



The Friendly News

San Antonio Quakers 7052 N. Vandiver (at Eisenhower) San Antonio, Texas 78209	Message Phone: 210.945.8456 Website: www.sanantonioquakers.org Facebook: @saquakers
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Considering our Meeting Structure

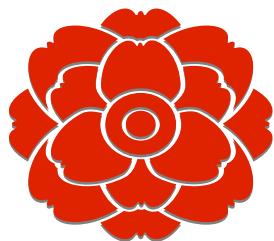
Our central purpose is worship. Everything else is dispensable.

The March Meeting for Business was devoted primarily to the concern for the structure of our Meeting. Based on a proposal (see the website, Calendar, box for March 19, click on "Proposed") that examines what is essential to the ongoing Meeting, we first considered the present vs a restructured committee arrangement. In essence, downsizing would leave Ministry and Care, Property, Finance, Religious Education and Nominating. Matters related to Peace and Social Concerns, Community Engagement and Long-Term Planning would be brought to Meeting for Business. Friends would be invited to bring their passion/issues to Meeting for discernment.

After thoughtful discernment, a trial period was agreed upon, to be reassessed next year.

The second area was the necessary minimum tasks needed for Meeting to function, as listed on a Task Board. Other tasks, also listed, are convenient but not the necessary minimum. Concern was expressed over the content/editing of our communications.

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April Query How can we balance our time and light between meeting, home, and work.

We have built our Meeting House on Payaya People's land.
Here are the direct links for our weekly activities.

- **Sunday Meetings for Worship**
10-11am, in-person in the Meetinghouse & on Zoom.
 - **Children's Program 1st & 3rd Sundays**
 - [CLICK HERE to join by Zoom](#)
ID # 976 0522 6497; passcode: 194077
- **Sunday Forums: 11:30-12:30**
[CLICK HERE to join by Zoom](#)
ID # 976 0522 6497; passcode: 194077
- **Tuesdays 7-8pm: Course in Miracles**— led by David
 - [CLICK HERE to join by Zoom](#) —
ID # 988 3173 6394; passcode: 724708
- **Friday Meeting for Worship – Fridays 8-8:30 AM**
 - [CLICK HERE to join by Zoom](#) – ID # 976 0522 6497;
passcode: 194077
- **1st Sunday Pot Luck Lunch**
- **3rd Saturday “Meeting for Weeding”**
- **3rd Sunday Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business** *join by Zoom* – ID # 976 0522 6497;
passcode: 194077
- **For ALL Zoom Meetings: by telephone at**
+1 346 248 7799, then enter ID#

Please send May news, pictures & events by
4/24/2023 to newsletter@saquakers.org

Special Events

Apr 2 Called Meeting for Business 11:00; Pot Luck 11:15

Apr 9 Easter & Fellowship

Apr 16 Meeting for Business 11:30

Apr 23 Forum 11:30 Exploring Margaret Fell “but what canst thou say?” in person & on Zoom, with Gary Whiting

Apr 30 TBA

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Note to Readers: in the spirit of discernment, just how much do you expect or want in the monthly Newsletter? News of other Quaker organizations? Could it end with news of FMSA? Please reply to <newsletter@saquakers.org> to let us know what you value and determine the extent of coverage in the future.



The Meeting Owl, joining us regularly since March 12. Photo by Jim Spickard

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We considered hiring someone to do the necessary minimum tasks and asking for short-term volunteers to do the rest. “If no one signs up, the job doesn’t get done.” Are we willing to live without those elements that have become customary to the Meeting experience?

To implement the full Volunteer Task Board, that depends on individuals signing up, we would need a Volunteer Task Coordinator who would not do any of the jobs, but would have job descriptions to give to the volunteers. Likewise, a Tech Coordinator would train and schedule those running the Zoom.

We proceeded with sighs and silences. “We are ready (to volunteer) when we are able.” Hearing agreement on the Task Board, the clerk suggested that an ad hoc group of F/friends examine it and see what jobs could be done for now, and take appropriate action. This portion of the reorganization is subject to ongoing revision, and reassessment next year, without needing a revision of the Handbook. [This report was prepared by Gretchen Haynes. The official minutes are available on the website.]

Clearness Committees and Support Groups

“Historically, clearness committees have been used by meetings primarily as part of the membership and marriage procedures. In recent years, Friends have requested the support of a clearness committee in order to discern how best to deal with an important personal decision, whether to make a change in the circumstances of their lives, whether to test a leading or for some other reason. A Friend may approach the ministry and care committee of the meeting and request that a clearness committee be formed. The request may include the suggestion of one or more potential members of that committee.

It is especially important for the members of the clearness committee to accept fully that their role in the session with the Friend is not to offer advice, nor to tell stories about their own possibly similar experiences, but to ask questions that enable the Friend to discern whether there is sufficient clarity regarding the issue or leading to move forward and take action.” Philadelphia Yearly Meeting *Faith & Practice*

Here in San Antonio, F/friends can bring various vexing situations to Ministry and Care and ask for help. For example, a supervisor at work may seem to be unfairly targeting you, or you may be a supervisor with a difficult colleague. A family member may seem to be on your case, or you may want to talk to someone about a difficult relationship within the family, or with a friend. You may have a leading to make a change in your circumstances. There are many reasons to seek more help than a simple conversation can provide.

A clearness committee is not a therapy group. It does not have an answer. You have the answer, but it is not yet clear to you. Friends on the committee will ask questions in which they have no particular investment. It is for you to make the connections. It may take more than one session, with time in between, before you become clear.

Some Quaker groups may suggest or require potential colleagues to meet with a Clearness Committee before joining a project. Clearness Committees may also consider whether the concern brought to them is one for the individual Friend or one that should involve the Meeting in further support of the concern--as in Marriage under the Care of the Meeting.

Similarly, you may wish to create a support group to help you navigate troubled waters. Again, this is not a therapy group, but a place to blow off steam, to test ideas, and move ahead with more confidence. You can suggest specific people for this group. If you would like to explore these opportunities further, please contact someone on M & C.

Worship Sharing

We consider a query or topic using a specific set of guidelines. “We speak once before anyone speaks twice; we use time equitably; we speak from our own experience and hold others’ sharing in confidence; we receive without judging, correcting, or offering assistance. Most importantly, we set aside our habits of secular conversation. When we listen, we are not taking mental notes or planning how to respond; when we speak, we are not wondering how we look or sound. We are listening together, as much as we are listening to each other; we cultivate the experience of listening with our entire being.”. – Ann Jerome, *We Listen as God Listens*; Friends Journal, March 2023, p 21

News of San Antonio Friends Meeting

Sara Ramey has started a mobile farmer’s market with produce and plants from her garden. For more information, please contact her via starfish15@gmail.com

Forum Apr 23 Exploring “ ... but what canst thou say?” (Margaret Fell) in person & on Zoom, with Gary Whiting

We are all seekers, whether we’ve been in worship four months or forty years. And we share what we have found with all the other seekers. In this spirit, Meeting will hold a series of explorations of what early Quakers found. They will take place on the 4th Sundays of each month, starting on April 23rd with the quote below from Margaret Fell. This quote is one of the foundations of Quaker faith. **We invite you to join via zoom (11:30 – 12:30) if you can’t make it to Meeting on those days.**

And so he went on and said, How that Christ was the Light of the world and lighteth every man that cometh into the world; and that by this Light they might be gathered to God, etc. And I stood up in my pew, and I wondered at his doctrine, for I had never heard such before. And then he went on, and opened the Scriptures, and said, ‘The Scriptures were the prophets’ words and Christ’s and the apostles’ words, and what as they spoke they enjoyed and possessed and had it from the Lord’. And said, ‘Then what had any to do with the Scriptures, but as they came to the Spirit that gave them forth. You will say, Christ saith this, and the apostles say this; but what canst thou say? Art thou a child of Light and hast walked in the Light, and what thou speakest is it inwardly from God?’

This opened me so that it cut me to the heart; and then I saw clearly we were all wrong. So I sat me down in my pew again, and cried bitterly. And I cried in my spirit to the Lord, ‘We are all thieves, we are all thieves, we have taken the Scriptures in words and know nothing of them in ourselves’... I saw it was the truth, and I could not deny it; and I did as the apostle saith, I ‘received the truth in the love of it’. And it was opened to me so clear that I had never a tittle in my heart against it; but I desired the Lord that I might be kept in it, and then I desired no greater portion.

---Margaret Fell, 1694

The Children's Program

April is a month of renewal and growth. Children will tend their egg-shell gardens and make planters to hold the maturing flowers. It is a time of cooperation and sharing.



Our time with the children is spent first in reading a story and asking “I wonder...” questions about it. They have a talking stick so everyone gets a turn and no one interrupts. Some stories are taken from *Faith & Play*, a Quaker curriculum.

These “stories enable me to share with children the tools of faith that can open minds and hearts to the Spirit. They tell us about how the Spirit has guided Quakers before us and help us to ‘know how to love what to do, and who to be.’ [You can] share the stories with children, youth and adults – they are a gift.” Anne Collins, co-author, *Sparkling Still*

After the story, children can illustrate the ideas or choose another activity. The wooden train tracks are a favorite, as is the box of Lincoln Logs. In good weather, we go for a walk around the grounds to see what is growing. On first Sundays, we have been

April 2023

making soup for the pot luck. Children bring ingredients to add and take turns mixing the brew. This month, they planted flower seeds and will make ceramic planters.



South Central Yearly Meeting (SCYM) 2023 Annual Sessions

Spiritual Refreshment for the Long Haul

Sunday, April 2 to Wednesday, April 5 online for everyone.

Thursday, April, 6 to Sunday, April 9 at Greene Family Camp (Bruceville TX)

[2023 SCYM Annual Sessions Schedule](#)

[2023 COVID Guidelines](#)

Events from Thursday, April 6 to Sunday, April 9 will be held in-person at Greene Family Camp. Some events will also be available online via Zoom.

- Business Meetings, the Keynote Speaker, and the Faith & Practice Forum will be view-only online. Online participants can submit questions or comments via Chat.
- Worship on Thursday and Sunday and the final Business Meeting on Sunday will be interactive online.

- Worship Sharing and Night Owl Worship will be available separately in-person and online. The full schedule is available at <scym.org>

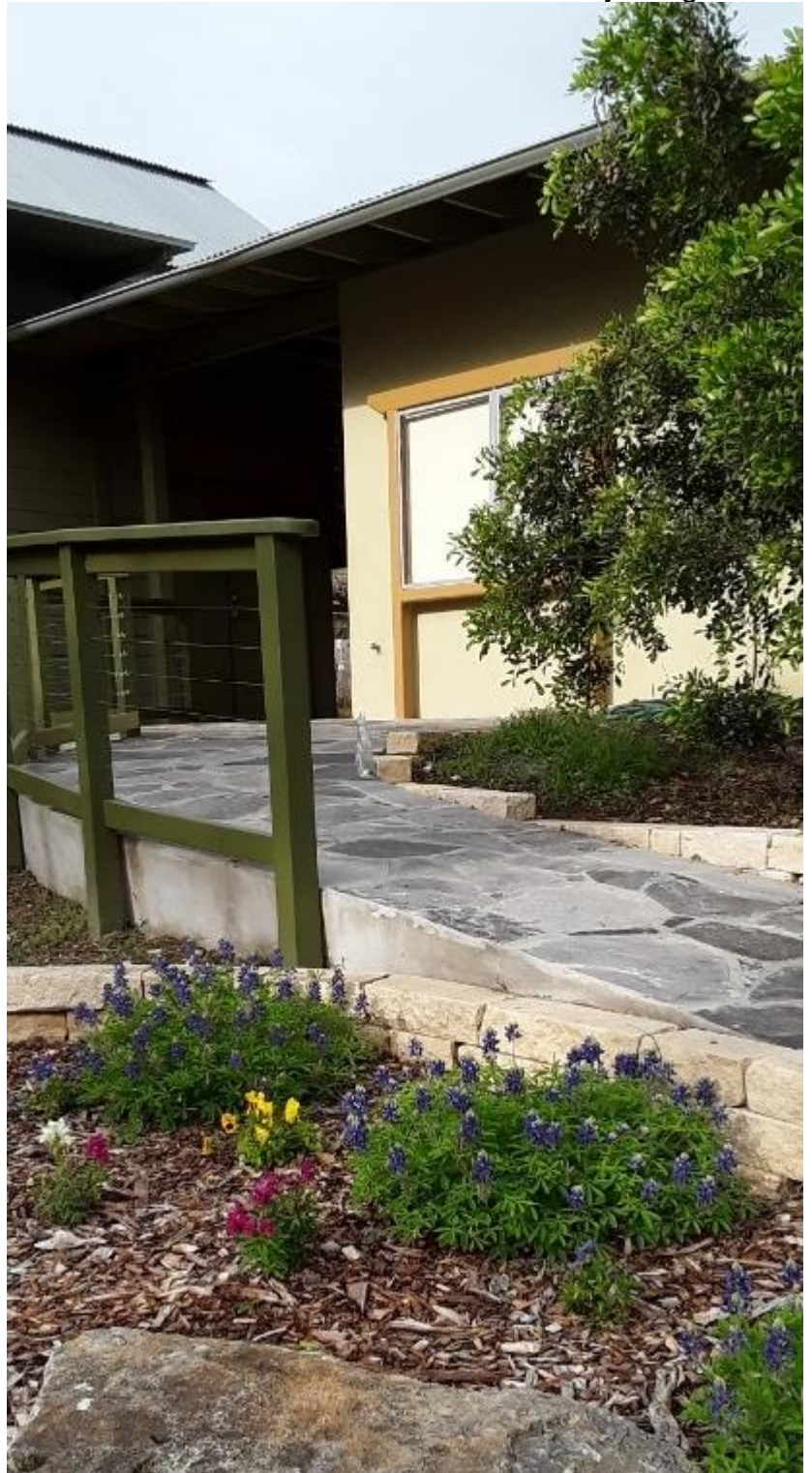
After many years of discussion and planning, the **Memorial Garden** is taking shape in the area behind the Community Room. A gradually descending path leads from the porch to the stone circle, with wildflowers adorning the way.

An enclosed notice area on the back wall will hold commemorative plaques. Anyone wishing information about burying or scattering ashes may contact Ministry and Care for details.

Another project of the Property Committee is the ongoing care of the many trees. After the devastating storms of 2019, several had to be removed altogether and have been replaced.

Now more limbs are dead and threatening to fall off. It is more than our crew with a chain saw can accomplish. So, it's up to professionals who have been called in to do the job safely.

This is the way we have been able to manage and maintain our buildings and grounds: monthly work days and professionals with heavy equipment. We depend on F/friends to conserve what we love and fill the tasks to keep Meeting open for Worship.





*Celebrating 75 Years of
Quaker Peace and Justice
Work at the UN*



Please Join Us For

Quaker United Nations Organization's 75th Anniversary Celebration
Celebrating 75 Years of Quaker Peace and Justice Work at the UN.
Since its inception, QUNO has worked with diplomats, U.N. officials, and
community to implement the United Nations' original vision of peace
and human rights.

In person and streaming online

Friday, June 9, 2023

6:00 - 9:00 pm ET

Reception starts at 6:00 pm

Program starts at 7:00 pm sharp

Scandinavia House

58 Park Avenue, at 38th Street

New York City

For more information, contact Von Kerins who will attend.