



# FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Newsletter, Ninth Month, 2020

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## Meeting for Worship Opportunities During the Pandemic

Friends are meeting for worship via **Zoom Conference** every 1<sup>st</sup> 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 roof of a chickeehut on the Orange River in Buckingham on Fridays at 10:30 AM for socially distanced worship outdoors (weather permitting). Call 239-313-6201 or e-mail the e-mail address above for directions.

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

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

### 9. Witness

#### Queries:

- |  |  |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do our lives reflect Quaker testimonies?</li><li>• Are we open and responsive to continuing revelation, and do we incorporate it into our spiritual life?</li><li>• Is our Quaker witness characterized by humility and a willingness to learn from others?</li><li>• Do we recognize that the Spirit works in the world through us?</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Does our witness lead us to the condition in which we “walk cheerfully over the earth answering that of God in everyone?”</li><li>• 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?</li></ul> |
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## **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.

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## **Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends**

### **Minutes of 9th Month 13, 2020**

*(Note: The wording of these minutes were not formally approved at the Meeting; hence they are presented here as a draft)*

The Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends met online on the 9th month, 13th day via Zoom conference with 22 present. The Meeting opened with a period of silent centering at 12:10 PM.

**Advices:** Clerk Richard Frechette read two Queries on the subject of Witness from SEYM Faith & Practice for the Meeting's reflection:

- 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 to that of God in everyone?"

### **Nominating Committee:**

Nancy Howell reported that Friends have volunteered to fill positions vacated by Richard Frechette when he became Interim Clerk of the Meeting, and to take on new responsibilities that have arisen due to need for online meetings during the COVID pandemic. Nominating Committee will send out questionnaires this month asking what Friends would like to do for the Meeting next year. Friends suggested that the Outreach Committee will need to work on how to get new people to join Zoom worship, which will require special skill. We may need a Technology Committee to help Friends who have difficulty with their devices. Nancy agreed to write a job description for this position. Other jobs that need to be filled include Database Manager, Principal Manager of Zoom Worship, and Records Manager. Friends who wish to volunteer for these tasks should send an email to Nancy Howell.

- ❖ **Minute 2020-MM12:** Fort Myers Monthly Meeting approves Helen Fox as Interim Recording Clerk, Carolyn Stanley as a member of Nominating Committee, Deb White as newsletter editor, and Nico Ashe as Website Editor and Facebook Manager.

After some discussion about setting up a Facebook Group for discussions among members, attenders and visitors, and possibly later, a “Fan Page” that would help draw attention to the Meeting, the following Minute was approved:

- ❖ **Minute 2020-MM13:** The Fort Myers Monthly Meeting approves the establishment of a Facebook Group

**Treasurer’s Report:**

Treasurer Paul Davis provided the report below for August, 2020, adding that we are in great shape due to the generosity of our members. Even our Friends Fiduciary funds continue to do well because of the growth of the stock market. However, the needs of the wider community have changed significantly this year due to the COVID crisis. Carolyn Stanley mentioned, in this regard, that the Peace and Social Concerns Committee donated an extra \$500 from its Emergency Fund to the Harry Chapin Food Bank to help with these needs.

- ❖ **Minute 2020-MM14:** The Fort Myers Monthly Meeting approved \$500 to replenish the Peace & Social Concerns emergency fund.

**FMMM Funds Report 8/31/2020**

<b>General Funds</b>	
Checking	6,953
Gen Fund Savings	40,376
Gen Fund Fr Fiduciary	26,178
<b>Total General Funds</b>	<b>73,507</b>
<b>Meeting House Funds</b>	
Savings	85,145
MH Fund Fr Fiduciary	12,181
<b>Total Meeting House Funds</b>	<b>97,326</b>
<b>FMMM Total Funds</b>	<b>170.833</b>

<b>August 2020 Income vs Expenses</b>	
Aug Income	3,450
Aug Expenses	655
<i>*\$500 donation to Harry Chapin Fund</i>	

Paul Davis, Treasurer

**Ministry & Counsel Committee:** Nancy Fennel provided the following report: As Interim Clerk of the Meeting, Richard Frechette has set aside his roles on Ministry and Counsel. We are grateful to Richard for all he has contributed to Ministry and Counsel. We are also very appreciative of Kathy Hale's contributions to Ministry and Counsel.

As has been mentioned, Nancy Fennell and Nancy Murvine have stepped in as co-clerks. With Kathy Hale's move out of state and one additional member's term ending at the end of 2020, the committee needed to reach out to others in our Ft. Myers Meeting to fill those positions. After discussion and discernment, the committee agreed that we also wanted to have male representation and to seek younger committee members, as well.

Ministry and Counsel Committee is grateful for those who have chosen to join us as we care for the spiritual and pastoral well-being of our community. The new people recommended for approval are: Hugh Pettigrew (as of September, 2020), Deb White (September, 2020), and Paul Davis (January, 2021). They join Nancy Howell, Nancy Fennell, Nancy Murvine, Jeannette Botha, and Helen Snodgrass.

We continue to look at ways for members to find attachment to the Meeting with the restrictions placed on us with COVID.

- ❖ **Minute 2020-MM15:** The Meeting approved for membership on Ministry and Council: Hugh Pettigrew (September, 2020), Deb White (September, 2020), and Paul Davis (January, 2021).

**Peace & Social Concerns Committee:**

The Peace and Social Concerns Committee asked Friends to consider giving their approval to a Minute on Police Violence and Accountability. This Minute represents three months of reading and discussion among PSC Friends, and two discussions with others in our Meeting on wording and substance. If approved, we would like to add the Minute to a growing list of Minutes on this topic sent by Friends Meetings to the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) and Southeastern Yearly Meeting (SEYM).

Friends thanked the P&SC Committee for all their work. After Friends recommended changing the "911" reference to "September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001", they approved the following minute:

- ❖ **Minute 2020-MM16:** Fort Myers Monthly Meeting approves this Minute on Police Violence and Accountability and asks that it be distributed to the wider circle of Friends, to area faith communities and to the local media.

**Statement on Police Violence and Accountability, September 13, 2020  
Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)**

*In shock and sadness, over many years, we have witnessed an unconscionable level of police violence against marginalized groups and individuals across the United States. As Quakers, we deny the inevitability of violence as a necessary and accepted way to keep communities safe. We believe that all life is sacred; thus, all the deaths – of suspects, bystanders, and police officers alike – are devastating and senseless losses to families and communities. Violence reduces our own humanity and burdens us with deep emotional and spiritual costs.*

*History has shown us that the use of state violence, ostensibly to maintain community safety, has complex roots. Policing in the U.S. South originated in the system of slave patrols, and in the North, as an organized system of social control of the “dangerous classes” – poor, foreign immigrants and free Blacks – and later, to harass and detain anyone who interfered with big-city political machines and criminal syndicates. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/long-painful-history-police-brutality-in-the-us-180964098/>*

*Although there have been many efforts at reform over the years, and although those reforms have professionalized the force and reduced corruption, violence against communities of color continues, and new abuses have arisen: since September 11, 2001 we have seen the transfer of military equipment and military tactics into police departments and the increasing surveillance of poor communities through invasive technology. <https://www.aclu.org/issues/privacy-technology/surveillance-technologies/community-control-over-police-surveillance>*

*We acknowledge that most police officers are responsible, hard-working men and women who have a difficult job to do. Yet they are caught up in a system of violence and impunity that disproportionately impacts people of color. And despite the arrest and imprisonment of 2.3 million Americans, an overwhelming body of scholarly literature finds that more spending on the police has little impact on the incidence of crime. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/investigations/2019/02/13/marshall-project-more-cops-dont-mean-less-crime-experts-say/2818056002/>*

*It is time to re-vision our idea of community safety and security.*

*As Quakers, we support nation-wide calls for police accountability and racial justice. We affirm that Black Lives Matter. We call for the development of unarmed, healing-based interventions including restorative justice practices that respect the humanity of all parties and address community needs – this is our ultimate, aspirational goal. <http://restorativejustice.org/rj-library/restorative-justice-and-transformative-justice-definitions-and-debates/11558/#sthash.bunxB8Pq.vFFmf3e3.dpbs>*

*We further acknowledge that our country's long history of institutional racism and a persistent belief in white supremacy infuse our system of policing and compromise many good-hearted efforts at reform. We join with other faith communities and individuals in our commitment to educate ourselves about how to be effective allies to people of color, and to put our learning into action.*

### **Religious Education Committee:**

Nancy Howell proposed that the Meeting's annual retreat, usually held in March, be focused on the theme of the artistic work of Friends in our Meeting. Friends welcomed this idea and look forward to the committee providing us with details in the coming months. Friends also expressed interest in online Quakerism 101 sessions for newcomers.

Clerk Richard Frechette asked if Friends agreed to hold a threshing session to consider our short term and long term options regarding the location and means of community worship. After some discussion, Friends approved the following:

- ❖ **Minute 2020-MM17:** Fort Myers Monthly Meeting approved holding a Threshing Session on the future physical home of the Meeting. The session will be held via Zoom on a First Day in October after information about our options is gathered in September and disseminated to the Meeting.

The Meeting closed in silent worship at 1:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Helen Fox, Recording Clerk

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### ***For Reflection***

This election year may be more important than ever before. You are encouraged to check out this link to access a reflection guide for people of faith jointly put out by Faith in Public Life and Interfaith Power and Light.

Topics for reflection include:

- Democracy and Voting Rights
- Climate Change Justice
- Loving our Immigrant Neighbors
- An Economy of Inclusion
- Moral Health Policies in Time of Pandemic
- Restorative and Racial Justice
- Respecting the Dignity of LGBTQ People
- The Global Common Good

Check out this link for the entire document <https://s3.amazonaws.com/s3.faithinpubliclife.org/images/VoterReflectionGuide2020.pdf?source=conf>

# International Day of Peace



The International Day of Peace, started by the United Nations 75 years ago, will be held on Monday, September 21 this year. The UN is calling for everyone around the world to take time for one minute of silence at noon that day. This will create a giant wave of peaceful meditation around the world as the different time zones reach 12 noon. The Fort Myers Peace and Social Concerns Committee invites you to participate in this world- wide acknowledgment of PEACE. We have organized 2 options for you:

**OPTION 1:** Carolyn Stanley will be hosting a Zoom program at 11:30 AM, Monday, Sept. 21. If anyone planning to ‘attend’ has a short (2 minutes?) poem or comment to share please let her know ([carolyn2020stanley@gmail.com](mailto:carolyn2020stanley@gmail.com)).

5 Minutes of silence at 11:58 will be observed, ending with Dona Nobis Pacem. The information for joining this Peace Day Zoom Meeting event is:

Topic: International Peace Day

Time: Sep 21, 2020 11:30 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89790262006?pwd=UG9aOEVudWExYbE5VRktxTmFyS2h-IZz09>

Meeting ID: 897 9026 2006

Passcode: 223535

**OPTION 2:** An in-person event will be held from 11:30 - 12:30 at the Chickee Hut at the Frechette’s (behind The Hut Restaurant, 5150 Buckingham Road). Hosts will be the Frechette’s, Tom Miller and Jerilyn Robison. At 12:00 noon there will be the UN minute of silence. We will share songs, poems, readings, and scripture. A sacred table will be available for symbols of peace. Friends are asked to wear masks, practice social dis-tancing and bring a sack lunch for a picnic afterwards. Any questions call Tom at 222-7476 or email at [tomomiller11@gmail.com](mailto:tomomiller11@gmail.com).

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## Book Discussions to be Held in October

Friends General Conference has a fall program on Racism that includes a book discussion of **See No Stranger** by **Valarie Kaur** (starting mid-October). Several FMMM Friends have recommended this book. P&SC Committee will keep you posted when we know the exact dates. We hope announcing this discussion now will give you time to get the book and read it. From FGC:

“The **FGC Spiritual Deepening Program** invites newcomers and Friends to build an online spiritual community through an exploration of Quaker thought and practice. One way is through book discussions, currently co-sponsored by the FGC Ministry on Racism. Join us for talks on How to be an Antiracist and See No Stranger.

## 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

## MEETING CALENDAR

1 <sup>st</sup> Days (Sundays)	Meeting for Worship (via Zoom)	10:30 am
6 <sup>th</sup> Days (Fridays)	Outdoor worship in Buckingham (at the Orange River)	10:30 am
Mon 9/21	International Day of Peace (see article above on two options for observing)	11:30 am
Sun 10/11	Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business (via Zoom)	At rise of Worship