

FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Newsletter, Third Month, 2022

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Meeting for Worship

Friends are meeting for hybrid worship every 1st day at 10:30AM. Friends may meet physically outdoors (weather permitting) under the roof of the chickee hut on the Orange River in Buckingham.

Friends who prefer to meet via Zoom instead may do so. Each Friday an invitation to Zoom worship is sent to our entire e-mail list, identifying the hyperlink and meeting number. People may join early either physically or via Zoom at 10:00 a.m. for conversation and fellowship.

Midweek worship, in person only, is held at the chickee hut each Wednesday morning, at 10:30 a.m.

For directions to 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*

SEYM Queries & Advices

First Section:

What is the state of our meetings for worship and business?

3. Harmony Within the Meeting Community

Queries:

- Are love and unity maintained among us?
- When differences arise, do we settle them in a spirit of love and humility?
- Are we careful not to hold an idea too firmly, knowing that another may bring us closer to the truth?
- Are we patient and considerate towards those we find difficult to understand or like?
- Do we demonstrate a forgiving spirit?
- Do we have concern and respect for the reputation of others?

- *When people are hurt, do we take care to hold them up with a tender heart?*
- *Do we respect that of God in each person, though it may be expressed in unfamiliar ways or may be difficult for us to discern?*

Advices:

- *Maintain love and unity by avoiding talebearing and detraction.*
- *Settle differences promptly, in a manner free from resentment.*
- *When we have a difference with another person, speak to them in private "in the love and wisdom that is gentle and pure."*
- *Be aware that verbal violence can be as destructive as physical violence.*
- *Be careful that our language does not incorporate violence, consciously or unconsciously.*
- *Listen patiently, and seek the truth another person's expressions may contain for us.*
- *Be willing to seek and willing to receive counsel and help from one another.*
- *In our daily lives, seek to know one another in the things that are eternal and to enter with ready empathy and sensitive discretion into the joys, sorrows, and needs of each other.*
- *Be mindful that everyone is included in the life and activities of the meeting.*

Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends Minutes of 3rd Month 13, 2022

The Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends met online on the 3rd month, 13th day via Zoom conference with 14 Friends present. The Meeting opened with a period of silent centering. Clerk Richard Frechette read the following from Quakers in Britain:

Quakers oppose all war and support peaceful resolution of conflict. Quakers have previously urged all parties to keep talking and find a way of preventing violence. The prospect of Russian troops being moved into Ukraine in contravention of international law makes this prospect even more challenging.

Even at this late hour, de-escalation should still be the objective. Military conflict does not have to be inevitable.

"It is always harder to stop fighting than it is to avoid it in the first place", said Paul Parker, Recording Clerk for Quakers in Britain. "Once violence begins, it creates more grievances and perceived injustices, which makes it ever harder to step away from responding in kind. Walking away from negotiations is always a choice, and countries should take every other action possible before making that choice.

"Quaker experience shows us that in the long term, common security and a just and sustainable peace can only be built by respect for international law and human rights, international cooperation, strengthening arms control and building a culture of peace and dialogue at every level.

"We uphold and stand in solidarity with the many citizens of both Russia and Ukraine who are actively working for peace and to find non-violent solutions to conflict, even at this incredibly challenging time."

"War today is the failure of yesterday that leads to unimaginable human suffering on all sides," said Paul Parker. "Imagine what could happen if we were willing to invest as much in peace as we currently do in preparing for war."

Clerk's Report

Clerk Richard asked, "Given the reading from Quakers in Britain, what is our response to the situation in the Ukraine as individuals and as the Fort Myers Community of Friends?"

Friends responded:

- Last week at the Chickee Hut we had an amazing Meeting that was focused on that issue. I don't have an idea for what we should actually do, but we need to go beyond the exploration and acceptance of different viewpoints and say something that is consistent with our values.
- Quakers have had a tradition of stepping in during the period of healing from violence and war. *Doctors Without Borders* has a good reputation for making the most of its contributions. You can identify a specific need or make a general contribution and they thoughtfully channel it to where it is most needed.
- *Doctors Without Borders* does get high marks from Charity Navigator. However, *World Central Kitchen* is already working with refugees in Poland. Their mission is quite different, though they also have a high rating. Could we start making a list of organizations that could use our support in addition to sending a contribution from the Meeting? If we provide the names and addresses of these organizations, Friends could send their own contributions directly.
- The Peace and Social Concerns Committee would like to recommend *Doctors Without Borders* as one of the charities working in Ukraine that the Meeting might support. In addition, we know that some Quakers have been struggling with how to reconcile our Peace Testimony with the right of Ukrainians to self-defense. We might be able to find some common ground on this question. We might say, as Friend Jim Keen has mentioned, that we support the dialogue that should occur before war breaks out, and the healing and reconciliation after a war is over.
- I don't think we've had enough discussion of this issue for PSC to write a statement about what we as a Meeting believe or recommend. And I'm not sure if a discussion of the pros and cons of the peace testimony in the light of Russian aggression would be the best use of our time. But I would stand aside on the issue of whether or not to write a statement if the Meeting decides to do so.

The Clerk ascertained that the sense of the Meeting is that we will send \$1000 to *Doctors Without Borders*, earmarked for assistance for Ukraine, and that PSC will identify other humanitarian organizations that individuals might donate to. PSC will also write a draft of a statement that describes where we are as a Meeting on the question of countering Russian aggression in Ukraine. The draft would then be shared and discussed among ourselves, perhaps in a Called Meeting for Business. If we agree, a final draft could be sent out to a wider circle of Friends.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Paul Davis reminded us that we also have substantial pledges to add to the Meeting House funds.

FMMM Funds Report 02/28/2022

General Funds

Checking	6,565
Gen Fund Savings	40,406
Gen Fund Fr Fiduciary	30,756
Total General Fund	77,727

Meeting House Funds

Savings	183,504
MH Funds Fr Fiduciary	14,311
Total Meeting House Funds	197,815

FMMM Total Funds 275,542

Feb 2022 Income vs Expenses	
Feb Income	\$ 1,300
Feb Expenses	\$ 4,790*
*Engineering \$2,830, misión	
Peniel \$750, AFSC \$600, Fair Housing \$300, Fair Food \$300	

Ministry & Counsel Committee Report

In a request sent to Clerk Richard Frechette, Friend Deb White asked for membership in Ft Myers Monthly Meeting. Following a meeting of her Clearness Committee, the request now bears the approval of Ministry and Counsel who ask today that a Minute be recorded accepting Deb White's membership into the Ft Myers Monthly Meeting of the Society of Friends.

- ❖ **Minute 2022-MM-05:** *The Ft Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends accepts Deb White's membership with gratitude for her commitment and active participation in the life of the Ft Myers Meeting.*

Report of the Joint Meetinghouse Committee

Friends received the draft lease, the Covenant, and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Fort Myers Meeting and the Unitarian Universalist Church of Fort Myers. Friends raised several questions:

Q: The last paragraph of the Covenant states that the agreement shall end if either organization decides it will end. What does that mean in terms of the building we would be constructing on UU property?

A: The land lease would take precedence. It's simply a recognition that if both parties really don't like each other, as in a divorce, the disagreement would not go to the courts, but to a built-in dispute mechanism. The term of the agreement is 25 years, which allows us to have time to get to know each other and become part of one community. The lease is pretty generous for us as renters. They're not requiring a security deposit or a down payment; they're charging very reasonable rent; and because of our spiritual similarity with the UU's we know that the money we pay them supports our values. There are still some questions, but we're moving forward in good faith. Friends should remember that FtMMM has already approved and signed the Covenant and the Memorandum of Understanding.

Q: Please explain the section in Attachment 1 that says the rental of the yurt will provide a significant source of income to the UU's.

A: The yurt will be our building and for the most part, we can use it at the times we need it. But we can't have a beautiful building sitting empty, so the UU's would rent it out at other times. We would review the fairness of this arrangement after several years. We will need to work out the details of cleaning, insurance, and so on, but our intent is that the building will be rented to other groups and the UU's will benefit from that. We can rent it too, if we want to have some functions outside our usual Meeting times.

Q: Has the issue with the Boy Scouts been resolved?

A: We've made it clear that we would have amenities the Scouts could use: shelter from rain, bathrooms. They will bring this back to their membership.

Q: We are expected to pay for insurance. Do we have an idea of what that might cost?

A: Not yet. We will also be paying for utilities, especially electric. The cost will be significant, but not prohibitive.

Q: The site description says the land we are renting is 1/3 of an acre. That's not very large. Are we assured of enough parking?

A: Yes. We'd create a small number of handicapped spots close to our building, plus we would have the use of the large parking area a short walk away.

Q: We would also be using the UUs' early childhood education facilities. Is that mentioned in the lease?

A: We have use of their playground for free, and 20% off what they would charge others for the childcare room. There are also many spaces outside where supervised children could potentially play and explore.

❖ **Minute 2022-MM-06:** *Friends approve the draft lease between FtMMM and the UUCFM.*

Friends are comfortable giving the Joint Meetinghouse Committee the authority to decide what storage options are the most logical for our books and other property after our lease with the Calusa Nature Center ends.

Friend Jim Koopman offered to attend meetings with the UUs to answer their questions about our vision of the relationship, the design of the yurt, and so on. Clerk Richard will offer that to UU's Bill Petrarca.

Report of Religious Education Committee

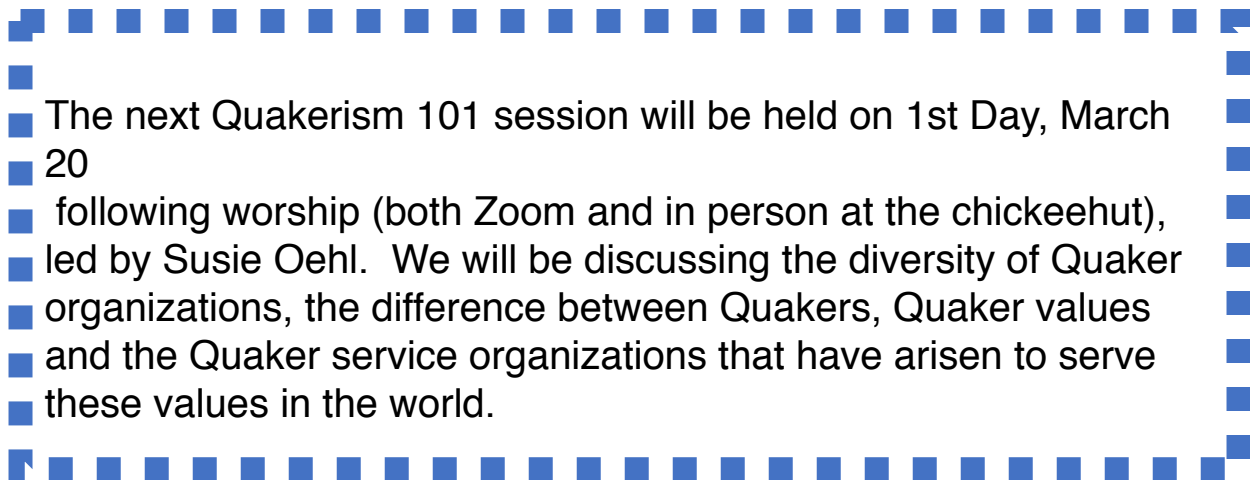
The next session of Quakerism 101 will be held next week after worship.

Other business:

- Clerk Richard will explore a call forwarding set-up for the Meeting's cell phone.
- Friend Nancy Murvine, Clerk of Ministry and Counsel, will discuss with Clerk Richard what contingencies need to be in place during his anticipated month-long recovery from his surgery on March 28. These recommendations will then be taken to M&C. Friend Pat Iyer has volunteered to set up hybrid worship on the first Sunday in April.

We closed in silent worship at 2:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Helen Fox, Recording Clerk



The next Quakerism 101 session will be held on 1st Day, March 20 following worship (both Zoom and in person at the chickeehut), led by Susie Oehl. We will be discussing the diversity of Quaker organizations, the difference between Quakers, Quaker values and the Quaker service organizations that have arisen to serve these values in the world.

Southeastern Yearly Meeting

Quakers in Florida, southeast Georgia, & coastal South Carolina

seymquakers.org

[find us on Facebook](#)



SEYM Gathering & Annual Sessions

April 13 – 17, 2022

Warren Willis United Methodist Camp & Conference Center, Fruitland Park, Florida
in-person & online

Registration opens today!

Join Friends from all over our SEYM region for workshops, the Walton Retreats & Lecture, worship sharing, intergenerational activities, a great Youth Program, our annual business sessions, and just relaxing in the natural setting on Lake Griffin.

"The Gathering is an experience of our wider Quaker community that deeply renews my spirit...learning & working together on shared interests & concerns, and sharing laughter, fun & friendship."

Some sessions, including business meetings, will be hybrid --- offered both in-person and on Zoom. The schedule for online offerings is being planned; updates will be posted on the Gathering page.

Several COVID precautions will be in place so we can all feel safe.

For all the details and registration, [visit the Gathering page](#)>

Our theme this year is
Welcome as you are
the invitation to inclusive, multi-generational community

the J. Barnard Walton Lecture & Retreats

Wonder & Welcome:

Holding Our Family of Friends in the Light

will be presented by

Windy Cooler & Melinda Wenner Bradley

All of us belong to families: circles of kinship, of friendship, and of spiritual community. What stories do we carry about our families, our meetings, and our faith that invite or discourage wonder and welcome? How have our families modeled hospitality and boundaries, and when have we needed to find more support? How do our meetings nurture hospitality and boundaries and can we discern when to change?



Windy Cooler is an embraced public Friend whose ministry is held under the care of Sandy Spring Monthly Meeting, Baltimore Yearly. She is Pendle Hill's 2020 Cadbury Scholar and a frequent guest of monthly and yearly meetings in the US where she has researched, lectured and given workshops on the connection between robust pastoral care responses, Quaker family life, and social justice in peer to peer ministry.

A current doctoral candidate at Lancaster Theological Seminary, her work incorporates ethnography and the Quaker tradition of discernment processes to help communities move forward in the Light.



Melinda Wenner Bradley (she/her) is an advocate for families in Quaker spaces. Her ministry weaves together her interests in children's spiritual lives, all-ages program development, and support for parents and teachers in Quaker meetings and schools. She is a member of West Chester Meeting, and currently serves as Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's Youth Religious Life Coordinator.

Melinda is a co-founder of the Quaker Religious Education Collaborative and the Director of Communications and Training for Faith & Play Stories. She co-authored and edited *Faith & Play: Quaker Stories for Friends Trained in the Godly Play Method*.



Opportunities to Worship with Focus on Ukraine



1. Join **Friends House in Moscow** for worship at noon (Eastern Time).

[Zoom link](#)>

Meeting ID: 416 500 5614 Passcode: 182805

2. Join **Quakers of Kyiv Ukraine** for worship at 1:00PM (Eastern Time)

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82984978940...>

Meeting ID: 829 8497 8940; Passcode: 586154

From Friends General Conference:

In terms of material aid, below are a few ways to contribute:

The International Rescue Committee is setting up facilities in Poland to care for Ukrainian refugees. Given that the IRC is present in conflict zones across the world, your emergency contribution will also help refugees in places like Afghanistan, Syria and Yemen.

UNICEF USA and UNICEF Canada are providing aid to children harmed by the Russian invasion. UNICEF has had a presence in eastern Ukraine for some time and is now responding to the expanded crisis.

The UNHCR Refugee Agency USA and UNHCR Canada are also stepping up efforts to help Ukrainian refugees.

Doctors without Borders are dispatching medical teams to Poland, Moldova, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia and are also ready to respond in Russia and Belarus.

We need a new newsletter logo!

For a number of years the newsletter banner has included a lovely sketch of the Iona House. As we are no longer worshipping there, it's probably time to come up with a more current logo. Here are a few that are more indicative our Quaker roots and peacemaking testimony. Maybe the artists in our Meeting can come up with something. If any of you have other ideas, please share with me.

Deb White, newsletter editor,
debwhitenfl@gmail.com



*Member **Ann Suich** continues to read our Newsletter each month and that she loves so many Members of our meeting. She plans to come back (from Lakeland Fl) to visit us this spring or summer, and I invited her to stay in my guest room, and reconnect with her old Friends when she can.*

Submitted by Friend Nancy Howell

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

Contributions to the Meeting can be made payable to Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, and can be sent to:

Paul Davis, Treasurer
 5530 Harborage Drive
 Fort Myers, FL. 33908

MEETING CALENDAR

Sun. 3/20/22	Religious Education presents: Quakerism 101	Upon rise of worship.
1 st Days (Sundays)	Meeting for Worship in a hybrid format: in person at Buckingham chickeehut or via Zoom An informal conversation time begins at 10:00 am	10:30 am
Each Wednesday	Meeting for Worship at Buckingham chickeehut. This is in-person only.	10:30 a.m.
Sun. 4/10/22	Meeting for worship with attention to Business	12:45 p.m.



**Friends Meeting of Fort Myers
Religious Society of Friends
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Address Correction Requested**