

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 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 for Sunday worship and for our Wednesday small meetings for worship, in person and zoom, are in the announcement sheet (link just above).

QUERY FOR DECEMBER

How can we show integrity, peacefulness and kindness in our hearts?

Source: 1st Grade class, Friends School of Atlanta

INVITATION TO A DEEPER COMMITMENT: EXPLORING MEMBERSHIP IN ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING

Ask yourself: What brings me to Atlanta Friends Meeting and keeps me coming back?

On October 22, Clive Gordon, on behalf of Ministry and Worship Committee, provided a forum on the meaning and process of membership in Atlanta Friends Meeting. John Adams and Sally Ferguson shared their journey to membership and their reflection on what membership means to them today. Asa Kramer-Dicker shared why, even after growing up in Friends Meeting, attending Quaker College and participating in Quaker Voluntary Service, had not been led to become a member.

Quakerism is a spiritual path grounded in the integrity of direct experience. We have long recognized that we need committed companions to be faithful and practice. You become a member of the Society of Friends by joining a particular meeting. Membership in the Atlanta Friends Meeting is a mutual commitment. You are making a commitment to the Quaker path and to this community. In turn, the community is making a commitment to you. You can serve and to be served, you will be supported and have opportunities to support.

For more information contact Clive Gordon or any member of the Ministry and Worship Committee. Members are glad to answer your questions on membership, preparing for membership and other Quaker spiritual practices.

The Membership Process

Our full membership guidelines are available on the AFM Website at the bottom of the Members and Attenders Page: http://atlantaquakers.org/site_pdf_docs/AFM_Membership_guidelines-201703.pdf

In brief, the process begins in individual discernment -- do you consider Atlanta Meeting your spiritual home? Members of Ministry and Worship are glad to talk with you about the membership process. The full membership guidelines provide some questions you might want to explore in your individual reflection. Below is a summary of the steps involved:

- Once you have decided you wish to pursue membership, you write a letter addressed to the Clerk of the Ministry and Worship Committee. A template is attached.
- Once Ministry and Worship receives the letter, the committee considers it at their next meeting and approves the formation of a clearness committee of several members who will meet with you. Clearness is a form of respectful worshipful inquiry. The meeting is intended to explore your request, asking and answering questions.
- The clearness committee provides a recommendation to Ministry and Worship, who consider the report and bring a recommendation to business meeting.
- The Monthly Meeting for Business receives a report one month and waits a month before bringing the recommendation for decision. Often, the Application Letter is read to the meeting, and you are introduced as an applicant for membership.
- Once Monthly Meeting has approved (minuted) the recommendation, you are officially recorded as a member of the meeting. The spiritual journey continues!

Example of Letter Requesting Membership

The letter requesting membership can be a simple statement. It can also be a longer reflection on your spiritual journey and your sense of connection to Atlanta Friends Meeting. Here is a template adapted from a Quaker source to use as a starting point:

YOUR ADDRESS

DATE

_____, Clerk
 Ministry and Worship Committee
 Atlanta Monthly Meeting
 701 West Howard Avenue
 Decatur, GA 30030

Dear Clerk of Ministry and Worship Committee,

I am writing to request consideration for membership in Atlanta Monthly Meeting and, by extension, in the Religious Society of Friends.

I am drawn to Friends by [details].

I consider Atlanta Monthly Meeting to be my spiritual community, and this request is an indication of my desire to continue and strengthen my commitment to spiritual growth as a Friend.

YOUR NAME

ON SILENCE

from a poem by Gloria Heffernan in November's Friends Journal
 read the rest at <https://www.friendsjournal.org/vital-conversations/>

“There is no silence.
 God’s voice is everywhere— “

“What we call silence
 is merely the spaciousness
 that allows us to hear.”

**PLEASE HOLD
IN THE LIGHT:**

Bill Hooson
Bob Goodman
Julia Ewen
Anton Flores-Maissonet
& family

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: 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, AmandaGendreau5@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 Ruscetta, arxaaron@gmail.com
Bookkeeper: Jonah McDonald, afmbookkeeper1@gmail.com

For info about these and other 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.

MEETING AUTHOR -- BOOK BY JENNIFER CRUMPLEY

Meeting attender Jennifer Crumpley, Licensed Clinical Social Worker and trained family therapist, is the author of *Reaching Our Neediest Children: Bringing a Mental Health Program Into the Schools*. Her co-author, Penelope Moore, holds a Doctorate in Social Work. Their collaboration resulted in the publication of a book offering a nuts-and-bolts guide for implementing and maintaining school-based mental health services for emotionally distressed children and families. Jennifer wrote each chapter and the case study. Penelope wrote the Introduction and Conclusion and provided the theoretical research as evidenced by her references.

Click on the link to view the ad for the book, including a 1.38 minute book trailer, podcast interview, and "Get The Book Now" from Amazon. <https://www.all-about-psychology.com/reaching-our-neediest-children-bringing-a-mental-health-program-into-the-schools.html>

There is an unmistakable growing need for mental health services for children, especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. This book is a valuable resource for mental health professionals, school-based support staff, and program administrators who want to provide school-based mental health services in an informed and strategic manner. It provides information needed to navigate the complex terrain of the school system so as not to waste critical resources, and, instead, give young people the resources they need to thrive.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR CLARKSTON AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Submitted by attender Kevin Bergen:

Help support Clarkston's youth at The Clarkston Community Center's after-school program, Monday to Thursday, 3 to 6 PM. Volunteers needed! Email youth@clarkstoncommunitycenter.org for details.

HOMELESS RESOURCE GUIDE

Homeless Services are listed on pages 8 and 9 of the United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta Resource Guide.: https://dph.georgia.gov/sites/dph.georgia.gov/files/WIC_Resources/Resources/United%20WayofMetropolitianAtlantaResourceGuide%20-%20Metro%20Counties%20Only.pdf

RESOURCES FOR THANKSGIVING AND INDIGENOUS HISTORY MONTH (NOVEMBER)

Here are a few resources for Thanksgiving and about the Muscogee (Creek) Nation's current efforts to work with state and national officials to preserve its heritage in Georgia. Shared by Susan Firestone.

Children's books on Thanksgiving from a Native perspective:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-a1WlhXIKW_fq2HkjLUjYB-if7zwU8Cm/edit?usp=sharing&oid=108995711048204362426&rtpof=true&sd=true

Two articles related to the Muscogee Nation and preserving its heritage in Georgia:

On holy ground: Ocmulgee park test of Georgia's clout in Congress, AJC

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AUe1aJ25FYF7Y_YUplajBo0QLyQ8Wv0p/view?usp=sharing

Georgia Revamping its museum at Etowah Indian Mounds , AJC

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yk-XFJ713mJvIOkqGcFbC4kk_NygFXxh/view?usp=sharing

OUT OF OUR HANDS: HOLIDAY ART & CRAFT SALE – Friday & Saturday, December 1 & 2

Join local artists and artisans for a holiday art and craft sale in the meeting room at the meeting house Friday, 12 to 5 pm, and Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm.

FGC's SILENCE & LIGHT FOR QUAKER NEWCOMERS eRETREAT – begins Saturday, Dec 2

Curious about Quakers or new to Quakerism? Join Friends General Conference (FGC) in exploring the basics of Quaker theology and practice. (FGC is the Quaker umbrella organization for unprogrammed meetings with which AFM is affiliated.) The Silence & Light for Quaker Newcomers eRetreat meets on Saturdays from 1 to 2:30 pm Eastern / 10 to 11:30 am Pacific, from December 2 through January 6 (no meeting on December 23). More information and registration at <https://www.fgcquaker.org/event/silence-light-for-quaker-newcomers-eretreat-4>.

MACON QUAKERS RESUMES MONTHLY IN PERSON WORSHIP – Saturday, December 2

Starting December 2, 2023, the Macon Worship Group, which is under our care will be meeting for worship in person every first Saturday at Centenary United Methodist Church, 1290 College Street, Macon, GA, at 2:00 pm. This is in addition to the weekly Wednesday evening meeting for worship via Zoom at these coordinates:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85017745787?pwd=RUQ3OGJPenMrYktXemlxl1d2R3Q2Zz09>

Meeting ID: 850 1774 5787

[Passcode: 22Light](#)

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

Each first Sunday of the month in Adult First Day School, we listen to how a Friend in our meeting answers questions of God's leadings as well as questions about what brings them to this meeting, what led them to become a member or not, and what they believe now. We call these stories Spiritual Journeys, stories where Friends describe their understanding of God and religion in their life. On December 3, MaryAnn Lockard will offer her Spiritual Journey. (To hear Jamie Lockard's Spiritual Journey, shared November 5, visit <https://tinyurl.com/yc8fzh3j>. To listen to other past Spiritual Journeys or to your own, contact Mary Ann Downey at madowney@mindspring.com.)

On the second, third, and fourth Sundays in December, Adult First Day School will begin the discussion of a new book. (See the announcement sheet for details about the book.) All are welcome whether you have read the book or not.

On fifth Sundays, including December 31, 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. (Zoom details above.) For questions, please contact Elizabeth Lamb.

POTLUCK – Sunday, December 3

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.

Atlanta's FLGBTQC (Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender – and genderqueer, nonbinary and genderfluid – Concerns) will gather at potluck, and Green Friends will meet afterwards. See announcement sheet for details.

If you can, please bring not only enough food for your family, but also extra for newcomers and guests.

BOOKS BY AND ABOUT PEOPLE OF COLOR -- Thursday, December 7

The book group reading works by and about people of color meets at 1:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month in person in combination with Zoom. On December 7, they will discuss *Heaven and Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride. For questions or the Zoom link, contact Susan Cole (cole2544@bellsouth.net). Future books include:

- January 4, *Water Museum* by Luis Alberto Urrea
- February 1, *Firekeeper's Daughter* by Angeline Boulley
- March 7, *Autobiography of My Mother* by Jamaica Kincaid
- April 4, *This Other Eden* by Paul Harding
- May 2, *The Fraud* by Zadie Smith

SEWING CIRCLE -- Saturday, December 9

Join us for a Sewing Circle, meeting in the library, on December 9 at 3 pm. All art / craft mediums (that are easily cleanable!) welcome as we create deeper community around shared interests. For more information, see announcement sheets or contact Lisa Magee, Lisamagee@gmail.com.

FGC MONTHLY VIRTUAL WORSHIP FOR NEWCOMERS -- Tuesdays, December 11 & January 8

Are you a newcomer or seeker interested in worshipping with Friends? Do you have questions about what happens in the Silence? Join Friends General Conference's (FGC 's) Spiritual Deepening for monthly worship and reflection about this unique spiritual practice! Upcoming Dates: December 11 and January 8 at 7 pm Eastern / 4 pm Pacific. This offering is free. Simply register to access the zoom link at <https://www.fgcquaker.org/event/newcomers-worship/>.

MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS – Sunday, December 17

Stay after meeting for worship, whether in person or via Zoom. Meeting for Business will be held in a combined format about 11:45, using the Zoom coordinates for Meeting for Worship.

The minutes for last month's meeting are below.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89686276751?pwd=M29EYlFWEhSQUtZRVVPalFFYmVDQT09>

Meeting ID: 896 8627 6751

Passcode: 789456

MINUTES FOR ELEVENTH MONTH MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS NOVEMBER 19, 2023, held in person and via Zoom in a blended meeting

Minutes Recorded Pending Approval

Attendance: Mike Aland, Richard Allen, Mark Bryans, Steve Collins, Jennifer Crumpley, Mary Ann Downey, Julia Ewen, Waman French, Eric Glenn, Clive Gordon, Bill Holland, Bill Hooson, Teri Key-Hooson, Mira Hernden, Greg Johnson, Lynda Kerr, Elizabeth Lamb, Judy Lumb, Paul Mangelsdorf, Karen terHorst Morris, Caroline Morris, Ron Nuse, Derek Harootune Otis, Lissa Place, Mary Place, Arianna Rodriguez, Mark Smith, Jennifer Thompson, Jim Tolmach, Myrna Trapp, Ian "bigSofty" Wells, Brent Wolff, Mark Yates, Jennifer Dickie (Clerk), Emma Bingham (Recording Clerk)

Worship

Query for Eleventh Month: How can we increase our awareness of the local history of colonization and reconciliation efforts in our faith community?

Source: *Canadian Friends Service Committee, Queries for Canadian Friends on Reconciliation.*

<https://quakerservice.ca/news/quaker-queries-to-boost-your-insight-and-clarity-about-reconciliation/>

Discernment

Nominating Committee – Lissa Place reported for Nominating Committee.

Minute-11-19-23:01: On the recommendation of Nominating Committee, Atlanta Friends Meeting approves David Small as Clerk of Meeting for a term starting January of 2024 until December of 2025.

Minute-11-19-23:02: On the recommendation of Nominating Committee, Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Brent Wolff as Assistant Clerk of Meeting for a term starting January of 2024 until December 2025.

Ministry and Worship – Bill Hooson reported for M&W.

Atlanta Friends Meeting accepted Julie Hliboki's transfer of her membership to Santa Fe Monthly Meeting in July (Minute 07-16-2023-03), and now we are rescinding that minute. See letter from Julie below.

August 25, 2023

Hello Friends,

I spoke with Mary Ann this afternoon and I am clear that I would like to continue my membership at AFM (rather than transfer it or lay it down) and that I am not ready at this time to transfer my membership to SFMM. Being a member of AFM these past 12 years has brought me immense joy. I have learned so much from so many, especially what it means to navigate the world through the lens of our Testimonies. I continue my relationship with the Spiritual Nurture Group and I hope to be back periodically to visit and worship with you.

With gratitude and love,
Julie Hliboki

Minute-11-19-23:03: On the recommendation of Ministry and Worship Committee the meeting rescinds Minute 07-16-2023-03 requesting the transfer of Julie Hliboki to Santa Fe Monthly Meeting's care. Atlanta Friends Meeting will continue to care for her membership.

SAYMA Representative Meeting Request –

Jennifer Dickie reported on behalf of Alison Mawle (the SAYMA representative).

AFM has received a request from SAYMA to hold the April 6 Representative Meeting at AFM. The Hospitality Clerk and Zoom team are in support of the request. We were supposed to host them in 2020, but could not due to the pandemic, so this is like a reinvitation.

A Friend asked how the Hospitality Committee will organize hospitality for the Representative Meeting. The clerk responded that Alison Mawle (clerk of Hospitality) will reach out to people. It was noted that Friends should also reach out to Alison if they want to host people from out of town.

A Friend asked if the Representative Meeting has been hosted here before, and the clerk replied that it has.

Minute-11-19-23:04: Atlanta Friends Meeting invites SAYMA to hold their Spring 2024 representative meeting on April 6 in the Atlanta Friends Meetinghouse. AFM will provide a hybrid format, and we look forward to extending hospitality to SAYMA representatives.

Minute of thanks for Kathy Johnson's service as a Ferguson Cabin Steward –

Bill Holland read the minute of thanks.

Some background: Forty years ago (in 1983) we received the deed for the Ferguson cabin from Dwight Ferguson in memory of Irene Ferguson. This was the result of a 6 month discernment process prior to this about how to do this transfer, and out of that came a plan for stewardship of the property.

As Kathy Johnson ends her long tenure on the Ferguson Cabin Committee, Atlanta Meeting extends our thanks for her service.

The Ferguson Cabin was offered to Atlanta Meeting by Dwight Ferguson in May 1983 as a loving tribute to Irene Ferguson.

In August of 1983 Kathy presented to business meeting a Proposed Stewardship Plan for Ferguson Cabin and Property. Kathy served as the general facilitator of the Ferguson Cabin Stewards Committee, one of the first six stewards. In this role, Kathy was instrumental in defining the practical and organizational work of the stewards committee.

In addition to her organizational role, Kathy has served as a living connection to the loving spirit of Dwight and Irene Ferguson. She is one of the first members of meeting to have visited the Ferguson

Cabin before it was offered to our meeting. She has maintained relations with the children of Dwight and Irene.

In the inevitable ebb and flow of committee life, Kathy has helped sustain the vision of the Ferguson Cabin place as a vital site of refreshment. Many individuals and groups continue to be nourished by this vital witness including: the men's retreat, Quaker Voluntary Service, the Friends School of Atlanta, Young Adult Friends, and SAYMA Ministry and Nurture.

Kathy has been eager to see the work continue and to hand over the care of the cabin to a new generation of stewards.

Atlanta meeting thanks Kathy Johnson for her years of service and loving stewardship of the Ferguson Cabin property. We treasure this place and her many services.

Minute-11-19-23:05: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the minute of thanks for Kathy Johnson.

Ferguson Cabin Committee letter to neighbor —

Mike Aland read the letter to the neighbor of Ferguson Cabin.

Mike read a letter that has been drafted to send to a neighbor of the Ferguson Cabins. Please see the 8th Month Meeting for Business minutes for background.

If Friends wish to read the letter to the neighbor, they should contact Mike Aland.

A Friend asked if there is a need to have some type of waiver in case any damage is done to that patio (by us in using the right of way). Mike said this did not come up in conversation with the lawyer. Mike is not clear on this, but his belief is that we have the right to totally remove the patio on our property if we want. The clerk said it makes sense to ask the lawyer about this, and run any document we're asking the neighbor to sign by the lawyer. (The letter to the neighbor mentioned a document we would ask him to sign, but this document has not been written yet.)

A Friend asked if the document to be signed will be sent with the letter, or what the process will be. Mike said his intention was just that we send the letter, and the lawyer had suggested we include that part about signing a document. But it is not clear when the document signing would happen. The clerk suggested that we add to the letter that if the neighbor wants to continue using the property, he should sign the document included with the letter.

The clerk (as the person who is going to sign the letter) said she appreciates the legal clarity from working with the lawyer, and she also appreciates the reiteration of the intent to be good neighbors.

It was agreed that Mike Aland will ask the lawyer, Linda Dunlavy, with whom he has been working, to draft the signatory document to send with the letter.

Minute-11-19-23:06: On the recommendation of the Ferguson Cabin Stewards Committee, the clerk will send the letter written by the committee and reviewed by the the lawyer and the signatory document written by the lawyer to Matt Mitcham, a neighbor of the property, asserting our rights as property owners to limit his encroachment on the Ferguson Property.

Social Concerns Committee - Minute calling for an immediate ceasefire in the Israel/Palestine conflict (suggested cover letter) – Karen Morris reported for Social Concerns Committee [SCC].

It was discerned last week in Social Concerns Committee that a minute calling for a cease-fire between Israel & Palestine should be presented to AFM. They are asking that it be discerned today given the immediacy of the conflict.

Karen read the minute as initially proposed by SCC:

A minute concerning the conflict in Israel and Palestine

We urge our government to call for an immediate ceasefire, immediate and adequate humanitarian aid, and negotiations for long-term peace.

We urge our government not to add to the violence.

As Quakers, we believe each life is sacred.

A Friend asked that, since there is no international recognition of Palestine as a state, should we include the words Palestinian people instead of Palestine? Friends asked if there was discussion in the SCC meeting about using the words Palestine or Palestinian people. Karen said she doesn't think so. As background, she said, SCC borrowed language for this proposed minute from a much longer minute the Chapel Hill Friends Meeting created.

After several Friends shared their views on the matter, it was decided that the minute should say "Palestine" rather than "Palestinian people" so as to parallel the mention of Israel.

A Friend asked if this minute would be forwarded to someone in the government. Karen said this would be the intent. The clerk added that there is also a cover letter meant to be used in sending to government officials.

A Friend said that he thinks the minute feels underdeveloped in terms of the moral horror of what is going on. He feels this particular issue is very central to what it means to be a Quaker, that Israel and Palestine have a long-term conflict, and their response is to answer force with force, and as Quakers we need to hold up that what has been happening is unacceptable, not just calling for a ceasefire in response to the current conflict. A Quaker approach to this issue would be to break the cycle of responding to force with force. The entire approach is wrong and we need to uplift other ways to approach this.

The clerk said she knew SCC made a deliberate decision to remove some of this background about Quakers from the minute (which was originally in the Chapel Hill minute) and ask more directly for a ceasefire. Karen said that SCC was thinking that in order for a minute to be approved rapidly it would need to be short and forceful to the issues in the moment. Karen said she thinks we can consider a longer minute about the long-term issues later. The shortness of this minute is to have something for now to let our government know how we would like them to proceed.

The clerk read the cover letter:

[name of Quaker group] presents this Minute for your consideration and reflection of your constituent's values and concerns. [name of Quaker group] includes [number of members approving the minute] members in your state's district.

Members of the Religious Society of Friends, or Quakers, are part of an international Christian community who seek to facilitate the creation of a peaceful, equitable, just world, and an earth restored.

Minutes are a way that Quakers communicate actions we have chosen to take as a meeting, or worshipping body. They are vital to the Quaker community as a way to formally record a way forward and exercise faithful actions in the world.

We encourage you to act on the concern we raise in this Minute and look forward to hearing your response.

The clerk asked if Friends were ready to approve this minute as it stands, as well as ask SCC to work on a longer minute.

A Friend proposed adding the following to the beginning of the minute:

The Atlanta Friends Meeting are appalled by the events of Oct. 7 2023, but are equally appalled by the violent response by the government of Israel. We do not believe violence is a pathway to permanent peace.

Another Friend suggested that we change “each life” to “all lives” recognizing the complexity of the community of humanity rather than individuals.

A Friend suggested moving “As Quakers, all life is sacred” to the beginning of the minute.

A Friend suggested including that the Oct 7 events were perpetrated by Hamas, in order to separate the violence of Hamas from the Palestinian people.

The revised minute was read by the recording clerk:

A minute concerning the conflict in Israel and Palestine

As Quakers, we believe all lives are sacred.

The Atlanta Friends Meeting is appalled by the events of Oct. 7 2023 carried out by Hamas, and are equally appalled by the violent response by the government of Israel. We do not believe violence is a pathway to permanent peace.

We urge our government to call for an immediate ceasefire, immediate and adequate humanitarian aid, and negotiations for long-term peace.

We urge our government not to add to the violence.

A Friend said he must stand aside from this minute as read and from anything that does anything more than call for peace. He cannot condemn the Palestinian people for trying to break out of the oppression they are facing. A Friend suggested that these concerns could be addressed by leaving out the part about being appalled. The clerk addressed the Friend who would stand aside and asked if he would still stand aside with this change. He said he would stand aside from anything that condemns or criticizes Palestinians for what they are trying to achieve.

A Friend said her heart has resonated with all the concerns raised and wishes we could deliver all of them in the minute. But she is concerned that we keep the purpose of the document at front, which is to demand a ceasefire right now, and going forward from that we can continue to detail our other spiritual and practical concerns. Getting who we need to read this is most important, and we need to get them clearly the message that a ceasefire is needed right now.

A Friend said Hamas does not represent the Palestinian people. She said she would also stand aside if the minute criticized the Palestinian people, but Hamas does not represent them.

A Friend suggested that we remove the references to Hamas and the Israeli government, because all people are equal, so we should just say we are appalled. A Friend said he resonates with what is behind said, and wondered if the minute could simply say “ we are appalled by the loss of innocent lives on both sides”. The clerk asked if this means that we are not appalled by non-innocent lives being lost. It was decided that the minute should say “the loss of lives”.

The minute, including these suggestions, was read by the recording clerk. The meeting was in unity on the minute and no one stood aside.

Minute-11-19-23:07: A minute concerning the conflict in Israel and Palestine.

As Quakers, we believe all lives are sacred.

The Atlanta Friends Meeting is appalled by the loss of the lives in this conflict. We do not believe violence is a pathway to permanent peace.

We urge our government to call for an immediate ceasefire, immediate and adequate humanitarian aid, and negotiations for long-term peace.

We urge our government not to add to the violence.

Reports

Ministry and Worship —

Bill Holland reported for M&W.

Shannon McNeal has written a letter requesting membership in the Atlanta Friends Meeting. Mary Ann Downey will clerk the Membership Clearness Committee. Suzie Lippold, Clive Gordon and Bill Holland will serve as members of the committee.

Beginning in 2021, Ministry and Worship developed a concern to expand our meeting's understanding and action on reparations and right relations. Our goal was to increase our knowledge and create the basis for tangible actions. The interest of other groups in meeting who shared this leading led to the formation of a meeting-wide ad hoc coordinating committee under the care of Ministry and Worship. In 2021, we approved our minute on Reconciliation and Right Relations (Minute 8-15-21:03). Over the past two years this work of education and discernment has continued to have life. We now believe it is time for the Atlanta Meeting to establish this Ad hoc committee as a full standing committee of the meeting with a defined purpose.

Proposed Minute: On the recommendation of the Ministry and Worship committee, the Atlanta Friends Meeting charges the Nominating committee in coordination with Ministry and Worship and Friends who served on the ad hoc committee for reparations and right relations, to develop a committee description for a new AFM reparations and right relations committee.

Nominating Committee –

Jim Tolmach reported for Nominating Committee.

Nominating Committee brings forward the name Derek Harootune Otis as Clerk of the Library Committee for a term of three years from January of 2024-December of 2026. We will bring Derek's name back for approval next month. If you haven't had a chance to get to know Derek, try to do so in the next month.

Nominating Committee brings forward the name Lisa Magee as Clerk of the Gathered Meeting Retreat Committee for a term of 2 years from January of 2024-December of 2025. We will bring her name back next month for approval. If you haven't had a chance to get to know Lisa, try to do so this month.

Nominating Committee brings forward the name Arianna Rodriguez as a teacher for First Day School for a term of one year effective immediately through June of 2024. If you haven't had a chance to get to know Arianna, please try to do so in the coming month. We will bring her name back for approval next month.

Nominating Committee brings forward the name Cathy Amanti as a teacher for First Day School for a term of one year effective immediately through June of 2024. If you haven't had a chance to get to know Cathy, please try to do so in the coming month. We will bring her name back for approval next month.

Nominating Committee brings forward the name Stacey Sharer as Treasurer of Meeting for a term of 2 years effective immediately until December of 2025. If you haven't had a chance to get to know Stacey, please do so in the next month. We will bring her name back for approval next month.

Naming Committee –

Bill Holland reported for Naming Committee.

The Naming Committee was appointed by the clerk with members announced at 9th and 10th month meeting for business. The members of the 2023 Naming Committee were Derek Harootune Otis, Lisa Magee, and Bill Holland. Bill Holland was asked to serve as clerk.

The clerk of meeting provided us with a charge which included copies of the committee descriptions for Naming and Nominating from the meeting handbook.

According to the committee description members of the Nominating Committee serve for three-year, non-consecutive terms. Reviewing the business meeting minutes there are currently six active approved members of the Nominating Committee. Three members end their terms in December 2023. The current committee is composed of five women, one man and one person of color.

Current Active		Proposed	
1/2021-12/2023	1/2022 -12/2024	1/23-12/25	1/2024 -12/2026
Diane Rowley (01-17-2021-01)	Lissa Place (1/16/2022:02)		Alison Mawle
Ann Ritter (01-17-2021-02)	Jim Tolmach (1/16/2022:03)		Eric Glenn
Jennifer Thompson (01-17-2021-03)	Ellen McQueen* (2023-03-19:01)	Ellen McQueen	Sara Patenaude

We held five virtual meetings, assigned tasks and reported back. We made announcements in meeting and reached out to YAF Friends. We sought to engage the resources and discernment of the entire meeting. We want to raise to the meeting and future naming committees the importance of including YAF, non-binary and more BIPOC voices to the Nominating Committee.

We united on two recommendations:

1. Recommendation #1: We recommend extending Ellen McQueen from the current 2 yr. term to a regular 3 yr. term, extending her present appointment by one year.
2. Recommendation #2: We recommend Alison Mawle, Eric Glenn, and Sara Patenaude as the class of 2026 with a three-year term on the Nominating Committee beginning January 2024 and ending December 2026.

The proposed committee would consist of four women, two men and one person of color.

We will bring this recommendation back for discernment in 12th Month.

Submitted by Bill Holland on behalf of the 2023 Naming Committee. Bill said that it was wonderful to work with the Naming Committee this year, and they had very efficient and enjoyable meetings. He thanked the clerk for appointing them together.

Finance –

Paul Mangelsdorf reported for Finance Committee.

Paul presented the budget for the next year. See links here to the [preliminary budget](#), the [gifts and affiliations](#), and [notes on the budget](#).

Things that are still up in the air about the budget: employee cost of living adjustment doesn't happen until the end of the year, when they will use the latest data to determine the adjustment.

Also, the Library Committee might produce a request for a slightly higher budget, since the new proposed clerk is excited about it.

We increased our contributions to Quaker organizations because of SAYMA, and SAYF might also ask us for more money because their budget from SAYMA is less this year. We also have one other Quaker organization a Friend asked us to include (the Bolivian Friends Education Fund). There is some support from SCC for that, and the Friend will look into this more. It was noted that Bolivia has more Quakers per capita than any country in the world (Evangelical Friends).

Social Concerns Committee is asking for a \$500 increase.

A Friend suggested there should be money in the budget for the gathered meeting retreat since we are nominating a clerk for it.

A Friend asked how Religious Education can order supplies. The clerk said she can help with that.

A Friend asked about the overspending on some categories, especially grounds. Paul said there was a large tree trimming that might get transferred to the permanent improvement fund.

Also the playground was mulched.

The bookkeeper is salaried, not contracted. Paul will correct this.

Ferguson Cabin Committee –

Mark Bryans reported for the Ferguson Cabin Committee.

Mark thanked Bill Holland and Mike Aland for the minute of appreciation and the letter to the neighbor respectively.

The cabins were well used again this year. There were 40 reservations over 110 days during the season (mid-April – mid-November) by individuals and groups including friends, family, an Atlanta Friends Meeting Men's Weekend and a Young Adult Friends Retreat. The Young Adult Friends Retreat was planned by Atlanta Friends Meeting young adult Friends, for 19 Friends from all around SAYMA.

Committee members joined two committee rotation opportunities including potluck set up and a slide show about the cabins at summer First Day school to acquaint the children with the cabins.

Reservation changes, online scheduling, and a new payment process were introduced this year. Payments are now calculated by the night/per cabin instead of by the person. Online, Friends are using a calendar to view available dates. Friends can email a scheduler to make reservations and use PayPal to send payments earmarked for the Ferguson Cabins but most Friends are still texting a scheduler and sending payments to the AFM treasurer. Friends on the committee are analyzing online scheduling and payment processes to make sure payments are complete and determine additional steps to make the online process more visible and workable.

Projects completed in addition to cleaning and general maintenance this year included new metal roofing over the sleeping portion of Treetops Cabin, two new window screens and crank hardware in the kitchen of Irene Cabin, a roof installed over the exterior upper entrance door to Irene, driveway repair, grading and gravel from Dwight Cabin to Treetops Cabin and the original ceramic counter top was installed next to the sink in Dwight Cabin.

The committee considered the possibility of opening the cabins for winter use due to requests from a few Friends. Having dealt with damage from frozen pipes in the past, the committee spent considerable time looking into the complexities of this request, including using the services of people local to Lake Burton for turning the water on and off. Committee members were unable to find a

workable solution for coordination of these services, so at this point in time, Friends are asked to limit winter use to Dwight Cabin only, to use the outhouse and to bring their own water. The committee will continue to consider ways to safely manage more off-season use in the future.

Cabins Committee members are working with attorney Linda Dunlavy following a request by Atlanta Friends Business Meeting to address an issue with a neighbor who is encroaching on the cabin's property by the lake. Cabin Committee members will present the draft of a letter to the November Atlanta Friends Business Meeting which will be sent to the neighbor from Atlanta Friends Meeting.

Rental Income	\$3,590.00
Expenses (Lake Burton Civic Association, Electric, Supplies, Driveway repair, Legal Fees)	\$5,929.04
Ending Balance on 9/30/2023	\$4,244.17

A Friend from the Finance committee expressed appreciation for everything the committee does, and they are doing a great job managing their own finances and the property and scheduling.

They typically have some money left over at the end of the year — in the past 5 years, they have run a surplus, but this year there were driveway repairs and legal fees.

The clerk asked where the money to pay for the legal fees is coming from. Mike Aland said it is a bookkeeper error that they have not followed up on. The Meeting is supposed to be the one paying for the legal fees. Paul will correct this.

Mike offered a small correction, that only the upper and lower parts of the driveway were repaired, not the middle part, so they saved on driveway repair costs.

The Religious Education and SAYMA representative reports will be carried over to next month.

Clerk's Items

Letter from the Friends Meeting of Detroit, Michigan

From: Kevin Howley <khowley@aol.com>

Date: Mon, Oct 23, 2023 at 9:49AM

Dear Friends

The Development Committee of the Detroit Friends Meeting is excited to share with you that we have reached another milestone in our effort to raise funds to renovate our new meetinghouse. We have surpassed the \$600,000 mark toward our goal of \$850,000.

While we are thrilled about our progress, we have work yet to do and are reaching out for assistance from Friends across the country. Our journey has already been more than ten years in the making. We would welcome the chance to schedule a Zoom call with your members to talk about that journey and our future plans. We have a brief power point presentation and could then take questions.

As an alternative, or a complement, to this suggestion, we have made a recording of the presentation that can be accessed by clicking on the link below. Might we ask that you share this link with your members and attenders so that they might hear our story from the comfort of their home?

The financial support we have received from meetings around the country has already been key to our effort to reach our goal. The spiritual and emotional support has been invaluable.

We know that you appreciate our efforts to maintain a permanent Quaker presence in the City of Detroit.

Sincere thanks from Friends in Detroit.

<https://detroitfriendsmeeting.org/new-meeting-house/>

Kevin Howley, Sharon Ottenbreit, Peter Dale

<http://www.detroitfriendsmeeting.org>

The clerk asked if it should be a consideration that the meeting would send a donation to Detroit Friends Meeting. This will not be discerned now, but Friends can speak to the clerk about it.

Journey of Hope Speaker

The clerk reminded Friends that Bill Holland went to the World Day Against the Death Penalty and spoke on behalf of Friends. He requested the clerk sign a letter advocating for a change in Georgia law to protect people with mental disabilities from capital punishment. The clerk signed the letter written by Georgians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty [GADP]. GADP invited AFM to host a Journey of Hope speaker in early 2024. The clerk shared the information below.

Georgia Journey of Hope 2024

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Journey of Hope organization?

The Journey of Hope...From Violence to Healing, Inc. (JOH) is an organization led by family members of murder victims, joined by family members of those who have been sentenced to death, and persons exonerated and released from death row. The purpose of the organization is abolition of the death penalty. Speakers from the Journey of Hope are available to address any group, either in person or online, to share their own stories of loss and healing, and to advocate for constructive responses to violent crime, instead of capital punishment.

When is the Journey of Hope in Georgia?

From time to time, the organization carries out speaking tours, both in the U.S. and in other countries. Early in 2024, a Journey of Hope speaking tour will take place in Georgia, in cooperation with Georgians for Alternative to the Death Penalty (GFADP). From January 26 through February 7, speakers will be available to address faith communities, classrooms, and community groups throughout the state.

The clerk asked if there were any Friends who wanted to shepherd this program for AFM. Mary Ann Downey and Bill Holland offered to help bring a speaker to AFM.

Call for committee reports for the state of the meeting report

As the clerk prepares to write the state of the Meeting report in 2024, she asked for committees to share with her their assessment of the past year.

She offered the query: In what ways are you journeying towards the beloved community, and in what ways are you stumbling? What are the things your committee has done to move you in that direction, and what things are stopping you from getting there?

The clerk will send out this request to committee clerks following this Meeting for Business and reports will be due in early January.

Big Softy asked if he could submit a statement about QVS alums in Atlanta for the State of the Meeting report because he is in contact with former QVSers from Atlanta.

