

**Jacksonville Monthly Meeting**  
**Meeting for Worship for Business**  
**June 12, 2016**

**Minutes**

**Attendees:** Elaine Martin, Sue Watson, Bonnie Hall, Ken Hall, Mike Shell

**Query:** "The need for being rather than doing, in the knowledge that action will take care of itself if an energy of goodness, justice, and peace is encouraged to flow. This means not so much being good—as allowing good to be in you."

– Damaris Parker-Rhodes, 1985

[https://openlibrary.org/authors/OL1714840A/Damaris\\_Parker-Rhodes](https://openlibrary.org/authors/OL1714840A/Damaris_Parker-Rhodes)

Do I remember that it is the spirit of my service that makes love visible?

**Note:** There will be no meeting for business during July and August. The next meeting for business will be September 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Minutes of May 8, 2016** – Approved.

**Outreach/Inreach Worship Sharing**

- Friends held worship sharing on the following queries:
  - Who are we as a Meeting?
  - Where are we now as a Meeting?
  - How do we see ourselves moving forward as a Meeting?
- Friends agreed that the Recording Clerk should write a summary of the worship sharing for everyone to consider over the summer (see [Attachment 1](#)).
- The Recording Clerk invites Friends to revisit the [2015 Spiritual State of the Meeting Report](#) (PDF) in the context of this worship sharing (Word version in [Appendix 2](#))

**Outreach/Inreach Activities**

- *Second hour activity* – Bonnie's Rex Amber/Faith & Practice study series will resume in September.
- *End-of-summer potluck* – Friends agreed to host a potluck at the amenities center at the Heritage Landing Development in St. Augustine, World Golf Village
  - Bonnie will arrange for 9/18/16, with 9/25/16 as a backup date
  - Elaine will invite St. Augustine Worship Group and other St. Augustine Friends, including Penny Farms Friends
  - Once details are set, Mike will publish them on the Meeting website.
- *Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP)*
  - A basic training is in planning for the fall
  - We may also do a mini-AVP training (1 day instead of 1 week) for the Meeting and the Universalist Unitarians.
- *Book Events* – Mike will do research on potential authors to do local presentations.
- *Quakerism 101/Florida Christian Center (FCC) outreach*
  - Willie proposed that Meeting host a Quakerism 101 class and invite FCC residents
  - Bonnie & Mike proposed that Friends volunteer and visit with residents
  - Elaine will get on the FCC newsletter mailing list and share news with Friends.

**International Day of Peace, September 21** – Elaine stood aside as clerk to present idea for organizing an event for the International Day of Peace.

- As a result of the work of the Campaign Nonviolence organization, 350 cities around the world held events on Peace Day, September 21st in 2015. Events included vigils, festivals, rallies, prayer services, etc.
- Ideas for the 2016 event include asking both Veterans for Peace and Pax Christi to participate, as well as other interested organizations. Both national organizations of Veterans for Peace and Pax Christi have endorsed Campaign Nonviolence.
- Elaine mentioned the idea to Francis Key, a peace and environmental activist, musician, singer, songwriter and friend. Francis response: "I like that idea. I could get 40 people together to sing."
- Meeting gave Elaine the go ahead to start organizing the event and requested that she provide updates to Meeting as plans progress.

### **Other Topics**

- Bonnie presented the idea of protocols, stating that she felt that having protocols or parameters would benefit meeting. Protocols would help in time of conflict, reduce individualism, and help promote community.
- *Newsletter*
  - Friends discussed the cost of the newsletter and decided to wait until we see a report prior to issuing any payment.
  - Friends request that the newsletter editor submit receipts for the costs of the newsletter for payment.
  - Friends also expressed an interest in having email version of newsletter to reach a larger number of people.
- *Website* – Deferred until next meeting for business.

### **Treasurer's Report**

- Sue presented the Treasurer's report. There were no questions.
- Friends discussed the proposed FY 2016-17 Budget.
  - Minuted – Friends approved the [FY 2016-17 Budget](#) as written.

Submitted by  
Mike Shell, Recording Clerk  
6/26/2016

## FY 2016-17 Budget

Budget - 2016-2017		
<b>Income</b>		
	2011	\$2,188
	2012	\$2,908
	2013	\$3,422
	2014	\$4,609
	2015	\$3,719
	2016	\$3,800
		<i>approximate</i>
<b>Expenses</b>		
	SEYM	\$2,000
	Meeting space rent	\$600
	Insurance	\$350
	Friends Journal Listing	\$70
	SEYM-Attendance Support	\$150
	Friends Journal Subscription	\$150
	Quaker Life Listing	\$20
	Activities	\$100
	Meeting Literature	\$100
	Property Fund	\$100
	Community Donations	\$300
	Newsletter	\$100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,040</b>

**Jacksonville Friends Meeting**  
**Outreach/Inreach Worship Sharing**  
**June 12, 2016**

Queries:

- Who are we as a Meeting?
- Where are we now as a Meeting?
- How do we see ourselves moving forward as a Meeting?

Summary of shared comments:

- For Jacksonville Meeting to grown would require intention, commitment, awareness, unity and work. This is a challenge facing many Quaker meetings at present. Part of this is the explore how we unify in the midst of our difference approaches
- Meeting needs to grow to witness to the peace testimony in our community. We are indeed networking with other organizations and sponsoring joint activities. However, if Meeting doesn't grow, we will lose this impact and the "island of refuge and empowerment" Meeting now provides. Through hosting events, offering Quakerism 101 and Faith and Practice study, we can learn together, be interactive and raise people's spirituality. People need to see Friends in action first, before they want to join us.
- Liberal Friends sometimes focus too much on independence, as if saying, "No one's going to tell me what to do." Yet if Friends disregard the importance of the Meeting community, they risk losing compassion and unity. Though we don't want to leave anyone behind, there are parameters for being a healthy Meeting. These include accepting, caring for, and offering safety to each other, truly hearing and responding to the concerns of others, and being willing to accept eldering if our individual voices hold others back. We need to come together as people who really know each other.
- Meeting needs also to pay attention to "inreach," going deeper into the group dynamics of silent worship and of doing business "after the manner of Friends." This effort is a counterbalance to outreach, not a contradiction to it. The heart of being a Meeting is the challenge of being a caring family even with those we disagree with or dislike.
- Meeting has grown and shrunk over the years. Our new location gives us an opportunity to be settled and to get to work. What do we need to do to get people in the door, especially people with children? How to we keep them with us? We can either define who we are and live that, or we can appeal to the lowest common denominator.

**Jacksonville Friends**  
**Spiritual State of the Meeting – 2015 Statement**  
**2/7/2016**

**Attendees:** Bonnie Hall, Ken Hall, Mike Shell, Wendy Clarissa Geiger, Al Geiger, Elaine Martin, Thandekile Mvufsi

**Worship Sharing**

Out of a very settled silence, Friends were each felt led to speak primarily to how they interact individually with Meeting. Though we have not yet reflected on what these testimonies mean for us as a community, what was shared informs us deeply about what is presently at work among us.

Here are some summary quotations and paraphrases.

- "I bring my sorrows and my city's sorrows and the world's sorrows into meeting for worship and wait to see what I'm led to work on."
- I have felt "spiritually absent from Meeting" this year as I have dealt with my family's challenges. I also feel that the activist work I am doing is mostly outside of Meeting, and I sometimes feel I have not been fully present or fulfilling my role within Meeting.
- Spoken on behalf of the previous Friend: "Go forth." You *are* representing Meeting in those outside works.
- I have been "wrestling with God" and haven't "felt connection with Meeting." It is extremely difficult for us to deal with our geographical distances and with the lack of interaction between First Day gatherings. We really need to reach out to each other across these "disconnects."
- Our practice is so hard. We start "backwards" as Friends, not with an idea but with experience *in* the world. We often don't realize why we are doing what we are doing. We need to trust the truth, to trust connecting with each other to deal with the truth.
- I care so much for Meeting and can feel hurt so much.
- I hit bottom emotionally during the summer and fall, and I came to Meeting wanting rescue and not finding it. However, coming out of that depth, I am becoming stronger by *being* rather than *doing*.
- It is clearer to me now that the connections in Meeting are much stronger for me when I "come to Meeting for expectant worship but without bringing expectations with me."
- There are hundreds of varieties of churches in Jacksonville. For me, the value of Quakerism is in being able to get along with a great many cultural differences, philosophies ,etc., without being wishy-washy.
- Meeting has gained in the last year, though I'm not able to say exactly how.
- I was somewhat amused at seeing 18 queries on Spiritual State of the Meeting. In the old days we had a retired professor from the University of New Mexico who spoke out of the

silence each First Day to give us a history lesson. It was "interesting" but not "spiritual." Other people spoke freely too, regardless of how "spiritual" what they said was.

- I never felt such speech was a waste of time, though I do see a reason for a Spiritual State of the Meeting conversation.
- We need to give ourselves more formal instruction in how to prepare for meeting for worship, so that meeting for worship prepares us, in turn, for the rest of the week's life. Our individual presences in the larger community represent Meeting. We need to claim the responsibilities of being Quakers.
- We are all one people. We have strengths and weaknesses. Because we are a mix of theists, non-theists, etc., we need to be careful how we listen to each other. All of us are from the light. It is easy because of the past for us to put up barriers. Instead, we need to listen past those barriers and become a community of love.

### Review of the year

As our 2014 Statement acknowledged, we "did not see a clear path forward" and needed to accept the challenges of "being still and working as a meeting to create that place where God can work through us to find peace for all."

2015 was not a year for conflict, yet it was full of changes, uncertainties and disruptions. We welcomed several Friends who contributed much to Meeting life but then went their separate ways after having shared our "Quaker waystation" for an extended period. We did our best to care for the members of a family which was breaking apart. We made several interrupted efforts to start adult study of Quaker Faith and Practice, and we have determined to revisit this study during potlucks this year with the help of Rex Ambler's *The Quaker Way: A Rediscovery* (<https://www.quakerbooks.org/book/quaker-way> (1998)).

Meanwhile, Meeting's engagement in the larger community did become increasingly fruitful. Our hosting of March 25<sup>th</sup> and June 25<sup>th</sup> Moral Injury presentations by Lynn and Steve Newsom, Directors of Quaker House, has led to productive networks with other local groups, including local mental health activists and the Jacksonville chapter of Veterans for Peace (<http://www.veteransforpeace.org/>). We also continued our connection with ICARE, especially its Youth Crime Committee (<http://icarejax.org/youth-crime/>), and with Florida Coalition for Peace & Justice and Wage Peace.

Finally we began a local Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) (<http://avpusa.org/>) with a September training facilitated by Tampa Bay AVP, with Friends Cece Yocum and Beverly Ward, of the Tampa Meeting, and Ned and Christina Bellamy. This has led to Jacksonville Friends joining with Ft. Myers, Miami, St. Petersburg, Tampa, and Tallahassee Meetings to sponsor the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) within Southeastern Yearly Meeting.

We begin 2016 with the reminder that this will be the final year of our current clerk's second 3-year term. We need to plan ahead for a change of clerk (and perhaps other officers), and we need to consider setting a three-year term for clerk. We also hope to expand our committee work to include Hospitality and Inreach/ Outreach. We continue to learn how to be whole despite the challenges of being a very small meeting.

Mike Shell  
Recording Clerk  
2/21/2016