



# FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS NEWSLETTER, SECOND MONTH, 2019

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**Worship:** In the Iona House at the Calusa Nature Center  
**Mailing Address:** 117 East Mariana Ave. North Fort Myers FL 33927

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

- 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the Month: Pot Luck Lunch
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Month: Meeting for Worship  
With Attention to Business
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## **QUERIES & ADVICES** *from Faith & Practice of Southeastern Yearly Meeting*

### **2. Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business**

#### **Queries:**

- Are meetings for business held in the spirit of meetings for worship?
- In decision-making, do we promote a spirit of love, understanding, and patience as we seek unity on an appropriate course of action?
- Do we keep our remarks simple and speak only as the Spirit leads?
- Are we able to unite in good grace with the sense of the meeting when our personal desires tend in another direction?
- Do we maintain respect for others, however strongly our opinions may differ?
- Are meetings for business seen as positive opportunities for testing and practicing our spiritual life?

#### **Advices:**

- As members, attend the business meetings and extend our support to

the meeting's affairs so that the burden will not rest upon a few.

- In meetings for business and in all duties connected with them, seek the leadings of the Light.
- Avoid undue persistence. As we release our attachment to our ideas, the Light may reveal solutions none of us has considered.
- Be willing to admit the possibility of being in error.
- Remember that the foundation of a lasting decision lies in the search for unity—that is, a corporate seeking of the Light in an atmosphere of love, trust, and mutual forbearance.
- Attenders are warmly invited to attend and participate in meeting for worship with a concern for business.
- Have a sense of when to continue to labor on or to lay aside an issue.

**MINUTES OF THE FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING  
OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS  
2nd Month 10, 2019**

The Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends met in Iona House on 2nd Month 10th day with 17 Friends present. The meeting opened with a period of silent centering. Clerk Joan Culver read queries and advices on the subject of Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business: *In decision-making, do we promote a spirit of love, understanding, and patience as we seek unity on an appropriate course of action? Are we able to unite in good grace with the sense of the meeting when our personal desires tend in another direction? Attenders are warmly invited to attend and participate in meeting for worship with a concern for business.*

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Paul Davis presented us with the financial report for the period ended 1/31/2019. He prefaced the presentation with a note that he, with the help of the Finance Committee, is exploring ways of making financial presentations understandable to all.

General Fund	
Checking	\$4,256
Checking 2018 Surplus	\$6,986
Gen Fund Checking	\$11,242
Gen Fund Savings	\$33,302
Gen Fund Fr Fiduciary	\$22,152
Total General Fund	\$66,696
Meetinghouse Funds	
Savings	\$74,162
MH Funds Fr Fiduciary	\$10,308
Total Meetinghouse Funds	\$84,470
FtMMM Total Funds	\$140,858

January 2019	
Cash on Hand	\$11,242
General Fund	\$55,454
Meetinghouse	\$84,470
January Income	\$4,609
Jan. Expenses	\$696

**Ministry and Counsel Committee:** Richard Frechette reported that the Committee determined that he should serve as Clerk of the Committee for 2019. He informed us that annually the Meeting considers its Spiritual State, and submits such statement to the Southeastern Yearly Meeting. M&C has worked on a first draft of this year's statement. Nancy Howell read the draft. We discussed the draft and made several suggestions for improvement.

- ❖ **Minute 2019-MM03:** Friends approve the following statement of the **Spiritual State of our Meeting:**

*We, the community of Friends at Fort Myers strive to deepen our inner relationship with God and to answer to that inner Light within each of us and all others. Meeting for worship - waiting worship - continues to be the center of our community's life.*

*In this past year, we were pleased to welcome into membership Paul Davis as a convinced Friend and Susan Oehl who transferred from Middletown MM (CT), NEYM. Several also joined our community as regular attenders. But there always is the opposite side of the roster - those who have left. We were saddened by the death of Bill Wells, a retired dentist who, before becoming ill, had volunteered his skilled services to the impoverished Immokalee community. And very recently, we experienced the death of Larry Butler, the last founding member of our faith community and a gifted Christ-centered preacher. We also were saddened to see others move away from our community, and wish them peace and well-being.*

*Since 2017 several families with young children have been attending. Initially, we felt challenged with the need to address caring for these children who were toddlers and pre-schoolers, in part because we currently do not have a room that can be dedicated to children. The solution is evolving and a minute was created: "We have small children who remain with us during the meeting for worship. We take seriously our role in supporting these children in their growth within the Friends' community. We welcome them and accept their soft sounds as vocal ministry." We continue to address the centering of both children and adults as each learns to accept the other's process. The Meeting continues to labor lovingly.*

*We continue to consider questions surrounding outreach and our meeting place. Our Outreach Committee feels challenged in preparing outreach activities because it is unclear to whom we should reach out. Through queries and discussions we hope to find a way forward. The Committee has established a website and is exploring ways of improving it.*

*Our Meeting remains committed to peace and social justice in various settings. We continue to participate in the organization L.I.F.E (Lee Interfaith for Empowerment), which works to improve conditions for the community. We also continually collect for the Harry Chapin Food Bank and the Misión Peniel. Individuals from our meeting have taken on responsibility for regular transport and other assistance to those operations.*

*Finally, we continue to nourish the spiritual and social growth of our community. We sponsored several activities designed to deepen our spiritual lives including a retreat led by Tampa Meeting's Cece Yocum on "Strengthening Our Spiritual Resources", a series of Quakerism 101 workshops, and a workshop led by SEYM's Bev Ward on "Friends and Unity with Nature: What are you called to do?" We have created opportunities for social gatherings. Our monthly pot-luck following worship provides another opportunity for Friends to just sit back and enjoy each other.*

*We hope to remain faithful to that still small voice that urges us to take part in God's work, both as individuals and as a community of faith.*

Friends read a **draft of a memorial minute for Larry Butler**. We ask that M&C review suggestions for changes and bring the minute back to us next month.

**SEYM – Winter Interim Business Meeting Report:** Richard Frechette and Nancy and Tom Dudley Fennell attended WIBM on behalf of our Meeting. They reported that:

- The Earthcare Committee has revised its draft "Testimony to Earthcare," and is asking for each Monthly Meeting's comments, discernment or approval by March 25. The draft will in our monthly newsletter. The final document will be submitted to the YM Gathering.

- Monthly Meetings are asked to consider endorsing the Coalition of Immokalee's Wendy's boycott campaign by sending a letter of endorsement to the Coalition of Immokalee Workers. P&SC Committee will take this under advisement.
- The Committee on Racism is focusing on right relationships with indigenous people and suggests as a start that Monthly Meetings find out what indigenous groups lived in the area of their respective meetinghouses.
- Three new worship groups have been established under the care of monthly meetings, and two monthly meetings are considering the need to revert to worship group status.

**Finance Committee:** Joan Culver reported that the Finance Committee met and are working closely with John and Paul for the transition of Treasurer responsibilities.

**Nominating Committee:** Friends are asked to consider taking on the role of Clerk of the Committee in preparation of the 2020 process. Friends were reminded that one can join the work of a committee without formal nomination. All committees are asked to include the Meeting Clerk, Joan, in the (e-)mailing of minutes and other related information.

**Adult Religious Education:** The Committee is in discernment concerning naming of a clerk.

**Peace & Social Concerns:** Carolyn Stanley, Clerk, reported that:

- The Committee approved spending \$50 from its funds to pay to participate in Southwest Florida's Peace Day in the Park, to take place in September and has assigned a working group to plan our activities in it.
- The Meeting's L.I.F.E. representatives continue to work on two research teams and our network members recently met to discuss how to reach our goal of 28 Quakers attending the Nehemiah Action on April 9
- There is a continuing concern about affordable housing for the farm workers in Immokalee. A letter was received from Ruth DeYoe at Misión Peniel stating that the newly formed Immokalee Fair Housing Alliance is completing its process to become a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.
- The Committee continues the focus on letter-writing as the most effective way for Friends to communicate our positions on peace and social issues that concern us.
- The newly formed Environmental Action Working Group will initially focus on water contamination and water dynamics issues that lead to algae blooms, toxicity, fish kills, etc. The Committee approved the Working Group's providing an opportunity for each of us to give opinion and encouragement to the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission concerning their temporary ban on glyphosates. The Working Group is establishing a relationship with several important people in the water management field.

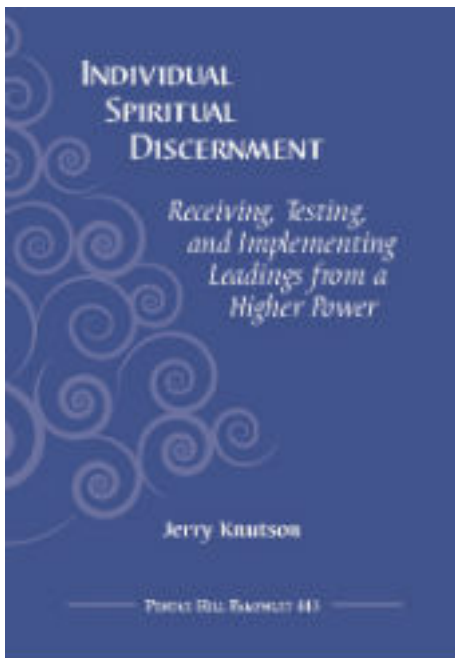
**Hospitality:** Friends are asked to sign up to prepare snacks for the post worship fellowship and soup for the Meeting for Business.

**Properties:** The Committee is working on creating an information board about our Meeting on the currently empty sign board in front of Iona House. It will be shared with information about Iona House and the Montessori School.

**Outreach:** Pat Iyre reminded Friends about the Feb 24 digital group review of the Meeting's website with attention to its use as an outreach tool.

**Other Business:** Suzanne F. Reported that the CNCP did not approve our placing an orchid outside of Iona House in memory of Larry Butler, because it is not a native species.

Respectfully submitted,  
Richard Frechette  
Co-Recording Clerk



Join us in a **presentation led by Jerry Knutson**, based on his Pendle Hill Pamphlet, “Individual Spiritual Discernment: Receiving, Testing and Implementing Leadings from a Higher Power”

**Sunday, February 17** at the rise of worship (following fellowship period). (Bring a brown-bag lunch if you wish).

**Jerry Knutson** has dual memberships in Orlando Friends Meeting in Florida and Monongalia Friends Meeting in Morgantown, West Virginia, spending six months per year in each area. In 2002–03, he worked on spiritual discernment as a resident student at Pendle Hill. In 2014, he received a master of divinity degree from Earlham School of Religion. While writing this pamphlet, Jerry was working on a certificate in Spiritual Formation from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

### **This from FCNL Regarding Yemen:**

"A bipartisan group of members of Congress has filed Yemen war powers legislation in both the House ([H.J.Res. 37](#), introduced by Rep. Ro Khanna (CA-17)) and the Senate ([S.J.Res. 7](#), introduced by Sens. Bernie Sanders (VT), Mike Lee (UT), and Chris Murphy (CT)). In the coming weeks, we expect every member of the 116th Congress to have to take a stand on U.S. military participation in the Saudi-led war in Yemen." The House Resolution is entitled: Directing the removal of United States Armed Forces from hostilities in the Republic of Yemen that have not been authorized by Congress. Please call, write or e-mail your Congressional Rep and Senator to support this resolution.

## **LETTER WRITING February 10, 2019 Ft. Myers Friends Meeting Extend Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) temporary ban on glyphosate to control water weeds**

The Environmental and Ecological Action group (EEAG) is newly formed under the Peace and Social Concerns Committee of FMFM. An issue EEAG identified that deserves urgent action is the use of glyphosate to control of water weeds. In recent days, FWC instituted a temporary ban on such use. We believe that extending the current temporary ban on glyphosate is critical to the health of our waterways. But citizen involvement is necessary. FWC asks for your input at <https://myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/habitat/invasive-plants/aquatic-plant/public-workshops>

A motivating force for FMFM to get involved in this issue was Suzanne Frechette's and Kay Flatten's witness of an algal bloom and fish kill following glyphosate use at Gator Lake in the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve. It seems the people in charge of hyacinth control have a strong bias in favor of glyphosate use.

<https://www.recordnet.com/article/20151227/news/151229800>

In our work so far, EEAG has found scientific literature on how glyphosate could favor algae blooms, which are toxic to our waterways. We also found, interestingly, that water hyacinths could be part of the solution for algae blooms. (see <https://www.conservationmagazine.org/2014/03/water-hyacinth-in-kings-bay/> )

Please email FWC at [Invasiveplants@MyFWC.com](mailto:Invasiveplants@MyFWC.com). Your timely input (deadline this week) will have more impact if it is personal. Say why you are concerned about the health of our waterways. Here are some possible talking points:

1. Provide some praise for FWC for providing good analyses and leadership on issues such as fisheries protection and promotion.
2. Indicate that you are happy about the temporary ban and want to ensure that it gets extended.
3. Recognize that hyacinth and other water weed control is a difficult issue and that physical control without herbicides has been costlier than herbicide use.
4. Indicate that you are concerned about the role of glyphosate use and other herbicide use in algae blooms.
5. Indicate that you are aware of research that airborne components from algal blooms can be harmful to human health. Since glyphosate can stimulate algal blooms, stopping glyphosate use will be good for human health.
6. Suggest that research focusing on water hyacinth control and the role of hyacinths in preventing algal blooms is necessary. Such research could lower the costs and raise the benefits of physical as opposed to chemical water hyacinth control.
7. Suggest that FCW needs input from South Florida sites more affected by algal blooms. None of the public meeting sites are in these areas.

Roxy & Tom Jacobs informed us that the **Misión Peniel** organization in Immokalee has temporarily suspended collection of food and goods, due to limited storage space. We will be informed when they resume collections. The Harry Chapin Food Bank continues to welcome our food non-perishable food donations

## Save the date: February 24 at 3 PM Fortmyersquakers.org website review

Join the Outreach committee to give your thoughts on the website as a method of outreach.

Patricia Iyer is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Join by computer or phone (if using phone you will need to be in front of a computer that has a camera, such as a laptop)

By computer: Join Zoom Meeting

Use this link at the time of the meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/293297010>

By phone: Call 1-646-876-9923

Then use the Meeting ID: 293 297 010

New to ZOOM? Watch this under 1-minute video: <http://LNC.tips/zoom>

## Calling all friendly kayakers and canoers

We will have an opportunity to explore the beauty of our area on March 2 in the afternoon for a kayaking/canoing trip. It will take place on Cape Coral or Pine Island. The location for meeting and the time are to be determined.

If you are interested in joining us please contact Pat Iyer at [Patriciaiyer@gmail.com](mailto:Patriciaiyer@gmail.com). She will make sure you know about the final plans.

*The Southeastern Yearly Meeting's Earthcare Committee has prepared a revised draft of **A Testimony to Earthcare**, which it hopes to present to the Yearly Meeting Gathering in April for formal approval. Each Monthly Meeting is asked to review this revised draft and to present comments, suggestions – or approval – to the Committee by March 25. It can be considered by our community formally at our March meeting for worship with attn to business.*

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 deeply lament the damage already done to the natural world and the continuing process of environmental degradation that is often the result of our search for material gain and individual satiation 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 and acknowledge that living in a natural, clean, and safe environment has a far greater value than all the material things that arise from destroying it can ever provide.

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

Historically, our Testimony to Equality has caused us to object to exploitation with the strength and resilience of Truth. We find the conditions that allow for the exploitation of natural resources and of our human communities to be cut from the same spiritual fabric. We are called to break our silence and refuse to consent when environmental injustice is visited upon those whose voices are consistently ignored. We are led, as Friends have been at other daunting moments in history, to overcome our own despair, to relieve suffering, and to unite with Spirit in ways never before imagined to bring new possibilities to Life.

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



**SEYM Gathering & Annual Sessions April 17 - 21, 2019**

United Methodist Life Enrichment Center, Fruitland Park, Florida

**Theme:** Taking off the Masks: Undoing Racism as Personal & Community Practice

**2019 Walton Lecture Saturday 7:PM**

'Taking off the Masks: Undoing White Supremacy as Spiritual Practice' will be presented by Lucy Duncan & Noah White

Lucy and Noah --- as a white woman and a bi-cultural man --- will tell stories of how the socialization of white supremacy was taught to us, and explore our journey toward deeper awareness and mutual liberation. Through deeply personal stories, they will delve into the dynamics of growing up in a system that uses us to perpetuate and receive harm---in our families, communities, and society --- and explore the sometimes quite intimate way white supremacy is transmitted and the healing that has happened for each of them. They will talk about their shared work in the Quaker community to hold others as they struggle toward and resist their liberation.

**What else is happening at the Gathering?** A wide array of workshops, worship sharing, great fellowship.

**Site use and lodging options:** Motel-like rooms, Tenting and RV sites, or day use.

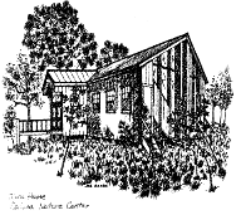
**Costs:** Registration: Adults (over 18 - \$50; Single Day registration - \$35, Youth, Free Housing: See the SEYM website for detailed cost information.

**Registration period is now until April 1**

**For More Information:** <https://seymquakers.org/news-events/yearly-meeting-gathering/> or call Susan Wade, Registrar (727-821-5048)

**FOR our FtMMM Friends Community:**

- \* Car pooling: Contact Nancy Howell
- \* The Meeting is most pleased to offer "scholarships" to individuals and families that would like to attend some or all of the Gathering, but cannot afford the full cost. Simply contact Richard Frechette, M&C Clerk for a private discussion.



**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

## MEETING CALENDAR

1st Days (Sundays)	Pre-Worship Singing (most 1st days)	10:00 am
	Meeting for Worship	10:30 am
Sun 2/17	Presentation on Individual Spiritual Discernment	At Rise of Worship
Sun 3/3	Pot luck lunch	At rise of Worship
Sun 3/10	Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business	At Rise of Worship
Tues 4/9	L.I.F.E. Nehemiah Action	7:00 PM place TBA
Wed 4/17 – Sun 4/21	Southeastern Yearly Meeting Gathering @ Fruit-land Park	