

543 South Mountain Avenue

Ashland, Oregon 97520

(541) 482-0814

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www.ashlandquakers.org

SUNDAY AM SCHEDULE

First-Hour Activity

9 to 10 am

Spirit-Based Discussions
Hybrid: Both In-Person and
via Zoom (link below)

7 December No First Hour Activity

10:15-11 am: Circle of Light

14 December No First Hour Activity

21 December ZOOM ONLY

8:30-10 am: Business Meeting

28 December

9-10 am: What is Friends General Conference and why are Quakers in OR, WA, ID, and MT considering becoming affiliated with FGC?
(*details on page 1*)

10-11 am: Holiday-Themed Potluck Brunch (*details on page 2*)

Outdoor Worship on the Back Deck 11-11:45 am Sundays

Meeting for Worship

11 am to Noon EVERY WEEK

Hybrid: Both at the Quaker Meeting House and by Zoom (link below):

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7477317797pwd=SW1sd3pTZjhIbGRmUWpOY3pZaUFDdz09>

SOUTH MOUNTAIN FRIENDS MEETING **THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)** Unprogrammed Worship in Ashland, Oregon **Twelfth Month 2025**

What is Friends General Conference? **Should We Affiliate with Them?**

An informed Discussion 9-10 am Sunday 28 Dec

All Are Welcome: In person/Zoom



Founded in 1900, Friends General Conference is an association of local and regional Quaker organizations primarily in the United States and Canada. Its focus areas and related projects are determined by volunteers representing our affiliates and consistent with FGC's organizational Minute of Purpose: With Divine guidance, FGC nurtures the spiritual vitality of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) by providing programs and services for Friends, meetings, and seekers.

FGC holds a week-long gathering each July, where even non-affiliated Quakers are welcome, to which many South Mountain Friends can attest and share their expansive experiences.

Recently, Friends in our four-state region are encouraging our North Pacific Yearly Meeting to consider affiliation. Our Yearly Meeting doesn't make decisions on its own that trickled down to South Mountain and other Monthly Meetings. Instead, our 28 December discussion will pave the way for discernment to take place at our business meeting. We'll then pass our spirit-led perspective onto NPYM.

Friends General Conference is a network of "Friends serving Friends." FGC exists to increase communication among Friends, to bring Friends together across yearly meeting lines, to enrich the spiritual life of the Religious Society of Friends, and to provide resources and services to Friends and Friends meetings. It is not a governing body. It does not establish policy for its member meetings, or seek to speak for the Religious Society of Friends. FGC services are available to all Friends and attenders, regardless of affiliation.

So, why affiliate? Affiliation connects Friends within a network of North American Quakers. The chance to meet and work with Friends from distant meetings is exciting. It's like discovering you are part of an enormous family you never knew you had. Affiliation lets your voice be heard. All meetings have important insights and experiences to share. There is no center of authority in FGC; we learn from each other as we come together to work and worship. Affiliation helps meetings become more familiar with the programs and services offered by FGC, and more likely to take advantage of them. —Bob Morse

Holiday-Themed Potluck Brunch

10-11 am Sunday 28 December at the Meeting House * All Are Welcome

As hosts, we, the Friendship & Hospitality Committee, will be acknowledging various end-of-year holiday celebrations from around the world. Bring some food, bring a tradition, or simply just bring yourself. Please be sensitive to the following food sensitivities and dietary preferences within our Quaker community—gluten-free, onions, vinegar, tomatoes, bay leaf, and vegan/vegetarian—and please list your ingredients. —Ká Hering

Becoming People of Place: An Inquiry

A Composite of Ideas Expressed during our 9 November Worship Sharing

I feel mostly at home when I realize that I'm a part of nature. People aren't just pests; many are beneficial contributors to nature. I am comforted by this place that is my environment. I learn from nature, especially listening to the wisdom whispered by the trees. It's not necessary where we're born but the place that speaks to or calls to us that feels to be home and makes us people of place. We're conditioned [by our non-Native, Euro ancestry] to find security in our owning a home, and yet I realize the culture clash with Indigenous people who instead found/find meaning in stewarding the land—[and stewardship is one of our Quaker testimonies]. —Bob Morse

Planting Native Plants in our Meeting House Courtyard



Advices & Queries on INTEGRITY

"Integrity is doing the right thing, even when no one else is watching."

—C. S. Lewis

Living with integrity presents the daily challenge of keeping our lives congruent with the Light—in essence, living in Truth. Our choices in how we use our time, spend our money, and form relationships are consistent with what we believe. Our conversation in public and private is a seamless whole. On those infrequent occasions when we are required to swear an oath, we can advance the cause of truth by simple affirmation. The greater discipline is to continually exercise care in speech, making statements that convey truth without exaggeration or omission of essential fact.

Conduct is integrity made visible. We cannot learn or think our way into faithfulness; it requires that belief and action be aligned. We are called to perform our daily tasks with measured care so that our work is sound. We behave honestly with individuals and toward organizations. Willingness to bear the consequences of our convictions leads to taking our lives seriously. A capacity for self-examination enables us to work toward integrity. The words and witness of Friends provide encouragement towards a life lived whole.

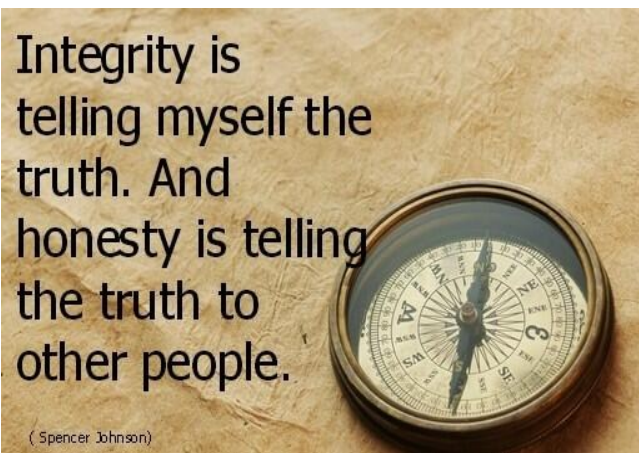
The Light in our hearts leads us into ways we can meet the challenges of living a life of integrity.

We strive to maintain integrity in word and deed. We recognize the temptations to grow rich at the expense of others, and how apparently harmless indulgence can lead to wrongdoing.

We avoid pretense in clothing, manners, and speech, realizing that false impressions may be conveyed by action and appearance, no less than by words.

In all the settings we find ourselves, we practice keeping a single and open manner of relating to others. We avoid using different characters in each role we fill.

We live our best lives as Friends when we focus on what Truth and Love require of us, not on our own comfort or contentment.



How do we use the resources and strength we are given to meet the challenges of living a whole and honest life?

How do we keep to a single standard of truth in daily life? Do we avoid taking judicial and other oaths?

How do we fulfill the promises we make?

Are we responsible about incurring and repaying debts?

Are we just and honorable in all our dealings?

How do we take care that our spiritual growth is not sacrificed to busyness?

Quaker Events Open to the Greater Community

Free Writing Friends: every MONDAY afternoon

Song Circle: 6:30 pm 2nd TUESDAYS

Meditation on Peace & Love: 5-6 pm every THURSDAY (if wanting to zoom into the Meditation Group, text Ka for link: 541-778-5206)

Details at [OUR SCHEDULE](#) | [AshlandQuakers](#)



Meeting for Worship for Business 16 November 2025

Friends Present: Bill Ashworth, Melody Ashworth, Valeria Breiten, Ken Deveney, Ann Gaffney, Ka Hering, Andra Hollenbeck, Bob Morse, Nancy Spear, Jean Semrau, Adam Thompson, Mary Ward, Rochelle Webster.

First People Acknowledgement: see [South Mountain Friends Meeting](#)

Quote & Reflection: *"When tyranny becomes law, rebellion becomes duty"* ~Thomas Jefferson

Nominating Committee (NC): Nominating Committee presented the Job Descriptions and Procedures document, which they see as a living document. The job descriptions section contains a description and general guidelines. The procedures are intended to be a useful starting point for officers or committees and be descriptive rather than prescriptive. Job description changes are made under the oversight of the Nominating Committee and are approved by business meeting. Nominating Committee will maintain the procedures document with information and text received from officers and committees. These documents will be placed up on the website when Nominating Committee is ready to do so. The Meeting is moving forward with the Welcoming Committee job description, but M&C is still working out the procedures section for that committee since it is a new/returning split-off from Friendship and Hospitality.

2025.11.1 Friends thanked the Nominating Committee for their hard work on the Job Descriptions and Guidelines and approved the documents with the understanding that the job descriptions for the Welcoming Committee and Friendship and Hospitality Committee are still drafts and the procedures are guidelines.

2025.11.2 Friends approved

returning to a Welcoming Committee as separate from the Friendship and Hospitality Committee.

Friends are still sought to join the following committees: Nominating, Finance, Ministry and Counsel, Friendship and Hospitality.

Treasurer Report: October was relatively typical for us financially: Donations were higher than expenses but lower than budgeted. Our current cash balance is high because the bequest from Andrew "Yav" Yavelow is still in that account while Friends decide how the Meeting will use that money.

Toward Right Relationship Interest Group: Next educational discussion will be first hour Sunday 11 January.

North Pacific Yearly Meeting (NPYM) Coordinating Committee: Bill Ashworth is our representative and shared about the work of the Yearly Meeting. NPYM is in serious financial straits. The Meeting is spending roughly \$25,000 per month more than the Meeting is bringing in. One of many reasons for this is the number of paid positions for the Annual Meeting. Annual Session costs are not being covered by Annual Session income. Other reasons include travel expenses to national Quaker organization conferences and meetings (e.g., FCNL), insurance, and the increased knowledge of regulations relative to non-profits needed for operations due to changes in the law. Bill reminded Friends that big decisions all come to the Monthly Meetings and so discussions of solutions will continue.

As noted last month, NPYM is considering joining Friends General Conference (FGC), which looks like it may move forward, which also comes with a (minimal) cost. Our Meeting is hosting an informed

conversation where we learn about the history and talking points of this issue in order to inform our way forward.

Announcements of particular note for our Meeting from NPYM:

Tacoma Monthly Meeting shares a lot of similarities with ours in terms of things they are working on as a Meeting (e.g., young adults, right relationship).

Susan Cozzens (scozzens@live.com) is the person to communicate with about attending NPYM Peace and Social Concerns meetings or the training on supporting immigrants.

Meg Cody is the Young Adult Friends coordinator for NPYM, and our Meeting may want to reach out.

Minute Approval: Nancy Spear expressed a concern that the Minutes are no longer approved by the full Meeting for Business as well as the process used to make that decision. Discussion was postponed to give the discussion the time and thought it deserves.

Ad Hoc Tech Committee: They collected and evaluated all of the tech currently in use. The committee has kept everything in place this year but is exploring the potential of using Google Workspace (in the discussion phase) and two new pieces of hardware costing a total of approximately \$1,400:

an OWL, a device that sits in the middle of the room and allows visual access to everyone in the room; and

a Raspberry Pi, a keyboard with an internal processor that uses the television as a monitor and can be permanently mounted in the meeting room.

Discussion brought up the following concerns/thoughts:

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When I recently took this photo from Ashland's Bandersnatch Trail, I thought of the beauty of Our Valley. Then the rhythm of the Our Father played in my head even as I only knew a scattering of the words along with the various phrases being jumbled in my mind. As my prayer/poem poured forth and, with the help of my fingers, started writing itself on my phone, I Googled the Our Father prayer as a reference. Here's what I wrote:

Our valley
 Our piece of heaven
 Hallowed be all souls
 Plant kingdom sings
 Thy lives be blessed
 On earth reflective of heaven
 Give us this life, our daily grace
 And forgive us our forgetfulness
 As we forgive those who forget us
 And lead us into thy beauty
 And deliver us unto thy mysteries
 For thou art our teacher, the healer, the nurturer for all life on earth
 A ho
 —Bob Morse

Our Valley

Inspired by People
 of Place: An Inquiry

Business Meeting Minutes

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The OWL does not offer a way to have in-person attenders be off-camera if needed, which Friends may need for personal safety reasons.

Some meetings who have tried OWLs have had them and gotten rid of them.

Level-setting on the value of devices that may need to be locked.

We do not always make clear that there is a camera or a section where one cannot be seen. We need to make that more clear to attenders.

Bob Morse experienced an OWL in action in Greensboro Meeting and was amazed at how it helped him see the speaker and read the closed captioning as well as hear. He can find a contact so

the Committee can learn from their experience.

Friends were comfortable with the Committee moving forward with the Raspberry Pi purchase and setup and continuing to research the visual and sound options. Thank you to Kitty Cable and the Committee for their expertise!

Friendship & Hospitality (F&H): see *"Potluck Brunch"* atop page 2

Announcements: Peace & Social Concerns annual donations discussed last month were made.

Respectfully submitted,

Valeria Breiten, Clerk

Ann Gaffney, Recording Clerk

Officers

Presiding Clerk: Valeria Breiten 480-688-7442

Assistant Clerk: Rochelle Webster 646-5186

Treasurer: Adam Thompson 201-8255

Recording Clerk: Ann Gaffney 603-490-7193

Communications Clerk: Jean Semrau 646-8225 with Kitty Cable (tech support) and Marian Spadone (admin support)

Joint Committee Delegates: Richard Spencer 707-543-6330 and Nancy Spear 626-437-8913

Standing Committees

Ministry and Counsel: Andra Hollenbeck 601-6421, David Runkel 210-0031, Zach Klaphaak 646-5584, Jean Semrau 646-8225, Jim Lobsenz 206-399-2782, Valeria Breiten/Rochelle Webster (*ex officio*)

Nominating Committee: Nancy Spear 626-437-8913, Adam Thompson

***Peace and Social Concerns:** Herb Rothschild 531-2848, Ken Deveney, Jim Lobsenz, Steve Radcliffe, Fernando Gapasin

***Finance:** Nancy Spear, Ann Gaffney, Adam Thompson (*ex officio*)

***Friendship and Hospitality:** Ká Hering 778-5206, Crystal Bosbach, Cathy McDaniel, JoAnn Sustrick;

Welcomers: Andra Hollenbeck, Bob Morse, Tara Jones, Fernando Gapasin, Richard Spencer

All area codes are 541 unless otherwise noted

Newsletter submissions are due to Bob Morse (morse@mind.net) Tuesday after Business Meeting

Interest Group Contact Persons

***Adult Education:** Bill Ashworth 778-9470

***Applied Improv:** Rochelle Webster 646-5186

***Art Displays:** Becky Hale 601-3084, Marian Spadone 503-252-1624

***Building & Grounds:** Merlin McDaniel 301-6054

***Circle of Light:** Crystal Bosbach 930-4222, Nancy Spear 626-4377-8913

***Free Writing Friends:** Becky Hale 601-3084

***Friends Men's Group:** Ken Deveney 482-2173

***Friends Women's Group:** Althea Godfrey 261-5329

***Meditation on Peace/Love:** Ká Hering 778-5206, Fernando Gapasin 503-917-1286

****Outdoor Worship:** Ká Hering 778-5206

***Racial Concerns:** Bob Morse 482-8449

***Song Circle:** Rochelle Webster 646-5186

***Young Adult Friends:** Hazel Jordan 360-229-5498

***Zoom Support:** Samantha Archer 385-645-1546, Rochelle Webster 646-5186

Other Contact Persons

Librarian: Tara Jones 817-471-5120

Newsletter: Bob Morse 482-8449

NPYM Coordinating Committee: Bill Ashworth 778-9470

Web Site Administration: Bob Morse 482-8449

Monthly Neighborhood Gatherings

***Dancing Bears group:** Herb Rothschild 531-2848

***Outliers group:** Becky Hale 601-3084

***Quaker Neighbors:** Jean Semrau 646-8225

***Sunday Afternoon group:** Lucy Edwards 941-7539

***Quaker Kin:** Bob Morse 482-8449

* = All new and longtime participants welcome

South Mountain Friends Meeting

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Ashland, Oregon 97520