

Chapel Hill Friends Meeting

Newsletter: First Month, 2026



Monthly Query: *How am I open to new light, from whatever source it may come?*

Monthly Worship Tip from the M&W Committee: *Waiting in silent expectation and prayer for guidance from the Light Within is the basis for our Meeting for Worship.*

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Monthly Calendar

First Sunday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8:15 - 9:15 am - Early worship in the meeting room• 9:30 - 10:30 am - Forum via Zoom• 11:00 am - 12:00 - Worship in the meeting room• 11:00 am - 12:00 - Online worship via Zoom• After meeting - Potluck in the schoolhouse
Second Sunday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8:15 - 9:15 am - Early worship in the meeting room• 9:30 - 10:30 am - Forum via Zoom• 11:00 am - 12:00 - Blended Meeting in the meeting room and via Zoom
Third Sunday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8:00 - 9:00 am - Early worship in the meeting room (reverts to 8:15 the following week)• 9:00 - 10:30 am - Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business via Zoom• 11:00 am - 12:00 - Worship in the meeting room• 11:00 am - 12:00 - Online worship via Zoom
Fourth Sunday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Same as Second Sunday - Blended Meeting
Fifth Sunday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Same as First Sunday, but without potluck



Upcoming Zoom Fora

<https://www.chapelhillfriends.org/forums.html>

January 4: xxx

January 11: xxx

January 18: Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business (no forum)

January 25: xxx



Upcoming Events

Quaker Study Tour to Bolivia, Jan. 7-20

Pam Schwingl shares with Friends:

The Bolivian Quaker Education Fund, BQEF, is organizing a Quaker Study Tour to Bolivia from January 7-20, 2026. We are excited to offer this special “connections” tour, where we will visit a wide variety of projects, supported by Quakers from the North. Our goals are to foster relationships of solidarity, to learn, to share, and to celebrate work that reflects our collective Quaker values. Please submit the [Expression of Interest Survey](#) if you are interested; please contact Pam Schwingl (pschwingl82@gmail.com) for a detailed written description of the trip.

Christian Nationalism: Learn More, Jan.25 - Feb.15

Dottie Heninger shares with Friends:

Wes Wallace, MD, a friend from the Clergy Coalition, sent this invitation. University United Methodist Church is providing this important course for faith communities in Orange County. He writes: The seminars will be on serial Sundays, each will last an hour and will focus on understanding the dangerous ideology of Christian Nationalism and the risk it poses to faith, freedom of religion and democracy.

Taught by Dr. Lester Ruth of Duke Seminary and Dr. Joey Shelton, pastor, attorney and educator, each hour-long seminar will begin at **9:15 am**. The sessions will begin **January 25** and continue each Sunday **through February 15**--a total of four sessions.

Both speakers have national expertise regarding Christian Nationalism and bring presenting skills and clarity to this important problem.

I realize that Sunday at 9:15 a.m. might well conflict with events in your faith community. The pastors at UUMC feel that this issue is important enough to ask all of our adult Sunday school classes to cancel their usual plans and join these seminars. I hope that you and your congregants can find a way to join us. For now, please save the dates for Sundays from January 25 through February 15. More details soon.

Thank you and I hope Friends at the Quaker Meeting can join us.

Best,

Wes Wallace, MD

Piedmont Friends Retreat & Annual Sessions, June 5, 6, 7

Piedmont Friends will be meeting for the 2026 Retreat & Annual Sessions at Haw River State Park, June 5, 6, 7.



As we prepare for this expanded gathering, we are inviting all Piedmont Friends meetings to participate in the planning and to recommend a Friend from their meeting to serve on the Retreat Planning Committee.

The Committee will meet periodically on Zoom to plan for

- Retreat theme, focus and queries
- Adult, Youth and Young Adult Programming
- Accommodations and meal arrangements with Haw River State Park
- Coordinate with the Clerking Committee the Annual Sessions
- Retreat flyer, communications, registration

Information about the Retreat and Haw River State Park, including some pictures from an initial site-visit, is available on our website at:

<https://www.piedmontfriends.org/2026-retreat-annual-sessions/>



Announcements

CFS Beloved Community Offerings this Coming Spring

Pam Schwingl shares with Friends:

From Carolina Friends School Beloved Community Institute:

UPCOMING WELLNESS AND TRANSFORMATIONAL TRAVEL-LEARNING PROGRAMS

Registration opens soon!

- **Coastal Journey**, a six-day racial justice trip to Savannah and Charleston. **Early March 2026**
- **Quaker Journey**, a weeklong visit to the 17th-century roots of Quakerism in the breathtaking Lake District of Northern England. **2-9 August 2026**

You can see links for these and additional offerings at www.cfsnc.org/AdultEnrichment.



Personals

A New Home for Little Bear

Annalee Harkins shares with Friends:

I am seeking a foster or potential re-homing for my dog, Little Bear, whom I adopted 6 months ago. Little Bear is 3 years old, 27 lbs, and a perfect angel - but unfortunately, my pre-existing dog, who is old and blind, wants to murder him.



More information and pictures of Little Bear are available here:

<https://forms.gle/Ycw25acCNM3NqmLb7>

Please feel free to reach out to me directly (text is best, 919-370-2054) and share widely!

With gratitude,
Annalee
919-370-2054



Recurring Announcements

InterFath Council Committee Is Seeking Volunteers

We invite anyone interested in becoming, or knowing more about being an IFC Committee Member to please contact Carolyn White.

We welcome volunteers to help with food preparation and service at ICF every second Thursday for lunch: 10a - 1p, and/or every second Friday for dinner 4p-6:30p. Volunteers are welcome for part of the shift, or the full shift.

Zoom Tech Hosts Wanted

Support Chapel Hill Friends Meeting's Zoom worship and forums by becoming a tech host. The role is much more simple than you would imagine. Trust us! We need your help and will train you. Please contact the Zoom Subcommittee if interested, or have questions:

zoom@chapelhillfriends.org.

Inter-Faith Council Pantry Needs Donated Food Items

Please consider IFC's needs when doing your shopping. There is a basket in the meetinghouse foyer for food donations. IFC has requested the following food items: coffee, hot chocolate, canned protein, canned pork and beans, canned soup (not vegetable), boxed cereal, cake mixes, instant foods, ramen noodles. Thank you!

FRIENDS, PLEASE LIMIT YOUR WEEKDAY MEETINGHOUSE VISITS.

The CFS Early School teachers, parents and guests have priority use of the meetinghouse parking lot from 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM Monday through Friday throughout the calendar year. If you must visit the meetinghouse during weekday hours, please alert John Hite, the Meetinghouse Resident, at least one day ahead. Email: johnthequaker@gmail.com or call: 919-929-5377.

Newsletter & eNews Reminder

Please send items for the weekly eNews email and the monthly print Newsletter to news@chapelhillfriends.org.

- The deadline for weekly eNews is *Wednesday* 5 pm.
- The deadline for the monthly print Newsletter is on the *last day of the month*.

To unsubscribe, email to news@chapelhillfriends.org with the subject line, Unsubscribe.

Note: If you think that you haven't received your weekly enews or monthly newsletter, it helps to add news@chapelhillfriends.org to your contacts. Otherwise it might go to your Spam folder (and likewise for other chapelhillfriends.org mailing lists such as pfym@chapelhillfriends.org).



Recurring Events

Prayers for Healing/Holding in the Light, 2nd and 4th Wednesday, 7-8:30 pm

YOU ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN Virtual Prayers for Healing/Holding in the Light on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month, 7:00 to 8:30 PM. Join us when you can for as long as you wish - from your own home.

Do you have a name or a group of people to add to - or remove from - the list of those we will hold in our hearts and prayers? If so, please send to: prayers@chapelhillfriends.org. The list of names to be held in the Light will be renewed each month. Names must be resubmitted each month to be maintained on the list. We'll send an updated list on Wednesday afternoons. Thank you for joining us!

This virtual prayer service continues under the care of the Care and Counsel Committee and each week, a committee member will collect and post the names that are submitted and will read them aloud during the time of the service.

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Peace in Palestine. Thursdays, 5:30pm

You are invited to join Meeting for Worship with Attention to Peace in Palestine and Israel at 5:30 p.m. ET / 2:30 p.m. PT.

Join on Zoom:

<https://afsc-org.zoom.us/j/85831333364?pwd=VEtPTUZuYk5hTHV2OGs1VzRkY0ZKUT09>

Meeting ID: 858 3133 3364

Passcode: 759311

Pendle Hill Worship via Zoom, Daily, 8:30-9:10am

Pendle Hill Quaker Study, Retreat, and Conference Center is now opening their daily morning worship to everyone, by way of Zoom or phone. A lovely opportunity for gathered worship every morning. "A handful of Pendle Hill residents continue to gather daily in the Barn – from 8:30am to 9:10am Eastern Time – expanding the 90-year-long tradition of daily worship here on

campus. Beginning the week of March 16, 2020, we started an experiment of opening the circle of worship to YOU in your home. You can join us here via Zoom.”

<https://pendlehill.org/explore/worship/join-us-online-for-worship-in-the-barn/?bblinkid=210290749&bbemailid=19903873&bbejrid=1408822779>

Note: The above link takes you *not* to the meeting but to a page of general instructions. Look for the sentence “You can join us via Zoom **here**, or by clicking on the image below.”

Pray for Peace - From Friends House Moscow, Daily

Link to the Daily Meeting for Worship for Peace sponsored by FHM/FHMSA: (Friends House Moscow)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4165005614?pwd=NUtieEtqbDBYbjBrcGdMMzBKQ3drQT09>

Meeting ID: 416 500 5614

Passcode: 182805

The room opens at 8:45am Pacific time (10:45 EST); worship begins on the hour and ends an hour later. After worship there will be time to share brief thoughts that did not rise to the level of ministry. You may also want to rename yourself indicating your geographic location. There will be no audible indicator when one enters or leaves, and everyone will be muted on entry. Please leave yourself muted unless giving ministry.

Ministry may also be shared in the chat, but it is not the place for private conversations. If you are new to Quaker unprogrammed worship and wish to talk with someone about it, send a message to the host and someone can join you in a breakout room.



Business Meeting Minutes

Chapel Hill Friends Meeting

Minutes, Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, December 21, 2025, online via Zoom

Present: Jennifer Leeman, Jeff Brown, Matt Drake, Tom Munk, Carolyn White, Dottie Heninger, Susan Newcomer, Curt Torell, Pam Schwingl, Ann Miller, Jan Hutton, Betsy Brinson, Astra Titus, Lloyd Kramer, David Waterman, Tom Ludlow, John Hite, Julia Cleaver, John Pilgrim, Hank Elkins, Buzz Borchardt, Carolyn Stuart, Alice Carlton, Dave Curtin, Gwynne Pomeroy, Colleen Fey, Lynn Drake, Quaker Harmon, Nancy Milio, Marion Schoenbach, Allie Scales, Hart Pillow, Ben Ousley

1. Meeting opened with worship and the query, “How does my Quaker faith help me remain hopeful?”

A Friend shared that his Quaker faith, supported by family and Friends, is helping him respond to the recent life altering condition of loss of vision in one eye.

2. The minutes of the November 2025 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business were approved as written.

3. On behalf of the nomination committee, John Hite requested approval of Ann Miller to serve as treasurer to replace Monteze Snyder. Friends approved the nomination with gratitude and enthusiasm.

4. Pam Schwingl presented the annual report of Friends Committee on North Carolina Legislation (FCNCL) ([Appendix A](#)). Friends accepted the report with appreciation for the work of the committee and for the FCNCL lobby days.

5. Jeff Brown, Clerk, read a request for membership from Margaret Vimmerstedt ([Appendix B](#)). Friends reflected on Margaret’s contributions to the Meeting over many years, with particular appreciation for her violin playing. Friends shared that her husband also attends Meeting, and that their son grew up in the Meeting and wrote a fine conscientious objector letter. The request was referred to Ministry and Worship Committee to begin their established process of responding to requests for membership.

6. Dottie Heninger read a report on the Spiritual Condition of the Meeting on behalf of Ministry & Worship Committee ([Appendix C](#)). A question was raised regarding how we might engage

younger Friends in future spiritual retreats; all participants in this year's retreat were all "above a certain age". Appreciation was expressed for the report and how well it captured where we are as a meeting. Friends accepted the report with gratitude.

7. Friends raised concerns about the military actions of the current administration, particularly in relation to Venezuela. The suggestion was made that Wayne Finegar from Quaker House or Steve and Lenore Yarger be invited to do a forum on the topic. Curt Torrel reported that the GI Hotline is seeing a substantial increase in calls including questions about what is a legal order as well as national guard deployments within the United States. Tom Munk asked Friends to hold his great niece, Kamyia, in the Light. She recently enlisted in the army.

8. Friends minuted appreciation for Monteze Snyder and the years she supported us as treasurer. During this time she dedicated many hours to solving multiple difficult situations. She leaves us with much cleaner guidelines for future treasurers and proposed solutions for future problems.

9. The next Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business is planned for 9:00 AM on January 18, 2026.

10. We closed with worship.

Jeff Brown, Clerk, and Jennifer Leeman, Recording Clerk

Appendix A: 2025 Annual Report of CHFM Representatives to FCNCL

FCNCL has been functioning since October 2019 under the care of the Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting. In 2025 FCNCL continued to educate ourselves and our participants about the NC General Assembly (NCGA) and to advocate for legislation that promotes Quaker values.

All of us working with FCNCL appreciate the continued spiritual guidance and support provided by North Carolina Fellowship of Friends, Piedmont Friends Fellowship, and by other Quaker organizations throughout the state. We have 24 volunteers actively engaged in four committees: FCNCL's activities: Policy Committee, Outreach and Engagement, Communications Committee, and Nominations Committee. These are shepherded by the Executive Committee, composed of Clerks of each committee as well as the Clerk, Pam Schwingl and Assistant Clerk, Tim Lindemann. We have consistently supported our commitment to antiracism in our work as we advocate for state policies that support our Quaker values and policy priorities. We appreciate the financial contributions from Meetings and individuals that support our outreach efforts.

Pam Schwingl, David Waterman, and Wendy Michener are currently the FCNCL representatives from the Chapel Hill Friends Meeting.

During this year, FCNCL's work during the NC General Assembly's Long Session (first of a two year cycle) has been led by policy priorities discerned in 2024:

- 1) Quality Public Education;
- 2) Protecting Participation in the Democratic Process for All;
- 3) Health and Safety of All North Carolina Residents;
- 4) Protection of the earth and healthy biosystems through the promotion of clean energy and clean air and water;
- 5) Criminal justice reform.

The Policy Committee. This committee followed a number of topics over the past year by studying the issues, legislative bills put forth, and NCGA committee assignments. In response to the legislative calendar and outputs, they prepared fact sheets, sent action alerts, communicated with Monthly Meetings and encouraged General Committee members to establish relationships with their representatives in the legislature. In addition, they chose the topic to pursue at the annual Advocacy Day, preparing training materials and approaches to advocacy.

Advocacy Day

- Quakers have worked for centuries on moving social change in a humane and progressive direction. Our North Carolina government, hand in hand with federal action, has been making rapid moves to eliminate much of the progressive change

of the last 50 years, and Quakers have rallied to speak up and be heard, which was reflected in the interest that was shown for our advocacy day on June 18, 2025.

1

Thirty (30) Quakers from across the state gathered for a brief training and meetings with state legislators to encourage them to support bills that align with our 2025-26 Priorities.

- Our primary focus this year was on environmental issues, and specifically, on the potential veto override of Senate Bill 266 which reversed bipartisan progress signed into law in 2021 that made commitments to move us towards carbon neutrality. Our view was the bill lacked safeguards for affordability or success, while weakening the accountability standards meant to guide North Carolina toward a stable energy future.
- One of our own FCNCL representatives, Wendy Michener, did considerable work on assessing attitudes for a veto override among House members. While the Governor's veto was overridden, and SB266 ultimately passed, we learned a great deal from Wendy's efforts.
- In October, FCNCL hosted our Annual Meeting of the General Committee at New Garden Friends Meeting in Greensboro.
 - We had approximately 40 people who registered for the hybrid meeting. Our keynote speaker was Justice Anita Earls. Selecting Justice Anita Earls for our speaker was driven by our priority of protecting participation in the Democratic process for all. It was also in response to the multiple NCGA attempts to undermine fair elections: voter suppression and gerrymandering, banning Rank Choice voting; and leadership and appointments changes to the NC Board of Elections.
 - Justice Earls has championed the importance of the Voting Rights Act and the right of each citizen to vote. In her address, Justice Earls voiced concern that the 1965 Voting Rights Act may soon be declared unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court. A case charging racially-based gerrymandering is now in federal courts. In 2026, Justice Earls will be on the ballot to maintain her seat on the court, and it is critically important that she remain on the bench, giving voice to concerns about democracy, fairness, and equity.
- Beyond the Advocacy Day focus on SB 266, FCNCL sent action alerts questing members to
 - 1) urge the NCGA to pass the NC Budget and meet the needs of North Carolinians
 - 2) urge the NCGA to sustain Gov. Stein's veto of HB 402 – the REINS ACT which proposed that any new rules proposed by state boards and commissions above a certain cost be approved by a two-thirds legislative majority; an unworkable requirement which threatens to hamstring the

state's responsibility to fulfill its fundamental obligation to protect public health, safety, and environmental quality.

3) Currently the committee is writing a comment to the U.S. EPA as it is moving to loosen reporting requirements for businesses that make or use

2

PFAS. The proposed rule would eliminate more than 97 percent of the information that would have been generated under current rules. There is a need for more information about PFAS especially in our state, not less, as PFAS is a public health issue of concern in North Carolina.

At the end of 2025, or the end of the first year of a two-year NCGA (North Carolina General Assembly) legislative session, the party which has opposed many of the efforts and priorities of FCNCL still has a veto-proof majority. While FCNCL mounted several efforts to support our concerns, in the end, even with the Governor's veto of many of the bills which did not favor our priorities, the legislature was able to override these vetoes and pass legislation which FCNCL did not support.

Communications, outreach and training Committee.

During 2025, FCNCL will have published 3 newsletters, and is currently working to expand the content to include reflections by various FCNCL Friends, reports from FCNCL committees, and information about other organizations doing similar work.

In the past the Outreach and Engagement committee has conducted trainings and is currently seeking new members of this committee who have skills in training, social media, and outreach.

The FCNCL website contains much valuable information including newsletters, our Anti-Racism statement, archived Action Alerts, Fact Sheets, and our Legislative Priorities for the 2025-2026 legislative session. The committees together are looking at ways of improving the website.

Contributions and expenses.

The organization has no paid staff but is powered by volunteers from meetings across the state of North Carolina. The total reported contributions to FCNCL from meetings and individuals amounted to **\$4,561.00**. We ended the year with a balance of **\$12,767.53**.

Another state-wide FCNCL Lobby/Advocacy Day in Raleigh will take place this spring, and we are awaiting on developments around several bills/issues to set a specific date. Once this is set, we welcome **Meeting members and attenders to join us!** More information will be available soon.

FCNCL welcomes any who are committed to Quaker advocacy in NC to visit a committee meeting; craft policy Alerts and fact sheets; help the Communications group develop and issue announcements; send friends to FCNCL's website to grow our membership; and most importantly -- respond to Alerts and build relationships with your representatives! Please ask your FCNCL representatives for times, etc. of meetings.

Respectfully submitted, Pam Schwingl, Presiding Clerk; David Waterman, Policy Committee Member, Wendy Michener, Policy Committee Member

Appendix B: Margaret Vimmersted Request for Membership

To Jeff Brown, Clerk

9 December 2025

Dear Jeff,

I have been attending CHFM for over 15 years and would like to seek membership.

I have been nurtured and learned from ARE fora and small groups at CHFM. I have enjoyed the community of like-minded people. All my life, I have wished people would not fight but solve their problems diplomatically. I believe in equality and inclusion. I think it is important that we encourage people to seek their own beliefs, Not tell them what to believe.

Sincerely,

Margaret Vimmersted

Appendix C: Spiritual Condition of our Meeting

On November 15, 2025, twenty-one members and attenders of the Chapel Hill Friends Meeting gathered virtually via Zoom from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM to discern the spiritual condition of our Meeting. Carolyn White, clerk of our Ministry and Worship Committee, began the session by inviting us into centering silence. The group then divided into three small groups to address the first of two queries provided by the Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting and Fellowship. Our three groups formed anew to deliberate on the second query.

The first query focused on the Meeting's collective experience of the Spirit, while the second invited reflection on individual experiences of nourishment and sustenance within the Meeting. Notably, many responses touched on both corporate and individual aspects, highlighting the interconnectedness of our experiences. Each small group included a scribe from the Ministry and Worship Committee, who summarized their group's discernments for the larger gathering.

Query #1: How Has Our Meeting Experienced the Working of the Spirit This Year?

The reports revealed a strong consensus among the groups. A recurring theme was the appreciation for opportunities the Meeting creates to deepen relationships, including small group meetings in homes, committee work, potlucks, and the Hospitality Committee's efforts to foster conversation and connection after Meeting for Worship. Members also valued Meetings for Healing and Holding in the Light, as well as the sharing of joys and sorrows at the end of Meeting for Worship. The benefits of holding blended meetings and utilizing Zoom were acknowledged, with gratitude expressed for the dedication of our technology hosts.

We welcome our new Peace and Justice Committee and are grateful for new members and leadership. Participants noted the significant benefits of participating in PFYM gatherings. We valued the Adult Religious Education Committee's forums for highlighting Quaker testimonies and promoting discussion of wider social issues. These opportunities to gather, and our work together on other committees, have strengthened our Meeting this year.

Query #2: What Have You Found Nourishing and Sustaining from Your Meeting Community?

Several participants shared the joy of returning to in-person worship after the isolation of the pandemic, emphasizing its renewed importance this year. The continuation of hybrid and Zoom meetings is valued, ensuring that all who wish to attend Meeting for Worship have the opportunity to do so. Members recounted experiences of support during personal challenges, including the sharing of meals, sending of caring notes, and holding one another in the Light. These acts of kindness and care are woven into the fabric of our Meeting.

Participation in Meeting activities builds friendships, a sense of belonging and of being known. We are grateful for the experience of Meeting for Worship itself: "It's very cozy. I have such gratitude and joy." One Friend expressed appreciation for elders and for more experienced Quakers. From them and others in Meeting, "The Quaker way becomes clearer as a sense of being grounded in the Spirit and carries over to our presence in settings outside of Friends' circles."

The community is strengthened by the presence of visitors and the upcoming celebrations of new members. Participants expressed delight when children join Meeting for Worship, and gratitude for men from the Orange Correctional Center who share their lives with us, enriching our collective experience.

Being part of this blessed community calls each of us to be responsible: to bring our best selves to our shared work. Pay attention to the Spirit, to the condition of our members and attenders. Quakerism, as practiced in our Meeting, is a way of life that invites, indeed requires, attentiveness and readiness to serve.

One member reflected on the growth she experienced through serving the Meeting and the encouragement she received over the years. Another noted that entering the meeting room brings a sense of comfort, belonging, and acceptance — “These are my people.”

A third query arose: How can CHFM do better or what more can we do?

Participants are eager to learn more about Native Americans and Quaker boarding schools. We would also like to work with and become more attuned to other faith communities.

After sharing our responses to the queries with the larger group, we concluded the gathering with silent worship and deep gratitude for one another and for the Meeting.

Dottie Heninger
Recorder

Chapel Hill Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends
531 Raleigh Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27514
Resident: John Hite (919) 929-5377