



CHILDREN'S EDUCATION AT THE
CHAPEL HILL FRIENDS MEETING

2013-2014

The Chapel Hill Monthly Meeting (Quaker) provides nursery care for infants and toddlers and a religious education program for children from age three years through high school every “First Day” (Sunday).

The Children and Youth Religious Education Committee (CYRE) oversees all of the children’s programs. The goals of the programs are to instill Quaker values (e.g., simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, stewardship) through instruction and example, to acquaint the children with Quaker history and sacred texts (including but not exclusively the Bible), to promote respect and appreciation of other cultures, and to create an intergenerational community. The program is primarily managed through volunteers and two paid positions: Leslie Rountree serves as coordinator of the First Day School (FDS) program and Stacey Sewall supervises the nursery. Our FDS teachers, who work in pairs, are typically members or longtime attenders of CHFM.

MEET THE TEACHERS

Each September the CYRE committee hosts a picnic for teachers and parents at the rise of late Meeting, either on the porch of the schoolhouse or in the schoolhouse, depending on the weather. This year’s meeting is scheduled for September 8. We strongly encourage parents to attend and learn more about our FDS program.

TIMING OF FIRST DAY PROGRAMS

- 8:30-9:30 am: Meeting for Worship (childcare provided by volunteers if needed).
- 9:45-10:45 am: Forum with nursery care provided.
- 11:00-12:00 noon: Meeting for Worship (with nursery available for infants and toddlers and First Day School for children age 3-18. Our practice during the 11 o’clock meeting is to include children and youth (and infants if parents wish) in silent worship at the beginning of meeting. It is acceptable for the children to look at a book during this time. After approximately 15 minutes, the teachers rise and escort the children to their FDS classes.

CHILDREN’S EDUCATION CLASSES

During the summer months the children (except for those in the nursery) meet together for inter-age activities led by various volunteers from the Meeting.

During the school year we divide the children into six classes (known as “pods”). Especially with younger children, we encourage parental input in their placement. Parents know their children best and may wish for them to go in a class above or below the ones designated for their ages. Such wishes should be discussed with the FDS coordinator.

- **Nursery (infants to age 3)** is supervised by Stacey Sewall. (*We ask parents to move their child from the nursery to the Pre-K class when the child is mature enough to listen to a story and participate in group activities for 45 minutes.*)
- **PreK (ages 3–5)** is led by Lauren Hart, Carolyn Stuart, Nancy Martin and Allie Scales.
- **K–2nd grade** is led by Cecelia Carver, Jasmine McKewen, Wendy Richesin-Dodd and Margot Stern.
- **3rd–5th grade** is led by Mark Hulbert, Jochen Wachter, Carolyn White & Andrea Wuerth.
- **Middle school (6th–8th grade)** is led by Leslie Rountree, Herbert Struemper & Curt Torrell.
- **High School (9th–12th grade)** is led by John Hite, Jennifer Leeman & Kathleen McNeil.

CURRICULUM

The High School and Middle School groups help their teachers plan the content of their classes. The elementary classes follow a four-term schedule:

- Fall (September 1 – mid November): Quakerism and Community Building
- Mid November – December: inter-age Holiday activities
- Winter (January – March): Bible and other Sacred Writings (*We alternate emphasis on Old and New Testaments. 2014 will be Old Testament.*)
- Spring: (April – June): World religions and multi-cultural study

On occasion, during First Day School our teachers will escort the children on a short walk to the Forest Theater on the UNC campus to provide a more appropriate venue for a planned activity or to simply take advantage of a glorious day. If you do not want your child to participate on these walks, please let your teachers know as soon as possible so that we can make alternate arrangements for your child. Twice a year the entire First Day School goes on a field trip to an educational or historical site pertinent to our studies or to visit another faith community. Parents are welcome and encouraged to attend (volunteer drivers are especially needed).

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Non-Sunday morning activities sponsored and/or supported by the CYRE committee include:

- Family Potlucks (usually on a Saturday evening)
- Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) retreats for those in 7th–12th grades (usually once a month in various southern states)
- Meeting Holiday party
- Various Middle and High School retreats, evening or overnight activities
- Saturday morning “football parking” during UNC football season, to raise money for middle and high school activities

For each activity, the youth recruit FAPs (Friendly Adult Presences). FAPs must be at least aged 21. We also require that anyone driving our youth to an activity be at least 25 years old.

For any activity requiring an overnight stay or that involves the possibility of injury (e.g., a ski trip) we require both a permission and a health form. Forms are on the meeting website (www.chapelhillfriends.org). The health form can be filled out once at the beginning of the year and kept on file with the First Day School Coordinator.

SAFETY & SUPERVISION

- During forum and worship times outside of FDS, we ask that children either be in the Meeting Room or with their parents. Please do not leave children unsupervised in the school building, playground, basement, or anywhere else on the property.
- While we understand that some young children are more comfortable being escorted to FDS by their parents, we encourage moving toward the practice of letting teachers escort the children. This minimizes the disruption of the worship service.
- FDS lasts until the rise of meeting, when the children are dismissed to the playground. The meeting provides one or two people to supervise the playground while announcements are being made.
- Although we don't do any formal reference checks on people volunteering to work with our children, we do have a general policy of pairing new teachers with an experienced teacher and having two adults in each classroom (except the nursery).
- Basic first-aid kits are in the supply closet in the schoolhouse and in the upstairs bathroom closet in the Meeting house.

The CYRE committee looks forward to working with you and your children. Although the committee members are appointed by the Meeting, the work involved in FDS goes far beyond what committee members can do. We rely on volunteers and hope that working with our youth is seen as a form of ministry in which all of us can participate.

2013-2014 CYRE Committee members:

Kathleen McNeil, clerk
Sean Chen
Eloise Grathwohl
Lauren Hart
Wren Hendrickson

John Hite
Bill McDonnell
Merideth Tomlinson
Jochen Wachter
Leslie Rountree, ex officio
(as FDS coordinator)