

543 South Mountain Avenue

Ashland, Oregon 97520

(541) 482-0814

communications@ashlandquakers.org

www.ashlandquakers.org

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

During the months of Jul, Aug, & Sep, there are generally no scheduled 1st hour (9-10 am) activities

Special Event:

11 am Sunday 14 July

Worship in Glenwood Park (block west of the Meeting House) followed by Soul Food Sunday Brown-Bag lunch in the Park

Monthly Business Meeting resumes 8:30-10 am Sunday 15 September

Meeting for Worship continues all year long

11 am to Noon

Hybrid: Both at the Quaker Meeting House and by Zoom (zoom link):

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7477317797pwd=SW1sd3pTZjhlbGRmUWpOY3pZaUFDdz09>

Outdoor Worship on the Back Porch:

11 am - 11:45 am Sundays

SOUTH MOUNTAIN FRIENDS MEETING

THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)

Unprogrammed Worship in Ashland, Oregon

Summertime 2024

South Mountain Friends' Amended Minute on Christian Nationalism

As Quakers, we believe that everyone possesses the light of the Spirit, which is how we express what Jews and Christians traditionally meant by asserting that everyone is created in God's image. We also believe that everyone possesses some portion of the truth and that no one possesses total understanding. Still, if a widely held opinion that we regard as mostly erroneous threatens grave harm, we feel called upon to address and oppose it. Such is the case of a cluster of opinions that go under the common name Christian nationalism.

Christian nationalism seeks to merge Christian and American identities. It asserts that the United States was founded as a specifically Christian nation; that it is necessary to be a Christian to be a true American; and that Christianity should be favored and actively supported by the state. A frequent corollary of this ideology is that the United States has been chosen to impose its will on other nations in God's name. Additionally, it often overlaps with, and provides cover for, white supremacy and racial subjugation at home as well as abroad.

We reject all these tenets and implications of Christian nationalism. It distorts both the spirit of our country and of Christianity itself. To be an American does not require adherence to any one religion or to any religion at all. And to adhere to Christianity or any other world religion does not require residence in any one country. People are bound to their countries by their citizenship and to their religions by their faith.

In alignment with our testimony of peace, we focus our actions of dismantling such oppressive, aggressive, and authoritarian systems as Christian nationalism. At the same time, our testimony of equality guides us to not condemn individual Christian nationalists.



We commit to educating members of local faith communities and the public at large about the inherent false narratives and extreme threat to democracy posed by Christian nationalism. We call upon ourselves to provide teach-ins, show relevant films, and hold conversation geared toward raising awareness. We recommend that fellow Quakers educate themselves through books and videos and then alert their communities to the reality that Christian nationalism is a political movement based in power that masquerades as a religion that is known for mercy and compassion. (*"Amended" details: Peace & Social Concerns: p. 6*)

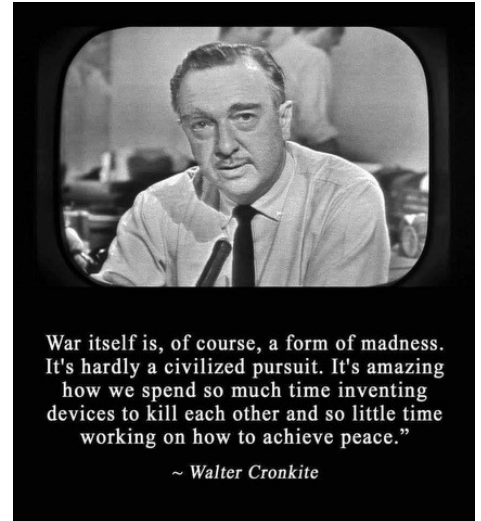
Turning our Nonviolent Presence Retreat into Action

On 2 June, we winnowed on impacts of our 23 March retreat and **suggested follow-up actions**. At the 16 June business meeting, there was a sense that our focus should be on local concerns. **Herb invited anyone who's called to turn a (below) suggestion into action to contact him and meet with the Peace & Social Concerns committee**. Already, over this summer, the Meeting's clerk and recording clerk will explore a What's App "text tree," and Herb will take lead on arranging a Teach-In at SOU on Christian nationalism.

The Quaker Social Concerns Network in Seattle holds peace vigils at demonstrations where violence might occur by standing silently with a sign saying, "Quakers for Peace & Justice." During a pro-Palestinian rally at SOU, a longtime local peace activist was identified as a "peace keeper." Are we ready to inform Peace House to call on Friends to be similar peace keepers?

Local concern: Ashland's cruel and violent treatment of the unhoused; shelter with fire-code violations; displaced by police with no safe place to go; due to incident on night lawn, one person died.

Our country is the largest purveyor of violence; we blame other countries for the violence we provoke. Direct action alone is ineffective; it must be part of a campaign with goals. I write a column that counters the country's commitment to violence. To learn of local concerns, subscribe to the Peace House newsletter.



Above quote contributed by Becky Hale

"I have learned...how important...a support group is for so many of us who are moved by conscience to engage in risk-taking actions. Sometimes we have to act alone, but a strong group for action and support can be more powerful and effective. And it can have a courage-building effect."

—Peg Morton,
*Feeling Light Within,
I Walk*

I'm more ready to silently witness in a group than alone and especially to stand in witness to younger folks.

We can't know our readiness; let's create a Seattle-like Friends network in our valley, committed in both actions and words to nonviolence. Before taking action, such networks gather as a group to pray—which is also a practice in which Indigenous people engage.

Friends have been more successful when inviting others to join us in action. It's equally important to support others in their doing direct action; our being supportive would be our direct action—especially in our valley where there's so many active service organizations.

Formalize an intent to share news about potential actions, then communicate among ourselves to discern in which actions is it appropriate for us to engage; we could communicate through an action-alert text tree (a 21st century phone tree).

To counter knee-jerk violent reactions, we could conduct teach-ins about homelessness, mental health, gun violence, or Christian nationalism; we could find an SOU faculty member to instruct the teach in, a department to sponsor it.

It's been part of our calling as Friends to be trained as monitors at protests.

—Bob Morse

"The most important consideration is not the right action in itself but a right inward state out of which right action will arise. Given the right inward state, right action is inevitable."
—Howard Brinton

(Before traveling on a minute to speak to slave owners, John Woolman had a clearness process with his full Meeting.)



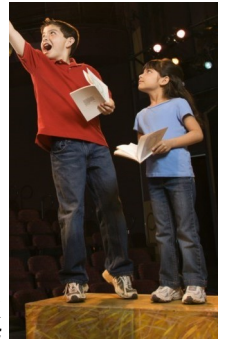
Applied Theater Workshop

7-9 pm Saturday 27 July at the Meeting House

Open to South Mountain Friends and By Invitation (No Charge)

Participants will use their bodies, voices, and hearts to explore themes of justice, healing stories, and connection with each other. Curiosity, experience in listening & empathy, and an ability to have fun required!
No theater experience of any kind necessary!

We will play games, get to know each other, and be briefly introduced to Playback Theater and/or Theater of the Oppressed. Led by Bobbi Kidder (founding member of the Hamazons and Registered Drama Therapist), Kyndra Laughery (Hamazon), and me.
—Rochelle Webster



Friendship, Picnic, Music

6 pm-ish, Thursday 8 August, Lithia Park Band Shell

Join Friends and friends for a pre-band gathering on the right side as you look at the stage on the grass closer to the trees than the stage (in case it's really hot). The Pre-band concert begins at 6:15 pm, the concert at 7. BYOB/C/F: Bring your own blanket, chair, and food. The Lions Club sells ice cream with proceeds going to the Ashland Schools band departments.



The Ashland City Band has been providing outside summer music in Lithia Park for over 50 years. It's family friendly, and every week highlights a different pre-band, smaller musical ensemble. As well, every week features a differently-themed band concert. Mostly kids dance, but "kids of all ages" are welcome to dance. Sadly, smoke does cancel the gathering. —Ká Hering

Encountering Spirit

Feeling a desire for a deeper Quaker spiritual connection, in April I took part in the online Friends General Conference "Encountering Spirit" Retreat. It was described as "A Flexible, Build-You-Own Retreat Experience", a kind of experiment with online retreating.

On the whole, I gained a larger sense of the richness of the Quaker tradition from listening to the varied presenters, and listeners as well. There were smaller group sessions such as *Listening to and Honoring Our Souls*, *The Gathered Meeting*, and *Experiment with Light*. I was touched by how often speakers referred to the experience of the early Friends, stretching back for understanding that can inform, even deepen, our worship today.

Albert Bellg facilitated the *Experiment with Light* workshop. I was so moved by the kind, calm, gentle way he led us through reflecting on our individual lives and leadings that I immediately found and read his recently written book, *Living the Deepest Truth You Know*.



"Find the deepest truth you know and let everything else fall in place around it."

The book explores these "words," which had emerged from dialogue between him and his wife. Bellg looks back at his own life and sees examples of his having following this message, a missive that to me seems transcendent and applied to more than just himself. He encourages all of us to know our own deepest truth. In fact, I feel that is what I have been trying to do myself in a more limited way, and he inspired me to deepen in my exploring and to continue towards becoming fully the person God/Spirit/Light meant me to be: One who brings Light into an often dark world.

Overall, I am thankful for these learnings and leadings. That said, I missed the informal heart-to-heart connection that happens when attending retreats in person. I am grateful to South Mountain Friends Meeting for sharing with me the cost of this retreat. —Nancy Spear

Some come to worship for lots of silence; some come to be inspired by vocal ministry; most of us want a good dollop of worshipful silence *AND* spirited ministry. How might we open ourselves and our Meeting to be calling in more inspiration?

Advices & Queries on EXPECTANT WORSHIP, VOCAL MINISTRY

We prepare ourselves for meeting for worship in many ways—for example, through regular study, meditation and prayer—so that we come into meeting with open, expectant spirits seeking after Truth.

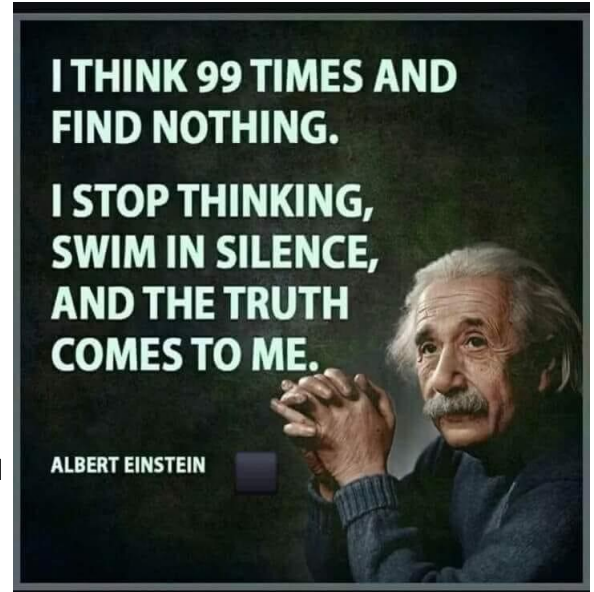
We search within ourselves before rising to give vocal ministry—being aware of the physical and spiritual promptings that underlie true vocal ministry.

If prompted by the Spirit to give vocal ministry, we speak audibly, clearly, simply, and as briefly as possible.

We listen to the ministry of others as if it is the voice of the Divine, seeking the thoughts behind the words and hold the speaker in love.

After a message is given, we take time to ponder its meaning and to give space before rising to speak, if we are so led.

We prepare the children of meeting to understand and experience the power of Quaker worship and vocal ministry.



How do we prepare our hearts and minds for meeting for worship?

Do we worship together in a way that honors and respects other Friends' beliefs?

How do we listen to ministry that seems wrong or misguided?

Do we meet for worship in expectant waiting for the promptings of the Divine Spirit?

How do we carry this inspiration into our daily living?

How do we take care that our vocal ministry is not lightly given?

Do we offer vocal ministry under the leading of the Spirit, in the simplicity and sincerity of truth?

As we listen, or as we speak, are we guided by the inward Light and sensitive to one another's needs?

Are we careful not to speak at undue length or beyond our call?

**"I come to Meeting for Worship to attend to that Presence which is always present but before which I am not always alert and listening. I come to be disarmed by truth, a process in which I am helped to discern what I have hidden from myself in overlays of activity. ... I come to the ministry of silence and caring to experience whatever needs to happen not only for me but for each person heart-led there. I come not knowing what will be asked of me or given, trusting that process and that Power which directs."
—Shirley Ruth Parks Tweed, 1982**

Meeting for Business 16 June 2024

Land Acknowledgement

This Meeting gathers in the traditional, sovereign territory of Indigenous Takelma, Latgawa, Shasta, and other peoples who have cared for these lands for millennia and continue to do so today. May we honor these original stewards and their rights of self-determination, continue dismantling the systems of oppression that have dispossessed them of their lands, and participate in the care and protection of our shared home.

Friends Present: Bill Ashworth, Melody Ashworth, Wyatt Banks, Valeria Breiten, Ken Deveney, Ann Gaffney, Althea Godfrey, Ariel Love, Bob Morse, Herb Rothschild, Jean Semrau, Richard Spencer, Nancy Spear, Adam Thompson.

Quote & Reflection: “We do not need guns and bombs to bring peace. We need love and compassion.” —Mother Teresa

2024.6.1 Friends approved as presented the Minutes from the 19 May Meeting for Worship for Business.

Treasurer’s Report: Peace and Social Concerns has a lot of additional spending that appears in the P&SC line items, but they are all things that the Meeting approved in addition to that budget (e.g., *God & Country*, mailings about Christian Nationalism). May showed relatively moderate spending and more-than-typical donations. Overall the Meeting’s accounts have healthy balances.

2024-2025 Annual Budget: An ad hoc group has been working on attracting children and families and has asked for a small amount of money for child education, \$200, and outreach, \$200, in the budget. The addition puts the expected deficit for this year at about \$700.

2024.6.2 Friends approved the 2024-25 Budget (details on p. 7)

Friendship & Hospitality (F&H): F&H is planning a pre-concert social gathering before the Ashland City Band concert on 8 August (details on page 4). 14 July Soul Food Sunday will be a brown-bag in the park (details on page 1)

Nominating Committee (NC): NC is still working on finding Friends to fill the roles of Communications Clerk, rounding out M&C, the

library, and volunteering to set up the Zoom equipment. Aside from those positions, Nominating has had great success matching roles and interested individuals. NC reminded Friends that all are encouraged to pursue leadings!

Ministry & Counsel (M&C): M&C shared a letter to Jamie McLeod-Skinner after her disappointing experience in the recent Primary Election.

2024. 06.3 Friends approved that the letter composed by Ministry & Council to our member Jamie McLeod-Skinner, regarding the Meeting’s support for her and her recent election experiences, be sent from the Meeting at large.

Friends discussed potential next steps with regard to the Nonviolent Presence work. After some initial discussion of ideas, Friends determined that this was a transition moment to move the care of this work from M&C, who encourages leadings, to P&SC, under whose purview this particular leading lies.

Ad-Hoc Reimagining Children’s Program Committee (CPC): The committee has met multiple times, cleaned up the children’s space, gone through curricular materials, reimagined outreach, and is ready to move forward in a larger way. (Including getting t-shirts!) CPC hopes to lead our participation in the Greater Medford Multicultural Fair on 28 September to make others, and particularly families with children, aware of our presence in the Valley and that we welcome newcomers.

Peace & Social Concerns (P&SC): A year ago, the Meeting created a minute opposing Christian nationalism. North Pacific

Yearly Meeting (NPYM) responded with enthusiasm for our minute, but also shared that it was unclear the action we wanted the other Friends to take. Hence, Meeting was asked to approve a revised minute that incorporated the previously approved minute with the addition of two final paragraphs that answered this call.

2024.06.4 Friends approved the amended minute on Christian Nationalism (details on page 1)

Friends suggested and agreed that the revised minute should be sent to all Meetings in NPYM. The NPYM Secretary can help facilitate that.

P&SC shared a suggestion to hold a teach-in at Southern Oregon University (SOU) about Christian nationalism. P&SC is working on building co-sponsorships and participation within the SOU community for the teach-in. There is a Quaker-initiated steering committee who are meeting to continue the work on outreach regarding Christian nationalism which meets on Monday evenings here at the Meeting House from 6:30–8 pm. Friends discussed making Zoom available to this group. A Friend cautioned about using the movie *God & Country* as our primary source of outreach in this area. Further discussion will ensue.

Clerk: Valeria initiated discussion about perhaps hosting Meeting once a month or so outdoors in the park next door. Friends suggested that there be a greeter at the door to help visitors find the Meeting and pass out chairs as needed. Next business meeting will be on 15 Sep.

Respectfully submitted,
Valeria Breiten, Clerk;
Ann Gaffney, Recording Clerk

SMFM Budget '24-'25

	A	B	C	D
1	2024-25 SMFM Budget			
2				
3		'23-'24		'24-'25
4	Income:			
5	Donations	15,900		16,700
6	Investment income	800		800
7	Total income	16,700		17,500
8				
9	Fixed expenses:			
10	Joint Committee Contribution	8,400		8,400
11	NPYM Dues	2,580		2,100
12	Parking Lot	936		963
13	Quarterly Meeting Dues	215		175
14	Oregon Registration Fee	50		50
15	Communications (Zoom)	150		160
16	Total fixed expenses	12,331		11,848
17				
18	Discretionary expenses:			
19	Adult Education	0		0
20	Children	0		200
21	Equipment Maintenance			100
22	FCNL Lobby Day Spons			1,750
23	Friendship & Hospitality	200		450
24	Library	500		200
25	Ministry & Counsel	600		600
26	Misc/Office Supplies	150		150
27	Neighbors in Need (OHRA)	500		250
28	Newsletter	150		150
29	Outreach			200
30	Peace & Social Concerns	1,400		1,400
31	Racial/Climate Concerns	600		600
32	Website	280		280
33	Total discretionary expenses:	4,380		6,330
34				
35	Total expenses:	16,711		18,178
36				
37	Surplus (deficit)	(11)		(678)

"DIVIDED WE FALL"

FREE Film Screening & Discussion

This film reveals ordinary people wrestling with what it truly means to be an American, the divides that prevent unity, and what we can do to bridge the gaps.

In 2018, the participants ~ equal numbers of Reds and Blues ~ break out of partisan echo chambers to listen to one another.

In 2022, they come together again to talk about how the experience impacted them.



Center for Spiritual Living

in partnership with Unity of Medford

540 North Holly Street, Medford

6:30 - 9 pm Friday 12 July

Eventbrite registration required

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/divided-we-fall-free-film-screening-discussion-tickets-913246042497>

Facilitator: Marla Estes, Founder of Building Bridgers
www.BuildingBridgers.com
 For more information:
marla@BuildingBridgers.com

God & Country: film exposing Christian nationalism

If you missed the recent public screenings of *God & Country* or want to view it again (yes, it's chock full of information) or want to invite some friends to watch it with you (as a way, perhaps, to inform our beloveds and fellow voters), here's how to watch:

Rent it online and watch it at home via Vudu, Amazon Prime, or Google Play (\$3.99) or via Kanopy for free with a Jackson County library card.

Officers

Presiding Clerk: Valeria Breiten 480-688-7442
Treasurer: Adam Thompson 201-8255
Recording Clerk: Ann Gaffney 603-490-7193
Communications Clerk: Jean Semrau 488-6855
Joint Committee Delegates: Ariel Love 925-212-2118;
Bill Ashworth 778-9470

Standing Committees

Ministry and Counsel: Andra Hollenbeck 601-6421, clerk;
Bob Morse 482-8849, David Runkel 210-0031, Rochelle
Webster 646-5186, Becky Hale 601-3084, Crystal Bosbach
930-4222, Valeria Breiten (*ex officio*)

Nominating Committee: Richard Spencer, 707-543-6330,
Wyatt Banks, Althea Godfrey, Nancy Spear

***Peace and Social Concerns:** Herb Rothschild 531-2848,
Ken Deveney, Javan Reid, Jim Lobsenz, Steve Radcliffe

***Finance:** Fran Curtis 482-1095, Jean Semrau, Adam
Thompson (*ex officio*)

***Friendship and Hospitality:** Ká Hering, 778-5206,
Crystal Bosbach, Cathy McDaniel; **Greeters:** Ariel Love,
Wyatt Banks, Karen Maleski, Rochelle Webster, Andra
Hollenbeck

All area codes are 541 unless otherwise noted

*Newsletter submissions are due to Bob Morse
(morse@mind.net) Tuesday after Business Meeting*

Interest Group Contact Persons

***Adult Education:** Bill Ashworth 778-9470
***Art Displays:** Becky Hale 601-3084
***Building & Grounds:** Merlin McDaniel 770-3318
***Child Care:** Ken Deveney 482-2173
***Circle of Light:** Crystal Bosbach 930-4222
***Free Writing Friends:** Becky Hale 601-3084
***Friends Men's Group:** Ken Deveney 488-5506
***Friends Women's Group:** Althea Godfrey 261-5329
***Library:** Tara Jones 817-471-5120
***Mailchimp:** Peter Orozco 201-699-3948
***Neighbors in Need:** Alex Reid 707-499-9146
***Outdoor Worship:** Ká Hering 778-5206
***Racial/Climate Concerns:** Bob Morse 482-8449

Other Contact Persons

Interfaith Ministries: Gizelle Luccio 944-0748
Newsletter: Bob Morse 482-8449
NPYM Coordinating Committee: Bill Ashworth 778-9470
Web Site Administration: Bob Morse 482-8449

Monthly Neighborhood Gatherings

***Dancing Bears group:** Herb Rothschild 531-2848
***Outliers group:** Becky Hale 601-3084 & Pam Johnson
535-1940
***Quaker Neighbors:** Jean Semrau 646-8225
***Sunday Afternoon group:** Ken Deveney 482-2173

** = All new and longtime participants welcome*

South Mountain Friends Meeting

543 South Mountain Avenue

Ashland, Oregon 97520