

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER

JUNE 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 am. Details page 3.

QUERY FOR JUNE

Do I look into the nature and meaning of peace? How does it affect my daily life?

Source: AFM Ministry and Worship Committee

There are other lives
lived out of the mainstream babble
that hold immense value
because they are quiet
These lives will never receive
the world's acclamations
they are subterranean
lived out through everyday's
simple tasks.
They are the stitches that hold
the world in place
unnoticed but necessary
a private grace.

by patricia turner

NOTHING CAN SEPARATE US FROM THE LIGHT

"We have a rich tradition as Quakers of allowing our inner life to guide our lives in relation to the larger group and to national and international issues that call us to be involved. Nothing can separate us from the Light Within nor from the bonds that connect us," Linda Sager says in her article "Nothing Can Separate Us From the Light" in the March 2023 *Friends Journal*.

Read more at <https://www.friendsjournal.org/nothing-can-separate-us-from-the-light/>.

SPEAKING SO EVERYONE CAN HEAR US

This originally appeared as an email from Julia Ewen posted on the meeting's discussion email list and is shared here with her permission. The headline comes from an exchange between a First Day School teacher and a first-grader, heard many years ago.

Teacher: What do we do in meeting?

Student: We sit quietly til God tells us to speak and then we speak so everyone can hear. The Editor's notes below are additional suggestions based on the editor's experience in theatre, designed to help your voice reach the microphone and the ears of those in the meetinghouse as well as to make the words you're saying more understandable. Clarity is just as important as volume for making it possible for others to know what you're saying.

Friends, we in “ZOOM-land” are sort of the canary at the bottom of mine regarding how audible and intelligible your messages are. Over a period of months, I have been in touch with the ZOOM host about the audio from the Meeting Room, and everything technologically possible has been done to enhance the quality of the transmission to ZOOMers. The volume is fine, but we continue to struggle to understand what many of you are saying when you speak in Meeting. The closed captioning feature makes it clear that some Friends articulate distinctly—and the closed captioning does fine reflecting their words—but many, if not most, of you are having your words transliterated as nonsense worthy of the Tower of Babel! Even prior to the pandemic our Meeting Room has presented chronic challenges in acoustics. It is designed for profound quiet, and it EATS spoken words!

Today the ZOOM host told me that the ZOOM host had a problem discerning a spoken message without the aid of using the earphones connected to the sound/ZOOM equipment. And my closed captioning reception was from somewhere beyond Alice’s Looking Glass. It is important to all of us that a Spirit-led message be heard clearly so we can receive it in our hearts!

Here are some suggestions for increasing our faithfulness in delivering our spoken ministry clearly:

RISE and lift your chin parallel to the floor and speak toward the opposite wall or even the ceiling. The carpet has been sufficiently edified and is willing to share inspiration with a wider field. ☺

[Editor's Note: If you find it uncomfortable to look at people, just look over the tops of their heads.]

Our messages are songs of praise to God, and so tips from teachers of singing can be very helpful in effective speaking as well: Standing frees up the diaphragm and allows it to push air into your lungs and up into your mouth, which should be opened wider than you normally would for a conversation with someone sitting at your elbow. That helps the sound project to the other side of the room. In music, including singing, it is the nanosecond of space between the syllables that creates a note. Otherwise, without that space, one produces an undifferentiated hum, which may be audibly pleasing but one cannot discern words/thought. Speaking this way is known as “enunciating.”

[Editor's Note: Also emphasize your consonants more than usual and make them as clear as possible, so that the difference between words like 'needing' and 'meeting' is clear.] It takes some conscious effort and takes a tiny bit more time to speak in this manner, but people in the Meeting Room will hear you more clearly, and it increases the likelihood that the ZOOMers will understand you. *[Editor's note: Slowing down is another way to help people hear and understand you more easily. The editor's father liked to say that he heard just as well as he always had, just not as quickly.]* No matter how good the electronic transmission, it is not so good as being there in person. And those present in the room will also benefit.

I say these things not to be critical, but to plead with you to make us ZOOMers more truly present to your Spirit-led and heart-felt messages and more truly welcomed as part of our worship.

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. Masks are optional at the meetinghouse, but if you test positive for COVID or are ill for any reason, please stay home and join us for worship and other events via Zoom. Any updates to Zoom info will be in 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.

There are three Wednesday opportunities for worship available each week, both in person and via Zoom. See the [announcement sheet](#) for more details.

**PLEASE HOLD
IN THE LIGHT:**

Jennifer Crumpley
Lynn Leuszler
Bill Hooson
Donna Roberts

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, afm.care.counsel@gmail.com
- Quakers for Racial Equality: Susan Firestone, susanfires@gmail.com
- Committee on Undoing Racism in AFM: Lissa Place, lissaplace@yahoo.com
- Religious Education: Amanda Gendreau, gfmars@gmail.com
- Young Friends Program Coordinator, Asa Kramer-Dickie, afm.young.friends@gmail.com
- Library: Cal Gough, calgough@bellsouth.net
- Nominating: Lissa Place, lissaplace@yahoo.com
- Newsletter Editor: Nina Gooch, atlquakerltr@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.

REGISTER NOW FOR SAYMA & FGC GATHERING

SAYMA: Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA) will hold its Annual Sessions and Retreat from June 23 to 27 at beautiful Berea College, Berea, Kentucky. **The Registration deadline for in person attendance is June 2 and for hybrid attendance, June 27.** Registration information and the Advance Program is at <https://www.sayma.org/YM2023/>.

The SAYMA Gathering is a wonderful opportunity to get to know Friends from across the southeast, participate in worship and workshops and commune with beautiful nature. This year the basic adult package with meals is \$305 for a shared room, and for teens \$300. Children under 12, Young Adult Friends (18 to 35), and Friends of Color participate at no cost. (See promo codes at the link above.) Atlanta Meeting encourages interested members and attenders to participate. Our Clerk Jennifer Dickie is also the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee Clerk!

Friends General Conference: Join Friends from across the continent at the 2023 Friends General Conference (FGC) Gathering "Listen So That We May Live"! [FGC (fgcquaker.org) is an umbrella organization providing resources for unprogrammed Quaker meetings like ours.] Experience a week of Quaker worship, workshops, and community for all ages at Western Oregon University in Monmouth, Oregon from July 2 to 8, 2023! There will also be livestreamed plenaries and Bible Half Hour for those not able to travel to Oregon. **Late fees begin June 1, and registration for Junior Gathering and the High School Program ends June 8. Registration for hybrid events ends June 25.** More info and registration links at <https://www.fgcquaker.org/fgcprograms/the-gathering/>.

HOW DO WE GET TO COMMUNITY?

A note from Rich Klima: "To be in a real supportive community takes time and effort. This can be built through small groups sharing, getting to know each other. My vision for this group is to start building community based on the writings of M. Scott Peck. This is something I have done before in another community and would like to offer this here at Atlanta Friends Meeting. To start, I need about eight people to commit to 8 hours of meetings. Time and place to be determined by the group. Let me know if you are interested. I am available most Sundays." Contact info for Rich is 404-534-1518 or rich8klima@yahoo.com.

FORUM RECORDING: REPARATIVE JUSTICE & RIGHT RELATIONS FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES & AFRICAN AMERICANS

AFM's Quakers for Racial Equality is very grateful to guest speakers Frank Pommersheim and Craig Womack, who shared their expertise and perspectives with us at the April 30, 2023 online forum sponsored by Atlanta Friends Meeting and the Friends School of Atlanta. Frank Pommersheim spoke on the topic of "Reconciliation and Repair: Land Acknowledgement, Land Return, and Reparations." Craig Womack shared information on "Creek History and Creek Responsibilities." Among other things, we learned more about the complexities of land return for sovereign Indigenous groups with different geographical or historical situations and about strategies for redress. We are also thankful for the high level of interest in this topic and the broad range of participants.

Recording: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yXwp1VJmV8aBrbiQDw-b_CjWxNJLLbQ4/view?usp=sharing
Resources from chat:

Muscogee Creek Indian Freedmen Band: <https://www.1866creekfreedmen.com/>

Kaitlin B Curtice: <https://www.kaitlincurtice.com/>

SUMMARY OF MARCH 26 FORUM ON CLIMATE CHANGE

At the Green Friends' March 26 forum on Climate Change/Global Warming, Dr. Bob Place presented a thorough coverage of the dangers and challenges that we are all increasingly facing. We need to achieve two important goals as quickly as possible. First, we must completely stop the emission of CO2 from our energy producing devices. We must use non-CO2-producing energy sources by focusing on massive solar, wind and nuclear power increases. Second, we must remove close to half of the earth's CO2 to prevent the CO2 that has already been added to the air from forcing the temperature up. The CO2 has a long lifetime in the atmosphere of about 1000 years, so it will hang around and continue to drag the temperature up. We must address both of these goals simultaneously and effectively while avoiding infringing on the lives of marginalized groups in our society as we locate necessary facilities. We can do many things personally to minimize our contribution to this problem including using low-energy transportation only as needed, keeping less extreme temperatures and lighting in our homes, buying only what we need, and working with existing groups like CCL or Sierra Club to make more effective group input to change our energy picture. To get a copy of the slides from which Dr. Place shared during his presentation, please contact him at 614-705-5492 or rplace@otterbein.edu or see <https://tinyurl.com/slides0326forum>.

WORKSHOP SUMMARY: HOW WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Green Friends held a workshop and discussion on April 23 in honor of Earth Day. The title: "What is Ours to Do on Climate?"

The workshop opened with Henry Slack talking briefly on climate change: the causes (principally carbon dioxide from burning fossil fuels) and deadline (the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says we need major cuts by 2030 to prevent worse change from happening from natural forces (like greenhouse gas trapped in permafrost escaping with warming)).

Quakers have led on abolition, women's suffrage, draft counseling, and more. How do we respond to Climate Change caused by fossil fuel use? Can we use protest or civil disobedience?

Henry suggested ideas to cut fossil fuel use in our homes and the Meetinghouse.

- Install Rooftop Solar
- Replace furnaces with heat pumps, stop air leaks
- Electrify other methane gas uses
- Use electric cars, bikes, buses, etc
- Install chargers at the Meetinghouse.
- Eat plant-based, cut food waste
- Invest in green businesses
- More meetinghouse programs on climate
- Ask friends, elected officials to act

Nationally, he suggested that we lobby elected officials and help to elect officials willing to take action. Beyond that, joining a group like Sunrise, Citizens' Climate Lobby, or Third Act can amplify our voices.

Supporting the Earth is sometimes called sacrifice, giving up things, but it can actually lead to abundance. Giving up things that hurt us is actually joyful! Imagine:

- Giving up dread and uncertainty for the future
- Giving up emissions that hurt our/everyone's health
- Giving up fossil fuel control of our politics

We then broke into small groups for discussions, then returned to talk as a larger group.

The assignments were to

- discuss an action you've already taken that helps the climate;
- discuss what we can do in our own lives, as a Meeting, in our school or work, or as a nation with Congress? How can it lead to abundance?
- discuss what might block an action you'd like to try, and how you can get around the blockage?

Among the things blocking people: "Never done it before. Not used to it." And also, "It's beneath me to take the bus. "

The report-outs and large group discussion included the following points:

- Start with homes and meeting places, get assistance from manufacturers
- Approach legislators to get heat pumps and solar for condo. The Inflation Reduction Act doesn't guarantee easy access to the tax credit. We also want to make sure that auxiliary heat is adequate
- Use a scooter to replace the car
- We could use a single symbol or sign for climate change like a triangle.
- Educate on climate change in schools
- Different groups can acknowledge that the people most affected are and will be poor black indigenous. Think interrelatedness, not silos
- Mother's milk has little protein, but babies grow tremendously. We don't need as much protein as we think
- We want to hear from people who've done these things

SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS AND ADULT FIRST DAY SCHOOL – Sundays

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. Bob Place will share his story on June 4. (To listen to Derek Haroutune Otis' Spiritual Journey, shared May 7, visit <https://tinyurl.com/2p9c9yep>. 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 June, Adult First Day School's book for discussion will be *Hope Leans Forward* by Valerie Brown and beginning June 25, *Nelson Mandela: A Very Short Introduction* by Elleke Boehmer. All are welcome, whether you have read the books or not. On fifth Sundays, 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.)

FROM MAY'S YOUNG ADULT FRIENDS RETREAT

The Young Adult Friends from Atlanta Friends Meeting organized a retreat the weekend of May 12 to 14 at the Ferguson Cabins. Nineteen YAFs attended, including Friends from Atlanta, Asheville, Greenville, and Berea. We had a theme of emergence, the idea of simplicity arising from complexity, and we reflected on what is emerging in springtime, in our lives, and in our community. We had time for worship, worship sharing, journaling, and recreation, and shared plant-based meals together. The weather was beautiful and we went swimming and kayaking. We had worship sharing down by the lake at dusk and the frogs joined their voices with ours. We are grateful for the time, space, and funds given to us for the retreat, and we hope that future retreats will be possible.

If you are a young adult interested in connecting with other young adults at AFM — that is, Friends aged approximately 18 to 35 — please contact afm-yaf@googlegroups.com. We would be happy to meet you, add you to our WhatsApp chat, and keep you informed of what's going on."

BOOKS BY AND ABOUT PEOPLE OF COLOR – Thursday, June 1 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 June 1, they'll discuss *A Tale for the Time Being* by Ruth Ozeki. Future books include *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).

LISTENING FOR JUSTICE – June 3 to 24

Now in its third year, Listening 4 Justice (founded by AFM member Folami Prescott-Adams) is a growing and diverse community of youth and adults that supports its members to listen, learn, and lead for racial healing and cultural justice. L4J starts with a series of gatherings in which we listen and share stories rooted in personal and collective history that help us see a way forward. The next series for new community members is happening in June. Registration and more information at <https://listening4justice.com/uncategorized/l4j-summer-2023-registration/>

POTLUCK – Sunday, June 4

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 extra for newcomers and guests.

VIRTUAL DOCUMENTARY NIGHT: *THE STORY OF PLASTIC* – Sunday, June 4

Discussion Sunday, June 4th from 7 to 9 pm. The documentary *The Story of Plastic* gives a detailed look into the environmental damage and human rights abuses that occur throughout the lifecycle of plastic. What can companies, countries and people do to fix the issues? Watch the film for free in advance at <https://archive.org/details/the-story-of-plastic-2019> and RSVP for the June 4 discussion on Zoom at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/virtual-documentary-night-tickets-640282631587>. For more details, visit <https://documentarynight.wordpress.com/> or contact attender Adam Hicks at CommunityDocumentaryNight@gmail.com or 404-414-8917

IN-PERSON DOCUMENTARY NIGHT: COMMON GOOD ATLANTA – Friday, June 9

Friday, June 9 gather in person from 6:45 to 10 pm to watch and talk about the documentary, *Common Good Atlanta*. This 2022 documentary shows the power of the liberal arts to restore hope and dignity in this age of mass incarceration. Sarah Higinbotham, Co-Founder of Common Good Atlanta, will be joining us for a special guest Q&A! There's a link to the trailer at <https://vimeo.com/481336885>. The event will be held at Northwest Unitarian Universalist Congregation (NWUUC) in Sandy Springs. The film will start PROMPTLY AT 7:10 PM, with discussion to follow. RSVP and find the NWUUC address for the event at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/in-person-documentary-night-tickets-636032950677>. For more details, visit <https://documentarynight.wordpress.com/> or contact attender Adam Hicks.

ATLANTA GAY MEN'S CHORUS: RETURNING TO THE ROOT – Friday & Saturday, June 9 & 10

The Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus has sent us a special invitation to their upcoming concert, *Returning to the Root*, at Atlanta City Hall on June 9 and at the Conant Performing Arts Center at Oglethorpe University on June 10. They have also sent us a discount code (PRIDE123) for 10% off tickets, available at <https://www.voicesofnote.org/upcoming-events>.

ROOTS OF INJUSTICE, SEEDS OF CHANGE:

TOWARD RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH NATIVE PEOPLES – Saturday, June 10

In this two-hour participatory program, offered by Toward Right Relationship with Native Peoples, a program of Friends Peace Teams, we experience the history of the colonization of Turtle Island, the land that is now known as the United States. The story is told through the words of Indigenous leaders, European/American leaders, and Western historians. We engage with this history through experiential exercises and small group discussions. And we are invited to consider how we can build relationships with Indigenous peoples based on truth, respect, justice, and our shared humanity. This workshop is appropriate for high school students and adults. Register for the June 10 online workshop at 1pm PT = 4pm Eastern time at <https://friendspeaceteams.org/trr-workshop-jun-2023/>. Contact co-director Paula Palmer (paulaRpalmer@gmail.com) for more info.

QUAKERS, COLONIZATION, AND DECOLONIZATION – Monday, June 12 to Thursday, June 15

The topic of the 44th Annual Meeting of the Friends Association for Higher Education will be Quakers, Colonization, and Decolonization. In person and Zoom options. Dates June 12 to 15. Hosted by Haverford College, Haverford, PA. Get more info and register at <https://quakerfahe.com/>. For scholarship help from AFM's Quakers for Racial Equality, contact Susan Firestone at susanfires@gmail.com.

NEW TIMES AT AFM WALKS AND HIKES – Saturday, June 17 & Thursday, June 22 & ongoing

Bert Skellie says, "Starting on June 17 we will do 2 to 3 mile flat walks (mostly paved paths) on third Saturdays, meeting in the morning in warmer months. Starting on June 22, we will do 2 to 3 mile hikes (will include some hills) on fourth Thursdays, also meeting in the morning in warmer months. If you'd like to know more, please get in touch by email or phone. If you'd like to be added or removed from our hike/walk email list, just let me know. I will announce details to the email list about a week before each." Bert's contact info: 404-680-4799 and bertskellie@gmail.com.

MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS – Sunday, June 19

Stay after meeting for worship, whether in person or via Zoom. Meeting for Business will be held in a combined format about 11:45, using the Zoom coordinates for Meeting for Worship. The minutes for last month's meeting are below.

FRIENDS MUSIC CAMPS – beginning July 9

Two and three week camps for musicians 10 to 17 at Earlham College for strings, winds, brass, piano, voice and guitar. Visit friendsmusiccamp.org for more information.

MINUTES FOR FIFTH MONTH MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS May 21, 2023, held in person and via Zoom in a blended meeting Minutes Recorded Pending Approval

Attendance: Richard Allen, Cathy Amanti, Steve Collins, Jennifer Crumpley, Mary Ann Downey, Julia Ewen, Sally Ferguson, Susan Firestone, Nina Gooch, Clive Gordon, Bill Holland, Bill Hooson, Kathy Johnson, Teri Key-Hooson, Judy Lumb, Alison Mawle, Sue May, Kevin Moran, Karen terHorst Morris, Lissa Place, Ben Purvis, Aaron Ruschetta, Bert Skellie, Karen Skellie, Jim Tolmach, Myrna Trapp, Brent Wolff, Austin Brownlee Wattles, Jennifer Dickie (Clerk), Emma Bingham (Recording Clerk)

Worship

Query for Fifth Month: How can we speak up and improve as a community and society using the SPICES*?

Source: 4th Grade class, Friends School of Atlanta

**SPICES is an often used acronym for the Quaker testimonies of Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, and Equality (plus Stewardship in some communities)*

Discernment:

CURAFM - Budget increase for training with Restore More —

Lissa Place reported for the Committee on Undoing Racism in Atlanta Friends Meeting (CURAFM).

Minute 5-21-23:01: On the recommendation of Committee on Undoing Racism in Atlanta Friends Meeting (CURAFM) and Finance Committee, Atlanta Friends Meeting approves a budget increase of \$2200 for the year 2023 to cover unanticipated training expenses.

Nominating — Lissa Place reported for the Nominating Committee.

Minute 5-21-23:02: On the recommendation of Nominating Committee, the Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Amanda Gendreau as clerk of Religious Education for a three-year term from June 2023–May 2026.

Minute 5-21-23:03: The Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the updates to the AFM handbook for the Web Manager, Email List Manager, and Office Coordinator positions.

Reports:

Nominating — Lissa Place reported for the Nominating Committee.

Nominating Committee has been struggling to fill the Facebook Moderator position. It is a two year term and involves checking the Meeting's Facebook page for inappropriate content. If you are interested, or can suggest anyone for this position, please contact Lissa Place, Clerk of Nominating Committee. The committee does not know who is on Facebook, so they do not know who to ask. Also, any suggestions for how to proceed with filling this new position at meeting would be much appreciated. They have asked people who use Facebook, put announcements in the announcement sheet, but haven't found anyone yet. Nina Gooch is coming up on the end of her term as Facebook moderator, and there are supposed to be two people in the position.

Nominating Committee has been busy working on getting the handbook updated. Their goal is to complete the process of updating the handbook by the end of the summer. Even if there are no changes, they need to hear from the clerks of all committees so that they can change the date that your committee description was reviewed. If you are a clerk of a committee and have not put it on your agenda yet, please do so as soon as possible.

Nina Gooch reviewed the changes for the Newsletter Editor and the Database Manager. The change in the Database Manager position is to drop the duty about assisting with questions about adding people to the email lists. (The Email List Manager will do that now.) The Newsletter Editor position has several minor changes: (1) adding a duty of coordinating with the office manager in their role of creating the weekly announcement sheet, (2) specifying that the Email List Manager (not the Database Manager) will manage the electronic circulation list for the newsletter, and (3) adding a duty of sharing an electronic edition of the newsletter to the meeting's website.

Naming Committee — Sally Ferguson reported for the Naming Committee.

Sally explained that the Naming Committee is a temporary committee appointed by the clerk, and right now it includes Sally, Gwen Davies, and John Adams. They are responsible for naming people to the Nominating Committee, providing a separation between the clerk and the committees.

Blake Williamson is being brought forward for Nominating Committee. Blake has been coming to meeting for 15 years. He has been involved with Native American work, and has served on other committees before, including Religious Education. He actually volunteered to serve on Nominating Committee. One of his gifts is talking to people. His name will be brought back next month for discernment.

Ministry and Worship — Bill Hooson reported for Ministry and Worship Committee.

Atlanta Friends Meeting sponsors four ministries. Each quarter Ministry and Worship will invite one of these Friends to share about their ministry at meeting for business.

Richard Allen spoke about his ministry of music. For Richard's presentation, the clerk and others asked Richard questions, interview-style. (The questions are in italics.)

What is the ministry you feel called to at this meeting?

I didn't plan it, but I ended up having 8 original piano pieces that describe the week of Easter nonverbally. Being nonverbal, the pieces are neither right nor wrong, since they make no assertions in words.

What are the joys you've found in this ministry?

I am grateful and sometimes feel not qualified to do it, but God has given me the pieces and it's my job to play them. I'm still learning how to play them without being pushy. When I tune a piano, I offer to play the pieces, to come back and play them for free. It takes 20 minutes to play them.

Have you had any stumbling blocks when serving this ministry?

I don't value myself like I should and I'm still trying to work through stuff that is 50 or 60 years old. The pieces are a wonderful blessing for me because they are something that's real that I can play on the piano. It's a small thing, but I'm most grateful and intend to make them available without being pushy whenever an opportunity arises. It's wonderful that it's nonverbal, so you don't need words.

Is there anything you need from the meeting to support this ministry?

Just the good wishes and thoughts of the meeting, and any suggestions of places that would benefit from my playing. If there's somewhere that's a good fit, I would be blessed to hear about it.

If someone wants to recommend a place for you to play, how do they contact you?

A phone call is best, 99% of piano tuning business comes over the phone. [Richard's phone number is correct in the updated directory.]

Does someone need to have a piano for him to play for them?

They are piano pieces, so they require a real piano, not a keyboard (especially not one that doesn't have enough keys), so a real piano is best.

Can we request you to play these pieces here (at the meeting) at a time outside Easter?

I will play them anytime.

A Friend shared that Richard is our major connection to the Stone Mountain Friends meeting, and visits them regularly. Also, a score is being produced for the Easter pieces so they can outlive him.

The idea is to get it online. There is also a recording online. It's not a big thing in terms of all the music that has been composed throughout time, but what I like about the pieces is that they describe the events of Easter week without words. Nobody is wrong, and I'm not right, since there are no words.

A Friend thanked him for playing carols for us at Christmas and making us feel like we can sing.

Ministry and Worship continued — Bill Hooson reported for Ministry and Worship Committee.

- Greg Johnson has applied for membership in Atlanta Friends Meeting. Bill Hooson read the membership request letter. His membership will be discerned next month.

Dear Atlanta Friends Meeting,

I would like to respectfully request to become a member of the Religious Society of Friends. I have attended Atlanta Friends Meeting since January, 2007 and feel I have found my spiritual home. Thank you for your consideration

In Peace,

Greg Johnson

- There was a clearness committee for the marriage of Sara Patenaude and Stacey Sharer. It was delightful and the committee felt the love between these two people. Bill shared their vows aloud. (Friends should reach out to Ministry and Worship or Sara and Stacey if they would like to see the vows). Their marriage will be brought back for discernment next month. There is not yet a date for the wedding, but they are looking at October. It was noted that we encourage couples not to schedule the wedding before it is approved by meeting.
- Ministry and Worship and Care and Counsel Committees approve the March 2023 working statement of building toward land acknowledgement and making amends.
 - In preparation for developing a land acknowledgement for Atlanta Friends Meeting that includes steps to make amends and restore right relationships, we commit to working on the following areas:
 - recognizing past, present, and future Indigenous elders as stewards of the land;
 - learning more about and from the people whose land we occupy;
 - restoring the histories of Indigenous and people of African descent in our narratives related to our current use of the land;
 - building relationships of respect and deferring to the leadership of the Muscogee Creek People;
 - acknowledging responsibility for reparative action steps by those of us of European descent, who have benefited from the genocide and forced removal of Indigenous people;
 - deepening our understanding of the intergenerational trauma caused by boarding schools for Indigenous children and putting resources toward truth and healing;
 - exploring ways to use our resources in solidarity with Muscogee efforts to preserve and restore homelands and cultural traditions, and for landback at the local level.
 - M&W will continue supporting the ad hoc Reparations and Right Relations committee as they work on these issues.
- A member of Ministry & Worship, Mary Ann Downey, added to the M&W committee report, recognizing the use of the Susan and Tom Kenworthy bequest and the Ferguson Cabins, donated by Dwight and Irene Ferguson, for the Young Adult Friends retreat last weekend. She acknowledged the carrying forward of these couples' gifts to the meeting as well as the building of future community. She noted that this was one of the first uses of the Kenworthy bequest.

Social Concerns —

Kevin Moran reported for Social Concerns Committee.

Treasurer – Bert Skellie reported that there are remaining approximately \$1,500 in available funds in the SCC account.

The Celebration of Women was reviewed and found to have been well received. Karen suggested that SCC return to their customary Celebration in March. We were thankful for the article: “Just a Little About My Mother” which was made available online and in print.

SCC received thoughtful, in-depth email responses to FCNL's revision of policy regarding women's health care/abortion. The requested responses were forwarded to FCNL's policy committee as requested.

Karen Morris urged us to write to the Honorable Schumer, McConnell, McCarthy, and Jeffries "to support strong investments in non-Pentagon discretionary spending. The budget is a moral document, outlining the priorities of our country. Congress should base its budget decisions on how these choices will impact the least among us; addressing human needs, supporting environmental stewardship, and promoting peace at home and abroad."

SCC discussed the deletion of the word diversity from the Georgia teacher certification standards. The racist rewriting of the standards was unanimously approved by the 12-member, Governor-appointed board. The document with deletions was distributed to the AFM Discussion Group for discernment.

The request for AFM sponsorship of the Interfaith Children's Movement was approved with the stipulation that an individual comes forward who feels called to continue building a multi-faith, grassroots, advocacy coalition that works to create a Georgia where all children thrive. Two Friends came forward today after the rise of meeting and expressed interested in working with the organization.

The invitation of Kevin Moran to join Concerned Black Clergy representing the SCC was approved. An active search for a person of color to attend the weekly meeting and be the representative will be conducted.

Young Friends Support Committee —

Brent Wolff reported for the Young Friends Support Committee.

Brent noted that he was speaking on behalf of Asa Kramer-Dickie, the Young Friends Coordinator. The meeting developed the Young Friends Support Committee to support Asa's work. The committee focuses on the ages of middle school through high school.

The Young Friends Program has continued to grow over the past few months. Below are a couple of highlights.

Middle & High School First Day School (FDS)

The young friends program was wiped out by the pandemic, like the asteroid that killed the dinosaurs. Our apex predators are middle and high school students, and they have been the slowest to come back to meeting. There has been positive progress on that. The first Sunday is the best day for bringing young friends back because of potluck. One reason why it's been hard to get teens back is because they know that no one will be there, so they are trying to get teens to come on the same day, and the first Sunday is a good target for that.

Since February, Asa has been the main FDS teacher for middle and high school, with Nina covering classes they are not available for. Attendance has fluctuated between zero and five attendees, averaging two to three. Over the past few months, however, there are regularly two to three young friends (and up to five) as opposed to zero to one, which was standard for the past few years. The highest attendance has been potluck Sundays. For the longer term, having someone who can be a regular FDS teacher for the middle and high school class would be ideal, and they are loosely searching for someone who would be interested in doing this.

Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF)

The one institution that survived the pandemic was SAYF. There have been several SAYF retreats, including one in January in Atlanta that was very successful.

SAYF retreats have had great attendance from Atlanta for the past few months, regularly being one of the largest meetings at SAYF. Many of the Atlanta SAYFers are between 7th and 9th grade currently, with two current seniors who will graduate SAYF at SAYMA this year. As this group grows, we will likely have consistent matriculation into SAYF from younger ages, and hope to fill out the high school years of the YF Program in the next two to three years.

SAYMA Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) Retreat

On the weekend of May 5-7, Junior Yearly Meeting convened for the first-ever retreat at the Atlanta Friends Meeting. Four meetings were represented, with families from Atlanta, Macon, Asheville, and Columbia, SC. Most of the families had previously attended SAYMA, but there was one family who had never attended SAYMA. They shared a potluck on Friday night, with a number of AFM community members bringing dishes to share. On Saturday they had an outing led by Jennifer Dickie to Arabia Mountain, which included a nice mix of structured and unstructured activities. One family was hosted at the Meeting House, while others had accommodations elsewhere in the city, and generally, it was agreed that AFM was a great space for such a retreat.

There was confusion about who was taking the lead on the retreat, with contributions made by the JYM Committee, the AFM Young Friends Program Coordinator, and Atlanta parents. In the future, we hope to be more clear about whether the JYM Committee or the local meeting is taking on leading and organizing the retreat or at least having a more clear breakdown of roles. More adults would have been helpful, especially for the Saturday evening meal since the four adults present had to balance food prep and child supervision. It was noted that a more formal meeting orientation would be helpful so parents and children alike would know which spaces are open for play, and also be aware of general guidelines and boundaries. Finally, for future retreats, we need to reconsider the budget. We collected \$60 from families, but food costs totaled \$270, so the remaining costs will come out of the AFM YF budget, and the JYM SAYMA budget. They spent a lot more on food than they anticipated, and are figuring out how to close that gap.

Overall, the kids had so much fun spending time together, and the adults also had nice moments to talk and connect. It was a great first retreat and opened the possibility for more retreats like this in the future.

As a committee, they are also thinking about what other activities they can use to bring young Friends in. They are thinking about how to build in service activities. The committee has met the last couple months and is developing ideas that will be brought forward to future meetings.

Clerk Jennifer Dickie said she had two parents come to her and say that for the first time in years, they've had their children ask to come to meeting, and credit goes to having a Young Friends Coordinator who is able to actively reach out and plan activities.

Clerk's Items

SAYMA Finance sent out a [request for review](#) of the [FY2024 budget](#) that will be coming for approval at the SAYMA sessions in June. They are requesting feedback by June 6. Alison Mawle, SAYMA representative for AFM, will organize a Zoom meeting for those who want to discuss the budget.

SAYMA has an aspirational budget and a minimal budget. The aspirational budget would use up the undesignated funds this year. At the level of the minimal budget, the undesignated funds will be spent in 2-3 years. SAYMA is asking for discernment on how to move forward as the finance committee is concerned about using up the undesignated funds.

SAYMA is collecting less money because two meetings have laid down their relationship with SAYMA. Also, SAYMA has not raised the assessments requested from monthly meetings since 2017 (\$75 per person), and they are concerned about rises in cost of living. AFM is one of the biggest meetings in SAYMA, so we contribute a lot to them.

It's good news that the budget requests are large, because it means committees are more active. Some committees (such as the Southern Appalachian Young Friends [SAYF]) have asked for money that they didn't get a few years ago when some funds went undistributed. SAYF has been spending into their reserves because of this.

One Friend asked how we report our number of people for the assessment. Nina Gooch, the office coordinator, responded that SAYMA asks for numbers of members, active members, and active attenders (attending half the time or otherwise being actively involved in the meeting). Nina looks at who is active and inactive, and goes through the directory. This past year there were a lot of people who weren't in the directory, so she counted those and added them as well. It's not the most scientific but seems to work.

A Friend asked how many people constitute our assessment. In 2022 the number was 190 Friends. The total amount of money sent in 2022 for our assessment can be seen in our approved 2023 budget.

Alison Mawle, AFM SAYMA Representative, will send an email to the email discussion group, suggesting some dates, and then set up a possible meeting to discuss the budget.

A Friend asked if SAYMA URJ (Uplifting Racial Justice) is in the SAYMA budget. There are two places in the budget where SAYMA URJ is represented. One is in committee expenses for URJ support and the other is a set-aside fund.

The clerk encouraged people to look at the proposed SAYMA budget.

Announcements

- A forum "Quakers and holiday celebrations" will be offered 5th First Day of 7th month.
- Registration for SAYMA Sessions and Retreat, June 23-27 is open through June 2 at SAYMA.org. There is also a hybrid option for SAYMA. There are also scholarships available and people should speak to the clerk or to M&W about that.

Approval of Minutes from 4th month 2023

http://atlantaquakers.org/_afm_newsletters/AFM_Newsletter_2023-05.pdf

Minute 2023-05-21:04: The Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the 4th month 2023 minutes.

Events in the life of the meeting

[removed for privacy]

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

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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 an 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

Do we have your (correct) contact information so we can reach you?

Please send your name and (updated) 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 atlquakerltr@gmail.com. Submissions may be edited for length and format. **THE DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS IS THE 20TH DAY OF EACH PRECEDING MONTH.**

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