

January 2022



The Friendly News

San Antonio Quakers

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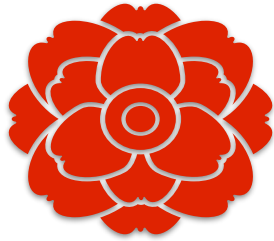
New Beginnings

Friends Meeting is continuing to reopen. COVID is still active in San Antonio, but most Friends are now vaccinated, we have good air filters, we remain masked indoors, and we offer Zoom participation to those who cannot attend in person. We are thus proposing two new steps, for which we need your help.

1. First, we are working to restart the Children's Program. We envision a program much like what we had before, with a paid childcare worker and one or more trained Friends leading activities during the 10-11am hour. **We need a (non-parent) volunteer each Sunday**, so that parents can attend Meeting for Worship. We will likely have two age-groups and an opportunity for additional Friends to lead special activities, like photography and poetry writing. *See page 4. For now, parents should leave a message at 210.945.8456 by Thursday if you are bringing children on Sunday.*
2. **We have received a bid to install an assisted-listening system in the Meeting Room with add-ons to facilitate using Zoom** during the 10-11 Meeting for Worship, forums, and business meetings. We have scheduled a **called Meeting for Business on Sunday, January 9th** to decide whether to accept this bid and, if so, whether to accept all parts of it or only some. *See page 5 for details.* Join us at the rise of Meeting (about 11:10 am) either in-person or on Zoom.

Each of these is a key part of our reopening. Please lend your skills and your discernment.

We continue to offer two Meetings for Worship each Sunday morning: traditional (no-Zoom) worship from 8:30 to 9:30 and blended (in-person and Zoom) from 10 to 11. Snacks and fellowship after each.



January Query

What talents, interests, and experience can we bring to the life of the meeting?

Regular Events

Here are the direct links for our weekly Zoom events. You do not need a Zoom account to join.

- **Sunday Meetings for Worship**
 - **8:30-9:30am**, in-person in the Meetinghouse.
 - **10-11am**, in-person in the Meetinghouse AND on Zoom.
 - [CLICK HERE to join by Zoom](#)
ID # 976 0522 6497; passcode: 194077
- **Sunday Forums: 11:30-12:30**
 - **January 9th: Called Meeting for Business**
 - **January 23rd: State of the Meeting Discussion**
 - **January 30th: On Vocal Ministry**
 - [CLICK HERE to join by Zoom](#)
ID # 976 0522 6497; passcode: 194077
- **Course in Miracles discussion – Tuesdays 7-8pm**
led by David
 - [CLICK HERE to join by Zoom](#) – ID # 988 3173 6394; passcode: 724708
- **2nd Thursday Simple Meal and Meeting for Worship**
 - Jan 13th: 6-7:30pm at the Meetinghouse (*see page 6*)
- **3rd Saturday “Meeting for Weeding”**
 - Jan 15th: 9am-1pm at the Meetinghouse (*see page 6*)
- **3rd Sunday Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business**
 - Sunday Jan 16th: 11:30-1:00 in-person in the Meetinghouse AND on Zoom.
[CLICK HERE to join by Zoom](#) – ID # 976 0522 6497; passcode: 194077
- **Friday Morning Meeting for Worship – Fridays 8-8:30 am**
 - [CLICK HERE to join by Zoom](#) – ID # 976 0522 6497; passcode: 194077

For ALL Zoom Meetings: by telephone at +1 346 248 7799, then enter ID#

Special Events

- Jan 9th: Called Meeting for Business (*see page 5*)
- Jan 23rd Forum: State of the Meeting Discussion (*see page 7*)
- Jan 30th Forum: Joint event with Cielo Grande Quarterly Meeting (*see page 7*)

Send February events to newsletter@saquakers.org

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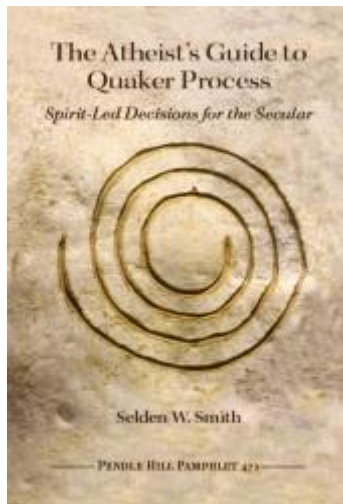
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News from San Antonio Meeting

Clerk's Corner: On Quaker Meetings for Business

Quakers have an odd way of doing business. We call our business meetings “Meetings for Worship”, and we take that very seriously. At root, we believe that everyone has insight, and everyone can have ‘leadings of the spirit’ that find creative solutions to whatever problems come before us. Each of us needs to listen for that inner voice that can guide us to the right collective solution.

We also do not vote. Instead, we seek unity around a way forward for the Meeting as a whole. The question to ask ourselves is never “What do I want?” The question is “What is right for the Meeting?” Unity takes time to discern. We need, collectively, to look at all sides of the problem. We need to listen carefully to each other, to understand the issues being raised and – most important – where the speaker’s words come from. None of us is perfectly articulate. None of us can see all sides of an issue. But when we listen well, we can usually discern what the speaker meant to say and consider what that contributes to our deliberations.



This also requires a radical honesty on the part of each speaker. We need so express all sides of an issue: the drawbacks as well as the advantages of whatever action we are proposing. If we see a problem with our favorite solution, we need to share it. This may stimulate others to see a way around the problem, leading us to a better solution than we had imagined.

In a recent Pendle Hill Pamphlet, Selden Smith describes the gifts we must bring for the Quaker Business process to work. He says we should “seek common ground”, “start by giving up” our own preferences, and “bring our best selves, not our best game”. He tells us that doing these calls for “respect”, “integrity”, “courage and compassion”, “patience”, “trust”, “mindfulness”, and “humor”. “Care for the process, however long it takes, ensures that when the decision is finally made, there is no lingering bitterness to poison its implementation.”

Doug Gwyn writes in his book on “The Call to Radical Faithfulness”:

“Listening for ‘where the words come from’ is as important as hearing the words themselves. That deeper discernment opens a space among us that frees us from judging the words, to hear more generously the spirit behind them. It’s our spiritual hospitality toward one another. Not all contributions will lead toward the unity that ultimately emerges in the group. But the space for those hopes, concerns, and side-bars will have been maintained ... [This] spiritual hospitality is a space-time continuum, just as covenant is a living faith carried on from generation to generation.”

I encourage each of you to come to our Meetings for Worship with Attention to Business with open hearts, ready to listen to each other as we discern our collective way forward.

-- Jim Spickard, Meeting Clerk

Restarting our Children's Program: Step-by-Step:

Friends Meeting has committed to reopening the Children's Program in 2022. We have families who are waiting to return to a safe, inviting experience. But that depends on having enough Friends who are not current parents willing to join the children, so that parents can attend Meeting for Worship. We ask each willing Friend to commit to one Sunday each month from 10 to 11 am.

Meeting for Business considered the plan, below, on 12/19, and generally approved. Each adult will get the training needed to feel comfortable with each age group. Later, we seek to include special events led by Friends with special interests, such as photography or writing poetry.

For now, we urge Friends to step up to make our commitment real.

To volunteer, please contact Gretchen at <jmhaynes@earthlink.net>

1. We wish to have a picnic early in the new year with all the families to reunite and get to know the children. It has been almost two years!
2. We request that any family that intends to attend worship contact us by Thursday of that week.
3. We anticipate two age groups: 4 to 7 and 8 to 14 and will provide programs accordingly.
4. We are actively seeking volunteers for one Sunday each month. We expect to have a paid child care person in addition to the Friend(s).
5. We will provide training for all volunteers in the Sparkling Still curriculum/process.
6. We will involve parents in developing the curriculum and field trips.
7. Until all weeks are covered, Gretchen Haynes will respond to the parents' requests and provide age-appropriate activities.
8. We encourage Friends to offer one-time programs in their area of interest.
9. If the Covid virus has a significant increase, we will monitor its advance and if public schools are closed, we will postpone the Program until the statistics improve. All adults in the program will be fully vaccinated.

What Canst Thou Do?:

This month's query asks **"What talents, interests, and experience can we bring to the life of the meeting?"** It is a good question. Each of us has different skills and our Quaker Meeting depends on them all.

A Meeting is a bit like a team of gardeners. Some people are good with plants: starting them, nurturing them, shaping their growth. Others are good at infrastructure: paths, rock walls, mixing dirt. Yet others can dig good holes, ones that provide drainage for the plants they'll contain. And others weed, prune, and handle the inevitable clutter that all living things make in abundance. Entropy-tamers. They're all important to create a place of beauty that lifts our spirits.

Those jobs and skills change over time, so we always need new gardeners, builders, writers, cooks, tech workers, setup artists, clerks, Friendly listeners, and those who do Quaker work in the community. That way no one burns out on one task. There's room for change. There's room for everyone to share their skills.

January 9th Called Meeting for Business

To consider approving a bid to install audio-visual equipment in the Meeting Room for Assisted Listening and for Zoom.

At the Meeting's direction last June, the Clerk solicited bids for the installation of a microphone and speaker system to provide hearing assistance to Friends and others using the Meeting Room. The Ad Hoc Committee on Reopening's July report subsequently recommended adding Zoom integration to this microphone and speaker system so as to facilitate easy Zoom use by Friends who cannot attend Meeting in person. In mid-July, Meeting approved pursuing Choice 1 of that report, which included Zoom use at the 10am Meeting for Worship, forums, and Meetings for Business.

The Meeting Clerk approached two local companies, one of which presented a bid. After some adjustment, the Clerk obtained a revised bid to install an assisted listening system that would be integrated with extra speakers and a video camera to replace the TV speakers and the tripod-mounted Zoom camera that we now use.

The illustration to the right shows what the bid promises to do and how much each component will cost. Including installation and training, the total cost is \$7,786.48.

The Clerk proposes the following Minute:

Minute 2022.01. __: FMSA authorizes the acceptance of the bid from Digital Display Solutions, Inc. to install an assisted listening system with Zoom integration in the Meeting Room at a cost of \$7786.48. This will be regarded as an off-budget depreciable capital improvement, using money from whichever accounts the Treasurer and Finance Committee deem wise.

Friends can find more information at our website at <https://sanantonioquakers.org/business-meeting-agenda-reports/> This including the full Digital Display Solutions proposal, the Ad-Hoc Committee Report, the Survey of Friends on which that report was partly based, and a copy of the above diagram in PDF form.

We received this bid on December 17th and have 30 days from that date to accept it. The December 19th Meeting for Business decided to hold a special Called Meeting for Business at the rise of Meeting on January 9th. The sole item of business is whether FMSA should accept the bid.

Report on a Bid for Installing Microphones & Sound (revised version)

(prices include installation)

Part I: Assisted Listening

1. Ceiling-mounted microphone & control hub



\$2,500

2. Cabling, router

\$ 600

3. Assisted listening Bluetooth WAP with 4 receivers

\$ 2,230



\$ 5,330

Part II: Zoom Integration

1. Pendant speakers \$ 550 (for 2)



2. Adjustable video camera \$1,220



\$ 1,770

Parts,
shipping,
& training

\$ 685

\$ 7,785

Join us for 2nd Thursday Simple Meal & Meeting for Worship
(January 13th, 6:00-7:30pm at the Meetinghouse)

This month, our 2nd Thursday simple meal and worship event will take another step back to normal. As we have done before, we will each bring our own food and eat together. We will eat on the porch if weather permits or in the community room if it does not. Then we will move to the Meeting Room for a Meeting for Worship.

- 6:00-6:30: Greet
- 6:30-7:00: Eat and talk
- 7:00-7:30: Unprogrammed worship

Masked except when eating. We can be COVID-aware without being paranoid. Please stay home if you have symptoms.

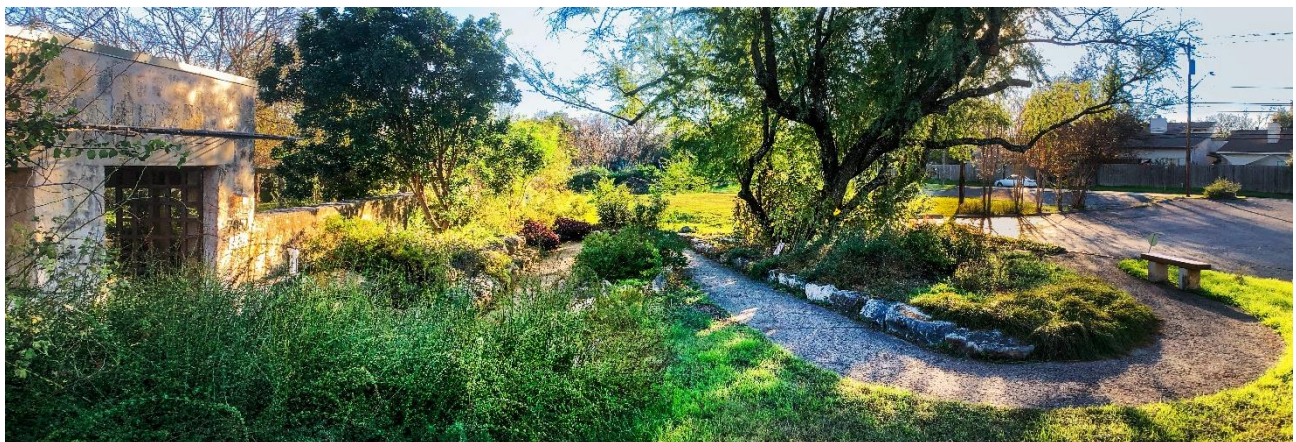
The Meeting Room at night, set with candles for the 2021 Christmas Eve Worship.



Meeting for Weeding: Jan 15th (9:00am-1pm)

Join us at the Meetinghouse for a morning of planting, weeding, minor repairs, and community fun. Bring gloves, water, and your favorite tools. Don't like gardening? There are other chores. And there are good people to talk with!

Here's a recent photo of our front walk. Beautiful!



January Forums

We will have two forums this month after our 10am Meeting for Worship. Forums start about 11:30am.

January 23rd: Preparing for the State of the Meeting Report



Each year, we write a State of the Meeting Report. We do this both for our own use – self-reflection is a long-standing Quaker practice – and as a report to South Central Yearly Meeting about how our Meeting is doing. The last two years have been hard, and many people have found themselves with unexpected emotions and with much less energy than usual. *(See the reflection on pages 9-10 for another organization's experience.)* This has certainly affected San Antonio Meeting.

We will gather at 11:30 on January 23rd, in person and on Zoom, to reflect together on our own experiences. This will help Ministry, Care, and Guidance write a draft report for our later consideration.

January 30th: Forum / Discussion on Vocal Ministry, led by Gary Whiting & Jim Spickard

*We will be joined for this 5th Sunday event by
Friends from the Cielo Grande Quarterly Meeting.*

Unlike many religious groups, Quakers in the unprogrammed tradition do not give prepared sermons during our Meetings for Worship. Instead, we speak only when we are led by the Spirit to do so. How does this work? How do we know when we are called to speak? Gary and Jim will lead a discussion of these matters on January 30th, drawing on their and your experiences of being called to present vocal ministry in Meeting for Worship.

We will use a short QuakerSpeak video as a discussion starter. Here are two useful ones. (Click on the picture or the link to view.)



<https://bit.ly/3pLOjOE>

We encourage you share what kinds of vocal ministry work best for you, either giving or receiving. Join us either in person or by Zoom.

San Antonio Inter-Religious Action

@TheIntersection* Multi-Faith Symposium

Tuesday, January 11, 2022 from 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM (CST) The Symposium will be HYBRID -- both in-person and livestreaming. Organized by Ann Helmke, Faith Liaison with SA Faith-Based Initiative

Join San Antonio compassionate leaders and hundreds of faith leaders to hear the top critical community concerns within our city. We have also designed this event to facilitate conversations of action and change. Think of it as a “working” symposium. Bring a colleague and/or team with you so you can roll up your sleeves towards an even stronger 2022!

Briefings will be given on these community concerns: Compassionate Community, Housing Security, Houselessness, Domestic Violence, Hunger & Food Security, Immigration & Refugees, Mental Health, Resourcing, and Public Safety.

This is a great opportunity for the faith community to rise and come together to nurture a better and more compassionate San Antonio. Please, I encourage you to invite other colleagues and compassionate leaders for this free hybrid one-day event:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/theintersection-multi-faith-symposium-tickets-220039382717>

Wider Quaker World

FCNL Actions:

1. The House-passed Build Back Better Act would invest more than half a trillion dollars in clean energy. It would also respond to climate change with provisions for carbon capture and storage, and incentives for wind and solar energy.

Now, we call on the Senate to retain these provisions as it takes up the Build Back Better Act. Congress has much work to do as we push for an earth restored—but the Build Back Better Act represents a significant step forward. Senators need to hear your support for the positive environmental policies included in the House bill.

Act now: Urge your senators to keep the House’s climate provisions when they pass the Build Back Better Act. <https://fcnl.quorum.us/campaign/34603/>

2. It is long overdue for the United States to acknowledge the historic trauma of the Indian boarding school era. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, Christian churches collaborated with the government to create hundreds of boarding schools for Native American children. The conditions at these schools, some of them Quaker-run, were unspeakable.

Now we must work with tribal nations to advance congressional efforts to establish a federal commission to formally investigate boarding school policy and develop recommendations for the government to take further action. Although the wrongs committed at these institutions can never

be made right, we can start the truth, healing, and reconciliation process for the families and communities affected as we work to right relationship with tribal nations.

Remind your members of Congress of their responsibility to tribal nations and urge them to support the Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies in the United States Act (S. 2907/H.R. 5444). <https://fcn.quorum.us/campaign/35660/>

Opportunities to Learn about Quakers & Quaker Traditions:

Pendle Hill and Ben Lomond Quaker Centers are two of the major unprogrammed Quaker retreat centers in the U.S. Both provide opportunities for online learning. Here are some of their coming workshops.

Upcoming at Pendle Hill

<https://pendlehill.org/>

1. **New Years: Creative Playfulness and Prayer:** A New Year's Arts and Spirituality Online Retreat with Jesse White. Begin the New Year with creative renewal! Experience creative playfulness, childlike wonder, and visual prayer in this experiential and restorative retreat. We will create ourselves anew while deepening our sense of connection to God and to one another. Together we will explore, learn, listen, discern, create, reflect, pray, and share in wonder. All are welcome. No particular artistic/creative experience or skills are required. A cleared space to work, and a computer, tablet, or phone with a webcam/camera are recommended for this online retreat. **Tuesdays from 5-7pm (Central Time), January 4th through 25th.** Register at <https://pendlehill.org/events/new-years-creative-playfulness-and-prayer/>

Three Workshops at Ben Lomond Quaker Center

www.QuakerCenter.org

1. **The Heart of the Quaker Way:** four 90-minutes sessions with Ben Pink Dandelion (one of England's foremost Quaker scholars). This course will look at the essential elements of the Quaker way, outlining the ideals of Quaker community life as well as its challenges. We'll have plenty of time for questions and discussion. Equally suitable for newcomers or for those with many years of experience. **Tuesdays at 1pm (Central Time), January 18th through February 8th.**
2. **Spiritual Deepening Approaches:** four 75-minutes sessions with Jeanne Haskel & Susan Wilson. Come learn & play at this spiritual development and creativity workshop! This is an opportunity to build compassion and understanding of yourself and others using wisdom from the Enneagram and creative expression through SoulCollage. There will be time for sharing and deep listening in a safe and affirming environment. **Fridays, February 4th-25th, time TBA.**
3. **Clerking with Joy and Confidence:** six 90-minute sessions, led by Barbara Babin and friends. *A Spiritual Practice in Worship, Service, and Leadership.* New to Friends, or want a touch-up? All are welcome in this clerking workshop. Each Thursday, Barbara will facilitate and bring in guest presenters on the basics of clerking, seeking Unity, dealing with challenges, and modern-day clerkships in our evolving Meetings. **Thursdays at 8:30pm (Central Time), March 3rd through April 7th.**

How Has COVID Changed Us? *A Reflection*

Jude Isabella is the Editor-in-Chief of Hakai Magazine (<https://hakaimagazine.com/>), a Victoria, B.C.-based online magazine that focuses on coastal science and societies. Her recent “Notes from the Editor” reflects on her team’s experience of the last two years. Our own newsletter editor finds her reflections helpful in thinking about the state of our Meeting. Here are a few paragraphs from her several-page long piece:

“We spent March 2020 to June 2020 in a state of urgency: we made a dramatic pivot, dropping our usual beat to assist our colleagues at a regional publication reporting on COVID-19. That three months was a blur. Editors and writers worked fast. We stressed about finding enough writers. We stressed about accuracy. We stressed that we could not keep up the pace.

“Somehow we managed until we could ease back into our usual beat and less reactive rhythm. But something had shifted: our contributors were having a hard time writing, a hard time filing on time, a hard time getting the work done because even sources found it more difficult to find time or energy for an interview. Not all writers and not all sources, but enough for us to notice. And almost two years into the pandemic, things have improved but a malaise lingers.

. . .

“In some cases, writers and sources are dealing with child-care and eldercare issues. Others are playing hot potato with stress in various forms. A pandemic coupled with the effects of climate change playing out before us must worry even the most stoic. In British Columbia, we’ve had three climate-related emergencies in 2021: a heat dome (which led to the death of almost 600 people), wildfires (one of which obliterated a town), and flooding that has largely cut part of southern British Columbia, including Vancouver, off from the rest of Canada. Sometimes it seems as though the fourth horseman of the apocalypse is looking down on us, ominously paused on a hill nearby.

. . .

“This constant simmering threat of disaster and death running in the background is distracting. It’s logical that we’d be instinctively hardwired to care more about our mortality than a deadline. We live in uncertain times. Stocking our closets with toilet paper at least makes us feel prepared: we’re doing something. It doesn’t take much thought either; it’s a fast, reactive, and selfish action. Spend almost two years with a chronic fight or flight response hovering in the amygdala and it’s easy to spend your day rushing and reacting to the most innocuous events and overreacting to threats, real or imagined.

. . .

“I’ve been thinking about two fables lately, “Chicken Little” and “The Tortoise and the Hare.” I know that Chicken Little warns against fearmongering, but my biggest takeaway as a kid was this: even if the sky is falling, racing around in a panic won’t help. My takeaway from the struggle of the tortoise and the hare was the same as everyone else’s: don’t rush, you’ll get there. . . . We do our mightiest work when we focus on quality, not speed.”

Hakai Magazine is free to read online at <https://hakaimagazine.com/>
You can also sign up for a free weekly newsletter featuring new articles.

Friends Meeting of San Antonio
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