



FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS NEWSLETTER, ELEVENTH MONTH, 2018

Worship: In the Iona House at the Calusa Nature Center
Mailing Address: 117 East Mariana Ave. North Fort Myers FL 33927
E-mail: ftmyers.quakers@gmail.com **Website:** www.fortmyersquakers.org

Clerk: Joan Culver (joanculver@gmail.com)
Recording Clerks: Kathy Hale / Richard Frechette
Treasurer: John Battin

- 1st Sunday of the Month: Pot Luck Lunch
 - 2nd Sunday of Month: Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
-

QUERIES & ADVICES *from Faith & Practice of Southeastern Yearly Meeting*

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 11, 2018**

The Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends met in Iona House on 11th Month 11th day with 18 Friends present. The meeting opened with a period of silent centering. Clerk Joan Culver read queries on the subject of Care of the Natural World: Do we seek to minimize our consumption of the earth's resources? Do we seek to minimize consumption? Do we walk gently over the earth, seeing that of God in all of nature? Do we share our sense of reverence and stewardship for the earth? In response, one friend shared a memory showing how this consideration for nature comes more naturally to some than others. Another friend remarked that we should not jump to conclusion that low technology is best for the earth. Another reported how she was quite impressed with the level of earth consciousness of our county's solid waste management facilities, but noted that individuals must participate in this process in order for the facilities to function optimally. One bemoaned that fact that we are quickly shrinking the world of mammals, and felt we need to look at ways of reversing this trend. Another noted that change in our diet may be a step towards that goal.

Clerk's Comments: Joan reported that we received a letter of thanks from Sarah Wells about our memorial Meeting for her husband Bill. We also received a card from Friend Nancy Webster informing us that she has turned 80 and is enjoying traveling. Joan also reported that she has received a letter from Paul Davis requesting formal memberships in our meeting. The request is being forwarded to Ministry & Counsel, which committee will establish a clearness committee for Paul.

Ministry and Counsel Committee: The Committee notes that, when Friends hold hands at the rise of worship, our larger winter Meeting population can cause awkwardness. They encourage people to not worry about a having a continuous loop and simply focus on holding hands with those next to you.

Treasurer: Treasurer John Battin presented the following year-to-date financial report. He notes that things are progressing nicely financially.

	October 2017	October 2018
Contributions	\$ 18,955	\$ 18,055
Outlays	\$ (14,475)	\$ (13,956)
Difference	\$ 4,480	\$ 4,099

Cash on Hand October 1, 2018		\$ 2,873
General Fund Contributions October 2018		\$ 2,437
Budgeted Outlays October, 2018		\$ (1,211)
Cash on Hand October 31, 2018		\$ 4,099

Finance Committee: The Committee presented a first draft of the 2019 budget, asking for Friends input prior to our formally approving a budget at our December meeting. We reviewed each of the lines, making suggestions of modifications.

Nominating Committee: The committee distributed a draft list of assignments for 2019. We reviewed each. The Committee will consider our suggestions and present a formal report for our approval next month. There is still time for Friends to offer their services for an assignment, and contact any of the nominating committee members. .

Adult Religious Education Committee: The committee will meet on Dec 2 to re-review its 2019 budget. The committee is asking for suggestions from the community about the content and format for future religious education opportunities. They have passed out a questionnaire for this purpose, asking that Friends submit their responses in November and December.

Hospitality Committee: The committee looks forward to our Thanksgiving dinner at Iona House.

Outreach Committee: At a recent meeting the Committee considered the questions “Do we want outreach?” What are the implications? Are we able to respond to the needs of a larger Meeting community? They ask the Meeting community to discern these questions prior to the Committee’s planning further on outreach initiatives.

Calusa Nature Center and Planetarium: The CNCP netted a substantial amount of funds from the Halloween programs, which has allowed them to address some of their debt.

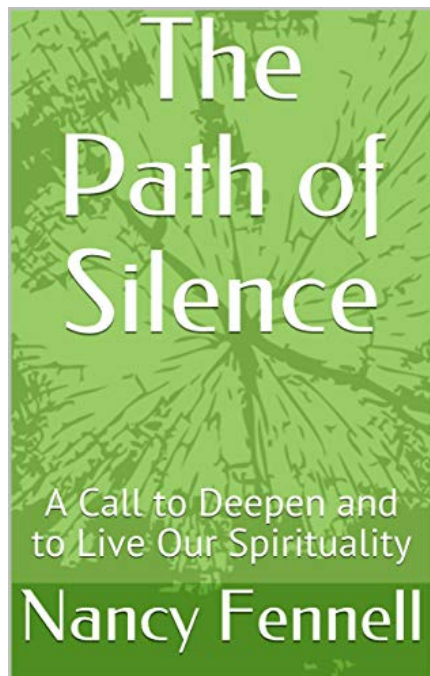
Other Business:

- Joan Culver reported that Larry Butler suggested that the Meeting write up our experience with young children during worship since he feels we have something to teach other small meetings that may not have a first day school. We would address the centering of both children and adults as each learn to accept the other’s process. We recognize that many in the meeting have struggled, grown, and are continuing to grow throughout this experience of spiritual development and joy. We look forward to the full meeting’s participation in creating this record of our growth. Roxy Jacobs offered to work with others on this discernment process.
- There was discussion about a possible future role of the Meeting in promoting an alternative to violence in our larger community. Friends are asked to think and pray about this opportunity and challenge, and committees may need to work together on this. It will require some seasoning.

The minutes of the meeting were read and approved. We closed with a brief period of silent worship.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard Frechette,
Co-Recording Clerk

Book written by our own Nancy Fennell



Available from Amazon.com, and a hard copy is in our library.

This summary from Amazon: *Our soul-deep desire to be in close relationship with God is often thwarted by equally deep fears of being in such a relationship. In simple and direct writing, Fennell discusses the most direct path to awareness of Divine Presence, a path open to all people, regardless of their faith path or life's experiences. Doubts about God's love for us, difficulties in trusting God, and fears of what will be asked of us are handled with understanding and compassion. Fennell holds that it is not possible to deepen our spirituality for our own benefit alone. Rather, in accepting God's love, we will be led to pass it on, to breathe "the breath of Life" into all our dealings with others: our family, our work, our communities, and our world. The human condition, now as always, desperately need people who adopt peaceful, thoughtful, kind and compassionate ways of being.*

Nancy adds: *It is not directed to Quakers in particular, but it tells a lot about Quakers through examples and mentions FMMM specifically.*

Letter from Mary Grace Menner (sent to Nancy Murvine):

It's so nice to hear from you, and especially lovely since I was actually just thinking about my Ft. Myers Friends! During meeting on Sunday I was reflecting on the warm welcome you all gave me when I first dipped my toe into Quakerism, and how grateful I am that the meeting set me on this path.

I'm currently in my first semester of law school at Northeastern University School of Law in Boston, where I was lucky enough to receive a full tuition scholarship. I finished my year with Quaker Voluntary Service and had such an incredible time working and living in community, and still live with Friends from QVS. I'm a regular attendee at Cambridge Friends Meeting.

This email is still good for contact <MGMenner@gmail.com>. Thank you for checking in, and lovely to hear from you!

Peace,
MaryGrace

Peace and Social Concerns Committee Update

The Peace and Social Concerns committee would like to introduce our community to two Quaker organizations that have been brought to our attention thanks to Nancy Howell.

Quaker House is an organization located in Fayetteville, NC near Ft. Bragg. It provides counseling and support to service members, their families and to veterans. In addition to free and confidential counseling they provide educational presentations about moral injury and classes in Mindfulness. For more information see their website: <http://quakerhouse.org>

Friends Peace Teams is a “spirit-led organization working around the world to develop long-term relationships with communities in conflict to create programs for peace, healing, and reconciliation.” Their main office is in St. Louis, MO but they have initiatives in Africa, Asia and South America. They use community reconciliation methods “and peace education to bring together people from different ethnic, political, gender, and religious backgrounds”. For more information about this organization their website is; www.friendspeacetams.org

There are also brochures about both organizations on the back table at Iona House on Sundays. Peace and Social Concerns has proposed supporting these 2 organizations in their 2019 budget with a small contribution. We believe that a donation from a Monthly Meeting, no matter how small, makes a strong statement of support to the organization.

USEFUL WEBSITES FOR FRIENDS

http://seymquakers.org	.....	Southeastern Yearly Meeting
www.fcni.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
www.quakerearthcare.org	.....	Quaker Earthcare Witness

EARTHCARE STATEMENTS

During her November 4 presentation to Fort Myers Friends, Bev Ward, SEYM's Field Secretary for Earthcare Witness, distributed the following two draft statements to us. Both were prepared by SEYM's Earthcare Witness Committee, and the Testimony will be submitted for consideration of Friends at the SEYM April 2019 Gathering. In the meantime, suggestions and comments from Friends at Monthly Meetings are sought. Our Meeting may wish to consider a community response at an upcoming Meeting for business. And individual suggestions relating to the draft may be given to Richard Frechette, our Liaison to SEYM.

SEYM: A Testimony to Earthcare (1st Draft)

Friends experience a deep spiritual connection to the natural world. Our connection arises from and integrates with our Testimonies to Simplicity, Integrity, Community, and Equality and centers on living in Peace as part of the environment.

Friends arrive at this sense of deep connection, as with all things, by many paths. Some Friends find this to arise from a sense of responsibility and stewardship, "that we must take care of the gift on loan to us". Other Friends express this connection as an understanding that "nature itself is an expression of the Divine". Some find joy and reverence in the simple experience of the natural world. Others among us study nature and find inspiration in the complexity of interrelatedness, in how each element of nature depends on another. Many of us share in all or most of these paths and we unite in seeking a greater sense of communion with the natural world.

Friends despair over the damage already done to the natural world and the continuing process of environmental degradation in search of material gain regardless of cost. Our Testimony to Simplicity expresses itself in this regard in a manner that often unites with the words of George Fox who cautions us to "not waste the creation upon our lusts". We understand that living in a natural, clean, and safe environment has a far greater value

than all the material goods that arise from destroying it can ever provide.

Our Testimony to Integrity drives us to live lives that are honest, fair, and just. We find the practices that export the impacts of our excessive consumption to our neighbors in other communities, states, and nations to lack this integrity.

Our Testimony to Equality historically has caused us to object strongly to exploitation. We find the conditions that allow for the exploitation of natural resources and our human communities to be cut from the same spiritual fabric. We object to environmental injustice that is all too often visited upon the less privileged among us.

Daily, we become more aware of the suffering of the planet and its people. We find an increasing demand do justice, to "let our lives speak" individually and corporately. Living in Blessed Community with each other and the natural world requires more than words, it takes action. We encourage Friends to deeply consider how they may act to bring forward a sense of peace in our experience of community with each other and communion with nature.

Draft SEYM Statement on Climate Change and Environmental Protection Faith Statement on Care for the Earth

It is our experience and testimony that the Light, Life, Love, and Wisdom of God calls us to preserve and protect the Holy creation of which we are part. It is contrary to the Spirit of God to waste or exploit nature on human greed or vanity. We are called to be good stewards of the earth, to live simply and sustainably, with care and reverence for all creation, preserving earth's biodiversity and abundance for future generations.

Therefore, we call on all our members of Congress, members of the Florida Legislature, the Governor of Florida, and local governments to uphold and enact laws, regulations, and policies that protect our natural environment from pollution, habitat loss, and climate change.

We ask you to uphold the integrity of our environmental agencies and protect public lands. The environment belongs to all of us; it is the role of government to preserve it for future generations and defend it against exploitation by private economic interests.

Urgent Action is needed if we are to avoid the catastrophic impacts of climate change. All reputable scientists agree that Climate Change is real, and is caused by increased carbon emissions mostly from burning of fossil fuels. This threatens all life on Earth. Our

glaciers are melting, our seas are rising, and our ecosystems are suffering disruption from a warming climate, seasonal weather changes, and more pests and diseases. Climate change is already threatening our economy, impacting our food supply, and causing flooding of coastal communities.

We ask our government to support society's transition to clean energy sources, and redirect subsidies from fossil fuel industries to support displaced workers and communities impacted by the transition to clean energy.

Clean energy is the energy of the future. Countries and communities around the world are proving that alternative energy and sustainable practices are not only viable, but can be a boon to economies. Clean and sustainable sources of energy are now readily available and comparable or cheaper in cost than fossil fuels. Solar and wind power create more jobs than fossil fuel industries.

"It would go a long way to caution and direct people in their use of the world, that they were better studied and knowing in the Creation of it. For how could [they] find the confidence to abuse it, while they should see the great Creator stare them in the face, in all and every part of it?" (*William Penn, 1693*)

BEFRIENDING CREATION

You are invited to sign up for *BeFriending Creation*, the quarterly digital newsletter of Quaker Earthcare Witness. The link to the mailing list is:

<https://www.quakerearthcare.org/publications>.



**Friends Meeting of Fort Myers
Religious Society of Friends
c/o Richard Frechette, Editor
138 Pinebrook Dr.
Fort Myers, FL 33907-5988**

Address Correction Requested

Celebrate Thanksgiving With Friends at the Iona House



Any and all are invited to share in food and fellowship on Thanksgiving Day (Nov 22) at noon at the Iona House. Bring Family and Friends. 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 (Voice/Text 401-744-6097; Suzanne.Frechette@gmail.com;) to register and to sign up for a food item to bring.

FORT MYERS MEETING CALENDAR

All First Days	Pre-Worship Singing	9:55 am
	Meeting for Worship:	10:30 am
Thurs 11/22	Pot Luck Thanksgiving Dinner	Noon
11/22-11/25	SEYM Half-Yearly Meeting @ Wekiwa Springs State Park, Florida – Go to www.seym.org for more info	
Sun 12/2	Pot Luck Lunch	At rise of worship
Sun 12/9	Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business	At rise of worship