

543 South Mountain Avenue

Ashland, Oregon 97520

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SUNDAY AM SCHEDULE

First-Hour Activity

9 to 10 am

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

2 November DAYLIGHT SAVINGS
No First Hour Activity

10:15-11 am: Circle of Light

9 November Worship Sharing on
Becoming a People of Place
followed by planting ceremony
(details on pages 1 and 2)

16 November ZOOM ONLY

8:30-10 am: Business Meeting

23 November How To Quaker:
Discourse and then worship sharing
on the testimony of simplicity
Simple Breakfast to Follow

30 November Peace & Social
Concerns: The Oregon Rural-Urban
Project (ORUP) (details on page 3)

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
Eleventh Month 2025

Becoming a People of Place: An Inquiry

To better understand our relationship to Indigenous cultures of this place in which we live, Tomi Hazel Ward, permaculturist and South Mountain Friend elder, asks, "Are we prepared to renew our own Friends sense of spiritual dimensions of place? All of Creation has Spirit. There is Spirit in place, and we can speak directly to the Spirit in all of Creation. To live in harmony with our surroundings, we need to re-skill, always remembering those who came before us and acting in ways that honor traditional wisdom of people and place. We Friends have cultural continuity and memory. We can reach out to our Native neighbors and talk culture to culture. But first we need to renew our sense of being people of place."

Poet Mary Oliver offers her sense of being a person of place in her poem "Sleeping in the Forest":



*I thought the earth remembered me,
she took me back so tenderly,
arranging her dark skirts, her pockets
full of lichens and seeds.
I slept as never before, a stone on
the river bed,
nothing between me and the white
fire of the stars
but my thoughts, and they floated
light as moths
among the branches of the perfect
trees.*

*All night I heard the small kingdoms
breathing around me, the insects,
and the birds who do their work in the
darkness.*

*All night I rose and fell, as if in water,
grappling with a luminous doom.*

*By morning
I had vanished at least a dozen times
into something better.*



Continued on Page 2

Where Althea Godfrey, Hazel Jordan, & Bob Morse—as South Mountain Friends "Toward Right Relationship" Interest Group—offer first steps in a People of Place Inquiry on **Sunday 9 November**:
A first-hour Spirit-led sharing from the heart
A ceremonial planting of native plants outside our Meeting House

Becoming a People of Place: An Inquiry

A Worship Sharing at 9 am Sunday 9 November at Meeting House (& Zoom) Planting Ceremony to Follow

As South Mountain's "Toward Right Relationship" Interest Group, which grew out of our revising our land acknowledgment, we propose starting by "embodying" our recently approved First People Acknowledgment.

Consider: *What aspect of this acknowledgment most speaks to you?*

We honor Takelma, Latgawa, Shasta, and other original caretakers of the land upon which South Mountain Friends gather. We acknowledge our Quaker forebears' complicity in the systems of oppression that drove these people from these lands. We commit to the work of dismantling remains of those systems. We pledge to act in solidarity with these First Peoples as they seek redress for the damages those systems have caused, as we together steward and protect our shared home.

Our **Quaker Advices on Harmony with Creation** are well aligned with our Inquiry on Becoming a People of Place:



Rejoice in the majesty of nature. Pray that the Presence will lead us to our rightful place in the creation.

We are each part of the intricate web of life; each choice to act or not to act can have profound consequences. We live in such a complex world that we can do considerable damage without knowing it. Choices that are beneficial in one direction may be harmful in another.

We take care to conserve and protect the whole of life. Both scientific inquiry and spiritual reflection lead us to deeper understanding of the interconnected, constantly changing systems in which we live.

The essence of the Divine Light can be found in our connection to the natural world. Our collective experience of this deep interconnectedness with all nature helps us understand the connection between ecological and cultural diversity, know the Earth as teacher, and value inspiration from a range of faith traditions.

We face the difficult challenge to change our manner of living to come into harmony with creation. As we support each other's efforts to use no more than our fair share, we guard against waste and resist the temptations of convenience and the inertia of the status quo. We help each other look for ways to counter attitudes of human arrogance, domination, and greed which threaten Earth's equilibrium.

Worship Sharing on 9 am Sunday 9 November on these queries. All are welcome.

How does the land of our home take care of us?

How do we recognize and honor that care in every step?

How do we see Spirit embodied in the world around us?

Worship Sharing: Speaking out of the silence from our own experience and in concert with Spirit without responding to others' words—and speaking only once until all have spoken.

A Ceremonial Planting right after Worship Sharing outside our Meeting House.

We'll provide native plants. We invite you to join us in adding these plants to our land to launch our exploration of place and spirit.

—Bob Morse

Friends Standing Up for Justice and Humanity

In the Southern Oregon PRIDE Parade

Holding High Our
New Signs,
Expressing Our
Testimonies



Silent Vigil for Palestinians, their Peace & Sovereignty

12-1 pm Wednesdays at E Main & Central, Medford
(wear black, if possible)

Meeting's Job Descriptions

All of us at Friends Meeting are volunteers. Periodically, under the guidance of Nominating Committee, we update our job descriptions, reflecting our actual tasks. **Please review the latest descriptions and related procedures (guidelines), especially, of roles you play or committees on which you participate and provide us with your suggestions/revisions.**

Descriptions only: <http://bit.ly/4oe63iR>

Descriptions & procedures:

<http://bit.ly/3Ja1ask>

Thanks, Nancy & Adam
nominating@ashlandquakers.org

The Oregon Rural-Urban Project (ORUP)

9 am Sunday 30 November at the Meeting House (& Zoom)

The current divisions between rural and urban Oregon communities pose a serious challenge to Oregonians' sense of participating in a fair and respectful political process. Rural counties feel poorly represented in our legislature, and urban senators have felt stymied when minority senators have hidden away to prevent a quorum. ORUP is learning views about this divide via county-by-county townhall meetings. Subsequently, ORUP will bring Portlanders out into the countryside to hold moderated discussions in which participants will be tasked with identifying mutually agreeable recommendations for addressing the underlying causes of the divide. My ORUP colleagues and I will compile these recommendations into a report that will be publicly available and presented to the governor and State Legislature.

I'm excited to share in greater detail the scope of this ambitious endeavor to unite Oregonians. Fair warning, we are seriously shorthanded, and I will be imploring Friends to lend a hand or to help finance our small team's travel expenses. A glance at the website will provide greater background for my talk (<https://oregon-rural-urban-project.braverangels.org/>). —Steve Radcliffe steveradcliffe@peak.org

Speaking Out Of The Silence

The purpose of all our ministry is to lead us and other people into closer communion with God and to enable us to carry out those tasks which the Spirit lays upon us.
—London Yearly Meeting, 1986

I was in my late twenties when I first found Quaker meeting. It was the silence which drew me in and drew me back. There already was enough chatter in my world. A weekly time set aside for quietude was novel—even enriching, relieving, enveloping.

Initially, I was shocked by words being thrust into my beloved silence. I feared that I would never get the respite I needed. Never is a long time.

I don't recall when someone else's words, spoken out of the silence, first spoke to *my* condition. It was as if starved and hungering for food, I had only yet known dinner, then someone slipped in dessert. I felt a similar resonance when I read the words of British Quaker author Geoffrey Durham: "There's a temptation to assume that silence is the purpose of a Quaker meeting." Durham speaks to the significance of sitting with others so that we might grow spiritually from each other's presence and active participation. Durham aptly describes how silence is an aid to the mutual realization of collective stillness, which, when felt by the group as a whole, allows truths to be revealed. He goes on to say that silence is not the only aid to stillness; the other helper, ironically, is speech.



Friends have never regarded worship as an individual activity. People who regard Friends' meetings as opportunities for meditation have failed to appreciate this corporate aspect. The waiting and listening are activities in which everybody is engaged and produce spoken ministry which helps to articulate the common guidance which . . . Spirit is believed to give the group as a whole. —John Punshon

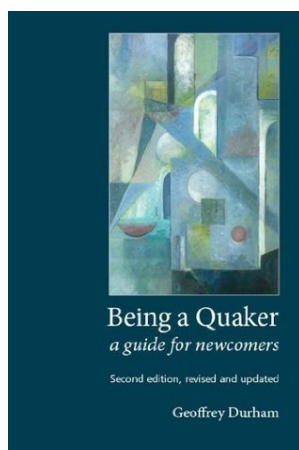
Vocal ministry gently gives new direction to the worship, which may simply deepen the silence or eventually give rise to others' spoken insights. Durham considers nothing to be "more cheerless" than a subsequent speaker's words being emitted immediately on the heels of one's predecessor. Not only has the meeting not yet had the opportunity to digest what has been expressed, but also, neither has the new speaker. Ah, thus silence and speech are not mere allies in stillness but also partners in the dance of worship. Similarly, in this choreography, it is expected that no one speaks at length or more than once per meeting. These guidelines acknowledge the root of the word "worship": *Worth*. We take time to honor each contribution's worth.

Friends tend to rise and break the silence with their words when an inner voice or a feeling or an image appears to be unshakable, when Friends conclude that they cannot *not* speak. Often vocal ministry arises as the result of self-reflection, pondering whether this message is meant only for the self or for the entire meeting. It is not uncommon that if one dallies too long, the essence of his or her vocal ministry will find voice in another worshiper. At times the melding of individual spirits is so profound that the communal stillness is intense, the ministry intertwined. In such "gathered meetings" words and silence take on the eloquence of a fine ballet, their impact powerful and definitely memorable.

Friends have from the outset taken seriously the New Testament injunction that all believers are priests. That is, they are to be vehicles of communication to each other in a redemptive community in which we have, in fact, abolished the laity and are all ministers. —Douglas Steere

—Bob Morse

PS: Since our worship is now hybrid, our standing up helps those on Zoom identify which Friend is speaking. As our Meeting's participants range in our ability to hear spoken word, using our "outside voice" helps us all hear each other's ministry. —Ed.



A copy of Geoffrey Durham's book *Being a Quaker: A Guide for Newcomers* lives in our Quaker library.

Meeting for Worship for Business 19 October 2025

Friends Present: Bill Ashworth, Melody Ashworth, Valeria Breiten, Ken Deveney, Ann Gaffney, Althea Godfrey, Ká Hering, Andra Hollenbeck, Bob Morse, Herb Rothschild, Nancy Spear, Adam Thompson, Rochelle Webster

Quote & Reflection: *“Meeting for Business is first and foremost a Meeting for Worship. In the book Quaker Silence, author Irene Allen reminds Friends that unless every person present was willing to listen to the Spirit, Quaker decision making could not work.”* —Jean Semrau

First People Acknowledgment was read (*printed on page 2*).

Nominating Committee (NC) has completed a draft job description for a welcoming committee, as requested by Ministry & Counsel committee at last month’s business meeting. Friends agreed on the need for such a committee.

NC requests that Friends review all the job descriptions and related procedures that NC has updated for Meeting’s officers and committees and submit revisions to NC (*see links on page 3*). NC recognizes that the “procedures” are simply guidelines, especially written to guide Friends who are new to their office or committee. Friends were reminded to ensure that Spirit is infused in these descriptions and to consider the intent of the procedures and replace some procedures with their underlying intention written into the description itself.

NC shared an addition to Ministry and Counsel, Jim Lobsenz, which was met with joy.

Toward Right Relationship Interest Group (TRR) has emerged from Meeting’s endeavor over the past year to revise our land acknowledgment. TRR proposes that our newly approved first people acknowledgment be posted in our foyer. Friends supported this proposal, while additionally suggesting that all the additional Advices & Queries listed in the updated *Faith & Practice* also be printed poster-size for posting in the foyer on a rotational basis.

Friends accepted TRR’s proposal to host a worship sharing on “People of Place” followed by a ceremonial planting of a native plant/seeds (*see details on page 1 & 2*).

2025.10.1 Friends approved the creation of a Toward Right Relationship Interest Group.

Treasurer Report: We spent \$370 for Peace & Social Concerns, which includes our participation in the Pride Parade and the creation of the testimony signs for parades. Friends recalled that such over-budget expenses were anticipated when this year’s budget was approved. Friends were reminded that we will be forming “an ad hoc committee composed of, at a minimum, the clerks or a designated representative of each standing committee, and at least 3 other people who indicate the wish to join, for the purposes of exploring how the Meeting should use its savings while holding our abundance in joy” (Minute 2025.09.2). That committee is scheduled to begin in November. Please let Valeria know if you would like to be part of the committee.

Friendship & Hospitality (F&H): F&H would like to acknowledge Friends’ birthdays quarterly. Low key snacks and breakfast food will continue being served between How to Quaker and Meeting for Worship on 4th Sunday mornings.

Ministry & Counsel (M&C): North Pacific Yearly Meeting (NPYM) is inquiring whether to become an affiliate of Friends General Conference (FGC). Friends expressed a desire to explore the long history between our yearly meeting and the two larger Friends organizations along with current feelings in a worship sharing to begin the process of answering NPYM.

Peace & Social Concerns (P&SC): The Pride parade was very successful, which included a visiting Friend from San Francisco and our new testimonies signs. Wednesday vigils for the people of Gaza continue in Medford (*see details on page 3*). Discussion was had about whether the vigils call for silence. On the 5th Sunday in November, Steve Radcliffe will be presenting the work of Braver Angels. Now, as in each autumn, we donate to national and international organizations, while donations are made in the spring to local organizations. Previous fall donations have been to the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), Quaker Peace Teams, Right-Sharing on the World Resources, and Friendly Water for the World. Contact Herb if you have suggestions for additional recipients.

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

Something need correcting? Inform our clerk before next business meeting (valeriabreiten@gmail.com).

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

543 South Mountain Avenue

Ashland, Oregon 97520