grateful to the Floreses and all involved for this ministry.

In this critical year for racial justice, Atlanta Friends Meeting has recommitted to uprooting systemic racism and white supremacy both externally, in our communities and nation, and internally, in ourselves, and our Meeting. We have seen wider participation of AFM Friends in anti-racism work at the Meeting, committee, and individual levels. Early in the year, the Committee on Undoing Racism in Atlanta Friends Meeting (CURAFM) and Quakers for Racial Equality (QRE) co-sponsored a well-attended workshop on "Addressing Racism Among Friends." Then they offered support to various committees for dismantling systemic racism to forward our goal of becoming a more welcoming anti-racist Meeting. This effort later led to the formation of an Ad Hoc Anti-Racist Policies and Procedure Group with representatives from several different committees to address institutional racism in AFM.

Recognizing the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on People of Color, Quakers for Racial Equality reached out to Friends of Color, helped expand and publicize the Assistance Fund, donated funds to a Black church providing direct assistance to unhoused people, and supported another local group, Beacon Hill Black Alliance for Human Rights. Social Concerns Committee submitted a Minute approved by Business Meeting that encouraged legislators to focus on access to healthcare, the

disparate effects of COVID on Black, Latinx, and People of Color, and the goal of a global ceasefire. In addition, the Social Concerns budget was largely used for local relief of those suffering during the pandemic.

In the wake of racist killings of Black people by police and white vigilantes, Quakers for Racial Equality, the Atlanta Friends of Color group, and the Committee on Undoing Racism in Atlanta Friends Meeting coordinated to draft a statement supporting Black Lives Matter for the AFM website and a draft AFM Anti-Racism Minute. Both were approved by Meeting For Business. CURAFM made Black Lives Matter signs available, and a great many Atlanta Friends participated in a wide range of racial justice activities with others from Meeting, as individuals, or with other groups. Within Meeting, CURAFM also started a new online opportunity to talk about race in a brave space, "Let's Talk About Race," which met weekly from July-September, and monthly since then. Quakers for Racial Equality continued their ongoing work virtually, offering the "Listening Ear for Concerns about Racism" by phone, and a "virtual literature table" that was available through the weekly announcement sheet. QRE held monthly online meetings on a wide range of topics, such as Juneteenth and Gullah Geechee culture, Reparations, and Right Relations with Indigenous Peoples. QRE also collaborated with Social Concerns committee to celebrate the 100 th anniversary of Votes for Women with a program on African American women suffragists and civil rights workers. The Friends of Color group supported each other virtually and collaborated with various committees on anti-racism work. An AFM book group reading books by and about People of Color read 10 books during the year. Beyond our own Meeting, AFM Friends participated in online opportunities such as the Me & White Supremacy book study group organized through SAYMA, and the "Listening 4 Justice" program, which is led by AFM member Folami Prescott Adams and includes a number of AFM Friends among its participants. Social Concerns Committee was actively involved outside the Meeting with Get Out The Vote, making and donating banners to non-partisan groups working in Black and Latinx communities where voting has historically been suppressed.

Our Meeting has continued to care for each other using virtual and socially distanced ways, primarily through the Care & Counsel committee. During March and April, Care & Counsel reached out to everyone in our directory by phone or email to offer support. They created online forms to allow Friends to volunteer with tasks such as grocery shopping as well as to request assistance. To help Friends in financial difficulty, the committee updated guidelines for the Assistance Fund and advertised how to apply for assistance in the weekly announcement sheet. As part of discerning their role in anti-racist work, they approved updated guidelines for welcoming diverse newcomers.

Administration Committee remained very active this year. They have nurtured and supported the Friend in Residence, many of the technical needs of Meeting, and have been in charge of cleaning and upgrading our building inside and out. The Administration Committee upgraded all HVAC filters in the building to improve air quality, explored installing solar panels, and a new roof.

The Suchitoto Fund Committee's work has come to a close this year, as planned. This Committee has been meeting since September 2016 to encourage the development of a non-profit organization of former and current scholarship recipients from the work of Frank and Carol Cummings, according to a bequest in Frank's will. The name of this organization is "Asociación de Becarios Actuales y Graduados de Educación Superior para el Desarrollo Integral de la Juventud de Suchitoto" or ABESUCHI." An international non-profit organization that works in El Salvador (IDEAS) was engaged to facilitate this work. ABESUCHI now has full legal status and is functioning as an independent organization that is now administering a funded project. The AFM Finance Committee will carry on some additional annual transfers from Frank's bequest and will monitor financial reporting from ABESUCHI now that the Suchitoto Fund Committee has been laid down.

Nominating Committee has continued to fill the spaces as they came available during this year. They were greatly affected by not seeing people in person at Meeting. They are working on creating a system that works virtually, which includes making announcements about open positions and asking for volunteers more than usual.

Our lobbying group for Friends Committee on National Legislation has learned to do virtual lobby visits. They are using this time to learn social media, and are already tweeting and posting on Facebook! They with all of us grieve the loss of Representative John Lewis, but look forward to meeting his successor as well as two new senators.

We had our 9th year of AFM serving as host meeting for Quaker Voluntary Service. Due to the generosity of the local Mennonite Community, the fellows are enjoying a new home in Atlanta. There were many changes in staff as well as in the Local Support Committee during 2020, but they are ending the year with solid leadership on both fronts. The support committee is striving to take up issues related to equity more intentionally and explicitly, including examining race, class, and gender. They are looking at this so that they can best be supportive of the Fellows.

A worship group under our care, Macon Worship Group, has been quite active during the pandemic. They have switched to virtual meetings which allowed them to give up their rental space. They have moved their worship to Thursdays to allow people to attend AFM meetings on the weekends, and they have begun meeting weekly for a shorter period of time with the flexibility that is offered by Zoom. They are also holding monthly public education topics as well as Business Meetings.

Some other important events and activities for 2020 include:

Approving Facebook Guidelines for our Facebook Page. In October's Business Meeting, we approved guidelines to help monitor how people use the Facebook Page. In an Ad Hoc committee initiated by our office coordinator, they came up with much needed guidelines. This seemed particularly important during this time because many people are finding us online and see the Facebook Page as a representation of who we are. The moderator positions are being added to the list of Meeting positions to be filled by Nominating Committee.

Using tools in Business Meeting to make it easier to see the general opinion of the group since it is harder to get a "sense of the Meeting" virtually. We have used colors in our screens to reflect agreement, concern, or a question/answer to a specific question. After the daunting task of setting up virtual Business Meetings, we mastered the technology and were able to keep the work of the Meeting moving forward.

Increased use of our cabin on Lake Burton. The Ferguson Cabin was willed to the Meeting by Dwight and Irene Ferguson many years ago. There has always been a committed group of people who have loved and cared for the cabin, but they have struggled to have new people discover it. This year, a record number of people visited the cabin (even with restrictions on only having one group visit at a time), with 17 people who had never been there before. They are working on making information about how to rent the cabin even more accessible to all.

Lastly, Landscape Committee has done a massive removal of kudzu from the property and replaced it with plants that support wildlife.

Despite the many challenges of 2020, we have persevered. We have found creative solutions for our current circumstances, and we have been there for one another. Now, more than ever we have relied on the depth of our faith to carry on. 2020 was a year like no other, but we are grateful to be on the other side of it, and hope that we will be stronger for it.

Proposed Minute from Friend in Residence Support Committee

Hannah MacNorlin read a proposed minute for the Friends in Residence Support Committee.

In July 2019 Atlanta Friends Meeting entered into a discernment process with Anton and Charlotte Flores when they both began residing in the meetinghouse. This discernment has blossomed from a seed of an idea to a work of accompaniment and hospitality with immigrants and asylum seekers. This work now engages a broader portion of the Meeting and others, including neighbors of the meetinghouse.

In February 2020 the Meeting affirmed that Anton “is called to a ministry of radical hospitality and justice with particular attention to immigrants and asylum seekers.” We believe it is now time for the Meeting to discern how Spirit is leading the community in response to Anton’s continued call to pursue this leading rooted in Quaker values. As we turn the long corner on COVID-19, Anton is hopeful we as a community can find ways to continue to offer a place of refuge and welcome to new friends from faraway lands who find themselves in our nation’s unjust detention/deportation pipeline.

Before becoming AFM’s Friend in Residence, Anton and Charlotte engaged in forms of radical hospitality with immigrants for 13 years through Casa Alternativa, a nonprofit they launched and which still provides supporters the means to support their work. This current ministry at AFM merges their gifts and passions with a true and unreplicated need in Atlanta.

This anchor committee proposes this minute affirming our collective commitment to this work:

Atlanta Friends Meeting is grateful for Anton and Charlotte Flores’s leading to offer radical hospitality to immigrants and asylum seekers and for the ways they have lived out this call utilizing AFM’s space during the COVID-19 pandemic. In just seven months our abundant meetinghouse has been a welcome place of hospitality for nearly ninety guests from thirty countries, providing short-term welcome and refuge for those in need of temporary housing as they transition out of detention and/or defend themselves against deportation. More than twenty AFM households have already engaged in this work of hospitality, plus immediate neighbors of the meetinghouse and a number of others. We ask AFM to formally recognize that this has become a ministry of the AFM community through Anton’s calling. We affirm and support this continued work and empower Anton to directly work with the appropriate committees of the Meeting to determine an arrangement as the meetinghouse reopens that provides the space necessary to continue this work in a way that acknowledges the multipurpose function of the meetinghouse.

As Friends take time to consider this minute and proposal before next month’s meeting for business, Friends are invited to a virtual “open house” and short discussion to learn more from Anton and Charlotte and others who have been active in this work over the past year. This will take place on Sunday, March 7 at 1 pm via Zoom - zoom.us/j/4269379048.

Submitted by Christina Repoley and Hannah MacNorlin, February 16, 2021

Ministry and Worship:

Report: Bill Hooson reported for the Ministry and Worship Committee that: It is the sense of Ministry and Worship, and Care and Counsel that First Day Worship in person should not commence until there is a sense of the community that is safe to be in attendance. We hope that the proposed survey will give us further guidance to see the way to evolve our worship in some combination of in-person and virtual attendance. However, we see our First Day Worship continuing as is for the near future and as the ad hoc committee on our building usage discerns protocols for the safety of our gathering as a whole.

On Sunday, February 28th @ 1:00 PM, all are invited to attend an online forum on Reparations and Right Relations. This forum is the first of two forums offered in February and May on reparations for African Americans. The forum has been developed through an Ad Hoc group started by the Ministry and Worship committee and includes members from Quakers for Racial Equality, the Committee on Undoing Racism in Atlanta Friends Meeting, and Atlanta Friends of Color. For further information contact Herb Edwards.

Committee Corner: Report for Ministry and Worship given by Bill Hooson

Currently there are 3 focal points of Ministry and Worship. 1) Forums - Opportunities for learning about Quaker practices, spirituality, traditions, history, and social/political/theological challenges to the Community. Upcoming Forums will deal with Queries in January and the concept of Reparations in February. 2) Spiritual nurture of the Community. How best to share the concept and techniques of spiritual nurture to our Community. And, 3) What will Meeting for Worship look like when the grips of the pandemic are loosed and we are once again meeting shoulder to shoulder. Will there be a place for virtual participation and what form might that take?

Friends discussed the importance of having the important work of committees in the minutes even if it is not required by Business Meeting. The clerk encouraged us to use Committee Corner for this purpose.

Announcements:

In June of 2020, the Working Group on the Use of the Meetinghouse recommended that Atlanta Friends Meeting's main Sunday worship be via Zoom for the foreseeable future. Now, along with the Ministry and Worship committee, we are looking at that question again and are asking for your input. How do we want to organize our Sunday worship? We will be sending out a survey by email early in the week, and information will also be in the announcement sheet next week and in the newsletter. We look forward to hearing what you have to say. Here is the link to the survey:

<https://forms.gle/r1AoF59t2QBTeVXh9>

Minutes of January 2021 were approved with changes.

Events in the Life of the Meeting

Rick Martinson died on February 8, 2021. Gene Singletary also passed on February 1, 2021.

The meeting closed with a moment of silence.

HOLDING IN THE LIGHT:

Cindy Berg
Beth-Ann Buitekant
Walter Degler's son, Dana
Mary Ann Downey
Freer Jarvis
Beth Martinson
Renda McCaughan
Joanna Rachel Reid

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.

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ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING

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Atlanta Friends Meeting email lists & facebook group:

- You may receive the announcement sheets and other announcements relating directly to the life of the meeting. This is the announcement list. (The announcement sheet is also posted online.)
- You may receive announcements AND posts about a broader range of topics relating to being a Quaker. This is the discussion list. (You do not need to belong to both the announcement list and the discussion list.)
- You may receive notification that the newsletter is online. This is the newsletter list.
- To join any of these email lists above, please email the office at atlantaquakers@gmail.com
- To receive weekly emails about Zoom and in-person meetings for worship, email atlantaquakers@gmail.com
- To join the meeting's Facebook page, search for Atlanta Friends Meeting & click the + **Join Group** button.

Would you like to appear in future AFM Directories?

Do you need to correct your directory information? 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.*