

## **ARE Annual Report 2021**

The Adult Religious Education Committee works to enhance the spiritual life of the Meeting community and to nurture the spiritual and intellectual growth of Meeting members. One of our main functions is to provide weekly forums on different topics connecting us to each other, our Quaker faith and practice, and to our role in the greater world. We ask committee clerks to suggest ideas for forum topics. We also consider suggestions from members and attenders, and ideas generated by ARE committee members.

We attempt to provide a rich range of topics and periodically review the representation of different types of topics. Some forums fall into several categories. Between late August of 2020 and mid-June of 2021, forums included personal sharing (3), Quaker faith and practice (11), racial equity and justice (3) other social issues (7), and community nurturing (7). The forums addressing Quaker faith and practice included a series on the testimonies of Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, and Equality. Among 33 forums, 8 were sponsored by committees, and 10 included outside speakers. As we did during summer of 2020, ARE continued offering forum sessions during the 2021 summer months, with a series of worship sharings on Quakerism, Race, and Connection.

Since March of 2020, forums have been offered by Zoom. This has allowed us to engage a wider range of outside speakers, including Karen Tibbals of NJ, Paulette Meier of Cincinnati, and Mary Rider from Raleigh. Meeting electronically has enabled our traditional Worship Sharing with Attention to Animals to be even more inclusive. Participation in these zoom forums has been robust. We thank the Zoom Working Group for their steadfast assistance, and encourage members and attenders to consider joining the tech host group.

ARE welcomes suggestions for forum topics as well as suggestions for improvement. We thank the committee clerks and Meeting members for their forum suggestions as well as their willingness to prepare and lead forums. The committee works with the Publications Committee and Ministry and Worship Committees to ensure that forums are announced in a timely fashion. Forums are listed in the newsletter, on the Meeting's website and announced at the rise of all Meetings for Worship.

We appreciate the contributions of departing committee members, Naveed Moeed and Max Drake. In July we welcomed new members John Bell and Ann Filiaci. Continuing members are Lori Fernald Kahmala, Jennifer Leeman, Tom Munk, Mark Toles, and Deborah Gibbs (clerk).

A list of forums from late August 2020 through mid-August 2021 is attached.

## **2020-2021 Forums**

August 23: Military Might in Our Environment. Quaker House's executive director, Kindra Bradley, and GI Rights Hotline Counselor, Steve Woolford

August 30: Tom Ludlow. Mental Health and Addiction.

September 6: Climate Change and COVID-19 in Bolivia. Rebeca Ramos, the visiting teacher from Bolivia

September 13 : Your right next step? Naveed Moeed.

September 27: Ruth Zalph, personal sharing. Moderator: Naveed Moeed

October 4: Getting Through the Pandemic. Leslie Rountree and Jasmine McKewen ,

October 11: How do you get your news? How do you show your light? Tom Munk

October 25: Quakers and Reparations: What Canst Thou Say? John Bell.

November 1: Celebrating loved ones who have died.

November 8: M&W Spiritual practices during uncertain times. Alice Carlton and Matt Drake.

November 22: Orange County Bail/Bond Justice Project. Kimberley Brewer, Chair

November 29: How Do You Practice Gratitude, with Matt Drake and Ben Ray.

December 6: Holiday Songs and Stories.

December 13: Barbara Fedders, Policing in schools.

December 27: The winter solstice and finding the Light. Peter and Carolyn White

January 3: Ringing in the new year.

January 10: Quaker Testimonies Series: Simplicity.

January 24: Timeless Quaker Wisdom in Plainsong. Paulette Meier

January 31: Facing A New World: the Biden Administration and FCNL. Nancy Milio.

February 7: Service to the Meeting. Givers of Time and Service

February 14: Quaker Testimonies Series: Community.

February 28: Climate Change in North Carolina: The Challenge for a Sustainable Future. Sally Robertson and Madeline Parker of NC WARN.

March 7: Persuade, Don't Preach: finding that of God in those we dislike. Karen Tibbals, Rahway Plainfield Monthly Meeting.

March 14: Quaker Testimonies Series: Peace. Mary Rider.

March 28: Bonnie Ludlow, Personal Sharing.

April 4: Quaker Testimonies Series: Equality.

April 11: PFF. No forum

April 18: Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

April 25: IFC Update. Jackie Jenks

May 2: Quaker Testimonies Series: Integrity.

May 9: Mothers and Mother Figures

May 23: Graduation Forum

May 30: Climate Change: Starting a Conversation. Quaker Earthcare Witness members.

June 6: Meeting for Worship with Attention to Animals

June 13: Ben Ray Personal Sharing

June 27: Simple forum series on Quakerism, Race, and Connection: What is it about Quakerism that feeds your soul?

July 4: Simple forum series on Quakerism, Race, and Connection: What does the fourth of July mean to me as a Quaker?

July 11: Simple forum series on Quakerism, Race, and Connection: As we emerge from pandemic quarantine, what lesson or practice would you like to keep?

July 25: Simple forum series on Quakerism, Race, and Connection: How do we heal the political divide in this country and what role can you play?

August 1: Simple forum series on Quakerism, Race, and Connection: When you think of your soul, what does that mean to you?

August 8: Simple forum series on Quakerism, Race, and Connection: Do you feel we are all connected, no matter race, gender, political views, etc., and if so, how and what does this mean to you?