



# FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING

## OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Newsletter, Fifth Month, 2016

902 Big Pine Way  
Fort Myers, FL 33907

Clerk: **Nancy Fennell (239) 437-4615**  
Recording Clerk: Kathy Hale/Richard Frechette  
Treasurer: John Battin (239) 437-8716

Newsletter Editor: Jeannette Botha (239) 368-7229

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month: Pot Luck Lunch—all welcome  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month: Meeting for Worship with attention  
to Business

“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,  
Since as members of one body you were called to peace.  
And be thankful”.

*Col. 3:15 submitted by Mary Smiley*

### QUERIES & ADVICES FOR THE FIFTH MONTH *How do Friends Care for One Another?* EDUCATION

#### QUERIES:

Do we share our deepest belief and values with each other and with our children, while leaving them free to develop as the Spirit may lead them?

Does the Meeting give the children loving care, and promote their spiritual life through religious education and other activities?

Do we encourage our children's participation in the Meeting's work and cultivate their desire for service to others? How do we educate our members and attenders about the Bible (especially the teachings of Jesus), other spiritual literature, and the history, principles and practices of Friends?

ADVICES: Seek for ourselves and for our children the full development of God's gifts, which is true education.

Realize that education should continue throughout life, and that all should share its opportunities and privileges.

Make time for regular personal prayer and worship, and for reading the Bible, Friends' literature, the Faith and Practice, the Queries and Advices, and other sources of spiritual value.

Seek truth together in our families and among Friends in shared worship and discussion.

Teach by being teachable. Be open to new ideas and approaches.

Reach out to that of God in everyone, and endeavor to live out the testimonies of Friends in all the expected and unexpected circumstances of daily life.

**MINUTES OF THE FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING  
OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS  
5<sup>th</sup> Month 15, 2016**

The Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends met on 5th month 15 with 14 Friends present. The meeting opened with silent worship. Clerk Nancy Fennell read queries and advices on the subject of education of children, spiritual education of members, and education about Quaker history and thought.

**Ministry & Counsel.** Acting Clerk Phyllis Stanley reported that the Committee held a productive meeting in the past week but has nothing to bring before the Meeting

**Clerk's Report.** Meeting Clerk Nancy Fennell read responses to queries from the Orlando Friends' Spiritual State of the Meeting report. The Clerk noted the difference between the Meetings in number of members available for committee work and encouraged Fort Myers attenders to consider membership.

Clerk Nancy Fennell reminded Friends of Visitation Sundays among south Florida Meetings on the 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month.

**Treasurers' Report.** Treasurer John Battin reported total contributions to the General Fund of \$1,735.00 for April, 2016. Additionally, surplus funds from 2015 and funds from the Dee Hohimer bequest were moved into our Savings Account.

**Finance.** Clerk Joan Culver reported that the committee discussed the issue of internal versus external audits and determined that we have an appropriate and effective internal audit process. Additionally, the committee suggests that the following text be added to the current description of the Committee's work: "The finance committee audits our records annually. We look for someone within our committee and the meeting at large, initially, provided that the person has no signatory responsibility for our finances."

**Nominating.** Clerk Nancy Howell reported that the committee is continuing to encourage committees to be working at revising committee descriptions, and she requests that the descriptions be in by October, 2016 for the Meeting's consideration. Pat Iyer introduced four queries to the Meeting to aid discernment of our level of interest in an outreach program. Discussion followed on ideas about purpose and approaches to outreach and about Quaker commitment to respecting our own principles as a group as well as respecting the spiritual leadings of each individual person. Friends' discussion indicates that the Meeting would like to explore further, and a working group was identified; Pat Iyer, Nancy Howell, Mary Wickes, and Joan Culver agreed to serve.

**Religious Education.** Mary Wickes read a current description of the Education Committee's purpose and function. Discussion followed regarding issues for revision to better fit the FMMM committee's focus.

**Peace and Social Concerns.** Clerk John Battin states the committee has nothing to bring to the Meeting at this time, but will report in the June Meeting for Business.

**Hospitality.** Clerk Helen Snodgrass reported that the committee is working on description revision.

**Properties.** Mary Smiley reports that the property committee has acquired "Slippery When Wet" signs and is working to reduce the slickness on the ramps. CNCP will do pressure-washing and will install the signs.

**Calusa Nature Center and Planetarium.** Joan Culver reported on the bi-annual meeting of the CNCP Board, including improvement of financial status and the continuing need for appointed executives to address upkeep and development priorities. The donation matching agreement has been completed and several new board members have been added. Joan's overall observation is one of continuing improvement of CNCP and continuing need for support by volunteers.

**New Business.** There is no new business.

The minutes were approved. The Meeting ended with a period of silence.

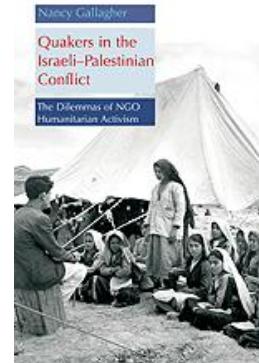
Kathy Hale, Co-Recording Clerk

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### ADULT EDUCATION Mary Wickes

We will have Adult Education on May 23, the 4th First day. Helen Fox will give a short presentation on the Consultation on Israel- Palestine she attended at Pendle Hill in April, organized by QPIN, the National Quaker Palestine Israel Network.

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### Betty De Witt

Memory Care Apt 162  
Heritage at Irene Woods  
4580 Forest Hill Irene Road  
Memphis, TN 38125



901 229 3436

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## *To a Friend, Ann deNevers*

*By Theron White, April 2016*

Ann, the matchmaker, invited  
Maria and me – we had not yet met  
–

But would in a greater grand plan,  
for  
An evening among Friends. She  
began

Not with gathering ingredients for  
Envied, secret recipes suitable for a  
chef,

Not with choosing heirloom linens,  
Porcelain tea cups so nigh transparent  
She allowed no one to return them  
To her kitchen, and silver

Lightly tarnished, aged, for having  
captured

Reflections of a stream of life at her  
table,

But with a greater venture in  
alchemy of

Friends she chose. That dinner,  
Twenty years ago, transformed Maria  
and me.

Quakers have no rituals, it is said,

But of Ann and those many evenings,  
my  
Remembrances are repeated ritual,  
Countervailing fading memory,  
That may reduce, finally, to two:  
She gave to me a friend I will adore  
for life, and  
One First Day at Smithfield  
Meeting, where  
Light passed through rippled  
windows,  
Shone on a bare wood floor and  
benches,  
And illuminated a truth many know:  
  
There is the unnamable and  
inexplicable,  
(You mustn't speak of God, she once  
said)  
That moves the needle and strand,  
with  
Eye and patience, in embroidery upon  
Our weft and warp, that seekers will  
read as  
Truth, and beauty, and love,  
Haven from all harm.

To those of us who knew our Friend, Ann deNevers, this poem just captures her essence perfectly. Thank you Theron.

Why They Hate Us  
by Fareed Zakaria  
Host of CNN's "Fareed Zakaria GPS"  
(submitted by Mary Wickes)



**Fareed Zakaria**

"Islamic terrorist don't just hate America or the West. They hate the modern world."

In 2014 about 30,000 people were killed in terrorist attacks worldwide. The majority of those perpetrating the violence were Muslim --and this is important--so were the victims. Of some of the 30,000 dead, the vast, vast majority were Muslims.

That's crucial to understanding "Why do they hate us." Islamic terrorist don't just hate America and the West. They hate the modern world, and they particularly hate Muslims who are trying to live in the modern world. Let us be clear. While the jihadis are few, there is a larger cancer within the world of Islam-A cancer of backwardness and extremism and intolerance. *Most of the countries have laws that restrict the free exercise of religion*, while those that have laws against leaving the faith are Muslim majority.

***But are these things inherent in the religion?***

When the experts tried to explain that in the 14th century, Islamic civilization was the world's most advanced, or the Quran was once read as a liberal and progressive document, they are not trying the realities of backwardness today. What they are saying is that it can change.

Islam after all, has been around for 14 centuries. There have been periods of war and of peace. Before 1900, for hundreds of years, Jews fled European pogroms and persecution to live in relative peace and security under the Ottoman Caliphate. That is why there were 1 million Jews living in the Muslim Middle East in 1900. Today Jews and Christians are fleeing from Iraq and Syria and radical terrorist {as they} take control of those lands. It is the same religion then and now. So what is different?

It is not theology, it is politics. Radical Islam is the product of broken politics and stagnant economics of Muslim countries--they have found in radical religion, an ideology that lets them rail against the modern world, an ideology that is now being exported to alienated young Muslims everywhere--in Europe and even in some rare cases in the United States.

***How can we bring an end to this?***

There is really only one way. Help the majority of Muslims fight extremists, reform their faith, and modernize their societies. In doing so we should listen to those on the front lines, many of whom are fighting and dying in the struggle against jihadist. The hundreds of Muslim reformers say their tasks is made much harder when Western politicians and pundits condemn Islam. How can we bring an end to this?

There is really only one way. Help the majority of Muslims fight extremists, reform their faith, and modernize their societies. In doing so we should listen to those on the front lines, many of whom are fighting and dying in the struggle against jihadist. The hundreds of Muslim reformers say their tasks is made much harder when Western politicians and pundits condemn Islam entirely condemn their faith, and speak of all Muslims as backward and suspect. (My underline. Mary)

There is another way to think about this. African-Americans make up about 13 % of the population, yet they comprise about 50% of homicide offenders, according to a Justice Department Study. Now we understand that when we see a black man on the street, we cannot treat him as a likely criminal. It would be dehumanizing, unfair, and racist. In America people should be treated as individuals and not stereotypes from a racial, ethnic or religious group. Remember the Bangladeshi cabdriver who drives you to the airport has nothing to do with ISIS, even though he is also a Muslim. Of course, it is not hard to make these quick associations-- especially in the wake of a terrorist attack. But if America is about anything, the idea that people should be judged as individuals with individual rights and liberties. That is what they hate about us. We might as well live up to our own ideals.

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**Norma Lipsen**  
**Interviewed by Pat Iyer**



For many years, Norma had her feet firmly planted in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey. This Northeastern Quaker grew up in the coal mining area of Pennsylvania. She was born into a family from Lithuania and raised Catholic.

Norma went to Millersville Teachers College to become a teacher. She met Charles, also a teacher, a year after graduating and got married in 1963. Laughing, Norma said they had to get married. They wanted to travel together at a time when single teachers were not permitted to do that.

During the first 7 years of her marriage, Norma worked in teaching jobs in both New Jersey and Pennsylvania. "I kept the jobs I liked the most and were closest to where I lived." She also completed a Masters degree in Special Education and became certified as an Educational Specialist. She worked for the rest of her career on a Child Study Team.

When her first child, Aaron was born 7 years into her marriage, Norma stopped working full time. Her second child, daughter Roslynn, arrived 3 years later. Norma did not resume full time work until both children were in college. Norma continued to be active in her profession; she worked toward certification in counseling.

Although Norma became a Quaker while living in Pennsylvania, her doubts about Catholicism began much earlier. Her uncle married a woman who was a Baptist. According to the Catholic Church, her aunt could not go to heaven because she was not Catholic. Norma had trouble reconciling this with her observation that her aunt did not smoke, drink or curse – yet Norma had Catholic relatives who did all of the above and were bound for heaven.

When Norma spoke to the priest about her doubts, he recommended, "Just have faith". "They spoke to my condition", Norma said when she discovered Solebury, Pennsylvania Monthly Meeting. She found Quakerism made sense to her and became active in the life of the meeting. She was a First Day School teacher and involved with the Peace and Social Concerns Committee and a local Quaker children's camp. She embraces the concept that all men and women are equal in the eyes of God and is comfortable and happy being a Quaker.

Charles and Norma just sold their Pennsylvania home. They also own a place in Maine where they spend part of the summer. They live in Pine Island Cove, a senior citizen community on a canal. Norma laughs as she says she is a member of the Matlacha Hookers, a group that raises money for people in need. Both of their children are married and living in the Northeast.

Norma and Charles are the proud owners of Chloe, a miniature schnauzer who comes to meeting for worship. Their Quaker perspective has rubbed off on Chloe. He knows how to meditate.

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## Quaker ABCs

*Submitted by Steve Woodall*

**ANTICIPATING** communion with the Divine is celebrated by Quakers not through special outward ceremony, but is to be found by all in their daily lives.

**BELIEVING** in the equality of all has helped Friends, from the early days of Quakerism onwards, to be sensitive to the evils of slavery and the “inferior” status of women.

**CHRISTIANS**, non-Christians, and occasionally even agnostics are found among Quakers, but despite differing theology, they unite in the belief that each has an aspect which most Friends call the Divine or God.

**DEVIL** and doomsday are words and concepts which are not of concern to Quakers, since belief in the intrinsic goodness of humankind, not its depravity, undergirds all Quakerism.

**EACH** and every participant in Quakerism is a minister. The abolished positions are those of the laypersons.

**FAIRNESS** to and equality for others are striven for by Friends since they believe that all persons have that of God within.

**GATHERING** together, without human leadership, and waiting through silence to hear that still small voice of God are the ways Quakers, or Friends, join together in worship.

**HIERARCHY** is foreign to the Quaker method of organization. Friends follow their understandings of spiritual leadings. These leadings are tested by and through the local members. Decrees handed down by a “superior” person or group are not accepted.

**INNER LIGHT** – that of God in each – is recognized by most Quakers as their basic belief.

**JUSTICE** for all is necessary before all peoples truly can remove conflict from their families, their local environment, and the whole wide world.

**KIN** to Quakers means all people in the world, despite real or perceived differences in their religion, race, sex, or ethnic background.

**LOVE** thy Lord thy God and thy neighbor as thyself, is the teaching which, as well as the example of the life of Jesus, Quakers try to follow.

**MEETING FOR WORSHIP** is the center of Quakerism and the center of spiritual focus and renewal for Friends.

**NEW** and continuous divine revelations may and do come to those who are open to them. They did not cease with the last period in the *Book of Revelations*.

**OATHS** are not sworn, for Quakers do not believe in a double standard of truth. Affirmation is used, not the swearing of oaths.

**PEACE** with others and within the self is the desired result of religious experience which Quakers join with all others in pursuing.

**QUAKING** at the word of God was the reason a judge gave Friends what he thought was a derisive nickname of Quaker which, today, is worn proudly.

**RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS** is the official name for Quakerism. It is taken from Jesus’ comment found in *John 15:15*, “but I have called you friends, for all things I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.”

**SIMPLICITY** is a principal testimony of Friends who have adopted Mother Elizabeth Seton’s statement “Live simply so others may simply live” as their guide.

**TESTIMONIES**, not the holding of creeds, are the accepted precepts of Quakers. Those of Equality, Integrity, Peace, and Simplicity are primary.

**UNITY** is reached before Friends move forward in making decisions in their meetings for worship in which business takes place. Quakers do not demand or expect unanimity in thought or action from their members.

**VISITATION** from the Spirit is always striven for during meetings for worship, but does not invariably occur.

**WAITING** upon Divine guidance is the relationship with God which Quakers endeavor to have. The presumption that a single understanding given to a person or group is the only way is not acceptable to most Quakers.

**XENOPHOBIA** is only one of the many phobias which Friends work against, for phobias about others ignore that of God in each and prejudge groups.

**YIELDING** the self as center, moving to another center, and working towards becoming God-centered is the commitment of Friends.

**ZEAL** for living and zest for causes characterize Friends at their best.

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## USEFUL WEBSITES FOR FRIENDS

Southeastern Yearly Meeting

[www.seymquakers.org](http://www.seymquakers.org)

Fort Myers Meeting Website

[www.quakercloud.org/fortmyers](http://www.quakercloud.org/fortmyers)

American Friends Service Committee

[www.afsc.org](http://www.afsc.org)

Friends General Conference

[www.fgcquaker.org](http://www.fgcquaker.org)

Friends General Conference Book Store

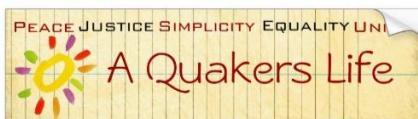
[www.quakerbooks.org](http://www.quakerbooks.org)

Pendle Hill

[www.pendlehill.org](http://www.pendlehill.org)

*Editor's email address is: [jeannettebotha64@gmail.com](mailto:jeannettebotha64@gmail.com)*

5-22-16	Meeting for Worship	10:30 am
	Adult Education—Israel /Palestine conflict – Helen Fox * see above	At rise of Meeting
5-29-16	Meeting for Worship	10:30 am
	Visitation Day for attending other Meetings	
6-5-16	Meeting for Worship	10:30 am
	Pot Luck Lunch—all are welcome	At rise of Meeting
6-12-16	Meeting for Worship	10:30 am
	Meeting for Worship with attention to Business	At rise of Meeting



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Address Correction Requested

