

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 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 OCTOBER

Be aware of the spirit of God at work in the ordinary activities and experience of your daily life. Spiritual learning continues throughout life, and often in unexpected ways. There is inspiration to be found all around us, in the natural world, in the sciences and arts, in our work and friendships, in our sorrows as well as in our joys. Are you open to new light, from whatever source it may come? Do you approach new ideas with discernment?

SEEKING WHOLENESS

by Bill Holland, originally in the Macon Worship Group weekly email newsletter

One of the early Quaker insights growing from the experience of the inner light was a rejection of the emphasis on human sinfulness or imperfection. The emphasis was on human possibility, or more precisely, moving from “the creature” into “the Life,” there was the possibility of human perfection. George Fox describes his experience in graphic language: “Now was I come up in spirit through the flaming sword into the paradise of God. All things were new, and all creation gave another smell unto me than before, beyond what words can utter. I knew nothing but pureness, and innocency, and righteousness being renewed up into the image of God . . .” The flaming sword is a biblical reference to the angel who guards the gates of Paradise guarding the way back to the tree of life. Fox is describing a return back through the angel into paradise.

Early Friends did think it was possible, but more likely a momentary state, we move in and out of perfection. Now even this notion of perfection is daunting. I have no idea what perfection might mean. I was helped in thinking about this idea by a Quaker minister who led a gathered meeting retreat for us many years ago. As part of a weekend we spent with Elizabeth Watson, a feminist biblical scholar, she examined the verse - “be ye therefore perfect . . .”(Matthew 5:48) and argued that a better translation rather than perfect was so say be ye therefore **whole**. I can imagine wholeness and seek that centeredness in our meeting.

LESSONS FROM MY FATHER

text used by Althea Natalga Sumpter, when she spoke at First Existentialist Congregation, Atlanta, Georgia on June 15, 2025; the actual talk, which differs slightly from this is at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j36RkXQaVE4>

I like to journal. Writing in a journal helps me reflect, clear my mind, and clear my soul. My life is not so special that I think my words can help anyone in the future, but looking back occasionally does give me a chance to understand how to move forward, gain perspective and improve insight, especially now that I am a woman of a certain age.

One journal entry I made a few years ago has stuck with me. I shared it with a couple of friends to get their reaction. Each person saw a description of psychological abuse and wondered how I endured. It is about my father. I had to learn how to reason with this proud man, born in 1923, who experienced World War II France as a Black man, got married upon his return from war and raised a family of three boys and one girl during the Jim Crow South. I am that girl, and the youngest child.

Journal entry: October, 2019

In my early teens my father would tell me "You're fat and ugly and your hair won't grow. You'll be a whore when you grow up."

When I first told my Ohio German husband that story, he was shocked. His first reaction was that it sounded like child abuse.

Only recently have I reflected back to that time in the 1960s and wondered in a new way about why my father would say something so hurtful--a hurt that I overcame by defying the way he projected my future and forcing him to show his affection for me by giving his college-bound daughter a hug and a kiss. He would show his affection in public without hesitation.

That so-called future whore is strong with a strong power of defiance. I now wonder if somehow calling me such hurtful names was a Black father's way of building strength in his Black daughter. It could be seen as reverse psychology, but those words really did hurt. My hair did not grow well, despite all of my mother's attempts to fix my hair to grow below my earlobes, using a hot comb on the ever-present kinks at the edges of my hair to fashion it into an acceptable European look.

I have always had a chunky belly, a physical trait from my father's side of the family. We would laugh about who in the family-- including aunts, uncles and cousins--had a Sumpter belly.

Despite those physical traits, I have become a woman more distinctive in style and comfort, whose face is a perfect blending of both my parents, while my brothers each resemble one parent or the other.

Why would my father call me a whore? I can only speculate that many decades ago, he may have feared that the sexualized image placed upon Black female bodies during that era would put his daughter in danger from various directions. His life in the South beginning in the 1920s was replete with the lessons of surviving as a Black male. Raising a daughter during that era must have frightened him. My mother surely shared his fear, although she radiated a strength that I grew up to emulate. She was always strong, defiant and opinionated during the onset of social change. My father was always beside her.

My parents signed up their children to desegregate the all-White public school system, they always looked after elders in the community, and they would find some last dollar to give to a high school

graduate making their way to college, sometimes the first child in the family to do so, lugging a trunk onto a bus traveling away from home.

But I never became a whore. I have had my own life experiences with no regret and I have my own treasure trove of survival stories, some lessons about overcoming trauma conveyed by my parents in their own subtle way.

It has taken many decades to gain perspective about my father's way of raising a daughter, the one child they relied on in their elder days before each passed on, beyond the veil.

I read a recent article which recounted a young Black girl calling herself a 'ho. Will she carry that with her as an adult woman? Will she learn to forgive those around her who labeled her blackness a social disorder, a sexualized misunderstanding of her present and future self that empowers her to become a defiant Black woman?

End journal entry.

My family would have been considered middle class by today's standards. The same for many Blacks in our island community, who were land owners since the Reconstruction Era. By the mid-60s, my parents built their own businesses, independent of White control. They were community activists, involved in the Civil Rights Movement and were among the pillars of our community. The most dangerous experience was going into town, across the bridge, where the stench of segregation had a hold, and Jim Crow laws were still engrained enough to control the behavior of Blacks. We still had to be careful going into town. The old anxiety of my parents getting into trouble with the law, or their children being taken away due to misbehaving, was still present.

I do not know what my father was trying to teach me, what fears he harbored for a daughter growing up in the Jim Crow South, but I have learned how to stand firm, to defy those who do not want me to stand as an equal. My mother taught me that I had to do twice as much to be considered equal to White people.

In my adult years, I learned to share fun and joy with my parents. I became a successful adult. They could depend on me in their older years, to the point that I could tease them by using their basket names, their family names, their nicknames. My father even showed me where he hid his pint in the corner of the garage. I knew he saw me as an adult when we shared a cup of his hot water, his favorite Scotch, hiding from my mother. He poured, said to always cut it with water to ease the stomach, then, he passed the cup. It was a special time. I earned his respect, and his love.

Was there any other way for parents to raise a daughter in the rural South before we became full citizens? Black girls had to learn to become survivors. They might have been told they were ugly so that their hearts could become hardened when they were faced with a standard of beauty that idealized blonde hair and fair skin. I wonder how many little Black girls were taught to bear up the same way I was.

It seems to me that too many others expect Black women to become their savior, especially during the social change of the 1960s during the Civil Rights Movement. In politics, we are expected to turn votes into a win for democracy. We are also expected to become caretakers for those who are dependent on home care in their old age. What price must we pay for bearing such a burden? When did Black women become protectors, expected to stand on the front lines of change?

I have learned to dare anyone to treat me as other than a Black woman of the South. I have experienced the Jim Crow laws of segregation. I have lived to see equality and diversity become possible.

I will be heard. I may bend but I will be present.

I was taught to keep my eyes wide open. Must keep watch, just as my father's mother taught. She became a midwife in the community, walking the roads with her bowler hat and double hung skirt. She is known to have chased buckra (White man) off her porch with a shot gun. They never bothered my family again. But no matter what, you must keep watch.

Keep a look see. That is what I learned, to keep a look see. I see the ones who would dare to minimize my life and try taking me back to a time when laws treated me as less-than because of my skin color.

Maybe my strength comes from where I grew up, on the islands of SC, a place where the Emancipation Proclamation was first read January 1st, 1863, the beginning of the annual Watch Night service that started the day before. The plan for Reconstruction began in the Beaufort District of South Carolina after the Union military captured the area from the Confederacy in October 1861. Two and a half years after Emancipation Day, word about freedom reached Brackettville, Texas, to those still enslaved. June 19th was the beginning of Juneteenth.

My history is about the people who survived, and my memory is bound to that because of learning how we got over, in so many ways, lessons passed down from one generation to another.

That memory is where my strength comes, because the work of remaining strong is how I honor the generations before me. It is a burden, but my father's mother taught me to always look 'em in the eye. Must keep watch. Must keep a look see.

Why do I tell my story? Do I feel obligated to write about my Gullah Geechee culture, my heritage on the islands of South Carolina, my joys and memories of hurt?

I need to tell my stories. I want others to know what I went through, what so many of us, Blacks and allies, endured to make diversity and equality work. My writing could be cathartic, but sharing it with others like me is to say we did a good thing. We need to tell our stories in order to counter the bad actions of these political times, so that the stress and the disappointments do not take us back, any of us, to a time when certain ugly behavior of segregation was law and acceptable.

I still remember the Jim Crow laws that I grew up with as a child. I am looking. I see. I will not go back.

FORUM HELD ON REDUCING MICROPLASTICS ENTERING THE BODY

On August 24th, Atlanta Quakers' Green Friends Committee presented a forum on microplastics pollution and how to reduce the body's exposure to these dangerous chemicals. Numerous studies have demonstrated microplastic contaminants are in people's hearts, kidneys, livers and other organs, as well as the human placenta. Recent major research found an average of about 7 grams of microplastics are in people's brains. Microplastics in the body can cause cardiovascular, hormonal and other health problems. Children are the most vulnerable.

Reducing exposure to microplastics is important. Microplastics range in size from 5 millimeters down to billionths of a meter and are found all over the world, from the deepest oceans to our homes. The fossil fuel industry, which is partially responsible for climate change, is also involved in plastics production.

Fortunately, current science indicates there are some ways to reduce microplastics exposure.

Drink water etc. from glass, ceramic or non-toxic metal containers. A liter sized plastic bottle of water can contain up to a quarter million microplastic particles. Tap water can be filtered then stored in non-plastic containers. Some of the relatively low-cost filters, such as the Brita Elite, have been certified as reducing microplastics.

Avoid plastic-lined disposable coffee cups, plastic straws, spoons etc. Some popular brands of tea have nylon bags and other plastics that release microplastics into a cup of tea. Research which brands, such as Bigelow, do not use plastic tea bags or consider looseleaf tea.

Cook and store foods in glass, ceramic or non-toxic metal containers. Plastic containers give off microplastics when liquids and foods are stored. The heat applied when cooking in plastic causes even more plastic contaminants to go into the food. Baby bottles are a particular concern.

Buy and use clothing and bedding made from natural fibers such as cotton, linen, hemp and flax. Synthetic clothing and bedding give off microplastics during use that can be inhaled. Plush synthetic material is the worst (look at dryer filter for proof). Exercise extra caution with clothing and bedding for children.

Clean home regularly, including vacuuming. Most carpets are made from plastics. Using a good vacuum regularly helps remove microplastic particles released as carpet ages. If the vacuum cleaner does not have a quality filter, then air house out when vacuuming. Wiping counters etc. with a damp cloth also helps reduce particles in the home.

Use a good furnace/AC filter. A furnace filter with a Merv rating of 12 or higher helps reduce microplastics down to .3 micrometers in home air. And/or use an air purifier. A relatively inexpensive and effective air purifier can be made using a 20"x20" box fan and the same size high Merv furnace filter.

Eat more plant-based foods. Toxins such as microplastics and pesticides tend to be more concentrated in animal-based meals. Seafood can have 30x the microplastics found in fruits and vegetables. Avoid highly processed meals. These tend to have more microplastics.

Buy less plastic packaging by purchasing food in bulk. The larger the container, the less exposure of the contents to the packaging. If using plastic to buy bulk foods, transfer food to glass, ceramic or non-toxic metal at home. Also, use a cloth grocery bag.

Society-wide reductions in plastics pollution can help everyone, particularly those who cannot afford some of the suggestions above. Take action by contacting elected officials and companies to promote ways to use less plastic. Support pro-environment/pro-regulation candidates. Become involved in environmental groups, such as the Green Friends committee, that meets on the first Sunday of every month around noon.

Feel free to share this with others. For concerns specific to your health and microplastics, consult a physician.

Sources for the information above include:

Making a relatively inexpensive air purifier using a box fan: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kH5APw_SLUU&t=142s

<https://sustainability.wustl.edu/microplastics-where-they-are-and-how-to-avoid-them/>

<https://www.news-medical.net/health/5-Easy-Ways-to-Reduce-Your-Microplastic-Intake.aspx>

<https://www.henryford.com/blog/2024/11/9-ways-to-reduce-microplastics-exposure-in-children>

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20250309/These-simple-diet-tweaks-could-slash-microplastics-in-your-body.aspx>

DO YOU HAVE AFM LETTERHEAD??

If so, please check the phone number on it. The phone number should end 2474. If it does not, you can correct it if you have a Word file. If you have a pdf file, please email the office at atlantaquakers@gmail.com to request a corrected version.

HELP PROVIDE NEED-BASED SCHOLARSHIPS TO THE FRIENDS SCHOOL OF ATLANTA AND REDUCE YOUR GEORGIA TAX

Help provide need-based scholarships to the Friends School of Atlanta AND reduce the Georgia State taxes you pay! In two minutes, you can complete an on-line application (www.apogee123.org and go to "Get started Apply Today") whereby you pay into the Tax Credit Scholarship Fund (designating "the Friends School of Atlanta" to receive your funds). The amount you pay (due by March) is deducted from Georgia taxes that you'll owe! Questions? Need help? Call Betsy Eggers at 404-831-8856

QUAKER STATEMENT ON GENOCIDE IN GAZA

Eight Quaker organizations based in the U.S., Britain, Norway, Canada, Europe, and around the world have issued a joint statement asserting that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza and urging Quakers to take action. Read the press release and full statement at <https://afsc.org/newsroom/quakers-discern-genocide-occurring-gaza-and-urge-courageous-action>

PLEASE HOLD IN THE LIGHT:

Becky & Bob Lough
Nan O'Connor
Howie Sankofa's son
Karen Gold
Charlotte Flores
David Small
Charles Hicks' stepfather
Gwen Davies & 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: 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.

UPDATE ON MACON WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The Macon Worship Group, which is under the care of Atlanta Friends Meeting, is now meeting in person for worship at a new day and time: every first and third Sundays at 4 pm at Centenary United Methodist Church, 1290 College Street, Macon, GA. (People of all ages are welcome, but there is no childcare available.) Enter through the side door on Ash Street. There is also a Zoom option.

In addition, they are also now meeting via Zoom every Wednesday evening of the month.

For more info: maconquakerworshipgroup@gmail.com

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

Meeting ID: 850 1774 5787

Passcode: 22Light

BOOKS BY AND ABOUT PEOPLE OF COLOR -- Thursday, October 2

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

JONAH MCDONALD AND ZARA POUNCEY'S *HIKING METRO ATLANTA'S HIDDEN FORESTS*:

Upcoming events:

Saturday, October 4, 11:30 am - Decatur Book Festival (<https://tinyurl.com/yksrwh5>)

Sunday, November 9, 2 pm - Hike with the Authors at Blue Heron Nature Preserve

(<https://www.facebook.com/events/767872739390070/>)

Wednesday, November 12, 6:30 pm – Book Event at DeKalb History Center

(<https://dekalbhistory.org/>)

Review from the AJC with more info about the book: <https://www.artsatl.org/new-guidebooks-offer-details-on-all-of-metro-atlantas-parks-and-trails/>

More about book / to purchase: <http://hikingatlanta.com/>

FLGBTQC OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORSHIP & COMMUNITY – Sat, Oct 4 and Sun, Oct 5

-- At 5 to 6 pm on Saturday October 4, 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, October 5, 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, October 5, 12, 19, 26

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 lives. On October 5, Nan O'Connor will share her Spiritual Journey. To hear Cate Tedford's Spiritual Journey, shared July 6, visit <https://tinyurl.com/3buxr9xm>. To hear Arianna Rodriguez' Spiritual Journey, shared August 3, visit <https://tinyurl.com/4tn365pc>. If you'd like to listen to other past Spiritual Journeys, 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.

On the second, third and fourth Sundays of the month, Adult First Day School will be discussing the book *Women, Family, and Utopia* by member Lawrence (Larry) Foster . You are welcome to join the discussion even if you have not read the book. Adult First Day School meets in person at the meetinghouse, and people can also join via Zoom. (Zoom details in the announcement sheet; see link at top of page 1.) For more details or questions, please contact Elizabeth Lamb.

WORLD QUAKER DAY – Sunday, October 5

This year World Quaker Day is scheduled to be celebrated on Sunday, October 5, 2026. World Quaker Day is a recent invention, established by Friends World Committee for Consultation in 2014. The goal of World Quaker Day is for us to celebrate our diversity as a religious movement and uplift our presence in the world. We are a tiny group with 400,000 Quakers across 87 countries. The theme for this year's World Quaker Day will be Love your neighbor with the supporting Bible passage Galatians 5:14: 'For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." '

October 5 is potluck Sunday, and members of meeting have extended invitations to American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), Friends School of Atlanta, Stone Mountain Evangelical Church, Macon Worship Group and others to join us for this day. At rise of meeting, we will invite representatives of each group to introduce themselves and share a few words. We will have cake.

In preparing for this day, we encourage everyone to bring a little extra spirit and sustenance to the potluck. **In addition, there will be no open announcements on this Sunday.**

HOMOSEXUALITY AND THE BIBLE – Sunday, October 5

Discover the history behind the 1946 mistranslation of the word homosexual in the Bible, and its lasting impact on society. Georgia Equality and Oakhurst Baptist host an afternoon featuring scholar Kathy Baldock on Sunday, October 5 at 2 pm at Oakhurst Baptist Church, 222 East Lake Drive. Decatur (on the other side of the tracks). Kathy's work includes: *Walking the Bridgeless Canyon: Repairing the Breach between the Church and the LGBT Community*; *Forging a Sacred Weapon: How the Bible Became Anti-Gay*; *Documentary: 1946: The Mistranslation That Shifted Culture*; *Unclobbering the Tangled Mess* (available on YouTube). This event is free and open to the public. You can read more about Kathy's work at www.canyonwalkerconnections..

Haesun Rhee Obituary
January 30, 1936 - August 18, 2025

Haesun Rhee passed away peacefully at 89 years old, on August 18, 2025, in Avondale Estates, Georgia. She battled Multiple System Atrophy, an atypical form of Parkinson's Disease, for the last decade of her life. As a child she experienced oppression and war, and as a young woman she became a stranger in a new land, but throughout her life, Haesun's Christian faith led her to a life rooted in extraordinary service to others.

Haesun was born on January 30, 1936, in Pyongyang, Korea (now part of North Korea), the second of seven children born to parents Chang Choon Lee (father) and Chan Gil Kim (mother). She and her family endured life in Korea under Japanese occupation and later, in 1950 when she was just 14 years old, they fled south during the Korean War, where they were refugees in the divided peninsula. Remarkably, she attended Ewha Womans University and earned her medical degree when she was 24 years old.

Haesun emigrated to the United States in 1960 to wed her beloved, Rev. Dr. Syngman Rhee, after they cultivated their relationship and pledged their love through airmail and telephone calls while Syngman attended college and seminary in the U.S. The couple had three children, all born in Louisville, KY, before they moved to Teaneck, NJ, in 1973. Haesun, gifted with a sharp business acumen, worked for a commercial bank and small family-owned businesses before becoming the owner of a gift shop on Lexington Avenue in New York City, of which she was particularly proud.

Although Haesun never practiced medicine in the U.S., she took countless people under her direct care, including family in the U.S and in Korea, fellow church members and young clergy families, and university and seminary students from Korea, often by cooking, counseling and housing them. Throughout their marriage, Haesun was both a partner and primary helper in Syngman's ministry of peace and reconciliation. She also worked to support Presbyterian mission worldwide as a staff member of the treasury office in the Presbyterian Church (USA), and as the Director of the Carl Howie Center for Science, Art and Theology at Union Presbyterian Seminary, before she and Syngman retired to Atlanta, GA, in 2014.

Haesun also possessed the creativity and vision of an artist. In her spare time she continually grew her hobbies for anything she could make or do by hand. She had a love for sewing, soapmaking, photography, making greeting cards, calligraphy, and playing piano. She combined her keen interest in plants with her green thumb to cultivate beautiful indoor and outdoor gardens.

Haesun was predeceased by her husband and two siblings. She is survived by her children, Anna (Joongyul Oh), Peter and Mina, and grandchildren, Benjamin Oh, Jesse and Kate Fineman, and Sophia and Synger Rhee. She is also survived by siblings Jungwoo Lee (Chicago, IL), Jung Hoon Lee (Atlanta, GA), Haewon Chang (San Jose, CA) and John Lee (Atlanta, GA).

A virtual memorial service / celebration of life will be held on Friday, October 10, 2025, 7:30-9:00pm eastern time. Join the service here - <https://shorturl.at/7BnWt>. In lieu of flowers, gifts in Haesun Rhee's memory may be sent designated for The Syngman Rhee Global Mission Center at Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, VA; to the Parkinson's Foundation; or to any nonprofit public health organization.

Haesun's family thanks her caregivers and everyone that supported her when she needed it most. Her legacy of service, selflessness and love will live on in her family, friends and others she cared for.

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR HAESUN RHEE -- Friday, October 10

A virtual memorial service / celebration of life will be held on Friday, October 10, 7:30 to 9:00 pm for Haesun Rhee, Mina Rhee's mother who joined Mina for worship many times. Haesun's obituary is above. Join the service at <https://shorturl.at/7BnWt>.

BABY BLESSING FOR ERIN, PAYNE & CALLA DANIEL MIDYETTE FAMILY – Saturday, Oct 11

We will gather at 10 am at Meeting in worship for Erin, Payne, and Calla. (Erin expects to give birth in late October.) Bring a blessing, reading, or thoughts to share, knowing your presence alone offers support. If you can also bring finger food to share please let Mary Ann Downey know at madowney@mindspring.com.

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! (There will be time to attend this and still join the Pride Parade.)

ATLANTA PRIDE PARADE / MARCH – Sunday, October 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) invite everyone in the meeting to join them as a visible witness of support for LGBTQ+ people. We are all members of this beloved community, and this is a meaningful way for us to embrace and support those of us who are part of the LGBTQ+ community, both within the meeting and in the wider world. The Parade leaves from the Civic Center MARTA Station (taking MARTA is highly recommended!) and our group will not start moving until at least 1 pm, leaving time for people to attend worship and the Committee Fair. More logistical details in the announcement sheet or contact Nina Gooch. Pride's website is <https://atlantapride.org/festival/parade-marches/>.

DOCUMENTARY SCREENING: BAD RIVER -- Monday, October 13

On Indigenous Peoples' Day (Monday, October 13, 7pm, Tara Theatre) there will be a screening of the 2024 documentary *Bad River*, co-sponsored by Chattahoochee Riverkeeper, Emory Center for Native & Indigenous Studies, Paddle4Tomorrow, and HJacobs Docs. Directed by Mary Mazzio, the film offers an inspiring chronicle of the Wisconsin-based Bad River Band and its battle to stop an oil pipeline from polluting Lake Superior, the largest freshwater resource in America. Along the way we learn about the tribe's ongoing fight for sovereignty and rights to its homeland. Following the 90-minute film will be a panel talkback by representatives from the co-sponsors. Tickets are \$12. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/bad-river-documentary-tickets-1680360035099>

FRICITION FARM CONCERT – Saturday, October 18

Friction Farm married songwriters, Aiden Quinn and Christine Stay, will perform at Fiddler's Green, (470 Candler Park Drive) on Saturday October 18 at 7 pm. Their songs address our current complex society with realism and hope. You can listen to their latest album on their website, Frictionfarm.com. Their songs address many personal and societal issues like climate change, gender identity, growing up, stress, love and poverty. Bob and Mary Place have heard them perform several times and have 4 of their albums. If you have any questions, please call the Places at 614-705-5492.

NEWCOMER WELCOME DINNER -- Saturday, October 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. October's Welcome Dinner will be hosted by John and Folami Adams. For more details, see later announcement sheets.

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

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=M29EYlIFWEhSQUtZRlVVPaIFFYmVDQT09>

Meeting ID: 896 8627 6751

Passcode: 789456

WORKSHOP: MLK'S LETTER FROM BIRMINGHAM JAIL – Saturday, Oct 25 & Thursday, Nov 13

Black Voters Matter and The King Center invite you to a powerful new series: MLK's Letter from Birmingham Jail: A Prophetic Guide to Power, Love, Protest, and Liberation. This series will consist of BOTH virtual and in-person workshops created for change makers of all kinds: activists, students, faith leaders, organizers, educators, and anyone committed to the pursuit of justice. Rooted in the legacy of the Civil Rights Movement, each session blends rich historical context with real-world tools and strategies to equip you for today's urgent struggles. This is more than a learning experience, it's a call to action! Remaining dates: Saturday, October 25, 11 am to 2 pm (hybrid with in-person option) and Thursday, November 13. 6:30 to 9:30 pm (virtual only). Register at

<https://www.mobilize.us/blackvotersmatter/event/789386/>

SEWING CIRCLE – Saturday, October 25

Join us for a Sewing Circle, meeting in the library on Saturday, October 25 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 November 22.

■ **Nominating Committee** - Ellen McQueen brought the report for Nominating Committee

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

Alison Mawle, as Personnel Liaison, for a period of one year

Dean Leeper as a member of the Young Friends Support Committee, for a period of two years

Erin Koeler-Donohue, as a member of the Young Friends Support Committee, for a period of one year

Stacey Sharer to continue as Treasurer for 2 years, through December 2027

Don Bender to continue as Assistant Treasurer for 2 years, through December 2027

2. The Nominating Committee will hold a Committee Fair on Sunday, October 12, 2025 following the rise of meeting.

A Friend pointed out that this was the same day as the Atlanta Pride Parade so Friends for Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Queer Concerns [FLGBTQC] would not be able to be a part of it.

Ellen pointed out that there are always conflicts and another Friend suggested that FLGBTQC could leave some information for those who are interested.

3. Meetinghouse and Grounds Committee

At the request of Administration Nominating the Nominating Committee asks that the meeting approve reconstituting the Meetinghouse and Grounds Committee, as the need for this committee to be up and running is pressing. The draft handbook description of this committee is below. The Meeting was asked to approve the committee and allow work to begin before the handbook description is approved. Approval of the whole handbook will come before the meeting at a later time.

Jack Hondard shared the history of this committee. The meetinghouse burned out many clerks of the former Meetinghouse Committee over the years and decided to hire a property coordinator, but that didn't work out well either so the work has fallen back on Administration Committee. This is a return to a previous concept of it and it is believed that there are more qualified people for it now.

Minute-09-21-25:01: The Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the reconstitution of the Meetinghouse and Grounds Committee.

The nominating committee is seeking members for this committee. Please share with the Nominating committee if you or someone you know has skills related to the MH & G Committee (See description below)

■ **Young Friends Support Committee** – Brent Wolff reported for YFSC

1. Young Friends Program Coordinator Position

Asa Kramer-Dickie, is stepping down from this position at the end of the year. Administration Committee and Young Friends Support Committee will be hiring a new YFPC

■ **Ministry and Worship** — Clive Gordon reported for Ministry and Worship Committee.

1. World Quaker Day October 5, 2025

This year World Quaker Day is scheduled to be celebrated on Sunday, October 5, 2026. World Quaker Day is a recent invention, established by Friends World Committee for Consultation in 2014. The goal of World Quaker Day is for us to celebrate our diversity as a religious movement and uplift

our presence in the world. We are a tiny group with 400,000 Quakers across 87 countries. The theme for this year's World Quaker Day will be Love your neighbor with the supporting Bible passage Galatians 5:14: 'For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." '

October 5 is potluck Sunday, and members of meeting have extended invitations to AFSC, Friends School of Atlanta, Stone Mountain Evangelical Church, Macon Worship Group and others to join us for this day. At rise of meeting, we will invite representatives of each group to introduce themselves and share a few words. We will have cake. In preparing for this day, we encourage everyone to bring a little extra spirit and sustenance to the potluck. **There will be no open announcements on this Sunday.**

2. Annual Membership Forum

On Sunday, September 28 at 11:45, Ministry and Worship will hold a forum on the meaning and process of membership. It will be an opportunity for those of who are members to reflect on what membership in this community means to us as well as sharing the process for becoming a member. We have invited speakers who are members to share what membership means to them; we have also invited speakers to share why they have not applied for membership. We invite everyone to come. There will be snacks.

3. Discussion with Durham, NC Friends Meeting

In 7th month we received an invitation from Durham, NC Friends Meeting to meet to share and explore a series of questions regarding caring for the spiritual life of large meetings. Questions included: how to build community in meeting, how to encourage greater participation in Meeting for Business, how do we share Quaker process with those new to meeting, and how we reach out to those who are hurt or in need. There may also be questions from the AFM side of the conversation. Members of both Ministry and Worship and Care and Counsel have expressed interest in participating. Christina Repoley is working to schedule one or more zoom calls to explore these questions. If you would like more information, contact Christina Repoly <christinarepoley@gmail.com> or Clive Gordon <cmgord28@gmail.com>

Brent Wolff added that Durham Friends Meeting has a large and robust Young Friends Program and hopes that we will be able to learn from them about their program.

■ Social Concerns Committee

1. Draft Atlanta Friends Meeting Minute on the Apartheid-Free Pledge was presented by Claire Hannaple

There is a growing Apartheid-Free community that seeks to draw attention to the Israeli government's violence against the Palestinian people. Claire handed out some background items for Friends to review that included the pledge below (in bold).

One Friend asked for clarification about how other Quaker organizations are connected. Claire shared that there are Wider Quaker Organizations, Yearly Meetings and Monthly Meetings that have signed. AFM would be the first Quaker organization in Georgia although not the first Faith group. AFM would not be the first Quaker meeting in SAYMA as Columbia Friends Meeting has already signed the pledge.

Another Friend asked if we could change any of the language in the pledge. Claire replied that we can't change the pledge, but we can add a preamble in any minute we approve. They gave the example in the draft below

Proposed minute:

“We utterly deny all outward wars and strife and fightings with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretense whatsoever; and this is our testimony to the whole world.” *from the Quaker peace testimony, as announced in 1660*

The Social Concerns Committee, requests that Atlanta Friends Meeting (AFM) joins American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), and the 800+ signers (over 40 of which are Quaker Communities [Editor’s Note: <https://tinyurl.com/yxde228c>]), in the Apartheid-Free Campaign.

AFM responds to AFSC’s and others’ call on faith congregations, communities, and organizations to join in and declare themselves Apartheid-Free. As such: **We affirm our commitment to freedom, justice, and equality for the Palestinian people and all people; We oppose all forms of racism, bigotry, discrimination, and oppression; and We declare ourselves an Apartheid-free community and to that end; We pledge to join others in working to end all support to Israel’s Apartheid regime, settler colonialism, and military occupation.**

A Friend reminded us that part of joining this pledge is acting on it. We might ask Social Concerns Committee to present an annual forum to help us understand our role perhaps in connection with other Quaker groups and local Jewish groups.

Claire said on the Apartheid-Free website <<https://apartheid-free.org/>> one can see the number of organizations that have signed. Signing on to the pledge would be committing ourselves to continued action. Clair shared that there is a Quaker Affinity group that meets monthly to work on this pledge.

If friends have questions or concerns they can reach out to Claire Hannapel <channapel@gmail.com> or members of the Social Concerns committee.

- Friends General Conference Institutional Assessment Implementation Committee Demographic Data Collection Request presented by Jennifer Dickie

Jennifer Dickie recognized that AFM already collects self-reported data on the number of Friends of Color for the SAYMA annual census. Jennifer requests that AFM consider inviting Friends to fill out the new monthly meeting Demographic Survey that is on paper from FGC IAIC. “[The purpose of the survey according to the] Friends General Conference [FGC] Institutional Assessment Implementation Committee [IAIC] **Demographic Data Subcommittee** aims to collect demographic data from Yearly Meetings to get a clearer sense of where Friends of Color worship. This information will help us to better shape FGC’s priorities and program offerings.” (from FGC.org) Monthly Meetings can collect this information from individuals using a form such as [this one](#).

[Editor’s Note: <https://friendsgc.wpenginepowered.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/IAIC-demographic-data-MM-request.pdf>]

Friends reflected some concerns:

If Friends of Color at AFM are undercounted with the current email survey, what makes us think a paper survey would be more accurate?

One Friend asked what the data would be used for and expressed concern that in a small community, the intersectionality of the questions could be used to identify individuals if the data was not disaggregated.

Another Friend shared that he had been collecting data on how many FoC attend weekly meeting for worship at AFM for years based on his visual assessment but has stopped because he doesn’t see that the data has served a greater purpose.

A Friend of Color reflected that he was reluctant to fill out the survey because he doesn't feel like our number diversity necessarily accurately reflects the power structures within our Meeting and could be misleading. He shared that our outward actions such as hiring contractors from marginalized communities or tracking our spending that goes to these communities would be more telling of our commitment to antiracism and multi-culturalism.

A Friend who is a demographer pointed out that before focusing on the instrument and the data we need to be clear on the objectives of the data collection.

Another Friend who works with census data pointed out that a single annual count on a designated day would be more representative than asking people to voluntarily self report.

A Friend shared that he is put off by our continuing to say that Quakers are a white organization. As a Black man he pointed out that if he is part of this organization then it is not a white organization and he feels overlooked with this language.

Another Friend of Color replied that he was a Black man who recognized he was part of a white organization.

Jennifer will share these concerns with the FGC IAIC Demographic Data Subcommittee.

Discernment

■ **Ministry and Worship** — Clive Gordon reported for Ministry and Worship Committee.

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

Last month, we reported the Meeting received a request from Derek Harootune Otis and Arianna Rodriguez to be married under the care of the meeting. A marriage clearness committee met with them and joyfully united in recommending we support their request. Ministry and Worship Committee unites with this recommendation. As is our practice, we bring you the vow proposed, so we all know what we are promising to support by taking this marriage under our care. 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 couple have scheduled their Meeting for Marriage in July of 2026. Our meeting guidelines recommend we review and revisit any marriage approval when the Marriage has not taken place within 6 months of approval. In this case, Ministry and Worship recommends we approve the marriage recognizing the Meeting for Marriage will take place in July 2026.

Minute-09-21-25:02: On the recommendation of the Ministry and Worship Committee, Atlanta Friends Meeting joyfully approves celebrating and taking under our ongoing care the marriage of Derek Harootune Otis and Arianna Rodriguez. We will support the couple in honoring their promises "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." We recognize the marriage is scheduled for July 2026.

2. Marriage Committee

The marriage committee is currently in formation. We will bring back a recommendation for meeting approval later.

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

Bill Hoosen brought back the following minute for discernment following discussion at the Eighth Month's business meeting.

Minute-09-21-25:03: "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. Various committees budget funds to help with the expenses of people attending conferences, etc. 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, and if receipts and a written narrative are provided, those expenses will be covered by the general fund of the Atlanta Friends Meeting, provided they are reasonable, as determined by the Finance Committee, and as it is able."

■ **DEI Minute** — Bill Hoosen reported on a DEI minute he prepared and brought for discussion at the Eighth Month's business meeting.

Minute-09-21-25:04: 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 continue to strive to do the following:

- Speak truth to power, recognizing injustice wherever it occurs, acknowledging that silence can be complicit.
- 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 uphold the ideals we strive to recognize in the intrinsic worth of everyone.

Guided by our belief that the Light is in everyone, we will continue to strive to create the Beloved Community we envision as we seek to heal and reconcile our worldly communities.

There was a period of worship that followed.

A Friend shared that We are these people and continue to be these people. It makes sense to post this on our site. Can we make it clear that this is continuous, not new?

One Friend shared that this morning he heard that the current administration is seeking to designate anyone who expresses *transgender ideology violent extremism* as a terrorist. This includes any transgender person who has ever said, taking away our rights is threatening our existence. He pointed out that earlier in this business meeting when he pointed out that the Nominating Committee fair was scheduled on Sunday, October 12 during the Atlanta the Pride March, the message he

received was that there was always a schedule conflict and he could leave some notes about the FLGBTQC Committee. There was no sense from this body that having Quakers show up to the pride march, particularly when the community is under attack, was a priority. He asked us to consider that we are about to approve a very nice sounding DEI minute, but are we actually doing what it says? Is this minute going to be more than just words?

A friend explained the make up of the Nominating committee included a transgender Friend and that person did not recommend a change. This Friend expressed that the date conflict was not intended to overlook the parade nor LGBTQIA Friends.

Another Friend said that we should change the date although the sentiment was that it was too late to change the date.

A Friend reflected that we need to sit in this dissonance. The misstep that hurt marginalized Friends is an important reminder that we are imperfect in our DEI efforts and our imperfection is also a part of who we are. She said that this is not time to fix this problem but to sit in it, and hold it, and strive to do better.

One Friend said that Friends could both attend the parade and the committee fair because the parade is going to step off after 1pm.

Another Friend identified himself in his intersectionality and recognized that a threshing might be needed.

The clerk asked if we could accept the minute with the suggested change of wording and then take up how we make sure our principles align with our practices.

The minute was then approved.

Discussion continued and there was a request to seek a date for the Committee Fair earlier so that there isn't a conflict with the Pride Parade next year.

Another Friend pointed out that we can have more than one committee fair.

Friends recognized that this situation was challenging hearing that the conflicting schedule resulted in at least one Friend feeling overlooked and further marginalized even though the intent of the Nominating committee was not to overlook LGBTQ Friends. Friends acknowledged that this conflict is especially difficult as the LGBTQIA+ community is facing grave threat from the current administration. Friends unified in apologizing for underestimating the importance of the Pride Parade and scheduling another concurrent meeting wide event, making a commitment to plan differently in the future to avoid further marginalizing members of our beloved community.

- **Nominating Committee** - Ellen McQueen brought back the following names for discernment:

Minute-09-21-25:05: On the recommendation of Nominating Committee, AFM approves Elizabeth Winslow, as a teacher for First Day School, for a term from September 2025 through June 2026

Minute-09-21-25:06: On the recommendation of Nominating Committee, AFM approves the following Friends for the Standing Response Group, under the care of CURAFM:

John Adams, for a term of one year, from October 2025—December 2026

Karen Morris, for a term of one year, from October 2025— December 2026

Diane Rowley, for a term of two years, Oct 2025—December 2027

Susan Firestone, for a term of two years, Oct 2025—December 2027

Minute-09-21-25:07: On the recommendation of Nominating Committee, AFM approves Emma Bingham as Web Manager, for a term of one year, January 2026 through December 2026.

Approval of Minutes from 6th month 2025

Minute-09-21-25:08: The Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the 8th month 2025 minutes with the following corrections.

Corrections

- Diane Rowley (remove “Jenkins”)
- The correct name of the museum is: The Legacy Museum and National Memorial for Peace and Justice.

Closing Worship

MEETINGHOUSE AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Approved 12/1999, informally laid down c. 2015, revived 2025

Purpose: The Meetinghouse and Grounds Committee is responsible for the care and improvement of the meetinghouse, both exterior and interior, and of the parking lot and grounds surrounding it.

Membership: Members and attenders of the Atlanta Friends Meeting. There are usually 3-5 members. The clerk is appointed by the Meeting.

Terms: Three-year, non-consecutive terms.

Meetings: Meetings are held monthly or as needed.

Duties:

- Plans and supervises the maintenance and improvement of the Meetinghouse’s physical facilities and grounds. The work may be done by volunteers or under contract for professional services.
 - The physical facilities comprise the *exterior and* interior of the Meetinghouse, including the furnishings, contents, and utility systems.
 - The grounds consist of the landscaping, playground areas, parking lot, site lighting, site utilities, sidewalks, fencing, steps, and other improvements outside the building.

The Meetinghouse and Grounds Committee may find it advantageous to continue a landscape subcommittee that stewards the care, planting, and maintenance of plants and select hardscape around the Meetinghouse. The Meetinghouse and Grounds Committee will determine the members of this subcommittee.

- Provides a job description for Property Coordinator in consultation with the Administration Committee. Interviews and makes recommendations to the Administration Committee for the hiring of a Property Coordinator, and manages their work.

