

543 South Mountain Avenue

Ashland, Oregon 97520

(541) 482-0814

communications@ashlandquakers.org

www.ashlandquakers.org

(Near Southern Oregon University)

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

First-Hour Activity

9 to 10 am

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

3 March Winnowing on Budgetary
Priorities *Details: Page 5*

10:15-11 am: Circle of Light

**10 March DAYLIGHT SAVINGS
BEGINS TODAY (SPRING AHEAD)**

Rise-of-Meeting:

Soul Food Sunday *Details: Page 3*

17 March

8:30-10 am: Business Meeting

24 March How to Quaker: Finding
Unity (insight into business meeting)

31 March Peace & Social Concerns:
Prioritizing Worldly Concerns for
Friends Cmte on National Legislation
Details: Page 4

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=SW1sd3pTZjhIbG
RmUWpOY3pZaUFDdz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7477317797pwd=SW1sd3pTZjhIbGRmUWpOY3pZaUFDdz09)

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

SOUTH MOUNTAIN FRIENDS MEETING

THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)

Unprogrammed Worship in Ashland, Oregon

Third Month 2024

Nonviolent Presence: An All-Meeting Training Retreat

1-5 pm Saturday 23 March at the Meeting House

All South Mountain Participants Welcome



Inspired by Jean Semrau's
leading, expressed in this letter:

"Dear Friends,

I have a dream for our community.
A dream for our Meeting.

We all know that in the months to come there will be increasing violence, confrontation, anger and fear in our world. In my dream, Quakers are a nonviolent peace force. Quakers are the ones who stand in protection around those who are being threatened: Muslims, Jews, people of color, LGBTQ folks, undocumented people, "dissidents," and so on. The threats may come from any fearful, angry group of people, or from armed police or military personnel.

My personal experiences of standing, simply standing peacefully, in protection of others, include standing at the California-Mexican border to help decrease Border Patrol violence; standing with other Witness for Peace volunteers on the Nicaragua-Honduras border during the Contra war; standing around a mosque after 9-11 so worshippers could safely enter and leave; and standing in a circle around the home of a fellow war tax resister which was about to be seized by the IRS. In every case, the presence of people simply standing peacefully did decrease the violence.

I think Quakers are the very people who should be among those standing, witnessing, being a calming presence. Ideally, we would be trained (or refreshed) in nonviolent civilian protection. I would like this to be part of our Meeting's mission and community service. It would also increase our visibility, if we wore simple armbands or t-shirts identifying the Quaker Peacekeepers."

Friends are encouraged to attend the retreat in person so that we can feel a stronger sense of community, but hybrid will be available if being present in the room is not possible.

Under the Guidance of Seasoned Quaker Helen Park

Helen Park has been a member of Eugene Monthly Meeting since 1978. She founded Wellsprings Friends School, an alternative high school, in 1994 and served as its first School Head. A professional educator, Helen believes learning is most effective in an environment of trust, curiosity and joy. Grounded in Spirit, she was one of the first Alternatives to Violence Project facilitators in Oregon, leading nonviolence workshops in prisons and communities for over 30 years.



RSVP, please: Bob Morse (morse@mind.net)

Advices & Queries: "Be Not Afraid"



Courage is a fundamental act of faith.

As Friends, we examine our fears and have the courage to release those that prevent us from growing in the Spirit and following our Guide. As we continue letting go of our fears and following the motions of love, we are led into a new, more abundant, and joy-filled life. Although this life is not always free of pain, it is graced with a courage that will endure any adversity.

We ask those in authority to employ their power to reconcile and unify us, rather than to exploit fear to divide us.

It takes courage to reach out to those who are creating fear and to those who are controlled by fear. We work to restore harmony through peacemaking and reconciliation based in mutual love. Disharmony is a manifestation of fear; it results in separation from God, from ourselves, from our fellow human beings, and from all of creation.

"We cannot avoid our fears by attempting to control people to make things turn out the way we want.

Living in the Spirit within a supportive, faithful fellowship gives us courage and guidance to let our lives speak, even when we are afraid, and helps us turn toward each other and toward the Light.

—North Pacific Yearly Meeting, Faith & Practice, 2017

How does fear influence our lives? Are our decisions based on fear, or do we trust the Spirit's urging toward love and reconciliation? How do we let go of our fears, trusting the Spirit, so that we can restore peace in our Meetings and communities?

Do we encourage each other through love to act in faithful witness? How do we identify and confront fears that deceive, enslave, and stop us from living faithfully?

In times of trial and terror, how can we open our hearts, return to God's love, and move forward with courage?

What would we do, as individuals and as a community, if we were not afraid?



"Even a wounded world is feeding us. Even a wounded world holds us, giving us moments of wonder and joy. I choose joy over despair. Not because I have my head in the sand, but because joy is what the earth gives me daily, and I must return the gift."
—Robin Wall Kimmerer, author, Braiding Sweetgrass

Soul Food Sunday: Rise of Meeting * Sunday 10 March/Daylight Savings

Sharing Food: We will provide soup and the start of a salad bar (the lettuce) and suggest that we each **bring a item to expand the salad bar** (tomatoes, cheese, carrots, etc.). Basic salad dressing will be provided. —Friendship & Hospitality Committee

Sharing Together: We'll be SPRINGING into a new season and **honoring and celebrating James Juarez** as he moves onto Nashville and springs forth into the next chapter of his life (see below).

Also, we'll acknowledge beginnings (and beauty) through engaging in a **Flower Communion**, whereas communion refers to sharing emotional or spiritual feelings. Please **bring a flower**, perhaps from your garden, to hold or place on the hearth during worship. If you haven't a flower, we'll provide you with one. We'll exchange flowers so that we each depart with a different flower than that which we brought. We will bless our meal with the reading of the poem "A Bouquet of People."

James's Journey

My journey to Nashville, TN, began about two years ago. While walking down the street in Ashland, I received a deep and powerful inner invitation to begin preparations for a potential move. The inner calling was strong, persistent, gentle, and full of peace and clarity. I have received inner callings like this before and is what led me to choose my college, medical school, emergency medicine residency, and is what led me here to Ashland. I was not given specifics about a location to move to, but as I pondered what I wanted for this next chapter of life, I knew that I wanted to be deeply engaged in helping others on their spiritual awakening journey. I also wanted to center my life around a contemplative, post-evangelical, progressive Christian community.

I was looking to be a part of a multigenerational community of a few hundred people, one that supports deep inner transformation, whole person development, and mature spiritual engagement in the world. I was open to moving anywhere in the USA or the world, knowing I could practice emergency medicine in places outside the US, like New Zealand, Australia, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and . . .

For six months I researched and reached out around the country to leaders of progressive, contemplative Christian communities. I looked at communities in California, Seattle, Washington DC, Texas, Michigan, Indiana, North Carolina and many other places. The community that most caught my heart was Spero Dei Church in Nashville, TN. I knew I had to see it, and planned a trip to visit a few of these communities to further discern where I was being called to. During my 10 day scouting trip to Nashville, I visited Spero Dei a few times, and joined in some of their activities like centering prayer, church services, book clubs, and social gatherings. This gave me the opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue with multiple community members, and by the end of my trip, I felt a strong sense of peace and felt that Spero Dei was a safe place for me to land and settle into.

After I chose to visit Nashville based on the church, I did some research for jobs and happened to discover that the area had just started a new emergency medicine (EM) residency training program and was also about to open a new medical school. I have been hired at both the new EM residency and as a community faculty member for the new Medical school. I am excited to train the next generation of physicians in the art of medicine. I also started a business to lead physician wellness retreats to help others live more deeply aligned with their soul and purpose.

This journey was actually very similar to how I ended up at our Friends gathering. I had taken about six months and traveled to various spiritual communities around the Rogue Valley. The Friends Meeting was the last one I visited, and I had given up hope of finding a local community that was contemplative, progressive and that honored the spark of God in All people. After my first Friends Meeting I knew I was home. After a five year process of reconstructing my faith life, the Friends Meeting has been a safe place for me to rest, rejuvenate and restore my spirit and nervous system. The community has been a welcoming place to open my heart and allow deep light, love, and healing to enter the deep recesses of my heart.

Thank you for a wonderful 2 years of fellowship, love, and encouragement. You all have taught me so much about living a life of authenticity and holding the tensions of life in the Light. The Friends Meeting has modeled what a life of deep contemplation and action, rooted in Spirit and community, can look like. I carry all of you in my heart as I move to Nashville and am grateful to have been called your Friend.

With love, James



Peace/Social Concerns

Prioritizing Worldly Concerns

9 am Sunday 31 March



Biennially, Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) asks its member meetings to help it prioritize the issues it will emphasize in the new Congress that will begin work in the upcoming year. During First Hour on Fifth Sunday, the Peace & Social Concerns Committee will lead a discussion with that discernment as its goal.

As usual, it will be hard to choose among the areas of concern, since Friends are interested in all of them. We will, however, do our best. Here are the issues from which we must choose five:

- ◆ Climate change
- ◆ Climate justice – mitigating the disproportionate burden on poor people and nations
- ◆ Economic fairness – amending the tax code, raising the minimum wage, and strengthening the safety net
- ◆ Criminal justice – ending mass incarceration and police bias and brutality, and promoting restorative justice
- ◆ Protecting democracy – access to the ballot, securing the election process
- ◆ Address institutional racism – centering voices of indigenous and peoples of color
- ◆ Tribal rights and sovereignty
- ◆ Peacebuilding and confronting militarism
- ◆ Enhance diplomacy and Congress’s role in decisions to engage militarily
- ◆ Expand access to basic needs – healthcare, housing, and nutrition
- ◆ End gun violence
- ◆ Nuclear disarmament
- ◆ Immigration reform

—Herb Rothschild

Letter on US Policies Toward Cuba

The Peace & Social Concerns Committee subscribed to a letter to President Biden urging him to return US policies toward Cuba to where they stood before Trump altered them. That “reset” was something Biden had promised when he campaigned for the presidency in 2020.

The letter was drafted and circulated by ACERE: Alliance For Cuba Engagement And Respect, a coalition of organizations and individuals that believe that sanctions and economic blockades are not the right answers to resolve conflicts. The letter urged Biden to allow for trade and investment with the growing private sector on the island, unfettered freedom to travel to Cuba, a fully functional US embassy in Havana, and an end to the designation of Cuba as a sponsor of terrorism, which “negatively impacts the well-being of our families in Cuba and hampers their access to everyday basic living essentials, financial operations, and digital platforms.”

The letter points out that our economic sanctions have precipitated a humanitarian crisis on the island and has “significantly contributed to an unprecedented immigration crisis on our Southern Border, as tens of thousands of Cubans have lost hope and have left their homeland in search of economic stability.” —Herb Rothschild



Capitol Building, Havana

Friends Helping Friends

Friends Leona (Patricia) Morrison and Scott Plummer have been doing a heroic job parenting their two-month-old premature twins and caring for their farm and animals, as well as performing daily household chores. They are also preparing for a big move across country to Calis, Maine, in late spring, with animals and babies in tow!!!

They could REALLY use some help from anyone who feels able and called to volunteer.

These are the tasks requested to consider:

- ◆ Baby sitting the twins for an hour while Leona gets other things done around the house
- ◆ House cleaning, bathroom especially.
- ◆ Farmwork as Scott needs help for a few hours occasionally.

If you're able to help out our Friends, call us. We're "gatekeeping" so that Leona need not juggle 2 babies AND calls, texts, or emails.

—Crystal Bosbach, 541-930-4222 & Becky Hale, 541-601-3084



Friends Women's Group

Those interested in participating in the South Mountain Friends Women's Group will gather from 2 to 4 pm Friday 29 March at my house. We will be marking spring's annual renewal. The group welcomes women and those identifying as nonbinary. Those interested in joining can contact me at 541-261-5329 for information or directions.

—Althea Godfrey



"The verb 'to love' in Persian is 'to have a friend.' 'I love you' translated literally is 'I have you as a friend,' and 'I don't like you' simply means 'I don't have you as a friend.'"

—Shusha Guppy

Winnowing Session on Budgetary Priorities

**Ensuring that Our Budget Aligns with Our Values
9 am Sunday 3 March**

Queries that We'll be Pondering:

Is the Meeting comfortable with a budget that projects a deficit?

What are the Meeting's financial priorities (goals) for the upcoming year?

See Treasurer's Report on Page 6 for Background Information

Quaker Events Open to the Greater Community

Free Writing Friends: Every MONDAY 2:30 – 4:30 pm: Song Circle: 2nd TUESDAYS 6:30 pm

Details at [OUR SCHEDULE](#) | [AshlandQuakers](#)

Meeting for Business 18 February 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, Crystal Bosbach, Valeria Breiten, Ken Deveney, Ann Gaffney, Ká Hering, Ariel Love, Andra Hollenbeck, Bob Morse, Herb Rothschild, Adam Thompson.

Quote & Reflection: “If you do anything in your own wills, then you tempt God; but stand still in that power that brings peace” ~ William Penn

2024.2.1 Friends approved as presented the Minutes from the 21 January Meeting for Worship for Business.

Treasurer’s Report: We received a lot of January donations, which brought us up to about where we should be with regards to the budgeted income. Our expenses thus far this year have been a little lower than anticipated, so our current balance is ahead for the year. Friendship and Hospitality has been submitting receipts for things that used to be donated in kind, so those expenses are higher than budgeted, which matches our expectations.

Budgeting will be starting soon. There has been talk in the past about ensuring our budgeting follows our values. More information about Friends’ wishes would be helpful for the Finance Committee. Issues that typically come up are:

- ◆ How conservative should we be in terms of spending matching versus exceeding the income coming in on an annual basis?
- ◆ Peace and Social Concerns donations—hearing from some that we should donate more and some saying we should donate less.

Friends suggested holding another winnowing session on budgeting. The Finance Committee will come up with some queries that may help Friends give input that will be helpful to the Committee in guiding their budgeting process. This session will either be held on 3 March (or 7 April), pending Finance Committee’s needs.

Ministry & Counsel (M&C): A farewell to James will be included in the Soul Food Sunday celebration in March. M&C is hosting a training retreat, Nonviolent Presence, to refresh and update ourselves in the peaceful presence, even in the face of violence, that we already know how to do/be. Helen Park from Eugene Friends Meeting will be our trainer. This event is scheduled for 23 March from 1-5 pm. The

committee noted appreciation for Becky Hale in rotating the artwork in the Meetinghouse. Currently, on display is the artwork of Marybeth Webster and Colombe Leinau.

Peace & Social Concerns (P&SC): P&SC has signed onto a petition by the Alliance For Cuba Engagement And Respect (ACERE) to president Biden regarding mending relationships with Cuba. *Related article: Page 4.*

In working with Alma Rosa Alvarez, P&SC was able to get two candidates for participation in the Friends Committee on National Legislation’s (FCNL’s) Spring Lobby Days. Friends expressed the desire to meet those candidates both before and after their participation. Discussion ensued over the source of funding the participation of these young people in Lobby Days. Friends shared that this activity furthers our values and invigorates our Meeting.

2024.2.2 Friends approved funding up to two individuals to participate in FCNL’s 2024 Lobby Days with such funding to come from the Meeting reserves.

Herb has been in contact with the few respondents to our letter on Christian Nationalism: Medford Friends Church, First Presbyterian Church of Ashland, and an additional response from Medford’s United Church of Christ (UCC). All three respondents are interested in a viewing of the film *God and Country*, with all four organizations listed as sponsors of the showing of this film. Herb will continue to work with these responding faith organizations to set up one or two events containing showings of this film.

FCNL has requested that Meetings help them discern the most pertinent issues for the next Congress. P&SC will host a session on the fifth Sunday in March where Friends can discuss, and get a better understanding of, the issues that FCNL has identified. *Details: Page 4*

Friendship & Hospitality (F&H): Looking for a greeter for First Sundays. During the Second Sunday in March, F&H is hosting a celebration of spring. *Details: Page 3.*

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

For Background on the 9 am Sunday 3 March Winnowing Session on Budgetary Priorities, see Treasurer’s Report above (related queries are on Page 5)

God Help The Outcasts

I don't know if You can hear me, or if You're even there.
I don't know if You will listen to a humble prayer.
They tell me I am just an outcast;
I shouldn't speak to You.
Still I see Your face and wonder:
Were You once an outcast, too?

God help the outcasts, hungry from birth.
Show them the mercy they don't find on earth.
The lost and forgotten, they look to You still.
God help the outcasts or nobody will.

I ask for nothing, I can get by
But I know so many less lucky than I
God help the outcasts, the poor and downtrod.
I thought we all were the children of God.

I don't know if there's a reason
Why some are blessed, some not.
Why the few You seem to favor,
They fear us, flee us, try not to see us.

God help the outcasts, the tattered, the torn,
Seeking an answer to why they were born.
Winds of misfortune have blown them about.
You made the outcasts; don't cast them out.
The poor and unlucky, the weak and the odd;
I thought we all were children of God.

—Stephen Schwartz



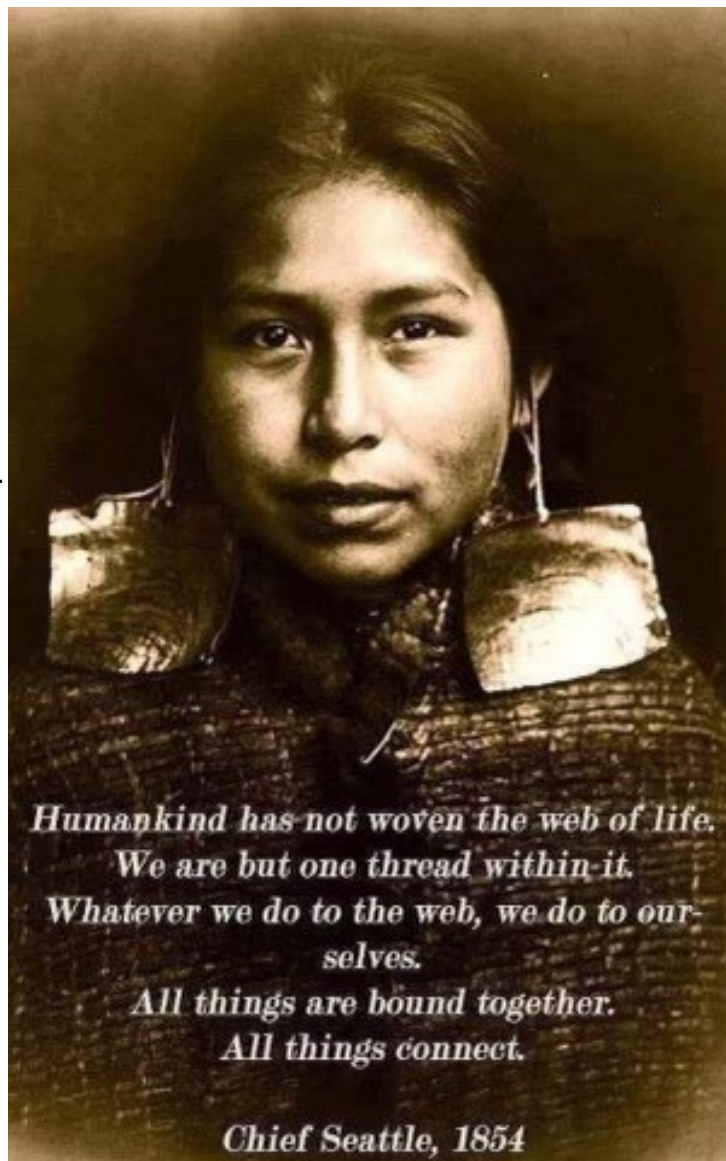
LISTENING

Listening is a form of worship,
but you don't have to kneel
on the floor with folded hands
or mouth the perfect prayer.
Just open the door of yourself
to another, become the space
they step through to show you
who they are. This is holiness:
two people seated together

on the pew of a park bench,
or the altar of a kitchen table.
Even if no one says a word
for a while, receive the silence
until it's like a new language
only the two of you can speak.

--James Crews

Contributed by Anya Kumara



Contributed by Becky Hale

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: Linda Spencer, Wyatt Banks, Richard Spencer

***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:** Jean Semrau, 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
***Library:** Tara Jones 817-471-5120
***Mailchimp:** Peter Orozco 201-699-3948
***Men's Group:** Ken Deveney 488-5506
***Neighbors in Need:** Alex Reid 707-499-9146
***Outdoor Worship:** Ká Hering 778-5206
***Racial/Climate Concerns:** Bob Morse 482-8449
***Women's Group:** Althea Godfrey 261-5329

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:** Pam Johnson 535-1940 & Becky Hale 601-3084
***Quaker Neighbors:** Jean Semrau 646-8225
***Late Afternoon group:** Ken Deveney 482-2173

** = All new and longtime participants welcome*

South Mountain Friends Meeting

543 South Mountain Avenue

Ashland, Oregon 97520