

FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Newsletter, Eleventh Month, 2017

Worship: In the Iona House at the Calusa Nature Center
Mailing Address: 902 Big Pine Way, Fort Myers, FL 33907
Website: fortmyersquakers.org
E-mail: FtMyers.Quakers@gmail.com

Clerk: Nancy Fennell (239-437-4615)
Recording Clerks: Kathy Hale / Richard Frechette
Treasurer: John Battin

- Worship: Every Sunday at 10:30 AM
- 1st Sunday: Pot Luck Lunch
- 2nd Sunday: Meeting for Worship With Attention to Business

From Faith & Practice of Southeastern Yearly Meeting -

How do Friends meet our responsibilities to the community and the world? Care of the Natural World

Queries:

- Do we live in harmony with nature? Do we live in keeping with the spirit of the unity, sacredness, and integrity of all creation?
- Do we seek to minimize our consumption of the earth's resources? Do we encourage equitable and sustainable use of those resources?
- Do we walk gently over the earth, seeing that of God in all of nature?
- Do we seek to educate ourselves, our children, our meeting, and our community about how our lives can be more in harmony with the earth?
- Does the meeting strive to bring all its practices in harmony with the natural world?

Advices:

- Maintain in ourselves and encourage in others a sense of responsibility for the environment, both for the present and for future generations.
- Avoid amusements that stimulate destructive emotions, are detrimental to the health or tranquility of others, or are damaging to the natural environment.
- Show a loving consideration for all creatures, cherishing the beauty and wonder of all God's creation.
- Share our sense of reverence and stewardship for the earth.

MINUTES OF THE FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

11th Month 12, 2017

The Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends met in Iona House on 11th Month 12, with 18 Friends present. The meeting opened with silent worship. Out of the silence, Clerk Nancy Fennell read queries on the subject of Care of the Natural World. In response, Friends remarked that it is such a huge challenge to act upon these queries. It is particularly difficult to not draw a line regarding killing of living things – bugs, etc. Another remarked that on occasion she is called to worship in the garden instead of to Quaker Meeting. Yet another noted that maybe we need to integrate the pre-language sounds of little children with our natural outside environment sounds.

MINISTRY & COUNSEL COMMITTEE:

Richard Frechette reported that the Committee will be exploring with Friends the forming of additional Spiritual Formation Groups after the first of the year. Nancy Murvine will be coordinating this effort. Also, the Committee wishes to work with Education Committee to arrange for one or more sharing sessions on centering. A clearness committee has been established to work with David Jossi concerning membership. M&C has also considered the request for transference of membership of Norma and Charles Lipsen from Solebury Monthly Meeting (Philadelphia Yearly Meeting) and recommends approval of the Meeting.

- ❖ **Minute 2017MM20:** We approve the transfer of membership of Norma and Charles Lipsen from Solebury Monthly Meeting (PYM) to Fort Myers Monthly Meeting, and welcome them into the Meeting family.

A welcoming celebration will be arranged by M&C. The Clerk will send a letter to the Solebury meeting noting our acceptance of the transfer.

A Friend suggested that we may need an educational session on the meaning of membership in Quaker meeting. Since we have already planned a Quakerism 101 course, which includes a section on membership, M&C will wait to see if additional effort should be taken beyond that.

CLERK'S REPORT:

- We received a letter from CNCP thanking us for our gift of \$157 sponsoring a campership
- We also received a letter from CNCP thanking us for our \$100 contribution for the Friendly Forest activity.

STATEMENT ON CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION:

We listened to and considered a statement on Climate Change and Environmental Protection prepared by SEYM's Earthcare Witness Committee. We recommend that the last two paragraphs be reversed. We also suggest that statements of "we know" be replaced by "we believe." The clerk will forward our comments to the Clerk of SEYM's Earthcare Witness.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

John Battin, Treasurer, reported on the financial activities of October 2017. The full report will be posted in our monthly newsletter. He noted that the contributions to date includes the two contributions from another meeting to ours to assist with Hurricane losses in our community.

The Treasurer also distributed and commented on a first draft of a 2018 budget for discussion, noting that the budget will be represented for formal approval at the December meeting for business.

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

The Finance Committee met to review the current and prospective budget. Joan Culver distributed a pie chart showing distribution of our 2017 budget. The Committee thought this may be helpful as we consider the 2018 budget.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Nancy Howell distributed a first draft of the nominations to various committees and other assignments. She noted that there remain vacancies that need to be filled and urged Friends to consider offering to fill a vacancy before the December meeting for business when the report will be formally considered. It was suggested that we add website management as a specified assignment. As this is the first time that a person who is not a member of the meeting has been nominated to serve as presiding clerk, the question of the meaning of membership was raised and discussed.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE:

Pat Iyre & Nancy Howell reported that the Committee wishes to sponsor a Quakerism 101 course, and asked whether Friends feel this should be limited to our Meeting family, or opened to others as an outreach tool. Also, if Friends see this as an outreach tool, should we have serious discussion on the implications of addressing the needs of prospective Friends with children? The formal guide suggests six two-hour sessions, and we discussed whether and how we might be able to adapt this to our own needs. Our sense is that it should be first offered in-house, and use this experience to formulate a larger outreach-based effort. The Committee would seek

commitments from our meeting family to participate in this first effort, and can then determine whether there is room for an informal outreach at the initial sessions.

PEACE AND SOCIAL CONCERNS:

We discussed the use of the Camden (DE)'s second contribution to us for hurricane relief. The Peace & Social Concerns Committee note that Lehigh Acres and South Lee County has been severely impacted by Hurricane Irma, and recommends contributing of two Faith-based organizations, one in each of those areas, for distribution to those residents. \$750 would come from the Camden Meeting contribution, and \$250 from the P&SC budget.

- ❖ **MINUTE 2017MM21:** We approve funding of \$500 to New Life Assembly for distribution to needy residents in Lehigh Acres, and \$500 to Interfaith Charities for distribution to needy residents in South Lee County.

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE:

The Hospitality Committee will serve as set-up coordinators for the Thanksgiving meal and for the collation following the Phyl Stanley Memorial Meeting on December 9.

CALUSA NATURE CENTER:

Joan Culver reports that the CNCP had a very lengthy and meaningful long range planning meeting. She notes that people have been reporting that the Nature Center is cleaner, but the organization is still experiencing financial difficulty.

The minutes of the meeting were read and approved. We ended the meeting in centered silence.

Richard Frechette
Co-Recording Clerk

Quaker Conversations:

All are invited to attend a Quaker Conversation at the rise of worship on Sunday, November 19. The topic will be generally on Worship, and will be based upon the Quaker Books publication (London YM) "Quality and Depth of Worship and Ministry." Pre-reading of the pamphlet is not a prerequisite. Soup and Bread will be served.

Celebrate Thanksgiving With Friends at the Iona House



Any and all are invited to share in food and fellowship on Thanksgiving Day at noon at the Iona House. It's a coordinated pot-luck. Mark your calendar. As the Nature Center is officially closed for that day, you must arrive between noon and 12:30pm, at which point the gates will be closed. Sign up for a food item to bring. Contact Suzanne Frechette (Suzanne.Frechette@gmail.com; 401-744-6097) to register and to sign up for a food item to bring.

Spiritual Formation Program

Ministry and Counsel Committee is offering an opportunity to explore SEYM's Spiritual Formation Program to our newest attenders as well as to returning and long-time members and attenders who might be drawn to small groups of spiritual companions. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Nancy Murvine (by phone/text: 239.293.6952 or by e-mail: nrmurvine@embarqmail.com). Below is SEYM's introduction to the concept and format of Spiritual Formation Program.

The work of Spiritual Formation Programs is accomplished within a small group format. These groups have been referred to as "circles of trust," "circles of light," "friendship circles," "spiritual companion groups," etc. SEYM prefers to call the small groups "spiritual companion groups."

The primary goal of a spiritual formation program is to deepen one's relationship

with the Divine, God, Spirit, or Inner Light through four major avenues: reading devotionally, individual spiritual practice, deep listening and spiritual community. Walking the spiritual path along with others in the group tends to lead to the formation of meaningful and long-lasting relationships. The transformative work of spiritual formation inevitably contributes to the spiritual well-being of the individual, the monthly and yearly meetings.

Spiritual Formation Programs have a long and respected history among many religious groups, including the Religious Society of Friends. Both Philadelphia and Baltimore Yearly Meetings have collaborated and published their entire programs on the web in order to serve as models for others. Many yearly meetings in the United States have adapted these models to meet the particular needs of their constituent meetings.

Letter from Rebecca Garofano:

(Editor's note: This letter was sent to the Meeting three weeks ago. Since that time, Rebecca, a sojourning member of our Meeting, found the opportunity to attend an ECHO conference this week, and was able to join us in worship this past 1st day - along with her wonderful son Amos. But you will find the letter well-worth reading, regardless of whether you had an opportunity to talk with her or not. She can be reached at rebecca.garofano@gmail.com or (315) 256-3980.)

Hello Friends,

This is long overdue, but greetings from Los Angeles. This is Rebecca, an old Friend of the Ft Myers meeting. Over the years I've had the chance to get together with Amy Vannocker (who attended together and joined the meeting around the same time as me while we were interns at ECHO) and we've reminisced about our community at the Ft Myers Meeting. I've been out of touch, but have very much stayed up with newsletters and have carried you with me as I've moved from place to place.

I've been in the US since October 2016, caring for my mother who is ill with cancer and navigating life as a new parent. My partner and I had to relocate to Los Angeles over the summer as he applies for a green card. He is a New Zealand citizen but his case is slightly complicated and the ninth circuit is our best bet, so we are here as we wait. He works as a Thai/English translator and I am currently taking prerequisite courses for what might be a masters degree, eventually. I know I've shared bits and pieces along the way, but for the record I am attaching a somewhat recent photo of us as a family, with our son Amos.

I thought of the Ft Myers meeting recently because my good friends, Rick and Ellen Burnette are soon to start a new nonprofit organization called Cultivate Abundance (<https://www.cultivateabundance.org>). Rick is a former professor of mine, but they've also had a large influence on my own life through their legacy as

founders of a local Thai nonprofit ("The Upland Holistic Development Project") that hosts the seed bank where I lived, and as well as the ECHO Asia Regional Impact Center (ECHO's first international branch). Rick and Ellen are humble and smart people, and the work they've been apart of is genuinely set apart by its integrity. I have the utmost respect for them.

Recently I heard that they will leaving ECHO to start an organization that will serve our neighbors in Immokalee. The aim is to support the good work that is happening through the Coalition of Immokalee Workers and other nonprofits by providing technical support for migrant communities in the areas of livelihoods and food security. Among various initiatives, they also hope to network gardens throughout the region to donate excess produce, to make sure that Immokalee workers have access to year-round nutritious food.

I've committed to supporting them for three years, to help the organization get on its feet. Fundraising is something I'm not very comfortable with, but I just wanted to (quietly, and respectfully) pass this along to you because I thought the meeting might also be interested. As a group of people that care deeply about justice, I simply wanted to make you aware of the opportunity. Should Friends be interested in learning more or want to consider supporting them, please let me know. I'd be happy to connect more.

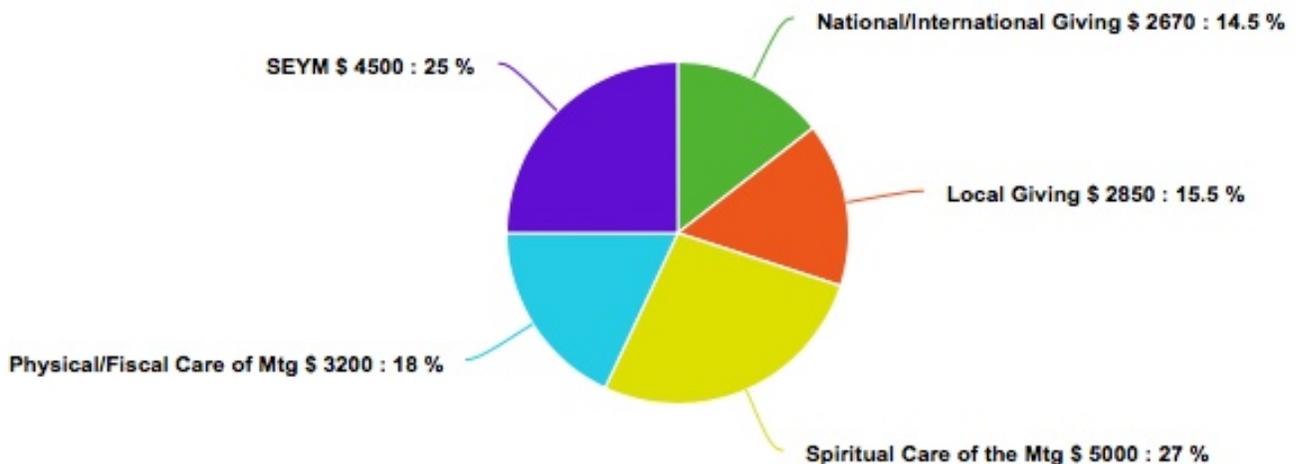
In Light and Love,
Rebecca

CALENDAR

All First Days	Pre-Worship Singing	9:50 am
	Meeting for Worship	10:30 am
11/19	Quaker Conversations: Worship	At rise of Worship
Thu 11/23	Thanksgiving Day meal at Iona House	Arrive noon-12:30
Mon 11/27	Ministry & Counsel Committee Meeting	10:30, place TBA
12/3	Pot luck lunch	At rise of Worship
12/10	Meeting for worship with attention to business	At rise of Worship
Sat 12/9	Memorial Meeting for Phyl Stanley	2:00 pm
Sat 1/13	SEYM – Winter Interim Business Meeting	All day - Orlando
Sun 1/14	SEYM Mitchner Lecture - “Remixing the Quaker Tradition: Renewal in a Participatory Culture” presented by C. Wess Daniels	Afternoon – Orlando
Fri 2/2 Sat 2/3	Meeting retreat led by Cece Yocum (Tampa Meeting)	Fri evening - location TBA; Sat all day @ Iona House

2017 Budget Distribution

The following is a graphic exposition of our current year budget. The Finance Committee presents this in order to better prepare you for our discernment of a 2018 budget at the December meeting for business.



meta-chart.com

October 2017 Treasurer's Report					
YEAR TO DATE SUMMARY					
		<u>October</u>			<u>October</u>
		<u>2016</u>			<u>2017</u>
	Contributions	\$ 14,630			\$ 18,955
	Outlays	\$ (11,497)			\$ (14,475)
	Difference	\$ 3,133			\$ 4,480
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General Fund Cash on Hand September 30, 2017					\$ 4,610
General Fund Contributions October, 2017					\$ 3,025
Budgeted Outlays October, 2017					\$ (3,155)
Cash on Hand October 31, 2017					\$ 4,480
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General Funds Savings September 30, 2017					\$ 11,704
Interest Earned					\$ 1
General Funds Savings October 31, 2017					\$ 11,705
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Meeting House Savings September 30, 2017					\$ 71,429
Interest Earned					\$ 9
Meeting House Fund October 31, 2017					\$ 71,438
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Allocations of General Funds Savings					
	Contingency			\$ 2,408	
	Ministry & Cnsl			\$ 102	
	Meetinghouse			\$ 3,732	
	Properties			\$ 3,732	
	P&SC			\$ 1,732	
				\$ 11,705	

Note from the Editor: (Editor's email address: Rich.Frechette@gmail.com)

- Please send articles, favorite passages, book reports and items of interest to Friends.
- Please send important dates, news of Friends/friends, etc.
- Those wishing to receive the newsletter by email, please contact the editor.

USEFUL WEBSITES FOR FRIENDS

<http://seymquakers.org>..... Southeastern Yearly Meeting
www.fcnl.org Friends Committee for National Legislation
www.fgcquaker.org..... Friends General Conference
www.afsc.org American Friends Service Committee
<http://fwcc.world>..... Friends World Committee on Consultation
www.quakerspeak.com QuakerSpeak: a Quaker YouTube channel.
www.quakerhouse.org Quaker House, Fayetteville
www.quakervoluntaryservice.org Quaker Voluntary Service
www.quno.org..... Quaker United Nations Office



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Address Correction Requested