

February 2026



The Friendly News

Friends Meeting of San Antonio (Quakers)

7052 N. Vandiver (at Eisenhower)
San Antonio, Texas 78209

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Our Meeting house is built on the Payaya People's land.

Threshing Session on Religious Education

By Rebecca Cole Sullivan

Why are we calling a Threshing Session?

Please join us after worship on March 8 for a threshing session about the focus of our religious education program. Over the last year, we have reinstituted religious education for the Young Friends and expanded the focus for adult RE. As we have done that work, conflicting opinions and a lack of cohesion around larger goals of the programs have cropped up.

At November's Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, the gathered body asked for this session in response to the report from the Religious Education Committee. To fully ground this work, I have reached out to the Yearly Meeting's Ministry and Care committee. A member of SCYM's M&C committee will join us to clerk this threshing session. Even though we have a single committee in charge of religious education, the whole meeting has a role to play in this work.

[continued on page 3]

Query for February

How does my Quakerism reveal itself in my relations and interactions with others?

February 2026 Calendar

Regular Activities

- **Sunday Meetings for Worship**, 10:00 - 11:00 AM
 - In-person in the Meetinghouse and on Zoom
- **First Day School Children's Program**, every Sunday, 10:00 - 11:00 AM
 - Childcare is available during forums and Meetings for Business
- **Midweek Meeting for Worship** - 1st Wednesday, 7:00 - 8:00 PM
- **Potluck Lunch** - 1st Sunday, 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM
- **Sunday Forums** - 2nd & 4th Sundays, 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM
 - In-person in the Meetinghouse and on Zoom
- **Meeting for Worship with Attention To Business**; 3rd Sunday, 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM
 - In-person in the Meetinghouse and on Zoom
- **Friday Meeting for Worship**, 8:00 - 8:30 AM, Zoom only
- **"Meeting for Weeding,"** 3rd Saturday, 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM
- 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

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| February 1 | Collection for people in need [see weekly announcements for details] |
| February 4 | Midweek Meeting for Worship at Gretchen's, 7:00 PM - Email newsletter@squakers.org for the address if you are interested in attending. |
| February 8 | Forum: Leada Dietz - What is a Faith and Practice, and Why Write One? (invited speaker via Zoom) |
| February 22 | Forum: Steve Angell - Quaker History through the Umbrella Organizations (invited speaker via Zoom) |

Threshing Session

[continued from p. 1]

Let's join together in worship to hear the variety of wants, needs, and experiences. No decisions will be made during the threshing session. Childcare will be provided for the whole time, and additional snacks will be provided to help us stay centered during this conversation.

The following article provides information about the nature of a threshing session ([LINK](#)).

Threshing Session Explainer

From "Meeting Space Threshing Process" by Martha Niemann
(<https://ecquakers.org/article/meetingspace-threshing-process>):

The purpose of a threshing session is to provide a forum where Friends may hear one another's truths, a variety of differing opinions, and absorb information around a complex, controversial, or emotionally charged issue. Expression of diversity of opinion is welcomed and is one of the goals. The overriding desire is to sort out what is important from the multiplicity of available information and opinion. The threshing session differs from a typical Meeting for Business and Worship in that Friends are urged to express themselves openly and passionately; Friends may speak more than once, speak to a point previously made, or ask a question. It is more helpful to the Meeting to address difficult issues openly, rather than to hold back for fear of offending. "Hesitancy to share a strong conviction because it may offend someone, reflects a lack of trust." (Quaker Process for Friends on the Benches, Mathilda Navias).

This trust in each other is what makes community strong. We can be open and honest with each other if we trust that all will hold the other in tenderness, remembering that there is that of God in everyone.

Here are some helpful ground rules:

- No decision will be made in this gathering.
- Come with a sense of humility and openness to new insights and to learn about differing experiences.
- Listen to each person and receive their thoughts.
- Each person has the opportunity to declare what he or she is thinking, feeling, and perceiving.
- Speak from personal experience.

Some practicalities should be noted. Full notice of the planned threshing session will be given to all, in order to allow full participation. No minutes will be developed from the session; however, notes may be taken to capture ideas and information that may be useful in later decision-making. A recommendation may be forwarded to the meeting for worship with attention to business for further 5 discernment. Length of the session is approximately 2 hours; if more time is needed for all to be heard, extension or additional sessions can be made.

get to know your Friends

Friends Meeting of San Antonio

Gretchen Haynes' parents divorced when she was 4, and she lived with both alternately. She grew up in a lesbian family and found nothing strange about the various relationships. This contributed to her openness to people not like herself. She has been an elementary school teacher, an ESL and community college English teacher, and the director of a Writing Center. She has served on the board of FGC. Since retiring, she has become a potter with a full studio, and she regularly sells her ceramics. She loves making soup and calls it her ministry.



How many states and/or countries have you lived in?

After college, I traveled through Europe by hitchhiking and bike. I lived in England for over a year and worked for United Press as a secretary to the Bureau Chief in 1956-7. I met my husband there, and we were married in '57. We came to New York for work and stayed on. Our two children were born there.

Where did you attend your first Quaker Meeting?

At Oberlin College, but did not attend regularly until 1958. We joined Westbury M M in 1958.

Which of the Quaker testimonies speaks to you most right now?

I was initially drawn to the Peace Testimony during the Vietnam War. Now I think Simplicity is the most compelling.

What is sustaining you right now?

Trying to find simplicity in my daily life.

1

Modern or Vintage

VINTAGE

2

Coffee or Tea

TEA

3

Music or Podcasts

MUSIC

4

Dine In or Dine Out

DINE OUT

Reflections

Our clerk Rebecca shared these thought-provoking advices and a query at the Clerks & Conveners Meeting on January 24.

"Unity suggests to us not agreement or sameness of viewpoint, but a oneness of purpose that instructs our life together. and so it is not necessarily completed, but always underway, moving us beyond maintaining images, even our Quaker image. When we are divided, we are challenged to think of where our unity exists.." Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting, 1989

"Friends' meetings for business are conducted in the same manner of expectant waiting as are meetings of worship. Aware that we meet in the presence of God, Friends seek to discover and implement God's will." - South Central Yearly Meeting Draft Faith and Practice, pg. 22

"Do we recognize that the search for unity may require us to accept with good grace a decision with which we are not entirely in agreement?" - SCYM Draft Faith and Practice, pg. 22

Community Updates

News from Nuevos Vecinos

Nuevos Vecinos, whom FMSA supports with monthly donations, has had a busy year. You can find out more about their work in their [recent newsletter](#). (Due to formatting difficulties, the links from the original newsletter are not live in this document. If you're interested in getting access to any of these links, email newsletter@saquakers.org and we'll get the information to you.)

Morning Light in the Meetingroom

Photo by Jim Spickard



The Library is Open for Business!

By Greg Koehler

General Circulation: If you'd like to check out a book from the collection, simply fill out the card inside the book [with your name, the date you borrowed it, and a method of contact] and place it in the black index card box. If there is no card in the book, take a blank index card from the black index card box, fill it out with the title of the book you're borrowing and the rest of the information, then place it back in the box. There is currently no limit to how long you can borrow items from the library, but if you have had an item for longer than a year, someone from the Library working group might get in touch to ask about its status.

Kids' Library: A small, curated selection of books for kids and young adults is now available on the short bookshelf under the dry-erase board. There is currently no process for checking out these books, but if you (or your kids) would like to borrow one (or more!), please feel free. If you/they would like to keep one of the books for yourself/themselves (which is welcome!), please let us know that you've adopted it by placing a note on a card in the black circulation index card box (and we can evaluate whether to replace it in the collection).

Free Books Shelf: Books on the tall brown shelf marked "Free Books" are available for permanent adoption! If you would like to give away books, you are also welcome to put books ON the Free Books Shelf. Once the Free Books Shelf is completely full, we'll start thinning the

selection and donating surplus books to the Book Cellar shop at the Central Public Library (or another deserving non-profit). We'll notify everyone during Meeting if that kind of de-accessioning is taking place so that folks have one last chance to take books from the selection available.

Special thanks to Von and others from the Property Committee for the hard work they did to clean and organize the library in the last year. We will be continuing to move things around and tidy up, but the project has a good start thanks to these efforts.

Other Friendly News

Quaker Journey 2026 with Carolina Friends School: Exploring the Roots of Quakerism in England's Lake District

Karen Porter from Austin Friends asked us to share this opportunity with the FMSA community. She is going on the trip for her 3rd time and has offered to answer any questions. She says it's a really great trip and that they'd love to have more Texans!

<https://www.cfsnc.org/extended-learning/adult-enrichment/quaker-journey>

Friends Music Camp

Friends Music Camp (FMC) is a Quaker music camp with a mission to create a caring, inclusive community through music. FMC was founded in 1980 and ran continuously until the pandemic. They are relaunching an in-person camp at Goshen College next summer, from July 5-19.

FMC accepts students ages 10-17 who play any instrument (including voice) at any level. FMC is a non-competitive camp, focused on learning and growth through collaboration. Campers sing in choir, perform with small and large ensembles for their instrument, take lessons, and learn new repertoire during camp.

FMC would love to connect with any students who might be interested in attending!

- FMC can set up a presentation for prospective students and parents, either virtually or in person. They're also holding some general virtual sessions open to anyone; anyone interested can [register here](#).
- FMC is also happy to speak directly with parents or campers about FMC. If anyone at the Meeting is interested, they can email friendmusiccamp@gmail.com to schedule a time to chat!
- FMC's website is friendsmusiccamp.org. It has lots more details about the camp, along with the camp registration form for any campers who would like to attend.
- FMC is also on Facebook and Instagram, which are great places to follow them for news and updates. For those who are not so fond of social media these days, FMC also has an email list that anyone can join to get updates.

If you're interested in hearing a personal perspective, talk to Bill and Denise W. Their daughters Pam and Jocelyn were involved with FMC for many years, both as campers and staff, and Pam is still actively involved as part of the coordinating team. .

Please feel free to send this information to anyone, friends or Friends, who you think would like to hear about FMC!

Phil Gulley on Quaker Call to Action

Noted Quaker pastor, writer, and speaker Phil Gulley was the featured speaker at the national Zoom call presented by the [Quaker Call to Action](#) on January 25. Over 1000 participants joined in the call. As stated in an email from the Quaker Call, "Phil's message, ***From Exhaustion to Enthusiasm: Joyful Resistance in a Time of Tyranny***, was unflinching in its description of the tyranny that surrounds us, while at the same time reminding us that we are called upon to persevere with enthusiasm, joy, and humor in seeking and speaking truth to power. We believe that Phil's message could be a long-lasting testimony to hope at this time in the resistance." You can see a video of Phil's presentation at <https://quakercall.net/video-phil-gulley>.

Personal Notes

A personal friend of Pam S died recently, leaving behind her cat, Piglet. Piglet is now in need of a new home.

Born 20 years ago in 2006, Piglet is a San Antonio native. Most of her life was spent in the company of dad, Bill W, who was a really smart guy (of course, he was, he chose Piglet as his feline owner), who passed away suddenly during an outpatient procedure. Here, Patricia M entered Piglet's life when she discovered her in Bill's home, all matted with claws grown into her paw pads. She was sharing the home with a large dog reputed to be part wolf. Pat kept the cat and had others care for the dog. Pat quickly got Piglet to Alamo Feline Health Center, where they made her feel lots better and, with the help of her previous vet, got her on the appropriate meds for her condition. Pat also learned she was 19 at that time. Thinking that there was no way a 19-year-old cat would outlive her since she just turned 80, Pat gave Piglet a furever home, until Pat suddenly passed away from leukemia on 7 Jan 2026. Piglet spent Christmas and New Years eve 2025 alone at Pat's, but was cared for by her friends and a wonderful cat sitter, Kristy.

Now we are looking for a fur-ever home for Piglet. Piglet is above all a lap cat. She still very much enjoys a romp with her fishing pole toy with the pink fish. She still stands on her hind legs to bat at the fish. She occasionally indulges in catnip and loves a good squeeze treat. Daily brushing is a favorite time for her, but she does request that only the techs at Alamo Feline do her mani-pedis. Piglet's dream home would be with a single person or couple where she is the only fur-baby.

If you are missing the sound of meows & purrs in your life, talk to Pam S at Meeting for Worship or email PigletForever@aol.com. Please do not repost on social media.



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We welcome input for newsletters. Please email newsletter@saquakers.org
if you have any news, articles, poetry, etc. to share. Photos are great, too!

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