Part IV. Materials from Quaker Organizations and External Parties

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From Martha Roberts

In October, 2017, my term as representative from Intermountain Yearly Meeting (IMYM) to Friends General Conference (FGC) ended. It was a remarkable run.... I feel so blessed to have had this job and am immensely grateful to IMYM for the support given.

So, Looking backwards....When nominated, few Friends knew that I previously had extensive experience with FGC. Returning to Central Committee after many years was, in some ways, being the new kid on the block while simultaneously reconnecting with old F/friends. After two years in this ‘new’ role, I was asked to serve on the Development Committee and the following year was asked to clerk the committee.

My initial response to the clerkship was “yes”.... later followed by “no” and a withdrawal of my name. I did not trust my reasons for accepting the position. They seemed more rooted in ego than in faith. Ego is never a good reason for taking on any commitment. As IMYM representative to the Executive Committee, I subsequently attended several meetings where the nominating committee would come forward expressing a need to find a clerk for the Development Committee. Some months after my initial “no”, and several nominating reports stating there was no clerk for Development, I ‘heard’ a voice saying “you could do that – are you using your gifts?” I approached the nominating clerk and said I would take the position if they were still open to my doing so.

The Development Committee is deeply centered and committed to spiritual listening as it carries a broad concern for the policies and procedures of fund raising. The committee as a body creates and supports policies regarding fundraising; seeks and may recommend use of sources of income; and supports the staff on whose shoulders much of the heavy work lies. The overarching goal is to find sufficient funding for FGC in order that the vision and mission of Friends General Conference be met.

Personally, I had a long history of avoiding fund-raising in any size, shape or form. To take on the clerkship of a committee whose task was concerned with the spiritual and practical aspects involved in fundraising was, for me, a truly spiritual challenge. The learning curve was very steep, fascinating and life changing. I lost my fear and gained confidence in asking others to help support FGC with their funds. This latter came into fruition when I was at ease asking a major donor to increase the donation!

Working with Friends General Conference changes lives in many ways. In each of my experiences as a representative from a Yearly Meeting to FGC, I found a spiritually deep community that “spoke to my condition”. As I became increasingly involved, my gifts were recognized and lovingly nurtured. This served me well in both my personal and professional lives. Being with Friends from around this country and the wider world, sharing who we are, exchanging ideas about Friends, worshiping together, playing and eating together broadens one’s experience of Friends that is not easily replicated elsewhere. Through FGC I have learned much about how to walk the talk of Friends. Perfect, FGC is NOT. But my experience has been more positive than negative and I continue to see many Friends in FGC seeking and working to live a life led by Spirit... [The
the icing on the cake is that one of my daughters recently told me that attending FGC Gatherings as a teen positively impacted her life.]

Representing IMYM is a gift. We, who were your representatives, used every opportunity possible to talk about our yearly meeting and to promote member meetings as places for committees to visit and meet. Hosting committees & meeting Friends from around the country widens our knowledge of Friends. Hosting is fun, broadening, and enriching.

Andrew Banks and I served jointly on the Committee of Discernment and Priority Planning where having 2 representatives from one yearly meeting is not the norm. We enjoyed reminding Friends how successful the Gathering in Greeley was! IMYM is the newest of yearly meetings to join FGC, but is one of the most visible. During the past year or so, the Executive, Nominating, and Development Committees as well as the Committee for Discernment and Priority Planning have each met in the 4-State region. IMYM is noted for warm and welcoming hospitality!

Regrettably, I will be unable to be at IMYM this year of 2017. My grandson is graduating from Westtown School (a Quaker school near Philadelphia) and our family is gathering from all over to celebrate this milestone and to be together for a while.

There is more gratitude in my heart for each of you than I have words to express. It has been a blessing to serve you. This report is sent to you all with deep love and appreciation for who you are and what you do. It has been such an honor to serve you in this capacity.

Martha Roberts
Spring, 2017
2017 Report to Yearly Meetings

Since the early days of the Religious Society of Friends, God’s spirit has led Friends to take action in the world. As Friends, our faith and experience convince us to work for the peaceful, just, equitable, and sustainable world we seek. FCNL has been bringing the concerns, experiences, and testimonies of Friends to bear on policy decisions in the nation’s capital for nearly 75 years.

The 2016 election manifested the deep political and social divisions in our country, revealing stark differences in voters’ hopes for the future. Amidst these seismic political shifts, FCNL’s grounding as a Quaker lobby and our presence on Capitol Hill as a nonpartisan voice for peace and justice are needed now more than ever. Friends remain the bedrock of FCNL’s strong network, standing together in a nearly 370-year-old faith-based movement living its faith through action.

Spirit-led Action

At FCNL’s Annual Meeting in November, which convened just two days after the election, we gathered to worship, lobby and conduct the organization’s business. FCNL’s General Committee approved legislative priorities to guide our community’s advocacy in the 115th Congress. These legislative priorities, available online at fcnl.org/priorities, were the result of widening circles of discernment that included input from hundreds of Quaker meetings and churches across the country, discernment by FCNL’s Policy Committee, and consideration by the General Committee. We also renewed our commitment as a community to use the persistent, powerful, and prophetic voice that sustains our work.

There is no question that the divisions in the American electorate — so evident in the presidential campaign — make our lobbying tougher than ever, and we are under no illusions about the challenges ahead. The threats are real. But our relationships on Capitol Hill with both Republicans and Democrats, and the relationships that the FCNL network have established, will take on new significance. Those voices will become even more critical in the months ahead. We encourage all Friends to join us in advocacy. Find out how: fcnl.org/advocacy.

In the weeks and months ahead, we will continue to be truth-tellers in the halls of power. We will uphold and move forward the priorities that our governing General Committee set for us when they met in November. We will recognize and affirm the many ways that people may be called to act for change — while remaining focused on our mission to work within our democratic system to influence national legislation.
The World We Seek: Now Is the Time Capital Campaign

As FCNL nears 75 years of faithful witness, we are building a sustainable future through a five-year, $15 million capital campaign that is strengthening the foundation of FCNL’s lobbying and educational programs. The success of the campaign, however, rests in far more than meeting a specific financial goal. The most important impact of the campaign is the degree to which it is empowering FCNL to fulfill its mission and engage as many people as possible in our work. By the time the campaign ends on June 30, 2017, FCNL will have hosted 35 campaign events in 23 states and the District of Columbia. We have been fortunate to have a broad base of support in this campaign from our national community of supporters — individuals, meetings, and churches — who are helping to ensure the future of Quaker advocacy.

Love Thy Neighbor (No Exceptions)

As our country struggles with deep divisions, it becomes even more urgent to highlight the value we place in one another. We invite Friends to help shift the narrative and spread a message of love by joining the #LoveThyNeighbor campaign: fcnl.org/lovethyneighbor.

We are grateful to the 25 Yearly Meetings that have appointed members to serve on FCNL’s General Committee. Thank you for sharing the nurturing gifts of these wise and committed Friends. With their guidance, we seek to remain open to where God’s spirit leads us. Please hold us in the Light this year as we continue to work for the world we seek.

Eric Ginsburg  
North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)  
Clerk, FCNL General Committee  
March 2017

FCNL’s Executive Committee and Education Fund Board

Eric Ginsburg, Clerk, North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)  
Bridget Moix, Assistant Clerk, Baltimore Yearly Meeting  
David A. Bantz, Recording Clerk, Alaska Friends Conference  
Karen Treber, FCNL Treasurer, Baltimore Yearly Meeting  
Becky Steele, Education Fund Treasurer, New England Yearly Meeting  
Diane Randall, Executive Secretary, New England Yearly Meeting  
Mary Lou Hatcher, At-large member FCNL, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting  
Mark Kharas, At-large member Education Fund, New England Yearly Meeting  
Constance Brookes, Finance Committee Clerk, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting  
Scott Duncan, Development Committee Clerk, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting  
Megan Fair, Field Committee Clerk, Wilmington Yearly Meeting  
Pam Ferguson, Annual Meeting Planning Committee Clerk, Winchester Friends Church (IN)  
Beth Henricks, Capital Campaign Committee Clerk, Western Yearly Meeting  
A.T. Miller, Personnel Committee Clerk, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting  
Karen Putney, Nominating Committee Clerk, Southeastern Yearly Meeting  
Kelly Schoolmeester, Policy Committee Clerk, Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting
Our Impact - March 2017

Many U.S. programs and policies that advance peace and justice are under threat today. FCNL leads work to protect the gains of the past decades, mitigate the most damaging proposals under consideration, and promote civil dialogue across political differences.

Strengthening and Growing our Advocacy Community
Thousands of new advocates are turning to FCNL for action and skills. We’re using our decades of experience in relationship-focused advocacy to train and empower people looking to influence and change U.S. policies. This work is bringing concerns for peace and justice to an increasing number of congressional offices. Our Advocacy Teams are thriving in more than 40 communities across the country, and we continue to launch new groups to build durable connections with members of Congress and persuade them to support key legislation. Last year, the number of FCNL community members lobbying in person grew by 50 percent. In combination with our Washington, DC lobby days and online resources and trainings to help people be effective advocates, we expect to exceed this growth in 2017.

Immigration: Welcoming the Stranger
As the Trump administration emphasizes enforcement and militarized borders, FCNL is building bipartisan support in Congress for compassionate immigration policies. FCNL staff chair the Interfaith Immigration Coalition, leading lobbying among the faith community to ensure offices hear these voices strongly. We are working closely with Republican and Democratic senators, including Senators Lindsay Graham (SC) and Richard Durbin (IL), to advance the bipartisan BRIDGE Act to protect young immigrants. The 18 young adults in our Advocacy Corps are organizing in their respective communities and building the groundwork necessary to effect real and lasting policy change. In addition to bringing more than 180 people in to lobby in their local congressional offices, members of the Advocacy Corps are working to shape the media discourse, cultivating a local network of constituent advocates, and developing issue expertise to lend additional credibility to their advocacy moving forward.

Peacebuilding: Promoting U.S. Leadership for Peace
The Trump administration’s aggressive foreign policy stances and efforts to increase military spending threaten decades-long efforts on forward-looking prevention of deadly violence. FCNL is working to counteract this trend, and we’re partnering with lawmakers like Senator Ben Cardin (MD) to advance peacebuilding initiatives. Administration and congressional decision-makers are reading the report of the bipartisan Experts Committee on Preventing Mass Violence, which we convened last year. The report recommends concrete steps to continue and expand U.S. leadership on preventing mass atrocities. Meanwhile, Republican and Democratic senators are working with us to ask hard questions of the administration and introduce legislation to support U.S. genocide and atrocities prevention efforts.
Religious Freedom: Opposing a Muslim Ban
While President Trump’s January executive order effectively banning travel from seven Muslim-majority countries has brought public attention to religious freedom issues, FCNL has been working steadily for nearly two years to raise concerns in Congress about this type of discrimination. We worked closely with Representative Don Beyer (VA) in 2016 and this year to introduce legislation prohibiting the U.S. from denying admission based on religious beliefs. Our professional lobbyists and a coalition of more than 100 organizations are building strong relationships and cultivating congressional leaders in efforts to make religious discrimination untenable as a policy of the U.S. government.

Economic Justice: Meeting Human Needs
Congressional decisions in 2017 could lay the groundwork to transform the government’s role in ensuring access to basic necessities for everyone in the U.S. Our lobbying is focused on stopping the policy changes that are steps along this path. As an organization and through our leadership in faith coalitions, we are part of a national mobilization to emphasize the detrimental effects of repealing the Affordable Care Act without a comparable replacement. At the moment that health care and funding for programs such as Medicaid and SNAP (food stamps) will be before Congress, our Spring Lobby Weekend is bringing more than 400 college students in March 2017 to Washington to lobby on these issues.

Pentagon Spending: Opposing Massive Increases
The Pentagon already consumes nearly $600 billion in government spending, a sum that is equal to what the next seven countries combined spend on their military forces. Now, President Trump is asking Congress for one of the largest increases in Pentagon spending in our country’s history. In Washington, FCNL lobbyists are leaders in focusing attention on Pentagon spending in congressional offices, working directly with staff and through key coalitions. Our Advocacy Teams across the country are meeting with members of Congress to raise the moral choices that we are making as a nation when we increase Pentagon spending at the expense of programs that keep people from falling into poverty and promote peace and diplomacy around the world.

Climate Change: Creating Space for Common Ground
Our moral call for action on climate change has opened a political space in Washington for lawmakers to acknowledge the danger of inaction and discuss positive solutions. In the 114th session of Congress, 17 Republicans cosponsored a resolution that FCNL developed with former Representative Chris Gibson (NY) calling on Congress to act on climate change. We are building support for similar legislation in 2017. Senators and representatives are increasingly interested in joining the bipartisan Climate Solutions Caucus, which brings members together across party lines to discuss ways to move forward on this issue.
FGC Mission Vision Update May 2017

Dear Friends:

This letter is both an update about the mission and vision statement process for FGC and a request for your participation and assistance.

Background

There have been many changes in the focus and programs of FGC in recent years. Throughout this period of change there have been comments from several sources, in listening sessions at Central Committee meetings, and in various FGC committees, asking whether the Vision Statement (approved in 2012) and the Mission Statement with its Minute of Purpose and Major Goals (approved in 2003) still accurately reflect what FGC is about now and what it hopes to be for the future. The current statements were seen by many as too verbose as well as too broad to guide programmatic decision making. Also, there was a desire for the statements to be more inspiring.

The Committee for Discernment, Planning and Priorities (CDPP) at the encouragement of Executive Committee has held these questions. CDPP began its work on this by facilitating a discussion about a vision and mission for FGC at the October 2016 Central Committee meeting.

CDPP reflected on these discussions and comments, and prepared draft revisions to the Vision and Mission statements, for circulation to FGC Executive and other committees (through their clerks) in early 2017.

Regarding the Vision Statement, we believe the specific points stated in the current statement (2012) largely remain valid and effective today, resulting in the draft revision stating that vision more concisely.

For reference, the 2012 version (currently on the FGC website) is:

We envision a vital and growing Religious Society of Friends—a faith that deepens spiritually, welcomes newcomers, builds supportive and inclusive community, and provides loving service and witness in the world.

Through Friends General Conference, we see Quakers led by the Spirit joining together in ministry to offer services that help Friends, meetings, and seekers explore, deepen, connect, serve and witness within the context of our living faith.

And our proposed 2017 version is:

We envision an inclusive and diverse Religious Society of Friends, grounded in the Spirit, clear in its testimonies and practices, and living and sharing these in the world.

In terms of the mission statement, there was a substantial rewrite in order to make it much more concise. For reference the 2003 Minute of Purpose states:

Friends General Conference, with Divine guidance, nurtures the spiritual vitality of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) by providing programs and services for Friends, meetings, and seekers.
Major Goals
1. Nurture meetings and worship groups.
2. Provide resources and opportunities for meetings, Friends, and seekers to experience the Light, the living presence of God.
3. Help meetings guide Friends to discern the leadings of the Inward Teacher and to grow into ministry.
4. Transform our awareness so that our corporate and individual attitudes and actions fully value and encompass the blessed diversity of our human family.
5. Work to grow and sustain a vital, diverse, and loving community of Friends based on a shared search for unity in the Spirit.
6. Articulate, communicate, and exemplify Friends' practices, core experiences, and the call to live and witness to our faith.
7. Promote dialogue with others, sharing with them our corporate experience of Divine Truth and listening to and learning from their experience of the same.

And the draft 2017 version is (now referred to as a mission statement):

Friends General Conference nurtures the spiritual vitality of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).

Our Current Situation
Several committees, including Executive Committee, took time to consider these draft revisions and shared their thoughts with CDPP. Several Friends were supportive of the drafts largely as-is. The Development committee was particularly positive noting that shorter statements are easier to share with potential donors and supporters. Others offered different phrasings and made observations such as:

- The vision statement was for the RSoF broadly rather than specifically for FGC and/or FGC affiliated Friends.
- “faith and practice” would be preferable to “testimonies and practice.”
- Would these statements actually help us make programmatic decisions?
- The idea of transformation should be included as it’s an important part of the Quaker journey.

It’s also interesting to note that in spite of temptations to add phrasing or entire paragraphs, several Friends supported the idea that “less is more” and affirmed the idea that we should try to keep these statements short.

With the above said, the Committee for Nurturing Ministries offered a much fuller critique of the mission and vision statements than did other committees or individuals. CNM is deeply concerned that the words “inclusive” and “diverse” are euro-centric. In anti-racist circles there has been some energy towards moving away from “diversity” as a concept, since it’s been watered down from its original meaning. Also, being “inclusive” has the connotation of the existing dominant group choosing to “include” a historically excluded group or groups. So in a way, the language can be seen to continue the existing power dynamic. CNM also struggled with having two different statements. As a result, CNM crafted a single mission statement for FGC for the consideration of CDPP and Friends more broadly. It follows:
The ministry of FGC is to support communities to create spiritual homes where people are listening, discerning and living into our testimonies and practices together.

A member of CDPP pointed out that the challenge of the above statement is that it leaves out any explicit reference to trying to create multi-racial, intergenerational communities. It was shared that this is because CNM was not clear at this time on what the replacement language for diversity and inclusion might be, though we are hoping we might get some guidance from the Institutional Assessment facilitators. Another Friend lifted up that they hoped CNM’s concern can be addressed and the emphasis on sharing our faith from the 2012 statements might also be included in whatever statement(s) move forward.

Your Help Requested

CDPP recently had a conference call where we were clear that CNM’s concerns need to be addressed along with the points raised by other Friends. As part of addressing these, we would like to maintain a concise mission and vision statement so that they are sharable in conversations, can help with decision making and are inspiring. In playing with variations we realized that other Friends might have a clearer sense of how to incorporate these various components into a harmonious whole.

June 9th-11th CDPP will meet concerning a broad range of issues with the vision and mission statements being a high priority. If you would like to take a turn at redrafting FGC’s statements grounded in the knowledge and guidance above, CDPP would greatly appreciate your assistance. We are also open to insights that are not mission or vision statements if your insights might help move the process forward. Please know that we may get several different statements and ask that you not be too attached to whatever you have crafted as your statement might or might not be the statement with which Central Committee Friends unite in the fall.

Please send your draft statements and/or insights to:

Marian Beane, Clerk
Committee for Discernment, Planning & Priorities
marian.beane@gmail.com

In Service,
Frank Barch Barry Crossno
Presiding Clerk General Secretary

P.S.- If you would like to see some interesting mission statements go to:
https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/inspiring-company-mission-statements#sm.00001t9qpf9qkcd40x84jl2eecbmk

Barry Crossno
General Secretary
Friends General Conference
215-561-1700 x3003
“We envision a thriving and integrated network of Friends from the Arctic to the Andes, woven together in transformative faith, learning to love, listen, and witness”

- Vision Statement of the Section of the Americas

Dear Intermountain Friends-

Greetings from your fellow Friends across the Americas and around the World. THANK YOU for your support!

This March, Cheryl Speir-Phillips and I (Rob Pierson) attended the Friends World Committee, Section of the Americas meeting in Stony Point, NY. The picture above is from a different recent meeting, but it gives you the idea – there is a vibrant community of Friends spread across South and North America. You are part of a larger world of English and Spanish speaking friends who want to know you and want to share their Quaker faith across the boundaries that normally separate and divide us.

I will keep this report short because I want you to read it! Also, you can find plenty more at the Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas website at http://fwccamericas.org/ - a website that was beautifully revamped this year and is full of helpful and interesting information about Friends and activities of the FWCC. If you want to expand your Quaker horizons, the website is a good place to start. And consider attending an FWCC event! Or invite your representatives to visit your Meeting and talk to you about the wider world of Friends.

There is always a lot going on among Friends. At the recent meeting, discussions continued between Friends from North and South on fostering the spiritual basis of the call for ecojustice and sustainability. Within North America, Friends engaged on issues of racism and privilege that afflict our Meetings. If you want to know more about these topics, please ask! But I want to focus here on the core initiative of the FWCC Section today.

At its core, the mission of FWCC involves intervisitation – getting Friends to meet one another and get to know one another in “that which is eternal.” The eternal may be limitless, but our individual and planetary resources are not. Shipping Friends across continents to gatherings is expensive and resource-consuming. As a result,
FWCC gatherings are becoming less frequent (every other year for the Section of the Americas, every seven years for the world gatherings). Yet, in an increasingly divided and polarized world, getting to know one another, at a deep personal and spiritual level and across divides of language, worship style, and culture is more important than ever! What are we to do?

FWCC’s response is to revitalize the old Quaker tradition of traveling ministry. Quakers have always encouraged those called to ministry to travel among Meetings, knitting the community together through their intervisitation. At this year’s meeting, the gathered Quaker community blessed and sent forth the first seven members of a Traveling Ministry Corp. (See picture at right) Each of these Friends are trained and prepared to travel, to come visit us at our Meetings, as a connection to the wider world of Friends. All we need to do is offer a little planning and hospitality – to open our hearts and homes to their presence while they sojourn with us. Is your Meeting ready and interested? Contact me or the Section of the Americas!

Our Intermountain Yearly Meeting theme this year is “About Money: A Call to Integrity, Community, and Stewardship.” This theme couldn’t be more timely. Like many Quaker organizations, FWCC depends on our financial support. Please donate and encourage your Meeting to support FWCC. Those of us who hear the call to reach beyond our narrow boundaries and acknowledge our larger faith community need to take part in building this “beloved community.”

On a personal note, our Cheryl Speir Phillips has taken on the role of Representatives Coordinator for the entire Southwest Region – from here to California! Rob Pierson is now serving on the Executive Committee for the FWCC Section of the Americas. Come talk to us about how we can help connect you to the world of Friends, and please consider attending Cheryl’s FWCC interest group while at annual gathering.

With peace and love,

- Rob Pierson / Albuquerque Monthly Meeting
To Intermountain Yearly Meeting
June 2017

Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds. Hebrews 10:23-24

Dear Friends of Intermountain Yearly Meeting,

We send you loving greetings from the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) World Office in London. We extend our best wishes for a full and gathered yearly meeting. We trust that God’s presence among you will enrich your fellowship and open your hearts. May your gathering be blessed by visitors from other yearly meetings and other parts of the world. Understanding how our Quaker brothers and sisters in different parts of the world are carrying forward their worship and witness broadens our own sense of our work at home.

Answering God’s call to universal love, FWCC brings Friends together both literally and virtually, both at the local level and at the world level. “Connecting Friends, crossing cultures, and changing lives,” we build understanding across cultures, languages, and theological diversity. We appreciate the yearly meeting’s continuing work of strengthening the Religious Society of Friends, and likewise, FWCC brings Friends together who have similar passions in order to strengthen the Quaker voice in the world. Whether we worship in isolated or small communities or enjoy a larger yearly meeting community, we all need the wider family of Friends to nurture us. We are not alone!

Martin Luther King said in 1967, “Difficult and painful as it is, we must walk on in the days ahead with an audacious faith in the future.” At this time of political unrest, we need each other and we need our faith. Being a Quaker, I take heart knowing I share the broad and insistent vision for a peaceful world. Everything has changed and nothing has changed. Our shared work for peace and justice continues, from King’s lifetime til now. From the World Conference minutes in 2012: “In moments of deep sharing of joys and grief, we find love, tenderness, and mutual understanding. Friendships form, and seeds of future partnerships are planted.”

FWCC holds the accreditation for Quaker work at the United Nations, and we appoint Friends from each Section to serve on the Geneva and New York governing committees of the Quaker United Nations Office. Quakers are represented well at the UN. Seek out your own Section appointees if you want to learn more or visit the QUNO web site.

I attach the Sustainability Minute from the World Plenary Meeting in Pisac, Peru in January 2016, drawing your attention to the call for yearly meeting action. Please let us know what you are doing or considering across time. We will be putting contributions on the FWCC World Office web site to build momentum for the Quaker movement around sustainability.

With this greeting, I invite you to engage with FWCC through our web site and Facebook page. I invite you to give financially to FWCC through your Section. I invite you to support Robin Mohr in her work
as Section Secretary of the Section of the Americas. And most importantly, I invite you to engage with other Friends who share your passion for life and love.

FWCC is revising the world map, Finding Quakers Around the World, and we are in the process of updating the book Friends Around the World. We also post all epistles we receive so that all Friends might see how God is moving amongst us. Please send your epistle to database@friendsworldoffice.org.

We hope that you will remember you are part of a larger family, very diverse, yet joined by its common heritage, testimonies, and faith. We enjoy unity within our diversity.

We thank you, Friends, for your faithful support of our work.

In loving Friendship,

Gretchen Castle
General Secretary

Attached: Sustainability Minute
IRM 16-20. 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) have presented a minute for our consideration:

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 Ecojustice 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 attached to these minutes 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 this Consultation, and after some discussion, we adopt 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.

**Annex to the Minute: Possibilities for practical sustainability action from the Pisac consultation**

**Individuals can:**

1. Dedicate personal time to nature.
2. Reduce consumption and use your consumer buying power to create change.
3. Cut down on meat consumption, be aware of energy costs in production and transport of all foods and methane from ruminant animals, support sustainable agriculture.
4. Travel – cycle, walk, use public transport or alternatives to private cars, keep air travel to a minimum.
5. Grow your own food and plant trees.
6. Be politically active in promoting sustainability concerns.
7. Share environmental concerns through books, publications, conversations, electronic media
8. Reduce energy use.
9. Use less water and harvest water.
10. Make time for spiritual connection with God.
Monthly Meetings, Worship Groups and small groups within Meetings can:

1. Live in a community, share housing, participate in a transition town movement.
2. Educate yourself and others.
3. Share transport and equipment.
4. Develop urban agriculture, community gardens, community supported agriculture, tree planting.
5. Love nature and encourage others to do so: we protect the things we love; get children out in nature; take care of nature around your meeting house (e.g., picking up trash/litter).
6. Invest ethically and divest from fossil fuels.
7. Ensure meeting houses are carbon neutral.
8. Build alliances, seek visibility, approach legislators.
9. Share sustainability skills.

Yearly Meetings can:

1. Support the sustainability actions of Monthly Meetings.
2. Build solidarity with local people.
3. Support Quakers in politics and international work.
4. Form support networks and alliances to make more impact – we can only do so much on our own.
5. Invest ethically, including on sustainability issues.
6. Practice what we preach.
7. Discern and move concerns to action.
8. Set targets for increased sustainability.
9. Connect and share with other YMs, direct or via FWCC Sections and World Office

We recognise that different actions are relevant to different Quaker meetings in different parts of the world.
Traveling Minute for Pamela Haines

The following minute was adopted by Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting in our meeting for business on May 14, 2017.

Dear Friends,

Please welcome and care for our member, Pamela Haines. Our member, Pamela Haines, will be attending Intermountain Yearly Meeting, held at the Ghost Ranch retreat center north of Abiquiu, New Mexico, June 14–18, 2017. Pamela will be serving as the keynote speaker on the theme of “All About Money: A Call to Integrity, Community, and Stewardship.” Her partner, Chuck Esser, will serve as her elder and traveling companion.

Pamela has been a member of CPMM for over twenty years, has clerked our Membership Care and Peace and Social Concerns Committees, and served as our meeting’s Assistant Clerk and Recording Clerk. She is active in the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Eco-Justice Collaborative and Friends Economy Integrity Project. Pamela has blessed us by her example of living with deep integrity and commitment to acting and being in right relationship with each other and the world.

Pamela comes to you with the blessing and support of Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting. We have witnessed the growth of her gifts and faithfulness. We hope that her time among you will be an occasion of growth in the Spirit for her and for you.

We ask you to open your hearts and listen deeply to the message that she carries. Welcome her and treat her tenderly. We commend our friend, Pamela Haines to you.

Sincerely,
Dana Reinhold, Clerk
Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting
Biographical Sketch of Pamela Haines

Pamela Haines is a long-time resident of Philadelphia, managing with her husband a diverse extended family household. Her paid work includes leadership development, community building and organizing for policy change among child-care workers; teaching peer counseling; and leading family play groups.

She is active in peace, justice and environmental work in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends, in the Friends Economic Integrity Project, and in a national interfaith group, Faith, Ecology, Economy, Transformation. She has written a Pendle Hill pamphlet, Waging Peace; Discipline and Practice, co-authored Toward a Right Relationship with Finance, led a variety of workshops on faith and economics, and spoken on the topic of climate, justice and racism.

She is on the board of the Mill Creek urban farm in West Philadelphia, and is active with the Philadelphia Orchard Project and her community garden. She enjoys deep personal connections in Poland and Nicaragua, and has helped develop community building and trauma healing work in Uganda and Indonesia.

She is passionate about quilting and repair of all kinds, and blogs at www.pamelalivinginthisworld.blogspot.com.
Enrique Esqueda Blas, our Heberto Sein Visitor

Enrique Esqueda Blas is the Mexico City Friends Meeting 'rep' to Intermountain Yearly Meeting via the Heberto Sein Memorial Scholarship fund.

Enrique began attending Mexico City Friends Meeting early last year and has dived in headfirst in a very good way. He is a studious, smart and intellectual seeker, and a very kind, gentle and agreeable person.

The clerk claims that: “We basically roped him into helping coordinate the youth meeting at the General Meeting of Friends in Mexico here last November. And (as I'd hoped!) it was a powerful experience for him and helped sharpen his interest in Quakerism.”

In March, Enrique asked for a support committee to accompany him during his process of exploring and moving closer to Friends. Having grown up in a very traditional, conservative Catholic family, it's a very serious and thought-out decision for him to do this. Enrique has also become involved with Casa de los Amigos and AVP Mexico.

Enrique is an historian interested in the experience of war and the social consequences to the collective violence in the communities. He hopes to write about pacifism and the Quaker history in Central America. He hopes to get to know some people who are working in high schools in nonviolence projects, some Quakers librarians, and people who are working for the equality of social minorities.
Western Friend – FY 2016 Annual Report

Western Friend exists to serve the unique condition of Friends in the West – a few thousand people dispersed over half a continent. Like the salt of the earth, we help sustain Life by sprinkling words of Truth throughout the land. Through magazines, books, online content, and face-to-face visitation, Western Friend builds connections among Friends in the West.

Our new “Deep Archive”
Since 1929, Friends in the West have spoken many words of Truth through our own periodical – Friends Bulletin and Western Friend. In 2016, we succeeded in publishing the complete archives of our magazine, back through 1929, in an electronically searchable format on our website. Go to westernfriend.org/magazine, scroll to the bottom of the page, and browse. Or find the “search this website” field at the top of our website, type in a term, and see what happens. (I’ve tried, for example: Seaver, Henderson, and Ackworth, all with good results.) It was my work on these archives (still a work in progress) that led me to realize how much we Friends in the West really are salt of the earth!

Our live online conversation series – “Cultivate the Quaker Experience”
You can also encounter difficult words of truth, spoken among Friends struggling together over issues confronting us today at westernfriend.org/cultivate-quaker-experience. Here you will find notes and recordings of this ongoing conversation series. Contact me if you want to receive invitations to future conversations.

Our magazine and other publishing
Western Friend magazine is our centerpiece – to which we have newly added a one-page “discussion guide,” an off-the-shelf resource for religious education in monthly meetings. We publish additional content in our online library (westernfriend.org/library), and we offer a collection of books by Friends in the West (westernfriend.org/books).

Our finances
Thanks to the generosity of Friends, Western Friend continued to strengthen financially in FY 2016, ending the year with net income of $23,018 and net assets of $81,336. Of those assets, we separated $25,000 into a “reserve” account as a first step toward eventually investing six-months-worth of operating reserves in an account with Friends Fiduciary. We continue to expand our budget overall, allowing us to contract for specialized services as needed and to move toward our goal of turning the executive editor’s salary into a “living wage” in a metropolitan region in the West.
This year marks the 100-year celebration of the American Friends Service Committee work that began in the aftermath of World War I, to help with reconstruction and humanitarian aid throughout Europe. To celebrate, AFSC planned and executed an extensive Summit at their Philadelphia headquarters in April, which coincided with this year’s Corporation meeting. So in addition to the usual Meeting for Business of the Corporation, AFSC also hosted an Academic Symposium and Workshops throughout the weekend, which the public was invited to attend.

Here is a link to the Summit schedule: https://www.afsc.org/resource/summit-schedule-events-april-20-23-2017  
Here is the link to the day-long Academic Symposium: https://www.afsc.org/resource/academic-symposium-program

It was a profound celebration, with many important panel discussions and a key note speech late Saturday night by Oscar Arias, Nobel Laureate and two-time president of Costa Rica. His speech can be seen here: https://www.afsc.org/video/keynote-oscar-arias

AFSC took this opportunity to launch their new “Sanctuary Everywhere” campaign, with compelling art work adorning posters and stickers throughout the Summit, which many attendees took home. Please see the AFSC table for more information, posters and stickers.

In addition to their work creating this impressive event, AFSC had the daunting task of finding a new General Secretary this year, as Shan Cretin is retiring. The search committee, led by David Henkel, was successful, and the Board appointed Joyce Ajlouny to serve as the next General Secretary of the AFSC beginning in September 2017. Joyce is the former head of Ramallah Friends School in Palestine and brings with her a wealth of international and organizational experience. You can learn more about Joyce and the inspirational gifts she brings at: www.afsc.org/story/afsc-announces-new-general-secretary-joyce-ajlouny.

Our local New Mexican AFSC programs are going well, focusing on sustainable agriculture, with new programs working on Pueblo lands with underserved (and underfed) populations. Please seek out Sayrah and Patrick for more information during IMYM.

It should also be noted that AFSC offices in Denver and Albuquerque have provided invaluable help with recent work to provide sanctuary to immigrants about to be deported and separated from family. Mountain View Monthly Meeting has been active with sanctuary, and in March, 2017 Albuquerque Monthly Meeting welcomed a guest into sanctuary. The AFSC New Mexico Program leaders, though their work is in local agriculture, were able to be a resource during Albuquerque's process of coming to unity. They had direct contact with Denver staff who work on immigration and provided answers to many questions. Once in action, Albuquerque received "how to" information and much appreciated encouragement from Denver along with help from national staff with national publicity for their press conference. Other meetings within IMYM considering sanctuary could benefit from these resources as well.
Here are brief statements from each group with ideas about how other meetings can support their work.

**Mountain View Meeting (MVFM) in Denver** has been hosting Ingrid Encalada Latorre in sanctuary in its meetinghouse since the end of November, 2016. MVFM joined the Metro Denver Sanctuary Coalition (MDSC) in July 2014 as a supporting congregation and learned the ropes while supporting Arturo Hernandez in sanctuary at First Unitarian for nine months. In January 2015 MVFM minuted readiness to become a host congregation and since then two immigrants have stayed with us briefly pending decisions on their stays of deportation. Ingrid is the mother of two citizen children: Anibal, 16 months, and Bryant 8. Anibal is staying with us as well. Ingrid is trying to re-open her felony conviction to correct the bad legal advice she received and has a court date for May 3rd. We want her to be able to pursue due process safely. Letters and cards of support to Ingrid are welcome as well as donations to MDSC towards legal expenses. Metro Denver Sanctuary Coalition, c/o Jefferson Unitarian Church, attn Carol Wilsey, 14350 W 32nd Avenue, Golden, CO 80401. You can also support Ingrid’s legal fees at: [https://www.gofundme.com/IngridSanctuary](https://www.gofundme.com/IngridSanctuary).

The MDSC also received Jeanette Vizguerra into sanctuary at First Unitarian on Feb 15, and is actively seeking to expand the network of host congregations. MVFM has been sharing its experience with sanctuary with inquirers nationwide.

**Albuquerque Meeting** has been hosting Emma since March 6, 2017. Over 100 people, including volunteers from the community, take shifts doing accompaniment at the meeting house. If other meetings wish to support them, they suggest that Friends help the Denver AFSC office in whatever ways they request. Also they ask that meetings partner with immigrant organizations in their community, preparing to respond to attacks on neighbors by training to do court accompaniment, provide Sanctuary, offer civil disobedience, etc. Finally, they ask that we hold in the light their guest, Emma; her husband, Robert; the Albuquerque Monthly Meeting; and all those who are affected by our country’s discriminatory laws and policies. If you wish, you can also donate to the New Mexico Faith Coalition for Immigrant Justice ([www.nmfaithcoalition.org](http://www.nmfaithcoalition.org))

Here are other AFSC resources that Monthly Meetings can share with Friends:

- A PowerPoint to share with your monthly/yearly meeting: [https://www.afsc.org/YearlyMeetingPowerpoint](https://www.afsc.org/YearlyMeetingPowerpoint)

- Documents arising from the workshops on ways you can stay involved, 5 ways you can further work on each issue presented: [www.asfc.org/5ways](http://www.asfc.org/5ways)

- Many ways to engage your meeting/church if AFSC's work: [www.afsc.org/friendsengage](http://www.afsc.org/friendsengage)

- Information about the Quaker social change
ministry:  www.afsc.org/qscm<http://www.afsc.org/qscm>

- And the Acting in Faith blog: www.afsc.org/friends<http://www.afsc.org/friends>

In Peace-

Anna Darrah
I have learned a lot about Friends Peace Teams in my first year as representative! Here is the national report and news from each of our three initiatives.

First, Friends Peace Teams would like to thank you for your support, both spiritually and financially. During this past year, our peace work has intensified, and we have new leadership for two of our initiatives. For AGLI (the African Great Lakes Initiative), David Bucura, a long-time coordinator with a local partner organization, stepped in for David Zarembka as our new coordinator. Monica Maher is our new coordinator for PLA (Peacebuilding in Las Americas), taking over the leadership responsibilities from Val Liveoak who is one of the founders of FPT.

The FPT Council (our governing body) has begun an examination our infrastructure, specifically the financial authority and responsibilities, with the goal of more transparency and accountability. Examples of what we are looking at are: What is the Council’s role for oversight? What is the role of the working groups for each of the initiatives? And what is its relationships with partner organizations?

Our decentralized structure calls for the three initiatives (AGLI, PLA, and AWP—Asia West Pacific serves us well. Abiding by and honoring our commitments to Friends process and practice as we solve conflicts and work through opportunities. Just recently, we established a Governance Committee, to be sure our practices continue to empower us all in the manner of Friends.

To help celebrate our 22nd year, Friends Peace Teams held our annual meeting at Wellesley Monthly Meeting (Massachusetts) on May 18 & 19, followed by our third annual PeaceQuest, where we celebrate FPT’s and Friends’ work with peace around the world, on Saturday, May 20. PeaceQuest was also held at Wellesley.

The Initiatives This Year:

Friends Peace Teams Asia West Pacific Initiative engages with peace workers in Central Java, North Sumatra, Aceh in Indonesia; Manila, Tagbilaran City, and Davao City in the Philippines; Seoul in Korea; Kathmandu, Pokara and Bhutanese camps in Nepal; and we maintain a concern for peace workers in Palestine, Israel, Afghanistan, Chechnya, Ukraine, New Zealand and Australia. As our peace-work follows the calling of our volunteers, in 2016 we actively worked in Nepal, Indonesia, the Philippines and Korea supporting nonviolence, peace, trauma healing, conflict transformation, and social justice advocacy for communities recovering from war or religious violence.

We completed earthquake relief activities in Nepal. We also provided a grant to Peace Place in Central Java to expand their training center and school. We continue to develop and support pre-schools, after-school programs, and parent, family and teacher training based on peace and nonviolence. The book, The Power of Goodness: Art and Stories for a Culture of Peace was published and is now available. It is a collection of short stories from the lives of real people who chose nonviolence and reconciliation and is accompanied by illustrations by young artists.

Peacebuilding en las Américas (PLA) has over ten active peacebuilding and trauma healing programs in Colombia, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras, Peacebuilding en Las Americas (PLA) provides grassroots solidarity, tools and hope to those most discriminated against and marginalized. 2016 marked an important year for the continued sustainability of PLA’s programs. After 13 years of volunteer service, Founding Coordinator, Val Liveoak, retired, continuing as advisor to the new team: Monica Maher, Initiative Coordinator; Allie
Prescott, Communications Specialist and Andy Cross, Financial Specialist. During this transition, the new team focused on growing and solidifying relationships with in-field Facilitators, Coordinators, and Volunteers who have passionately supported and facilitated workshops.

In 2016, each of PLA’s programs focused work with at-risk youth, teachers, war survivors, former and active gang members, prison personnel, indigenous communities and grassroots leaders. Some program highlights include: the first ever workshop in a Mayan Language in Guatemala; trauma healing workshops in El Salvador with female war survivors who have disappeared relatives; workshops that empowered women in Afro-Indigenous and Indigenous communities defending their land rights against illegal development in Honduras; workshops that provide rehabilitation for former gang members and prisoners in a Honduran Prison; and workshops with victims of violence as well as demobilized guerrilla and paramilitary fighters in Colombia during the historic signing of the Peace Accords. For more information on our work, please visit: http://pla.friendspeaceteams.org/.

The African Great Lakes Intitiative of Friends Peace Teams (AGLI) has continued its work in Central East Africa: Burundi, Rwanda, Kenya, and Democratic Republic of Congo. This includes Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC), Friends Womens Association’s, clinic in Bujumbura, Burundi, the Alternatives to Violence Project AVP, and other work. David Zarembka, the founder of AGLI resigned in August, and was partially replaced by David Bucura, a Rwandan. AGLI will be seeking a US-based person for outreach.

FPT’s office in St. Louis continues to be run efficiently and frugally by our Administrative Specialist, John Kintree. A new Communications Specialist, Hayley Hathaway, has been doing a great job updating our website and producing the beautiful new brochure available on our table. Tom Martin and Nancy Shippen continue as co-Clerks. We are grateful to the many volunteers who help us and our partners abroad continue to do this work.

Please visit our table in the display area for newletters and more to take back to your monthly meetings, and also our website at: www.FriendsPeaceTeams.org.

Submitted by
Anastacia Ebi
IMYM Representative to Friends Peace Teams