



Iona House  
Calusa Nature Center

# FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING

OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

NEWSLETTER, FIFTH MONTH, 2020

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**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

***During this period of COVID-19 restrictions, the Fort Myers Monthly Meeting will not physically meet for worship or other activities at the Calusa Nature Center until further notice. Friends are worshipping together via Zoom and other means.***

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

### **How do Friends care for one another?**

#### **5. EDUCATION**

##### **Queries:**

- Do we share our deepest beliefs and values with each other and with our children, while leaving them free to develop as the Spirit may lead them?
- Does the meeting give the children loving care and promote their spiritual life through religious education and other activities?
- Do we encourage our children's participation in the meeting's work and cultivate their desire for service to others?
- How do we educate our members and attenders about the Bible (especially the teachings of Jesus), other spiritual literature, and the history, principles, and practices of Friends?

##### **Advices:**

- Seek for ourselves and for our children the full development of God's gifts, which is true education.

- Realize that education should continue throughout life and that all should share its opportunities and privileges.
- Make time for regular personal prayer and worship and for reading the Bible, Friends literature, Faith and Practice, the queries and advices, and other sources of spiritual value.
- Seek truth together in our families and among Friends in shared worship and discussion.
- Teach by being teachable. Be open to new ideas and approaches.
- Reach out to that of God in everyone, and endeavor to live out the testimonies of Friends in all the expected and unexpected circumstances of daily life.

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## Meeting for Worship Opportunities

Friends are meeting for worship via **Zoom Conference** on each 1<sup>st</sup> day at 10:30AM. Each week (usually on Friday or Saturday) an invitation to this Zoom worship is sent to our e-mail entire list, identifying the hyperlink, the meeting number and the password.

Other Friends are meeting over phone or computer for worship, spiritual support activities and friendship at various times during the week.

If you do not have the Meeting's contact list, just e-mail [ftmyers.quakers@gmail.com](mailto:ftmyers.quakers@gmail.com) or call 239-313-6201, and one will be sent to you.

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### Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friend Minutes of 5th Month 10, 2020

The Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends met online on the 5th month 10th day via Zoom conference with 13 Friends present. The Meeting opened with a period of silent centering. Joan Culver, Clerk, read the following Advice from Faith & Practice on Education: Reach out to that of God in everyone, and endeavor to live out the testimonies of Friends in all the expected and unexpected circumstances of daily life.

#### Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Paul Davis informed us that he will be out of town for a while but will continue as Treasurer. Checks in support of the Meeting can still be sent to his home address and will be forwarded to his alternative address. Bob and Deb White will be available as needed to assist, in his absence. He noted that we received thank you letters from organizations to which we provided special financial support during the pandemic.

Paul presented the following financial report for the period ended 4/30/2020:

#### General Fund

Checking	6,254
Gen Fund Savings	40,363
Gen Fund Fr Fiduciary	22,814
<b>Total General Fund</b>	<b>\$69,431</b>

#### Meeting House Funds

Savings	84,096
MH Funds Fr Fiduciary	10,616
<b>Total Meeting House Funds</b>	<b>\$94,712</b>

**FMMM Total Funds**                      **\$164,143**

April 2020 Income vs Expense	
Income	360
Expenses	1,625

## **Ministry & Counsel:**

The Committee is seeking input on how members and attenders from the meeting are faring during this unusual period of distancing. It was noted that M&C shares a Nurturing list of our meeting family, and strives to be in contact with everyone, but that we all share this responsibility.

All were encouraged to follow up by phone with anyone about whose well-being they are concerned. Also, Friends are encouraged to contact any member of Ministry and Counsel to share a concern about an individual's well-being.

## **Peace & Social Concerns:**

Carolyn Stanley reported that she received a communication from Ruth DeYoe of Misión Peniel. In the letter, Ruth thanked us for our financial support, reported on activities and needs of the organization and relayed information on the condition of the Immokalee residents. The full letter will be posted in the newsletter.

Carolyn also invited Friends to participate in a Zoom P&SC meeting to discuss continued support for the Immokalee farm workers. It will be held on Thursday, May 14, at 1 PM.

**Online Meetings:** Friends discussed ways to reach out in the middle of the week via online meetings or phone call to increase the connections between Friends of our Meetings. It was noted that at least three Meeting members have a paid Zoom account and make use of such for Meeting purposes; perhaps another is needed.

The Clerk asked whether we should have a Meeting account with Zoom to facilitate the holding of meetings of various Clerks of Committees and Worship groups.

### **❖ 2020-MM09: We approve authorizing the Clerk to establish a Meeting Zoom Account, if she deems it appropriate.**

Another Friend commented that digital meetings for committees and other groups within the Meeting may have benefits that go beyond coping with the pandemic.

Friends asked Ministry and Counsel Committee to consider establishing a periodic digital mid-week meeting. It was noted that, once this has been established, we will be able to accommodate those who may be unable to physically attend group worship even after the removal of some pandemic-related restrictions. Such mid-week meetings can begin as soon as possible.

## **Calusa Nature Center:**

CNCP may be opening trails to members but has decided to not yet open the museum and planetarium until they are prepared to address various issues. Iona House will possibly be the site for a summer camp. We received a thank you letter for CNCP for continuing our financial commitment, in spite of the closing.

We discussed when and if we should consider asking to use the CNCP for either inside or outside worship. There are many hurdles at this time. And it seems premature for us to consider it.

## **OTHER:**

We recognize that there will likely be many months before we can return to “normal” socialization as a Meeting. We need to consider the long term implications – i.e. multiple years.

Should the Meeting initiate a survey of our family about how each is able to participate in the Life of the Meeting? We ask Ministry and Counsel Committee to take on this task.

We closed in silent worship.

Richard Frechette  
Recording Clerk

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## **Religious Education Committee to Sponsor Zoom Book Discussion**

Jeannette Botha, Clerk of Religious Education, invites F/ Friends to discuss the Pendle Hill pamphlet #447, Living in Dark Times, by Rex Ambler. This will be a Zoom-based discussion, day/time yet to be determined.

This pamphlet is very appropriate for what we are going through today. The author encourages us to ‘trust the Light’ and reminds us of Paul the Apostle’s words, ‘you have a better spirit than your own, in reserve for a time of need’.

Our clerk Joan Culver, has ordered pamphlets for those who are interested, or it can be sent to your computer, I-Pad or phone if you wish. Please contact Jeannette ([jeannettebotha64@gmail.com](mailto:jeannettebotha64@gmail.com); 239-218-6150) if you wish to participate in the discussion group, and to identify the days/times that would work for you.

## **How Do We Maintain Vitality and Community During the Pandemic?**

Honestly, we can’t predict what modifications in our community activities will be required in the long term. So finding ways of facing these challenges is something upon which our whole community needs to focus.

We hope to get in contact with each of our community members over the next several weeks – whether by telephone, e-mail, video conference or other means, then to report back to the community.

## Southeastern Yearly Meeting News

As you know, the SEYM 2020 Gathering scheduled for April was cancelled. Virtual workshops and social gatherings were held. The remaining part of the Gathering – the Plenary Sessions (i.e. business of SEYM) will be held via Zoom on several consecutive Saturdays (and 1 Sunday) in May/June. This is the schedule./ For more details and to register, go to the [SEYM Website](#).

### Saturday, May 16: Worship Sharing & Plenary 1

- 10 am EDT/ 9 am CDT • Worship Sharing
- 2 pm EDT/1 pm CDT • Plenary 1: Monthly Meeting & Worship Group Forum

### Saturday, May 23: Worship Sharing & Plenary 2

- 10 am EDT/ 9 am CDT • Worship Sharing
- 2 pm EDT/1 pm CDT • Plenary 2: Nominating, Treasurer, Trustees & Budget

### Saturday, May 30: Worship Sharing & Plenary 3

- 10 am EDT/ 9 am CDT • Worship Sharing
- 2 pm EDT/1 pm CDT • Plenary 3: Representatives to Organizations

### Saturday, June 6: Plenaries 4 & 5

- 10:30 am EDT/ 9:30 am CDT • Plenary 4: Committees
- 2 pm EDT/1 pm CDT • Plenary 5: Committees, FSE, YYAC

### Sunday, June 7: Plenary 6 & Closing Worship

- 1:30 pm EDT/ 12:30 pm CDT • Plenary 6: Nominating, Budget, & Epistle
- 3 pm EDT/2 pm CDT • Closing Worship

## Laughter Yoga via ZOOM

Join Joel Cook (Treasure Coast Worship Group) at **5:40 pm Monday thru Friday** for 20 minutes of Laughter Yoga. *Sense of humor not required!* Laughter Yoga is the unique concept that anyone can laugh for no reason at all. You will feel great as you get the most fun workout you have ever had. *Joel led Fort Myers Friends in a bout of Laughter Yoga a few years ago*

Click on this link to join the group: [<Laughter Yoga Zoom Link>](#)  
Meeting ID: 700 674 976    Password: 011053

## **Letter from Ruth DeYoe, Mission Coordinator for Misión Peniel, to P&SC Clerk Carolyn Stanley**

Hi Carolyn,

Thank you for reaching out! We are so thankful for the recent donation we received from you all! A thank you was just sent. You have all been so thoughtful and generous with all of your donations over the past few years!

Our two biggest needs are food donations to help sustain our Friday distribution and funds for our emergency relief account which are being used to assist farmworkers with rent/bill support and medical expenses during this uncertain time. We do continue to receive food supplies from our food bank partners but even their supplies are unpredictable from week to week. Our garden partners, Cultivate Abundance, have helped us resource fresh produce from some of the area's smaller farms. We feel blessed by the abundance received through them and so happy to be able to distribute it to the community.

Our numbers are still on the higher end, serving between 420-520 each week. We have been following CDC guidelines with our preparations and distribution process. We utilize a small number of volunteers for Friday serving. We all wear gloves and masks. We spray painted a zig zag line formation in our parking lot with circles every six feet for standing. People have responded well and the line moves pretty smoothly. No one comes into the building; the groceries are placed on a table in the doorway for individuals to pick up as the line moves.

We have been working with the C.I.W. to distribute face masks over the past few weeks. I think that with combined community efforts, we have enough for now. Toiletries would always be welcome! We will not be distributing clothing or other commodities until mid-June at the earliest.

The COVID-19 testing has gone well. Many organizations publicized it in four languages quite extensively. The biggest unknown for those who were tested is for what happens if they test positive. There has not been a clear plan communicated. As you well know, farmworkers do not have access to health insurance nor any sick leave support if they need to be isolated. If they don't work, they don't get paid. We will be ready to support aftercare plans with other organizations as best we can. More than their work, we value the farmworker and their families as God's precious children!

I just want to end with additional words of appreciation for the many ways you continue to reach out and support the mission's ministry!

We thank God for the blessing of people, churches and organizations like you and the Society of Friends!

Together in Service,  
Ruth DeYoe  
Mission Coordinator, Misión Peniel

## The Six Principles of Kingian Nonviolence



**The 1st Principle** - "Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people" - may be the most daunting, like a scary sign on a chain link fence, "DANGER: KEEP OUT!" - it stands as a warning for the other five principles.

**The 2nd Principle** - "Beloved Community is the framework for the future" - may seem all warm and fuzzy and benign, until you dig down to see what it really means. This is not a mere "kumbaya" sentiment, it is a call to genuine relationship, which requires work, vulnerability, honesty, commitment, and risk. It is about raising the level of relationships among people to a height where justice prevails and persons attain their full human potential. That takes courage, no way around it.

**The 3rd Principle** - "Attack forces of evil not persons doing evil" - also comes only with much self-discipline and initiative. Redirecting our natural aggression away from human opponents and over to systems of power exposes ourselves to new relationships with opponents and to full operation of systems of power against us. Acts of courage,

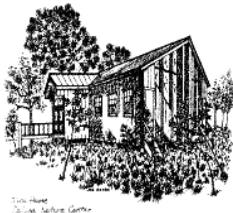
**The 4th Principle** - "Accept suffering, without retaliation, for the sake of the cause to achieve a goal" - speaks for itself. To risk suffering is the definition of courage.

**The 5th Principle** - "Avoid internal violence of the spirit as well as external physical violence" - is also very hard to do (and closely tied to principles 2-4), and takes courage.

**The 6th Principle** - "The Universe is on the side of justice" - can be hard to believe, as we consider the thousands of ways injustice and violence reign and seem impossible to overcome. Courage envisions a different world, creates a new reality.

*Credit: On Earth Peace*





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Religious Society of Friends  
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Address Correction Requested

## **USEFUL WEBSITES FOR FRIENDS**

<a href="http://seymquakers.org">http://seymquakers.org</a> .....	Southeastern Yearly Meeting
<a href="http://www.fcni.org">www.fcni.org</a> .....	Friends Committee for National Legislation
<a href="http://www.fgcquaker.org">www.fgcquaker.org</a> .....	Friends General Conference
<a href="http://www.afsc.org">www.afsc.org</a> .....	American Friends Service Committee
<a href="http://fwcc.world">http://fwcc.world</a> .....	Friends World Committee on Consultation
<a href="http://www.quakerspeak.com">www.quakerspeak.com</a> .....	QuakerSpeak: A Quaker YouTube Channel
<a href="http://www.quakerhouse.org">www.quakerhouse.org</a> .....	Quaker House, Fayetteville
<a href="http://www.quakervoluntaryservice.org">www.quakervoluntaryservice.org</a> .....	Quaker Voluntary Service
<a href="http://www.quno.org">www.quno.org</a> .....	Quaker United Nations Office