

Chapel Hill Friends Meeting Newsletter

September, 2013



Monthly Query:

As a Meeting, how do we support the spiritual growth of our children, Young Friends and Young Adult Friends? To what extent do we make this the whole Meeting's responsibility? What opportunities do we make to learn from them as well as teach them?

How can your committee help the Meeting become more diverse and more inclusive of youth, young adults, and young families this year?

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Monthly Worship Tip from the M&W Committee

To help us become better acquainted, please be sure to wear your name tags at meetings for worship. If you don't have one, you can use the supplies available in the basket on the table just inside the front door of the Meetinghouse to make one. Thanks!

Upcoming Forum Schedule

Sept 1: Sharing Our Travel Stories

We will break into small groups to share with one another our very best travel stories. At the end, we will come together to share highlights from our small groups.

Sept 8: Teen Video-Interviews

The teens have put together a video of their interviews with members of Chapel Hill Friends Meeting. They have been working for almost a year interviewing and editing and will be presenting their final product to the meeting at forum.

Sept 22: Report about FGC Gathering in Colorado

Ruth Zalph and Wendy Michener will share their pictures and experiences from this year's Gathering. They will also talk about Teen Gathering, Junior Gathering, and help that is available to members and attenders of Meeting who wish to attend Gathering.

Sept 29: Developing a Rational and Compassionate Drug Policy

A panel of knowledgeable people will join Paul Munk in leading a discussion about what we can do locally to dismantle the "drug war."

Welcome Naveed Moeed

At the September 1st potluck, we will welcome sojourning friend Naveed Moeed. Please join us. Below is a brief biography of Naveed:

Naveed is a 39 year old, British-born Pakistani, who not content with being from two countries has chosen to live in more. From the shores of Denmark and the canals of Amsterdam to the deserts of the Arabian Peninsula, he has come to rest (for now) in Chapel Hill. Originally an Astrophysicist he left the glitz and glamour of academia to work in Identity and Privacy solutions, which he now does for a large telecommunications firm. Naveed came to Quakers by conviction, having encountered silent worship at his alma mater, the University of Kent at Canterbury. His enthusiasm for the rights of individual privacy stem from the modest work he has done in Peace and Social Witness, as part of Reading Monthly Meeting in the UK (now Mid-Thames Area Meeting). Naveed is an enthusiastic bridge player and avid cyclist.

IFC News: New Executive Director Appointed

The Inter-Faith Council for Social Service (IFC) is pleased to announce the appointment of John Dorward as executive director of the agency. By a unanimous vote at its August 21st meeting, the IFC's board of directors appointed Mr. Dorward to the position to replace Chris Moran, who retired as executive director as of July 1st.

Mr. Dorward joined the agency in 2003 as finance director, was appointed associate executive director in 2008 and became interim executive director upon Mr. Moran's

retirement. "I am honored to be chosen by the board of directors to help lead the IFC in this, our 50th year," said Dorward. "With the help of the staff, board and our hundreds of community volunteers and supporters, we can continue the work of the IFC for another 50 years. Having worked with Chris Moran, the IFC's long-time executive director, for the past decade, I have a good grasp of the agency's mission and vision."

Mr. Dorward brings thirty years of non-profit management experience and a commitment to the underserved to his new position. Before joining the IFC, he spent 23 years with Ipas, another non-profit organization in Chapel Hill, in a variety of positions including executive vice president, CFO and corporate treasurer.

"John Dorward is the perfect leader for the Inter-Faith Council for Social Service at this time in our history," said Rebecca McCulloh, president of the IFC board. "John brings the experience, skills and savvy that we need to complete the capital campaign for the new Community House, build that facility, and launch the FoodFirst initiative."

Mr. Dorward and his wife Pat lived in Orange County for most of their 34 years together. They now live just across the line in Durham's Chapelwood neighborhood.

Consider Attending Yoke Fellows at OCC

Consider attending Yoke Fellows at OCC (the Orange County men's minimum security prison) on Tuesday evenings from 7 to 8 pm. If you have not attended before, you can visit one time as a guest. Contact Paul and Joyce Munk, Hank Elkins, Richard Miller, Tom McQuiston, or Asta Crowe.

Quaker House Event:

**A Front-Line Peace Witness and BPFNA/Quaker House Friendship Tour
September 7-9, 2013, Fayetteville, NC/Fort Bragg Military Base**

This event is co-sponsored by Quaker House and the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America. If you are interested in attending the portion taking place at Quaker House and Fayetteville, please contact the QH directors, Steve and Lynn Newsom, at 910-323-3912.

Join us as we gather for peace in a military city! This Friendship Tour will explore critical military issues such as suicide, PTSD, domestic and family violence, use of torture and drones, lack of truth in military recruitment, and the impact of repeated deployments.

You'll visit [Quaker House](#), founded by the Religious Society of Friends. Quaker House has been working for Peace and GI Rights since 1969. And you'll visit Fort Bragg Military Base, one of the largest military bases in the United States.

Move the Olympic Games

Submitted by Ed Bowen

I thought some in our community might be interested in the petition to move the 2014 Winter Games to Vancouver. The International Olympics Committee (IOC) is asked to make this change so the Russian Government is forced to recognize the world “will not tolerate the abhorrent persecution of minority groups.” The petition is at <http://www.change.org/en-GB/petitions/international-olympic-committee-ioc-relocate-the-2014-winter-games-to-vancouver-2>

Dismantling Racism Works – a workshop in Durham

“In the wake of Trayvon Martin’s killing, our country is attempting to figure out how to understand his death and the nature of the verdict. Each time a life is senselessly lost, we have two choices – we can continue to seek justifications that leave our deep racial divide intact or we can seize an opportunity for a different discussion, a deeper understanding of our shared history, a transformation.”

“Dismantling Racism Works is a training collaborative that provides a space for all of us to take a much-needed breathAt Dismantling Racism Works, we facilitate the difficult and liberating discussions about the impact of racism on us as people of color and white people. We work to build a collective vision of a world full of love and justice.”
Chapel Hill News, August 4, 2013

On October 4-5, “Dismantling Racism Works,” will offer a public training in Durham. Please see this link for more information: http://dismantlingracism.org/Dismantling_Racism/tRainings_woRkshops.html

As a reminder, the Shotts Memorial and Leadership Development Fund provides financial aid to benefit the spiritual life of the Meeting through the enhancement of leadership capabilities in individuals: <http://chapelhillfriends.org/ShottsLeadershipFunds.html>

Forward from Moral Monday (reprinted from August newsletter)

For the near future, Moral Mondays end on July 29 – the NC General Assembly has adjourned for the summer. The North Carolina NAACP, Moral Monday’s organizer, plans to take Moral Monday-like demonstrations on the road to different NC cities over the course of a number of weeks. If you’d like to keep abreast of next steps by the NAACP, please sign up for their alerts at this email address: info@naacpnc.org . You can also visit their website, <http://www.naacpnc.org/>, for specific information. Friends, let’s continue our journey of slowly, but with heart and persistence, reclaiming our humanity in North Carolina.

“I saw that there was an ocean of darkness and death; but an infinite ocean of light and love, which flowed over the ocean of darkness.” George Fox

Upcoming School of the Spirit Ministry Retreats

September 27 - 30, 2013: A 3-night Silent Retreat in the Manner of Friends at the St. Raphaela Retreat Center, Haverford, PA.

January 17 - 20, 2014: Powell House, Old Chatham, NY.

April 4 - 7, 2014: The DeKoven Center, Racine, WI.

Learn more online:

<http://schoolofthespirit.org/programs/silent-retreats-2/sr-registration/>

First Day School News and Events

The Children's Religious Education committee has reconfigured the First Day School pods and created a new one. Enough teens have been attending to warrant splitting their group into two pods, starting September 1: one of middle schoolers (grades 6, 7, and 8) and one of high schoolers (grades 9 - 12). The two pods will meet independent of each other, unless there is a joint activity planned, with tentative plans to have them meet as one group at least once a month.

If you are clearing out toddler toys at your house, please consider donating them to the Meeting nursery. Stacey Seawell, our new nursery worker, has been working on freshening up the toy selection, and would welcome gently used items (or new, if you are feeling generous). If you were looking for a good home for your child's outgrown toys, we can't think of a better place.

Please direct questions and comments to Leslie Rountree at lesroutree@nc.rr.com, or 919-932-7308.

Upcoming Events:

Sunday, September 1 (Potluck Sunday)

FDS opens (all children sorted into pods). This will be the first week of our fall unit on Quakerism (What are our values? What do Friends do in Meeting for Worship, anyway? What is our history? etc.) Note: High school teens should meet in the multipurpose room at 11 AM to set up for the monthly potluck, then retire to the Meetinghouse and enter Meeting for Worship (MFW) when the younger children exit. Teens will close MFW, and make the announcements. (Last spring, Ministry & Worship asked the teens to take on this task every first Sunday of any month with five Sundays. The next one will be in December.)

Saturday, September 7

Attention middle and high schoolers! UNC has a home game (vs. Middle Tenn. State) at 12:30 pm, and we need teen volunteers to report to the parking lot at 10:30 am to help collect fees and direct traffic. For those who have never done this before, here is why we need you: it raises hundreds of dollars for our programs in a very, very short time, the lot fills usually way before game time (and we can leave) and the more kids that come, the

merrier it is for all! Please let John Hite or me know if you and/or your teen(s) can help. We will need EVERY teen to volunteer at least TWICE during football season. Other dates for football parking duty include (all Saturdays except as noted): September 28 (ECU); Thursday, October 17 (Miami); October 26 (Boston College); November 9 (Virginia); November 23 (Old Dominion); and November 30 (Duke).

Sunday, September 8

Part one: Our teens will debut their CHFM interviews/video documentary at forum (9:45 am) this morning. Please plan to attend! Our teens have been interviewing folks from Meeting (including themselves) for the better part of a year, and it is finally ready!

Part two: It's time for our annual "Meet the First Day School Teachers" picnic at the rise of late Meeting. Come meet our teachers, find out what's going on in your child's pod, what "best practices" we use, and more! Free lunch, goodies, answers and more provided by the Children's Religious Education committee.

September 13-15, October 11-13, and November 15-17

There are three Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) retreats this fall: in Atlanta, GA (September), Durham, NC (October) and Knoxville, TN (November). SAYF retreats are open to 7th graders and older. For carpooling and other info, contact Wren Hendrickson at wrenhendrickson@aol.com.

October 6th or 20th (date TBD)

Our First Day School-wide fall field trip will be to Mendenhall Plantation, a Quaker homestead in Jamestown, NC that is about an hour from here in Guilford County. Mendenhall was a stop on the underground railroad. To learn more about it, visit here: <http://www.mendenhallplantation.org/>. More details coming soon...

Weekend of November 1-3 (tentative)

We are hoping to take the teens to Hyco Lake this weekend, pending cabin availability. Details to come.

Directory Updates

Due to privacy concerns, directory updates will not be included in the newsletter. Directory updates are posted on the bulletin board in the Meetinghouse foyer. If you are unable to get to the Meetinghouse, email directory@chapelhillfriends.org or call Emily Buehler for a copy of current updates.

Chapel Hill Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

Minutes

August 18, 2013

Tom Munk, clerk; Robin Harper, recording clerk

Worship and query: When disagreements arise, are they recognized, discussed, and resolved with loving patience and forbearance? Are we able to celebrate our diversity without reservation?

1. Welcome, recognition of first time attenders, review of agenda

We welcomed first-time attender Eric Nesman.

2. Review of minutes for June Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

Approved

3. Report from Quaker House—Steve and Lynn Newsom

We welcomed the new co-directors of Quaker House, and Lynn back to her home meeting. Steve and Lynn outlined some of the projects they are currently working on, such as a new “Alternatives to Violence” program. With the domestic violence rate in the military nearly twice as high as in the community at large, Ft. Bragg has welcomed QH actually offering this program on base. They also offer programs on anti-sexual assault training, conflict resolution, mindfulness, and a Wounded Warriors support group, among others. They have been exploring taking advantage of community resources, such as concerts and local service providers. While the hotline counselors at QH continue to have a very high success rate in helping soldiers that need to achieve CO status, Quaker House has increasingly become known in the military community as a helpful resource, and perhaps less of an adversary. They focus on Chuck Fager’s original sign: “We are against war but for our soldiers.”

Quaker House has been working on international issues as well. Putting pressure on the government to end the use of drones and expose the use of torture has been a focus for Steve. He has attended Stop Torture Now meetings and protested at Johnson Airfield, where extraordinary rendition flights were originating.

Lynn and Steve invited everyone to come to Fayetteville to visit QH, get a tour of Ft. Bragg, or see the Military Museum. Friends are also invited to take part in work parties at QH, which have been very successful with young people and families who come to help with needed chores. All of Quaker House’s work is funded by donations, so all gifts are welcome! You are also invited to “like” them on Facebook! Naveed Moeed offered to help them set up a Twitter account.

Lynn and Steve asked to be held in the Light during this Tuesday’s Alternatives to Violence class, which will be attended by members of the military. The class will be from 2:00–5:00pm and from 7:30–8:30pm.

We expressed our thanks to Steve and Lynn for all of the great work they are doing.

4. Peace and Social Concerns Annual Report—Bill Jenkins (Attached)

Friends asked if there members of Quaker House Board on P&SC, and there are. Other questions were raised about the difficulties in planning benevolence spending. A large part of the work of P&SC is the annual benevolence budget. Finance committee proposed thinking about changing the timing of this work. If the work was done in the winter, after Finance has a better picture of the Meeting's pending contributions, then Finance committee could then go to P&SC with this clearer picture. This could potentially make estimating the benevolence spending much easier. This will be explored by P&SC and Finance.

The committee has mounted a new (proposed) sign in front of the Meetinghouse, and asks Friends to take a look.

Accepted with thanks.

5. Proposal to change the name of the Peace and Social Concerns Committee to the Peace and Justice Committee—Bill Jenkins

There was extensive discussion surrounding this name change, including use of the words "witness" and "justice." Naveed reported that, in England, these committees are called "Peace and Social Witness" committees. The Meeting was not comfortable with the name change at this time, and referred it back to the committee for further consideration.

6. Letters of introduction for Rodney Burrell to Williamsburg and Virginia Beach meetings—Pam Schwingl (Attached)

Rodney will be released in early September and is moving to Newport News, VA. His support committee is working to find ways to support his transition. After some changes, Friends approved the attached letters of introduction for the two Virginia meetings, pending Rodney's approval.

Recommended change to letter: "We joyfully recommend Rodney to your Meeting."

7. Membership for Alice Drozdiak—Lynn Drake

A Clearness Committee for Membership consisting of Pam Schwingl, Jan Hutton, Chris Stanley, and Lynn Drake (convenor) met twice with Alice Drozdiak. We experienced quality sharing with each other and were impressed by Alice's faith journey and her knowledge of Quaker faith and practice. The Committee on Ministry and Worship recommends that the Meeting approve the membership of Alice Drozdiak. A brief biography of Alice is below.

Joyfully approved.

Lynn Drake, Jennifer Leeman, and Naveed Moeed will plan a welcoming, convened by Lynn.

8. Conscientious Objection letter from Rachel Leeman-Munk (Attached)

Rachel read her wonderful letter to us. Afterwards a Friends shared about Rachel and the great measure of Light that she holds. Another Friend praised her for the fact that she wrote this letter despite the fact that she did not need to, as a woman, to stand in solidarity with the men. He urged her to take her Light out into the World to share what it is to be a Quaker, and to be a CO.

Accepted with gratitude.

A Friend asked if we can we consider publishing this or another CO letter in a local newspaper (assuming writers are willing)? Curt Torell, Pam Schwingl, and Naveed Moeed indicated their willingness to form an ad hoc committee to explore this idea.

The Meeting approved setting up the above ad hoc committee, and asked that they also consider codifying the process so that it can be used for future letters.

Jennifer Leeman asked that we please hold Rachel in the Light as she moves to Boston to attend graduate school.

9. Announcements

- a. At the September 1 potluck we will welcome Naveed Moeed as a sojourning member from England. We will also begin the process of introducing the youth at this potluck, to help the Meeting get to know them.
- b. Please note the updates to the contacts page on our website (<http://chapelhillfriends.org/contact.html>). Please share this information with other members of the Meeting!
- c. There will be a Clerks' retreat on October 5, from 9:00am–12:00pm at the Meetinghouse. All committee clerks are encouraged to attend. Check out the clerk and committee support documents on our website under "Faith and Practice Documents."
- d. Ryan Jarrell will continue the global climate change discussions begun by Tom Munk with the staffers of Senators Burr (who doesn't believe in it) and Hagan (who supports the Keystone XL Pipeline). One of the items under discussion is the Shaheen/Portman Energy Efficiency Bill. Susan Inglis and Ruth Zalph will be joining this group, and Eric Nesman responded to Tom's request for someone to help with the science side of the conversation.
- e. On Sunday, September 1, in collaboration with the Ministry and Worship committee, the high-school teens will be attending meeting for worship and making the closing announcements.
- f. Forums: On August 25, those who made the journey to England for the Quaker Pilgrimage trip will share their experiences. On September 8, the teens will present their 75th anniversary video documentary of our Meeting.
- g. Media Benjamin will speak on August 26 at 7:00pm at Carol Woods. She is the founder of Code Pink, a leading grassroots peace and social justice movement working to end U.S.-funded wars and occupations, to challenge militarism globally, and to redirect our resources into health care, education, green jobs, and other life-affirming activities.
- h. The new ARE co-clerks are Wendy Michener and Barbara Williamson. If you have ideas for forums or thoughts for them, please contact them at are@chapelhillfriends.org.

Worship and Greeting

Attending: Bill Flash, Nancy Elkins, Hank Elkins, Eric Nesman, Curt Torell, Lynn Newsom, Steve Newsom, Wendy Michener, Barbara Williamson, Ken Grogan, Naveed Moeed, Allie Scales, Marilyn A. Dyer, Bill Jenkins, Ruth Zalph, Justin Danforth, Tom McQuiston, Bettie Flash, Diana McElroy, Alice Drozdiak, Eric Earley, Susan Inglis, Jennifer Leeman, Rachel Leeman–Munk, Joyce Munk, Paul Munk, Michael Nesmith, Matt Drake, Lynn Drake, Linda M. Graham, Pam Schwingl, Pat Mann, James Harper, Carolyn White, Carolyn Stuart, Richard Miller

PEACE AND SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

Activities covering January 2012 to July 2013

Benevolences: A major work of the PSCC again this year was to prepare a report for the Meeting on the current mission, financial condition, and recommendation for funding for selected benevolences for our wider ministry. The Meeting’s budget required an overall reduction of about ten percent. In recommending funding priorities, the Committee considered the current mission and program of potential benevolences in the light of the Meeting’s interests. The Committee also weighed the benevolences’ financial condition measured from financial reports solicited from the prospective grantees. In order to meet these restrictions some grants were eliminated and discussed strategies to increase funding in the future.

National Quaker Service: We also scrutinized with care requests from individual Friends for grants to participate in National Quaker Service.

Middle East concerns: In response to our recommendation, the Meeting joined other faith groups in supporting local bus advertisements calling for the United States to end military aid to Israel. We co-sponsored with the Abrahamic Initiative for the Middle East (AIME) a wellattended forum April 14 at the UNC Global Education Building on the subject of human rights and military aid to Israel.

NC Legislature: Our committee helped to foster participation in Moral Monday rallies at the state capitol, and one of our members testified at a legislative committee meeting against proposed restrictions on voting. In addition, the committee purchased a quarter page ad for the NAACP Freedom Fund.

Forums: As a member of the Orange County Peace Coalition, we co-sponsored a forum held at the United Church on April 6 to highlight urgent local needs in education, health, and infrastructure. Subsequently, with the Coalition, we successfully petitioned the

Orange County Commissioners and the towns of Chapel Hill and Carrboro to urge Congress to bring the war dollars home to meet local needs. Other forums included Human rights for the LGBT community and prison reform and re-entry.

Police in schools: Several on our committee have protested the potential hiring of police in the Hillsborough elementary schools, and one of our members has co-authored a report describing the negative effects of police in schools.

Prisons: As an outgrowth of our prison work, our committee has helped establish a separate committee, the Friends Transition and Support Committee. That Committee is primarily concerned with support and re-entry to the community of prisoners from Orange Correctional Center. The attorneys on our committee have provided counsel.

Future initiatives may include:

- Increasing visibility of the meeting's commitment to social justice by placing signs in front of the meeting house and on buses;
- Increasing voter participation in NC through our efforts with the NAACP;
- Holding a meeting of Durham, Raleigh and Chapel Hill Friends social concerns committees to discuss joint activities such as Moral Monday and voter registration follow-up, as well as, producing signs "North Carolina Quakers for Social Justice" for distribution to meeting houses and for use in demonstrations;
- We are also proposing a name change from Social Concerns to "Peace and Justice" to emphasize our belief in "faith in action."

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION FOR RODNEY BURRELL

To: Clerk, Williamsburg Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

From: Chapel Hill Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Approved by: Monthly Meeting for Business, 18th day, 8th month, 2013

Dear Clerk,

This letter serves to introduce Rodney Burrell, a member of the Chapel Hill Friends Meeting. Rodney will be moving to the Williamsburg area and may attend your Meeting.

After attending Meeting regularly for three years, attending Meetings for Worship with Attention to Business, joining us for potlucks, etc., Rodney, requested consideration for membership. A Clearness Committee for Membership was convened by the Ministry and Worship Committee. It met with Rodney several times and then recommended to the Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business that he be approved for membership. Rodney's request for membership was joyfully approved on March 24, 2013.

Rodney has contributed in many ways to our Meeting community, and we feel blessed to have had him with us. He has developed a deep commitment to Quaker values and to the importance of Quaker communities. Rodney intends to return home to the Williamsburg area in early September.

We joyfully recommend Rodney to your Meeting.

Tom Munk, Clerk, Chapel Hill Friends Meeting (919-537-9023)

ALICE DROZDIK BIOGRAPHY

My name is Alice Drozdiak. I grew up in rural western Pennsylvania and attended Dickinson College before moving to Chapel Hill in 2008 for graduate school at UNC. In 2011, I finished my Masters in Linguistics; I then taught English through the Orange County Literacy Council until spring 2013. Most of my students were refugees from Burma and Thailand, though I also had a chance to work with Latin American families through Carrboro's Centro Hispano. I also taught a class at Raleigh's detention center. In addition to my work with the Literacy Council, I volunteer with the Orange County Rape Crisis Center as both a Community Educator in public schools and a crisis Companion, responding to hotline and hospital calls. This fall, I will begin UNC's Masters of Social Work program, with a focus in international peace and conflict resolution.

My husband and I live on the outskirts of Chapel Hill with our dog, two cats, and rabbit. We began attending the Chapel Hill Friends Meeting shortly after I completed my degree. I originally wanted to attend because I was interested in silent worship. I was impressed with the respectful welcome we received, and we continued to attend off and on for about a year and a half before I decided to pursue membership. I am drawn to Friends' commitment to social justice and their willingness to embrace diversity and dissent within Meetings. My time with my Clearness Committee solidified for me that Chapel Hill Friends Meeting was my spiritual home, and I would like to thank Lynn Drake, Jan Hutton, Pam Schwingl, and Chris Stanley for their guidance. Thank you also for the attenders and members of the Meeting in general, and I look forward to membership!

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION LETTER FROM RACHEL LEEMAN-MUNK

I believe that every person, no matter what they have thought or done in their life, has a purpose in this world. By ending a life, one is taking away someone humanity can and should learn from. I am not saying that everything we learn will be nice, or fun. I'm definitely not saying that the person has to be free of fault. What I am saying is that, whether or not a person is fighting for the "enemy", has committed a terrible crime, or holds a belief that we cannot condone, that person exists on this earth for a reason and should not be taken from it. These beliefs cause me to request status as a conscientious objector from all war.

I came to these beliefs throughout my life. I have always been peaceful. When I was small, I could not stand to kill anything, even bugs. I became vegetarian at the age of 9 because I could not stand to eat an animal I had seen grazing in a field. I never fought in school, or verbally abused other children. Once when I accidentally hurt my brother, I spent the next hour crying because I felt so badly about it. I learned a foundation for my beliefs within my community at the Chapel Hill Friends Meeting, where I attended with my family throughout my childhood. Quakerism is one of the traditional peace churches, and growing up in Meeting I gained a deep connection to the peace testimony. I also learned much of my nonviolence from the Quaker testimonies "equality". If I view all others as equal, how can one person deserve to live and another not? On that basis, how can killing another human being ever be okay?

I have been actively supporting groups that support nonviolence for most of my life. In middle school I supported People of Faith Against the Death Penalty during the fundraiser that takes place at my Meeting every Christmas. I had the sad opportunity to confirm how I felt about the death penalty when a close friend was killed in an accident with a drunk driver during high school. While her family initially tried to get the harshest penalties against the driver who killed their daughter, I forgave him and hoped that the court would help him redeem himself and become a fruitful part of society.

I had the opportunity to work directly with people with similar stories to the man who killed my friend the year after I graduated from college, when I spent a year working at the Durham Economic Resource Center. DERC is a non-profit organization in Durham, North Carolina that does job training and placement for people with criminal records, substance abuse history, and mental illness. One of the biggest things I learned from my year there was that a person can do unequivocally terrible things in his/her life and still have worth as a human being. I worked with people who redeemed themselves.

I am unwilling to participate in a system that does not give the "enemy" an opportunity for redemption, assuming they need to be redeemed at all. I have experienced loss and anger in my life. I know what it is like to desire retribution. However, I do not feel that I have the right to determine whether someone lives or dies. Human beings are so complex. I cannot possibly know all the reasons for why a soldier is participating in war. Even if I did know, I do not believe any human is capable of single minded killing. There are too many underlying reasons for every action. I do not believe that anyone is truly unforgivable, and therefore no one is worthy of death. Please accept this letter as my written statement of this belief.

Calendar

(All events at Meetinghouse unless otherwise indicated.)

- Sun. 9/1** 8:30am Meeting for Worship (Early)
9:45am Forum: Sharing Our Travel Stories (see page 2)
11am Meeting for Worship (Late)
11am Meeting for Worship - Carol Woods
12:30pm Potluck & IFC donations, Welcome Naveed Moeed
- Tue. 9/3 7-8pm Yoke Fellows Prison Visitation - Call Hank Elkins
- Fri. 9/6 4:30-5:30pm Vigil for Peace & Justice - E. Franklin & Elliot Rd
- Sat.9/7 through 9/9 Quaker House Event - Fayetteville (see page 3)
- Sun. 9/8** 8:30am Meeting for Worship (Early)
9:45am Forum: Teen Video-Interviews (see page 2)
11am Meeting for Worship (Late)
11am Meeting for Worship - Carol Woods
12:30pm Meet the FDS Teachers Picnic - Schoolhouse (see page 6)
- Tue. 9/10 7-8pm Yoke Fellows Prison Visitation - Call Hank Elkins
- Fri. 9/13 4:30-5:30pm Vigil for Peace & Justice - E. Franklin & Elliot Rd
- Sun. 9/15** 8am Meetinghouse open for worship
8:30am Meeting for Worship (Early)
9:00am Meeting for Worship w/Attention to Business
11am Meeting for Worship (Late)
11am Meeting for Worship - Carol Woods
noon Families and Friends Affected by Mental Illness - Schoolhouse
- Tue. 9/17 7-8pm Yoke Fellows Prison Visitation - Call Hank Elkins
- Fri. 9/20 4:30-5:30pm Vigil for Peace & Justice - E. Franklin & Elliot Rd
- Sun. 9/22** 8:30am Meeting for Worship (Early)
9:45am Forum: Report about FGC Gathering in Colorado (see page 2)
11am Meeting for Worship (Late)
11am Meeting for Worship - Carol Woods
12:30pm Environmental Concerns Com. - Schoolhouse
- Fri. 9/27 4:30-5:30pm Vigil for Peace & Justice - E. Franklin & Elliot Rd
- Sun. 9/29** 8:30am Meeting for Worship (Early)
9:45am Forum: Rational and Compassionate Drug Policy (see page 2)
11am Meeting for Worship (Late)
11am Meeting for Worship - Carol Woods
10pm Deadline To Turn In Items For Newsletter!
- Tue. 10/1 7-8pm Yoke Fellows Prison Visitation - Call Hank Elkins
- Thur. 10/3 9am-1pm CHFM Serves Lunch at Interfaith Shelter
- Fri. 10/4 4:30-5:30pm Vigil for Peace & Justice - E. Franklin & Elliot Rd
- Fri. 10/4 through 10/5 Dismantling Racism Works Workshop - Durham (see page 4)

Sun. 10/6 8:30am Meeting for Worship (Early)
9:45am Forum: tbd
11am Meeting for Worship (Late)
11am Meeting for Worship - Carol Woods
12:30pm Potluck & IFC donations

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

Meetings for Worship at 8:30 and 11:00am
Forum at 9:45am; Child Care from 9:30am-12:15pm
First Day School from 11:15am-12:00pm
Clerk of the Meeting: Tom Munk (919) 929-9135
Resident: John Hite (919) 929-5377

- Newsletter. This newsletter is published every first Sunday under the care of the Publications and Records Committee. Paper copies are available at the Meetinghouse and a PDF is posted on the Meeting website, www.chapelhillfriends.org. The deadline for submissions is 10pm on the last Sunday of the month. Email submissions to news@chapelhillfriends.org or call Emily Buehler, (919) 475-5756. Please include "newsletter" in the subject line.
- Listserv. To send a news or "In the Light" announcement on the Meeting listserv, contact news@chapelhillfriends.org. Please include "listserv" or "in the light" in the subject line. This listserv goes to about 280 people. Do not submit personal information about someone else unless you know he/she wants to share. Subscribe to the listserv at www.chapelhillfriends.org/contact.html.
- Website. To get items posted on our website, send them to news@chapelhillfriends.org.