

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 January No 1st Hour Activity

10:15-11 am: Circle of Light

12 January No 1st Hour Activity

19 January ZOOM ONLY

8:30-10 am: Business Meeting

26 January

How to Quaker: John Woolman
and the Channel of Universal Love
A Light Breakfast to Follow

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](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7477317797pwd=SW1sd3pTZjhlbGRmUWpOY3pZaUFDdz09)

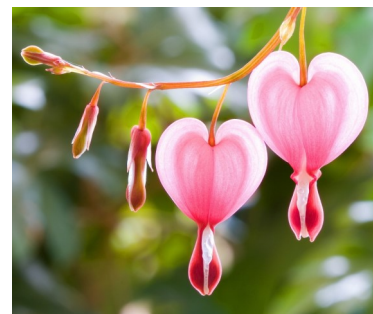
**Outdoor Worship on the Back
Deck 11-11:45 am Sundays**
(weather permitting)

SOUTH MOUNTAIN FRIENDS MEETING

THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)
Unprogrammed Worship in Ashland, Oregon
First Month 2025

For A New Beginning

In out-of-the-way places of the heart,
Where your thoughts never think to wander,
This beginning has been quietly
forming,
Waiting until you were ready to
emerge.



For a long time it has watched
your desire,
Feeling the emptiness growing
inside you,
Noticing how you willed yourself on,
Still unable to leave what you had outgrown.

It watched you play with the seduction of safety
And the gray promises that sameness whispered,
Heard the waves of turmoil rise and relent,
Wondered would you always live like this.

Then the delight, when your courage kindled,
And out you stepped onto new ground,
Your eyes young again with energy and
dream,
A path of plenitude opening before you.



Though your destination is not yet clear
You can trust the promise of this opening;
Unfurl yourself into the grace of beginning
That is at one with your life's desire.

Awaken your spirit to adventure;
Hold nothing back, learn to find
ease in risk;
Soon you will be home in a new
rhythm,
For your soul senses the world
that awaits you.

—John O'Donohue
(1956-2008)



Applied Improv



Open Studio

Open to All
We have fun!

7-9 pm
Thursday
23 January
at the
Quaker
Meeting
House

The Playback Theatre/Theater of the Oppressed "Playshop" that has happened twice has borne some fruit. We now have a plan (at least for a while) to meet as a quarterly "Applied Improv Open Studio". We explore Theater of the Oppressed, Playback Theatre, and our own ideas. We are influenced by comedy improv, Drama Therapy, and Psychodrama.

We say, "Yes . . . and." We celebrate mistakes as we explore the struggles of our lives in story and the art of theater. We explore the forces that keep us from living free, loving and empowered. We rehearse solutions for the future. We discover that our personal issues are collective issues and look for inspiration to make change. We recognize that theater can be done without anyone assigned to "only" spectate, but can be made together.

—Rochelle Webster (rochellenp@gmail.com)

Meditation on Peace and Love

5-6 pm Thursdays at the Meeting House

Participants are encouraged to meditate in any way that brings them to peace—including art, music, reading, and silence. All are welcome. —Ká Hering (541-778-5206; kathleen4bees@gmail.com)

Quaker Events Open to the Greater Community

Free Writing Friends: 2:30 – 4:30 pm every MONDAY

Song Circle: 6:30 pm 2nd TUESDAYS

Meditation on Peace & Love: 5-6 pm every THURSDAY

Details at [OUR SCHEDULE | AshlandQuakers](#)



"There is not enough darkness in all the world to put out the light
of even one small candle." ~ Robert Alden ~

One Quaker's View of Our Faith

We Quakers are characterized more for our diversity than for any common creed or article of faith. We may be better known for our belief in the centrality of a faith community. Nearly all Quakers would describe [our] faith as one in which access to the divine is available to every person, and need not be mediated by or through clergy (although some branches of Quakers do have pastors). We don't try to define what the "divine" is, often simply referring to "the Light."



How we live our lives as Quakers is far more important in describing our faith than any words might offer, even though as a faith most American and British Quakers don't proselytize. Our authenticity is probably best evaluated in our actions and our principles, religious or secular, and in our commitment to speaking truth to power. *What canst thou say?* is a Quaker challenge from our earliest days, charging each of us to align our life with our faith and values, which is directed as much to ourselves as to others.

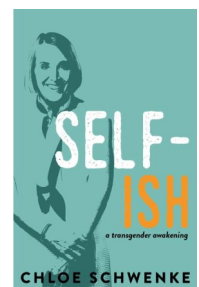
Quakers do come together around a number of shared testimonies. Simplicity: Living a life that is as uncluttered as possible by material possessions and the noise of trivial distractions allows us to be more attentive to listen in silence for the spiritual leadings upon which we depend—and allows the richness of common humanity to express itself more fully and directly.



The Quaker peace testimony relates to a view of the world in which—through concerted peacebuilding actions—the reasons for war will cease to apply. The testimony of integrity challenges Quakers to avoid duplicity and hypocrisy, to honor promises, and to speak from conviction, even in the face of powerful opposition. Community and equality: Even in the England of the 1640's, Quakers adopted the then radical position that women and men possessed equal spiritual authority and moral value. Quakers often feel called to find nonviolent means to confront powerful institutions of intolerance, violence, oppression, injustice, ignorance, and occasionally malice that underpin these negative forces.

Being a Quaker is about a commitment to participate in a genuine spiritual community of listeners, each of us staying intentionally open to discerning a divine will and giving our best efforts to living our lives in harmony with that discernment. Quaker listening is directed inward as much as it is upward; that essence of the divine is right there inside.

Excerpted from *Self-ish: A Transgender Awakening* by Chloe Schwenke of the Adelphi (MD) Friends Meeting (*Self-ish* is now in our South Mountain Library)



Advices & Queries on Discernment

Seeking and waiting for Truth's leadings is a discipline through which all can grow in patience, unity, and love. Decisions under the guidance of the Spirit knit the loving community together.

We remain patient and wait upon God as long as needed for a decision to emerge which clearly recommends itself as the right one.

We guard against contentiousness, obstinacy, and love of control and power. We remember that our views, however fondly cherished, may be wrong.

We season our decisions and test our leadings with patience and integrity. We take care to stay within our leadings, lest we outrun our Guide.

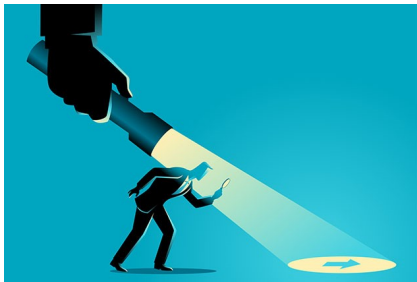
Friends approach meeting for business, committee meetings, and other occasions for group discernment with trust that the Holy Spirit will lead us to unity and right action. Unity is always possible because the same Light of Truth shines in some measure in every human heart. Communal discernment takes place in a context of worship as those present seek divine guidance.

Friends expect unity as the outcome, not as the starting point, of communal discernment. We proceed in the peaceable spirit of the light of Truth, with forbearance and warm affection for one another. Light will be shed on matters from many angles. We trust that as Truth is spoken, its power cannot be resisted.

We express our views but refrain from pressing them unduly. It is less important for any individual to be heard than it is for Truth to be given voice.

Group discernment and the search for unity may require us to accept with good grace a decision of the meeting we do not entirely agree with.

Contributing to the meeting's discernment is a responsibility of membership. This includes attending meetings for business and being faithful in the service of the meeting's affairs.



“In seeking sense of the meeting, we open ourselves to being guided to a perfect resolution in Light, to a place where we sit in unity in the collective inward Presence. [Whereas] through consensus we decide it; through sense of the meeting, we turn it over, allowing it to be decided. ‘Reaching consensus is a secular process,’ says a Friend. ‘In sense of the meeting, God gets a voice.’” —Barry Morley

Do we patiently seek divine guidance to discern the right course of action?

How do we test our leadings? Do we patiently and prayerfully seek clearness in the Light?

Do we offer spiritual aid for others who are seeking clearness?

When our own way is unclear, do we seek the counsel of others in our meeting?

What can we do to help others recognize, temper, and strengthen their leadings?

Do we hold our meetings for business in the spirit of worship, love, and understanding?

How are we seeking God's Truth together in community?

Do we regularly take part in meetings for business?

Do we uphold the meeting in prayer when we cannot be present?

Do we come into meeting for business prepared to be changed? Are we ready to let go of our individual thoughts and wishes and let the Holy Spirit lead the meeting to unity?

As difficult problems arise, are we careful to meet them in a spirit of love and humility, with minds open for creative solutions? How do we avoid taking sides and forming factions?

Do we avoid the pressure of time, neither unnecessarily prolonging nor unduly curtailing full consideration?

Are we aware that we speak through inaction as well as action?

Meeting for Business 15 December 2024

Friends Present: Bill Ashworth, Melody Ashworth, Wyatt Banks, Crystal Bosbach, Valeria Breiten, Ken Deveney, Ann Gaffney, Fernando Gapasin, Althea Godfrey, Ká Hering, Andra Hollenbeck, Bob Morse, Josephine Olson, Herb Rothschild, Nancy Spear, Adam Thompson.

Land Acknowledgement: [South Mountain Friends Meeting](#)

Quote & Reflection: “*Ye have no time but this present time, therefore prize your time, for your soul’s sake.*” ~ George Fox, 1652

2024.12.1 Friends approved as presented the Minutes from the November 17th Meeting for Worship for Business.

Treasurer Report: Meeting has received a bequest from Andrew Yavelow, about which Finance Committee will meet to discuss what should be done. Spending was very low in November. Donations are running slightly behind for the year, not counting the bequest, but our spending is also running lower than budget so our overall fiscal health is not significantly behind.

Friendship & Hospitality (F&H): Ká Hering has sent emails to some folks as part of organizing monthly game nights. She awaits responses from kids and families to get that started. Hopefully, it will begin in February.

Ministry & Counsel (M&C): Collin Boyd, formerly of this Meeting, is beginning to form a nationwide group of sanctuary Meetings for women needing health care that they cannot receive in their own states. He reached out to our Meeting to help him explore this on a broader scale. Friends were excited to learn more and participate, with several Friends sharing their willingness to host and transport women, as well as provide advice and support for the initial setup of this initiative. M&C

will investigate further and recommend that Collin also reach out to Multnomah Meeting in Portland. Further discussion to follow. Any minuted decision will be seasoned to allow for full-Meeting input.

Last month we discussed restarting “Let Your Life Speak” which was a chance for one of us to tell a story of the Spirit in our individual life and to get to know each other better while sharing our individual journeys. M&C discussed a kick-off half-day retreat where three people would have the opportunity to let their lives speak in the morning then walk to local restaurants and break bread together. In addition to kicking off the Let Your Life Speak, this event would serve to bring folks together in a retreat setting with a goal of reinvigorating the Meeting. Discussion focused on the length of time, the day of the week, the format of a retreat versus first hour, and the availability of people to join remotely.

Through this discussion, a new idea formed to have a morning retreat with queries for everyone in attendance to share about their spiritual lives and use that to kick-off the Let Your Life Speak series. M&C will revisit the retreat and bring it back to business meeting next month.

As Meeting returns to first-hour Let Your Life Speak sessions, if you are interested in sharing your spiritual journey, please let any member of M&C know. All are welcome.

M&C has been discussing the land acknowledgement, which appears on our website, our newsletter, and in the meeting for business. Bob asked Friends to share how the land acknowledgement has been landing for them. Friends’ feelings were quite diverse with some sharing it has helped them acknowledge the injustices Native Peoples have endured and others

sharing that the land acknowledgement feels hollow. Friends shared the power of hearing from Native Peoples in shaping their feelings and experiences with the land acknowledgement. One theme in the discussion was wanting to partake in some form of action rather than merely words. Friends felt that a winnowing session might be the proper place to discuss this in greater depth and requested some education in partnership with the winnowing session.

Ká Hering has had a leading out of which she has been hosting a weekly Meditation on Peace and Love (see Page 2). M&C warmly welcomed this leading and is pleased to endorse this as an activity supported by our Meeting.

Peace & Social Concerns

(P&SC): P&SC has made their annual contributions of \$100 each to the following organizations: Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), Friends Peace Teams, Friendly Water for the World, and Right Sharing of the World’s Resources. The Meeting has traditionally sponsored a young adult to attend FCNL Spring Lobby Days next March. Herb Rothschild is working with previous attendees to recruit and interview people for this year. Please let Herb know if you are interested in participating in this process. P&SC is discussing supporting Friends and others with the upcoming change in the Presidential administration, particularly with regard to potential deportations. Herb asked whether Friends were interested in civil disobedience training, to which Friends affirmed their desire to be so trained.

Announcement: No Soul Food Sunday in January.

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

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 along with Mary Ellen Gordian and Kitty Cable

Joint Committee Delegates: Ariel Love 925-212-2118; Bill Ashworth 778-9470

Standing Committees

Ministry and Counsel: Bob Morse 482-8849, David Runkel 210-0031, Crystal Bosbach 930-4222, Andra Hollenbeck 601-6421, Althea Godfrey 261-5329, Merlin McDaniel 301-6054, 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, Jim Lobsenz, Steve Radcliffe

***Finance:** Nancy Spear, Ann Gaffney, Adam Thompson (*ex officio*)

***Friendship and Hospitality:** Ká Hering 778-5206, Crystal Bosbach, Cathy McDaniel; **Welcomers:** Andra Hollenbeck, Rochelle Webster, Richard Spencer, & YOU

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 301-6054

***Child Education:** Ad Hoc Children's Committee

***Circle of Light:** Crystal Bosbach 930-4222

***Free Writing Friends:** Becky Hale 601-3084

***Friends Men's Group:** Ken Deveney 482-2173

***Friends Women's Group:** Althea Godfrey 261-5329

***Library:** A Friend

***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

***Quaker Neighbors:** Jean Semrau 646-8225

***Sunday Afternoon group:** Ken Deveney 482-2173

** = All new and longtime participants welcome*

All area codes are 541 unless otherwise noted

South Mountain Friends Meeting

543 South Mountain Avenue

Ashland, Oregon 97520