

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2025



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

<https://atlantaquakers.org/announcement-sheet/> will always have the most recent announcement sheet

Meeting for Worship each First Day (Sunday) in Person & via Zoom, 10:00 am
(For those who prefer a more intimate worship experience, we have resumed small meetings for worship in the library at 10 am.)

Details for Sunday worship and for our Wednesday small meetings for worship as well as worship opportunities with the Macon Worship Group, in person and via zoom, are in the announcement sheet (link just above). The most up-to-date information about events can also be found there.

QUERY FOR SEPTEMBER

Children and young people need love and stability.
Are we doing all we can to uphold and sustain parents and others who carry the responsibility for providing this care?

A JOYFUL ABANDON TO LOVE

excerpts from the January 2025 Friends Journal article by Barbara Birch found at <https://www.friendsjournal.org/a-joyful-abandon-to-love/>

She begins by quoting *Bread for the Journey* by the late Catholic priest Henri Nouwen:

Many voices ask for our attention. There is a voice that says, "Prove that you are a good person." Another voice says, "You'd better be ashamed of yourself." There also is a voice that says, "Nobody really cares about you," and one that says, "Be sure to become successful, popular, and powerful."

But underneath all these often very noisy voices is a still, small voice that says, "You are my Beloved, my favor rests on you." That's the voice we need most of all to hear. To hear that voice, however, requires special effort; it requires solitude, silence, and a strong determination to listen. That's what prayer is. It is listening to the voice that calls us "my Beloved."

Barbara Birch asks, "How do we learn to love ourselves if we did not learn it in childhood? One way is to change our interior script by attending to the Inner Voice of Love. The voice may belong to God, Gaia, Christ, Oneness, the Great Mysterious, or the universal force of love that Martin Luther King Jr. described this way: 'Love is the greatest force in the universe. It is the heartbeat of the moral cosmos. He who loves is a participant in the being of God.' "

She says, "My own Inner Voice had acquired no vocabulary of love, so I looked to the writings of early Friends and found they knew about the power of love. In 1663, Isaac Pennington wrote about how love can be transformative":

What is love? What shall I say of it, or how shall I in words express its nature? It is the sweetness of life; it is the sweet, tender, melting nature of God, flowing up through his seed of life into the creature, and of all things making the creature most like unto himself, both in nature and operation. It fulfils the law, it fulfils the gospel; it wraps up all in one, and brings forth all in the oneness. It excludes all evil out of the heart, it perfects all good in the heart. A touch of love doth this in measure; perfect love doth this in fullness.

"Over time, and with discipline," she ends by saying, "the repetition of words like these reset my mind and heart, and rewired my patterns of thinking. It is still a constant prayer of the Presence that flows into me with love, and it never leaves much room for the nagging voice of self-hate."

PLEASE HOLD IN THE LIGHT:

Charlotte Flores
Mina Rhee & family
Diane & David Green
Myrna Trapp
Patrick O'Neil
Claire Hannapel's cousin
SY Bowland's cousin

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: David Small, afmclerk1@gmail.com
Office Coordinator: Nina Gooch, atlantaquakers@gmail.com
Treasurer: Stacey Sharer, afmtreasurer1@gmail.com
Ministry & Worship: Clive Gordon, 404-534-1091
Finance: Bill Hooson, 770-786-8096
Administration: Jack Honderd, jkhonderd@gmail.com
Social Concerns: Karen Morris, karenth.1415@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: Derek Harootune Otis, dharootuneotis@gmail.com
Nominating: Ellen McQueen, missliveoak@aol.com. and Elizabeth Lamb, gelds@comcast.net
Newsletter Editor: Nina Gooch, atlquakerltr@gmail.com
Webmaster: Emma Bingham, afm.web.wizard@gmail.com
Bookkeeper: Jonah McDonald, afmbookkeeper1@gmail.com

For info about these and other committees, visit or download the AFM Handbook from <https://atlantaquakers.org/handbook/> OR contact the Clerk of the committee you're interested in.

MORE RESOURCES FROM FRIENDS JOURNAL

- "Love Your Neighbor is a Call to Action," June 2025, <https://www.friendsjournal.org/love-your-neighbor-is-a-call-to-action/>
- Chris Ferguson's article in May's *Friends Journal*, Shalom and Right Relationship: Reflections on Housing Justice, argues that homelessness is actually a housing problem -- homelessness exists because there isn't enough affordable housing. Read the article at <https://www.friendsjournal.org/shalom-and-right-relationship/>. The online version ends with a list of other resources on homelessness and housing justice. (The theme for May's *Friends Journal* (<https://www.friendsjournal.org/issue-category/2025/housing-and-homelessness/>) is Housing and Homelessness.)

AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2024

The 2024 Annual Report for the American Friends Service Committee can be found at <https://afsc.org/sites/default/files/2025-07/2024-annual-report-final.pdf>. The report includes highlights from our worldwide work for peace, immigrant rights, and economic justice.

FOR LATE AUGUST EVENTS

See the August 24 or August 31 announcement sheet at <https://atlantaquakers.org/announcement-sheet/>.

BOOKS BY AND ABOUT PEOPLE OF COLOR -- Thursday, September 4

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. In September, the group will be reading and discussing poetry selected by members of the group. All are welcome. The group encourages anyone interested in a particular book to drop in. Upcoming books include October 2, *Earth Keeper* by M. Scott Momaday; November 6, *Dream Count* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie; December 6, *My Documents* by Kevin Nguyen. For questions or the Zoom link, contact Susan Cole (cole2544@bellsouth.net).

BOOK EVENT: AMERICAN TEENAGERS: HOW TRANS KIDS ARE SURVIVING HATE AND FINDING JOY IN A TURBULENT ERA -- Thursday, September 4

On Thursday, September 4, Nico Lang, longtime LGBTQ+ journalist and author of the book *American Teenager: How Trans Kids Are Surviving Hate and Finding Joy in a Turbulent Era*, will be in Atlanta next month for a reading and Q&A at Out Front Theater Company (999 Brady Ave. NW, Atlanta), in partnership with Free Mom Hugs and PFLAG Atlanta. Doors open at 6:30pm ET, and the discussion will start at 7 pm. Nico's goal was to speak back to extreme anti-trans rhetoric about youth by showing trans kids as they actually are: powerfully human. Details on the book at https://docs.google.com/document/d/1c8Ef_gknqGPOfPyANUGQi-C4lbj2swnxtaEHy_NvN1A/edit?usp=sharing.

FLGBTQC OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORSHIP & COMMUNITY – Sat, Sept 6 and Sun, Sept 7

-- At 5 to 6 pm on Saturday September 6, join FLGBTQC Friends in person at our Meetinghouse and FLGBTQC Friends online from all over the U.S. and Canada for a hybrid meeting for worship with time for introductions and conversation from 6 to 6:30 PM. If Atlanta Friends can not get to the Meetinghouse in person for this worship and want to attend online, please contact Nina Gooch at atlantaquakers@gmail.com, preferably by Friday, to get the international FLGBTQC Zoom link.

-- After this, AFM's local FLGBTQC monthly game night begins at 6:30 pm at the meetinghouse. Conversation, games and potluck-style food! Allies welcome! Bring any board game or other tabletop game you'd like to share with the group. Just be willing to explain the game to new players, or (if it's your first time playing it) be willing to learn it along with the rest of us. For more information, contact Nina Gooch or Derek Harootune Otis.

-- On Sunday, September 7, we will also eat together at potluck (look for the queer flag). For more information about these events or about FLGBTQC, contact Nina Gooch or Derek Harootune Otis. To join the group email list and receive updates, contact Nina in the office.

SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS & ADULT FIRST DAY SCHOOL – Sundays, September 7, 14, 21, 28

Instead of listening to someone's Spiritual Journey, as they usually do on the first Sunday of the month, on September 7, Adult First Day School will offer an introduction to Spiritual Nurture Groups. The meeting currently offers three different Spiritual Nurture Groups, and more information will be in the announcement sheet. On the second and third Sundays of the month in August, Adult First Day School will be discussing the book *God Is Not One* by Stephen Prothero, and then picking a new book for the fourth Sunday. You are welcome to join the discussion even if you have not read the books. On fifth Sundays, Adult First Day School has worship sharing based on a query.

Adult First Day School meets in person at the meetinghouse, and people can also join via Zoom. (Zoom details in the announcement sheet. For more details, please contact Elizabeth Lamb.

FIRST SUNDAY POTLUCK -- Sunday, September 7

Please join us for a potluck lunch following the rise of Meeting. Weather permitting, there are several outdoor tables for those who prefer to eat outside. FLGBTQC (Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Concerns) as well as Green Friends will meet during potluck this Sunday. *If you can, please bring not only enough food for your family, but also extra for newcomers / guests.*

DON BENDER BOOK EVENT -- Sunday, September 7 (NEW DATE)

Don Bender will be selling his new memoir on September 7t after Meeting for Worship. The books will be available in the library during potluck (**this is a new date!**). *Don Bender Partner in Community Revitalization* includes stories from the two years Don and Judy were residents at Quaker House, and also stories about Sanctuary in the 80s and the road fight in the 70s and 80s against the planned limited access highway that became Freedom Parkway

WEBINAR: THE QUAKER PUSH FOR GAY LIBERATION, 1946-1973 -- Thursday, September 11

Brian Blackmore, director of Quaker Engagement from American Friends Service Committee, will discuss his new book during a webinar, "The Quaker Push for Gay Liberation, 1946-1973," on September 11 at 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time by the LGBTQ Religious Archives Network. More info and registration: <https://lgbtqreligiousarchives.org/events/the-quaker-push-for-gay-liberation-1946-1973>.

DEIDRE McCALLA IN CONCERT -- Saturday, September 13

Deidre McCalla is back in town with a THANK YOU, ATL CONCERT, Saturday, September 13 at 7:00 pm, presented by Zami NOBLA at the Neighborhood Church (Candler Park Area).

Also appearing: THE SHE (Sister Harriet Ensemble).

More info and ticket link at <https://deidremccalla.com/concerts/>.

NEWCOMER WELCOME DINNER -- Thursday, September 18

On the 18th of each month, newcomers to Atlanta Friends Meeting are invited to dinner at the home of a member or long-time attender. You'll have a chance to get to know other new attenders as well as long-time Quakers in a casual setting. For more details, see later announcement sheets.

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

Stay after meeting for worship, whether in person or via Zoom. Minutes from last month are below. Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business will be held in a combined format about 11:45, using the Zoom coordinates for Meeting for Worship.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89686276751?pwd=M29EYlFWEhSQUtZRlVVPaIFFYmVDQT09>

Meeting ID: 896 8627 6751

Passcode: 789456

ABOUT MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS

"Friends' decision-making is rooted in the spiritual oneness of a religious community. We reject majority rule for the higher goal of reaching decisions in unity, through distinctive attitudes developed by Friends over the centuries. Our process is democratic in the sense that everyone is encouraged to participate. However, it also goes beyond democracy in that it does not rely solely on human will or ability. Participants are expected to put aside personal desires and allow themselves to be led by a Guide beyond the self." (Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice 1998)

"Whenever we remember that we are in the presence of God, transformation is possible. Every task, no matter how mundane, becomes an act of worship, a word of praise offered to God. This is the basis for Quaker business practice. We call it 'meeting for worship with attention to business' because it is grounded in an awareness of God's presence!" (Friends General Conference)

Atlanta Friends Meeting guidelines for meeting for Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business are at https://atlantaquakers.org/wp-content/uploads/Guidelines_for_Meeting_for_Business.pdf. In addition, <https://www.friendsjournal.org/meeting-for-business-as-spiritual-rehearsal> talks more about the spiritual side of Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business as well as the ways the Quaker decision-making process differs from consensus. Another resource is Pendle Hill Pamphlet #307, *Beyond Consensus: Salvaging Sense of the Meeting*. The AFM library has two copies.

SEWING CIRCLE – Saturday, September 27

Join us for a Sewing Circle, meeting in the library on Saturday, September 27 at 3 pm. All art/craft mediums (that are easily cleanable!!) welcome as we create deeper community around shared interests. For more information, contact Lisa Magee, lisammagee@gmail.com.

The next Sewing Circle will be October 25.

MEMBERSHIP FORUM – Sunday, September 28

After meeting on Sunday, September 28, Ministry and Worship Committee will host a forum on membership in the Atlanta Friends Meeting and in the larger Religious Society of Friends. Details will be in later announcement sheets.

ATLANTA PRIDE PARADE / MARCH – Saturday and Sunday, October 11 & 12

The theme for Atlanta's 2025 Pride Festival will be ***Rooted in Resistance***. As Chris McCain, Executive Director of Atlanta Pride, says, *“Our community's journey has always been 'Rooted in Resistance.' From Stonewall to the present day, we have continually stood firm in the face of adversity, demanding our rights and celebrating our identities. This theme is a call to remember our past, acknowledge our ongoing struggles, and empower every individual to contribute to a future where all LGBTQ+ people can thrive, free from fear and prejudice. We invite everyone to join us in embodying this spirit at this year's Festival.”* Atlanta's FLGBTQC (Friends for Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Queer Concerns) is organizing a contingent for the Pride Parade / March on Sunday, October 12 (after meeting) and invites everyone in the meeting to join them as a visible witness of support for LGBTQ+ people, a witness that is needed more and more each day. More details to follow or contact Nina Gooch. For information about the parade itself and other Pride events on Saturday or Sunday, visit <https://atlantapride.org>.

COMMITTEE FAIR – Sunday, October 12

There will be a Committee Fair on October 12 in the Meeting Room at 11:45. This is an opportunity for Friends to find out how they might contribute to the life of the Meeting through belonging to a committee, and to consider how their skills, gifts, and interests may align with the function of a particular committee. All committees are invited to have one or more of their members at a table to answer questions and to provide literature or visuals, or whatever form of representation they feel best presents what their committee is and what it does. Providing snacks is encouraged!

WEATHERING THE STORM: A CONTEMPLATIVE RETREAT – Friday to Sunday, Oct 24 to 26

School of the Spirit and Peace Hill of Avila invite us to join them for "Weathering the Storm: A Contemplative Retreat in the Manner of Friends," October 24 to 26, 2025, at the Avila Center in Durham, North Carolina. They say, “Together we will reflect upon the storms that we are now encountering, whether in our nation, community, or as individuals. Who might we become through the storm? What may be lost? Gained? In what ways have we been faithful within the storm?”

All are welcome. Participants from varying spiritual backgrounds will experience the distinctly Quaker manner of contemplation in community. There will be opportunities for both solitude and for sharing. We will have silent time for prayer and reflection, walks among the trees, and contemplative interaction with scripture, as well as worship together and sharing out of the silence. Participants may, if they wish, meet one-on-one with a retreat leader. Our retreat leaders are April Allison of Durham Friends Meeting, Maryann Concannon of Red Cedar Friends in Lansing, Michigan, and Scott Wagoner of High Point Friends Meeting. This retreat is co-sponsored by School of the Spirit and Peace Hill at Avila.

The retreat begins with lunch at noon Friday and concludes after morning worship on Sunday. The registration fee of \$560 will cover lodging, meals, and program. Scholarships are available for those with financial need. Learn more at <https://www.schoolofthespirit.org/contemplative-retreats/north-carolina-retreat/>. Young Adult Friends (ages approximately 18 to 35) can contact the Ministry & Worship Committee (Clive Gordon) for information about full scholarships to this and other events in the wider Quaker world.

MINUTES FOR EIGHTH MONTH MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH ATTENTION TO BUSINESS
August 17, 2025, held in person and via Zoom in a blended meeting
Minutes Recorded Pending Approval

Attendance: Mike Aland, Richard Allen, Cathy Amanti, Guthrie Armstrong, S Bowland, Jennifer Crumpley, Gayle DeWees, Tom Denham, Jennifer Dickie, Mary Ann Downey, Julia Ewen, Sally Ferguson, Waman French, Lewis Gay, Gordon, Chad Heilig, Jack Honderd, Bill Holland, Bill Hooson, Teri Key-Hooson, Jamie Lockard, Georgia Lord, Judy Lumb, Allison Mawle, Ellen McQueen, Karen terHorst Morris, Caroline Morris, Mary Place, Aaron Ruschetta, Bert Skellie, Karen Skellie, Softy, Jim Tolmach, Myrna Trapp, David Small (Clerk), and Charles Hicks (Recording Clerk)

Worship

Query for the Eighth Month: Do you work gladly with other religious groups in the pursuit of common goals? While remaining faithful to Quaker insights, try to enter imaginatively into the life and witness of other communities of faith, creating together the bonds of friendship. What are you doing as individuals or as a Meeting to spread the message of Friends and to cooperate with others in spreading that message?

Discernment

- **Ministry and Worship** — Bill Holland reported for Ministry and Worship Committee.

We have received a request from Rebecca Cole Sullivan to transfer her membership to Friends Meeting of San Antonio. Rebecca first came to Atlanta Meeting in 2013 as part of the first group of Quaker Voluntary Service fellows. In 2015, she transferred her membership from Friendship Meeting in Greensboro, North Carolina (North Carolina Yearly Meeting – Conservative) and we accepted the care of her membership in March 2015. Rebecca was an active member of the meeting, contributing in many ways. Ministry and Worship recommends we approve this request and request Friends Meeting of San Antonio to assume care of her membership.

Minute-08-17-25:01: On the recommendation of the Ministry and Worship Committee, Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the request of Rebecca Cole Sullivan to transfer her membership to Friends Meeting of San Antonio. Atlanta Meeting asks Friends Meeting of San Antonio to assume continuing care for her membership.

- **Nominating Committee** — Ellen McQueen reported for Nominating Committee.

Nominating is bringing back Georgia Lord's name for discernment, as clerk of Care and Counsel.

Minute-08-17-25:02: On the recommendation of Nominating Committee, AFM approves Georgia Lord as clerk of Care and Counsel for a term of three years, January 2026 through December 2028.

Reports

- **Nominating Committee** — Ellen McQueen reported for Nominating Committee.

Nominating is bringing forward the following names for consideration by the Meeting:

Elizabeth Winslow, as a teacher for First Day School, for a term to begin upon approval through June 2026.

For the Standing Response Group, under the care of CURAFM:

- John Adams, for a term of one year, from October 2025 through December 2026.
- Karen Morris, for a term of one year, from October 2025 through December 2026.
- Diane Rowley Jenkins, for a term of two years, from October 2025 through December 2027
- Susan Firestone, for a term of two years, from October 2025 through December 2027

As Web Manager:

- Emma Bingham, to continue in that position for another one-year term, through December 2026.

Nominating Committee is discerning whether there should be a new position for the administration committee to administer the meeting house needs and whether this should be a paid position or a volunteer position. Ellen asked for ideas to be brought forward.

- **Ministry and Worship** — Bill Holland reported for Ministry and Worship Committee.

Marriage Under the Care of the Meeting: Derek Harootune Otis & Arianna Rodriguez

Atlanta Meeting has received a request from Derek Harootune Otis and Arianna Rodriguez to be married under the care of the meeting. A marriage clearness committee has met with them and joyfully unites in recommending we support of their request. The vows they propose to make are a variation on the traditional Quaker promise. "In the presence of God and all those gathered here today, I take thee [Arianna/Derek] to be my partner, promising with Divine assistance to be unto thee a loving and faithful spouse so long as we both shall live."

The Ministry and Worship Committee recommends the meeting take this marriage under our care. We will bring this matter back to Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business next month for the discernment of the community.

Visit by Friend with Travelling Minute

When a Friend travels to another meeting they may request a letter of introduction or a travel minute. A letter of introduction is simply a letter, usually issued by the Clerk, to confirm the carrier is an active member of the meeting. It is a kind of Quaker passport. A meeting may also issue a Travelling Minute which usually reflects when a Friend travels under a concern. The friend travelling brings with them a letter which the receiving meeting endorses. On return the travelling minute is returned to the home meeting as a record of their travels and their faithfulness in carrying the concern.

Atlanta Meeting received the visit of friend Bonface Eshuhunwa Mukhwana from East Africa Yearly Meeting Kaimosi with a travelling minute on Sunday August 3. Boniface shared briefly at the rise of meeting his work with needy children in Africa. Mary Ann Downey endorsed his minute on behalf of the meeting. We have a copy of the minute we retain for our records.

A Friend asked how Mary Ann was selected. Jamie Lockard said that in David Small and Clive Gordon's absence, Jamie asked Mary Ann as the most senior member of Ministry & Worship.

- **DEI Minute** — Bill Hoosen presented a proposed minute on behalf of himself and other members of the Quaker community but not on behalf of a specific committee after seeing other Quaker meetings record minutes on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

"As members and attenders of the Atlanta Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, we believe everyone — no matter who they are or where they're from — deserves

the opportunity to reach their full potential. Every person has intrinsic dignity. Everything our Meeting does should be in service of ensuring people and our beloved community thrive. 'We believe that diversity reflects divine beauty, an expression of the vastness of human experience woven together in a tapestry of shared purpose. Equity is our moral imperative, requiring that we not only open doors but remove the barriers that have long stood in the way of true belonging. Inclusion is our practice of radical hospitality, ensuring that every voice is heard and every heart is embraced.' (Pendle Hill Board) Understanding and committing to these principles, we will strive to do the following:

- Speak truth to power, recognizing injustice wherever it occurs, acknowledging that silence can be complicity.
- Actively work to correct systemic inequities within our Meeting and the communities we serve.
- Continue a culture of radical hospitality where differences are recognized and celebrated.
- Commit to continuous education, consideration, and action to support the recognition of everyone's intrinsic worth and equitable treatment for all.

Guided by our belief that the Light is in everyone, we will work toward creating the Beloved Community we envision as we seek truth telling, healing, and reconciliation in our nation and the world."

A Friend said this minute seemed to miss discussion of the military and law enforcement and wanted something said about this to communicate the concerns he has heard young adult friends raise. He proposed a threshing session on what role the military or law enforcement should have in this minute so that the meeting was prepared in the event of future action by the military or law enforcement.

A Friend said they did not appreciate, "Continue a culture of radical hospitality where differences are recognized and celebrated," because there are some differences we would not accept. She proposed ending the bullet at "Continue a culture of radical hospitality."

A Friend said the minute was confusing and suggested that the quote from Pendle Hill be taken out and moved to the bottom. Further, she asked for "these principles" to be clarified.

A Friend said he wanted "accessibility" to be more specifically called out in the minute.

A Friend suggested using "Blessed community" instead of "Beloved community," would be more historically accurately. She also suggested using "multi-real" instead of "multicultural." She said we should say that there are opportunities to learn and we are called to action to restore and repair our community.

Bill will bring this minute back for discernment at the next Meeting for Business.

■ **Social Concerns Committee** — Karen Morris reported for Social Concerns Committee.

The Social Concerns committee has been supporting leadings and concerns of its members for many years. Here are several which were discussed at the July meeting:

- The Abesuchi committee in Suchitoto, El Salvador, reported to our committee about their funding needs in the next 3 years to support high school and college fees for the students they support: \$5000 for each of the next 3 years. We let them know that we don't have that amount but we can offer \$500 each of the three years and encourage individuals who may want to contribute. Now deceased AFM members Frank and Carol Cummings began the project in the 1990s in the town of El Sitio to encourage higher education. Frank set up a fund in his will under the care of AFM to fund the program after his death. Their son Andrew

continues his parents' legacy. Most of the original contributors to the Suchito Scholarship Fund are now deceased. Before he left his position as AFM Clerk of Finance, Paul Mangelsdorf reported that there is \$1,934.42 left in Frank's retirement funds to be paid as a bequest for Abesuchi, \$967.21 in February of 2026, and \$ 967.21 in February of 2027. *To make an individual contribution, please see Bert Skellie or Judy Lumb.*

- Senator Elena Parent, from Georgia Senate District 44, spoke at AFM on August 3 following potluck about recent work in the State legislature focused on changes in education, immigration, and voting laws. We invited other groups in Decatur to attend such as Beacon Hill Black Alliance for Human Rights, and nearby churches. Representatives of the Georgia Coalition of the People's Agenda were also present to address voter protections and to help individuals check on their voting rights status. Many thanks to John Michael for organizing this event.
- And also related to voting rights, next First Day, August 24, we will host a celebration for Women's Equality Day to honor the 105th anniversary of women's right to vote in the United States. We will have a literature table for articles and books on the topic, free to a good home. We will have a cake and recorded music from the musical "Suffs." We encourage First Day school classes to share information on the topic. Recognizing that historically, many formerly enslaved people were denied the right to vote in their states until the Voting Rights Act in 1965, celebrating the political achievement of women's voting rights also honors the many women who put their lives on the line, such as Fannie Lou Hamer from Mississippi, who began challenging the barriers for voting in her county in 1962, and who founded the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Caucus, which she represented in the 1964 Democratic Convention in Atlantic City, NJ. The committee encourages each of us to write a story about an ancestor's memories of earning the right to vote or of one's personal experience of voting. We can post them on the bulletin board in a special section.

A Friend thanked Karen and the committee for putting the Women's Equality Day celebration.

- **SAYMA** — Allison Mawle reported on the SAYMA meeting in June 2025. She said this year's SAYMA meeting was the most coherent and productive meeting she had attended. She specifically named the restorative circles that took place on the first day of the conference and the work of SAYMA Clerk, Jennifer Dickie, as reasons the conference was successful. She noted the two plenary sessions were available to review, and she said we need monthly meeting representatives to the nominating committee and ministry and worship committees for SAYMA.

Karen specifically thanked S Bowland for her help planning.

Jennifer Dickie said as the clerk of SAYMA that she is asking the ministry and worship committee of SAYMA to do more outreach to monthly meetings to share what SAYMA is doing and to hear from local meetings about what they need.

- **Finance** — Bill Hoosen reported for the Finance Committee.

Bill said that the Meeting's finances were in good shape but noted that we are still behind in rental income and he encouraged Friends to invite friends to host meetings and events at the meetinghouse. We are ahead on the finances for the year in terms of income, and Bill is happy to answer any questions in the future. Bill reported that the finance committee is made up of himself, Don Bender, Cheryl Cowherd, Charles Hicks, and Stacey Sharer. Bill reported that certain checks have been reported stolen to the post office and the post office is investigating. Bill noted we are taking our money out of PayPal and moving this to an interest-bearing account.

A Friend suggested switching to electronic transfers and direct deposits. Bill said this was under consideration by Finance.

A Friend asked whether there was evidence the stolen checks were cashed. Bill confirmed the stolen checks were cashed.

Additionally, Bill gave the following report:

Recently someone who had been approved to receive financial assistance for a seminar out of state encountered a situation that is occurring with more frequency: "When I arrived at the airport on 7/13/25 I learned that my return flight had been canceled, and nothing was available until the evening of 7/14. So, I requested a refund for the return trip and purchased an American Airlines flight a (at an enormous cost-\$983.21) Unfortunately, that flight was delayed because of an inadequate number of crew members which meant I couldn't make my connecting flight, so I was rebooked to an American Airlines flight leaving on 7/14 at 7:35pm. The weather caused most east coast flights to be canceled on the evening of 7/13. Rather than staying in the airport for 24 hrs I got the cheapest hotel room I could find (\$245.29). Many hotels near the airport were booked). The bottom-line is that my travel costs \$1,445.58!"

This person had been approved by various committees to be reimbursed for up to \$1,000, for the related travel expenses.

When the Finance Committee became aware of this, they basically came to unity that if expenses for an approved travel were unforeseen and unexpectedly increased while in transit, and if that person was able to temporarily cover the expenses, Atlanta Friends Meeting, would cover the unexpected expenses, provided they were reasonable, as determined by the Finance Committee, and if receipts and a written narrative were provided.

Therefore, the following Minute is offered for consideration at the next Meeting for Business:

"The Atlanta Friends Meeting, as it is able, provides financial assistance or scholarships to help cover expenses for meetings, programs, or conferences when requested and approved. These expenses can be for registration, meals, lodging, and travel. Frequently, various Committees budget to provide this assistance. If a person has been approved by either a Committee, or the Meeting as a whole, and if those approved expenditures increase due to unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances, those expenses will be covered by the general fund of the Atlanta Friends Committee, as it is able."

A Friend said she would want clarity that this is not a bottomless, open-ended fund. Another Friend said he would suggest budgeting for organizational travel insurance.

Bill will be bringing this minute back for discernment at the next Meeting for Business.

- **Landscape Committee** — David Small reported for Landscaping that a pine tree was removed from the premises as a result of a recent storm, and Appleseed Tree Service came to remove the tree. Myrna Trapp has selected a tree to replace this one.

- **Administration** — Jack Honderd reported for the Administration Committee.

Jack said Administration has largely completed replacing the sprinkler heads in the meeting house, which means we are now ready to paint and spackle the ceiling. Jack reported we are repainting and recoating the cabinet doors in the meeting house and that should be done in two to three weeks. There are other maintenance projects around the meeting house that need to be done, and he endorsed hiring a building coordinator to complete and coordinate the work.

