



Iona House
Calusa Nature Center

FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING

OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

NEWSLETTER, NINTH MONTH, 2019

Worship: Iona House at the Calusa Nature Center, 3450 Ortiz Ave, FtM

Mailing Address: 117 East Mariana Ave. North Fort Myers FL 33927

Telephone: (239) 318-0538 ❖ **Website:** fortmyersquakers.org ❖ **e-mail:** ftmyers.quakers@gmail.com

Clerk: Joan Culver (joanculver@gmail.com)

Recording Clerks: Kathy Hale / Richard Frechette

Treasurer: Paul Davis

• 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*

To what extent is our personal life in accord with Quaker principles?? 9. Witness

Queries:

- Do our lives reflect Quaker testimonies?
- Are we open and responsive to continuing revelation, and do we incorporate it into our spiritual life?
- Is our Quaker witness characterized by humility and a willingness to learn from others?
- Do we recognize that the Spirit works in the world through us?
- Does our witness lead us to the condition in which we "walk cheerfully over the earth answering that of God in everyone"?
- Do we as a meeting try to share in the religious life of our wider community, availing ourselves of opportunities for worship and service with other local religious groups?

Advices:

Strive to keep true to the testimonies of integrity and simplicity.

Try to keep before us the essential truths, and test our life by them.

Endeavor to make our lives consistent with the high principles we profess. This involves the often-difficult discernment not only between good and evil but also between the better and the best.

Live adventurously. Let not failure discourage us.

Witness so that others can perceive the presence of God within us.

Be as good as people think you are. E. St. John (Jack) Catchpool

MINUTES OF THE FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS 7th Month 21, 2019

A called meeting for worship with attention to business was held at rise of Meeting for Worship to deal with a matter brought forth by both the Peace & Social Concerns Committee and members of Meeting that needed immediate attention. Kathy Hale clerked the meeting.

Kathy noted that the concern brought forth relates to recent involvement of members of the Meeting in the Witness Homestead non-violent vigil at the Homestead (FL) Detention Center and to the expressed interest of several members to support the work of the local Homestead witnesses who keep a daily presence at the Detention Center. P&SC suggested that a donation be made to "Support Witness Homestead," a particular Witness Homestead "Go Fund Me" account whose focus is the support of this vigil, which has received national attention. The suggested amount is \$500 and is available in the remaining P&SC budget line for "Other Local Initiatives."

Kathy reported that another member of the meeting offered a \$500.00 donation to the Meeting for this project, but after some thought, asks that we consider donating to one of the organizations seeking to reunite children and families. That money will be held in the Meeting's budget as Friends seek clarity on how to proceed.

Discussion on the proposal from PS&C followed, expanding to include Friends' concerns with the broader issues of the immigration detention and separation problems. Friends discussed the successes and limitations of witnessing, the problem of not being able to help the children directly, concerns that our advocacy not simply result in children being moved from Homestead to other facilities, ways of identifying effective programs working to unite children and families with whom we might partner, and the need to find more ways to implement advocacy and legal actions. Friends returned to the issue at hand, coming to unity to take a first step today by supporting the proposal by P&SC. Friends will remain open to being led to those paths where we can be most helpful in the issues surrounding separation of families and detention of immigrants,

- ❖ **Minute 19MM11:** The Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends commends the local Homestead Witnesses for maintaining the continuity of the Witness Homestead action opposing the Children's Detention Center in Homestead Florida and for supporting the participation of non-local witnesses. We approve a donation of \$500 to be paid via the "Support Witness Homestead" Go Fund Me account.

Richard Frechette,
Recording Clerk

Minutes of the Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

9th Month 8, 2019

The Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends met in Iona House on 9th month 8 day with 14 Friends present. The meeting opened with a period of silent centering.

Queries. In the ninth month, queries address the subject of *Witness*. Clerk Joan Culver selected the following:

“Try to keep before us the essential truths, and test our life by them.”

“Live adventurously. Let not failure discourage us.”

“Strive to keep true to the testimonies of integrity and simplicity.”

Joan also read the following from the second edition (1994) Quaker Faith and Practice from Yearly Meeting of The Religious Society of Friends in Britain:

“We come together and wait quietly to regain our sense of what lies deepest in us, of the things most important to us. Then when we each of us speak and listen from this condition of mind and heart we somehow understand and are bound together in ways that are healing and empowering.”

Clerk’s Message. Clerk Joan Culver discussed the importance of community in Quaker beliefs and encouraged our attention to processes in MFB (Meeting for Business) that support unity in the meeting.

Treasurer’s Report. Treasurer Paul Davis reports that we have paid all major budgeted items, including the second half of our support to SEYM. Despite stock market fluctuations, our funds in Quaker Fiduciary have earned over 12%. The total amount in our General Fund, including Checking, Savings, and General Fund Friends Fiduciary, is \$68,642. The total amount in the Meeting House Funds, including Savings and MHFunds Friends Fiduciary, is \$90,487. Grand total is \$159,129. August Income was \$1050, August Expenses were \$2,702.

Finance Committee. Clerk Kathy Hale had three items to bring before the Meeting:

- 1) The Finance Committee joins with the Peace and Social Concerns Committee in recommending that we retire the Turkey Basket (including the food box) effective immediately and that individuals who want to donate give either directly to HCFB or to the overall Meeting budget. The Finance Committee further recommends that P&SC make an increased budget request for HCFB for 2020, and that the Meeting provide funds of \$500.00 at the current time to cover the estimated financial loss to HCFB for the months of September - December 2019. More information is provided in the Peace and Social Concerns report below.
- 2) The Finance Committee requested that the Meeting consider affirming a long-held policy of this Meeting to not accept designated donations. The first such donation the Meeting had accepted in years was the large donation to establish a long-term Meeting House

Fund. A recent contribution by a member of the Meeting to support some area of immigrant detention, incarceration, and family separation (later altered to give the Meeting more discretion) raised this issue again.

The Finance Committee's (including Treasurer) thinking about this is that there are accounting and reporting complexities to holding separate funds, and they would like to avoid adding new funds. (The two funds to which people may donate are the General Fund and the Meeting House Fund.) Secondly, the Committee has concerns that a donation may nudge the Meeting toward a commitment it had not been ready to make and believes that the Meeting should lead our direction rather than a donation. The Finance Committee recommends that we affirm our policy of not accepting designated contributions and asks that the Meeting consider this question between now and the October Meeting.

- 3) We are coming up on time to prepare our 2020 budget. Paul Davis and Kathy Hale will be sending out letters to committee clerks in September requesting that committees begin meeting to formulate budget needs. The budget requests need to be back to Paul and Kathy (copy to both) by late October. In the November Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, we will present a draft of the total Meeting Budget, to be considered and approved at the December Business Meeting.

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

Adult Religious Education. The committee has no report.

Peace & Social Concerns. Clerk Carolyn Stanley read the following report: "The Harry Chapin Food Bank (HCFB) "the largest hunger-relief network in Southwest Florida" has been supported by our Monthly Meeting for years in three ways: through an annual monetary donation, collection of non perishable food, and weekly cash donations. Connie Summerlin has graciously and reliably carried the weekly food and cash donations to the HCFB Fort Myers office for years but has stated that she is relinquishing those responsibilities. The Peace and Social Concerns Committee has discussed our support of the HCFB through emails that have included treasurer, Paul Davis, and active HCFB supporter Suzanne Frechette and addressed our continued support at two recent Peace and Social Concern Committee meetings. To make our support more fiscally responsible and less burdensome to one individual, we recommend that the Fort Myers Monthly Meeting discontinue our weekly cash and food collections. We plan to increase our budgeted annual support from \$300 to \$500.

Nancy Howell has designed a pamphlet for Peace Day at the Alliance of the Arts on September 22, 2019. The pamphlet provides a short explanation of Quaker thought and history of involvement with social justice issues. The pamphlet also provides links to websites that explain aspects of Quakerism and information about what happens in Friends Meeting here at Iona House. Several suggestions were made for changes, and Friends approved.

Hospitality. Hospitality has nothing to bring to the meeting at this time.

Outreach. Outreach has no report.

Properties. Properties has no report. Two or three small issues were mentioned, and Joan and Tom will follow up to see what can be done.

Calusa Nature Center and Planetarium. Some discussion occurred regarding how the Meeting or individuals from the Meeting can relate more to CNCP.

New Business. The Clerk reports that SEYM introduced at yearly meeting a document called “The Land We Stand On.” SEYM recommends that all Meetings in Florida acknowledge that the space where they meet is built on communities who came before. SEYM suggests that each Meeting in Florida consider which kind of statement the Meeting wants to make.

Susan Oehl has catalogued the books in the library and has made lists of categories and is looking for a method to display to make the library more user friendly for the Meeting. The Meeting thanks Susan for the hard work this entailed.

The Meeting closed with silence.

Respectfully submitted,
 Kathy Hale
 Co-Recording Clerk

FMMM Funds Report 08/31/2019

General Funds

Checking4,794
 Gen Fund Savings40,322
 Gen Fund Friends Fiduciary23,526

Total General Fund68,642

Meeting House Funds

Savings.....79,540
 MH Funds Fr Fiduciary10,947

Total Meeting House Funds90,487

FMMM Total Funds159,129

August 2019 Income vs Expenses

August Income1,050
 August Expenses2,702*

**Major final 2019 budgeted Contribution made to SEYM*

Alliance For The Arts-----12th Annual Peace Day Celebration Presented in partnership with SWFL 4 Peace

Sunday, September 22 from 10 AM until 6 PM

Every year we come together as a community to celebrate a day of Peace, and every year we have a new theme. This year's theme is *Unity in CommUnity...Bridging the Gaps Between Us*. Let's take



the next step together as a CommUnity and see what else we can create together! Peace starts with us. In our hearts, our homes and our neighborhoods.

Peace Day, now in its 12th year, is fun for the whole family and features crafts, workshops, activities for kids of all ages, yoga and meditations, sing-alongs, education, key-note speakers and more. In addition, there will be food trucks bringing their incredibly delicious vegetarian, vegan and omnivore meals, treats and beverages!

For more information, volunteer or vendor questions and sponsorship opportunities contact SWFL Peace Day headquarters at 239-208-9872 or e-mail swfl4peace@email.com.

Note: There will be a Quaker booth that will focus on Quaker thought and history of involvement with social justice issues.

Immigration Working Group

Because of the concern expressed by Friends about child immigrants being separated from loved ones and held in detention, and other difficulties faced by undocumented immigrants and asylum seekers, P&SC Clerk Carolyn Stanley has asked Helen Fox to convene a working group to address how Friends can be of service to immigrants facing issues such as legal rights, asylum, detention, and family reunification. Our work with Immokalee migrants may also fit into this group. These are all broad issues and will necessarily need to become focused through discernment. If you are interested in participating in the Immigration Working Group please contact Carolyn (carolyn2020stanley@gmail.com) or Helen (hfox@umich.edu).

You are invited

To attend our Annual L.I.F.E. House Meeting

**Sunday, September 29 at Iona House following
Meeting for Worship About noon - 1:30**

Light snack will be provided (or bring your own sack lunch)

Be there to share your thoughts about justice issues in Lee County, to learn how L.I.F.E. works and how we can support L.I.F.E.'s work for justice.

Questions or to RSVP contact Carolyn Stanley
740-827-1800; carolyn2020stanley@gmail.com

L.I.F.E. = Lee (county) Interfaith For Empowerment, a consortium of congregations working for justice in Lee County, FL

If you joined us last year, our format will be a little different this time. If you are new to Lee County, L.I.F.E., or Lee (county) Interfaith For Empowerment (L.I.F.E.) is an organization of congregations in Lee County that work together to improve the lives of those in need of justice in Lee County. The Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Society of Friends (Quakers) along with 13 other congregations (and growing!) are members. We begin each year with 'House Meetings' within each congregation.

From Susan Oehl:

I would like to let Fort Myers Friends know that I play soprano and alto recorders and would like someone to play with. I am willing to teach someone who is just starting out.

USEFUL WEBSITES FOR FRIENDS

- www.seymquakers.org Southeastern Yearly Meeting
- www.fcnl.org Friends Committee for National Legislation
- www.fgcquaker.org Friends General Conference
- www.afsc.org American Friends Service Committee
- www.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



Friends Meeting of Fort Myers
Religious Society of Friends
c/o Richard Frechette, Editor
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Address Correction Requested

MEETING CALENDAR

1st Days (Sundays)	Pre-Worship Singing (most 1st days)	10:00 am
	Meeting for Worship	10:30 am
Sun 9/22	12 th Annual Peace Day Celebration at Alliance for the Arts	10 am – 6 pm
Sun 9/29	L.I.F.E House Meeting	At rise of Worship
Sun 10/6	Pot luck lunch	At rise of Worship
Sun 10/13	Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business	At Rise of Worship