

543 South Mountain Avenue

Ashland, Oregon 97520

(541) 482-0814

communications@ashlandquakers.org

www.ashlandquakers.org

(Near Southern Oregon University)

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

First-Hour Activity

9 to 10 am

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

3 December All-Meeting Discussion
on our Meeting's Values & Focus in
a Troubled World *Details Page 3*

10:15-11 am: Circle of Light

10 December Nothing First-Hour

Rise-of-Meeting:

Soul Food Sunday *Details Page 4*

17 December

8:30-10 am: Business Meeting

24 December

Songs of the Season Singalong

31 December

New Year's Watch *Details Page 7*

Meeting for Worship

11 am to Noon

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

[https://us02web.zoom.us/
j/7477317797?pwd=SW1sd3pTZjhlbGZmUWpOY3pZaUFDdz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7477317797?pwd=SW1sd3pTZjhlbGZmUWpOY3pZaUFDdz09)

Outdoor Worship on Back
Porch: 11 am - 11:45 am

SOUTH MOUNTAIN FRIENDS MEETING **THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)** Unprogrammed Worship in Ashland, Oregon **Twelfth Month 2023**

An Open Poem To A World-Weary Empath *you can't leave Earth yet*

*~ because I just flipped ahead about a hundred pages
in your story
and I read that someday you will be the reason
someone else doesn't give up on their life*

I'm sorry to spoil the end of your epic tale

*~ but someday you will be the one who ignites
the blaze in another person's heart that
won't ever be put out again*

don't complicate the plot of your story

*~ you are here to be a lamplighter that hands out
little bits of your flame to ensure the rest
of the world doesn't exist in darkness*

I know you have been scorched so many times

*~ to love the world is to sometimes be burned at the
the stake by others who mistake your gift
of compassion as a personal weakness*

*I know it's not
easy to be a
bringer of light
to those who
have become
addicted to
shadows*



*~ but we need
you to be a gardener of effervescent seeds
that you will perhaps never see grow into
burning rosebushes
that can be seen from space*

Oh, my love, don't give into the calling despair

*~ set your life on fire with kindness and watch how many
other people come out of their caves to sit by your
campfire heart to share their own stories of survival
Oh my love, you are my favorite element*

~ John Roedel

EVOLVING FROM VIOLENT LANGUAGE

Anna Taylor



INSTEAD OF

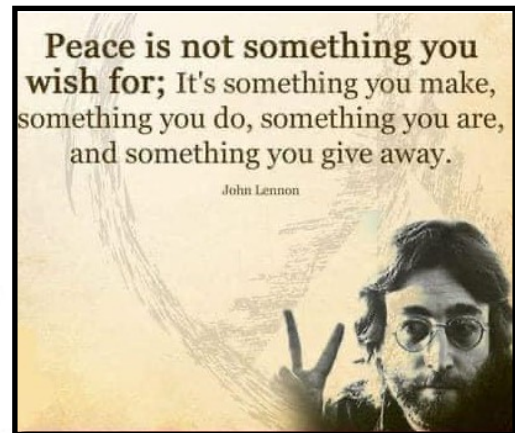
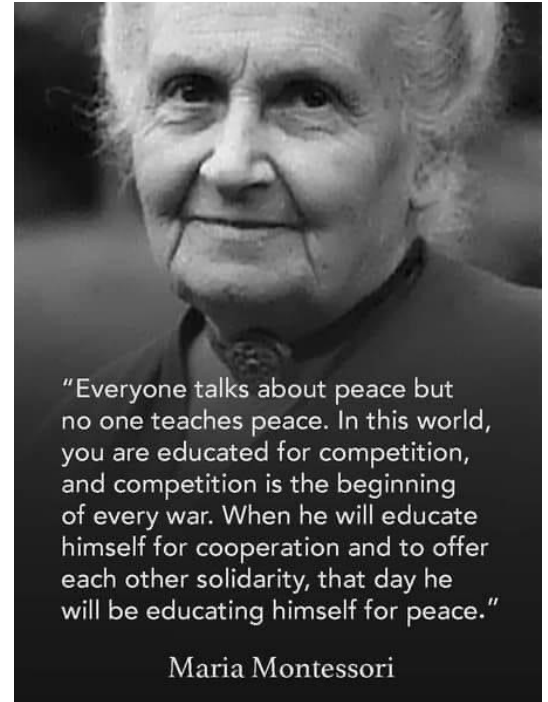
We're going to **pull the trigger**
I'll take a **stab at** [it]
Did we **jump the gun**?
I'll **bite the bullet**
That'll **kill** two birds with one stone
What's the **deadline**?
We have to pick our **battles**
Can you **shoot me** an email?
That was **overkill**
I **bombed** the presentation
Let's just **roll with the punches**
We can **soften the blow** by...
I'm going to **take a shot in the dark**
That's not a **bad idea**
Let's not **beat a dead horse**
I was **blown away** by her presentation
I was **kicking** around an idea
He's a **straight shooter** in meetings



SAY THIS

We're **going to launch**
I'll take the **first pass at** [it]
Did we **start too soon**?
I won't **avoid it any longer**
That'll **feed** two birds with one scone
What's the **due date**?
We have to choose our **opportunities**
Can you **send me** an email?
That was a **bit excessive**
I didn't **do my best**
Let's just **move forward**
We can **make it a little easier** by...
I'm going to **take a guess**
That's a **good idea**
Let's not **focus on that anymore**
I was **impressed** by her presentation
I was **thinking** through an idea
He's **pretty direct** in meetings

Talking Peace Teaching Peace Doing Peace



**3% of U.S. military
spending could end
starvation on earth.**

worldbeyondwar.org

(Number explained: worldbeyondwar.org/explained)

Submitted by Jean
Semrau, Becky
Hale, and
Marybeth Webster

All-Meeting Discussion on our Meeting's Values & Focus in a Troubled World

9 am Sunday 3 December 2023

Quaker Meeting is a unique spiritual experience, one of solitary contemplation and communal spiritual sharing. At times, we are called to come together to discern how we express our collective Quaker values. One format for such discernment is holding a **winnowing session**. Winnowing is the process of separating chaff from grain. We use this metaphor to describe our process of clearing away the extraneous from the important.

At this 3 December winnowing session we will discern as a group the essential values and focus of our Meeting as we move forward into the coming year. The current distresses in the world highlight an urgency for us to address in a spiritual, thoughtful, and collective manner our mission.

With deep listening, we will engage in **worship sharing**. We will consider queries in worshipful silence, and then speak aloud as led by Spirit to reflect our experiences, our feelings, and our piece of the Truth. We will allow space between speakers and refrain from speaking again until each person who wishes to speak has spoken.



Please join us in worship sharing with the following **queries** in mind:

How can our Meeting community promote our Quaker values in these times of strife and unrest?

Where ought we focus our human, financial, and energy resources in our outreach efforts?

—Andra Hollenbeck

Guide to South Mountain's New Digital Library Catalog

The digital catalog for our South Mountain Friends Library is now up and running! You can find the catalog link on the South Mountain Friends Meeting website (ashland-quakers.org). Click on the "Our Meeting" button, followed by the "Our Library" button. You can use the search bar that says "Search This Library" on the right hand side of the screen to search for a title, author, or subject. (The search bar that says "Search *LibraryThing*" will take you out of our catalog.) If you want to see all of the books on a specific subject, click the "Tags" button, then click the subject you want to explore. To go back to the original view, click the "List" button. Feel free to explore the other features and ask questions about how to use the digital catalog!



As a quick note, the DVDs are not yet in the catalog but will be added soon, and the Pendle Hill Pamphlets will not be added to the catalog because they are best found using the indexes available in the library. If you need any help navigating these indexes, please let me know.

—Tara Jones (tarajennie.jones@gmail.com)

A Leading/A Dream

Dear Friends,

I have a dream for our community. A dream for our Meeting.



We all know that in the months to come there will be increasing violence, confrontation, anger and fear in our world. In my dream, Quakers are a nonviolent peace force. Quakers are the ones who stand in protection around those who are being threatened: Muslims, Jews, people of color, LGBTQ folks, undocumented people, “dissidents,” and so on. The threats may come from any fearful, angry group of people or from armed police or military personnel.

My personal experiences of standing, simply standing peacefully, in protection of others, include standing at the California-Mexican border to help decrease Border Patrol violence; standing with other Witness for Peace volunteers on the Nicaragua-Honduras border during the Contra war; standing around a mosque after 9-11 so worshippers could safely enter and leave; and standing in a circle around the home of a fellow war tax resister which was about to be seized by the IRS. In every case, the presence of people simply standing peacefully did decrease the violence.

I think Quakers are the very people who should be among those standing, witnessing, being a calming presence. Ideally, we would be trained (or refreshed) in nonviolent civilian protection. I have obtained a list of trainers in Oregon who specialize in nonviolent action and presence. I would like this to be part of our Meeting’s mission and community service. It would also increase our visibility, if we wore simple armbands or t-shirts identifying the Quaker Peacekeepers.

Thank you for considering my dream.

Jean Semrau

An ad hoc group of interested Friends have begun planning a training to instruct/remind us how to witness. The group seeks a few more interested folks to help with the planning. Contact Becky Hale (bec.hale4@gmail.com), if you’d like to help plan.

Soul Food Sunday: Rise of Meeting on 10 December 2023

Sharing Food: Our community meal will be a good ol’ fashioned potluck. You are invited to contribute whatever part of the meal you’re led to bring—anything from soup to nuts!

Jean Semrau’s (above) vision may inspire involvement, or you may have a different vision, or you may be unclear about your call to action. Sharing can reduce our sense of isolation and overwhelm, as war and destruction continue. Open hearts and minds can be healing and inspire our path forward, personally and collectively.

Sharing Ourselves: Storytelling about ACTIVISM; how our experiences have informed our lives, leadings, and potential leadings. In a worship sharing format, we’ll take turns sharing out of the silence, allowing each person their time/space to speak. ALL are welcome. Come to share; come to be inspired.

—Becky Hale for Ministry and Counsel



Art Work Wanted

Calling all to share your art work or photography. Our Meeting House walls are mostly bare these days and in need of enlivening. If you have some work you’d like displayed, please call.

—Becky Hale (541-601-3084)

The Universal Force Is Love

In the late 1980s, Lieserl, the daughter of the famous genius, donated 1,400 letters, written by Einstein, to the Hebrew University, with orders not to publish their contents until two decades after his death. This is one of them, for Lieserl Einstein.



“...When I proposed the theory of relativity, very few understood me, and what I will reveal now to transmit to mankind will also collide with the misunderstanding and prejudice in the world.

I ask you to guard the letters as long as necessary, years, decades, until society is advanced enough to accept what I will explain below.

There is an extremely powerful force that, so far, science has not found a formal explanation to. It is a force that includes and governs all others, and is even behind any phenomenon operating in the universe and has not yet been identified by us. This universal force is LOVE.

When scientists looked for a unified theory of the universe, they forgot the most powerful unseen force.

Love is Light, that enlightens those who give and receive it.
Love is gravity, because it makes some people feel attracted to others.
Love is power, because it multiplies the best we have and allows humanity not to be extinguished in their blind selfishness. Love unfolds and reveals.
For love we live and die. Love is God and God is Love.

This force explains everything and gives meaning to life. This is the variable that we have ignored for too long, maybe because we are afraid of love because it is the only energy in the universe that man has not learned to drive at will.

To give visibility to love, I made a simple substitution in my most famous equation.
If instead of $E = mc^2$, we accept that the energy to heal the world can be obtained through love multiplied by the speed of light squared, we arrive at the conclusion that love is the most powerful force there is, because it has no limits.

After the failure of humanity in the use and control of the other forces of the universe that have turned against us, it is urgent that we nourish ourselves with another kind of energy...

If we want our species to survive, if we are to find meaning in life, if we want to save the world and every sentient being that inhabits it, love is the one and only answer.

Perhaps we are not yet ready to make a bomb of love, a device powerful enough to entirely destroy the hate, selfishness, and greed that devastate the planet.

However, each individual carries within them a small but powerful generator of love whose energy is waiting to be released.

When we learn to give and receive this universal energy, dear Lieserl, we will have affirmed that love conquers all, is able to transcend everything and anything, because love is the quintessence of life.

I deeply regret not having been able to express what is in my heart, which has quietly beaten for you all my life. Maybe it's too late to apologize, but as time is relative, I need to tell you that I love you and thanks to you, I have reached the ultimate answer!”

Your father Albert Einstein

Submitted by Becky Hale

Meeting for Business 19 November 2023

Land Acknowledgement

This Meeting gathers in the traditional, sovereign territory of Indigenous Takelma, Latgawa, Shasta, and other peoples who have cared for these lands for millennia and continue to do so today. May we honor these original stewards and their rights of self-determination, continue dismantling the systems of oppression that have dispossessed them of their lands, and participate in the care and protection of our shared home.

Friends Present: Bill Ashworth, Melody Ashworth, Crystal Bosbach, Valeria Breiten, Ken Deveny, Herb Rothschild, Ann Gaffney, Ká Hering, Andra Hollenbeck, Bob Morse, Adam Thompson, Mary Ward.

Quote & Reflection: "Quakers are not 'for peace' but rather know, in the deepest sense of the word, that peace is a holy imperative as part of a just society." –Ben Pink Dandelion

2023.11.1 Friends approved as presented the Minutes from the 15 October Meeting for Worship for Business.

Treasurer's Report: There were some snafus in where money has been deposited, which Adam is fixing. The money in Special Projects on this month's statement will be transferred to Operations. Black Alliance for Social Empowerment (BASE) reparations have been stopped unintentionally, and Adam is setting those up again. Related to budget, F&H members have begun submitting receipts rather than all donations being in kind. Friends were in agreement that members of the committee should indeed submit receipts, and we will respond with the budget as needed.

Ministry & Counsel (M&C): M&C has been rotating clerks but has decided to have a single clerk. Bob Morse will be the clerk for M&C through June, at which point clerkship will be revisited.

Sunday 3 Dec at First Hour will be a winnowing session for our Meeting's focus and values as we move into the next year. *Details on Page 3.*

M&C is responding to a leading from within our meeting to reinvigorate peaceful Quaker Witness. An ad-hoc interest group has been formed. If you are interested in participating, please contact Becky or anyone on M&C. *Details on Page 4.*

Joint Committee (JC): JC would like to add the Clerk of Buildings and Grounds as a full member of JC. Action will need to be taken by the Meeting to accomplish this. Finances are in great shape. The balances are coming back up; rentals are coming up.

Currently, the petty cash payments include utility bill payments. Recently, we raised the petty cash cap due to increasing utility payments. It was proposed to tie the petty cash cap to our monthly contribution so that the cap keeps pace with inflation. We are currently contributing \$700 per organization (\$1400 total), so the proposal would raise the petty cash cap to that \$1400 limit. Friends suggested that utilities be removed from the petty cash cap altogether. Friends also wondered if there were two different situations/accounts needed: one petty cash, and a separate for capital replacement/repairs (e.g., furnace replacement, dishwasher replacement). JC will take these up.

Peace & Social Concerns: Friends had a session last month regarding how we move forward on Christian Nationalism. What came out of that meeting was a feeling that we should find out where other faith-based groups are with regard to Christian Nationalism to engage in learning and communicating together. The committee read a letter in hopes of sending out to local faith-based organizations. Friends discussed the scope of our outreach; the sense of the Meeting was Jackson County. The cost of this endeavor was discussed and will be absorbed within the Peace and Social Concerns budget.

2023.11.02 The Meeting approved sending the letter on Christian Nationalism to other faith communities in Jackson County, the cost being born by the Peace and Social Concerns Committee.

Friendship & Hospitality (F&H): Greeter spots are all filled. F&H is planning a gathering of Greeters to get on the same page. 10 December is the next Soul Food Sunday.

Starting in 2024, Soul Food Sundays will be quarterly and may include some outdoor fellowship and be seasonally themed.

Respectfully submitted,
Valeria Breiten, Clerk
Ann Gaffney, Recording Clerk

New Year's Watch

9 am Sunday 31 December



In the early years of South Mountain Friends Meeting, we had a tradition of gathering on New Year's Eve for what we called New Year's Watch. Beginning at 9 pm with light snacks and conversation, the Watch would switch around 10 pm to worship sharing on what Spirit had led us to, individually and as a meeting, during the previous year—and what we expected the new year to bring. Worship sharing would slide into silent worship around 11:30, which would last until shortly after the new year had arrived; then there would be more snacks and more conversation before we dispersed, with filled and quieted souls, between 12:30 and 1 am.

At the beginning, in the 1970s, we met in Friends' homes. But over the years as one after another home became unavailable, the New Year's Watch became homeless. We tried holding it in the Meeting House for a few years, but attendance dwindled; The last gathering was held around 2005, and consisted only of Melody, me, and a couple who had driven down from Roseburg for the occasion. Since then, the Watch has been dormant, but not dead: the worship sharing portion has been revived several times, as a First Hour activity on years that either New Year's Eve or New Year's Day has fallen on a Sunday.

This year is one of those. Please join us **9 in the morning of New Year's Eve day** (Sun 31 Dec) as we address the following queries, which are based on an old, old Quaker greeting (Truth and Spirit being essentially synonymous for early Friends):

- How has Truth fared with thee during the past year? And,
- How does thee expect Truth to fare in the year that is about to arrive?

New Year's Watch will be hybrid, but Friends are encouraged to attend in person for the fellowship, and then worship, which will follow. —Bill Ashworth

Quaker Events Open to the Greater Community

Free Writing Friends: 3 – 5 pm every MONDAY & Song Circle: 6:30 pm 2nd TUESDAYS

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

Advices & Queries on Religious Education & Study

Friends study and learn throughout our lives in order to understand and deepen our experience of Truth and our Inner Teacher.

As individuals and families, we make manifest our search for Truth in every aspect of life and recognize that Truth may be found in many religions and spiritual practices. Friends participate, as they are led, in the spiritual education and formation of the meeting's young people.

As we learn together, we spiritually nurture each other according to our gifts and leadings, participate more fully in our meetings, and deepen our understanding of the beliefs and practices of the Religious Society of Friends.

Do we help to develop the spiritual lives of all of our members, attenders, and children?

Do we all take part in educating ourselves about the history and heritage of Friends?

Do we prepare members and children for worship and for a way of life consistent with the Friends principles?

*How do we teach Quaker worship and discernment and their importance
to the good order of our meeting community?*

Do we share our faith and spiritual journeys, as well as listen to and learn from others?

Do we encourage such sharing within our families and meeting communities?

Officers

Presiding Clerk: Valeria Breiten 480-688-7442
Treasurer: Adam Thompson 201-8255
Recording Clerk: Ann Gaffney 603-490-7193
Communications Clerk: Jean Semrau 488-6855
Joint Committee Delegates: Ariel Love 925-212-2118;
Bill Ashworth 778-9470

Standing Committees

Ministry and Counsel: Bob Morse 482-8849, David Runkel 210-0031, Rochelle Webster 646-5186, Becky Hale 601-3084, Crystal Bosbach 930-4222, Andra Hollenbeck 601-6421, Valeria Breiten (*ex officio*)

Nominating Committee: Valeria Breiten, Wyatt Banks, Richard Spencer, Melody Ashworth, Linda Spencer

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

***Finance:** Fran Curtis 482-1095, Jean Semrau, Adam Thompson (*ex officio*)

***Friendship and Hospitality:** Ká Hering, 778-5206, Crystal Bosbach, Cathy McDaniel; ***Greeters:** Jean Semrau, Karen Maleski, Rochelle Webster, Andra Hollenbeck

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

Interest Group Contact Persons

***Adult Education:** Bill Ashworth 778-9470
***Art Displays:** Becky Hale 601-3084
***Building & Grounds:** Merlin McDaniel 770-3318
***Child Care:** Ken Deveney 482-2173
***Circle of Light:** Crystal Bosbach 930-4222
***Free Writing Friends:** Becky Hale 601-3084
***Library:** Tara Jones
***Mailchimp:** Peter Orozco
***Men's Group:** Ken Deveney 488-5506
***Neighbors in Need:** Alex Reid 707-499-9146
***Outdoor Worship:** Ká Hering 778-5206
***Racial/Climate Concerns:** Bob Morse 482-8449

Other Contact Persons

Interfaith Ministries: Gizelle Luccio 944-0748
Newsletter: Bob Morse 482-8449
NPYM Coordinating Committee: Bill Ashworth 778-9470
Web Site Administration: Bob Morse 482-8449

Small Local Groups

***Dancing Bears group:** Herb Rothschild 531-2848
***Outliers group:** Pam Johnson 535-1940 & Becky Hale 601-3084
***Quaker Neighbors:** Jean Semrau 646-8225
***Late Afternoon group:** Ken Deveney 482-2173

** = all new and longtime participants welcome
All area codes are 541 unless otherwise noted*

South Mountain Friends Meeting

543 South Mountain Avenue

Ashland, Oregon 97520