



Iona House  
Calusa Nature Center

# FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS NEWSLETTER, ELEVENTH 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](http://fortmyersquakers.org) ♦ **e-mail:** [ftmyers.quakers@gmail.com](mailto:ftmyers.quakers@gmail.com)

**Clerk:** Joan Culver ([joanculver@gmail.com](mailto:joanculver@gmail.com))  
**Recording Clerks:** Kathy Hale / Richard Frechette  
**Treasurer:** Paul Davis

- 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

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

**How do Friends meet our responsibilities to the community and the world?**

### 11. 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.

## Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends Minutes of 11th Month 10, 2019

The Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends met in Iona House on 11th month 10th day with 13 Friends present. The Meeting opened with a period of silent centering.

**Queries and Advices.** Clerk Joan Culver read from the 11th month Queries regarding our responsibility to support Social and Economic Justice.

*“Do we as individuals and as a Meeting do all in our power to end governmental, social, economic, and educational injustices in our community and to create equal opportunity for all?*

There was discussion that the “all in our power” was a large order and that keeping ourselves centered and healthy is a significant part of giving us the strength to end injustices.

**Clerk’s Message.** Clerk Joan Culver called attention to the importance of considering the Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business as a Meeting for Worship, and thus Spirit-led. Some of the same practices are appropriate, including holding silence after someone has spoken so that we may reflect and seeking guidance from Spirit. Comments and questions are addressed to the Clerk, who may respond or direct the question to someone who may have that information.

### Preliminary Budget Meeting: Treasurer and Finance Committee

Joan Culver reminded the Meeting that this MFB is an informational and discussion meeting rather than a decision-making meeting. Decisions will be made in the December MFB.

The Finance Committee introduced a chart intended to show the “big picture” of the Meeting’s proposed use of our money in 2020 so that the Meeting may weigh those expenses against our intentions and values. The chart identifies five categories created by the Finance Committee from the line items of the 2020 budget requests. They are labeled SEYM; Spiritual Care of the Meeting; Local Giving; National/International Giving; and Fiscal/ Physical Care of the Meeting. A list of what items were included in each category was provided.

Treasurer Paul Davis presented a draft of the proposed 2020 Meeting budget developed from budgets provided by committee chairs to be considered by the MFB.

Some discussion followed regarding the SEYM apportionment. We will attempt to have more transparency about the process when SEYM asks for our contribution in the spring, remembering that the contribution is from the meeting as a whole.

### New Business

Deb White announced that the Hospitality Committee asks people to bring their own cups to avoid using so many paper cups.

Helen Fox reintroduced SEYM's effort to have Meetings read statements acknowledging the native peoples who occupied the land in the areas where we meet. Helen read a draft of a statement she and Jim Koopman wrote. Friends expressed support for the statement but asked for an alteration to one of the sentences and will take this up again at the next MFB.

**CNCP:** The point was raised that our contract with CNCP is up in about two years. The Clerk will appoint an ad hoc committee to gather information for a discussion and/or threshing session within a few months.

The Meeting Minutes were read and approved. The Meeting ended in silence.

Respectfully submitted, Kathy Hale

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## FMMM Funds Report 10/31/2019

### General Funds

Checking	7,368		
Gen Fund Savings	40,332	<b>October 2019</b>	
		<b>Income vs Expense</b>	
Gen Fund Fr Fiduciary	24,210	October Income	2,810
		October Expenses	150
<b>Total General Fund</b>	<b>71,910</b>		

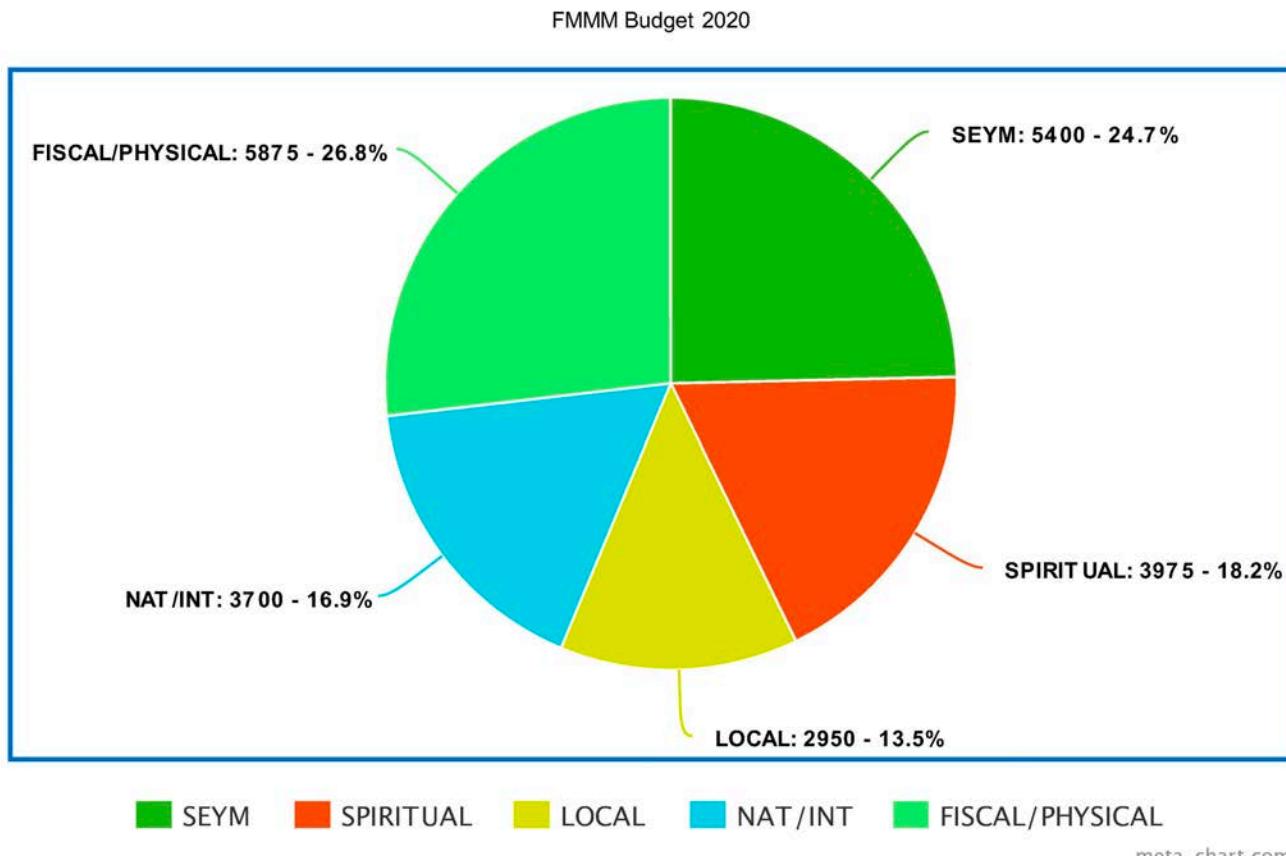
### Meeting House Funds

Savings	79,915
MH Funds Fr Fiduciary	11,265
<b>Total Meeting House Funds</b>	<b>91,180</b>
<b>FMMM Total Funds</b>	<b>163,090</b>

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**The Meeting's Library** is now fully catalogued, thanks to librarian Susan Oehl. The catalogue is in a binder on one of the library shelves and is also in the Meeting's website. (<http://fortmyersquakers.org>, click on Resources, then click on Meeting Library). There are several categories to choose from, including: Classic & History, Children's Publications, Fiction, Introductory, Peace & Social Concerns, Quaker Life/Life of the Meeting, Spirituality.



The pie-chart above gives you a visual sense of the distribution of our prospective 2020 budget as developed by the Finance Committee.

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### *Four Doors to Meeting for Worship*

The author of this well-loved pamphlet is William Tabor, a Pendle Hill teacher, a retreat leader, and an author who writes about the spirituality of Quakerism as well as Quaker history and practice.

Bill began consciously thinking about the future of Quakerism late in the 1960's. This concern has never left him. His metaphor of the four doors to worship grew from his sense of need for an explanation, or in some ways as a guide, as to what happens in a deeply centered, contemporary Quaker meeting. He presents worship as a reality that is ever present, a stream into which we can enter at any time. One way of entering this stream is to imagine a series of four doors through which we pass as we enter, pass through, and reach the final door "the door beyond" of meeting for worship.

This is a beautiful and well written piece of Quaker spiritual writing that has been a best seller since its first printing in 1992. It has been reprinted three more times; the latest printing was in 2018.

**Our Meeting's Religious Education Committee is sponsoring a session focused on this pamphlet, guided by Roxy Jacobs, following worship on Sunday, November 17. Bring a brown bag lunch to tide you over.**

**1<sup>st</sup> Day Worship on 17 November will include the renewal of marriage vows** by Erica Lynne and Bradley Musser. Erica & Brad were married under the care of the Meeting 10 years ago, (Erica was a long term member of Fort Myers Meeting before withdrawing from the Meeting several years ago). Following the tradition of the marriage ceremony, they will rise out of the silence as led and share their vows. The worship will otherwise follow the normal silence and sharing from the silence.

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## L.I.F.E. Update:

This fall the board members of L.I.F.E. (Lee county Interfaith For Empowerment) decided to continue our work to make rental housing in Fort Myers more affordable AND to continue our work to increase services for children in Lee County. In October, members of L.I.F.E. gathered together and voted to concentrate on finding a solution to childcare problems that were shared during 'house meetings' within each congregation. This month, at a recent DART conference (parent organization of L.I.F.E.), we learned that several other county organizations in Florida have or are still working on the affordable housing problem. Although it took 5 years, one county was successful in getting funding for an Affordable Housing Trust Fund. This month we will form a Child Care Committee and an Affordable Housing Committee to continue the "Research" work to determine what needs to be done to begin to solve these problems locally and who we need to ask to do it. I will try to keep you informed of our progress as we work towards our annual Nehemiah Action assembly which will be held March 9.

If you are interested in more information, please contact me, Carolyn Stanley, 740-827-1800; carolyn2020stanley@gmail.com

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## Lee Interfaith for Empowerment (L.I.F.E)

L.I.F.E. begins the Research part of its process with the Research Kick-Off (training) on **Thursday, November 14th (6:30 PM at the Unitarian Universalist Church on Shire Road)**. At that meeting we will form an Affordable Housing Committee and the Childcare Committee. Research includes being on one of those decision-making committees related to either housing or child care; attending interviews with people who can advise us or provide data for us; or interviewing officials who can make a change. The members of the 2 committees will suggest to the board what it is that we want to ASK our officials at the Nehemiah Action (Monday, March 9). For more information, and to volunteer to serve on one of the research groups, contact Carolyn Stanley (carolyn2020stanley@gmail.com; 740-827-1800)

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# Thanksgiving Day Options

## 1. Thanksgiving Day Potluck Dinner at the Meetinghouse

Join us at our third annual potluck celebration of Thanksgiving. Bring yourself, family, friends and/or neighbors. Sign up beforehand at the back table in the meeting room, or contact Suzanne Frechette (V/T 401-744-6097, [Suzanne.Frechette@gmail.com](mailto:Suzanne.Frechette@gmail.com)). Identify yourself, the number who will attend, and the item you would like to bring. The meal will be served at noon. Because the Nature Center will be closed to all other activities, there will be someone staffing the gate from 11:30-12:00; a late arrival will have to call Suzanne to be let in.

## 2. SEYM's Half Yearly Meeting over Thanksgiving

November 28 – December 1, 2019 at Wekiwa Springs State Park, Florida

Half Yearly Meeting is a family-friendly, serendipitous 4 days over Thanksgiving weekend when Friends come together for good food and good friends in [Wekiwa Springs State Park](#) in Apopka, FL. We have exclusive use of the Youth Camp, a natural setting with rustic cabins, accessible lodging, dining hall, kitchen, and conference hall. For more information, go to [SEYMQuakers.org](#)

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## Save The Date; Friday, December 13th 2019

Cody O' Rourke and Lara Alqasem from the Good Shepherd Collective [<https://goodshepherdcollective.org>] will give a presentation at Nancy Howell's home from 3-5. FtMMM supported Lara last year with a donation when she was held at the Ben Gurion Airport due to her concerns about treatment of Palestinians and not allowed to enter Israel to attend the masters degree program to which she had been admitted. All are invited; let Nancy know if you are coming (V/T 239- 888-9304; [howell@chass.utoronto.ca](mailto:howell@chass.utoronto.ca))

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## Financial Support of the Meeting

Contributions to the Meeting can be made in the following ways:

- Cash or checks can be left in the donations box at the back table in the meeting room.
- Checks to be mailed to the Treasurer (Paul Davis, 5530 Harborage Dr. Fort Myers FL 33908-4545; 239-464-9849)
- You can arrange with your bank electronically to have them post payments to the Treasurer at the above address (note: some of our Meeting family who utilize this option have not updated their payment info and the bank is sending the checks to the prior Treasurer, John Battin – please update).

## The Pendle Hill Quaker Institute: Practicing Our Heritage of Mysticism and Resistance      **Dec 12-15, 2019**

From earliest days, Quakers have sought to attend and follow the Inward Light, the Inner Teacher, as the only true guide to right action. And from earliest days, Quakers have been moved and guided by the Inner Teacher to act conscientiously in the world to “see what Love can do” to mend a world rent by injustice and oppression.

In contemporary Quaker circles, we sometimes hear Friends speak of contemplative Friends and activist Friends, implying a false dichotomy – that some Friends are mystics and others are actively engaged in mending the world. To be faithful to our tradition and to the leadings of the Light, we are both seekers after the Truth as revealed to us in prayer and worship and animators of the Truth that is revealed to us. We participate both in mysticism and resistance to the ways of the world by standing and moving in revealed Truth.

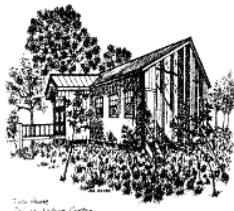
In this extended weekend together, we will hear plenary speakers, engage in extended worship, and explore both our heritage and what Spirit asks of us today in mending a broken world and creating the Beloved Community. It will occur at the Pendle Hill campus in Wallingford, PA. For more information, go to <https://pendlehill.org>, then click on Learn, then Quaker Institute. Financial assistance is available, both from Pendle Hill and from our Meeting.

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*Have you ever happened to casually observe something, perhaps an act of kindness, or a tender moment between two people, or the laughter of children, or a second when the beauty of nature deeply moved you, or even one of those cute animal videos, and it made you think, “how wonderful! That is so delightful!” And for that brief moment you saw the world as a miraculous place, a place you were glad you were in, and you breathed a silent thank you for having had that little joy in your day. But soon it was behind you, and you returned to your busyness and your internal conversations, perhaps thinking again on that moment from time to time, but knowing the memory of it would soon fade. Now what if the Universe were filled with those moments, a billion every second, all around us but outside our consciousness because they don’t personally touch us or our lives are too stressed or our minds are too busy or our hearts are not open. And though we know we can’t always make ourselves see around us, or experience something outside us, still somehow just knowing it happens anyway, each and every second, outside our awareness but everywhere around us, and just remembering that brings a profound feeling of deep gratitude for a universe filled with wonder. That is Faith.*

Randy Oftedahl, Quaker from Prince Edward Island



**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) Meeting for Worship	9:50 am 10:30 am
Sun 11/17	Presentation & Discussion on "Four Doors to Worship"	At rise of Worship
Sun 12/1	Potluck lunch	At rise of Worship
Thu 11/28	Thanksgiving Day Potluck Dinner at Iona House	Noon
11/28-12/1	SEYM's Half-Yearly Meeting	
Sun 12/8	Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business;	At Rise of Wor-ship
Sun 12/8	"Last Chance" Book Club	