

# ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER

## JULY 2022



Current and back issues of the newsletter are available at <http://atlantaquakers.org/archive.htm>

The most recent announcement sheet is always at [http://atlantaquakers.org/announcements/Announcement\\_Sheet.pdf](http://atlantaquakers.org/announcements/Announcement_Sheet.pdf)

Meeting for Worship each First Day (Sunday) in Person & via Zoom. 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

### QUERY FOR JULY

How do I interact with cultural / racial groups other than my own in my community and in the wider community?

Source: modified from SAYMA's *A Guide to Our Faith and Our Practice*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, 2021, A.32  
[https://www.sayma.org/online\\_documents/faith\\_and\\_practice/F&P2021final.pdf](https://www.sayma.org/online_documents/faith_and_practice/F&P2021final.pdf)

### PLEASE JOIN US ON SUNDAYS FOR WORSHIP AND FIRST DAY SCHOOL



We will continue to worship on Sunday at 10:00 am in person at the meetinghouse in combination with worship via Zoom for the indefinite future. Please choose the option that is best for you. For the most up to date Zoom information and COVID guidelines for in-person worship, see the current announcement sheet at [www.atlantaquakers.org/announcements/Announcement\\_Sheet.pdf](http://www.atlantaquakers.org/announcements/Announcement_Sheet.pdf).

#### MEETING FOR WORSHIP

Combined in person and Zoom, 10 am Sundays

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89686276751?pwd=M29EYlIIFWEhSQUtZRVVPaIFFYmVDQT09>

Meeting ID: 896 8627 6751

Passcode: 789456

#### ADULT FIRST DAY SCHOOL

(see under Events below for more details for each Sunday)

Combined in-person and Zoom, 9:00 to 9:50 am Sundays

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86063665797?pwd=Nms0Vm5MSW91UXdWRGJSOXA5NWRjZz09>

Meeting ID: 860 6366 5797

Passcode: 013191

#### FIRST DAY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

In-person, 10:15 am Sundays

Children can continue to join Meeting for Worship for the first 15 minutes or can go directly to Religious Education, as they and their parents / guardians prefer.

## BUILDING THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

---

by Mary Ann Downey, originally published in Friends Journal, October 2005

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

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

In a recent discussion [as of 2005], we talked about what we want as individuals from this religious community, and what our vision is for this Friends meeting. It was a wonderfully deep and rich sharing that included ways that the meeting has not met the needs of some people. I realized later that I could not remember any other discussion in my 26 years in meeting about such a fundamental and valuable question. I hope that's because they've occurred and I've just missed them. How can we expect to build a spiritual community if our conversations stay only on safe topics like favorite movies or restaurants? As Scott Peck reminds us in his book, *The Different Drum: Community Making and Peace*, we all need a "safe place for personal disarmament." We need the kind of time and space where we can share our most important dreams for ourselves and for a better world without fear of being ridiculed, rejected, or [called] politically incorrect.

During the same discussion, I also realized that some of us come to meeting with an idealized view of Friends, expecting that the beliefs espoused for more than 300 years would create meeting communities of perfect harmony and fairness. Even after attending for more than ten years, I confessed that I did not ask for membership because I believed that I needed to achieve some personal level of perfection or at least better daily practice of the beliefs before I could "fit in" or qualify for the title "Friend." Like me, others also held back from full participation and membership in meeting for fear of not qualifying or being good enough. In contrast, some held back because they believed that the meeting was not good enough. The expectations of our own personal perfection or of the perfect community are equally unrealistic and present major barriers to the creation of community. We need to accept our flaws and our shadow sides, realizing that while we espouse beliefs and work toward a peaceful and just community, we do not yet have the ability to create and maintain such a place.

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

Differences of belief, language, culture, and practice have always been defining characteristics of Friends' meetings. It was a willingness to struggle together with differences, and to submit these concerns to a process of corporate discernment, that helped meetings grow strong and held early Ranters in check.

Ranterism is the belief that an individual can and should act on anything that the Spirit leads one to do. Among many other excesses, such a belief led James Nayler in 1656 to ride through the streets of Bristol recreating the procession on Palm Sunday, casting himself in the role of Christ. The sense of unity that we seek in our meetings for business rests on a commitment to submit our individual leadings to the wisdom of the group as we seek God's guidance.

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

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

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

---

## SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS AND ADULT FIRST DAY SCHOOL – Sundays, July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

Adult First Day School will meet in person at the meetinghouse, and people will continue to be able to join via Zoom. (See the first page or the announcement sheet for Zoom details.)

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 Spiritual Journeys, stories where Friends describe their understanding of God and religion in their life. On July 3, Quaker Voluntary Service Fellows Selena Faith and Rebecca Rubenstein will share their Spiritual Journeys. (To hear Susan Firestone's Spiritual Journey, shared June 5, visit <https://tinyurl.com/zb9umf4j>. You can read the text she prepared at <https://tinyurl.com/57sswrkp>. To hear other past Spiritual Journeys, contact Mary Ann Downey.)

On second Sundays, Adult First Day School will have worship sharing, usually on that month's query. On other Sundays, we will discuss *Biblical Literacy: The Essential Bible Stories Everyone Needs to Know* by Timothy Beal. Please join us, even if you haven't read the book.

## FLGBTQC POTLUCK / PICNIC -- Sunday, July 3

---

Atlanta's Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (and Non-Binary / Genderqueer / Genderfluid) and Queer Concerns will be hosting a potluck / picnic on July 3. For questions about the gathering (or other lgbtq+ concerns) or to join the FLGBTQC email list, contact Nina Gooch. You may bring a already-prepared dish to share or a picnic for yourself as you feel comfortable. Disposable plates and utensils will be provided. See announcement sheet for last minute details.

## FRIENDS GENERAL CONFERENCE GATHERING ONLINE – Sunday to Saturday, July 3 to 9

---

Friends General Conference (FGC) is an umbrella organization for yearly and monthly meetings, including our yearly meeting. They offer many resources (<https://www.fgcquaker.org>) and host an annual Gathering each summer. This summer's Gathering will still be virtual with opportunities for worship, workshops and fellowship. The theme is . . . **and follow me**. For more information, see <https://www.fgcquaker.org/fgcprograms/the-gathering/>. Registration will continue thru the Gathering, although some workshops may fill up.

## WEDNESDAY AM MEETING FOR WORSHIP – Wednesdays, July 7, 14, 21,28

---

8:30 am. This ongoing meeting for worship is again both in person and Zoom  
Watch announcement sheet for updates. Contact Bert Skellie at 404-680-4799 for general info.  
<https://zoom.us/j/92038862952>  
Meeting ID: 92038862952  
Password: 726229

## WEDNESDAY EVENING WORSHIP WITH MACON WORSHIP GROUP – July 7, 14, 21, 28

---

The Macon Worship Group, which is under the care of Atlanta Friends Meeting, worships via Zoom every Wednesday at 7:00 pm.. They invite us to join them for this ongoing meeting for worship! For more information, contact Bill Holland and Mary Ann Downey.  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85017745787?pwd=RUQ3OGJPenMrYktXemlxl1d2R3Q2Zz09>  
Meeting ID: 850 1774 5787  
Passcode: 22Light

## SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE MEETING -- Sunday, July 10

---

The Social Concerns Committee, which encourages and supports individual members and attenders in their social concern leadings, will hold its every other month meeting at 1:00 pm on July 10 via Zoom. Newcomers are welcome. For questions, contact Glenn Plyler.  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4922576045?pwd=WDBiTHlhVDgzMjVNZDA3RHVleTIsUT09>  
Meeting ID: 492 257 6045  
Passcode: Friends

MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS -- Sunday, July 17

---

Stay after meeting for worship, whether in person or via Zoom. Meeting for Business will be held in a combined format about 11:45. Minutes from our last Meeting for Business in May are at [http://atlantaquakers.org/\\_afm\\_newsletters/AFM\\_Newsletter\\_2022-05.pdf](http://atlantaquakers.org/_afm_newsletters/AFM_Newsletter_2022-05.pdf). [http://atlantaquakers.org/\\_site\\_pdf\\_docs/Guidelines\\_for\\_Meeting\\_for\\_Business.pdf](http://atlantaquakers.org/_site_pdf_docs/Guidelines_for_Meeting_for_Business.pdf) has more information about how meeting for worship with attention to business works.

LET'S TALK ABOUT RACE -- Wednesday, July 27

---

Our monthly online, drop-in forum about race meets at 7:30 pm on the fourth Wednesday of the month. (No meeting in August.) Each meeting starts with a quote from anti racist literature or other media to be the springboard for the evening's conversation. All are welcome whether you have attended before or not. No special knowledge or background needed. We contribute from our personal experiences and backgrounds. We learn from the stories and questions we are willing to share. For more information, contact Lissa Place, 678-793-9260.  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84678045805?pwd=cFdhcEd4UmdlLWwNldDFpMm1mOEVTQT09>  
Meeting ID: 846 7804 5805  
Passcode: LTAR

FORUM: GIVING AND RECEIVING VOCAL MINISTRY – Sunday, July 31

---

*When we gather for worship, how do we create a space for the Spirit to speak to us and through us? How do we listen with open hearts to vocal ministry others offer?* Join Mary Ann Downey and Bill Holland to consider these questions in a forum, "Giving and Receiving Vocal Ministry," on Sunday July 31 after worship at 11:45. Combined in person and Zoom. The current issue of *Friends Journal* focuses on vocal ministry: <https://www.friendsjournal.org/issue-category/2022/vocal-ministry/>.

**PLEASE HOLD  
IN THE LIGHT:**

Karen Gold and  
Jeremiah Gold-Hopton  
Lynn Leuszler  
Beth-Ann Buitekant

*If you wish to have requests  
for holding in the light included  
in this monthly newsletter,  
please give the names  
to a member of  
Care & Counsel.*

**Atlanta Friends Committees and Other Contacts**

Clerk of the Meeting: Jennifer Dickie, [afmclerk1@gmail.com](mailto:afmclerk1@gmail.com)  
Office Coordinator: Nina Gooch, [atlantaquakers@gmail.com](mailto:atlantaquakers@gmail.com)  
Treasurer: Lynn Leuszler, [afmtreasurer1@gmail.com](mailto:afmtreasurer1@gmail.com)  
Ministry & Worship: Bill Hooson, [bhooson@aol.com](mailto:bhooson@aol.com)  
Finance: Paul Mangelsdorf, 770-677-4280  
Social Concerns: Glenn Plyler, 207-522-5295  
Administration: Steve Collins, [shcollins75@gmail.com](mailto:shcollins75@gmail.com)  
Care & Counsel: Karen Skellie, [kskellie@gmail.com](mailto:kskellie@gmail.com)  
Quakers for Racial Equality: Susan Firestone, [susanfires@gmail.com](mailto:susanfires@gmail.com)  
Committee on Undoing Racism in AFM: Lissa Place, [lissaplace@yahoo.com](mailto:lissaplace@yahoo.com)  
Religious Education: Laura MacNorlin, [laura.norlin@gmail.com](mailto:laura.norlin@gmail.com)  
Library: Cal Gough, [calgough@bellsouth.net](mailto:calgough@bellsouth.net)  
Nominating: Lissa Place, [lissaplace@yahoo.com](mailto:lissaplace@yahoo.com)  
Newsletter Editor: Nina Gooch, [atlquakerltr@gmail.com](mailto:atlquakerltr@gmail.com)  
Webmaster: Aaron Ruscetta, [arxaaron@gmail.com](mailto:arxaaron@gmail.com)  
Bookkeeper: Jonah McDonald, [afmbookkeeper1@gmail.com](mailto:afmbookkeeper1@gmail.com)

**For information about these committees, download the AFM Handbook from <http://atlantaquakers.org/members.htm> (scroll down to the bottom to AFM Documents to Download) OR contact the Clerk of the committee.**

## CAT SITTER NEEDED

---

Karen Gold and Jeremiah Gold-Hopton need someone to care for their cat (which is de-clawed) while they are gone mid-late July to mid-late September to visit the Mayo Clinic. Contact Karen or Jeremiah if you can help or if you have questions.

## HELPING CASA ALTERNA WITH GROCERIES

---

The family hosted by Casa Alterna at the Atlanta Friends Meeting house earlier this year has returned and may stay through the summer. To sign up to volunteer to purchase groceries over the next few months, visit <https://bit.ly/3NO2lp1>. As always, this work wouldn't be possible without your support. We are extremely grateful for all you do. If you have questions, contact Cathy at [cbamanti@gmail.com](mailto:cbamanti@gmail.com). For general information about Casa Alterna, visit [casaalterna.org/about/](http://casaalterna.org/about/).

## YOUNG FRIENDS PROGRAM COORDINATOR POSITION AVAILABLE

---

The Meeting is conducting a search for a *Young Friends Program Coordinator* (approximately 10-12 hours per week), who provides engaging youth activities based in Quaker faith and practice, connects youth to the Meeting and to each other, and provides a stable and healthy social support for youth in the AFM community. The Program Coordinator works with young persons in three age groups: upper elementary (3rd through 5th grades), middle school (grades 6 through 8) and high school (grades 9 through 12). Position activities will be dynamic as the needs of the Program will fluctuate with the demographics of AFM youth. Program Coordinator Responsibilities will be dynamic with the needs of the Program and include Program development in collaboration with the *Young Friends Support Committee*, program implementation, volunteer coordination, and event leadership. To obtain a job description and list of qualifications, to ask questions about this position, or to apply, contact [atlantaquakers@gmail.com](mailto:atlantaquakers@gmail.com) by July 15.

## PROPERTY COORDINATOR POSITION AVAILABLE

---

The Meeting is looking for a part-time, paid *Property Coordinator*. The Property Coordinator, whose work schedule varies weekly, will handle upkeep, maintenance and minor repairs to the Meetinghouse. Applicants should have some experience doing building repairs and working with contractors. To obtain a job description, to ask questions about this position, or to apply, contact [atlantaquakers@gmail.com](mailto:atlantaquakers@gmail.com) by July 31.

## 2022 DIRECTORY AVAILABLE IN PRINTED FORM

---

Printed copies are now available on the greeting table or by contacting the Office Coordinator. (The printed copy says June 2022, but is essentially the same as the April 2022 edition that was emailed earlier. If you did not receive an electronic copy of the new 2022 directory in your email or would like an electronic copy of the updated June 2022 edition, please let the Office Coordinator know and she can forward you a copy. Contact [atlantaquakers@gmail.com](mailto:atlantaquakers@gmail.com) or 404-377-2474. If you are not in the directory and would like to be in the next one or if you have corrections, please send your contact information to the Directory Editor at [afmdirectory@gmail.com](mailto:afmdirectory@gmail.com).

## JIM CROW'S PINK SLIP: BOOKS FOR SALE AT MEETINGHOUSE

Atlanta Friends Meeting has some printed copies of the book *Jim Crow's Pink Slip: the Untold Story of Black Principal and Teacher Leadership* about the systemic dismissal of black educators after Brown vs. Brown. The book is by Leslie T. Fenwick, who spoke at the April forum at AFM, **Racial Disparities in Education and the Wealth Gap**. We are selling the book at a discount of 20% for \$27.20. You may give a check written to Atlanta Friends Meeting for that amount and put on the memo line, "Jim Crow's Pink Slip." You may also pay cash (*exact change only please*) or credit card through the Meeting's paypal account. Please contact Office Coordinator, Nina Gooch, to pick up your book.

## JULIE HLIBOKI'S GOING TO ESSENCE: AGING INTO WISDOM WITH INTENTION AND GRACE

If you missed the Zoom reading with Julie Hliboki on May 10, here's a link to a 20-minute radio interview / readings from her book *Going to Essence: Aging into Wisdom with Intention and Grace*: [https://thelastword.libsyn.com/may-12th-2022-with-julie-hliboki?fbclid=IwAR0-9ksLbLbrq-tK64w3zCuSqU\\_8AmfUI5otOcTV62Vh3TPWKb-RNMrGmYY#comment](https://thelastword.libsyn.com/may-12th-2022-with-julie-hliboki?fbclid=IwAR0-9ksLbLbrq-tK64w3zCuSqU_8AmfUI5otOcTV62Vh3TPWKb-RNMrGmYY#comment).

The book is available at <https://amzn.to/3re3PVU>.

## RECORDING OF FORUM ON THE SOUTH RIVER ON May 22

is at <https://1drv.ms/u/s!AtVGqFIJZFVDj32q-JkaDYRLAb6t>.

To listen to it, try clicking on Download and then opening the file.

## QUESTIONS FROM GATHERED MEETING RETREAT ON MAY 28

For many years, the Meeting has gathered as a community to deepen our spiritual life together and get to "know each other in that which is eternal." On Saturday, May 28, this Gathered Meeting Retreat returned – in a hybrid format – for the first time since 2019. Much of the time was spent reflecting in small groups on queries.

Here are some of the queries considered so that you may reflect on them and ponder how Spirit has moved within you in recent years:

- How did isolation reveal strengths / weaknesses in myself or reveal differences in my connection with those around me?
- How was my spirituality, prayer life affected by the pandemic isolation?
- How can facing my death shape my living as a lifelong spiritual practice?
- What joys, gifts, and celebrations nourished my spirit?
- Did I take up old / new pastimes, physical, educational, or other?
- How did companionship show up for me?
- How did my hopes change as the pandemic months turned into years?
- Who or what inspired me? Did the age or experiences of those around me affect my hope for the future?
- Did I feel differently or have affirming interactions with people I talked with on the phone, delivery people, store clerks?

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

#### ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING

Office Hours: Monday thru Thursday, 10 am to 1 pm and Friday, by appointment

web and email: [atlantaquakers.org](http://atlantaquakers.org), [atlantaquakers@gmail.com](mailto:atlantaquakers@gmail.com)

voicemail/phone: 404-377-2474

Clerk: Jennifer Dickie, [afmclerk1@gmail.com](mailto:afmclerk1@gmail.com)

Treasurer: Lynn Leuszler, [afmtreasurer1@gmail.com](mailto:afmtreasurer1@gmail.com)

##### **Ways to communicate and receive information:**

- You may receive the announcement sheets and other announcements relating directly to the life of the meeting. This is the announcement email 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 via email. This is the discussion email list.
- You may receive notification that the newsletter is online. This is the newsletter email list.
- **You may receive weekly reminders about in person and Zoom worship and First Day School via a new email list.** This is the worship reminder list.

To join any of these email lists above, please email the office at [atlantaquakers@gmail.com](mailto:atlantaquakers@gmail.com)

To join the meeting's Facebook group, search for Atlanta Friends Meeting & click the + **Join Group** button.

##### **Do you need a directory, printed or electronic?**

Email [atlantaquakers@gmail.com](mailto:atlantaquakers@gmail.com) or call 404-377-2474

##### **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](mailto:afmdirectory@gmail.com).

**What does investing in your spiritual community look like for you and your family?** Atlanta Friends Meeting accepts contributions of your time, resources, and money! Place a financial contribution in the slot marked "Contributions" in the greeting area of the Meetinghouse or mail to our mailing address. Donate online at [atlantaquakers.org/contact.htm](http://atlantaquakers.org/contact.htm) with a credit card or paypal. Sign up to volunteer on Sunday morning, at <http://tinyurl.com/afmvolunteers>. Contact the Nominating Committee to serve on a committee. Thanks!

**Want to submit an announcement, letter, article, etc to the newsletter?** Email [atlquakerltr@gmail.com](mailto:atlquakerltr@gmail.com). Submissions may be edited for length and format. THE DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS IS THE 20<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF EACH PRECEDING MONTH.

*This newsletter is a publication of the Atlanta Friends Meeting.*

*Views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily that of the Meeting.nina*