

May 2025



The Friendly News

<p>Friends Meeting of San Antonio (Quakers) 7052 N. Vandiver (at Eisenhower) San Antonio, Texas 78209</p>	<p>Message Phone: 210.945.8456 Website: www.sanantonioquakers.org Facebook: @saquakers</p>
<p>Our Meeting house is built on the Payaya People’s land.</p>	

SCYM Addresses Trump Administration

South Central Yearly Meeting approved the following minute declaring that administration policies are incompatible with Quaker faith and practice. This will be sent to the President and his Cabinet, leaders in the House and the Senate, and all Yearly Meetings in the U.S.

**South Central Yearly Meeting
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
Minute Regarding the Trump Administration
April 19, 2025**

As members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) from Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas; we are guided by the Light within, seeking to live in accordance with our testimonies of peace, integrity, equality, simplicity, community, and stewardship. Our faith leads us to uphold the inherent worth and dignity of every person and to act with compassion, justice, and nonviolence in all areas of life regardless of race, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, or immigration status.

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Advice for May

How do we recognize and respond to our responsibility to protect and uplift the most vulnerable among us, actively seeking ways to ensure their dignity, safety, and well-being?

May 2025 Calendar

Regular Activities

- **Sunday Meetings for Worship**, 10:00-11:00
 - In-person in Meetinghouse and on Zoom
- **First Day School Children's Program**, every Sunday, 10:00-11:00
 - Childcare is available during forums and Meetings for Business
- **Midweek Meeting for Worship at Gary and Vivian's home**
 - First Wednesday of each month, 7:00 PM
 - 307 E. Mistletoe Avenue (between McCullough and St. Mary's, we will keep the colored lights on)
 - Please join us!
- **Potluck Lunch** - 1st Sunday, 11:30-12:30
- **Sunday Forums** - 2nd & 4th Sundays, 11:30-12:30
 - In-person in Meetinghouse and on Zoom
- **Meeting for Worship with Attention To Business**; 3rd Sunday, 11:30-12:30
 - In-person in Meetinghouse and on Zoom
- **Friday Meeting for Worship**, 8:00-8:30 am, Zoom only
- **"Meeting for Weeding,"** 3rd Saturday, 8:30-12:30
- For ALL Zoom Meetings:
 - [CLICK HERE](#) to join by Zoom; ID # 976 0522 6497; passcode: 194077
 - by telephone at +1 346 248 7799, then enter ID#

Special Events

May 4	Collection for People with Needs
May 11	Forum: SA Stands
May 17	Meeting for Weeding, 8:30-12:30
May 25	Forum: Writing a Statement of Conscientious Objection to War and Violence

First Day School Schedule

May 4	Cooking for Potluck with Gretchen
May 11	Equalizing Forces, or Floating Rainbows
May 18	Equality is for You and Me
May 25	Stories of Nonviolence in Action

May Forums

On May 11, a guest from SA Stands will visit us to tell us about their program. More information about SA Stands is available at <https://sastands.info/>

It is useful to have articulated a Statement of Conscience about War and Violence. On May 25, Val will offer a forum in which we will use worshipful reflection, journaling, and worship sharing to begin the process to arrive at our own Statements. Resources for further work and publication of our Statements will be offered.

Community Updates

FMSA is continuing to collect items for people in need. This collection will only take place each First Day (Sunday) of each month. A collection box will be on the breezeway outside the Meeting Room entrance. The items will be delivered later in the week. Watch the weekly announcements for specific needs for each upcoming month.

Current needs for the May 4th collection:

- Food staples are still the biggest need: rice, oil, salt, sugar, and pasta.
- After that, toiletries, diapers (multiple sizes), and wipes.

SCYM Addresses the Trump Administration

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We are moved to speak plainly at this time, as we witness policies and rhetoric from the Trump administration that contradict our most deeply held religious beliefs. When a government disregards constitutional norms and the rule of law, attacks the legitimacy of elections, or acts with impunity; it breaks the sacred trust between citizen and state. We are called by the Spirit to witness against such abuse with steadfast love.

We affirm that:

- **Peace** is not compatible with the glorification of military force, the erosion of diplomacy and cooperation, or the targeting of marginalized communities through rhetoric or action, whether through foreign policy or within our own borders.
- **Integrity** cannot flourish in an environment where falsehoods are routinely disseminated, public trust in democratic institutions is undermined, and accountability is disregarded.

- **Equality** is denied when policies promote the discrimination of people of color, intolerance of religious diversity, restrict immigration and asylum, and marginalize LGBTQ+ individuals, women, and the poor.
- **Simplicity** is intentionally replaced with chaos and confusion when officials use inflammatory rhetoric, barrage us with contradictory statements, engage in outright lies, and rely on social media and executive fiat to willfully bypass the deliberative processes that are the cornerstone of our democracy.
- **Community** is broken when leaders sow division by implicitly and explicitly bullying and threatening those with whom they disagree, scapegoat vulnerable groups, and reject collective responsibility for public health, climate stewardship, and the common good.
- **Stewardship** is abandoned when we fail to nurture all that has been entrusted to us — not for personal gain, but for the well-being of all, including generations yet to come. The failure to uphold this responsibility reflects not care, but consumption. Not service, but self-interest.

We recognize that no political administration perfectly reflects our values. However, we find the words and actions of the Trump administration cruel at its core and its disregard for truth, embrace of violence, and the dehumanization of others purposefully egregious and harmful.

We speak from a place of profound religious conscience, not from partisanship.

We call on all people of faith and goodwill to examine the spiritual cost of complicity and silence. We seek to live out our testimonies not only in worship, but in public witness, advocacy, and loving resistance.

We reaffirm our commitment to justice, compassion, and nonviolence, and we invite others to join us in building a more just and peaceful world.

SCYM Approves Minute Regarding Genocide in Gaza

South Central Yearly Meeting has been objecting to U.S. complicity with the war in Gaza since its beginning. The following minute was approved at the 2025 SCYM annual sessions in April and will be sent to the President, Secretary of Defense, Secretary of State, and key senators and representatives working on the Armed Services and Foreign Affairs committees.

2025 South Central Yearly Meeting Gaza Minute

Because of our testimonies of integrity and equality and our commitment to peaceful resolution to conflicts, Quakers from Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas call on our US government to end American complicity in genocide as defined by the International Genocide Convention. We know that many of our elected officials support the Trump and Netanyahu administrations' actions. To be silent in these horrific times is to be complicit in genocide ourselves.

We call on our president, senators and representatives to follow, rather than violate, US and international law by:

- Ensuring the immediate delivery and distribution of humanitarian aid to civilians in Gaza and ceasing to provide the equipment, materials, and supplies that are used in the support of the genocide.
- Condemning US and Israeli statements and actions relating to ethnically cleansing Gaza of Palestinians as we do for any people anywhere.
- Denouncing the Trump administration's tactic of supporting the genocide by punishing Americans, students and others for their speech critical of the genocide.

We therefore call on our president, senators and representatives to:

- Stop all attempts to cancel visas and deport people (who are in the US legally and) whose only supposed crime is their speech, whether expressed orally, in writing, or through non-violent protest.

Quaker Questions

What happens when I enter a Quaker Meeting for Worship?

In San Antonio, Meeting for Worship officially starts at 10:00 am. However, the Meeting begins when the first person enters the meeting room and settles into silence, regardless of the time. This happens regularly in San Antonio. Turn off all alarms. You should plan to enter as though Meeting has already started. There is no minister, nor program of worship.

As you pass through the outer doors, make sure they close gently. You can grab a back cushion if you like; then peer through the slats on the inner door to make sure no one is standing and speaking. We don't enter or leave while ministry is being vocalized. If all is clear, enter the meeting room quietly and find a seat. The Meeting continues in silent waiting worship until someone is led by the Spirit to share vocal ministry. As often as not, Meetings may remain gathered in the silence for our entire time together.

When giving ministry, we stand, if able. We allow significant space (more than may be comfortable for newcomers) between messages to allow time for reflection, and we do not respond to ministry as we might in a conversation. Ministry is about the truth given to us by the Spirit, and we each must determine if that ministry is for us alone or to be shared. At the end of about one hour, the clerk or their designee will close worship, at which time we greet one another and share news with one another.

Are you curious about other Quaker faith and practice matters? Let us know! Email ministry@saquakers.org with your questions and we'll respond in future newsletters.

Reflections on Friends Journal

By Frances Frey

The March 2025 issue of the Friends Journal included six feature articles about neurodiversity in Friends meetings. This issue felt personal to me because both of my children are neurodiverse, and FMSA was one of the few places where I felt like they were not just accepted but loved when they were young. The author of *Quaker Meetings as Neurodivergent-Affirming Spaces* described Quakerism as “a movement that was founded on upholding difference... it is a place where it is possible to be 'proudly weird.'” I wonder if it's because Quakers believe that there is that of God in everyone, that we are able to embrace the many packages that God comes in.

In *Centering Up: Becoming the Self God Made Me to Be*, the author describes her challenges with silent worship as a person with ADHD. I recognized my younger son in her statement, “My body is rarely able to quiet enough to cease movement. I joke that my primary spiritual practice is fidgeting.” Yet, despite her challenges, the author describes a deep spiritual practice, asking, “Have you ever seen a drop of water resting on a body of water, and then, suddenly, the surface tension of the individual drop breaks, and it dissolves into the body? Sometimes that happens for me in meeting for worship.” Ultimately, the author describes her own process of “centering up,” which means “turning outward to allow distractions to become reminders of the Holy Spirit’s abiding presence.”

In an article called *I Found the Quaker Sasquatch*, the author describes being curious about Quakers but never seeking them out because, in Texas, “the Quakers were like Sasquatch: they most likely didn’t exist, but if they did, they certainly wouldn’t be here in Texas.” It wasn’t until a TV series she binge-watched during the pandemic got her researching Quakers that the author learned there was a Quaker meeting where she lived. She described feeling like her autism has given her a strong sense of justice and that she has found her spiritual home in the Quaker community, which shows empathy and passion for the world around them.

In *Quietly Present: Neurodiverse Voices in Worship*, the author describes growing up as a Quaker and feeling a true sense of acceptance and belonging despite her apraxia and dyspraxia, both of which affect her movement and coordination, including speech. Although she struggles with a constant flow of thoughts and restless energy in meeting, she is learning to “think of it as an invitation to be present with the mind as it is, as God made” her.

The final two articles, *Finding What Works For Us: On Accommodating Neurodivergent Friends* and *Shifting System Paradigms Together* focused on accommodations and how shifting from a neurotypical mindset benefits everyone in the meeting. One author wrote, “We neurodivergent folks work so hard to fit in, consciously or unconsciously wearing a mask in order to be accepted. Ultimately, even if the neurodivergence isn’t recognized, it still benefits everyone in a meeting to have the vocabulary for discussing needs and accommodations.”

As I read these six articles, I was struck by how many of the challenges neurodiverse people face are amplifications of challenges we all face, and how accommodating neurodiverse friends makes meetings more welcoming for everyone. If any of these topics interest you, I encourage you to check out this issue online at the [Friends Journal website](#).

Friends World Committee for Consultation

By Rachael Cundey

On March 2nd, I had the joy of joining Friends World Committee for Consultation for Global Worship hosted by the Europe and Middle East Section.

A Friend shared that there are only about 10 Quakers in Austria. They enjoy worship together in Vienna, often with some visiting Friends from around the world. A Friend from Ireland shared about their strong Children's Program, including children's yearly meeting and classic games like "Committees" and "Stack the Quaker."

Friends in Ukraine are endeavoring to support conscientious objectors as the war continues. Conscientious objectors there report torture, imprisonment, and forcible conscription as punishment for their stand for peace. Communication between Quaker Meetings in Ukraine and the Ukrainian government has so far been unsuccessful in resolving this issue.

I spoke personally with three Friends from Kenya. They are very concerned with the increase in deportations in the United States and happy to hear about the lawsuit Friends General Conference joined concerning immigration enforcement in houses of worship. Their loved ones are also being affected by the freeze on federal aid, with some losing jobs at local aid organizations due to lack of funds. They were interested to hear what Friends in the U.S. have been thinking and doing with regard to reparations. They were also concerned that Friends from some countries with poor internet connectivity could not join us on Zoom. We considered together how to connect and collaborate across the digital divide.

The Kenyan Friends also asked for prayers for those in the Democratic Republic of the Congo during this time of violence and displacement. They are praying for Friends in the United States as well, and they noted the importance of tying prayer to action.

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