

## **Jacksonville Monthly Meeting**

### **Meeting for Worship for with a Concern for Business: Minutes**

January 13, 2013

Elaine Martin, Clerk

**Attendees:** Elaine Martin, Linda Wilson, Al Geiger, Wendy Clarissa Geiger, Sue Watson, Sue Williams, Bettie Freel, Connie Geunther and daughters Kacey, Erika and Addie, Mike Shell.

#### **1. Worship**

**2. Reading:** “Looking for a Godly Outcome,” by David Watt, *Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting Newsletter*, November, 2005 ([Attachment 1](#))

**3. Minutes of December 9, 2012** – Approved.

**4. Treasurer's Report** – Sue Watson ([Attachment 2](#))

- Current balance is \$1,880.97.
- Vystar requires nonprofits to have Florida’s Division of Corporations (<http://www.sunbiz.org/>) documents at the cost of \$80/year. Sue will look elsewhere for a credit union account.

#### **5. Membership**

- SEYM 2013 Directory: Membership Committee will submit updates to SEYM by January 31<sup>st</sup>.
- Michael Austin Shell: The Clerk read her [12/10/2012 letter](#) to Sallie Prugh, Clerk of Columbia (SC) MM, accepting this transfer of membership.
- Jo McIntire: The Clerk read Friend Jo’s [1/7/2013 email](#) about laying down membership.
  - Minuted (2013.1) – With regrets, Friends accepted Jo McIntire’s request to lay down membership in Jacksonville MM.
- Celebration Potluck for New Members: Friends agreed to a celebration potluck at Elaine’s home, following meeting for worship, on 2/3/2013.

#### **6. Website**

- Shannon Palmer is laying down the Meeting website <http://www.jacksonvillefriends.org/>, and Kenneth Hall has agreed to take on the responsibility.
- Minuted (2013.2): Meeting expressed its appreciation to Shannon Palmer for her work on the website and approved Kenneth Hall as the new website manager.

#### **6. Spiritual State of the Meeting Statement**

- Six Friends met for worship sharing on 1/6/2013 to consider the 2012 Spiritual State of the Meeting for a report to SEYM.
- The Recording Clerk will submit the report to SEYM after Winter Interim Business Meeting.

**7. Meeting Location** – Friends revisited pro and con considerations regarding a proposed move of worship location to the home of Brooke Stephens.

- Evergreen Cemetery management has said that they cannot allow us the use of their chapel, but we can return to using the staff lounge if a move elsewhere is unsatisfactory.
- Pluses: Weekly space for First Day School, better acoustics, cleaner and more physically comfortable and welcoming.

- A Friend noted that FDS is an issue separate from location, and that the lack of FDS would be unwelcoming toward children and un-Quakerly regardless of location.
- Minuses: Greater travel distance for Friends on the coast, preference of some Friends for a simpler setting without Christian images, concern that visitors might be wary of coming to a private home.
- Friends who voiced these concerns said that they would not stand in the way of a decision and pointed out that moving does not imply a permanent choice of location.
- Minuted (2013.3): Meeting agreed to move the location for weekly meeting for worship to the home of Brooke Stephens on a trial basis, beginning on February 10, 2013. We will continue to evaluate this decision.

Meeting closed with silence.

Submitted by  
Mike Shell  
Recording Clerk  
1/27/2013

## Looking for a Godly Outcome

By David Watt

When Friends talk about our meetings for business, we sometimes talk about "discerning the will of God."

Friends talk that way, in part, because we wish to remind ourselves that Friendly organizations ought to make decisions on different grounds and in different ways than do other sorts of organizations. We ought not, we believe, to make our decisions by standards dictated by the marketplace or by national opinion. And we ought not, we think, to make our decisions on the basis of avoiding doing anything that might make us uncomfortable: good decisions often produce a certain amount of discomfort.

Talking about the will of God is a good way to remind ourselves how peculiar our discernment processes ought to be. For that reason, references to God's will often have a highly salutary effect on Quaker meetings.

However, there might also be something to be said for using an alternative phrase. The one I have in mind is "looking for a Godly outcome." When we speak that way, we are less tempted to think that there is only one possible outcome of which God would approve. (God might want us to give \$1,500 next year to help provide clean drinking water to people in Sub-Saharan Africa. On the other hand, she might want us to give \$1,800 for such a project. It is by no means obvious that there is a single will of God on this issue.) When Friends speak of looking for a Godly outcome we also give ourselves lots of room to see differences between Friends as a positive good rather than an obstacle that needs to be overcome. (The differences between Friend X and Friend Y concerning a particular matter do not have to be seen as the result of one Friend having come closer to discerning the will of God than the other one has. Both friends might be attracted to an outcome that would be genuinely Godly).

Speaking of finding a Godly outcome is helpful in another way, as well. Doing so reminds us of an important bit of Quaker theology. For Quakers, God can never be simply something outside of us and above us. Quakers believe that God is, in a real sense, a part of us. Thus it might not be appropriate for Quakers to assume that God has already made up her mind what the outcome of any given

meeting for business ought to be before that meeting has taken place, or for them to assume that the job of a meeting for business is to try to come up with the same answer that God has already come up with. That makes it sound a little like Quakers are playing a parlor game in which we are trying to read God's mind.

It might be helpful for us to entertain the possibility that meetings for business can be instruments that God uses to discover for herself what a Godly outcome might be. According to this way of looking at things, God could be seen pictured as sitting with us in our meeting for business. She has willingly taken on our limitations as well as our gifts. She is there with us: perhaps a little tired, but still knitting patiently and very much willing to learn something new.

Sometimes when she sees how arrogant and brittle and small-minded we can be, she blinks back a tear. Other times- for instance when she sees us being teachable and large-hearted- she beams with joy. But always she is with us, hoping that she can work with us to make something useful and beautiful.

Perhaps that way of putting the matter is too extreme. God is certainly too large and too other to be captured by the homely metaphor I have adopted here. But you get the drift. It is possible that meetings for business are not really about discovering the one most excellent and predetermined course of action that God has already chosen for us. Instead they could be about learning to ask God to struggle for us and with us. Whether or not any given meeting for business is successful is determined at least as much by how open we have been to being used by God as by how wise the decision we reached turns out to have been.

Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting Newsletter  
November, 2005

05.11.01

## Treasurer's Report

Jacksonville Friends Meeting – 1/13/2013						
Date	Description	Contributions		Payment		Balance
1/1/2012	Balance brought forward					\$1,908.17
1/8/2012	SEYM-annual assessment			\$1,200.00		\$708.17
2/15/2012		\$78.00				\$786.17
2/27/2012	Insurance for new location			\$154.00		\$632.17
3/15/2012	SEYM Attendance support			\$103.66		\$528.51
4/13/2012		\$407.00				\$935.51
5/4/21012	Friends Journal-listing			\$44.00		\$891.51
6/8/2012		\$610.00				\$1,501.51
7/25/2012		\$425.00				\$1,926.51
8/1/2012	SEYM			\$600.00		\$1,326.51
8/1/2012		\$276.00				\$1,602.51
9/20/2012		\$200.00				\$1,802.51
10/16/2012		\$352.00				\$2,154.51
10/19/2012	FCPJ			\$100.00		\$2,054.51
10/21/2012	Friends Journal-subscription			\$150.00		\$1,904.51
11/9/2012		\$300.00				\$2,204.51
11/26/2012	Interfaith Council of Jacksonville			\$100.00		\$2,104.51
11/26/2012	Quaker Life			\$16.50		\$2,088.01
11/29/2012		\$207.51				\$2,295.52
12/9/2012	Gift to cemetary ee's			\$92.24		\$2,203.28
12/31/2012		\$52.69				\$2,255.97
YTD		\$2,908.20		\$2,560.40		
1/11/2013	SEYM			\$600.00		\$1,655.97
Pending deposit		\$225.00				\$1,880.97



## Jacksonville Friends Meeting

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Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)  
759 Candlebark Drive  
Jacksonville, FL 32225

December 10, 2012

Dear Sallie Prugh,

It is with great joy that Jacksonville Monthly Meeting accepts the transfer of Michael Austin Shell's membership from Columbia Monthly Meeting to Jacksonville Monthly Meeting.

We are both fortunate and blessed to have Michael in our midst. His deep insights, careful deliberation, kind and loving nature and infinite patience, tolerance and acceptance of all of us in the Jacksonville Meeting is truly appreciated and valued.

We are grateful to Columbia Friends Meeting, Michael's first Quaker home, for providing the Quaker foundation, love and nurture instrumental in shaping Michael's love for and devotion to Quakerism. We, in Jacksonville, know that Columbia Friends Meeting is very near and dear to Michael's heart.

In Friendship and with blessings,

*Elaine Martin*  
Elaine Martin, Clerk  
Jacksonville Monthly Meeting

**XFINITY Connect**

emartin227@comcast.net

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## Membership

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**From :** McIntire Jo <jomcintire@bellsouth.net>

Mon, Jan 07, 2013 05:00 PM

**Subject :** Membership

**To :** Geiger Wendy <julalf@juno.com>, emartin227@comcast.net

Dear Friends,  
Please lay down my membership with Jax MM.  
Thanks.

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Jo McIntire  
7265 A1A South, D1  
Saint Augustine, FL 32080  
Phone: (904) 461 3175  
[jomcintire@bellsouth.net](mailto:jomcintire@bellsouth.net)