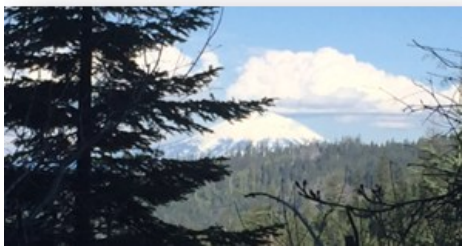


543 South Mountain Avenue
Ashland, Oregon 97520
(541) 482-0814
communications@ashlandquakers.org
www.ashlandquakers.org

SOUTH MOUNTAIN FRIENDS MEETING

THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)
Unprogrammed Worship in Ashland, Oregon
Eleventh Month 2026

SUNDAY AM SCHEDULE

First-Hour Activity

9 to 10 am

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

1 Nov **Circle of Light** 9:30-10:30am

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS ENDS
CLOCKS FALL BACK

8 Nov Peace & Social Concerns
Post-Election Debriefing: A Conversation among South Mountain Friends

15 Nov Business Meeting
9-10:30 am ***IN PERSON ONLY***
(for hybrid, contact Rochelle or Ann in a timely fashion)

22 Nov Adult Ed Book Group begins (*A Sustainable Life* by Douglas Gwyn) To request a book and/or learn details: **SEE PAGE 3**

29 Nov
Activity Not Yet Scheduled

Meeting for Worship

11 am to Noon EVERY Sunday

Hybrid: Both at the Quaker Meeting House and by Zoom

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

BELIEF

So I can't save the world—
can't save even myself,
can't wrap my arms around
every frightened child, can't
foster peace among nations,
can't bring love to all who
feel unlovable.
So I practice opening my heart
right here in this room and being gentle
with my insufficiency. I practice
walking down the street heart first.
And if it is insufficient to share love,
I will practice loving anyway.
I want to converse about truth,
about trust. I want to invite compassion
into every interaction.
One willing heart can't stop a war.
One willing heart can't feed all the hungry.
And sometimes, daunted by a task too big,

I tell myself what's the use of trying?
But today, the invitation is clear:
to be ridiculously courageous in love.
To open the heart like a lilac in May,
knowing freeze is possible
and opening anyway.
To take love seriously.
To give love wildly.
To race up to the world
as if I were a puppy,
adoring and unjaded,
stumbling on my own exuberance.
To feel the shock of indifference,
of anger, of cruelty, of fear,
and stay open. To love as if it matters,
as if the world depends on it
—Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer

Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer has been writing and sharing a poem a day since 2006—a practice that especially nourished her after the death of her teenage son in 2021

Quakers Invite Pollinators

Heeding a call from Quaker Earthcare Witness for a national day of Quaker action on the environment . . .

. . .seven South Mountain Friends gathered at the Meeting House on Saturday morning 19 September . . .

, , , to plant a pollinator garden, under the able leadership of Andra Hollenbeck and Merlin McDaniel and with the help of Ka Hering, JoAnn Sustrick, and Melody Ashworth.

The result can be seen at the northeast corner of the Meeting House/Peace House grounds, near the sign.

The accompanying photos were taken by Karen Maleski; Bill Ashworth prepared this excellent 4-min video:

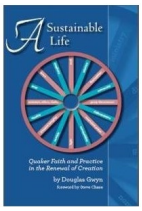
https://youtu.be/hNuw42wrSoo

Quaker Book Group: All Are Welcome

9 am 4th Sundays beginning 22 November

Douglas Gwyn's ***A Sustainable Life:***
Quaker Faith and Practice in the Renewal of Creation

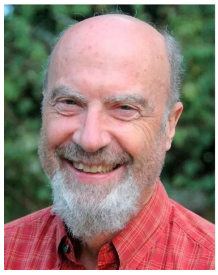
About The Book



A well-known Quaker historian explores the qualities of Quaker faith and practice that contribute to living sustainably in the world today. He explores such paradoxes as equality and community, unity and differentiation, integrity and personal discernment, and other aspects of life that Quakers have worked to bring into balance over their 350-year history.

The author ponders how Quakers have learned to create the individual and community life that prepares us to live fully and responsibly into a time of social and planetary change.

About The Author



Douglas Gwyn's ministry unfolded as a series of sojourns crisscrossing the divide between liberal-progressive and traditional Christian camps of American Quaker, sometimes as a Friends pastor, other times as a teacher at Pendle Hill. Over the years, Gwyn continued to research and write about early Friends, attempting to present early Quaker witness as a more vital faith and practice than either liberal or evangelical Friends offer.

About The Book Group

On Sunday 22 November, our book group will discuss the introduction and first chapter, then focus on each consecutive chapter in each consecutive month through August 2027 (except January and April)

Your presence is welcome whether or not you've read the book.
Your presence is welcome even if you only intermittently attend.

If you would like a copy of Douglas Gwyn's book, please contact me.

—Lori Fleuter (for the Adult Education Committee); 808-633-3934; loriflueter@gmail.com

South Mountain Friends Meeting EMAILS

M&C has an email address for the committee: MandC@ashlandquakers.org.This is the best way to contact M&C about spiritual matters, worship practice, requests for pastoral care, or financial assistance. Other South Mountain Friends emails include communications@ashlandquakers.org, treasurer@ashlandquakers.org, nominating@ashlandquakers.org, and clerk@ashlandquakers.org.

NPYM Coordinating Committee

HIGHLIGHTS from the 17 OCTOBER 2026 Committee Meeting

Even as Annual Session broke even for first time since COVID, our **North Pacific Yearly Meeting** is not doing well financially. Polyamorous Friends are requesting to be brought under the care of NPYM as part of Queer Quakers, with similar support as given to gay marriages. —Bill Ashworth

Adult Ed Proposed First-Hour Schedule

2nd Sundays: Let Your Life Speak, worship sharing, guest speakers, or open
4th Sundays: Book Club (see ABOVE) or Bill's How to Quaker in Oct, Jan, Apr —Lori Fleuter

Meeting for Worship for Business 18 October 2026

Friends Present: Lori Fleuter, Rochelle Webster, Ann Gaffney, Merlin McDaniel, Adam Thompson, Kitty Cable, Josephine Olson, Jim, Lobsenz, Melody Ashworth, Bill Ashworth, Cathy McDaniel, Ken Deveney, Aero McNish, Will Kelly, Bob Morse, JoAnn Sustrick

First People Acknowledgement: *See* South Mountain Friends Meeting

Quote & Reflection: *Friends Method of Reaching Decisions*

"Quaker decision making is based on our religious faith. Friends come to a meeting for business expecting to be led toward correct action. Unity is always possible because the same Light of Truth shines in some measure in every human heart… Only as Friends are aware that we are functioning in the Divine Presence does the Quaker method work. The commitment to search for unity depends upon mutual trust, implies a willingness to labor and to submit to the leadings of the Spirit, and grows as members become better acquainted with one another. All members and attenders are encouraged to attend and take part in meetings for business."
—NPYM Faith & Practice, 2018

Action items

Use of Meeting's Savings
BACKGROUND: Upon receiving a bequest from a Meeting attender who, upon his death, gifted us with a sizable financial contribution, we came to realize that we haven't a plan for managing our savings. The ad hoc committee to discern "how we might use our savings in a spirit of abundance and joy" came to these realizations: 1) Recognizing that leadings may come from individuals or from the Meeting as a whole, 2) Supporting criteria or a process being created to fund our most pressing needs and ambitious aspirations, 3) the full meeting should take a deeper dive into such savings-management decision-making ideally at a retreat, and 4) there is no urgency to spend or save. The ad hoc committee did not reach unity on the specifics of retreat planning but recommended a retreat-planning committee. The Sept business meeting laid down this ad hoc retreat-planning committee and suggested a Spring Meeting retreat as Friends are currently absorbed with midterm elections.

Friends reviewed the essence of previous South Mountain retreats: growing spiritually as a group, being joyful and playful together, building community, enriching time as Friends, prolonged silence.

Treasurer's Report: Last fiscal year ended $4700 in arrears due to lower total donations, and the Finance committee's having budgeted for an unanticipated deficit which then occurred due to unforeseen expenditures. The deficit has already been covered by savings. The committee acknowledges Friends who make generous donations and plan to send out a donation-reminder letter. Our Friends Fiduciary Fund balance is forthcoming, having been delayed by tech difficulties. Adam's not concerned by summer-time low donations, knowing that intermittent large donations are typical. It was posited that all our talking about our abundance might have diminished Friends' perceptions of our Meeting's donation needs, while, actually, we haven't had sufficient funds to replace our "natural gas" furnace. The reminder that we haven't met our goal of reducing our dependence on fossil fuels landed viscerally among those present and shifted the dialogue from the abstract to the concrete. Merlin detailed the financial challenges to replacing our current well-functioning furnace with a heat pump, along with heat-recovery ventilators and regional thermostats throughout our building.

2026.10.1 Friends approved an ad hoc Fossil Fuels Committee consisting of Merlin, Bill, Ann, and Ken to initially report back to the December 2026 business meeting.

Ministry & Counsel: Adam reminded/informed Friends of our financial assistance funds for Meeting participants in temporary need, maintained by earmarked donations. Usually, the fund has a low balance and the requests are small. Currently, the fund is even lower at $500. Friends examined historic and practical guidelines before discerning that borrowers would have no obligation to pay back but would have the opportunity to provide a Pay It Forward reimbursement to the fund or contribute non-monetarily to the Meeting. The relief that emerges from knowing such funds are available is part of our abundance and joy. M&C will discuss guidelines for this fund.

2026.10.2 Meeting approved moving $1000 into the financial assistance fund.

2026.10.3 Meeting approved re-naming the financial assistance fund the Pay It Forward fund.

Informational Items

Clerk Rochelle announced that Lori and JoAnn have agreed to be on nominating committee.

Friendship & Hospitality: Ka encourages Friends to make coffee, put out snacks, and clean up (instructions posted). Upcoming potlucks will be on 2nd Sundays in Dec, Mar, Jun, Sep.

Peace & Love Meditation has resumed after a summer hiatus (5 pm Thu at the Meeting House).

After the meeting, Peace & Social Concerns agreed to facilitate 2nd Sunday in November at Meeting's request for a post-election debrief soon after election day.

Respectfully submitted,
Rochelle Webster, Co-Clerk
Bob Morse, Recording Clerk

Something need correcting? Inform our clerk before next business meeting (clerk@ashlandquakers.org)

Advices & Queries on Stewardship of the Self

Taking care of our physical, mental, and emotional health, as we are able, is a form of stewardship. Living the most balanced and healthy life we can brings us wholeness and promotes our spiritual well-being. How we use and treat our bodies can help us to find a new self in partnership with the Creator. Just as we seek timely medical help for our physical bodies, we attend appropriately to our mental and emotional health needs.

Our testimonies of simplicity, integrity, and stewardship encourage us to choose ways of living that rest and strengthen the body, and that refresh and enrich the mind and spirit. We choose recreations in keeping with our values around the right use of money. We consider how we use the time and energy that have been given to us. We make considered choices about the food we eat. We also think about the effects that our choices have on the welfare of others and of the Earth as a whole as well as on our own lives.

Some activities can become obsessions, leading to lives inconsistent with integrity and simplicity and creating barriers between individuals and their families and communities. Although we are now less concerned about mild forms of gambling such as raffles and door prizes, traditionally Friends have opposed all forms of gambling as distractions from our connection to God that could also lead to family ruin. As Friends we recognize that the incautious use of alcohol and drugs can be a spiritual danger as well as a threat to our physical, emotional, and social selves. Any activity taken to an extreme can divide us from God.

Physical Activity as a Spiritual Discipline. Many forms of recreation or physical activity can be used as spiritual disciplines. Intentional immersion in re-creative activity can enable us, as George Fox advised, to be still awhile from our own thoughts and to be stayed in the principle of God. We can find focus in rhythmic physical activity or in the regular activities of preparing food, washing dishes, or caring for each other. Changes in our physical ability need not shut us off from the opportunities to experience the Spirit through recreation. Our attitude matters more than proficiency or the nature of the activity performed.

Along the way to singleness of focus, the activities of play and rhythmic exertion offer pleasure. Social relationships in a class, play group, or team can ease the tasks of preparation and warmup. Playing in a group is a way to follow Jesus' instruction to become like children, in order to enter the kingdom of Heaven (see Matthew 18:3).

"Therefore be still awhile from your own thoughts, searching, seeking, desires, and imaginations, and be stayed in the principle of God in you, that it may raise your mind up to God, and stay it upon God." —George Fox, 1658

Do we choose recreations which strengthen our physical, mental, and spiritual lives and avoid those which may prove harmful to ourselves and others and to the world around us?

How do we make time in our lives for healthy play?

How do our food choices reflect our values as Friends?

Do we recognize all our own addictions and compulsive behaviors? How do our relationships with the Spirit and with our meeting communities help us deal with them?

4 Quaker-based Community Activities Open to All

WRITING, SINGING, IMPROV, MEDITATION ON PEACE

Details at OUR SCHEDULE | AshlandQuakers

Officers

Presiding Co-Clerks: Rochelle Webster 646-5186 & Ann Gaffney 603-490-7193
Treasurer: Adam Thompson 201-8255
Recording Clerk: Bob Morse 482-8449
Communications Clerk: Jean Semrau 646-8225 with Kitty Cable (tech support) & Lori Fleuter (admin support)
Joint Committee Delegates: Richard Spencer 707-543-6330; Merlin McDaniel 301-6054

Standing Committees

Ministry and Counsel: Adam Thompson 201-8255, Andra Hollenbeck 601-6421, Jim Lobsenz 206-399-2782, Jamie McLeod-Skinner 777-7797, Josephine Olson 505-608-8254, Rochelle Webster & Ann Gaffney *(ex officio)*

Nominating Committee: Adam Thompson 201-8255, Lori Fleuter, Kathleen Donham, JoAnn Sustrick

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

***Finance:** Ann Gaffney, Jean Semrau, Adam Thompson *(ex officio)*

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

***Welcomers:** Bob Morse, Brittany Fagin/Kody Kirby, Fernando Gapasin, Richard Spencer

***Adult Ed:** Lori Fleuter, JoAnn Sustrick, Josephine Olson

*Interest Group Contact Persons

***Applied Improv:** Rochelle Webster 646-5186
***Art Displays:** Becky Hale 601-3084
***Circle of Light:** Crystal Bosbach 930-4222
***Free Writing Friends:** Becky Hale 601-3084
***Friends Men's Group:** Ken Deveney 482-2173
***Friends Women's Group:** Althea Godfrey 261-5329
***Racial Concerns:** Bob Morse 482-8449
***Song Circle:** Rochelle Webster 646-5186
***Young Adult Friends:** Samantha Archer 385-645-1546
***Zoom Support:** Adam Thompson, Bill Ashworth, Brittany Fagin, Kitty Cable, Kody Kirby, Samantha Archer

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*

All area codes are 541 unless otherwise noted

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

South Mountain Friends Meeting

543 South Mountain Avenue

Ashland, Oregon 97520