

FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING

OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Newsletter, Fourth 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

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

“Don’t go to the meditation room to become quiet.
Take quietness with you when you go there.”

Unknown, Submitted by Nancy Fennell

QUERIES AND ADVICES FOR THE FOURTH MONTH

How do Friends care for one another?

Mutual Care

Queries:

How do we foster a spirit of community among the Meeting’s members and attenders?
How does the Meeting keep in contact with all of the Meeting’s members and attenders?
How does the Meeting assist couples and families to communicate, grow together, and rear children in a loving environment?
Does the Meeting Community nurture the Meeting’s children?
How does the Meeting care for those who live alone, the sick, the aging, the widowed, the separated or divorced, and others with families affected by disruption?
Do we assist Friends in need as their circumstances require?
How do we labor with and care for those whose conduct or manner of living give grounds for concern?
How are visitors to our Meeting made to feel welcome?

Advices:

Be truthful and sincere and thus encourage these qualities in others.
Through example and education, help each other to recognize and follow the voice of God both in our spiritual lives and in joyful and willing service.
Watch with tenderness over the opening minds of children. Seek to awaken in them the love and understanding of the life and teachings of Jesus, and a sense of security in the love of God. Remember that there is a unique potential in each human being as a beloved child of God, and the Holy Spirit may lead children to give wise counsel to listening adults.
Young people, too, have responsibility to care for the Meeting and to participate in Meetings both for Worship and for Business. Faith is needed as a vital part of our living.

**MINUTES OF THE FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
4th Month 10, 2016**

- The Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends met on 4th month 10th day with eleven Friends present. We entered into silent worship. Presiding Clerk Nancy Fennell read queries and advices from Faith & Practice on Mutual Care. In response, we discussed how we as individuals and as a Meeting address these queries and advices. We also discussed the challenge of finding balance between respecting privacy and offering care.
- The Clerk read the spiritual State of the Meeting report of Jacksonville Monthly Meeting. It began with a sharing of thoughts of how individuals interacted with Meeting. The quotes seemed to parallel our own thoughts of challenges and hopes, such as:
 - *“We need to give ourselves more formal instruction in how to prepare for meeting for worship, so that meeting for worship prepares us, in turn, for the rest of the week’s life. Our individual presences in the larger community represent Meeting. We need to claim the responsibilities of being Quakers.”*
 - *“We are all one people. We have strengths and weaknesses. Because we are a mix of theists, non-theists, etc., we need to be careful how we listen to each other. All of us are from the light. It is easy because of the past for us to put up barriers. Instead, we need to listen past those barriers and become a community of love” ...*
- On behalf of **Ministry and Counsel Committee**, Richard Frechette reported that Phyl Stanley will serve as M&C clerk during his May to September absence.

The committee completed its interviews of all persons who had participated in the Spiritual Companion Program. Based on those interviews, they have formulated these recommendations:

- The Meeting should continue to foster the formation of Spiritual Nourishment Groups. The goals of the Spiritual Nourishment groups are two-fold: increasing one’s connection to Spirit, and deepening relationship with other Meeting folks.
- Anyone participating in a Spiritual Nourishment group needs to commit to regular attendance, to reading the assigned materials faithfully, and to confidentiality.
- M&C should recruit seasoned Friends to serve as convener/resource person to each group. That seasoned Friend will determine whether to follow a pre-set curriculum, or to work with the group on packaging the curriculum.
- The convener will announce the formation of a group. Interested persons can contact the convener to tentatively join the group. These persons will attend an initial meeting. At the initial meeting, the group will work out the remaining logistics and each person will determine whether to stay with that group or to

wait for the formation of another group.

- We need to find alternative ways to blend the needs of both full-time and part-time residents in spiritual nourishment groups. To this end, Kathy Hale has offered to research how we may take advantage of current technology.

Friends discussed the relationship of the Spiritual Nourishment Groups to the SEYM Spiritual Formation Groups. We also recognized that there are various opportunities for Friends to find spiritual nourishment within the meeting, such as participating in the pre-worship music periods.

- **Treasurer** John Battin presented the financial report for the period ended March 31. In summary, year to date receipts are \$4,075, and outlays are \$1,208, for a net surplus of \$2,867. On March 31, we had \$15,417, which is made up of the following:
 - ❖ 2016 Funds on hand for budgeted expenses \$2,867
 - ❖ 2015 General Funds surplus \$7,550
 - ❖ Dee Hohimer Bequest unspent to-date \$5,000Meetinghouse funds savings as of 3/31 totaled \$45,877
The complete report will be included in the newsletter.
- Nancy Howell reported that the **Nominating Committee** decided to send a request to all committee clerks to have their committee review and update their respective committee descriptions. Pat lyre has been asked to prepare a draft description of an outreach committee.
- The presiding Clerk asked that Religious Education committee purchase copies of "Living the Testimony of Equality: A White Friend's Experience" by Patience Schenck, Pendle Hill Pamphlet #451, a pamphlet that SEYM has suggested we read.
 - Peace and Socials Concerns Committee held an open meeting in which 11 members and attenders participated to discuss key issues that it would like FCNL to focus on. The sense of that body is that the following are the key issues, and P&SC recommends that our Meeting align with these recommendations: Peacebuilding Policy, Call to Conscience on Climate Change, Fighting Poverty, Campaign Financing
- ❖ **2016MM05:** Fort Myers Monthly Meeting recommends the following items for FCNL priorities relating to national legislation over the next two years:
 - **Peacebuilding Policy:** We are changing U.S. foreign policy from one that is overly militarized to one that prevents, mitigates, and transforms violent conflict. We focus on peacefully preventing and ending violent conflict and reforming U.S. counterterrorism policy. By building support in Congress and the administration, we are increasing civilian capacities through the State Department and USAID to address violent conflict and extremism.

- **Call to Conscience on Climate Change:** The US Congress is pivotal to national and global efforts to meet the challenge of climate disruption. For Congress to be part of the solution, collaboration between legislators from both political parties is needed. Over the past 3 years, FCNL, with concerned citizens across the nation with diverse organizations across civil society, has helped foster a new moral, bipartisan and cooperative spirit in Congress. We all played key roles in the introduction of resolution on climate change by II House Republicans in September 2015. We continue to foster this spirit so that Congress can craft meaningful legislative solutions.
- **Fighting Poverty:** In 1964 President Lyndon Johnson called for an end to poverty in this country. While the safety net built since then boosts millions of people over the poverty line each year, the U.S. needs to do more build durable paths out of poverty and into economic security. To fulfill this longtime aspiration and finally end poverty, Congress should ensure everyone has an adequate income and access to education, health care, a safe home and meaningful employment.
- **Campaign Financing:** We urge FCNL to continue its mission to reduce the role of big money in government, which all too often drowns out the voices of American citizens.

P&SC stated its intent to post in the newsletter possible uses of the Dee Hohimer \$5,000 bequeathment, and to receive input from the Meeting family prior to next month's meeting.

- **Hospitality Committee:** Clerk Helen Snodgrass shared her quandary of buying supplies from budget versus asking individuals to provide various supplies such as coffee and paper goods. Friends were of the opinion that we should expect the committee to buy supplies and receive reimbursement, and that we should channel Friends contributions to general support. Friends also noted that it would be beneficial for the Meeting to have a sense of budgetary needs in the hospitality area. It was also noted that there will be a need for alternative support for closing the meetinghouse on 1st days in the summer
- **Properties Committee:** A sign has been made cautioning visitors to the Iona House that the ramp is slippery when wet. The committee is continuing to work on improvements to the ramp.
- **Calusa Nature Center:** The current Bookkeeper is leaving the CNCP. A replacement plan has been put into place.
- **Clerk's Report:**
 - The clerk reported that our Meeting's phone number in "Friends Journal" has been updated. The webservant was asked to check that our Meeting's website includes the proper contact telephone number.
 - SEYM's Worship and Ministry Committee urges each meeting to accept the

months with 5th Sundays as Visitation Sunday. The Clerk will announce this in each of those month's and will solicit volunteers to visit other meetings.

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

Richard Frechette
Co-Recording Clerk

Message to F/friends from Peace and Social Concerns

Members and Attenders are asked to consider possible recipients for Dee Hohimer's Bequest 'For the Indigent'. Peace and Social Concerns is working on this for suggestions, however, if you are aware of efforts or groups whose activities assist indigents, please let us know your thoughts. Please direct your ideas to jbattin@nycap.rr.com.

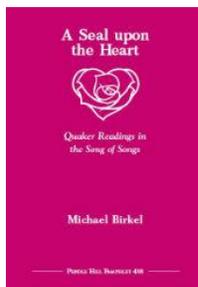
"A Seal upon the Heart"

By Michael Birkel

Pendle Hill Pamphlet #438

Quaker Readings in the 'Song of Songs'

Book review by Helen Snodgrass



Michael Birkel is a member of the Clear Creek Monthly Meeting in Richmond, Indiana, and teaches in the Religion Department at Earlham College. He is active in promoting interfaith relations.

The 'Song of Songs' is a unique book of the Bible. No one knows who wrote it. The poem appears to imply man's praises for the beauty of his lover, and she in turn, praises him. It is definitely a poem about love and contains beautiful passages. God is never mentioned. It is an erotic poem. Over the centuries Jews and Christians saw the poem as an allegory. Christians felt it described Jesus' love of the church, but most people who read it feel it is a love poem between lovers. They feel the Bible is embracing sexuality.

The discussion questions at the end ask you:

Do you read it allegorically, or as a celebration of human love, or something different?

It is worth the read and rewards you with several Quaker views of the songs.

Karen Zentgraf

Interviewed by Pat Iyer

Lazy summer days floating down a salt water creek – Karen lights up when she remembers the idyllic summers spent at her mother's family's home. She grew up on Long Island where her family lived in the winter in Syosset and in the summer in a cottage on Centre Island/Oyster Bay on the north shore of Long Island. "Summers were great! We had a cottage on the creek. We were fast swimmers when we swam with the tide. My grandmother used to have float parties where a group of family and friends used inner tubes to float with the tide."

Karen's father was an attorney who worked in banking law in Brooklyn. Her mother had lived abroad, and attended 13 schools before she enrolled in junior college. Karen's mother spoke German and French. Karen's paternal grandparents lived in Glen Cove on a farm. After they died, Karen's parents moved into this house. When Karen's parents died, Karen's sister and brother had to dispose of 6 generations of possessions stored in the house. They sold off the land and the house, the end of an era.



When Karen was in 7th grade, her family moved from Syosset to Locust Valley. There Karen attended the Locust Valley Friends Academy. Karen knew her family was careful with their finances so she and her siblings could attend Friends Academy. Karen's father and all his family were Quakers. She recalls her great grandmother sewing white nighties for the Friends Service Committee to be given to infants of displaced people from the war.

In contrast to the Quaker background of Karen's father, Karen's mother and her mother's family were Christian Scientists. Her parents agreed their children would be exposed to both religions. Karen went every other month to Matinecock Friends Meeting for Worship and alternate months to the Christian Science Sunday School. In college (Vassar College) Karen realized she was trying hard to follow the beliefs of the Christian Scientists, but she could not accept them. Her thinking crystallized further when she wrote a paper on Quaker education for a senior year philosophy of education course. She learned more about Quaker beliefs and the importance of educating spirit, mind and body.

Karen and Hank met in Poughkeepsie, New York while he was working for IBM. The summer between Karen's sophomore and junior college years, she participated in the "Experiment in International Living". She lived and traveled in Germany with a German family. Hank participated in the "Experiments" Program by being a community ambassador to Chile. After completing their programs, Karen and Hank met by sharing a ride to an alumni meeting in Putney, Vermont. Hank volunteered to give Karen, who had no car, a ride to the meeting. As they became better acquainted they discovered their mutual interest in swimming which strengthened their bonds. Hank and Karen had swimming dates in the Vassar College pool, generally followed by dinner. They discussed religion as their relationship deepened. Hank had been raised Catholic. When they discussed marriage, there was a concern that the Church would require her to become Catholic and raise the children in the Catholic Church. Karen and Hank were fortunate to find a priest who could handle their differences; the priest even advised Hank to find out more about Quakers and told him it was his responsibility to support Karen in her spiritual development.

Karen completed her degree in German at Vassar College and moved to Iowa for two years, where she taught German at the Scattergood School in West Branch. "It was a Peace Corps-like experience", she explained. "The students, as well as the faculty were active in the upkeep and maintenance of the school, as well as the kitchen, (cooking, serving, and cleaning up meals), housekeeping (cleaning, laundry, painting, minor repairs and plumbing) and farm chores. They milked the cows, collected the eggs and each sophomore raised a sow, attended her farrowing, and raised her piglets." While at Scattergood and during the summers, Karen also continued studying for her masters from Middlebury College German School as well as completing requirements for teacher certification.

After completing her masters, Karen and Hank were married in New York. Seven months after their wedding Hank transferred with IBM to Boulder, Colorado. When they first married,

they attended both the Boulder Meeting for Worship and the Catholic Church. Hank fell away from the Catholic Church shortly thereafter. They were involved with the Meeting, especially through their contact with the Carter family, whom the Meeting helped by sponsoring school lunches for them, while the Carter children integrated the schools in Drew, Mississippi. The Zentgraf family visited the Carter family in Drew and had two of the Carter girls spend two summers with them in Boulder. (For more information about the Carter family, read *Silver Rights* by Connie Curry.)

As the Zentgraf children grew, Hank and Karen realized the Quaker Meeting was not the best fit for their children at their ages, so they began attending the United Church of Christ. They have three daughters. One lives in Fort Collins, CO and the other two live in Austin. Two grandchildren live in Austin and one in Colorado. When Karen and Hank's Colorado daughter became ill, it was evident that it would help her daughter, son-in-law and granddaughter if Hank and Karen moved closer. Downsizing from two and a half acres to a small city lot in Fort Collins sweetened the deal. Living in Boulder for four decades had been rewarding. Karen had enjoyed teaching English to women from other countries. But then the school administration where she taught insisted they wanted to have only Christian teachers. Karen and quite a few teachers resigned in protest and started their own school happily teaching English as a second language. Karen also taught swimming, lifesaving, babysitting and CPR at a local YMCA. But the move to Ft. Collins has brought new activities as well as an annual move to warmer climes in the winter. Here, too, they are finding new activities.

Karen and Hank have been married for 50 years as of October 2015. It is clear Karen lives her Quaker values. She is drawn to the concept of that of God in each person, and the concept of letting your life display your values. Before leaving for summer in Colorado, they will travel to Haiti in conjunction with Hope for Haiti. They have been doing volunteer work for this organization for a while and now have the opportunity to see the results of their work.

USEFUL WEBSITES FOR FRIENDS

Southeastern Yearly Meeting	www.seymquakers.org
Fort Myers Meeting Website	www.quakercloud.org/fortmyers
American Friends Service Committee	www.afsc.org
Friends General Conference	www.fgcquaker.org
Friends General Conference Book Store	www.quakerbooks.org
Pendle Hill	www.pendlehill.org

Editor's email address is: jeannettebotha64@gmail.com

4-24-16	Meeting for Worship	10:30 am
	Islamophobia discussion—bring bag lunch	At rise of Meeting
5-1-16	Meeting for Worship	10:30 am
	Pot Luck lunch—all are welcome	At rise of Meeting
5-8-16	Meeting for Worship	10:30 am
	Meeting for Worship with attention to Business	At rise of Meeting
	Last chance book club	At rise of Meeting
5-15-16	Meeting for Worship	10:30 am
5-22-16	Meeting for Worship	10:30 am



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Address Correction Requested

