

Friends World News

The Bulletin of the Friends World Committee for Consultation
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)



WORLD PLENARY MEETING

fwcc.world

FWCC

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About the Friends World Committee for Consultation

The purpose of the Friends World Committee for Consultation is to encourage fellowship among all the branches of the Religious Society of Friends. The Quaker community circles the globe, spanning a rich diversity of regional cultures, beliefs and styles of worship. FWCC programs unite Friends around the world through Spirit-led fellowship.

Our association with the Quaker United Nations Offices offers a means to monitor and present Quaker contributions to world affairs. Our consultation extends to those of other faiths through work with the World Council of Churches.

Our Mission

Answering God's call to universal love, FWCC brings Friends of varying traditions and cultural experiences together in worship, communications, and consultation, to express our common heritage and our Quaker message to the world. (Approved 2006)

History

In 1937, after years of concerned work to reconnect a fragmented Quaker world, the Second World Conference of Friends created the FWCC "to act in a consultative capacity to promote better understanding among Friends the world over." Today, Friends from yearly meetings and groups in 75 nations continue this work. Around the world there are four cooperating, autonomous FWCC Sections serving Africa, the Americas, Asia and the West Pacific, and Europe and the Middle East. FWCC's World Office is in London. Since 1948, FWCC has had "consultative" status with the United Nations and is responsible for the two Quaker UN Offices in Geneva and New York.

FWCC World Office

The world office is based at Friends House in London, England. It serves four main roles:

- Organise world gatherings, including triennial meetings and consultations of Quakers world-wide.
- Support and maintain contact with the work of the four FWCC sections and the Quaker United Nations Offices.
- Coordinate the International Membership programme, which joins isolated Friends and worship groups to the wider Quaker community.
- Promote an understanding of the world-wide character of the Society of Friends, through conferences, staff travel, correspondence and publications, and through ecumenical and interfaith work on behalf of Friends.

Further information about FWCC and its activities can be obtained from the World Office or the Section Offices, whose addresses are on the back cover of Friends World News. Contributions to the work of FWCC are always welcome and can be sent to any of the offices.

Friends World News

Friends World News, the bulletin of FWCC, is published twice yearly. If you wish to receive a personal copy, please contact the World Office (or the Section of the Americas if you live in North America). There is no set subscription fee, but a donation would be welcome. Please send to the World Office anything you would like considered for publication in Friends World News – articles, letters, news, photographs and other illustrations, about the activities and religious witness of Friends. All materials received will be acknowledged although the editor cannot make any commitment to publish. Please say if you wish photographs or other materials to be returned.

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Thank you for your donations to
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- Together we are building a strong and vital Religious Society of Friends.
- Together we are strengthening the worldwide network of Friends.
- Together we are bringing our Quaker message to the world.

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For more about FWCC please visit
our website:

fwcc.world

An Experience to Remember

When Friends gather, it is pretty much always an experience to remember. We laugh, we cry, we talk into the night, we walk in the early morning, we engage fully. Quakerism is a full body, mind, and spirit experience! As we engage in a culture of curiosity and searching, of heart and mind, we can be equally loving and intense, accepting and judgemental, kind and even hurtful. We are human. Hooray! it simply means we get to practice forgiveness over and over, reminding ourselves that it is all done in love. I love this element of Quakerism, giving us depth and breadth in relationships, knowing that this life asks a lot of us.

And God asks nothing less than giving our whole selves to the pursuit of a deeply spirit-filled life. Jesus said, the first commandment is, 'You shall love your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength' (Mark 12:28). That is pretty much everything. In the next breath, Jesus says the second commandment is this: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' It is not enough to love God in isolation. This remarkable choice to love God happens in community, in the fullness of learning to live together and to love together.

Coming together as a world family of Friends is very magical. There is so much to learn about cultures, Quaker practices, ways of being in the world, and commitments to making the world a better place. We love each other in that which is eternal. As we feel a unity of spirit, we celebrate each other and the privilege of identifying as a Quaker and being aware of a new wholeness.

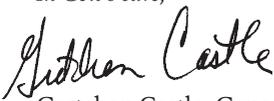
I am an eternal optimist. And I recognise the value of talking about both those things that unite us and those things that cause dissension. As we build trust, we can talk honestly about what we experience in each other. When it is done in love, we can move along the path together. As the Plenary Epistle reads, 'We are different. We came together as a diverse collection of Friends. We were challenged by our differences. This challenge is not always comfortable but it is one we welcome.' Ah, yes.

The Epistle continues, 'We are one. We are one in the spirit of God which does not wash away or hide our differences, but allows us to celebrate them and enables us to move beyond the spiritual boundaries that may separate us.'

In our humanness, we express these dualities. In our spiritual expression, we move more freely into Oneness. We experience the new creation. God calls us into unity. Paul said to the Corinthians, 'Open wide your hearts'. Let us open wide our hearts to each other. Let us build the blessed community and be an example of the loving world we crave. Let us live and love most fully—and let us continue to create experiences to remember.

Bless us in all the ways we gather. Hold us in your care, as we say thank you, and thank you, and thank you.

In God's care,



Gretchen Castle, General Secretary, FWCC World Office

World Office Reports from the Plenary

From 19 to 26 January 2016, over 320 Friends from 37 countries gathered in Pisac, Peru for the FWCC World Plenary Meeting.

A Plenary Meeting is an opportunity for FWCC Representatives from constituent yearly meetings and other bodies to conduct the business of FWCC. This Plenary considered changes to the FWCC Constitution, the World Office budget and various appointments. The Plenary reviewed the work of the Central Executive Committee, which is responsible for the governance and strategy of the FWCC World Office, bringing the Sections and the World Office together as one organization.

Friends joined as a community, enjoying worship and fellowship, listening and learning, welcoming the challenge of our differences, celebrating our shared passions. Friends took part in four Consultations to help guide the future work of FWCC.

This article gives a brief overview of the key issues considered by the Plenary. The full minutes of the Plenary will be found on the FWCC World Office website, www.fwcc.world.

Central Executive Committee

Elizabeth Cazden (New England YM), Clerk of the Central Executive Committee, asked all Friends to help the CEC discover the best ways to inform the broader Quaker community of the CEC's actions, and to hear concerns and vision rising among Friends worldwide. She also highlighted the CEC decision to eliminate fossil fuel companies from the organisation's investment portfolio. In the comments following the report, Friends expressed gratitude for this decision, and raised the question whether additional Quaker concerns should be added to FWCC's investment criteria.

World Office

Gretchen Castle (Philadelphia YM), General Secretary, opened her report by reading Romans 8:38-39, which sustains her in her work. She noted that FWCC serves and supports yearly meetings and local meetings and churches and individual by "Connecting Friends, Crossing Cultures, Changing Lives." She highlighted recent accomplishments including the two "World Quaker Day" celebrations and an increasingly active World Office Facebook page. The World Office serves a vital function by representing Friends at the world level in ecumenical and interfaith activity as well as bringing Friends from each Section to serve on the Quaker United Nations Committees. A Friend noted that in worldwide ecumenical circles, the General Secretary represents us with dignity in a manner fully consistent with Friends' ways.

Finance and Budget

Treasurer Alastair Reid (Britain YM) noted that the World Office accounts reflect our care of the resources that God has provided. He presented a report, in graphs, charts, and notes, of the financial condition of FWCC for FY 2014, the last year for which full audited



reports are available. In recent years, income to the World Office from the Section of the Americas has declined, as the Section's own income has declined; more than 50% of total income comes from Europe and Middle East Section, especially Britain. The World Office appreciates donations of any size, from small gifts to a

recent substantial gift from the family of a Friend who was long active in FWCC. The World Office's expenditures have been quite stable; one variable is travel costs, including the costs of holding the required annual meeting of the Central Executive Committee.

The projected budgets through 2018 reflect further reductions in expected income from the Section of the Americas. These budgets do not take into account any recommendations that may come from FWCC's fund-raising consultant for expanding income across all segments of FWCC. Unless we can make changes in income and/or expenditures, these budgets would result in a gradual erosion of our General Fund reserves well below the recommended level.

The Treasurer also presented information on the approximate cost of holding the World Plenary Meeting, although final figures would not be available for several months. The Plenary was intended to break even. The total costs to the World Office, exclusive of the time of permanent staff, total about £300,000 (\$430,000); about £66,000 (\$94,000) was raised in restricted donations to the travel fund, plus about £20,000 (\$29,000) in other special donations, leaving £214,000 (\$306,000) to be paid from participant fees. The time spent by permanent staff would add about £100,000 (\$144,000); and a similar amount for additional travel costs. The total estimated cost of the meeting, including these extra items, is therefore about £500,000 (\$700,000).

In addition to these planned costs, we have spent an extra £20,000 (\$29,000) to purchase last-minute tickets for Friends whose visas arrived very late. Simon Lamb (Ireland YM), Clerk of the International Planning Committee, encouraged Friends to make a special donation to help defray this unanticipated extra cost, and to ask their local and yearly meetings to do the same. To date we have raised just over £4,000 (\$5,800)

The Treasurer stressed that most of FWCC's programming takes place at the Section level, with the World Office providing communications and coordination among and across Sections. He also noted that the CEC has engaged fundraising consultant Michael Wajda, to advise us on how to increase resources throughout the organisation.

The Plenary approved the proposed budgets, understanding that the Central Executive Committee has authority to revise them as circumstances warrant. Friends were reminded that the audited accounts for 2014 (and 2015 when available) are included in the Trustees' Report that is filed annually with the Charities Commission of England and Wales and is available on the FWCC website.

Constitution

Friends considered a new and much simpler Constitution for the World Office. The new text will be available on the World Office website (www.fwcc.world).

With the cost of world gatherings rising and Friends' concern for reducing our carbon footprint, the Central Executive Committee recommended that world gatherings happen less frequently with potential for other creative ways of coming together, and correspondingly, governance would shift to the CEC which meets annually.

A concern was raised whether the provision for at-large appointments to the CEC should require that at least one position be filled by a young Friend. Instead of embedding such a requirement in the Constitution, the Plenary asked the Nominations Committee to continue to give attention to including one or more Young Friends in its recommendations for officers and at-large positions on the Central Executive Committee.

A major concern was the proposed frequency of Plenary Meetings. Many Friends expressed deep hesitations about the proposal to extend the interval between Plenary Meetings to as long as twelve years. Elizabeth Duke, former General Secretary of FWCC, spoke to the demands that meeting planning makes on the World Office staff, in addition to financial demands and the impact on the environment. In seven-and-a-half years in the office, she was involved in the planning of four Plenary meetings. This work made it difficult to carry on other work that FWCC feels called to do. She asked that Friends give the CEC discretion to discern prayerfully when a Plenary meeting is in right ordering. A Friend encouraged all participants to look for opportunities to create cross-cultural and cross-branch experiences - to bring FWCC to our local meetings - going beyond talking about what a wonderful experience the Plenary was for us.

Friends expressed a fervent hope that full Plenary Meetings can be held more often, and encourage the CEC to consider holding the next Plenary Meeting no later than six to eight years from now, as financial and other resources permit, with 10 years as the absolute outward limit. The Plenary also encouraged the CEC and the office to encourage other opportunities for intervisitation, cooperation between Sections, and other ways to bring Friends together.

With this understanding, the Plenary approved the new Constitution.



Section Reports from the Plenary

Section of the Americas

Robin Mohr (Philadelphia YM), Section Secretary, and Benigno Sanchez-Eppler (New England YM), Clerk, noted that in 2014 the Quaker Youth Pilgrimage (a joint program of the Section of the Americas and Europe and Middle East) took place for the first time ever in South America, and a number of leaders, pilgrims, and hosts were present at the Plenary. This is one way of equipping leadership within the Section. In early 2014, instead of an Annual Meeting, the Section held four consultations, in different locations, on the theme “Let the Living Water Flow,” which came out of the 2012 World Conference. This brought the FWCC experience to a much wider range of Friends who would not be able to travel to a World Plenary or Section meeting. The Section has developed a new Strategic Plan, entitled “Weaving the Tapestry,” to guide the Section’s activities for the next five years; the text is available on the Section website in both English and Spanish. The Section was delighted to host the World Plenary Meeting, and encourages other Sections to take advantage of the experience of hosting. Hosting does not require you to complete the task with the resources you think you have, but rather with the resources the Spirit will provide.

Asia West Pacific Section

Patricia Macgregor (Aotearoa/New Zealand YM), Section Clerk, assisted by Saskia Schuitemaker (Aotearoa/New Zealand YM), presented an oral report to supplement the written report by Section Secretary Ronis Chapman (Australia YM). A Section gathering was held in January 2015, hosted by Hong Kong meeting. Given the vast distances and cultural differences within the Section, communication is both essential and challenging, whether through electronic means or face-to-face visitation. The Section holds a strong concern for the environmental impact of travel. The Section website is in process of redesign.

Europe and Middle East Section

Marisa Johnson (Britain YM), Section Secretary of the Europe and Middle East Section, read Romans 12:9-16, which for her encapsulates why we do this work. The entire region faces challenges from wars, civil unrest, terrorist attacks, and migration of refugees. The Quaker community is small, but does substantial work in addressing these issues. The Section’s role is to bring Friends together for mutual upholding and to help them do their work more effectively.

Africa Section

Section Clerk Joshua Lilande (Lugari YM), Section Secretary Churchill Malimo (Nairobi YM), and Section Assistant Clerk Nokuthula Mbete (Central & Southern Africa YM)

presented the report from the Africa Section. Joshua thanked the meeting for the warm welcome African Friends received when they arrived at the Plenary, as members of the family filling out the table. This followed a delay in many African Friends' arrival due to visa issues. Churchill said they felt humbled at realizing what a financial liability they had become to the meeting. In the prayerful period that followed, a Friend expressed the sentiments of many that when we are not complete, when one Section is not fully present, we are not truly the Friends World Committee.

The report highlighted the emergence of new leadership within the Africa Section, including the first woman clerk of a Kenyan yearly meeting. The Section is deeply concerned by the ongoing political crisis in Burundi, and seeks ways for Friends to contribute to peace-building. In 2015 World Quaker Day was celebrated in 14 yearly meetings, up from three the previous year, and raised KSH164,150 (£1,129/ \$1,608) to support the Section and the World Office.



Reports from Plenary Consultations

Leadership and Ministry

Leo Wieldraaijer-Vincent (Britain YM) and Rubén Maydana (INELA Bolivia YM), co-facilitators, reported. There was some interest in beginning the planning process for another World Gathering of Young Friends. These was creative thinking about what a newly shaped Quaker Youth Pilgrimage might look like. The Consultation raised the question whether a mechanism could be developed within FWCC for membership that is not tied to geographical boundaries; young adults especially find these structures inconsistent with their identity as Friends. They would like FWCC to find ways to further this conversation.

Living Ministries Communities

Rachel Guaraldi (New England YM) and Yanet Velázquez Hernández (Cuba YM), co-facilitators, showed a video illustrating, in compressed form, the participatory process their Consultation used during its time together. They discovered that God is calling us not to worry about numbers, but to concern ourselves with the life and vitality of our communities, and to recognize the rich brightly illuminated life that is already present among us. Their work produced hundreds of ideas, written on small note-cards, for nurturing and growing that living faith. They hope to distribute a distilled list at a later time, and invite Friends to add to the list and share stories of God's work among us.

Sustainability

The Consultation on Sustainability, facilitated by Jonathan Woolley (Mexico City MM/Pacific YM; Staff, QUNO-Geneva), Rachel Madenyika (Staff, QUNO-NY), and Charlotte Gordon (Aotearoa/New Zealand YM) presented a minute:

Living Sustainably and Sustaining Life on Earth

The Light of Christ has inspired Quakers throughout the generations. As we gather together in Pisac, Peru in 2016, we feel this light stronger than ever in our calling to care for the Earth on which we live. It is calling us from all traditions: programmed, unprogrammed, liberal, and evangelical. It calls us to preserve this Earth for our children, our grandchildren and all future generations to come, working as though life were to continue for 10,000 years to come. *Be ready for action with your robes hitched up and your lamps alight.* (Luke 12:35, Revised English Bible)

Our faith as Quakers is inseparable from our care for the health of our planet Earth. We see that our misuse of the Earth's resources creates inequality, destroys community, affects health and well-being, leads to war and erodes our integrity. We are all responsible for stewardship of our natural world. We love this world as God's gift to us all. Our hearts are crying for our beloved mother Earth, who is sick and in need of our care.

We are at a historical turning point. Internationally, the Paris Agreement and the

Sustainable Development Goals oblige governments to take action. Faith groups and other civil society are playing a major role. As Quakers, we are part of this movement. The FWCC World Conference approved the Kabarak Call for Peace and Eco-justice in April 2012, while the FWCC World Office was a signatory to the Quaker statement on climate change in 2014 and divested from fossil fuels in June 2015.

We recognise that the environmental crisis is a symptom of a wider crisis in our political and economic systems. Our loving and well informed environmental actions as Friends, consistent with our spiritual values, must therefore work to transform these systems.

Many of us all over the Quaker world are taking practical actions as individuals and communities. At this Plenary, a consultation of more than sixty Friends from all over the world worked to build on these leadings with further practical action. (The Annex, which can be found on the FWCC web site shows examples of what Friends are doing already or propose to do.)

We must redouble our efforts right now. We must move beyond our individual and collective comfort zones and involve the worldwide Quaker community and others of like mind. Just as Jesus showed us, real change requires us to challenge ourselves to be effective instruments of change. We can do more.

On recommendation of the Consultation, and after some discussion, we adopt this statement as a statement of the Plenary Meeting, together with the following minute:

In this effort for sustainability, and mindful of the urgency of this work, this Plenary asks the FWCC World Office and Central Executive Committee to:

1. **Invest FWCC World funds ethically.**
2. **Share Quaker experiences with other faith groups** to inspire them to action, especially through the World Council of Churches.
3. **Seek ways of connecting Friends worldwide that are sustainable.**
4. **Facilitate dissemination of training materials on sustainability issues** for Quaker leaders, pastors and teachers.

This FWCC Plenary Meeting also asks all Yearly Meetings to:

1. **Initiate at least two concrete actions** on sustainability within the next 12 months. These may build on existing projects of individuals or monthly meetings or they may be new initiatives. We ask that they encourage Young Friends to play key roles. We ask that meetings minute the progress and results, so as to share them with FWCC and Quaker meetings.
2. **Support individuals and groups in their meetings** who feel called to take action on sustainability.
3. **Support the work done by Quaker organisations** such as the Quaker United Nations Office and the Quaker Council for European Affairs to ensure that international agreements and their implementation support sustainability.

This FWCC Plenary Meeting asks individual Friends and groups (such as Monthly Meetings, Worship Groups and ad-hoc groups within Meetings) to **Share inspiring experiences of living sustainably** on the new “sustainability webpage” of the Quakers in the World Website (<http://www.quakersintheworld.org/>). This webpage can be used as a source of ideas, inspiration and action.

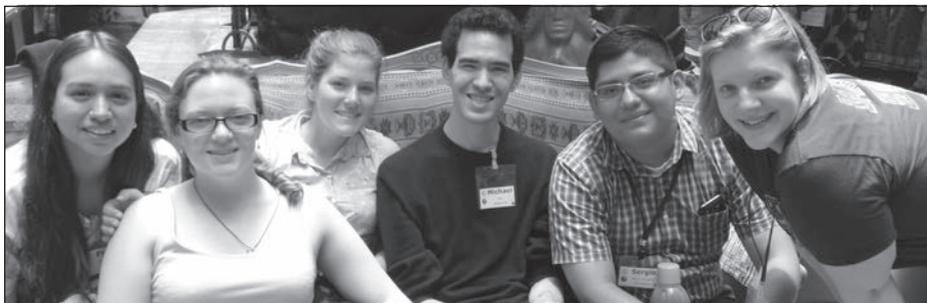
Equipping FWCC Consultation

This Consultation's consideration moved from our experiences of Connecting Friends, Changing Lives and Crossing Cultures, through our visions for FWCC in the future, to practical ways of implementing such visions. Here is a summary of some visions and practical suggestions:

- Smaller gatherings with a particular focus, e.g. theology, faith and order, peace, mission and service, women Friends, young adult Friends.
- Networks on similar topics
- Events for young adult Friends, e.g. work camps, world gathering of young Friends, YQCA (Young Quaker Christian Association—Kenya)
- Quaker Youth Pilgrimage or other memorable experiences for this age group
- Connection between Friends' Schools around the world
- Getting FWCC better known, e.g. representatives have responsibility to make FWCC better known on return, circulate epistle, Facebook and other social media, bring FWCC into our meetings, World Quaker Day (subcommittee to organise it), multilingual materials (including online) explaining FWCC
- Quakerism 101 in many languages, web-based primarily
- Cross-communication between Sections
- Intervisitation
- Twinning between Meetings within Sections / between Sections / between Quaker traditions—develop / use existing guidance and good practice

Young Adult Friends

Renke Meuwese (Netherlands YM), Jean Hubert Hirwa (Rwanda YM), and Milena Villca (Iglesia Unión Boliviana Amigos) reported on business meetings held by Young Adult Friends during these sessions. They have considered whether it is time to convene another World Gathering of Young Friends. They have formed a committee to further season this concern, and to strengthen links among young people within each Section and across Sections. They ask our prayers and suggestions, trusting in God's power to carry forward God's work.



Minute of Record

We have spent more than a week together in what has long been known as a Sacred Valley, surrounded by steep mountains. Friends have shared deeply in worship, song, quiet conversations, and meetings of various sizes and configurations.

Early morning worship included Bible study or unprogrammed worship, with one group meeting outdoors surrounded by the mountains. The main morning worship was led each day by Friends from a particular part of the world, enabling us to experience, in silence, words, and music, the diversity of worship styles among Friends. We have found that even when the words came in an unfamiliar tongue, we could enter together into the place where the words come from.

One evening plenary consisted of a presentation by the two Quaker United Nations Offices, which represent FWCC and the worldwide family of Friends at the UN in New York and Geneva and provide a Quaker presence that enables diplomats and staff to come together around areas of Friends' concern, such as climate change and sustainability, refugee and immigrant rights, peace-building, and economic justice.

An excursion day enabled many Friends to see local sights or hike in the mountains, while others simply rested. During the weekend, approximately 60 additional Friends from Peru and Bolivia (many of whom travelled many hours to attend) joined our gathering.

Workshops on a wide variety of topics enabled Friends from different parts of the world to share experiences and ideas on topics such as the Alternatives to Violence Program, "Godly Play" materials for youth education, Fair Trade schemes, combating racism and imperialism, evangelisation, and the financial structure of FWCC. Home Groups of about twenty Friends met each day, enabling us to come to know each other more deeply. Four Consultations met throughout the week to thresh issues of common concern: Ministry and Leadership, Living Ministry Communities, Sustaining Life on Earth, and Equipping FWCC. These provoked thoughtful and energetic discussions, some specific recommendations, and some ad hoc groups that hope to continue their conversations as they can over the coming months. We are grateful to those who served ably as facilitators of Home Groups and Consultations, and to all those who participated with clear minds, listening ears, and generous hearts.



World Plenary Meeting Epistle

*Se contenta el Corazón ensanchándose de amor;
todos a una voz a Dios gracias damos.
¡Bienvenidos Amigos!*



To all Friends Everywhere,

We send loving greetings to you from Pisac in the Sacred Valley of the Incas. We were blessed with both sunshine and rain. As we gathered together we lifted our eyes to the mountains and lifted our hearts to God

From 19 to 27 January over 320 men and women from 37 countries, 77 Yearly Meetings, 8 independent Monthly Meetings, and 2 worship groups, speaking dozens of languages met to consider the theme “Living the transformation: creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God (Romans 8:19).”

Our time together started in sadness at those who were delayed in their journeys or prevented from joining us—we felt a gap in our gathering the shape of God. Later, as we were joined by Friends from Kenya and welcomed local Friends from Peru and Bolivia, we felt the full fellowship among us. We were complete.

Many of the messages shared in our worship, speaking to the theme of transformation were both moving and uplifting: we were challenged to be transformed in ways leaving us more faithful to God’s purposes individually, as meetings/ churches and as a World Family of Friends.

Our speakers emphasised the process of transformation. One spoke of spiritual transformation using the image of a heart transplant and what it means to be given the heart of Jesus. In this transplant of the heart we become agents of change who show the love of Christ in the world. Another image we were given was that of a seed pod. Each pod contains the past, present and future, showing us how we remain connected to our past even as we look to the future, as God gathers us into one grand story.

We heard the message that we must be open and available to God, making space in our hearts, our communities and our churches/ meetings. Transformation often finds us when we’re not seeking or expecting it. We must be willing to be vulnerable and open our hearts in order to undergo the change we want to see.

As we gathered we not only spoke of transformation, we invited it and created spaces for God to make it happen. Many of us experienced it while we were here. We found ourselves broken open and touched by the Living Spirit of Christ.

We are the children of God. We are who creation has been waiting for. We are called to reveal ourselves in our lives and in the work we do with our hearts and our hands. Although God can fill our hearts, God has no hands but ours to heal this broken world. We can be salt and light shining to the world and declaring the love of God.

As Quakers our faith is inseparable from our concern to care for all life on earth. We are reminded of the Kabarak call for Peace and Eco-Justice and the need to redouble our efforts now. We call on Friends everywhere to take practical actions to sustain life on Earth.

Listening together in our home groups, workshops, and consultations, where two or three languages were spoken, opened up countless opportunities to pray, sing, ask difficult questions, learn, cry and laugh together. We have hurt each other with our words when we have spoken without love but this is a human failing and we have also experienced the healing power of Christ's love.

We learn from each other's ways of connecting with God; each offering of worship held within it the opportunity for the Spirit to move and speak and sing. Sharing worship in this way enables us to recognise that we must both listen to, and speak to God.

The presence of so many young adult Friends among us has been a blessing. We heard their moving testimony and experienced their inspirational leadership. As we go back to our churches and meetings we must allow this ministry and leadership to flourish.

We are different. We came together as a diverse collection of Friends. We were challenged by our differences. This challenge is not always comfortable but it is one we welcome.

We are one. We are one in the spirit of God which does not wash away or hide our differences, but allows us to celebrate them and enables us to move beyond the spiritual boundaries that may separate us. We are able to do this by coming together in worship where, while its form may be unfamiliar, God was present throughout. Through listening deeply and tenderly to each other and to God we reached a place where we can hear and sense where the words come from even when we may not understand the tongue they are spoken in.

We are Friends. In making the choice to come together and be willing to share deeply, pray boldly, and listen lovingly together, we seek to move beyond our differences, see beyond our labels and find ways to connect with each other. The work of FWCC depends on us all. In order to continue it, we encourage Friends, meetings/churches and Yearly Meetings to contribute financially to and participate in building connections between Friends.

As we leave here we will carry the love we have received from each other and from God in our hearts.





FWCC depends
on all Friends.

Help support
Friends' work
in the world.

[fwcc.world/
about-fwcc/donate](http://fwcc.world/about-fwcc/donate)



Save the date . . .
WORLD QUAKER DAY
October 2, 2016

hold each other in prayer and thanksgiving, and let our hymns of praise resound across the world.

Find more information on the World Quaker Day website:
www.worldquakerday.org

FWCC invites every Quaker meeting and church from around the world to celebrate **WORLD QUAKER DAY (WQD)** on October 2, 2016. As the sun rises in each area of the world, we want to remember that Quakers are worshiping through every time zone, celebrating our deep connections across cultures and Quaker traditions. We are united in love and can accompany each other on this special day that draws us together. As we worship, let us



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Save the date . . .

WORLD QUAKER DAY

October 2, 2016

