

September 2026



The Friendly News

Friends Meeting of San Antonio (Quakers)

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San Antonio, Texas 78209

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

Call to Service

By Bill Wilkinson

Nominating Committee is looking for steady hands and faithful hearts to step forward into various positions of responsibility. Most of us are juggling the multiple concerns of daily living; yet we ask you to consider committee service to the Meeting—not because it is easy or convenient, but because it is faithful.

This is not a call to sacrifice everything, nor to add another thing to an already crowded calendar. This is a call to grounded, Spirit-led engagement with each other. A call to listen, to discern, and, when way opens, to serve well with Friends.

Your experience, your insights, your presence—they matter. You are essential to our Meeting, and our community needs you and your gifts.

Please consider what you can offer the Meeting and reach out to Bill W., Pat S., Lisa C., or Rob F. if you are led to do so.

[See related article, Opportunities for Service, on p.3]

Query for September

How do you like to prepare for meeting? How often do you give yourself time and space to do so?

September 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
- **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 - 11:30 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#

Upcoming Events

September 13	Forum: SCYM Faith & Practice : Testifying to the Life of the Spirit
September 19	Meeting for Weeding, 8:30-11:30 am
September 27	Forum: What is Quaker Leadership?, with Rebecca

Sad News

We lost two beloved long-time members of Friends Meeting of San Antonio this past week. James Goslin died on Monday, August 31, 2026 and David Bristol died on Tuesday, September 1, 2026. James' obituary is available at [this link](#). Ministry & Care is planning their memorial meetings with their families. We will share that information and their memorial minutes in future newsletters and weekly announcements. Please hold their loved ones in the Light.

Opportunities for Service

Frances needs to step back from her service as newsletter editor, so we have an opportunity for service! It would certainly be great to have a designated editor. But we also welcome any individual submissions - articles, reflections, poems, photos, etc. Or maybe you would like to take on a regular column (like the Get to Know Your Friends column). We're open to ideas! If you're interested, please email newsletter@saquakers.org or talk to Denise.

We also have openings on the Zoom team. This involves setting up the equipment, hosting during Meeting for Worship, and taking equipment down and returning it to the storage closet. You don't have to be super-techie to do this. We'll train you! If you're interested, talk to Carol R. or email tech@saquakers.org.

Queries and Advices

Thank you to Whitman and Suzanne for our September query!

The Ministry & Care committee welcomes submissions of spirit-led queries and advices to use each month.

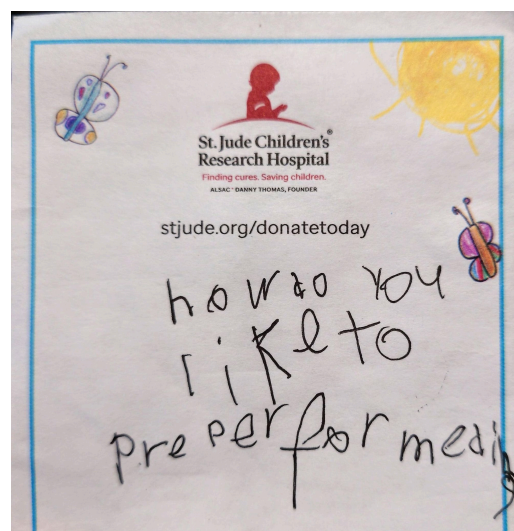
But what are queries, anyway?

Queries are a tradition that asks us to look inward and helps guide the way we are called to interact in the world. Here is a quote from "A Query Buff Looks at Queries," by Barry Morley, in the [May 1988 edition of Friends Journal](#):

"I want queries that look beyond expected behavior. I want queries that go deeper than proper responses to Quaker concerns. I yearn for something that touches my core, that holds me to my center, that speaks primarily of inward essence. If I am centered in the power of the Spirit that dwells in me, I reason, outward manifestations will take care of themselves."

More about queries and advices can be found on p.26 of the newly-adopted [South Central Yearly Meeting Faith & Practice](#).

Email ministry@saquakers.org if a query or advice arises that you wish to share.

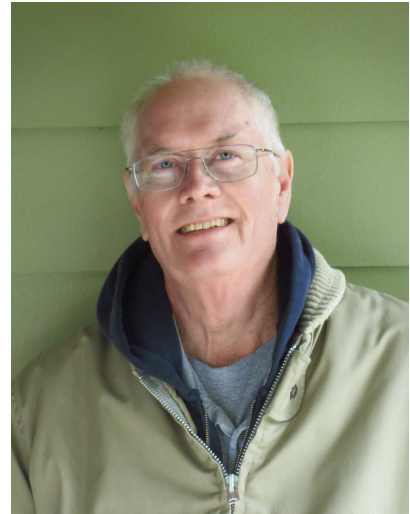


Doug Balfour: Memorial Remembrance

By Gary Whiting

In a recent Meeting for Worship, I found myself thinking of Doug Balfour, a longstanding member of our Meeting whom we lost to cancer some years ago. I believe I was thinking of Doug because of a conversation I had just had with visiting traveling minister Emily Provance, who works to bridge the divide between people of ideological differences. One such fracture actually exists within the full spectrum of Quakerism, between Friends who are more universal in their spiritual searching and those who are firmly Christ-oriented.

Doug considered himself a devout Christian, though had an active and searching mind. He and I did a forum years ago on the similarities between unprogrammed Friends and Taoism. Here is a funny story: Between us we had 9 different translations of the Tao Te Ching, and given that Chinese language units are pictograms rather than letters, and given that the Tao Te Ching is written in deliberately mysterious epigrams, you can imagine the wide disparity in some of the translations. We would read them aloud, and Doug was masterful at sifting through to the essentials and articulating it all back in some pithy form that was all his own.



So in the months before he died, when it became difficult to leave his hermit-like apartment, I would visit with him there. Here is the memory that I wish to share: One day, I sit down and without much preview, Doug tells me that he has been shown that week “why God loved his son Jesus so much.” Well, says I, please tell me what you have been shown, Doug. He goes on to say, “God was always being surprised and delighted by how far Jesus could take love and forgiveness, farther than even God knew was possible.” Now we all have seen people who have a certain radiance, particularly when pleased or excited, but I was moved by the light coming from Doug’s face during this exchange. He went on to explain how, when Christ was being tortured to death for a message of love, in looking down at the people jeering at his extremity, he was moved to ask “Father, please forgive them, they know not what they do.” Doug wanted me to understand that THIS was the moment of mankind’s redemption: not a sacrificial death, but penetrating insight that we mortals just don’t KNOW yet to treat kindness and mercy as an ultimate. That we are still ignorant, and therefore worthy of tolerance and patience. And that in the centuries to come, the reality of this death and this asking for forgiveness (on our behalf) would change everything.

That was our Friend Doug.

Rilke Poems

Rilke's The Book of Hours: Love Poems to God

Translated by Anita Barrows and Joanna Macy

*Last year a group of Friends, led by Gary, were studying Rainer Maria Rilke's **The Book of Hours**. They had planned a forum to share some of the poems that had spoken to each of them, but Meeting for Worship and forum were canceled that day due to bad weather. We will share a few of the selected poems each month. No doubt Gary and the other participants would love to discuss them with you!*

I have many brothers in the South
who move, handsome in their vestments,
through cloister gardens.
The Madonnas they make are so human,
and I dream often of their Titians,
where God becomes an ardent flame.

But when I lean over the chasm of myself –
it seems
my God is dark
and like a web: a hundred roots
silently drinking.

This is the ferment I grow out of.

More I don't know, because my branches
rest in deep silence, stirred only by the
wind.

I, 3

You are the future,
the red sky before sunrise
over the fields of time.

You are the cock's crow when night is done,
you are the dew and the bells of matins,
maiden, stranger, mother, death.

You create yourself in ever-changing
shapes
that rise from the stuff of our days –
unsung, unmourned, undescribed,
like a forest we never knew.

You are the deep innerness of all things,
the last word that can never be spoken.
To each of us you reveal yourself differently:
to the ship as coastline, to the shore as a
ship.

II, 22

Learning Opportunities

As our younger set heads back to a new school year, some of us not-as-young Friends might be interested in these opportunities to continue our lifelong learning journey.

[Academy of Learning in Retirement](#) - North East ISD (Thanks to Pam S for this tip)

[San Antonio Oasis](#)

[North East ISD Adult & Community Education](#)

[Northside ISD Community Education](#)

[San Antonio Public Library Events Calendar](#)

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<https://sanantonioquakers.org/newsletters/>

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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