

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2023



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

Meeting for Worship each First Day (Sunday) in Person & via Zoom, 10:00 to 11:00 am
Details page 5

QUERY FOR APRIL

Do all aspects of your life bear the same witness? Do you center your life in the awareness of the presence of God so that all things take their rightful place?

Source: Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association *Faith and Practice*

STATE OF THE MEETING REPORT FOR 2022

as approved at Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business on March 19, 2023

Dear Friends,

The past year has felt to many like a year of recovery. After two years of pandemic restrictions our community slowly began reuniting in the Meeting House at the end of 2021. As Friends felt ready and able to join in-person worship our numbers shifted from more appearing on Zoom to more appearing in the Meeting room. Our faithfulness to one another throughout this long transition was held in tender care by many committees and individuals working together to attend to our physical and spiritual health and wellbeing. We thank the Working Group on the Use of the Meeting House, Ministry and Worship, Care and Counsel, Administration, and Religious Education committees, and our Friend in Residence and Office Coordinator.

Attending in-person Meeting at the start of 2022 required masking and contact tracing sign-ins. Over the year, following guidance from the CDC, this shifted to optional masking, the reintroduction of coffee hour in April, and potlucks in October. We had new attenders at almost every Meeting for Worship who were welcomed by greeters and an updated information sheet. A new informal group of Young Adult Friends is endeavoring to build community through monthly get togethers. There is tangible joy in our spiritual fellowship with each other. As with all joys, there come challenges and we recognize with our growing numbers in worship, we can be challenged with our different understandings of vocal ministry. We hold this challenge among others as we strive to be sensitive to the promptings of Spirit.

In May, on the recommendation of Ministry and Worship we agreed to extend the hybrid Meeting format, which had been working well, for the foreseeable future. This format has allowed homebound and distant Friends to continue worshiping with us. With this approval comes our commitment to attend to challenges related to the use of technology during Meetings for Worship.

While First Day School [FDS] continued all year, the Religious Education committee kept a close eye on the wellbeing of young Friends. RE guidelines required volunteers in FDS to be vaccinated and mask throughout 2022, as well as maintain a significant separation between young Friends and the large Meeting for Worship as a vaccine for children aged 6 months to 11 years was not available until June. It was a joyful celebration to see families with young children returning to meeting in larger numbers in the last months of the year. We also celebrated the addition of three children to our community, one by birth and two by adoption. With this return we are faced, once again, with a need for more adult volunteers to walk with our youngest Friends as they seek Spirit in their time together during First Day School.

We also deeply feel the loss of our teens who, many of whom are currently active in Southern Appalachian Young Friends [SAYF] programming, have not returned to Meeting for Worship yet. This absence offers a significant challenge as well as an opportunity to identify the spiritual and social needs of adolescent Friends and their families. We are hopeful that with the hiring of a new Young Friends Program Coordinator and re-starting the AFM Young Friends Support Committee we are building the foundation for a youth program that was too seriously challenged through the pandemic years.

Our spiritual lives were deepened and nourished through the work of Ministry and Worship. Through them we welcomed eight new members by application and one by transfer. Our community is enriched by the recognized ministries of four friends each of whom was supported by an anchoring committee. Our connections were deepened during Adult First Day School and through the ministerial leadership of Mary Ann Downey when eleven Friends shared their Spiritual Journeys and joined our hybrid gathered meeting retreat.

We remembered and were enriched by the lives of Friends who passed. Memorial Meetings for Worship were held under the care of the meeting with the support of Ministry and Worship and Care and Counsel for John Stabler, Cindy Berg, Bruce Burton, Bette Turlington, Peter Schantz, Beth-Ann Buitekant, and Muireann Brennan.

We were surprised in 2022 with the announcement by the national Quaker Voluntary Service [QVS] that they would, “enact a sabbath for the Atlanta QVS program.” We finished out our 10th year, providing support for the cohort of QVS Fellows. As a community, we mourn this loss while holding the incredible gifts we have received and given in our decade of fellowship with QVS.

We continue in the spiritual work of addressing racism in ourselves, our institutions, and our society with guidance and support from Quakers for Racial Equality [QRE], the Committee for Undoing Racism in the Atlanta Friends Meeting [CURAFM], the ad hoc Committee on ad hoc Committee on Reparations and Right Relations, and Friends of Color. This year we saw the fruits of this labor in monthly collaborative forums, meetings, and conversations, and after almost 2 years of work, the Meeting’s approval of AFM’s Interpersonal Racist Incident Policy. The ad hoc Committee for Anti Racist Policies and Procedures, that completed this monumental work, was composed of Friends from many committees and was supported by Friends of Color.

We also endeavored to strengthen our spiritual lives by examining our deep history with the enslavement of African American and Indigenous People and the displacement of those Indigenous

People from the lands on which we reside. The ad hoc Committee on Reparations and Right Relations along with QRE developed programming this year that supported our continued growth in understanding our varied positions and responsibility to this history.

We see that this work is no longer singularly located in one or two committees but has become central to the life of the meeting through the work of many committees, collaborations within the Meeting and the wider community, the ministry of Casa Alterna, and the work of individual white Friends and Friends of Color. Friends are engaged in conversations through the book group reading books by and about People of Color, the CURAFM monthly dialogue "Let's Talk about Race," and SAYMA sponsored racial justice training affinity groups. AFM continues to support and encourage Friends to attend conferences related to recognizing and undoing white supremacy and living into anti-racism as we seek to become an anti-racist, multicultural Meeting.

While we are experiencing a year of recovery and building our spiritual lives with each other, we recognize that the world around us continues to present challenges that pull deeply at our core values and move us to action in ways that often feel urgent. We are living out our Quaker testimonies through the ongoing works of many committees and Friends.

We maintain relationships through committees and individual Friends with organizations and movements doing the work of peace, equity, justice, and stewardship in the local and broader community. Friends can be found serving in the Quaker Religious Education Collaborative [QREC], Friends Committee on National Legislation [FCNL], American Friends Service Committee [AFSC], Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association [SAYMA], Alternatives to Violence Project [AVP], Beacon Hill Black Alliance for Human Rights, Decatur Cooperative Ministries, and the Atlanta Forest Defenders among others.

The Social Concerns Committee [SCC], which coordinates the outreach work among many Friends and committees of AFM, recognizes the increased need for action on issues relevant to women and indigenous communities as well as the continued need to counter the national and state movements to disenfranchise voters in 2022. They invested heavily in local groups and activities that lifted up the needs of those most affected by these concerns. With Green Friends they supported a forum as well as the very successful voter access banner-making project. They focused on international concerns related to the wars in Ukraine and in Yemen collaborating with the Atlanta Advocacy Team of the Friends Committee on National Legislation, supporting interstate travel for lobby visits as needed. We approved a minute, presented by SCC, of support for the expansion of medicaid in Georgia.

Casa Alterna, a ministry of radical hospitality welcoming asylum seekers from all over the world to the meetinghouse, continues to minister to those ensnared by a broken U.S. immigration system. With the support of the Atlanta Friends Meeting, and the ministerial leadership of Anton Flores-Maisonet, guests are received as friends and offered accommodations, meals, and other simple necessities. In 2022 over 70 asylum-seeking guests from 13 countries were welcomed into the meetinghouse.

This year we welcomed back meeting groups and renters into the physical space. This return to the week-day bustle in the Meeting House has added to the sense of recovery and renewal for many. As we transitioned back to daily use of our Meeting House, we have invested in our physical home with a much needed replacement for the front doors. After 10 years of work by Green Friends and supported by the Administration Committee solar panels were installed on the roof. We spent much of the year waiting for them to be connected to the power grid which did not happen in 2022. We have held landscaping work days, continuing to build out the trails and spaces in the land behind the Meeting House. We hired a new Property Coordinator who began his work at the end of 2022.

The Ferguson Cabin has continued to be a place of retreat for more than 100 individuals in 2022 and is cared for by a dedicated committee endeavoring to maintain and enhance the physical space and the scheduling system to foster Friends comfort in this important AFM resource. This year AFM supported the community of Murray Cove in its opposition to the commercial development of property adjacent to ours. Ultimately the commercial development was allowed to proceed while maintaining a green buffer between our property and theirs.

In 2022, as in years prior, a common wish arose among Friends as we sought to deepen our spiritual community and address the social, political and environmental challenges of the world. We seek more robust participation in the committee life of the Meeting. We are grateful that the Nominating Committee was fully functional in 2022 helping to match the gifts of many Friends with the needs of the community. Nominating offered a committee fair in the late fall in hopes of engaging more friends in the work of the Meeting. We recognize not all Friends are called to work within AFM's organized committees and we hope that recent attenders as well as established Friends will feel welcome to share their gifts in meaningful ways, offering new perspectives and creating a new generation of leadership within our Friends Meeting.

**PLEASE HOLD
IN THE LIGHT:**

Margie Rece and family
Bill Hooson
Donna Roberts and family
Bill Cox and son David

If you wish to have requests for holding in the light included in this monthly newsletter and in the announcement sheet, 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
Office Coordinator: Nina Gooch, atlantaquakers@gmail.com
Treasurer: Lynn Leuszler, afmtreasurer1@gmail.com
Ministry & Worship: Bill Hooson, bhooson@aol.com
Finance: Paul Mangelsdorf, 770-677-4280
Social Concerns: Kevin Moran, moran.kevinmoran.kevin@gmail.com
Administration: Steve Collins, shcollins75@gmail.com
Care & Counsel: Jennifer Crumpley, see directory
Quakers for Racial Equality: Susan Firestone, susanfires@gmail.com
Committee on Undoing Racism in AFM: Lissa Place, lissaplace@yahoo.com
Religious Education: Laura MacNorlin, laura.norlin@gmail.com
Library: Cal Gough, calgough@bellsouth.net
Nominating: Lissa Place, lissplace@yahoo.com
Newsletter Editor: Nina Gooch, atquakerltr@gmail.com
Webmaster: Aaron Ruschetta, arxaaron@gmail.com
Bookkeeper: Jonah McDonald, 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.

RECORDING FROM FORUM ON ROOT CAUSES OF HOMELESSNESS

On January 9, AFM member Sara Partenade was a panelist at a forum on the Root Causes of Homelessness: Race, Gentrification, and the Unhoused in Metro Atlanta. A recording of that forum is now available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SbtJH48L_4c if you were unable to attend.

QRE RECORDING: ELDER FRIENDS OF COLOR SHARE THEIR STORIES

Quakers for Racial Equality (QRE) is very grateful to Althea Sumpter and Folami Prescott-Adams, who shared their stories during our February 26 Quakers for Racial Equality forum, "Elder Friends of Color Share Their Stories". We hope to hear from other elder Friends of Color at another time. Thanks to everyone who participated by listening or asking questions. A recording is at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1h-RhJAQYr5GFGoNjI5DamnyXeEiSk0wv/view?usp=sharing>

PLEASE JOIN ATLANTA FRIENDS ON SUNDAYS FOR WORSHIP AND FIRST DAY SCHOOL



We continue to worship on Sunday at 10:00 am in person at the meeting house 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 info and COVID guidelines for in-person worship, see the current announcement sheet at www.atlantaquakers.org/_announcements/Announcement_Sheet.pdf.

MEETING FOR WORSHIP

10 am Sundays, combined in person and Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89686276751?pwd=M29EYlIFWEhSQUtZRVVPaIFFYmVDQT09>

Meeting ID: 896 8627 6751

Passcode: 789456

ADULT FIRST DAY SCHOOL

(see more details for each Sunday below)

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

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

Meeting ID: 860 6366 5797

Passcode: 013191

FIRST DAY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS

10:15 am Sundays, in-person,

Children and teens 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.

WEDNESDAY OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORSHIP EACH WEEK

IN-PERSON AT THE MEETINGHOUSE AND VIA ZOOM AT 8:30 AM

In the library. For more information, contact Bert Skellie at 404-680-4799 .

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

Meeting ID: 92038862952

Password: 726229

IN PERSON AT THE MEETINGHOUSE AT 7:00 PM

In the library. All are welcome to attend. For more information, contact Alex Zinnes, azinnes@gmail.com and Clive Gordon, cmgord28@gmail.com.

VIA ZOOM WITH MACON WORSHIP GROUP AT 7:00 PM

The Macon Worship Group, which is under the care of Atlanta Friends Meeting, invites us to join them for this ongoing meeting for worship via Zoom! 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

In a January meeting for worship, Mary Ann Downey shared this poem from Mary Oliver:

Each Day

At the beginning of each day,
after we open our eyes
to receive the light
of that day,

As we listen to the voices
and sounds
that surround us,
We must resolve to treat each hour
as the rarest of gifts,
and be grateful
for the consciousness
that allows us to experience it,
recalling in thanks
that our awareness is a present
from we know not where,
or how, or why.

When we rise from sleep let us rise for the joy
of the true Work that we will be about this day,
and considerately cheer one another on.

Life will always provide matters for concern.
Each day, however, brings with it
reasons for joy.
Every day carries the potential
to bring the experience of heaven;
have the courage to expect good from it.

Be gentle with this life,
and use the light of life
to live fully in your time.

*The book that Mary Ann also mentioned that morning was
Always We Begin Again: The Benedictine Way of Living by John McQuiston II.*

SAYMA INVITES WORKSHOP PROPOSALS FOR 2023 GATHERING (proposals due April 24)

This Summer, SAYMA (Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association) Friends will gather at Berea College in Kentucky for our annual Retreat and Sessions, from 1:00 on Friday, June 23 to 1:00 on Tuesday, June 27. As with last year's Retreat and Sessions, we will gather both in person and virtually.

The Yearly Meeting Planning Committee is inviting Friends who are so led to present a workshop as part of our annual Retreat. They write: "Workshops that connect to our theme are central to the retreat experience. As you seek to discern your leading to offer a workshop, we invite you to interpret this year's theme [*Why Are We Here?*] in whatever way feels right to you, including but not limited to 'We are here to join with one another to participate in this wonderful workshop.' We invite proposals whether for **in-person attenders, virtual attenders, or a hybrid of both**. You may suggest a one-part or two-part workshop. You may offer to repeat the same workshop on more than one day."

The deadline for receiving proposals is Monday, April 24, 2023. To submit your idea/s, use the form at <https://forms.gle/ojoj3XT15U7zWsac9>. For more details and alternate ways to submit proposals as well as general information about the Retreat & Sessions, visit sayma.org.

Here are some queries that might help you create a workshop proposal of 50 to 100 words:

- How would you describe the core idea for the workshop?
- What do you want participants to take away from the workshop?
- Will participants acquire new information or build on existing knowledge?
- Will this be a spiritual, intellectual, or emotional exploration or experience or some combination of these?
- How will you interact with participants and how will participants interact with their inner life, with the spirit, and/or with each other?
- How will you know what your participants are "getting" from the session?
- How is your session built on sharing in the beloved community?

If the review committee accepts your workshop, you are agreeing to attend SAYMA, and you will need to register and pay the registration fees.

ADVANCE PROGRAM AVAILABLE FOR FGC GATHERING (dates July 2 to 8)



FGC Gathering 2023

The Friends General Conference (FGC) Gathering, a week of Quaker worship, workshops and community for all ages, will be in person again this year from July 2 to 8 at Western Oregon University in Monmouth, Oregon. Evening plenaries will also be available via Zoom or later recording (registration for this is required on the website). The theme for the Gathering is *Listen So That We May Live*. Early Bird registration begins April 3 and an Advance Program and additional information is available at fgcgathering.org. FGC (fgcquaker.org) is an umbrella organization providing resources for unprogrammed Quaker meetings like ours.

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR SAYMA ANNUAL SESSIONS & RETREAT AND FOR FGC GATHERING

As part of Tom and Suzan Kenworthy's bequest to the meeting, scholarships to wider Quaker events, including these, are available to Young Adult Friends (ages 18 to 35). Ministry and Worship also offers partial scholarships to anyone in the meeting attending these two specific events. More details later or contact the Ministry and Worship Committee via Bill Hooson.

SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS AND ADULT FIRST DAY SCHOOL – Sunday, April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

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. Ellen McQueen will share her story on April 2. (To listen to Richard Allen's Spiritual Journey, shared March 5, visit <https://tinyurl.com/55h5run2>. To listen to other previous Spiritual Journey, contact Mary Ann Downey.)

We offer a standing invitation to all attenders and members, those new to meeting, transfers from other meetings or longtime Atlanta members and attenders to share your answers to these questions. Some Friends find it helpful to do this as an interview. For more information and to schedule a time to tell your story contact Mary Ann Downey at madowney@mindspring.com. You can also learn more about these stories at <https://www.friendsjournal.org/telling-stories-spiritual-journey/> and <https://www.friendsjournal.org/what-we-can-say-now/>.

On second, third, and fourth Sundays in April, Adult First Day School's book for discussion will be *Hope Leans Forward* by Valerie Brown. All are welcome, whether you have read the book or not.

On fifth Sundays, including April 30, Adult First Day School will have worship sharing based on a query, either that month's query or another query.

Adult First Day School meets in person at the meetinghouse, and people can also join via Zoom. (See above for Zoom details.)

POTLUCK – Sunday, April 2

We have resumed our monthly potlucks. Please join us for a potluck lunch following the rise of Meeting on the first Sunday of the month. Weather permitting, we have tables outside for you to enjoy. If you can, please bring not only enough food for your family, but also a little extra for newcomers and guests.

RICHARD ALLEN TO PLAY PIANO PIECES -- Sunday, April 2

Sunday, April 2, at 12:15 pm, Atlanta Friends Meeting's own Richard Allen will play his 20-minute composition "Two Thousand Years Ago In Jerusalem." Richard played many years in Florida in a jazz band and now spends most of his days as a piano tuner, including for our pianos at the meeting house. He has performed these jazz-influenced pieces for all ages over the years. Richard connects this set of pieces to the story of Jesus' last week, so Palm Sunday is a perfect day to play them. Richard is supported by AFM in his ministry to share this gift of music. For more information, contact Bert Skellie at bertskellie@gmail.com or 404-680-4799. Richard's Spiritual Journey shared March 5 (<https://tinyurl.com/55h5run2>) talks about his background as a musician and about this piece.

BOOKS BY AND ABOUT PEOPLE OF COLOR – Thursday, April 6 and ongoing

The book group reading works by and about people of color meets at 1:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month. They are currently meeting in person and via Zoom. On April 6, they'll discuss *Deacon King Kong* by James McBride. Future books include *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie on May 4; *A Tale for the Time Being* by Ruth Ozeki on June 1; *Master Slave Husband Wife* by Ilyon Woo on August 3; poems selected by members of the group on September 7; and *Afterlives* by Abdulrazak Gurnah on October 5. For questions or the Zoom link, contact Susan Cole (cole2544@bellsouth.net).

WHITE PRIVILEGE CONFERENCE -- April 12 to 15

The White Privilege Conference 24 (<https://www.theprivilegeinstitute.com/wpc24mesa>) will be held in person only this year April 12 to 15 in Mesa, Arizona. Many Atlanta Friends have participated in past years. Friends General Conference (FGC) offers a 10% discount in the cost if you first register through FGC using this link <https://www.fgcquaker.org/fgcprograms/ministry-on-racism/white-privilege-conference/>. Then FGC will send you a discount code for registering with WPC24 site. The conference is less than a month away, and is well attended, so do not delay if you are interested in registering. Quakers for Racial Equality also has some funds to help with financial assistance. Email Susan Firestone for more info (susanfires@gmail.com).

MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS -- Sunday, April 16

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 are below.

ATLANTA CHILDREN'S CHOIR CONCERT -- Saturday, April 22

The Atlanta Children's Choir, which rehearses in the meeting room on Thursday afternoons, will present their spring concert on April 22 at 6 pm. The concert, which is free to all, will be about 30 minutes long and there will be light refreshments afterwards.

GREEN FRIENDS WORKSHOP: "WHAT IS MINE TO DO ON CLIMATE?" – Sunday, April 23

Our climate has changed. Experts tell us we must reduce our use of fossil fuel pollution by 2030 to prevent much worse damage. We cannot effectively remove all the pollutants that are making us warmer. What is our calling, as people of faith? Do we go as before, or do we change? Should the Meeting replace polluting appliances that burn methane gas quickly, or as they need replacement? Should we encourage electric vehicles, both cars and e-bikes, instead of those burning gasoline? Can we get Federal funds to support some of this work?

In this Green Friends workshop starting at 11:45 pm and ending at 1:00 pm, Henry Slack will give a short presentation / introduction, then invite us to small groups to consider our actions: as individuals, as a Meeting, and as citizens. We will reconvene and share from our small groups, then close. Snacks provided.

FORUM ON REPARATIVE JUSTICE & RIGHT RELATIONS FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND AFRICAN AMERICANS – Sunday, April 30

Atlanta Friends Meeting and the Friends School of Atlanta invite you to join us for this free online forum on April 30, 2023 at 1:00 PM ET with guest speakers Frank Pommersheim and Craig Womack. Free registration via Zoom is required, and details will be available closer to April 30.

Frank Pommersheim will be speaking on “**Reconciliation and Repair: Land Acknowledgement, Land Return, and Reparations.**” He is professor emeritus of law at the University of South Dakota School of Law, was born in New York City, but has lived in South Dakota for more than 40 years. Prior to joining the faculty at the University of South Dakota School of Law in 1984, he lived and worked on the Rosebud Sioux Reservation for ten years. He has also served on a number of tribal appellate courts throughout Indian country including Chief Justice for the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribal Court of Appeals and Associate Justice for the Rosebud Sioux Supreme Court. Professor Pommersheim writes extensively in the field of Indian law. He is the author of *Braid of Feathers (American Indian Law and Contemporary Tribal Life)*, *Broken Landscape: Indians, Indian Tribes, and the Constitution*, more than 40 law review articles, and more than 125 judicial opinions. His most recent book entitled *Tribal Justice: 25 Years as a Tribal Appellate Justice* came out in 2015. Professor Pommersheim has also won numerous teaching awards. In 2022, Frank received the Federal Bar Association Lawrence Baca Lifetime Achievement Award in Federal Indian Law.

Craig Womack will be discussing “**Creek History and Creek Responsibilities.**” He is a retired professor of Native American literature, is a musician and author, and member of Hillabee Ceremonial Grounds, one of the Creek grounds in Oklahoma. He was a long-time resident of Atlanta who now lives in middle Tennessee and remains active in the city.

For Zoom coordinates, watch the announcement sheet. For general information, contact Herb Edwards, Herbmedwards@gmail.com or Susan Firestone, susanfires@gmail.com or see this flyer: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xP-k6_F66tgsJ0XkGHdLnDW1_QPHI76f/view?usp=sharing

MEN'S RETREAT AT FERGUSON CABIN – Friday to Sunday, May 5 to 7

The annual Men's Retreat (man is self-defined) at the Ferguson Cabins on Lake Burton in the north Georgia mountains will be May 5 to 7. Enjoy fishing (license required), swimming, hiking, canoeing and listening to the sound of nature. When registering, please let us know about any medical conditions and what you might bring. Prices \$20 per night for cabins and \$15 per night for bunkhouses. Scholarship funds available. Please call or text Eric Glenn at 404-966-1417 or call or email Bert Skellie at 404-680-4799 or bertskellie@gmail.com.

YOUNG ADULT FRIENDS RETREAT – Saturday & Sunday, May 13 to 14

The Young Adult Friends will have a retreat Saturday to Sunday May 13 to 14, with the option of staying Friday night as well. It will be at AFM's Ferguson Cabins (about 2.5 hours north of Atlanta). Anyone aged approximately 18 to 35 is welcome. Mark your calendars! More info and RSVP are coming soon. In the meantime, please email afm-yaf@googlegroups.com with any questions.

MINUTES FOR THIRD MONTH MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS

March 20, 2023, held in person and via Zoom in a blended meeting

Minutes Recorded Pending Approval

Attendance: Mike Aland, Richard Allen, Judy Bender, John Carpentier, Sallie Carpentier, Steve Collins, Jennifer Crumpley, Mary Ann Downey, Julia Ewen, Sally Ferguson, Susan Firestone, Clive Gordon, Bill Holland, Bill Hooson, Teri Key-Hooson, Elizabeth Lamb, Lynn Leuszler, Georgia Lord, Paul Manglesdorf, Alison Mawle, Jillian Minarich, Kevin Moran, Karen terHorst Morris, Caroline Morris, Elizabeth Muller, Ron Nuse, Aaron Ruscetta, Bert Skellie, Karen Skellie, Jim Tolmach, Myrna Trapp, Jennifer Dickie (Clerk), Emma Bingham (Recording Clerk)

Worship

Query for Third Month: Is meeting for worship regularly held, in expectant waiting for divine guidance? Are both silent and vocal ministry rooted in a shared experience of the Light?

Source: Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association Faith and Practice

Discernment:

Naming Committee - Sally Ferguson reported for the Naming Committee.

Minute 2023-03-19:01: On the recommendation of the Naming Committee, the Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Ellen McQueen as a member of Nominating Committee for a two-year term, March 2023 - December 2024.

Sally also requested another volunteer to serve on Nominating Committee. Many people (about 20) have been asked so far but none have been able to serve.

Ministry and Worship - Bill Hooson reported for the Ministry and Worship Committee.

Bill read the membership request letter from Jillian Minarich.

Minute 2023-03-19:02: The Atlanta Friends Meeting, on the recommendation of the Ministry and Worship committee, approves Jillian Minarich as a member.

State of the Meeting Report

The clerk asked if anyone had any questions about the final draft of the State of the Meeting report. (The report was not read again but was available in paper and digital formats.)

Karen Morris asked whether we should list births in the State of the Meeting report. She said there was at least one birth last year, the granddaughter of Diane Rowley.

Bill Holland said that this is the reason we add “events in the life of the meeting” to the business meeting minutes each month, and we can look back and include any births in the State of the Meeting report.

Karen Skellie said children of members and attenders are usually listed, but not grandchildren.

Jennifer Dickie said that she would add any births she found in the minutes.

Minute 2023-03-19:03: The Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the final State of the Meeting report with the addition of any births to members or attenders of Atlanta Friends Meeting in 2022. *[Editor's Note: The final version is printed above!]*

Reports:

Ministry and Worship - Bill Hooson reported for the Ministry and Worship Committee.

Greg Johnson has sent a letter requesting membership. A clearness committee is being put together, and his name will be brought forward at next month's meeting for business.

Nominating Committee - Jim Tolmach reported for the Nominating Committee.

Nominating Committee would like to bring the following names forward for the Ferguson Cabin Committee. They will all have three year terms from April of 2023-December of 2025. The Nominating Committee will bring their names back next month for approval.

Caroline Morris. Mike Aland. Sallie Carpentier, John Carpentier, Mark Smith. Kathy Johnson, Alvant Kerdine, Martha Hutchins, Joan Thompson, Asha Leong, Jennifer Thompson, Marty Frank. Laurie Metcalf

Caroline Morris asked if Laurie Marion could be added to the list instead of Laurie Metcalf, because they don't know who Laurie Metcalf is. Friends present also did not know who Alvant Kerdine was. The clerk asked the Nominating Committee to return next month with an accurate list.

Bill Holland asked if these 13 people would get any training and if they would serve staggered terms. Jim Tolmach answered that people could serve staggered terms so that not all the members would roll off at once, and the Nominating Committee will bring their names and their assigned terms back next month for discernment.

Alison Mawle asked how many members are currently on the Ferguson Cabin Committee, and why this is such a large committee. The clerk noted that the list presented has 13 members. She also said that in the handbook, it says 5-9 members will be named and approved. She noted that the handbook is currently being reviewed, so this could be changed if brought to meeting for business. Jim replied that the Cabin Committee is one of a few committees that requires all members be named by business meeting.

Caroline Morris said that in the past, only the stewards have been approved, not every single member of the Cabin Committee. Jennifer Dickie asked if there was a difference between the cabin committee and the stewards committee, and it was answered that they are the same.

The names brought forth for the Ferguson Cabin Stewards Committee will be held over until next month for more clarity.

Handbook Revisions:

Jim Tolmach noted again that handbook revisions are ongoing,

CURAFM is bringing forward revisions to the handbook for their section. See the current version at [this link](#) and the proposed changes at [this link](#). Karen Morris went over the changes. Some of the changes are structural and some are needed because of the new Interpersonal Racist Incident Response Policy. There is a new Standing Response Group (SRG) for this policy.

Jennifer Crumpley asked what staggered two-year terms mean. Karen Morris answered that it means if two people are approved this year, one would serve a one-year term and one would serve a two-year term in order to make sure there is continuity on the SRG (since members will serve for two years).

Bill Hooson noted that we have a form for reporting racist incidents and a form for reporting sexual abuse. He asked whether these forms could be merged, or whether they need to be separate. The clerk said we would set this question aside for now as it is not directly related to the handbook description.

Bill Holland said that when Ministry and Worship was reviewing the policy, they suggested that the SRG be a committee under the care of the meeting, not under CURAFM, as he doesn't know of any other approved committee that's a subcommittee of a standing committee. Karen Morris said she wasn't aware of this and that CURAFM could have a conversation with Ministry and Worship Committee. Bill Holland said that Ministry and Worship had minuted this and their representative to CURAFM was at the meeting where it was minuted. He said they felt that if the SRG was important, that it should be under the care of the meeting directly. Susan Firestone replied that CURAFM was aware of this issue, and that's why SRG members will be nominated and approved by the whole meeting. She said, however, that it doesn't make sense for the SRG to be separate from CURAFM because CURAFM will be the committee largely responsible for administering the SRG, and there shouldn't be a whole separate approval for the SRG as a committee.

The clerk noted the concerns about Item 7 should be clarified between CURAFM and M&W before Nominating brings the revised description back for approval.

Current handbook description and the revised description were shared via email for comparison.

Ferguson Cabin Committee - John Carpentier reported for the Ferguson Cabin Committee.

The Cabin Committee has been in the inquiry of how to increase the usage of the Ferguson Cabins.

The cabins are on a lake front property located at Lake Burton in North Georgia. There are two main cabins: Irene, the newer cabin, built about ten years ago, and Dwight, the original cabin whose original building dates to the 1930s. There are also two separate sleeping cabins, Tree Tops and Squirrel House. Both cabins are large enough to accommodate groups of 2 to 5 people. The property is large enough to accommodate groups at each cabin at the same time. The sleeping cabins can be rented to allow for larger groups at either cabin. If a group wishes to have the property for themselves, they can rent both cabins.

The Cabin Committee has been at work creating an online scheduling procedure. The future online presence will allow members and attenders of the Atlanta Friends Meeting to request and schedule dates to use the Ferguson Cabin. To facilitate payments for the cabins, they are also exploring methods to allow for online payments. Jonah has been very helpful with exploration. Currently payments can be made by sending a check to the meeting house, or through the donation box at the meeting house.

As part of the discussion of the online procedures, the committee has come to agreement to change the per person per night rate to a per night rate. This change is designed to simplify the scheduling and payment for the cabins. The new nightly rates for each individual cabin are \$45 for Irene, \$20 for Dwight, and \$10 for the sleeping cabins, with a nightly rate of \$65 for all cabins.

At this moment, the online system is not ready for roll out. The expectation is that the system will be ready by the end of May 2023. The Cabin Committee will announce the online scheduling when it is ready. In the meantime, the cabin can still be reserved by contacting the scheduler, Joan Thompson, 404-273-3489.

The Cabin Committee encourages the usage of this beautiful property. Dwight Ferguson, a member of Atlanta Friends Meeting, donated this property as a spiritual retreat for members and attenders of the meeting.

Aaron Ruscetta, as the current AFM website manager, said the calendar could be up on the website soon so that people could know the cabin's availability.

Alison Mawle asked, if multiple groups are sharing the property, how to know whether people in other groups would bring their pets, since it might make a difference to people staying there.

John said they could add that.

Jennifer Dickie asked if the per cabin charge would be a challenge for single individuals who want to stay there. Alison Mawle asked about the flip side, noting that if there are a lot of people staying, \$20 would be a small amount. John Carpentier responded that there is always an opportunity for more donations. The switch to a per cabin cost is to simplify the process so they don't need to ask how many people stayed there. He also said that they would try this system for a while to see if it works, and address any concerns when or if they come up later.

Finance Committee - Paul Manglesdorf reported for the Finance Committee.

The AFM Finance and Social Concerns Committees propose that Atlanta Friends Meeting become the fiscal sponsor of the Beloved Community Scholarship ("BCS"). The Beloved Community Scholarship was started by a member of AFM. More information can be found at [the scholarship's website](http://belovedcommunityscholarship.org/), <http://belovedcommunityscholarship.org/>.

The Beloved Community Scholarship is designed as one way for white families to pay reparations and to provide a step up to young people of color. This scholarship is intended to have very few strings attached. The program does not want to micromanage or enforce our values on the recipient, but rather to simply redistribute wealth. We will give the money and trust the student. The only requirement is that the funds are used for college. To ensure the focus is on the recipient and to avoid perception of paternalism or charity, we intend for the managers and contributors to the scholarship fund to stay anonymous. There are already 6 families who fund the scholarship, so no other money is necessary. However, other members of the AFM community may participate as funders if they choose.

There are very few logistics required of AFM to be the fiscal sponsor. The scholarship application process will continue to be managed by the Atlanta Friends Meeting member who created the program. The AFM Bookkeeper (Jonah McDonald) will record donations and cut checks to the schools for the scholar's accounts.

Recipients will preferably meet these four criteria:

- Graduating senior at Drew Charter School or Maynard Jackson High School
- Minimum 2.7 GPA
- First generation college student
- Attending an HBCU

Sally Ferguson asked why they ask for "preferably" for the applicant criteria. Why are the criteria not just requirements? Paul responded that he was describing the program as it exists now. He also said that it is first come, first served with the idea that they try to pick applicants that meet the greatest number of criteria. It is also intended not to force the view that this is what the applicants need to do.

Jennifer Dickie asked about there not being a question about race on the form. Is the scholarship specifically for people of color? She asked whether a white student could receive the scholarship if they met the other criteria. Paul said he would ask about this.

Alison Mawle asked what being a fiscal sponsor means. Does it mean that people could donate to the scholarship via donating to the meeting? Paul clarified that fiscal sponsorship is a concept in the IRS code. AFM will take in the money as an organization that can take in tax-deductible donations and write the checks that will go to the students. Paul said that there should not be a financial risk for the meeting, as people will have to donate to the scholarship specifically, and the money donated to it would be separated into its own fund. One thing the meeting would have to do is an annual audit to make sure the students receiving the scholarship are meeting the criteria.

Alison also asked if they can use the AFM name, and also why they do not set themselves up as a nonprofit. Paul said it is complicated to set up as a nonprofit and costs a lot of money in terms of legal assistance and paperwork required. This is why the concept of a fiscal sponsor exists, for smaller organizations that can't make this expenditure. And yes, they will use AFM's name because the money has to go through the meeting.

Sallie Carpentier said private scholarships can be deposited to the college account or given directly to the student. Which one will it be? Paul said it will be deposited to the student's account at the college, not given to the student directly.

This topic will come back next month for discernment. In the meantime, questions can be sent to Paul Manglesdorf (Finance Committee, manglesdorf@bellsouth.net) or Bert Skellie (Social Concerns Committee, bertskellie@gmail.com).

Clerk's Items

Jennifer Dickie said that the ad hoc committee for the kitchen update will be extended to April 30.

Announcements

- FCNL listening session on reproductive health and abortion on Tues., Mar. 28, 7-9 pm in the library and via Zoom.
- Update on DATES for the 2023 SAYMA Sessions and Retreat: [Why Are We Here?](#) The planning committee added one more day: New dates - **Friday, June 23 - Tuesday, June 27.**
- A call for SAYMA workshops has been issued at SAYMA.org
[Editor's Note: also see page 7 above]
- Following the rise of Meeting for Business today will be the corporation meeting of Atlanta Friends Meeting.
- Susan Firestone announced that the Ad Hoc Reparations & Right Relations Committee is contacting other committees in Atlanta Friends Meeting and asking the committees to review the "working statement building toward land acknowledgement and making amends." The purpose is to get feedback from the whole Meeting and make progress on plans for a possible formal land acknowledgement in consultation with Indigenous People. The March 2023 working statement can be viewed [here](#). Committees can send feedback about the working statement to Susan or to Herb Edwards, Clerk of the Ad Hoc Reparations & Right Relations Committee.

Approval of Minutes from 2nd month 2023

Minute 3-19-23:04: The Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the 2nd month 2023 minutes.

Closing Worship

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, atlantaquakers@gmail.com

voicemail/phone: 404-377-2474

Clerk: Jennifer Dickie, afmclerk1@gmail.com

Treasurer: Lynn Leuszler, 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

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 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.

What does investing in your spiritual community look like for you and your family? Atlanta Friends Meeting accepts contributions of your time, resources, talents, and money! Place a financial contribution in the slot marked "Contributions" in the greeting area of the Meetinghouse or mail to our mailing address. Or donate online at 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 atquakerltr@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.*