

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
Asheville Friends Meeting Minutes
Eighth Month 9, 2026
DRAFT

Present in the Meetinghouse: Interim Clerk: Barbara Esther, Interim Clerk; Recording Clerk: Robin Wells; Bobby Carter; Rylin Hansen; Katherine; Valerie Hogstrom; Jim Cavener; Ellie Cox; Pat Johnson; Barbara Burke; Jim Barton; Rusty Maynard; Liz Gooch and Susan

Present via Zoom: Satchel Loftis, Kitti Reynolds, Bob Lackey, Beth Eddy, Mike Eddy, Gita Larson

The meeting opened at 12:15 am with silent worship.
Out of the silence, the Interim Clerk read the following:

From: *A Guide to our Faith and Practice 2012 Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association*, page 22, regarding the work of a Ministry and Counsel Committee

The meeting is concerned with the mental and emotional well-being of each of its members, because its spiritual strength is dependent upon the unity and strength of all. Traditionally, Friends have recognized that some members have a special vocation for counseling, having special qualities of warmth, sympathy, the ability to listen without judging, the ability to keep confidences, spiritual insight without prejudice, and practical resourcefulness. Friends who recognize these gifts in themselves and others should nurture them so that the meeting will grow in sensitivity to the needs of others. One need not be perfect to minister to others and to foster a love that transcends human limitations.

Agenda Review

Minute #1: The Agenda was accepted.

Approval of 7th Month Minutes

Minute #2: The 7th Month Minutes were approved.

Announcements

- The Meeting is saddened to report that Ron Martin-Adkins died on August 1st, 2026. A memorial of his life will be held at 1:00 pm at the First Congregational United Church of Christ on what would have been his next birthday on August 23rd. There will be a visitation at his home on the Saturday before the memorial. Ron's obituary reads, in part:

Ronald "Ron" Ray Martin-Adkins, age 79, passed away peacefully on August 1, 2026, at the Elizabeth House in Flat Rock, North Carolina. A resident of Candler, North Carolina, for 21 years, Ron was born on August 23, 1946, in Marion County, Indiana, to the late Eugene L.P. Adkins and Faye Eileen Kindy Adkins.

Ron dedicated his life to peace, nature, and community. As a conscientious objector, he completed his wartime service through the Brethren Volunteer Service and later worked with the National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors. He pursued higher education with deep curiosity and purpose, earning a Bachelor's degree from McPherson College and a Master of Divinity from Bethany Seminary with ordination to ministry through the Church of the Brethren. Throughout his professional career, Ron worked as a Data Analyst for the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry and as a Senior Word Processor for Children's National Medical Center, among other varied jobs. Over the course of his life, he also lived in Long Beach, California; Champaign, Illinois; Kensington, Maryland; Hershey, Pennsylvania; and Washington, D.C.

A man of diverse spiritual and creative expression, Ron was affiliated with the Church of the Brethren, the United Church of Christ, and the Friends Meeting/Quakers. He was a poet, published author, environmentalist, avid gardener, and photographer who found beauty and meaning in the world around him.

Ron is survived by his beloved wife of nearly 49 years, Alice Martin-Adkins. He leaves behind a devoted family, including his children, Nathaniel Drew

Martin-Adkins of Asheville, NC, and Myra Jordan and her husband Mathew of Candler, NC;

- Are you wishing you had some quiet worship time in the middle of the week? We offer a Midweek Meeting for Worship each Wednesday between 4-6:00 pm at the Asheville Friends Meetinghouse. Drop in as your schedule allows.
- On August 16th, the Response Team will host a protocol review and practice during second hour. We hope Friends will stay until we have practiced the protocol in order to be ready to carry out this important work.

Committee Reports

Ministry and Counsel - Robin Wells

Ministry and Counsel is pleased to report that we have two associate members requesting full membership in the Religious Society of Friends. Both Adelaide Utz and Anders Utz have turned 18 and are requesting that their membership transition to full membership. Ministry and Counsel Committee whole-heartedly recommends these requests. We received the following letters from each of them.

From Adelaide:

I wanted to write and tell you I would like to be a member of the Quaker meeting. Could you let me know what I need to do next to become a member?

I looked to see if there was a Quaker meeting in Colorado Springs, too. I feel drawn to Quakerism because the Asheville Friends Meeting has been a wonderful community to grow up in. I also really connect with the Quaker idea of active nonviolence.

Thank you - Adelaide Utz

Minute #3: Asheville Friends Meeting whole-heartedly approves the transition of membership for Adelaide Utz to full membership.

From Anders:

Hi Robin (and M&C)!

*I would like to request to be an official adult member of the Quaker Meeting!
I have grown up in this meeting house and have grown a deep connection to the
community and the belief system.*

*I feel especially drawn to the belief that there is that of God in everyone, or the
Inner Light and that all life is sacred. I also feel connected to the value of integrity
and equity and the standards that we hold ourselves to in all of our testimonies.*

*I just turned 18 and am about to head off to college in Massachusetts, so this feels
like the right time to maintain my connection as I won't be physically close to a
Quaker meeting.*

*Thank you for all the ways that this community has supported me and has helped
shape me and my future.*

*Thank you for your consideration. Sincerely,
Anders Utz*

Minute #4: Asheville Friends Meeting whole-heartedly approves the transition of
membership for Anders Utz to full membership.

Nominating - Kitti Reynolds

The Nominating Committee received word that Lilith Swaggert and Margaret Farmer are
stepping down from service on the Ministry and Counsel Committee. We would like to
invite interested Friends to consider serving on the Ministry and Counsel Committee. We
need two people who meet the following criteria: membership in the Religious Society of
Friends and willingness to hold information in confidence.

Minute #5: We thank Lilith Swaggert and Margaret Farmer for their service over the
years as members of the Ministry and Counsel Committee. They will be missed.

PEJA Committee Report -Pat Johnson

The Peace, Earth, and Justice Action Committee brings gathered Friends a
recommendation and a report. First, the report is to inform Friends about three of our
Meeting's restricted Funds that are in whole or in part under the stewardship of the PEJA
Committee.

A few years ago Asheville Friends articulated commitments to reparative justice, especially for the Black and Native Peoples of our region, based on our understanding of white supremacy culture and our potential role/s in addressing the past and present-day injustices and harm to these communities for which we are collectively accountable. Financial resources were among those commitments, and in keeping with our pledge, Asheville Friends established three restricted funds each with its own focus.

The *Reparations Fund* was created as a direct conduit of financial support to participate in repair of harms done to Asheville's Black community, as well as compensating persons of the global majority for sharing their expertise and experience to help us become a more anti-racist, multicultural faith community. Most recently this Fund provided compensation for Niconda Garcia's sharing during the Second Hour with the NC Coalition for Alternatives to the Death Penalty. The Fund is annually depleted to a \$1500 balance, with the remaining balance going to the Reparations Stakeholders' Authority of Asheville to be disbursed according to their discernment.

The *Indigenous People's Fund* is intended to provide partial compensation to the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in recognition of the fact that our Meetinghouse sits on land that rightfully belongs to the Cherokee people. This fund is annually depleted with the entire amount going to the Center for Native Health.

The *Community Support Fund* was recently established to answer to unexpected, immediate news of local organizations advancing principles that align with our Quaker values, and similar needs arising in our wider Quaker world that we are led to support. Of the three funds, this is the only one that is not entirely focused on reparative justice. The Fund has been utilized twice in recent weeks, first to provide material support for Ross Brubeck-Galloway, the Quaker Peace Walker, and second to help pay funeral expenses for the two young men who were tragically murdered in the recent mass shooting in Asheville.

Asheville Friends have stepped up to invest in these funds in part through donations to the General Fund along with donations earmarked for specific funds as individual Friends are led.

As for the recommendation, PEJA Committee suggests that our Meeting's efforts to address food insecurity in our wider community could be greatly enhanced if we could

get into the habit of bringing non-perishable food items any time, all the time, rather than trying to remember to bring items only during specific months. To that end, the Committee recommends that we place a collection box in the foyer on an essentially permanent basis. Two months out of the year, perhaps May and October, food items will be donated to Manna Food Bank, as we have done in the past. The other ten months, food items will be donated to Twelve Baskets, due to its proximate location and the engagement of several Asheville Friends in that community. Any time the box is empty, a committee member will remind the Meeting that our food collection is continuous, and Friends can bring items any and every week. Any time the box is full, a committee member will bring the food to either Manna or Twelve Baskets, depending on what month it is. We ask Friends to approve the following Minute:

Friends reminded us that both the renters and the Library Committee like to have the entrance room clear of debris and suggested that the collection box be simple and attractive enough that it does not look unsightly. Friends are encouraged to bring in items on a regular basis.

Minute #6: Asheville Friends agreed that hereafter our semi-annual food drive will become a permanent, continuous food drive, with a collection box occupying a prominent location in the foyer, and collected items disbursed to Manna Food Bank in two months each year and to Twelve Baskets in the other ten months.

The clerk thanked the PEJA Committee for its thoughtful and thorough report. The status of the various funds will be important to keep current with the help of our treasurer.

Response Team Report - Lizzy Markman (read in her absence)

The response team has been holding regular monthly meetings to develop and practice meeting protocols in case of a Federal Law Enforcement Agent Visitation. We will present our protocol during the second hour of meeting next week, August 16th, where we will have a chance to review and rehearse the response protocol together. We encourage anyone who would like to learn more about our response, and/or are nervous about agent activity in and around Asheville to attend. While committee members will take lead in the response, all people present at the meeting (who are comfortable) may be asked to join and the rehearsal will be a valuable way to become familiar with these protocols.

FCNL Education Fund - Bob Lackey

BACKGROUND: I spoke last week with LaVida Davis, a staffer with FCNL who was very enthusiastic about our idea to start an FCNL Education Fund. Besides the annual Friends Changemaker Weekend (FCW) that 7 of us from Asheville attended this past April, there are 3 other training programs available. These are the Advocacy Corps, which is a paid 10 month internship in DC, the Diaspora Advocacy Team for immigrants/refugees, and the College Chapter Advocacy Teams where a group affiliated with a college or university starts an Advocacy Team as we did here in Asheville. At present we have 2 College Chapter Advocacy Teams in NC - Western Carolina U in Cullowhee and Guilford College in Greensboro.

It is felt that the students should be 18 years old, but there is no upper age limit.

PLAN: Instruct the Finance Committee to create the Asheville Friends Meeting FCNL Education Fund with the \$580 remaining from the 2026 FCW fundraising, for the future Friends Changemaker Weekends or other FCNL educational opportunities, such as a local college forming an FCNL College Chapter Advocacy Team. The role of Scholarship and PEJA committees would be to provide guidance for these opportunities when questions arise about the use of the funds.

Minute #7: Meeting approved the formation of the Asheville Friends Meeting FCNL Education Fund with a starting amount of \$580. The Scholarship Committee will process the requests with PEJA offering guidance about the use of the funds if questions arise.

Treasurer's Report - Satchel Loftis

Satchel presented an Operating activity update for FY2026 through 7/31/26.

1. Operating Income Statement — FY2026 through 7/31/2026

INCOME	Annual Budget (Approved)	Actual through 7/31/2026	% of Budget
Contributions / Gifts (unrestricted)	\$34,000	\$14,951	44%
Rental Income	\$5,500	\$3,448	63%
Interest Income	\$500	\$250	50%
Total Income	\$40,000	\$18,649	47%

EXPENSES

Annual Fund Transfers	\$4,417	\$4,417	100%
Meeting House & Grounds	\$14,860	\$9,198	62%
Meeting Support (committees)	\$6,198	\$1,616	26%
Outreach & SAYMA	\$14,525	-	-
Total Expenses	\$40,000	\$15,231	38%

NET SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	-	\$3,418	
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Activity for both income and expenses is as expected through 7/31. Unrestricted Gifts are just under \$15,000, which is a bit less than half of the budget amount of \$34,000 for the year. Rental income and interest income are tracking to the budget as well. Expenses are within expectations, with annual fund transfers recorded, but without the outreach or SAYMA assessment recorded. This is typical for this point in the year.

With operating income currently at 47%, we are in good standing to anticipate meeting our budget, considering the levels of giving in previous years in the last quarter of the calendar year.

2. Unrestricted Gifts at 7/31 vs. Annual Budget

Fiscal Year	Gifts through 7/31	Annual Budget for UnR Gifts	% of Budget
FY2021	\$12,275	\$23,800	52%
FY2022	\$13,706	\$28,278	48%
FY2023	\$12,665	\$30,635	41%
FY2024	\$12,142	\$29,500	41%
FY2025	\$15,860	\$32,000	50%
FY2026	\$14,951	\$34,000	44%

Unrestricted Gifts are at 44% of budget, which is in line with recent years' amounts. In the past five years, the percentage of unrestricted gifts through 7/31 has been between 41% and 52%, as compared to the annual budget. The results are encouraging and raise no concerns.

Fundraiser Update for Much Needed Repairs—Satchel Loftis, Robin Wells

Our Building and Grounds Reserve Fund has begun growing! We have had \$12,500 pledged so far and we are in communication with a few more families whose pledges we await. One pledge in particular is focused on the driveway improvement. We ask that all contributions to this special reserve fund get tagged in the memo line with Building and Grounds Reserve Fund and/or with a specific project, such as the driveway improvement. This fund was initiated by three committees: House and Grounds, Finance and Ministry and Counsel Committees. Contributions in any amount will help us to reach our goals. We can receive multi-year pledges as well, in case next year is a better time to contribute. Please speak to Robin or anyone on the Finance Committee if you have any questions about the fund. **The fund will welcome contributions both now and in 2027.**

A consultation with a contractor will help us to envision a driveway that is both safer and less bumpy. Our major project timeline includes:

- re-wiring the Meetinghouse to remove knob & tube wiring,
- deck and stairs protective painting,
- temperature control and
- driveway to follow those.

Other projects, such as the downstairs floor refinishing and porch floor and ceiling repair, will take place at a time determined by House and Grounds.

We were reminded that a sign to indicate where the handicapped entrance is and a bathroom that meets the requirements of those needing handicapped access are also needed.

A copy of the financial document Satchel made for our fundraiser can be found here:

[Financial Document for Fundraiser](#)

Farewell to Ron

“Sorry Humans” by Ron Martin-Adkins

Sorry humans.

Far from the starring role you imagine for yourselves,
you float like a speck of dust in my production of the epic drama of life.

Sorry humans.

As your Earth Mother, I feel justified in asking:
“What have you done with your privileged life?”

I know you have exploited my abundance and
prevented privileges for your neighbors,
exploiting them in turn for your selfish desires.

I know you take pride in the clever ways
you have managed to feed your greed,
while never, from what I see,
enhancing life around you.

Sorry humans.

Polluting things you need; air, water, soil,
and leaving mountains of waste where
I had created beauty.

When you look beyond my borders
What do you see?
From my perspective, it seems that
far too many of you see nothing
beyond the ends of your noses.

Sorry humans.

When in daylight I offer sun, clouds,
sky of gray or blue,
you show no sense of wonder.

When at night I bring dark sky,
moon, perhaps stars,
again, no sense of wonder.

So unlike your ancestors of

2 million years ago.

They noted seasonal patterns above,
gave names to constellations,
and lived in fascination with
what they could see of the universe.

Sorry humans.

I know I apply a broad brush that hides
spiritual, religious, transcendent
aspects of human life; I wonder
whether those features can be restored
by recovering a sense of oneness
in this amazing cosmos?

Without such a resurrection into life's fullness,
I fear that the profound experiment
you know as homo sapiens will fail.
What a shame if that comes to pass...

Sorry humans.

Suppose you accept that even
a speck of dust contributes to creation.
Suppose you decide to make that
contribution as meaningful as possible.

Then I would no longer say "sorry" humans.
Instead, I could say "worthy" humans,
worthy of respect and a well deserved
place within the divine realm...

from the bulletin for
Asheville First Congregational United Church of Christ
Creation Justice Sunday, April 19, 2026

The business meeting closed at 1:40 pm with a period of silent worship to meet again as
way opens for our Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business on the Ninth day,
Ninth Month, 2026.

