



FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING

OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Newsletter, Sixth Month, 2016

902 Big Pine Way
Fort Myers, FL 33907

Clerk: Nancy Fennell (239) 989-2503
Recording Clerk: Kathy Hale/Richard Frechette
Treasurer: John Battin (239) 437-8716

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

Newsletter Editor: Jeannette Botha (239) 368-7229

“Look not out, but within...
Remember it is a still voice that speaks to us in this day,
And that it is not to be heard in the noises and hurries of the mind;
But it is distinctly understood in a retired frame.”

William Penn, 1644-1718

QUERIES FOR THE SIXTH MONTH

Home, Family and Relationships

Queries:

Do we make our home a place where love, peace, happiness, friendship, and refreshment of spirit are found, and where the presence of God is experienced?
Do all members of our family receive our affection and understanding?
Do we take care that responsibilities outside the home do not encroach upon the time and loving attention our family needs?
Do we acknowledge and support all relationships and families, whether conventional or not, that are based on love and commitment?

Does our family set aside First Day and other times for worship, service, rest and refreshment of spirit?

Advices:

Live in love and learn from one another.
Try to live simply.
In our family life, encourage reliance upon God's guidance and help for each day's needs.
Remember the value of beauty in all its forms.
God's gifts are for all to enjoy; learn to use them wisely.

**MINUTES OF THE FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
6th Month 12, 2016**

The Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends met on 6th month 12 with 12 Friends present. The meeting opened with silent worship. Clerk Nancy Fennell read queries and advices about the extent to which our personal lives are in accord with our Quaker principles. These can be found in our Faith and Practice.

Ministry & Counsel. Ministry and Counsel has nothing to bring to the Meeting at this time.

Clerk's Report. Meeting Clerk Nancy Fennell read from the Savannah Friends' Meeting's 2015 State of the Meeting report, including a description by a member of her experience of silent worship and identification of the Meeting's special events and ministries through the year.

Treasurers' Report. Treasurer John Battin prepared a financial report showing May contributions of \$7,665 and May outlays of \$3515. The Meeting is slightly behind in contributions for this point in the year, but no problems are expected. A full report will be in the newsletter.

Finance. Clerk Joan Culver states that the Finance committee did not meet and has nothing urgent to report.

Nominating. Clerk Nancy Howell has asked clerks of all committees to review the documents outlining the purpose and work of the committees.

Religious Education. Mary Wickes reported that the current description of the Committee's purpose will stand.

Peace and Social Concerns. This committee has not met and has nothing to report at this time.

Hospitality. Clerk Helen Snodgrass reported the committee has not met and has nothing to bring to bring to the Meeting.

Properties. Mary Smiley reported that there is some concern regarding intrusion into Iona House and it is being investigated.

Outreach Committee. Nancy Howell reported that the newly appointed Outreach Committee visited an event to feed the hungry to observe the process and consider how our outreach might connect to these events. The committee also met to discuss greater use of the web and our current website for outreach. Committee Chair Pat Iyer has purchased the domain name of ftmyersquakers.org for possible use, and she proposes we revamp our current website, which serves Quakers well, for better outreach to non-Quakers. Specifically, such a revision might include more information on events, profiles of members, and interview videos from Quaker Speak, all designed to create an understanding of Quaker values and culture.

Pat Iyer also proposes use of a Meetup Group, which brings people with similar interests together for events, formal and informal. The Meeting decided to hold this proposal for further consideration.

Two Minutes were approved in response to the Outreach Committee's proposals.

2016MM06. The Meeting supports approving the upgrade to our website and related funding costs.

2016MM07. The Meeting agrees to provide \$300 to the Outreach Committee for their work this year

Joan Culver gave the following report as liaison to CNCP:

"The fundraising in March netted around \$50,000 which was matched by another \$50,000. The article in the News Press generated a gift of \$100,000.

Approximately \$145,000 more has to be set aside for the Aviary which legally has to be completed by October. It may cost more.

Roof repair for the Planetarium is the next largest expense followed by the AC repair.

The new treasurer is attempting to restrain daily costs so the above monies won't be spent for other items. Estimated monthly costs to run the center are \$30,000.

Summer camp starts this Monday and will perhaps pay for itself with a little extra.

There will be several fundraising attempts coming soon. There is a meteor display in August which hopefully will bring in some cash for monthly expenses.

The office manager, Jayne, often has to be at the front desk and then neglect other duties because of lack of consistent volunteers. CNCP would welcome help."

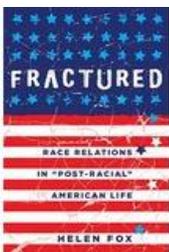
It is still my sense that CNCP is moving slowly toward self sufficiency but it is fragile."

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

Kathy Hale
Co-Recording Clerk

Islamophobia
(Dr. Helen Fox)

The Meeting suggested these be circulated through the newsletter." Here's some context: The first attachment is the Open Letter to Hillary Clinton that the Palestine Israel Action Group of Ann Arbor Friends Meeting is circulating among Quakers throughout the U.S. A list of signers is attached, but more are coming in by the hour, so the list is very incomplete. We will be collecting signatures throughout June, maybe longer. If anyone from FMFM would like to sign on they should email me at hfox@umich.edu. The next three attachments are Minutes regarding Palestine passed by Ann Arbor Friends Meeting in 2001, 2007, and 2011. We talked a bit about these at my presentation, and some Friends



wanted to have the text of all three. Whether they go into the newsletter at some point of course is up to you. Thanks again, and I'll see you, God willing, in November. I can always be reached at my email address while we are in Michigan. My best, Helen

My new book, "Fractured: Race Relations in 'Post-Racial' American Life" is now on Amazon: <http://tinyurl.com/q7svf5v>

An Open Letter to Hillary Clinton
May 17, 2016

As Quakers, we are disappointed in your opposition to the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement and your unwavering support for the right wing government of the State of Israel, despite its unconscionable repression of the Palestinian people.

We understand that you think BDS stands in the way of peace negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians. In your letter of May 9 to the Israel Action Network and the Jewish Federations of North America you explain that the movement aims to “punish” Israel by “dictating” how the two sides should resolve the core issues of the conflict. We respectfully disagree with this analysis. As you surely know, the balance of power has always been in Israel’s favor. Israel, a nuclear armed country with a modern military supported by \$128 billion dollars in US aid since its founding, is pitted against smaller and smaller enclaves of Palestinians, now crowded into barely 15% of historical Palestine, harassed and dehumanized at checkpoints, deprived of work, food, water, building materials, travel, health care – everything that human beings should enjoy. The fact that Palestinian civil society has called for a powerful, nonviolent, international response to this untenable situation should be understandable.

As you may know, Quakers have been serving since the 1880s in Palestine, where we have had the opportunity to learn from and appreciate the Palestinian people, their culture, their work ethic, and their resilience in the face of suffering. We respectfully suggest that as someone who hopes to act as a fair negotiator, you should avail yourself of every opportunity to do the same.

You often reminisce that when you and Bill visited Israel for the first time three decades ago, you walked the ancient streets of Jerusalem’s Old City and fell in love with the country and its people. We believe you will be a better negotiator if you allow yourself to fall in love with the Palestinian people as well. It is not hard to do. Spend time with families, visit people’s homes, enjoy their magnificent hospitality, listen to their stories about their daily lives, learn a bit of Arabic, appreciate the humor, the children’s games and stories, the music, the beautiful embroidery, the olive harvest, the importance Palestinians place on education. Learn, too, about the terror so many have experienced, the physical and emotional trauma of scores of children, the displacement from their ancestral homes and villages, the erasure of their suffering from the eyes of Israelis on the other side of the “separation wall”.

We know this is not how diplomacy usually works. But we believe the world is ready for a new way of addressing human disagreements that result in violence and war. If you spend significant time experiencing the lives and perspectives not just of the Israelis, but of the Palestinians as well, you will be able to move negotiations forward in ways that both sides will ultimately see as fair.

As Quakers, we yearn for an end to this terrible conflict that has spawned such hard feelings between good people. We ask you to act with integrity in the critical work that you do.

Sincerely, Dr. Helen Fox

Ann Arbor Friends Meeting Minute on Israel-Palestine adopted December 16, 2001

We deplore the dangerous and destructive spiral of violence in Israel and Palestine.

As Quakers, we believe that all life is sacred; thus, all of the deaths -- of civilians, bystanders, soldiers, and suicide bombers alike -- are devastating and senseless losses to families and communities on both sides of the conflict.

We call for an immediate end to the Israeli government's provocative acts of occupation and restriction that inflame emotions and destroy human dignity; we call on the Palestinians for an immediate end to their desperate acts of retaliation; and we entreat our own government to stop encouraging the conflict by supplying arms aid to Israel.

We call on the United Nations and the entire international community to assist in negotiating for justice, peace, and the building of two separate, viable states: an Israel that is safe and secure and an independent Palestine free of Israeli occupation, settlements, and military domination.

Ann Arbor Friends Meeting Minute of Concern on Israel-Palestine (Feb. 18, 2007)

Ann Arbor Friends are united in concern about the death and destruction occurring in Israel and Palestine. We feel grief and sadness for the vulnerability experienced by people in both lands. We believe the Spirit calls us to care about all who suffer in this conflict and to respond peaceably, as we each are led.

We hold in the Light Friends who undertake the work of seeking information, supporting peace groups, working to sustain the Quaker presence in Ramallah, initiating interfaith dialogue, opposing the supply of weapons to combatants on both sides, and promoting economic development to lessen poverty in the region. We will continue to educate ourselves about this humanitarian crisis as we seek helpful ways to respond individually and as a Meeting.

Ann Arbor Friends Meeting Minute July 17, 2011

The Ann Arbor Friends Meeting recognizes the complex international dynamics that feed the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict, creating fear on both sides and putting both Palestinians and Israelis at risk. We are concerned about the safety and well-being of *all* affected by this conflict. We wish to ally ourselves with those in Israel and Palestine working to bring peace.

We believe that one key step towards stability and safety for both Israelis and Palestinians depends on a just agreement regarding the Palestinian lands that Israel has occupied, illegally, according to international law, since 1967. Successive U.S. governments have generously supported Israeli military occupation of these lands, and have turned a blind eye to illegal tax exemptions for U.S. charitable organizations that support Israeli settlements.

We urge our government to exhibit equal concern for the well-being of both Palestinian and Israeli people by:

- Supporting a United Nations resolution recognizing a Palestinian state
- Withholding U.S. tax dollars that support the Israeli military
- Enforcing U.S. tax law regarding charitable organizations that support Israeli settlements

We also urge Friends worldwide to unite with Britain Yearly Meeting in its call to boycott products made in Israeli settlements, “not as punishment or revenge, but as an external pressure to achieve change.”

With Britain Yearly Meeting, Ann Arbor Friends Meeting considers that “we should now act publicly, and, well-informed, be able to explain our action to others,” in order to “give hope to Palestinians and support to those in Israel who are working for peace.” We agree with Britain Yearly Meeting that “in the face of the armed oppression of poor people and the increasing encroachment of the illegal settlements in the West Bank, we cannot do nothing.” We too are clear that it would be wrong to support the Israeli settlements by purchasing their goods.

In order to exert more than symbolic pressure on the Israeli government to negotiate a just peace at this critical time, Ann Arbor Friends Meeting joins with religious and civil society organizations throughout the world in a boycott of corporations that support the Israeli military.

Helen Snodgrass **Interviewed by Pat Iyer**

The child of two generations of farmers, Helen was raised in Bloomington, Illinois. Her grandmother set a precedent for women in the family when she went to college and graduated in 1906. Helen's mother also went to college, became an accountant, and moved off the family farm to live in town. Helen was named after her mother's sister Helen who died on the operating room table during



thyroid surgery in 1937. "The farm was big to me" she said in describing spending summers on her grandparents' farm.

Although Helen's father thought she should work in a bank, Helen insisted on going to nursing school to become the first nurse in the family. After finishing two years of nursing school in Champaign, Illinois, Helen moved into a dorm in Chicago to complete her Bachelors Degree in the Science of Nursing. The school had no place for girls in the dorm so they erected a wall to segregate the men and women. Laughing, Helen recalls the wall came down the first day of school.

After graduating from nursing school, Helen married a man she knew from high school and moved to Birmingham, Michigan, then to Chicago where her husband was employed by the Chicago Art Institute. Their next move brought them to a 108 acre farm in Alfred, New York which they bought for \$17,000 in 1969. Helen's first exposure to Quakers took place in New York. Helen was raised in the Disciples of Christ Church. "I was taken with how Quakers talked and how outspoken they were." Quakers in that area met in homes rather than in a meetinghouse.

In 1972, Helen and her husband adopted a baby girl whom they named Melissa Kerry America. Within a few years, they spent a year living in Great Britain (Wales, Scotland) while her husband completed a term as a Fulbright Scholar.

Helen enrolled in a Masters Degree in Nursing program at State University of New York Binghamton after they returned from abroad. It took her 2 hours and 45 minutes to drive one way to college for classes. She persisted and earned her Masters Degree and completed a nurse practitioner program. At this point while she was taking her daughter trick or treating, the dean of the school of nursing at Alfred interviewed her for a job. Helen was wearing a clown's outfit when she was interviewed for a job teaching at a school of nursing. She got the job. "That job taught me how to teach", she explained.

Next, Helen and her husband moved to Minneapolis where she taught at a community college for a year. Then she got a job working at the University of Minnesota Hospital on a unit that was filled with AIDS patients. This was in the early days of the epidemic when the disease was not well understood. Many of the patients also had tuberculosis. Helen and many of the hospital employees tested positive for tuberculosis.

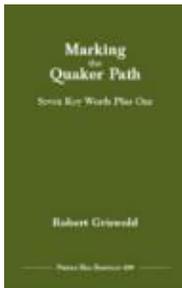
After 29 years of marriage, Helen got a divorce. Noting the weather in Minneapolis varied between -59° to 108°, Helen talked to her mother about moving to Florida. "In the autumn of my life, I wanted to be outside as much as possible." Her mother refused to move so Helen got a job in the prison, where she found many of the inmates had AIDS. Then she took a job teaching in a community college. She worked there until she retired 8 years ago.

In 2008, their plans were finalized and they moved to Florida in 2009. Helen's mother died at age 92, 5 months after they moved to Florida. Helen lives in Deep Creek Development in Punta Gorda.

Helen rediscovered Quakers after her mother died. (There were no Quakers in the Midwest near her.) “I felt like I dropped in on an interesting meeting”, she said after she began attending Fort Myers Monthly Meeting. “I am happy to be a Quaker.” Helen shared that being part of a spiritual formation group within the meetinghouse community has helped her.

Currently Helen is dating a physician named Bob whom she has known literally almost all of her life. They walked to kindergarten together; their great grandparents knew each other. Bob lives and practices in Bloomington, Illinois, where he is entrenched. And he visits Helen in Florida.

Helen traces her interest in Quakerism to the point in college where she began questioning her religion. “I saw that Quakers were clear about what they believed, and I found it appealing that there were no levels between a Quaker and God. It made sense to me that you have responsibility to figure out your values. I got into Quakerism late in life and have made great changes in how I live. I am so much farther along the path than I was 5 years ago.”



MARKING THE QUAKER PATH:

Seven key words but one written

By Robert Griswold

Pendle Hill Pamphlet #439

(Synopsis by Helen Snodgrass)

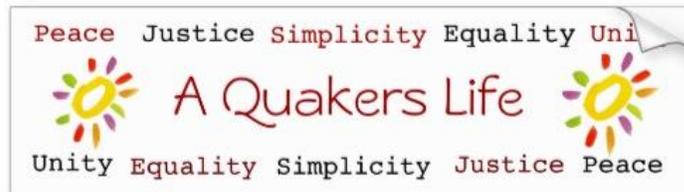
Robert Griswold has been a convinced Friend since 1947. He has been Clerk of several meetings, Director of Scattergood Friends School and has written several articles for Friends' publications. He is currently living in Denver. The author speaks of a progression of words to help seekers where individuals are on their Quaker path. The words are the key to our integrity.

The seven words are: condition, experience, covenant, discipline, discernment, authority, and beloved community. There is one more, submission. The author explains these words by discussing the work of early Quakers. I like the plain language and 'to the point' comments. Discussion questions are included.

The closing paragraph is, “we became aware of our condition; we became open to an experience with the Divine. We promise to keep our covenant with what is Holy; we take up the disciplines which keep us on the path; we trust the process of discernment; we accept and act on our authority to love; we find we can love unconditionally and belong in the beloved community.”



6/26/16	Meeting for Worship	10:30 am
	Adult Education	At rise of Meeting
7/3/16	Meeting for Worship	10:30 am
	Pot Luck lunch—all are welcome	At rise of Meeting
7/10/16	Meeting for Worship	10:30 am
	Meeting for Worship with regard to Business	At rise of Meeting
	Last Chance Book Club	At rise of Meeting
7/17/16	Meeting for Worship	10:30 am



Friends Meeting of Fort Myers
Religious Society of Friends
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Address Correction Requested

