



FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING

OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

NEWSLETTER, EIGHT MONTH, 2020

Mailing Address: 138 Pinebrook Dr. Fort Myers FL 33907
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Meeting for Worship Opportunities During the Pandemic

Friends are meeting for worship via **Zoom Conference** every 1st day at 10:30AM. Every week (usually on late Friday) an invitation to this Zoom worship is sent to our entire e-mail list, identifying the hyperlink and meeting number.

Other Friends are meeting over phone or computer for worship, spiritual support activities and friendship at various times during the week. And some are meeting physically in smaller groups outside. Anyone from the Meeting family is welcome to gather under the Oaks at the Orange River in Buckingham on Fridays at 10:30 AM for socially distanced worship outdoors (weather permitting). Bring a folding chair and a mask. Call 239-313-6201 or e-mail for directions.

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

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

8. Personal Integrity & Right Action

Queries:

- Do we keep to simplicity and moderation in speech, manner of living, and vocation?
 - Do we make time in our day for silence, solitude, spiritual reflection, and the growth of our inner life?
 - Do we remind ourselves each day of our connections with people, other creatures, and all that sustains life?
 - Are we ready to live in the Spirit that heals estrangements that may arise from resentment, nagging fears, and alienation from others?
 - Do we listen to others, even beyond words, being sensitive to their personal needs and difficulties?
- Are we free from the use of judicial oaths, thus affirming that our statement is only part of our usual integrity of speech?
 - Do we regard our possessions as given to us in trust, and do we part with them freely for the needs of others?
 - Are we careful to keep our jobs and social activities from absorbing time and energy that need to be given to spiritual growth and service to others?
 - Do we stay tender and open to the leadings of the Spirit?

Advices:

- Use our capabilities and possessions as God's gifts entrusted to us to share with others in humility, courtesy, and affection.
- Accept and encourage the creativity in others.

- When we have a choice of employment, choose that which gives the fullest opportunity for the use of our talents in the service of others.
- Be willing to seek and be faithful to God's will.
- Remember that we are all one in God.

Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends Minutes of 8th Month 9 2020

The Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends met online on the 8th month 9th day via Zoom conference with twenty-two Friends present. The Meeting opened with a period of silent centering. Nancy Howell served as pro temp Clerk for this Meeting. Nancy read the following Queries and Advices from Faith & Practice on Personal Integrity & Right Action:

QUERIES:

- Are we ready to live in the Spirit that heals estrangements that may arise from resentment, nagging fears, and alienation from others?
- Do we listen to others, even beyond words, being sensitive to their personal needs and difficulties?
- Are we careful to keep our jobs and social activities from absorbing time and energy that need to be given to our spiritual growth and service to others?

ADVICES:

- Use our capabilities and possessions as God's gifts entrusted to us to share with others in humility, courtesy, and affection.
- When we have a choice of employment, choose that which gives the fullest opportunity for the use of our talents in the service of others.

In response, one Friend noted that the first query should be read by everyone in the country.

Clerk Nancy reported that Joan Culver has submitted her resignation as clerk of the meeting. Jeannette Botha made the following comments regarding Joan: "From my heart, and on behalf of the Meeting, I want to thank you for your years of service as Clerk of FMMM. Your guidance and example of deep spirituality has influenced us to advance along our spiritual pathways. We will miss your beautiful presence as our Clerk, but are looking forward to seeing you again as our dear Friend."

- ❖ **2020-MM10:** Friends wish to express their great thanks to Joan Culver for her 2 ½ years of service to our Meeting as Presiding Clerk.

Clerk Nancy noted that Joan submitted her resignation to the Ministry and Counsel Committee in July, and several weeks were spent in planning the response. M&C is proposing to the meeting that Joan's decision to resign the position as clerk be accepted and that the Meeting appoint interim candidates to hold the positions that will be vacant as a result for the five month period from now to the end of the year, to carry on the work of the Meeting. Specifically, M&C suggests that we appoint Richard Frechette as Interim Clerk for the balance of 2020.

Clerk Nancy reminded Friends of the structure of our Meeting, and how we make decisions. The Meeting for Worship is the heart of the Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. Our goal is to come to unity in sensing God's purpose and wishes for our beliefs and our actions. When the Meeting comes into unity on a matter, we can act as a body. This occurs when the group considers a proposal, usually from one of our committees, discusses it at one or more of our monthly Meetings for Worship for Business until it is entirely clear to all of us, and adopts a minute of our agreement. We do not vote, because it is God's will we are trying to discern, not our own.

Nancy noted that our Meeting, acting in unity, is the basic unit of decision making in the Quaker world, but is also part of a larger circle of Friends, the South Eastern Yearly Meeting (SEYM). She strongly recommended Friends' attendance at the Yearly Meeting Gatherings. She also highly recommended that Friends make use of the SEYM-created guide Faith and Practice, cautioning that it is a guide, not a list of edicts.

Nancy outlined the role of the Meeting clerk: to facilitate the business of the Meeting. Prior to the Meeting for Worship for Business, the clerk should prayerfully consider the matters that might be brought before the meeting for discussion, and draws up an agenda. The clerk of the meeting is automatically a member of each of the committees of the meeting, he or she should especially be kept informed of all the matters that clerks of the committees are aware may be brought up in any given month. During the meeting, the clerk calls upon Friends, maintains a calm and unhurried discussion, and calls the Meeting into the Silence if discussion becomes heated. The committee that brings an item to the Meeting for Worship for Business may have formulated a minute of the agreement in advance, or they (or the clerk or recording clerk) may formulate the Minute to be considered. When all who wish to be heard on the subject have had a chance to speak the clerk assesses the unity of the Meeting on that topic, and expresses his or her opinion of whether the meeting is in unity. A final opportunity to respond to that assessment is given, and the Meeting goes on to the next item on the agenda. Nancy noted that Quaker process is sometimes slow to come to a conclusion, but there is no objection to a committee bringing back the same or an altered Minute for consideration at the next or another meeting.

On behalf of the Ministry and Counsel Committee, Nancy presented a draft minute regarding the naming of an interim Clerk. Friends discussed this recommendation, including who would take on other Meeting roles that Richard now holds, and how those issues would be addressed, as well as other roles that Joan Culver held such as the connection with Calusa Nature Center. Nominating Committee and Ministry & Counsel Committee would immediately take on this task, and Nancy Howell urged Friends to consider how they can be in service to the Meeting. This starts with persons serving on the Nominating Committee. Friends approved the following minute.

- ❖ **2020-MM11:** The Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, in accepting the resignation of Joan Culver as Clerk of the Meeting, appoints Richard Frechette to be the interim clerk of the Meeting for the balance of 2020.

We agreed that that a major task ahead of us as a Meeting is to determine our long range plans for physical place of worship once the pandemic has lessened.

We are feeling the loss of some Friends' participation in the life of the Meeting, especially because of inability or reluctance to participate in digital worship and business.

Treasurer Paul Davis noted that he is living in Colorado until December, and that contributions to the meeting can be sent to either his Colorado or Fort Myers address, which will be posted in the newsletter.

The numbered minutes were read and approved. We closed in silent worship.

Submitted,
 Nancy Howell, Clerk Pro Tem
 Richard Frechette, Recording Clerk

FMMM Funds Report 7/31/2020

General Funds

Checking	4,158
Gen Fund Savings	40,374
Gen Fund Fr Fiduciary	25,605

Total General Fund 70,137

Meeting House Funds

Savings	85,134
MH Funds Fr Fiduciary	11,915

Total Meeting House Funds 97,049

FMMM Total Funds 167,186

July	2020 Income vs Expense	
July	Income	910
July	Expenses	1,762*

*1,000 transfer to Meeting House Fund

Paul Davis, Treasurer

The Treasurer will be living in Colorado until December. Contributions to the Meeting can be sent to either address:

5530 Harborage Dr.
 Fort Myers FL 33908-4545

or

PO Box 770455
 Steamboat Springs CO 80488

To: Fort Myers Monthly Meeting
of the Religious Society of Friends

Re: Donation to Misión Peniel:

Dear Fort Myers Friends:

On behalf of Pastor Miguel Estrada and Misión Peniel, I want to express our sincere appreciation for your June donation of \$500. Your ongoing support at this critical time means a lot to us and those who are served through the mission.

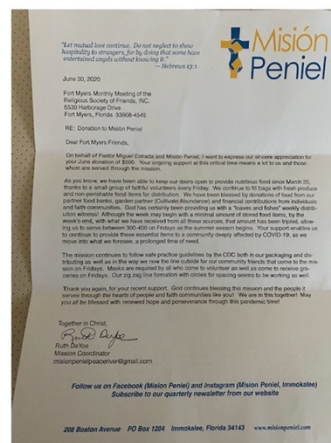
As you know, we have been able to keep our doors open to provide nutritious food since March 20, thanks to a small group of faithful volunteers every Friday. We continue to fill bags with fresh produce and non-perishable food items for distribution. We have been blessed by donations of food from our partner food banks, garden partner (Cultivate Abundance) and financial contributions from individuals and faith communities. God has certainly been providing us with a “loaves and fishes” weekly distribution witness! Although the week may begin with a minimal amount of stored food items, by the week’s end, with what we have received from all those sources, that amount has been tripled, allowing us to serve between 300-400 on Fridays as the summer season begins. Your support enables us to continue to provide these essential items to a community deeply affected by COVID-19, as we move into what we foresee, a prolonged time of need.

The mission continues to follow safe practice guidelines by the CDC both in our packaging and distributing as well as in the way we manage the line outside for our community friends that come to the mission on Fridays. Masks are required for all who come to volunteer as well as come to receive groceries on Fridays. Our zig zag line formation with circles for spacing seems to be working as well.

Thank you again for your recent support. God continues blessing this mission and the people it serves through the hearts of people and faith communities like you! We are in this together! May you all be blessed with renewed hope and perseverance through this pandemic time!

Together in Christ,
Ruth DeYoe
Mission Coordinator
missionpenielpeacriver@gmail.com

*Follow us on Facebook (Mision Peniel) and Instagram (Mision Peniel, Immokalee)
Subscribe to our quarterly newsletter from our website (www.misionpeniel.com)*



“Make us the brightness bent through shade.”
A line from “Petition” by KA Hayes: (submitted by Theron White)

Can Thee Step Forward, Friend????

Because of the transition in leadership at the Meeting, there may be a number of responsibilities in search of a volunteer. Richard Frechette, the Interim Clerk, is willing to retain a number of current duties, but will clearly have to pass on some. Contact any member of the Nominating Committee if you feel led to take on a responsibility:

- Meeting website contents manager
- Newsletter editor
- Meeting database manager (managing list of all Members/Attendees/Contacts)
- Meeting telephone contact (dedicated phone & number included)
- Name tag maker
- Archives and records management

If any of these speak to you, you may contact Richard or any member of the Nominating Committee (Nancy Howell & Vicki Scott) to discuss it further. And Nominating Committee announces that it needs an additional person or two on their committee, and on the Finance Committee.

Minute From Providence (RI) Monthly Meeting:

As Quakers, we are called to a testimony of equality, to “answer that of God in everyone”. This testimony requires us to challenge the historical and current-day racial inequities that surround us, and in which we participate. We are deeply grieved as we take note of the white supremacy and structural racism that are present in our society, in our meeting, and in us as individuals. We are committed to undertake a process within our meeting to examine these truths deeply and to consider, with divine guidance, what may be needed to transform our lives, our meeting community, and our society. We commit to undertaking a process of self-examination and corporate action to do our part to bend the arc of the moral universe towards justice.

7th Month 12, 2020

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

You Are Invited to POST 1ST-DAY WORSHIP DISCUSSIONS

August 16: The Beatitudes. This is a follow-up to the August 2 discussion sponsored by the Religious Education Committee. It will focus on a pamphlet “The Beatitudes: Pathways of Living in True Joy and Peace” by Virginia Schurman (A pdf file of the pamphlet can be made available to you)

August 23: Peace and Social Concerns Committee will continue discussion of **Police Reform** with **Part 2: Re-visioning Community Safety**. This discussion will be led by Carolyn, Helen and Hugh.

September 6: Discussion on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr’s **Letter from a Birmingham Jail**, co-sponsored by the Peace & Social Concerns and the Religious Education Committees. (A pdf file of the letter can be made available to you)

Statement regarding our Native American Precursors

Let us begin by acknowledging, with humility, that for nearly two thousand years, the land where we meet today was the home of the Calusa people. We ask the spirits of the Calusa to welcome us into this space, and to allow us to feel their presence in the earth and the living things upon it. We open our hearts and minds to the ancient understanding that all things in the natural world are connected: animals, plants, water, stones, celestial bodies, geological formations, and sacred spaces, and that all these things can be felt and experienced as spirits with whom we can enter into a relationship. We thank the ancestors for this wisdom and ask that it guide us to a deeper appreciation of the world as we address today’s challenges.



**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

1 st Days (Sundays)	Meeting for Worship (via Zoom)	10:30 am
6 th Days (Fridays)	Outdoor worship in Buckingham (at the Orange River)	10:30 am
Sun 8/16	2 nd Discussion on the Beatitudes (Via Zoom)	At rise of Worship
Sun 8/23	2 nd Discussion on Police Reform: Part 2 - Revisioning Public Safety (via Zoom)	At rise of Worship
Sun 9/6	Discussion on Dr. Martin L. Kings Jr's Letter from Birmingham Jail (via Zoom)	At rise of Worship
Sun 9/13	Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business (via Zoom)	At rise of Worship