

Adult First Day Program Notes – 23 January 2022

This week Tampa Friends read the article *Worship as an Act of Love: The experiment of online worship* by Jorge Arauz for our Adult First Day Program.

Friends shared that while they appreciated being able to worship together virtually, it was not without its challenges. Arauz's message helped remind Friends that "The Spirit that brings us forth is Love. It is in Love that we communicate; it is in Love that we stand and relate; it is in Love that we see each other and love one another. So let us remember that, even as we strive to provide the best accommodations and best arrangements for our meetings for worship, it is love that allows for their good use, and it is love also that can render them superfluous or irrelevant."

Friends shared that they especially liked Arauz's example of John Woolman visiting the Native American community of Wyalusing, and though he did not speak their language, because Woolman trusted "in the fluency of Spirit, which allows for the speaking and the hearing that seep through or rise above every wall," their chief, Papunehang, was reported to have said "I love to feel where words come from." Arauz does not diminish the challenges of coming together as a community but reminds us that these challenges occur whether we are in person or online. He also encourages us to recognize the blessings in our being together, however that happens and that because "Worship regenerates... If it becomes tiresome or frustrating, we might need to look into our inward dispositions – {asking ourselves} how much love do I bring into our meeting?" He then used another Woolman quote to bring Friends back to his original message of Love: "Love is the first motion." Therefore, Arauz states, we need to "make that first motion of love the motion that moves us... {so that we} enter into the joy and the peace that unity thus found provides."