

## Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

### Asheville Friends Meeting

8th Month 14, 2022

**Present in the Meetinghouse:** Bob Lackey, Clerk; Barbara Burke, Recording Clerk, Barbara Esther, Steve Livingston, Suzanne Junkins - Friedrichs, Jim Cavener, Pat Johnson, Robin Wells, Kitti Reynolds, Rusty Maynard, Katherine Kowal, Joel S O'Brien, Sarah Jane Thomas

**Present vis Zoom:** Morgan Murray, Rylin Hansen, Mike Eddy, Beth Eddy, Gita Larson, Ellie Cox.

Meeting opened with Silent Worship

The Clerk shared a reading out of silence .

*“It’s (Sense of the Meeting) like looking out from a mountain at the towns, farms, woodlands, and roadways below. Your eyes take in so much. There is an order, a symmetry, as if the whole thing had been laid out by plan; as if it were given to you to see the plan. None of this is evident from studying the parts close up. The short view includes the rivalries, pettiness, bitterness, struggle, conflict, and inequalities that generate ugliness. But the long view, like a great painting, has a quality of timelessness. From the mountain the only visible motion is traffic which moves slowly, as if no one were ever in a hurry to get anywhere. Sharp edges are blurred. The pain and ugliness, though we know they are there, are transcended by distance. We have now seen that the earth, viewed from space is magnificent.”*

Barry Morley, Beyond Consensus Salvaging Sense of the Meeting, p 18.  
Pendle Hill Pamphlet 307.

**Minute #1:** The Seventh Month business meeting minutes were approved.

**Announcements:**

A thank you note from Fanta Jacobs, an inmate at Anson Correctional, for the food box she received, was read. Several Friends from the Meeting donated money to buy food boxes for some people at Anson to supplement the meals they receive there. A Friend mentioned she has her address if anyone wants to write to Fanta.

An invitation to attend SAYMA Anti-Racism Small Groups was read.

*Registration is now open for SAYMA's conflict transformation process, which starts with forming small ongoing groups engaged in worship sharing, anti-racism study, spiritual deepening, and discussion. These groups are structured as a means for relationship and community building across our yearly meeting. These will follow the model of caucus or affinity groups, with white Friends learning together in groups, and with Friends of Color will have their own Friends Center for Racial Justice-facilitated group to pursue their distinct needs in this work.*

*This initial stage will be ongoing and free-of-charge to Friends from SAYMA monthly meetings, with groups meeting monthly (or more frequently if they chose.) The links to the invitation and registration form are in the Asheville Friends Meeting Digest and below. If you have questions the invitation letter does not answer, you may contact Margaret Farmer for more information.*

## **Committees:**

Nominating: Kitti Reynolds

Pat Johnson has been nominated as the next Clerk of Asheville Friends Meeting. Earlier in the summer a clearness committee was established and met with Pat to discuss her nomination. As they discerned the nomination, many of Pat's gifts and skills that would make her an excellent clerk were discussed. Among the gifts she would bring to Meeting are she :

- Is passionate for a better world.
- Has courageous initiative
- Is very organized
- Has a strong background in Quakerism and is a member of Meeting
- Is respected by all
- Is a faithful attender at Meeting for Business
- Has a strong background in understanding finance
- Has participated in a clerking workshop and
- Is a good listener

**Minute #2:** Meeting approved Pat Johnson as the next Clerk of Meeting. Pat states she is humbled and honored to accept the role as Clerk of the Asheville Monthly Meeting. She will begin as Clerk the first of October

Racial Justice Committee: Steve Livingston

The Tuesday night discussion group has concluded reading Layla F. Saad's book *Me and White Supremacy* and is seeking input as to what direction for our future work would most benefit our community. The group

decided to take a hiatus next week as we seek clarity on this, and then resume meeting on the 23rd, perhaps to reach a conclusion at that time as to Way forward.

Steve states the group would like to hear from others in the Meeting about them joining and suggestions on what they would like to see for future endeavors. The group does not only read books for discussion, and it was suggested that a consideration would be to contact Ms Bettie Council about an Act Out Equity workshop. This provides practice at what to do when observing people of color being abused and how we as white people can respond. This meets on Tuesday.

For more information on Act Out Equity visit their website.

Communications: Mike Eddy

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Last month the domain name " ashevillefriends.org" was renewed for \$12/year and the web hosting cost continues to be about 5 cents per month.

Peace and Earth: Mike Eddy

Collection information for MANNA foodbank is posted in the digest.

## **Food Collection for MANNA**

- the traditional barrel will be on the porch
- at least the next couple of weeks
- only critter proof packaging, please
- in the past we have collected 100+ pounds of food items
- MANNA accepts monetary donations

Finance: Pat Johnson

Our money is at Self Help Credit Union. We have checking and Money Market Accounts, which include the Building Fund, and a 12 month CD. We don't regularly have a monthly report, but Pat suggests we have at least a quarterly report to stay on top of things.

As of 08/10/2022 our balances are:

Checking ~ \$27,714.46

Money Market ~ \$19,619.29

12-mon CD ~ \$21,851.70

The above amounts include restricted funds in the checking account . Pat reiterated that donations are needed as our weekly expenses are about \$500.

Ministry and Counsel: Robin Wells

Ministry & Counsel is pleased to report that Joel Swaggert O'Brien has requested membership in Asheville Friends Meeting and The Religious Society of Friends. He wrote the following letter of request:

*I was raised by hippies. My first religious teachings were, from my mother, that "religion shouldn't be shoved down your throat like my parents did to me," and from my father, it was music. I've thus been allowed to wander down my own path of spirituality and religion. I've studied buddhist meditation, and yogic asana, I've been a quiet quaker and an outspoken atheist. I have been a true believer, an existentialist and a nihilist. Having*

*the opportunity to feel all of those and to know that the meaning of my life may be nothing, freed me to learn what my true religion is, what my work of this life will be.*

*To me, people are the house of god, and their speech is my communion. Having come to the age of 32 I find that this assurance that I have is not so common, and that this gift of understanding my spiritual purpose is not one I want to squander. So I have sought my peers and I believe to have found them in the Asheville Friends Meeting. To know membership in a community is my duty to myself, to the people around me and to the cosmos as it is the songbird's duty to sing and fly, with joy in its heart. I hope that the Friends of this Meeting accept this offering of myself, my responsibility, successes, failures and all.*

*I thank you for your consideration.*

*Sincerely,*

*Joel S. O'Brien*

A clearness committee, convened by Steve Livingston, met with Joel and talked with him about his spiritual journey and his desire to become a member of our Meeting. The conversation was rich and the committee found no obstruction to Joel becoming a member. After a period of deep reflection, Joel found that he had reached clearness about becoming a member.

It is with great joy that Ministry & Counsel recommends Joel Swaggert O'Brien for full membership in Asheville Friends Meeting and the Religious Society of Friends.

**Minute #3:** Joel Swaggert O'Brien is approved for full membership in the Asheville Friends Meeting.

A committee to plan a welcome for Joel as a member has been established and Jim Cavener, Steve Livingston, Barbara Esther and Bob Lackey have volunteered to be on it.

A Member spoke about being a member of the clearness committee, and how the process works. If a person decides not to pursue membership in the Meeting after having met with the clearness committee, this should not be viewed as a failure, but rather as an opportunity for that person.

#### Proposed Adjustment to the Policy of Not Eating on the Porch

In a previous business meeting, it was decided that we needed to have more distance while eating in order to reduce the potential spread of COVID. The community level of COVID in Buncombe County is medium based on cases and hospitalizations. The positivity rate is currently 24% and the wastewater monitoring has fluctuated from a medium to severe range back down to medium (40-59.9 percentile).

It was decided that we would serve food indoors where people are masked and then people would be asked to eat on the lawn and not on the porch. This has presented a challenge for those needing to avoid the sun and also for those who may have trouble going down the stairs carrying a plate of food. The goal is for us to distance while unmasked and eating, so we would like to propose that we provide seating on the porch AND on the lawn with the encouragement to distance from each other while eating.

Perhaps we could make the porch seating for those who have some mobility issues. When snacking during business meeting and second-hour presentations, people are asked to distance themselves from others and put masks back on when not eating. Would the business meeting be agreeable with this?

A Friend addressed the report on Meeting requesting masking while on the porch and asked for clearness and explicitness on the policy of mask wearing. He feels the porch should be treated as the outdoors, and the indoors, with fans on could, not require masks. Would like to see a no-mask policy for the porch and someone who has a concern about risk, could socially distance themselves from others and other attendees would respect that wish.

A different Member says that what we are doing now is in response to the concerns of people who feel the risk of Covid is a concern to them.

Another Member addressed the request for explicitness, and pointed out that the Greeter is tasked with informing people attending Meeting about our policy on masking.

There was a time when we made an announcement at the start of Meeting encouraging masking.

Message needs to be visited frequently and disseminated.

**Minute #4:** The Meeting approved eating on the porch or lawn while maintaining distance from each other.

Spiritual Enrichment Committee: Barbara Esther

Report on Spiritual Enrichment Committee Proposed Schedule  
Eighth Month 14, 2022

As we approach Labor Day and the beginning of our 2022-2023 schedule, I look again at the possibilities for adult enrichment in our twice monthly (first and third First Days) second hour programs. I'd like to propose that we begin with a program called,

“Where do I fit in the meeting’s structure?  
How can I be of service and be active in the meeting community?”

Some Friends new to the meeting jump into committee work immediately while others look around and deepen the bond with meeting for a while. Other Friends may wonder what the structure of our meeting is. The above discussion is hoped to describe the work of committees and positions of responsibility, bringing those seasoned in that work together with those looking for a way to be involved in the work of the meeting. Our Nominating Committee is currently looking for various people to become a part of the fabric of the meeting by joining in committee work. Please plan to attend the discussion on August 21st, next week.

Following that discussion, the Spiritual Enrichment Committee will sponsor a planning session for the first First Day in September, September 4th. We invite Friends to bring their ideas for how you think our meeting needs to use the dozen or so second hour meetings during this coming year. We will have some intergenerational activities throughout the year that have become important to Friends of all ages, such as our annual Simple Gifts and Christmas gathering, Secret Pals and Youth Celebration programs. Already on the calendar is a discussion on documents each of us needs to consider having completed regarding dying and death concerns on October 16. There are two opportunities available for SE

programs between now and then: September 18 and October 2. We traditionally reserve the fifth First Days for expressing our concerns to legislators by writing cards or sending emails on topics brought to us by the Peace and Social Concerns Committee. To see a draft of the calendar, you can read the meeting digest.

The Meeting closed with silent worship until the way opens for our next Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business in the ninth month of 2022.

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SAYMA Invitation for Anti Racism small groups:

[https://mcusercontent.com/58848bdc8e8da0a0e0bb81076/files/c4f248a4-307b-5bda-1a57-75b385f4b1f4/Invitation\\_to\\_small\\_groups.pdf](https://mcusercontent.com/58848bdc8e8da0a0e0bb81076/files/c4f248a4-307b-5bda-1a57-75b385f4b1f4/Invitation_to_small_groups.pdf)

Spiritual Enrichment Schedule-2022-2023:

## Spiritual Enrichment Schedule for 2022-2023 (draft)

When? 2022	What?	Who facilitates?
Aug. 21	<b>Structure of the Asheville Friends Meeting Community: Opportunities for Service</b>	Spiritual Enrichment & Nom.
	<i>Aug. 28 <u>Religious Education Committee</u></i>	
Sept. 4	<b>Planning for the year</b> _____ (Sept. 5 is Labor Day) <i>Sept. 11 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business</i>	<u>All Friends</u> _____
Sept. 18	_____	_____
	<i>Sept. 25 Sandwich Sunday</i>	
Oct. 2	_____	_____
	(Barbara E. will be absent on Oct. 2))	
	<i>Oct. 9 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business</i>	
Oct. 16	<b>Documents for Dying and Death</b> _____	<u>Ellen Kaczmarek</u> _____
	<i>Oct. 23 Sandwich Sunday</i>	
Oct. 30 (5th First Day)	<b>Card Writing to Legislators</b>	<u>Peace and Earth Com.</u> _____
Nov. 6	<b>Beyond Consensus?</b> _____	<u>Ministry and Counsel</u> _____
	<i>Nov. 13 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business</i>	
Nov. 20	_____	_____
	<i>(Nov. 24 is Thanksgiving Day)</i>	
	<i>Nov. 27 Sandwich Sunday</i>	
Dec. 4	<b>Simple Gifts</b> _____	<u>All Friends</u> _____
	<i>Dec. 11 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business</i>	
Dec. 18	<b>Christmas Play</b> _____	<u>Religious Ed</u> _____
	<i>Dec. 25 Christmas!</i>	

**2023**

Jan. 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Jan. 8 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

Jan. 15 \_\_\_\_\_

Jan. 22 Sandwich Sunday

Jan. 29 (5th First Day) **Card Writing to Legislators** \_\_\_\_\_ **Peace and Earth Com.** \_\_\_\_\_

Feb. 5 \_\_\_\_\_

Feb. 12 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

Feb. 19 **Secret Pals** \_\_\_\_\_

Feb. 26 Sandwich Sunday

March 5 \_\_\_\_\_

March 12 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

March 19 \_\_\_\_\_

March 26 Sandwich Sunday

April 2 \_\_\_\_\_

April 9 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business (Easter)

April 16 \_\_\_\_\_

April 23 Sandwich Sunday

April 30 **Card Writing to Legislators** \_\_\_\_\_ **Peace and Earth Com.** \_\_\_\_\_

May 7 \_\_\_\_\_

May 14 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

May 21 **Youth Celebration** \_\_\_\_\_ **All Meeting** \_\_\_\_\_

May 28 Sandwich Sunday

*(May 29 is Memorial Day)*

**Some Idea:**

Sharing Spiritual journeys  
Death and Dying  
Seekers and Strangers to Quakerism [Quaker 101 series?]  
Friends practices such as Holding in the Light  
Friends' Process

**Meeting committees *are invited to be represented in the Spiritual Enrichment Schedule:***

Communications Committee  
Finance Committee  
House and Grounds Committee  
Hospitality Committee  
Ministry and Counsel Committee  
    Care and Nurture Sub-Committee  
Nominating Committee  
Peace and Earth Committee  
Racial Justice Committee  
Religious Education Committee  
Spiritual Enrichment Committee

**SE Committee Members:**

Barbara Esther  
Jeremy Seifert  
Rylin Hansen