

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
Asheville Friends Meeting Agenda
First Month 11, 2026
DRAFT

Present in the Meetinghouse: Barbara Esther, Interim Presiding Clerk; Elliott Jarrett, Recording Clerk; Jim Barham, Matt Utterback, Adrienne Weir, Steve Livingston, Rusty Maynard, Pat Johnston, Michael Sober, Annina Rusila, Lizzy Markman, Sarah Jane Thomas, Suzanne Junkin Fredericks, Margaret Farmer, Robin Wells, Jim Cavener, Bonnie Siegel, Bobby Carter, Rylín Hansen, Ellie Cox,

Present via Zoom: Beth Eddy, Mike Eddy, Carrie McLachlan, Jim McLachlan

The meeting opened with Silent Worship.

Out of the silence, the Clerk shared the following reading.

“Frugality is good, if liberality be join’d with it. The first is leaving off superfluous experiences; the last bestowing them to the benefit of others that need. The first without the last begins covetousness; the last without the first begins prodigality: Both together make an excellent temper, Happy the place wherever that is found.”

William Penn *Some fruits of Solitude* (1749 ed’n), Part . 1. No. 50, p. 25

Presentation of the Agenda

Minute #1: The Agenda was accepted.

Approval of 11th Month Minutes

Minute #2: The 11th Month Minutes were approved.

Approval of 12th Month Minutes

Minute #3 The 12th Month Minutes were approved.

Announcements

- We will begin our **Secret Pal** in January 2026! We have lots of kids who want to be a secret pal, so we will need lots of adults. Folks who want to participate should fill out a card and put it in the Secret Pal Box. Assignments will be handed out or mailed this week and gifts will be given each week until the Reveal Party on February 15th.
- On January 17th, the annual **Martin Luther King Prayer Breakfast** will take place at the Crowne Plaza at 8:00 am. Asheville Friends Meeting has reserved a table. All seats at the table have been reserved. However, you can still get a ticket by going to the website, mlkasheville.org/tickets-donations/. Scholarships are available from the Meeting for this event.
- The Meeting received several **letters from students at Carolina Friends School**. The fourth graders have learned about the impact of Quakers on many Native Peoples in North America. They asked what we are doing to repair our relationship with the Cherokee. Individual handwritten letters to each student have been sent thanking them for their efforts, telling them of our Meeting's work on this issue, and what we plan to do in the future.
- Each year we write a "State of the Meeting" report of the past year to submit to the Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA). We invite Friends to begin our process of response to queries and/or reflections on the past year during our second hour on January 18. We're requesting each committee to have at least one representative there but this is an open invitation to anyone who wishes to contribute to be present for this second hour.

Committees

Ministry & Counsel Committee - Barbara Esther (interim clerk for January)

Ministry and Counsel Committee wants to invite committee clerks or representatives, members and attenders to join us on January 18 at Rise of Meeting to reflect on the past year and the spiritual challenges and opportunities we have experienced. Although we have not yet received queries from the SAYMA Ministry and Nurture Committee, we want to begin the process now since the State of the Meeting Report is due in its finished form by the end of March. This allows time for the clerk or designate to write a draft, present it to the February Meeting for Business and make necessary changes to be approved in March. Please plan to stay on January 18 to reflect on the year 2025.

We began thinking about a residential retreat for our Meeting some time ago, but have not had success getting a plan together to do so. We seek a few Friends to help us begin the work of planning and organizing. Narrow Ridge Center in Tennessee is a place we have considered for the retreat, possibly in May. It would be especially helpful if someone were interested in serving as the convener of the Ad Hoc Retreat Committee.

Minute 4: The Ministry and Counsel report was accepted.

Nominating Committee - Mike Eddy

Nominating Committee brought two requests:

The Nominating Committee is pleased to bring forth two nominations for the House and Grounds (H&G) Committee. We ask the Meeting to approve Adrienne Weir to be on the House and Grounds Committee. We also ask the Meeting to approve Michael Sober for H&G Committee..

Minute 5: The Meeting approved the addition of both Adrienne Weir and Michael Sober to the House and Grounds Committee.

Finance Committee/Treasurer's Report - Satchel Loftis

Our Gift income has come in \$2,000 ahead of what we had budgeted. If we meet our budget of \$32,000 we are limited to that level of budget for 2026. Since we received more than \$34,000 last year, Satchel would like this to be used for the budget for this year, putting us in balance. If Meeting feels we can sustain 2025 levels of giving into 2026 then we can be comfortable extending that cap to the 2026 budget. He will distribute a proposed budget in advance of the February Meeting for Business to allow Friends to closely examine it. The finalized budget for 2025 is very close to being completed and is in the black.

Because our budget is a balanced budget, we do not propose a budget in which operations for the year are higher than what we brought in during the year previous. We have this constraint to predict and navigate the budget with an intent of possible surplus. We have a decent amount of rental activity and interest that helps sustain our operating income.

Last month's proposed income for 2026 couldn't go above \$34,000. This didn't incorporate the \$36,000 actual income because we didn't have all of our annual contributions. Included in expenses are restricted funds such as committee needs; scholarships; House and Grounds expenses, assuming the Meetinghouse will have a few maintenance needs; and Outreach.

- Meetinghouse and maintenance of the lot and home comes to \$6000
 - In this budget we have preventative annual service on furnace and pest control
 - \$5000 insurance for home and board of directors basic insurance to be a business entity (this is locked in for 2026)
 - 14000 for utilities insurance and maintenance of the house
- Meeting Support: Activity of our committees, generally small expenses that total to about \$6,000

- Outreach including the SAYMA assessment, outreach and community support, totalling \$8,000

The budget proposed last month will balance, allowing us to raise totals in accordance with the increase in gifts. The question remains whether we raise the 2026 budget to reflect the strong year's of gifts.

Satchel presented the finances for 2025 and a draft of the proposed 2026 Operating Budget over Zoom. We received some good news. Several end of year contributions totaling in excess of \$2,000 have helped us cover our 2025 expenses. The question that we are to consider before next month's Business Meeting is "Are we willing to expect increased or similar giving patterns this coming year of 2026? If so, we could raise our expected budget to \$34,000. If not, we should consider keeping the budget to \$32,000"

Our budget is modeled to remain balanced. We do not budget in our operations for the year to spend more than we expect to bring in. We have this constraint to predict and navigate the budget. In addition, we have a decent amount of rental activity and interest that helps sustain our operating income.

Satchel took some time to go through our budget and he answered questions about specific budget line items.

Satchel will present a final draft of the proposed 2026 Operating Budget for approval at our Second Month business meeting. He will also give a report on the Restricted Funds which are reserved from year to year. These funds include: Building Fund, College-Age Friends Support, House & Grounds Emergency, Indigenous Peoples, Junior Business Meeting, Ministry & Counsel Needs, Meetinghouse Improvement, some memorial funds, Residential Retreat,

Scholarship, Reparations Fund, and a Community Support Fund, and a few short-term funds set up for Meetinghouse projects.

Please see the linked report for details of the budgets presented during this business meeting.

Friends acknowledged the generous contributions that provide us with the opportunity to cover expenses from last year and the ability to expand our budget for next year. This month we are not able to approve a budget because the finalized version is unfinished. In advance of the next Business Meeting we will see a proposed budget for 2026 to review and be prepared to approve.

One Friend asked Satchel to expand on the transfers to other funds and whether that includes the Reparations Fund and Indigenous Peoples Fund. It will be clarified how each of the funds is supported in the budget.

Minute 6: The Meeting wrestled with budgetary decisions in preparation for approval of the 2026 budget. The proposed budget will be distributed for our review in advance of the Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business in Second Month.

The Meeting closed with a period of silent worship.