

FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Newsletter, Twelfth 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 Chickee Hut on the Orange River in Buckingham on Fridays at 10:30 AM for socially distanced worship outdoors (weather permitting). Beginning Sunday, December 27, 2020, a hybrid form of worship will be held at the Chickee Hut. 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?

12. Peace Testimony & Nonviolence

Queries:

- Do we work for peace in the world? Do we nurture peace within ourselves?
- Do we “live in the virtue of that life and power which takes away the occasion of all wars”?
- Do we seek consistently to carry out this testimony for peace in all our relationships, including family, community, and work life?
- Do we as individuals and as members of a meeting seek to take part in the ministry of reconciliation between individuals, groups, and nations?
- Do we faithfully maintain our peace testimony?
- Do we reject military training, preparation for war, and participation in war as inconsistent with the spirit of Christ’s teachings?
- Do we as a meeting take a stand and do all we can to remove the causes of war and violence?

Advices:

- War is contrary to the life and teaching of Jesus. Seek through God's power and grace to overcome in our hearts the emotions that lie at the root of conflict.
 - Strive for nonviolent approaches to conflicts in all aspects of our lives.
 - Every human being is a beloved child of God and has that divine spark which claims our reverence. War is a denial of this truth.
 - Friends' peace testimony is the positive exercise of good will calling us to lend our influence to all that strengthens the growth of international friendships and understanding.
 - Cultivate an active spirit of love and peace.
 - *The first step to peace is to stand still in the Light...* .George Fox, 1653
-

Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends Minutes of 12th Month 13, 2020

The Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends met online on the 12th month 13th day via Zoom conference with 23 Friends present. The Meeting opened with a period of silent centering. Richard Frechette, Clerk, read the Friends Peace Testimony of 1660, followed by two Queries from SEYM's Faith & Practice on the Peace Testimony & Nonviolence:

- Do we seek consistently to carry out this testimony for peace in all our relationships, including family, community, and work life?
- Do we as individuals and as members of a meeting seek to take part in the ministry of reconciliation between individuals, groups, and nations?

In response, a Friend suggested that we expand our notion of "war" to include psychological warfare and the manipulation of truth.

Treasurer's Report:

Treasurer Paul Davis provided the following report of FMMM's financial status as of 11/30/2020.

Nov	2020 Income vs Expense	
Nov	Income	810
Nov	Expenses	158

General Funds

Checking	8,154
Gen Fund Savings	40,381
Gen Fund Fr Fiduciary	27,983

Total General Fund 76,518

Meeting House Funds

Savings	85,175
MH Funds Fr Fiduciary	13,021

Total Meeting House Funds 98,196

FMMM Total Funds 174,714

Paul then presented the 2021 draft budget to Friends, noting that there were no changes from the first draft presented in November.

Discussion: Friends discussed raising the amount for the Harry Chapin Food Bank, which provides food to individuals and food pantries in five counties. Before the pandemic, The Food Bank was spending \$37,000/month on this service; now, they are spending \$1 million/month, as hunger is much more widespread. Friends were in unity to increase that line item from \$500 to \$3,500.

❖ **Minute 2020-MM23:** Friends approved the following 2021 Budget.

Ft Myers Monthly Meeting.	2021 Budget
Calusa Nature Center:	\$1,450
Board/Events	\$0
Membership	\$250
Utility Payments	\$1,200
Finance Committee:	\$200
Banking & Corporate Fees	\$100
Contingency	\$100
Hospitality Committee	\$450

Meetinghouse Reserve	\$3,000
Ministry & Counsel Committee:	\$4,000
Care of Individuals	\$1,000
Friends General Conference	\$1,200
General/Misc	\$300
Spiritual/Scholarships	\$1,500
Newsletter	\$300
Nominating Committee	\$100
Outreach Committee:	\$1,010
Friends Journal Listing	\$80
Web Hosting	\$150
Phone	\$130
Zoom & Misc.3	\$650
Peace & Social Concerns Committee:	\$8,700
AFSC	\$600
Educ. Concerns for Hunger (ECHO)	\$200
Friends Comm on Nat'l Legislation (FCNL)	\$600
Friends Peace Teams	\$300
Harry Chapin Foodbank	\$3,500
Lee Interfaith for Empowerment (LIFE)	\$500
Quaker House	\$300
Quaker Voluntary Services (QVS)	\$200
Quality Life Center	\$300
Peace Day	\$100
Environmental Working Group	\$100
Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW)	\$300
Immokalee Fair Housing	\$300
Cultivate Abundance	\$100
Mission Peniel	\$300
Initiatives that may arise	\$1,000

Properties Committee	\$150
Religious Education Committee:	\$1,350
1st Day School	\$50
Books/Misc	\$500
Retreats/Speakers	\$800
SEYM	\$2,700
Technology Committee	\$500

Total	\$23,910
--------------	-----------------

Ministry & Counsel Committee:

On behalf of M&C, Friend Nancy Fennell shared the committee's draft of the 2020 report on the spiritual state of the Meeting. Friends made several suggestions for modification to the report. It was agreed that the Committee would take these recommendations and any others that come in the next few weeks and will redraft the report for presentation at the January Meeting for Business. It was noted that there was great enthusiasm for the report, so any suggested changes should not be taken as a rejection of M&C's work.

Nominating Committee Report

It was noted that the December Meeting for Business also serves as the annual corporate meeting. Friend Carolyn Stanley presented the Annual Corporate Report which must be submitted each year.

❖ **Minute 2020-MM24:** Friends approved the following Annual Corporate Report:

Annual 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

Carolyn then presented the Committee's recommendations for assignments in 2021:

- ❖ **Minute 2020-MM25:** Friends approved the following recommendations of the Nominating Committee for 2021 assignments.

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 – Presiding Clerk
- Quality Life Center - Susan Oehl
- Four Immokalee Organizations: Misión 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) **2021** Nancy Howell, Nancy Fennell **2022** Jeannette Botha; Nancy Murvine **2023** Paul Davis, Hugh Pettigrew, Deb White

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
- Technology Committee – Pat Iyer, Nico Ashe, Paul Davis, Mark Mackey, Xander Poltzer, Richard Frechette
- Nominating Committee - Carolyn Stanley, Nancy Howell

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

Peace and Social Concerns Committee Report

Responding to a request from the membership of FMMM, the Peace and Social Concerns Committee will hold a discussion of their recommended book, “White Fragility” by Robin DiAngelo, on January 17, 2021 after Meeting for Worship. The PSC Committee will continue to recommend an anti-racism reading, a video or film, and an action to Ft. Myers Friends each month.

Update on the Hybrid Worship Initiative

“Hybrid worship” combines the physical presence of Friends at the Chickee Hut in Buckingham with Friends at a distance over Zoom. Barring technical difficulties, FMMM could begin hybrid worship on Sunday, December 27th. At that time, Friday worship at Buckingham would be replaced by the Sunday hybrid. Friends who gather physically would continue to socially distance and wear masks except when speaking. The Buckingham site can accommodate up to 24 Friends sufficiently spaced. After discussion, Friends approved the following Minute:

- ❖ **Minute 2020-MM26:** Friends approve moving to a hybrid worship format beginning 12-27-2020.

Since hybrid worship would not have been possible without a strong internet signal provided by a friendly neighbor to the Frechettes, the following Minute was approved:

- ❖ **Minute 2020-MM27:** The Fort Myers Friends Meeting wish to formally thank Pastor Terry Vance of the Gunnery Road Baptist Church and his son John for providing technical assistance that will allow Friends to initiate hybrid physical and Zoom worship at the Frechettes’ Buckingham property.

Future Place of Worship After much discussion, it was decided that the previously announced Threshing Session will be held on Sunday, January 3, 2021 via hybrid format after Meeting for Worship. Information on possible building sites, rentals of land or buildings, building designs and budget considerations is still being gathered and will be made available to Friends before the session. The purpose of the session will be for Friends to air their thoughts, feelings, ideas, objections, and, not least, their spiritual leadings about a future place of worship. In order to include as many Friends as possible in this session, those who cannot participate physically or via Zoom will be asked to

write down their thoughts and send them to the Clerk to be read at the session. The facilitation of the Threshing Session will be done by the Clerk, who might set some guidelines for speaking. If everyone speaks only once until all who want to speak have spoken, we expect the session to be reasonably orderly and inclusive.

Noting that most of those present had been on Zoom for nearly four hours, the Meeting closed in silent worship at 2 PM. Today's Action Minutes will be formally approved at the next Meeting for Business.

Respectfully Submitted,
Helen Fox
Recording Clerk

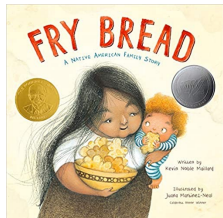
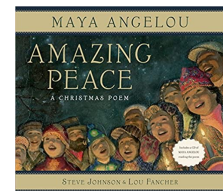
PSC December Challenge to Action

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 DECEMBER, our holiday recommendations are geared toward children and teens.

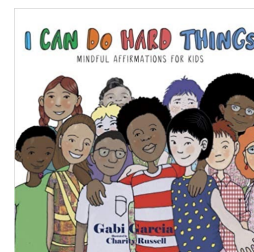
Books:

Amazing Peace: A Christmas Poem. By Maya Angelou. Ages 4-8 (and adults).



Fry Bread: A Native American Family Story. By K. Maillard and J. Martinez-Neal. Ages 2-6 . A sweet. fun book for the littlest ones.

I Can Do Hard Things: Mindful Affirmations for Kids. By G. Garcia. Ages 7-10+ For anyone who needs a boost of self confidence



Video: *Defund Police.* For teens and adults. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTOY-pOmk8NA&feature=youtu.be> This 4 minute video explains, calmly and without graphic violence, why people of color and white people may have different attitudes toward the police.

Action: This month, as last, we encourage you to do some Christmas shopping at a Black-owned business for the children and teens on your list. Check out “ETSY Black-owned shops” on Google. Or, while you’re wrapping gifts, treat yourself to some local takeout from a Black-owned food spot!

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

The Peace and Social Concerns Committee welcomes Friends’ suggestions for upcoming recommendations.

Reader’s/Writer’s Corner

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

Book Review

Whether you’re new to Quakerism or an “old-timer”, all of us have questions about vocal ministry and whether what we feel led to share is for ourselves alone, or for the community as a whole. Recently, I read a pamphlet that addresses many of the questions we might have about vocal ministry. Included are specific guidelines or queries to assist in determining whether or not we are called to share a message. I would encourage all to read Pendle Hill Pamphlet 460, *On Vocal Ministry: Nurturing the Community through Listening and Faithfulness*, by Barry Crossno and J. Brent Bill.

submitted by Deb White

Ed. note This month’s writing is a poem by our own Helen Fox. It exceeds the 400 word limit, but because of its significance to our SWFL history, indigenous background and ecosystem, I felt it was worth including. Because of its length it starts on the next page.

History of a Kind of Paradise

© Helen Fox 4/1/2020

In the year of our Lord 1513
One Juan Ponce de Leon
having made himself rich from the blood
and tears
of native people throughout the Caribbean islands
sailed north to discover new lands
make himself famous
and trade worthless trinkets for gold.

But the temper of La Florida
(as he called it)
was very different from what he had imagined.
The natives of the land
were very Harsh and Savage and Warlike and
Ferocious and Indomitable
and not at all accustomed to abandoning their liberty
so easily at the discretion of foreign men.
So everything went astray in a few short days
and Juan Ponce was struck by an arrow
and repaired to Havana to die.

Years passed
until the king of Spain
understanding there was neither gold nor precious metals to be had
allowed purveyors of the faith
to journey to La Florida to baptize the population
as it was well known
that natives who have accepted the One True God
and have burnt their idols
cut their hair
planted corn
and agreed to dress in the Spanish manner
are more docile.
But docile they would not be.
Instead, they argued, and when argument failed
they laughed, and turned their backs
and fouled the priest and his relics with excrement
and withdrew their labor from the garrison
and retreated to the thorny wilderness

And so their uninvited guests
were forced to leave the southwest coast.
For seven generations the people lived in peace
knowing, however,
from tales of the sheer size
of the Spanish treasure fleet
the sting of their steel bayonets
and most of all
the prescient voice arising
by some peculiar kind of foreign magic
from strange designs sketched on leaves of their most holy object
that their way of life was doomed.

To the north, Great Powers raged,
England, France, and Spain
vying for land claimed as their own
Yet Florida remained unsettled,
verdant, lightly trod, primeval,
streams and rivers brimming over,
creeks and grasslands flooding season after season,
mudflats, estuaries sustaining thousands,
fishermen, seafarers, traders
river warriors, painters, weavers
brides and bridegrooms, families
paddling up one watershed, down another
visiting the neighbors, paying tribute, feasting on oysters
catfish, mullet, snails and conchs, wild papaya, coco plum
singing, praying
honoring the sacred spaces,
purging their bodies with the black drink, then
running league after league in the heat
until visions of their gods
informed them of things unseen
while the land,
this bounteous land, blossomed, and offered its abundance.

To civilized men, La Florida
was water-drenched and wild
a bug-infested, snake and alligator hell on earth
until they came to understand that swampland
can be tamed
and made more docile.
For the land does not argue, scoff, or turn its back
but gives itself up, quietly, to shovels and pickaxes,
pipelines, railways, roads filled with sand and shells and bones from ancient burials
the remaining native families hunted, shot down
sold into slavery
decimated by typhus, measles, plagues from Old World cities
hounded down the coast
picked off one by one
family by family
until the few remaining chiefs and warriors and their ragtag bands
agreed
to throw themselves
upon America's protection
and to cede and relinquish all claim
to the whole territory of Florida
and be concentrated and confined to small metes and boundaries
patrolled by government agents,
watchful
that everything would remain
peaceful and orderly
while armies of steel plows ravished the land and left it
battered, scraped, and drained
its great trees wrested from the earth

its rivers fouled

its worthless soil infused with foreign magic
 its wildflowers mowed into surrender
 its forest paths choked with traffic.
 And yet, as sun-starved settlers from the north
 pile in season after season
 this patient land,
 its ancient souls still living deep in its embrace,
 this bounteous land,
 waits quietly for redemption.

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.guno.org.....Quaker United Nations Off

MEETING CALENDAR

1 st Days (Sundays)	Meeting for Worship (via Zoom) An informal conversation time begins at 10:00 am	10:30 am
Fri. 12/18	Outdoor worship in Buckingham (at the Orange River)	10:30 am
Sat. 12/19	Wedding of Priscilla DeOliveira and Dylan Goldey via Zoom	4:00 p.m.
Sunday 12/27/20	Beginning hybrid worship in Buckingham and via Zoom	10:30 am
Sun 1/3/21	Threshing Session on location of future worship	At rise of Worship
Sun 1/10/21	Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business	At rise of Worship