

Adult First Day Program Notes – 21 November 2021

Tampa Friends continued reading *Walking in the World as a Friend* by Nadine Hoover, focusing on Chapter 5 - "Experiment with the Living Spirit." We were reminded of George Fox's famous opening that "we have a direct relationship with the Living Spirit" and that he knew this "experimentally." Hoover states that our central Quaker testimony, from which all others flow, is "to yield to the Spirit to shape and guide our lives" so that we are then able to "reflect our inward experience in outward form." To do this, we make use of discernment, which Hoover defines as "our human ability to comprehend the inner nature and relationships of things, especially when obscure, that leads us to keen insight and judgment." She then lists several tests of discernment, including a sense of the Spirit, integrity, and experience of the fruits of the Spirit. As we feel Spirit working within us, we may have difficulty distinguishing between inspiration and woundedness. "The ability to stop, hence silence in Monthly Meeting and the ability to accept external feedback, hence testimony in Monthly Meeting" are crucial tools Hoover explains to aid us in this. Remembering John Woolman's words, we are also reminded of the importance of love being present throughout: "universal love becomes the business of our lives" and "Love was the first motion, and then a concern arose..."

Please join us each First Day from 9 to 9:45 am, online or at the meeting house. We will start Chapter 7, "Essential Quaker Structures." There is an accompanying video at the Quaker Religious Education Collaborative (<https://quakerrecollaborative.org/resource/walking-in-the-world-as-a-friend>).