

2798 Forbes Street  
Jacksonville, FL 32205  
June 4, 2019



Dear Clara,

Thanks so much for your kind May 26<sup>th</sup> letter.

I'm sorry it didn't occur to me in advance of WIBM to ask for time on the W&M agenda then, instead of waiting for Gathering. That would obviously have been more helpful all around. My last experience clerking was with Columbia (SC) Friends Meeting (SAYMA) in the early 1990s. That was a large meeting with plenty of weighty Friends and their families, and the sort of organizational challenges Jacksonville faces never arose.

When I wrote you on March 25<sup>th</sup> following SEYM-WIBM, I was full of optimism over the arrival of more new seekers. That stream of visitors continues, and I want to minister to them. Nonetheless, few of these folks are ready to be regular attenders, and none are ready to take up responsibility for a monthly meeting

I agree with you that the June 8<sup>th</sup> Executive Committee discussion will be helpful on all sides. Sue Watson and I did our best to game-plan what would need to happen should we not find local Friends to carry on the work of JMM. The EC exploration of this concern will at least help us all to delve deeper into the practical aspects of dealing with such a challenge.

Thanks, too, for envisioning ways for the W&M Committee to move forward. I know that many SEYM meetings (and others beyond our YM) are facing similar challenges. I will do what I can to contribute to the larger process.

Meanwhile, I am focusing locally on person-by-person contacts with both long-time Jacksonville Friends and newcomers. There is a changing group of local people who want to try out or have already chosen to be part of Quaker meetings for worship. For as long as we have our rental space with Florida Christian Center, I will continue to open the doors for worship each Sunday, as well as to keep the website [www.jacksonvillefriends.org](http://www.jacksonvillefriends.org) and other communication channels open.

I'm also encouraging Jacksonville folks to visit St. Augustine Worship Group. In my heart I'm not worried about the continued workings of the Spirit in NE Florida. Clearly people here want to experiment with the Quaker way. At least one JMM "old-timer" who lives in Neptune Beach says she may start traveling to St. A. for Wednesday night worship. I plan to "kidnap" my hubby Jim to take him there as well, and we may bring along the 20-something married couple, David and Emily, who have been attending JMM for the past ½ year.

For me the Quaker way of faith and practice is a spiritual discipline that relies on community yet can continue without formal organization. Whatever happens in Jacksonville, I know the Spirit will sustain those of us who use this particular way of staying open to its leadings.

Blessings,  
Mike