

543 South Mountain Avenue
Ashland, Oregon 97520
(541) 482-0814

communications@ashlandquakers.org
www.ashlandquakers.org

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

First-Hour Activity

9 to 10 am

**Spirit-Based Discussions
Hybrid: Both In-Person
and via Zoom (link below)**

5 May Attender **Andrew Yavelow**, whose death is approaching, will be sharing about his life's spiritual journey, **letting his life speak**

10:15-11 am: Circle of Light

12 May *No First-Hour Activity*

Rise-of-Meeting:

Soul Food Sunday:

Songs & Sing-Along *Details Pg 3*

19 May

8:30-10 am: Business Meeting

**May Business Meeting:
ONLY ON ZOOM *Details Pg 4***

26 May **How to Quaker:**
Clearness Committees

Meeting for Worship

11 am to Noon

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

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7477317797pwd=SW1sd3pTZjhlbG RmUWpOY3pZaUFDdz09>

SOUTH MOUNTAIN FRIENDS MEETING

THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)

Unprogrammed Worship in Ashland, Oregon

Fifth Month 2024

Origins of Quaker Terms "Threshing" and "Winnowing"

Friends,

Sometimes it seems that early Quakers spoke in a way meant to obscure and baffle. Plain speech often seems anything but plain.

I watched a video recently about a flour mill that preserves some old ways that gave me insight about our terms "threshing" and "winnowing." Link to the video: [Claire Saffitz Tours A Flour Mill | Out of The Kitchen - YouTube](#)

These are words that we use with some regularity only in Quaker Meeting and almost nowhere else in our non-agricultural lives. But the old "super seed cleaner" machine in the video was something that the expert said would have been in almost every barn in America at one time.



Threshing Grain

It threshes the grain, which means breaking up the heads of grain by force. Then it winnows the grain, which means blowing air through to blow off the material that is lighter than the grain. Winnowing separates the nutritious nugget from the chaff.

Winnowing Grain

I was struck by this elegant metaphor that would have been part of many early Quakers' daily lives—the threshing & winnowing of grain and the spiritual analogy. Early leadings may be reaped from sitting in silent worship, but need to be threshed out—a vigorous process that might involve energetic voices of others. Then that leading needs winnowing; to feel the breath of the holy spirit move through it to blow off the insignificant and mundane.



—Rochelle Webster

Advices & Queries on EQUALITY

Every person has the capacity to experience the Inner Light.

As Friends, we share a vision of a social order based on the testimony of equality—it embraces and seeks to transform all of human society. This vision, and the inner transformation that enables us to see it and live it, enhances our spiritual connectedness and can transcend our differences.

We treat every person with respect and love, based on our belief in the fundamental equality of all of humankind.

We examine ourselves as individuals and in our Meeting communities to be sure that we are practicing the testimony of equality in reality and not just paying lip service to it.

We cherish those parts of the history of the Religious Society of Friends that show us opposing slavery and refusing to doff our hats to superiors. We also acknowledge that the history of Friends practice of the testimony of equality is not without flaw. We acknowledge that Friends who are white, or from other entitled groups, may benefit from privilege and may exhibit prejudice and discrimination, even unintentionally. Friends are not perfect in treating all human beings with equal respect, and there is work yet to do, both among Friends and in the world, to achieve the vision of a social order based on the testimony of equality.

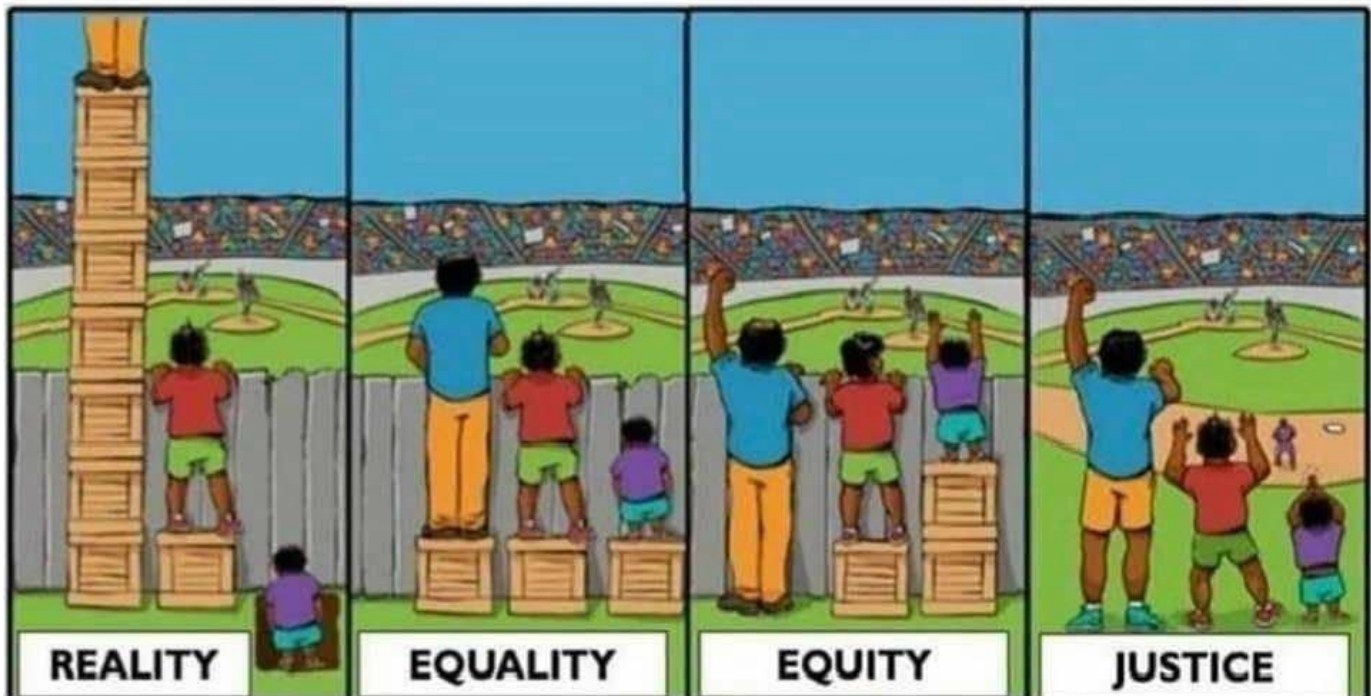
Do we regularly examine ourselves for evidence of privilege and prejudice?

What are we, as individuals and as a Meeting community, doing to overcome the contemporary effects of past and present oppression?

*How do we avoid being drawn into violent reactions against those who are destructive of human dignity?
Do we reach out to the violator as well as the violated with courage and love?*

How do we make our Meeting open to all, regardless of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and identity, or class?

Is our Meeting place physically accessible and welcoming to all?



One gets **more than** is needed, while the other gets **less than** is needed. Thus, a huge disparity is created.

The assumption is that **everyone benefits from the same supports**. This is considered to be equal treatment.

Everyone gets the support they need, which produces equity.

All 3 can see the game without supports or accommodations because **the cause(s) of the inequity was addressed**. The systemic barrier has been removed.

Reaping the Fruits of our Nonviolent Presence Retreat

Winnowing Session: 9 am Sunday 2 June



Twenty people in person and two via zoom participated in the Meeting's Nonviolence Presence retreat Saturday 23 March. Helen Park from Eugene Meeting led us in the blossoming of our interest in greater participation in issues of interest in our Valley, the state of Oregon, the United States, and the world.

What will be the fruit of that afternoon? To discover that, a winnowing session will be held first hour on the first Sunday of June for a Meeting-wide discussion. We will seek to gather thoughts of how we now move from commitment to action.

We're announcing the June Winnowing Session a month early to allow Friends time to ponder.

In preparation please think through those matters that are of greatest concern to you and ways in which Meeting participants can bring them to the attention of a wider audience with nonviolent means both physically and verbally. —David Runkel

Soul Food Sunday: Rise of Meeting on Sunday 12 May 2024

Sharing Food: Our community meal will again be a **good ol' fashioned potluck.**

You are invited to contribute whatever part of the meal you're led to bring:

Anything from soup to nuts—or just your presence!



Celebrating all Mothers on Mothers' Day With Special Dessert . . . And With Songs:

Sharing Ourselves:

There'll be songs for listening and songs for singing along. There'll be songs sung by "The Wells," a trio comprised of Cyrise Schechter, Bryn McCamley, & our very own Rochelle Webster.

You're welcome to bring instruments (or not) or bring song suggestions (or not). You're most welcome to just bring yourself!

The Other

If other people laugh at you, you can pity them.
But if you laugh at them, you may never forgive yourself.

If other people injure you, you may forget the injury.
But if you injure them, you will always remember.

In truth the other person is
your most sensitive self
given another body.

—Kahlil Gibran, author of *The Prophet*



Outdoor Worship on Back Porch: 11 am - 11:45 am Sundays

Meeting for Business 21 April 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, Andra Hollenbeck, Bob Morse, Adam Thompson.

Quote & Reflection: “We live in a society either scarred by scarcity or spoiled by luxury. We have no idea how much is enough. We don't know when to quit.” —Sharif Abdullah

2024.4.1 Friends approved as presented the Minutes from the 17 March Meeting for Worship for Business.

Treasurer's Report: Deposits appear low this month because some were deposited later than usual and will show up in next month's report. We also paid for sending young folks to FCNL. We did receive some reimbursement for this, but that will show up in the April report. Although we do show losses for this month, things should equalize and be where we expect it after next month.

State of the Society Report: See the State of the Society Report (on page 5), which was read aloud. All of these reports will be shared aloud at the Willamette Quarterly Meeting. Bill Ashworth suggested that the report be amended to include a specific reference to the fact that Medford Friends Church is joining us in our work on Christian Nationalism in order to highlight that we are working across the Quaker divide. Friends also hoped for the addition of a concluding paragraph. The changes will be worked on while we season the report.

We will hold a brief called Meeting for Business at rise of meeting on 12 May in order to finalize the State of the Society report so that it is ready to be presented at Willamette Quarterly Meeting during the weekend of 17- 19 May.

Ministry & Counsel (M&C): During our last winnowing session, Karen Maleski shared the desire to have more families with young children. An ad hoc committee was formed to brainstorm ideas as well as to clean up the supplies stored in the children's room. The committee suggested setting up booths at local events with children's activities as well as some indication to adult family members that we are a faith community. Work will continue in this area. M&C brainstormed more outreach opportunities including an announcement in local news outlets sharing that we hold worship each Sunday at 11 and welcome adults, families, and children. Friends expressed their appreciation to Karen for raising this important issue that has been on many Friends' minds.

Peace & Social Concerns (P&SC): P&SC has sent the following list of priorities to FCNL: US Wars and Militarism; Middle East Policy; Sustainable Energy and the Environment; Economic Justice; and Voting and Elections. In May P&SC will be meeting to make their final recommendations for the local area organizations that receive funding from SMFM. Contact Herb Rothchild if you have input.

Our Meeting is co-hosting a showing of *God & Country* at 6:30 pm on Friday 26 April in Calvin Hall at the First Presbyterian Church in Ashland. Bob Morse has been working with Skip Strauch, the Interim Pastor of First Presbyterian, to plan the specifics of the event. Friends thank them for this work.



God & Country, documentary film

Announcements: Andrew “Yav” Yavelow will speak at a Let Your Life Speak during First Hour on 5 May. During this time of transition, Yav will speak autobiographically about his spiritual journey.

May's Meeting for Business will only be on Zoom due to Clerk Valeria's attending the Willamette Quarterly Meeting, happening at the same time.

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

State of Society Report * March 2024

South Mountain Friends Meeting

We are delighted in the vibrancy of our Meeting. We've experienced an influx of several 30-50 year olds who have imported their ideas, skills, and Spirit. Some have returned after a job-driven hiatus from our region reinforcing the familial comradery we South Mountaineers feel. We are saddened by the passing of four dearly beloved elders. A birth-right Friend has become a new member, enhancing us with her deep familiarity with Friendly ways. Our membership stands at 34, and about 20 participants attend worship.

We've divided our Meeting into neighborhood groups which each gather monthly to become better acquainted over snacks and sharing. Now in their second year, these "pods" are frequently mentioned when referencing Friend's favorite aspects of our faith community and when describing a tangible underpinning of our Meeting's renewed spiritual deepening.

We're appreciating monthly "How to Quaker" discussions in which a seasoned Friend provides historic lessons and anecdotal tales on such topics as testimonies, clerking, and leadings. Both discussions and worship are routinely hybrid, enriching our gatherings with South Mountain alums, traveling Friends, and stay-at-home locals.

Our robust Ministry and Counsel committee continues to reinforce within-Meeting community-building through monthly Soul Food Sundays: Rise-of-meeting potlucks followed by sharing-ourselves activities. During Black History Month, we watched the biopic *Rustin*, documenting the part of Friend Bayard's life when he organized the 1963 March on Washington.

Spirit guided us to gather and discuss our values so that our Finance committee would be updated on our Meeting's priorities for financial allocations as they prepare our budget.

A Friend expressed her "dream" of Quakers' being a nonviolent peace force and of South Mountain Friends becoming trained or refreshed in nonviolent civil protection. We were honored that Eugene Friend Helen Park heartfully facilitated our training retreat on nonviolent presence.

A city in our Meeting's catchment area has attempted to rid its streets of unhoused people by outlawing outdoor sleeping if blanketed. An attorney Friend informed us that the lawlessness of this ruling will soon be brought to the US Supreme Court. We united in signing on to our attorney Friend's Amicus brief, as this homelessness case truly feels close to home.

Our concern about the rise of Christian Nationalism led us to circulate a letter among our county's faith communities questioning whether they shared our apprehension and would like to dialogue with us. The response was limited, but along with these few responsive congregations—one of which is a local Friends Church—we have plans to watch the documentary *God & Country* as a prelude to conversation.

For a second year, our Peace & Social Concerns committee assisted sending two local university students to the FCNL's Spring Lobby Days. One of our first year's students has proven the program's success as she's remained active in FCNL and local lobbying.

All of this year's activities have both arisen out of and brought about our Meeting's revitalization and rejuvenation.

—Valeria Breiten, Clerk, South Mountain Friends Meeting

Quaker Events Open to the Greater Community

Free Writing Friends: Every MONDAY 3 – 5 pm: Song Circle: 2nd TUESDAYS 6:30 pm



Details at [OUR SCHEDULE | AshlandQuakers](#)



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: Bob Morse 482-8849, clerk, David Runkel 210-0031, Rochelle Webster 646-5186, Becky Hale 601-3084, Crystal Bosbach 930-4222, Andra Hollenbeck 601-6421, 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