



FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Newsletter, Eleventh Month, 2020

Mailing Address: 138 Pinebrook Dr. Fort Myers FL 33907
Telephone: (239) 318-0538 ❖ *Website:* fortmyersquakers.org
E-mail: ftmyers.quakers@gmail.com

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 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.

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 08, 2020

The Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends met online on the 11th month 8th day via Zoom conference with 21 Friends present. The Meeting opened with a period of silent centering. Richard Frechette, Clerk, read the following Queries from SEYM's Faith & Practice: "Do we seek to minimize our consumption of the earth's resources? Do we encourage equitable and sustainable use of those resources?"

In response, Friends shared several positive actions that have been taken locally. Among them are the generation of electricity by burning trash; a bio-char generating facility that captures carbon and enriches the soil; and a farm-to-table business (www.swflproduce.com) that delivers fresh fruits and vegetables to subscribers' homes.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Paul Davis provided the following report of FMMM's financial status as of 10/31/20:

General Fund	
General Fund Checking	7,502
Gen Fund Savings	40,379
Gen Fund - Friends Fiduciary	26,441
Total General Fund	74,322

Meeting House Funds

Savings	85,166
MH Funds – Friends Fiduciary	12,304
Total Meeting House Funds	97,470

FtMMM Total Funds	\$171,792
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Oct 2020 Income vs Expense

Oct Income	690
Oct Expenses	310*

* \$200 to National Temporary Protected Status

FMMM Draft Budget.

Treasurer Paul Davis explained the first draft of the 2021 budget, adding that there is no need to finalize it until December. Since we are no longer meeting at Iona House or have a representative on the Calusa Nature Center Board, there is nothing budgeted for that item in 2020. The Treasurer added \$2000 to the Meeting House Reserve, which he deducted from an overpayment to SEYM for next year. Friends were reminded that this budget is merely a draft. The final budget will appear in the December Minutes.

Ft Myers Monthly Meeting Draft Budget 2021

	2020	2021
Calusa Nature Center		
Board/Events	\$500.00	\$0.00
Membership	\$250.00	\$250.00
Utility Payments	\$1,200.00	\$1,200.00
Finance Committee		
Banking & Corporate Fees	\$15.	\$100
Gifts/Contingency	\$600	\$100
Hospitality Committee	\$450	\$450
Meetinghouse Reserve	\$1,000	\$3,000
Ministry & Counsel-Care	\$1,000	\$1,000
Ministry & Counsel		
Friends General Conference	\$1,200	\$1,200
General/Misc	\$300	\$300
Spiritual/Scholarships	\$1,500	\$1,500
Newsletter	\$300	\$300
Nominating Committee	\$100	\$100
Outreach Committee		
Friends Journal Listing	\$80	\$80

Web Hosting	\$60	\$150
Phone	\$400	\$130
Zoom & Misc.	\$210	\$650
Peace & Social Concerns		
AFSC	\$600	\$600
Educ. Concerns for Hunger	\$200	\$200
FCNL	\$600	\$600
Friends Peace Teams	\$300	\$300
Harry Chapin Foodbank	\$500	\$500
Initiatives that may arise	\$2,500	\$1,000
Lee Interfaith	\$500	\$500
Quaker House	\$300	\$300
Quaker Voluntary Services	\$200	\$200
Quality Life Center	\$500	\$300
Peace Day	\$100	\$100
Environmental Working Group	\$100	\$100
Coalition of Immokalee Workers	\$0	\$300
Immokalee Fair Housing	\$0	\$300
Cultivate Abundance	\$0	\$100
Mission Peniel	\$0	\$300
Property Committee	\$500	\$150
Religious Education Committee		
1st Day School	\$150	\$50
Miscellaneous	\$500	\$500
Retreats/Speakers	\$800	\$800
SEYM	\$5,400	\$2,700
Technology Committee	\$0	\$500
Total	\$23,050	\$20,910

A Friend asked what would be a fair, pro-rated contribution expected of each member/attender in order to reach this total. Although this figure is difficult to determine, we can get an idea by dividing the total funds by the average number of members/attenders. On average, 25 people consistently attend Meeting and about 50 are on the mailing list.

Ministry & Counsel Committee Report

Friend Nancy Fennell shared the following report:

The meeting opened with centering silence. We reviewed the role of Ministry and Counsel Committee (M&C) in pastoral care and counsel. The discussion was followed by calling attention to those in our community who have physical, material, or social difficulties currently. Committee members offered suggestions about how we can be of assistance.

At the last month's Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, M&C offered to use \$1000 of our 2020 budget for new technology to support remote Meetings for Worship and committee meetings. We want to clarify that we assume that the newly appointed Tech Committee will have its own budget line in 2021 and that M&C has no further financial obligation for purchasing technology.

A draft of the Spiritual State of the Meeting is written and will be distributed to M&C for review in the November committee meeting. M&C members reviewed an article entitled, "Clearness Process and Clearness Committees." We expect to send it to our newsletter editor for publication in the November issue.

Lastly, we had a lengthy and loving discussion about the changes we are observing in the spoken ministries in Meeting for Worship. Useful suggestions were made to help our community distinguish between Spirit-led ministry, afterthoughts, and announcements. As an example, we have implemented changes in comments made in the opening and closing of worship. We will explore other suggestions as need arises. We closed the meeting in silence.

Nominating Committee Report

Friend Carolyn Stanley shared the following draft report with several additions: Young Friend Xander Poltzer is to be added to the Technology Committee; Friend Nancy Murvine is no longer on the Religious Education Committee; and Clerk Richard Frechette is on the Technology Committee.

Annual report of the corporate report: "Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, Inc., a Florida Non-profit Corporation" (eligible for tax-deductible gifts)

Current Principal Place of Business: Current Mailing Address: c/o Richard Frechette, 138 Pinebrook Drive, Fort Myers, FL 33907 FEI Number: 65-0607361

Certificate of Status Desired: No

The Officers/Directors of this Corporation:

1. Current Registered Agent: Paul Davis, 5530 Harborage Dr. Fort Myers, FL 33908-4545
2. Director Richard Frechette, 138 Pinebrook Drive, FM, FL 33907
3. Director Jim Koopman, 7418 Grand Pine Road, Bokeelia FL 33922-3501

4. Director Carolyn Stanley, 14093 Mystic Seaport Way, Fort Myers, FL
33818-7700
5. Director Helen Fox, 7418 Grand Pine Road, Bokeelia, FL. 33922-3501

Fort Myers Quaker Meeting, Officers and Specific Jobs:

Clerk – Richard Frechette

Recording Clerk - Helen Fox

Treasurer – Paul Davis

Newsletter Editor – Deb White

Assistant Newsletter Editor for Circulation – Mary Smiley

Librarian – Susan Oehl,

Assistant Librarian - Nancy Murvine

Name Tag Producer – Mary Smiley

Technology Manager – Clerk of Technology Committee Facebook and Web Site Manager – Nico Ashe

Volunteer Liaisons between FMFM and other Quaker organizations:

Amer. Friends Service Comm. – Clerk of Peace and Social Concerns

Friends Committee on National Legislation – Helen Fox

Quaker Voluntary Service – Cheryl Keen

Southeast Yearly Meeting (SEYM) – Helen Fox

Friends Peace Teams - Tom Miller

Quaker House - Clerk of Peace and Social Concerns

Liaisons between FMMM and other Organizations:

L.I.F.E. - Carolyn Stanley

Calusa Nature Center and Planetarium - Clerk, (until we return to Iona House?)

Quality Life Center - Susan Oehl

Four Immokalee Organizations: Mision Peniel CIW, Cultivate Abundance and IFHA -
Helen Fox and Carolyn Stanley

Volunteers to serve on 2021 committees to carry out the Meetings' business:

(Ministry and Counsel Committee nominates their own members; appointment is on a staggered basis)

The following committees are open to all members and attenders. Each committee chooses their own clerk. The first meeting of the year should be called by the first member listed, who shall serve as Convener until a Clerk is selected. Friends are welcome to join any of these committees throughout the year.

- Finance Committee : Paul Davis, Sam DeOliveira
- Peace and Social Concerns Committee – Carolyn Stanley, Helen Fox, Susan Oehl, Hugh Pettigrew, Tom Miller, Jill Husson Martinez, Christine McBride, Jerilyn Robison, Chris Ruhnke, Jim Koopman, Donna Anderton, Karin Gelotte, David Jossi, Janelle Christensen, John Battin

- Environmental Working Group (including the Yellow Fever Creek Project): Chris Ruhnke, Jim Koopman, Tom Miller, Paul Davis, Suzanne Frechette, Vicki Scott
- Religious Education Committee - Nancy Howell, Jeannette Botha, Tom Miller, Sheilana Massey, Susan Oehl, Nancy Murvine
- Technology Committee – Pat Iyer, Nico Ashe, Paul Davis, Mark Mackey
- Nominating Committee - Carolyn Stanley, Nancy Howell

Committees on hold during the pandemic: Outreach Committee; Properties Committee; Hospitality Committee

Friends discussed the need for an active Outreach Committee to let the public know about Quakers and to meet the needs of young adults searching for a spiritual home.

Technology Committee Report

Friend Pat Iyer explained that the objective of the new Technology Committee is to figure out how to combine physical and virtual meeting spaces during the pandemic and afterward in our “new normal.” Toward that end, a TV has been installed and there is now internet access at the Chickee Hut in Buckingham. The committee will meet via Zoom with a Friend from New England Yearly Meeting for technical guidance. They will also consider improvements to the FMMM website and Facebook pages.

Future Place of Worship Discussion

Clerk Richard Frechette opened the discussion by sharing the kinds of information we need in order to have a fruitful threshing session at some future date.

1. If we return to Iona House, we need to consider whether it will be safe to share the space with schoolchildren, the viability of the Calusa Nature Center, the noise level of the new air conditioner, and so on.
2. If we rent space in some other building, we need to know the cost, the size and configuration of the space, and the times and days we could access it, as well as the necessary arrangements for health and safety.
 - a. Mr. Mohammed at Quality Life Center has suggested that we might meet there. QLC has a long history with our Meeting as well as impressive new facilities. It is located on MLK Blvd. where it primarily serves the Dunbar community. Friends Sue Oehl, Suzanne Frechette, and Tom Miller will explore questions of access, costs, feasibility, and public health with the Director. Friend Jim Koopman will create a checklist, prioritized in order of importance, of the public health issues they need to address.
 - b. It was noted that other rental space may be available such as in a commercial strip, in a historical home on 1st St. in Fort Myers, in a Seventh Day Adventist Church (which meets on Saturdays) or at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Fort Myers (on Shire Lane), which has some space we might be able to rent at times other than Sunday morning.
3. If we build a new Meeting House on rented land, we need to know the land rental costs and other issues such as parking, liability, and so on. The Unitarian Universalist Church of Fort Myers has suggested they might rent us some of their ex-

cess land that we could build on. Friends Sue Oehl and Suzanne Frechette will explore this option further.

4. If we buy land and build a new Meeting House, we need to know the estimated costs and land issues such as zoning and parking. Friend Paul Davis will look into the cost of a 2000 square foot building (Iona House total sq footage is 1550). A Friend mentioned that we should consider a larger building in order to attract parents with young families and in general, grow our Meeting. It was also suggested that we consider building a green, high-tech building. Friend Paul Davis will look at these costs.
5. If we seriously consider building a new Meeting house, we need to find out, through an anonymous survey of FMMM Friends and attenders, how much money we could raise through donations, including matching funds. Clerk Richard Frechette and Friend Helen Fox agreed to create and carry out such a survey.

The results of all these investigations will be sent to everyone to read and consider carefully before the threshing session. As well, the responses to the survey among Friends that had been conducted a year ago will be distributed. Friends were reminded that no decisions are made at such threshing sessions; they are meant to air all sides of the issues.

We closed in silent worship.

Respectfully Submitted,
Helen Fox
Recording Clerk

Our queries and advices this month focus on caring for our earth and the life of all its creatures. Here are three links to resources that can help us in this witness.

www.conserveflorida.org -features conservation projects and initiatives throughout Florida

swflproduce.com - provides locally grown produce

www.echonet.org - gives more information on the work of Echo Global Farm (located in North Fort Myers)

Friend Priscilla De Oliveira and Dylan Goldey would like to cordially invite you to their wedding! It will take place on December 19, 2020 at 4pm. You will be invited to attend via Zoom Meeting. If during the ceremony you wish to speak to the couple, you may type your message in the Zoom chat box. Your message will be read out loud to the group during the ceremony. Priscilla and Dylan look forward to “seeing” you there! (Note: if you wish to attend the wedding under the care of the Meeting via Zoom, send an e-mail to the Meeting e-address (ftmyers.quakers@gmail.com), and the sign-on link will be sent to you).



PSC Challenge to Action

Fort Myers Quakers: Let's put our concern for racism into action!

Each month, the Peace and Social Concerns Committee will recommend three resources: one book, one film or video, and one action. We ask you to join us in committing to educate ourselves and to support Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color in our communities.

FOR NOVEMBER, our recommendations are:

Book: *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism.* By Robin DiAngelo. "A necessary book for all people invested in societal change."

Video: *A Class Divided* by Jane Elliot and Frontline PBS. Watch for free on YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1mcCLm_LwpE

Action: Do some Christmas shopping at a Black-owned business. Check out "ETSY Black-owned shops" on Google or pick up some local takeout from a Black-owned food spot:

<https://www.packslight.com/black-owned-food-spots-in-sanibel-fort-myers-florida/>

Choose one, two, or all three!

PSC welcomes Friends' suggestions for upcoming recommendation

"Wellsprings of Life" by Paulette Meier, is a cd containing musical chants composed by the words of Quaker writers spanning three centuries. One can hear samples of these chants online. I really loved some of these and intend to buy the cd. I hope you enjoy them as much as I did.

submitted by Jeannette Botha

If you're new to Quakerism, you've probably noted that there are many processes with which you may be unfamiliar. One of those is the Clearness Committee. Ministry and Council decided to include this article that helps explain the process.

Clearness Process and Clearness Committees

One of the duties given to the Ministry & Counsel Committee is oversight over the long-established Quaker process of clearness.

The most common clearness process is that relating to **Membership in the Meeting**. When an individual has participated in the life of the Meeting and feels that they may be ready to go to the next step of commitment - formal membership - they notify the Clerk of the Meeting in writing of their desire. The letter is read to the community at the next meeting for worship with attention to business. The Clerk passes the request for membership to the Ministry & Counsel Committee, who then establishes a Clearness Committee comprised of at least one member of Ministry and Counsel and at least two others from the community. The requestor is asked if they wish any one person in particular to serve on the clearness committee.

The Clearness Committee has two roles - to help the individual discern whether they are truly clear to commit to the Meeting and to discern whether the Meeting is truly clear to receive the individual into membership. Commitment on both sides requires the willingness of the individual as well as the Meeting to give and receive.

The Clearness Committee meets one or more times with the individual, often in the requestor's home or at another mutually acceptable place. When clearness has been discerned, the committee will so inform Ministry and Counsel. In turn, Ministry and Counsel will discern the matter and, when ready, will bring the resulting clearness to Friends at the next meeting for worship with attention to business.

The other common use of a Clearness Committee relates to **Marriage of two individuals**. Marriage under the care of the Meeting is a covenant that involves the couple and the Meeting. This covenant, grounded in the Spirit, is a sacred commitment emerging through careful discernment of all involved. In this case, the Clearness Committee helps couples discern the quality and thoroughness of their readiness for marriage. As in the Clearness Committee for Membership, Ministry and Counsel will establish the Clearness Committee. The couple will be asked if there is anyone of the Meeting community that they would like to have serve. Once clearness has been mutually discerned, the Clearness Committee reports back to the Meeting via Ministry and Counsel and the Meeting considers taking and approving the marriage under the care of the Meeting.

Quaker Meetings also have a long tradition of using Clearness Committees to assist an individual who may be facing a **personal struggle**. Such struggles may include an individual's home, health, work, relationships, or spiritual life. These may involve dis-

agreements, crisis, life changes, or leadings of many kinds. While the individual may bring a request to Ministry and Counsel for a clearness committee, members of Ministry and Counsel may become aware of a situation and initiate a conversation with the individual. Because of the deeply personal and confidential nature of this work, there is no reporting back to the Meeting with one exception-- the mutual discernment and clearness that there is a role for the Meeting as a whole to play.

Clearness Committee meetings have a simple structure:

1. All present open the meeting with worship.
2. The focus person presents the concern without interruption.
3. Members of the committee ask brief, open, honest, direct questions. All present listen without prejudice to what is being shared.
4. The committee members reflect what is heard, but do not give advice.
5. Affirmation, support and prayer are an important part of the process.
6. The meeting closes in worship.

Clearness Committees usually meet one to three times. Issues that require longer attention, such as supporting and holding accountable individuals following a leading, usually benefit from a Care Committee. If so, Ministry and Counsel Committee will appoint a Care Committee which may involve members of an original Clearness Committee or which may need the skills of different members, depending on the situation.

Clearness Committees do not deal with conflict between members of the Meeting community; a Care Committee whose members are familiar with conflict resolution skills will be assigned by Ministry and Counsel Committee (see Faith and Practice, Chapter 4; pp. 84-90).

Related reading material available in the Meeting's Library:

- Clearness Committees and Their Use in Personal Discernment (Jan Hoffman)
- Faith & Practice (SEYM) Chapters 4, 7, 8, 10
- *Decision Making & Spiritual Discernment* (Nancy Bieber)

Information available on the web:

- FGC on Clearness Committee (<https://www.fgcquaker.org/resources/clearness-committees-what-they-are-and-what-they-do>)
- QuakerSpeak on Clearness Committees (<https://quakerspeak.com>, search for Clearness Committee)

Reader's/Writer's Corner

You have to live poetry

You have to live poetry,
Beautifully like a new lover
He used to say. It stopped.
He didn't know when.
A fire that had burned so bright,
Left a wordless void.
But he never forgot the choir of angels
He heard in a pasture as a little boy.

He prays words will return
Like geese back to their genesis.
He prays for holy fire,
To sing to the world
Its truth and beauty
With voices of angels
He once heard.

Theron White

Most of us are avid readers, and some of us are writers, as well. Submit any essays, poetry or book reviews (400 words or less—about one newsletter page) that witness to the testimonies of Quaker life. Please email:

debwhitenfl@gmail.com

USEFUL WEBSITES FOR FRIENDS

http://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
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



**Friends Meeting of Fort Myers
Religious Society of Friends
c/o Richard Frechette
138 Pinebrook Dr.
Fort Myers, FL 33907-5988**

Address Correction Requested

MEETING CALENDAR

1 st Days (Sundays)	Meeting for Worship (via Zoom) An informal conversation time begins at 10:00 am	10:30 am
6 th Days (Fridays)	Outdoor worship in Buckingham (at the Orange River)	10:30 am
Mon 11/9	LIFE Annual Assembly via Zoom	7:00 p.m.
Sat. 12/19	Wedding of Priscella DeOliveira and Dylan Goldey via Zoom	4:00 p.m.

