

State of the Meeting Report – Atlanta Friends Meeting, 2024

"Where your fear is, there is your task." – Carl Jung

This past year has called us to courage. As a spiritual community rooted in Quaker tradition, we have faced fears personal, collective, and structural - fears of speaking and listening, of change and inaction, of confrontation and silence. And yet, as Jung reminds us, it is precisely in these spaces of discomfort that our deepest work lies.

Throughout 2024, Atlanta Friends Meeting has continued to grow in spirit, size, and conviction. Our committees report a year of transformation and perseverance, responding faithfully to urgent social issues, nurturing the inner life of the Meeting, and attending to the practical needs of our spiritual home. Below are highlights and reflections from each committee's contributions to our life together.

Ministry and Worship

Meeting for Worship remains the heart of our community. In 2024, we welcomed many new attenders drawn by a hunger for spiritual depth amid political and cultural unrest. This influx has challenged our practice of vocal ministry, prompting deeper reflection and the creation of a guide to worship. We began using a microphone during worship to ensure all messages could be heard—recognizing that if ministry is divinely inspired, it must be accessible to all.

Forums this year explored practices such as holding in the Light, membership, and the intersection of creativity and spirituality. We joyfully welcomed new members and held memorials for beloved Friends. The Macon Worship Group remains healthy, and we now support four individual ministries under our care. The committee's work on reparations has evolved into a formal standing committee, reflecting our ongoing commitment to justice and healing.

Nominating Committee

This year brought new energy as attendance and volunteerism grew. The committee diligently worked on a major overhaul of the Handbook with new templates for clarity and consistency. This effort included deep collaboration with committee clerks and set a strong foundation for future transparency and discernment.

Care and Counsel

Care and Counsel reaffirmed its nurturing role, actively supporting Friends through compassionate outreach and practical assistance. Efforts included addressing the needs of unhoused individuals, contributing to memorial services, and ensuring ongoing support for homebound Friends. The continuation of traditions such as the Welcome Table and the thoughtful use of Quaker Quilts reinforced our Meeting's foundational ethos of care and connection.

CURAFM (Committee on Undoing Racism in Atlanta Friends Meeting)

CURAFM advanced implementation of the AFM Interpersonal Racist Incident Policy, offering training in restorative circles and facilitating community-building events. A confidential racial incident was addressed through peacemaking processes, even as the formal Standing Response Group remains in development. The committee remains committed to fostering anti-racism and accountability within our Meeting.

Quakers for Racial Equality (QRE)

QRE worked energetically across educational, spiritual, and advocacy realms. They hosted forums, expanded library resources, and co-sponsored efforts on voting rights, reparations, and land acknowledgment. Central to their work is a commitment to the Muscogee Creek people, on whose land our meetinghouse stands. Through partnerships and donations, they have engaged in acts of reparative justice and decolonization.

Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Concerns (FLGBTQC)

Our LGBTQ+ community grew deeper roots in 2024. Alongside potlucks, they added monthly game nights that fostered intergenerational bonds. They marched joyfully in Atlanta Pride and raised awareness about increasing threats to trans and queer lives, recommitting ourselves to solidarity in the year ahead.

Social Concerns Committee

The Social Concerns Committee remained a hub of action. Events addressed issues ranging from Gaza to voting rights. A standout effort was the year-long “Vote Now” banner project in collaboration with NAACP partners. They initiated a new Sanctuary Working Group in response to immigration policy fears and sponsored workshops for the LGBTQIA community. Funds were sent for hurricane relief in North Carolina, to Palestinian students studying at Guilford College, and for 3 student scholarships that are awarded by The Coalition for the People’s Agenda. Despite a mid-year resignation, the committee remained resilient and active.

Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)

The Atlanta FCNL Advocacy Team embodied persistence, lobbying for Pentagon budget reform and a ceasefire in Gaza. Through forums, vigils, and personal connections with lawmakers, they uplifted peace and fiscal responsibility. Their efforts contributed to meaningful co-sponsorships and built relationships critical for long-term change.

Administration Committee

From staffing to sprinklers, the Administration Committee managed the Meeting’s physical and logistical needs with diligence. Major achievements included completing the website revamp,

raising staff wages, replacing the stove with a greener option, and improving safety systems. Their care for the building grounds and long-term tenants reflects a stewardship rooted in faithfulness.

Landscape Committee

The ravine behind the meetinghouse has been a quiet focus of spiritual and ecological renewal. Invasive species were removed, native plants introduced, and a sacred space for nature-based meditation nurtured. This work complements our broader efforts toward harmony with Earth and all beings.

Gathered Meeting Retreat Committee

The Gathered Meeting Retreat Committee held its first weekend retreat since 2019, with the meaningful theme "The Story of Me, The Story of Us, The Story of Now," facilitating intergenerational connections and deeper spiritual reflection. Participants reported renewed spiritual intimacy and optimism for the Meeting's direction.

Library Committee

The Library Committee experienced substantial growth, both financially and in the breadth of its collection. Special collections were prioritized, especially around racial equity and language diversity, with significant additions of Quaker-themed fiction, poetry, and resources on Islam, reflecting the Meeting's evolving interests and commitments.

In a year shaped by unrest and renewal, the Atlanta Friends Meeting leaned into its fears and found within a call to deeper witness. We have not turned away from hard questions—about war, racism, belonging, or how to worship in truth. Instead, we are meeting them with the same spirit of listening that grounds our Quaker faith.

We remain a vital, growing, and courageous community, led by Spirit into the work we are called to do. Where fear has stirred among us, it has revealed our path which we walk together.

*Submitted in faith and gratitude,
David Small Clerk*

May 18, 2025