Reports from Quaker Organizations

1. Friends Committee on National Legislation
2. Friends General Council
3. Friends Peace Teams
4. Western Friend
5. Friends World Committee on Consultation report to IMYM
6. Quaker Earthcare Witness
7. AFSC – IMYM, 2019
Dear Molly,

I am pleased to enclose the Friends Committee on National Legislation’s annual program report to yearly meetings. Because Intermountain Yearly Meeting appoints members to serve on FCNL’s General Committee, I hope you will convey this report to your member meetings by publishing it in your advance documents and/or in the minute book from your annual sessions.

This report, which summarizes FCNL activities, includes FCNL Legislative Priorities for the 116th Congress. FCNL mails all yearly meetings a report to include with those from other Quaker organizations in their 2019 yearly meeting materials. I also hope that if the schedule for your annual sessions allows time for organizational reports that you will include your yearly meeting’s FCNL representatives.

For the past 75 years, FCNL’s close affiliation with its General Committee members and the yearly meetings who appoint them has been one of the most distinctive and important aspects of FCNL’s strength as a Quaker organization. The General Committee’s oversight and spiritual stewardship of our work help lead us towards right action in the world, and the involvement of local meetings and churches in helping to shape our legislative policies and lobbying priorities is an essential part of our mission to create a world free from war, a society with equity and justice for all, a community where every person’s potential may be fulfilled and an earth restored.

With gratitude,

Diane Randall
Executive Secretary
dianerandall@fcnl.org

P.S. Please be in touch with me directly if you have questions about our work or this report. I will also be sending this report to you digitally, for ease of reproduction.
2019 Report to Yearly Meetings

“When courageous action is required, God calls on ordinary people to accomplish the extraordinary.”
Amelia Kagan, FCNL Legislative Director for Domestic Policy, addressing the 2018 FCNL Annual Meeting

Dear Friends,

As Quakers, our faith and practice convince us to work for the peaceful, just, equitable, and sustainable world we seek. We are ordinary people called to accomplish the extraordinary. Founded in 1943 in Richmond, Indiana, FCNL has been bringing the concerns, experiences, and testimonies of Friends to bear on policy decisions in the nation’s capital for over 75 years. This work continues with your support and engagement, and with the ever-present grounding of Spirit.

Friends, in the last year your advocacy and financial contributions have helped ensure food is not taken away from families struggling with hunger, push to end the disastrous Saudi-led war in Yemen, prevent genocide and atrocities across the globe, and reform our criminal justice system.

Setting the Legislative Priorities for the 116th Congress

One of the distinctive features of the Friends Committee on National Legislation is our practice of asking Quakers around the country to help shape our collective work. Every two years, FCNL asks Friends and their meetings, churches, and worship groups to discern which public policy issues they feel are most pressing for the next Congress.

The core question as part of this process is, where is the Spirit leading us? How are Friends called to influence government today? Friends discernment is the foundation for the lobbying priorities that FCNL establishes for each congress. We were heartened to see robust participation by Quakers across the country in this process in 2018 (an increase of 20% from 2016). The legislative priorities recommended by Friends were approved by FCNL’s General Committee on December 1, 2018 and are included in this report.


FCNL’s Quaker Public Policy Institute and Lobby Day drew 400 people to Washington, DC to lobby to protect SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). Attendees went on 193 lobby visits representing 45 states with 39 different Members of Congress. One third of the participants were first time attenders.

More than 300 people stayed for FCNL’s Annual Meeting which celebrated FCNL’s 75th Anniversary, affirmed the direction of the Forward Plan as outlined by staff, and conducted the business of the organization. FCNL awarded the Edward R. Snyder Award for National Legislative Leadership in Advancing Disarmament and Building Peace to Rep. Ro
Khanna (CA-17) for his steadfast work to prevent war with North Korea, to end U.S. support for the Saudi-led war in Yemen, and to strengthen U.S. diplomacy abroad.

**We Get Heard by Listening – The Growth of Advocacy Teams**

FCNL’s Advocacy Team network is made up of more than 1,500 Quakers and friends from across the country who use their power as constituents to make change in Washington, D.C. Our success comes from our commitment to building relationships with Congress grounded in mutual respect and listening. 2018 brought tremendous growth in this program, as we launched 26 new Advocacy Teams. FCNL currently supports 113 teams around the country, an increase of 30% from just a year ago. In 2019 new Advocacy Teams are forming. To see current locations, visit fcnl.org/advocacyteams.

One of the greatest values in the community-building work done by FCNL’s Advocacy Teams is that we are making a conscious decision to stay focused on a single topic for a long time, even when it’s out of the headlines. This relationship-based approach to constituent advocacy has a unique value in a noisy time. We find that our steady, focused, and calm approach makes a difference when it comes to influencing policymakers. For members of Congress, meeting with us is a more pleasant experience than being yelled at in a town hall meeting.

**The Critical Role of Young Adult Friends**

FCNL is committed to growing our lobbying power both here on Capitol Hill and across the country. Central to all that we do is FCNL’s recruiting and training of young adults across the country to be advocates for peace, justice, and a sustainable planet. Eighteen Advocacy Corps organizers – who work part-time in their home congressional districts – lobbied on police demilitarization in 2018-19. Five summer interns, 10 full year Program Assistants, and 450+ participants in the 2018 annual Spring Lobby Weekend...young adults are taking the lead — and pressing Congress to pass key legislation.

For more than a decade, Spring Lobby Weekend has been a cornerstone of FCNL’s commitment to training new generations of advocates for peace and justice. In March 2019, more than 500 young advocates gathered in Washington, DC to learn, build community, and lobby Congress on the immigration crisis. Visit fcnl.org/youngadults to learn more about these opportunities.

In the year ahead, please join Friends in your community, and in Washington DC as we work for a world free of war and the threat of war, a society with equity and justice for all, a community where every person’s potential may be fulfilled, and an earth restored.

With gratitude for your partnership,

*Bridget Moix*
Baltimore Yearly Meeting
Clerk, FCNL General Committee
Legislative Priorities for the 116th Congress
Approved by FCNL’s General Committee on December 1, 2018

Since the early days of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), God's spirit has led Friends to be a prophetic witness and to take action in the world. The Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) brings Friends' spiritual values and testimonies to bear on U.S. public policy decisions. FCNL solicited the views and concerns of Quaker meetings, churches, and organizations around the country to help discern the following priorities for our lobbying and public education work during the 116th Congress (2019-2020):

- Peacebuilding, diplomacy and the peaceful prevention and resolution of violent conflict with an emphasis on the Middle East.
- Reduction of military spending and armed interventions.
- Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.
- A criminal justice system that is just and equitable, eliminates mass incarceration and promotes law enforcement that is community-oriented and demilitarized.
- An immigration system that promotes and respects the rights, safety and dignity of all immigrants, refugees and migrants.
- Equitable access for all to participation in an open and transparent political process.
- Ending gun violence including through the support of policies informed by public health best practices.
- Witness and advocate on Native American concerns. Honor the treaties.
- Economic justice and equity; strengthen programs that meet basic needs including universal access to quality, affordable healthcare.
- Sustainable solutions to climate change, including reducing fossil fuel use, increasing renewable energy, strengthening environmental protections, promoting international cooperation, and protecting vulnerable populations.

Friends are called to promote genuine equality of opportunity and communities in which everyone can safely live, learn, work, worship, and love. In each priority we will identify, expose and work to eliminate institutional racism, institutional sexism and other forms of systemic discrimination. We are mindful that our nation has a special responsibility to redress the consequences of its long history of slavery, race-based discrimination and oppression.

FCNL seeks to collaborate across the political spectrum to advance these priorities. FCNL’s work will be based on legislative opportunities, specific expertise, leadings, and available resources. In addition, The World We Seek (FCNL's Policy Statement) gives FCNL the flexibility to respond to crises and to important legislative opportunities, as Way opens.
FGC Talking Points 2019

Having done significant work to make FGC more financially sustainable over the past two years, Central Committee (our governing board) celebrated the opportunity to turn our attention in the year ahead to strengthening ongoing programs and implementing an institutional assessment focused on addressing systemic racism and fostering faithful inclusion.

Institutional Assessment

In 2017, Central Committee united around the need to undertake an institutional assessment to uncover structural racism within our organization. After two years of work, the Institutional Assessment Task Force’s report and recommendations are now available at www.fgcquaker.org/report

As a result of the Task Force’s report and recommendations, Central Committee approved the creation of an Implementation Group to guide the transformation of FGC into an anti-racist organization. FGC has committed to confront and heal white supremacy within our organization and among FGC Friends, and to model anti-racism as we support the work of the Implementation Group.

Although structural oppression doesn't diminish the presence of the Spirit in us or the vision of a “great people to be gathered,” it does create barriers that are stumbling blocks to full participation by many in our faith community. In dismantling these stumbling blocks, we must tap into the power of the Spirit while acknowledging the truth that structural oppression and systemic racism does spiritual violence to us all. To be faithful in this time we must do more than admit that such oppression and attitudes of privilege exist. We must act to eliminate them if we wish to be fully inclusive in ways that are more than mere words.

Spiritual Deepening

The Spiritual Deepening Library has been updated, expanded, and is now FREE and publicly available for meetings and individuals to use. The Spiritual Deepening Library offers a collection of experiential activities and exercises for small groups of Quakers and newcomers of all ages to explore together, with the goal of building connections with Quaker roots, growing as a spiritual community, and listening deeply to the Light within.

Spiritual Deepening eRetreats build spiritual community online through 4-week sessions on topics such as Silence and Expectant Waiting; Living into Wholeness; Aging, Death, and Dying; Becoming Patterns & Examples; and Understanding and Healing White Supremacy. Please see the FGC website for upcoming eRetreat dates.

FGC Gathering

The 2019 Gathering (June 30th to July 6th) will be at Grinnell College in Grinnell, IA, with the theme, “Peace in Our Hearts, Justice in the World.” Thanks to a generous donation, program fees for children and teens are waived and more discounts and scholarships are available for young adults, families, and teens.
Then, in 2020, the Gathering will be at Radford University in Radford, VA. This site was chosen by the Gathering Site Selection Committee whose composition is now majority Friends of Color. It was documented as part of the Institutional Assessment on Structural Racism that People of Color have often experienced the Gathering sites as unwelcoming or hostile. Because of these experiences, the Gathering Sites Selection Committee was reconstituted in 2016 to be majority of Friends of Color in hopes of addressing this issue. We’re thankful to all the volunteers on this committee who spend many hours traveling to find suitable Gathering locations.

Budget & Fiscal Health

We have made strides towards a balanced budget. Our focus now is on communicating with Friends about the quality and impact of FGC’s programs, increasing Friends’ engagement with FGC, and communicating to Friends and Quaker meetings that their contributions are vital so FGC can do the work that Friends have asked us to do. If you are currently a supporter of FGC thank you! If you aren’t, please contribute to support vital and enriching programs.

Other Programs

Welcoming Friend Project is a newer initiative that helps meetings throughout the United States and Canada welcome visitors and newcomers more fully into the life of Quaker meetings, with a specific focus on the unique needs of newcomers from a variety of backgrounds.

QuakerBooks FGC operates an online bookstore, www.quakerbooks.org, which continues to focus on our core services of providing key resources for local meetings, yearly meetings, and individuals with the goal of strengthening the Religious Society of Friends. Beginning in 2018, our inventory has been moved to a fulfillment house, which allows us to enhance customer service and fulfill online and phone orders in a timely manner. QuakerBooks continues to provide consignments to yearly meeting sessions and other events. We depend on Friends’ patronage to provide this important service.

Quaker Press publishes new books and pamphlets related to FGC’s major goals and programs. Look for new titles in the coming year.

Christian and Interfaith Relations Committee brings Quaker perspectives to ecumenical and interfaith events. It also connects us with faith-based conversations about truth, justice, and reconciliation.

Quaker Cloud offers a user-friendly platform for a monthly or yearly meeting to have a public presence online. The service has undergone a number of technical improvements and uses professional technical support as we seek to provide meetings with an easy to maintain, low cost, and feature-rich website that includes a minute manager and member directory. Approximately 150 meetings/Quaker organizations are now using the Quaker Cloud.

Ministry on Racism empowers individual Friends and Quaker meetings to confront and heal the wounds of white supremacy, challenge racism, and help Friends co-create communities that are more accessible and equitable. Specific projects include the Pre-Gathering Retreat for People of Color and their Families, organizing Friends to attend the annual White Privilege Conference (WPC), and regional gatherings for Friends of Color and their Families.
**Friends Meeting House Fund** supports Quaker meetings by guiding meetings through the process of securing a loan or grant to buy, renovate, or add on to other structures on meeting house property or to increase the energy efficiency of meeting houses.

These programs and projects are only possible due to the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donors across the United States and Canada. We are grateful for this support. Together we nurture the spiritual vitality of the Religious Society of Friends and nourish one another’s lives.
Dear Friends at IMYM.

First and foremost please accept my thanks for allowing me to represent you on the FPT Council. This work nurtures me and reporting back to you is good attention to Friends practice.

About five years ago FPT invited me to clerk the Council, and that service has been a joy. This past year we continued to excel worldwide in peacebuilding with local partner organizations in Africa, Asia West-Pacific and Latin America. The vital transitions that have been underway for several years in each of the initiatives and the Council have continued with renewed energy as we supported the peace work led by Spirit:

- The Africa Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI) is particularly well-positioned for their projects with our ongoing partners there. Expect a surge of programs.
- The Asia West-Pacific Initiative (AWP) has a new part-time paid coordinator, Kins Aparece from the Philippines, and a new working group clerk, Jane Drexler from Australia YM, who both have been working in the Initiative for several years in other positions. AWP just received a generous donation of $20,000 to develop new technologies for training the peace teams worldwide via YouTube and Internet.
- For Peacebuilding in Las Americas (PLA), our new and ongoing programs have outpaced the funds available to support them as well as our part-time coordinator. That creates a new opportunity for more intensified fundraising, so you may be hearing from those Friends.

Allie Prescott expanded her role with us as Communications Specialist for all of FPT, not just for PLA. She created the layout for the Spring 2019 PeaceWays publication and expanded our presence on social media and on our redesigned website. A new Peace Ministries Committee now receives and encourages Friends and others with a leading for peace work who need a home for oversight and support. Under the care of that new committee we moved The Power of Goodness curriculum, workshops and publications, so that all are readily available in all our programs worldwide. Finally, we established the new Fundraising Committee; you can expect to hear from them.

Again this year we kept our expenses for administration and fundraising to a minimum, 16%. With careful budgeting matched with actual expenses we met our financial goals, and program expenses for our initiatives are 84% of our total expenses.

This year was invigorating for all of us at FPT. My personal goals for the coming year are

- Continue to contribute to the successful transitions already under way in each Initiative and in the Council
- Strengthen the collaboration across all programs with careful attention to uniform workshop process and safeguards, especially the follow up activities that maintain contact with and support of those whom we train
- Coordinate the use of new technologies for training our partners via YouTube and the Internet
- Encourage new postings on social media and to our website to improve our presence and create more outreach to the general public
- Help streamline access for our volunteers to our records, minutes, and other information items via Google Docs
- Support new fundraising programs to increase our donations

Your continuing and generous financial support keeps all our volunteers and our part-time staff engaged in creative and effective peacebuilding with remarkable programs that build a culture of peace. THANK YOU.

Tom Martin, IMYM Representative to FPT
There is a principle which is pure, placed in the human mind, which in different places and ages hath different names; it is, however, pure and proceeds from God . . .

In whomsoever this takes root and grows, of what nation soever, they become brethren.
– John Woolman, 1762

Western Friend
Annual Report FY2018

Founded in 1929 as “Friends Bulletin Corporation,” Western Friend exists to serve the unique condition of Friends in the West – a few thousand people dispersed over half a continent. With our magazine, books, online publishing, and videoconferencing services, we help Friends in the West connect with each other – for sharing information, inspiration, organization, and worship. Today, Western Friend supports these purposes by hosting a range of communications media, including a magazine, books, web pages, bulk emails, social media, and videoconferencing.

During our 2018 Fiscal Year, Western Friend placed special emphasis on book production and online services. We published the newest edition of North Pacific Yearly Meeting’s book of Faith and Practice. (And, as a happy result, dozens more people decided to become new subscribers to Western Friend magazine.) Also in 2018, Western Friend greatly expanded our videoconferencing services for committees affiliated with IMYM, NPYM, and PYM. Currently, about fifteen committees are using this service on a semi-regular basis.

We invite you to become an active partner with us:
• Share your Quaker-related creative works with us, to publish online or in print.
• Sponsor discussion groups about articles and topics in Western Friend.
• Participate in online events that we sponsor.
• Support Western Friend financially by check, online, or through donations of stock. Donations to Western Friend are tax deductible.

Learn more by visiting our website: westernfriend.org.

The board of directors of Western Friend is drawn from the three yearly meetings that sustain it: Intermountain Yearly Meeting, North Pacific Yearly Meeting, and Pacific Yearly Meeting. Each yearly meeting appoints three directors, who serve three-year terms. The board sets direction for the 501(c)3 nonprofit, provides financial stewardship, and participates in building community among Friends in the West. The editor / executive director is a Friend and is responsible for all editorial, executive, and administrative functions of Western Friend.

FY2018 Board of Directors
Sakre Edson, Clerk (NPYM); Doug Smith, Treasurer (PYM); Jim Anderson, Recording Clerk (PYM); Claire Gorfinke (PYM); Tom Head (NPYM); Fred Koster (IMYM); Suzanne Simons (NPYM); Sarah Tarver-Wahlquist (IMYM), Charlene Weir (IMYM); and Mary Klein, Editor / Executive Director (PYM).

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, Western Friend remained financially strong in FY2018, ending the year with net income of $15,212 and net assets of $109,662. Of those assets, we held $37,518 in a “reserve” fund with Friends Fiduciary, which earned $1,743 in FY2018. Shortly after the fiscal year ended, we moved another $20,000 from our checking account into that reserve, which means that we have now achieved our goal of building our reserve fund to an amount equivalent to six months’ worth of operating expenses, while also maintaining a healthy balance in our checking account. Even more, we have met our goal of expanding our budget to the point that we are now able to pay our editor a “living wage,” while continuing to expand our services.

One pair of noteworthy anomalies in our FY2018 cash flow resulted from the publication of NPYM’s book of Faith and Practice. Our income from book sales and our costs of book production were both significantly larger in FY2018 than is usual. Consequently, the core importance of subscription income and individual donations to our overall financial health is somewhat diluted in our FY2018 financials.

### Western Friend - FY2018 Financial Statement

#### Balance Sheet

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<tr>
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<td>Equity - Reserves (Friends Fiduciary)</td>
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<td>Liabilities</td>
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<td><strong>Net Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$109,662</strong></td>
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#### Profit and Loss Statement

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<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
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<td>Advertising</td>
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<td>Contributions - Individuals</td>
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<td>Contributions - Monthly Meetings</td>
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<td>Book sales</td>
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<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Expenses</strong></td>
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<td>Publication expenses</td>
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<td><strong>Total expenses</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Net Ordinary income</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>$13,469</td>
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<td><strong>Unrealized gain (Friends Fiduciary)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Net income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$15,212</strong></td>
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*Shortly after the close of FY2018, Western Friend shifted another $20,000 from "equity-operations" into "reserves."*
FWCC Report to Intermountain Yearly Meeting  (May 2019)

“The Friends World Committee for Consultation fosters fellowship among all the branches of the Religious Society of Friends. In the Americas, the Quaker community extends from the Arctic to the Andes, spanning a rich diversity of regional cultures, beliefs and styles of worship.”

- FWCC Section of the Americas Website

2019 Section of the Americas Meeting, Excelsior Springs, MO

Dear Friends-

Greetings from Friends across the Americas and around the World. THANK YOU for being part of the Friends World Committee and for your support! You have many more Friends than you know, waiting to meet and worship with you!

Last year, our New Mexico Regional Meeting was blessed with a visit from Debbie Humphreys, one of the first group of traveling ministers sent out by their Meetings and FWCC to encourage intervisitation among Friends. This year, Debbie helped bless and send out the next cohort, some of whom you see in the picture to the right.

Friends – young, old, North American, South American, Latin American, English-speaking, and Spanish speaking – are now traveling across the Americas bearing their personal ministry and also inviting Friends into the larger Quaker family through their travels and personal witness. Although Debbie visited our Regional Meeting, the traveling ministers primarily visit individual (Monthly) Meetings, often several in an area, and accept hospitality from the Meetings they visit. If you are interested in hosting a minister at your Meeting, get in touch with Bill Schoder-Ehri from Arizona who is the clerk of the Traveling Ministry Corps Program Group (travelingministry@fwccamericas.org). It’s very convenient to have Bill in our region!
Your representatives – Bill Schoder-Ehri (AZ), Barb Stephens (CO), Rob Pierson (NM), and Cheryl Speir-Philips – were all blessed to attend the Section of the Americas Meeting in Excelsior Springs a couple weeks ago. (See pictures.) In fact, with two additional visitors from NM and CO, we had six people there from IMYM! Please talk to these Friends about the experience. Even better, invite us to visit and talk to your Meeting! We’d love to do it…

Section Meetings occur every two years. So the next one will be in 2021. We hope it will be out West. In fact if you know a good site in our region and think your Meeting might be willing to help with some arrangements, please let FWCC know! The next World Plenary will be in Durban, South Africa in 2023.

Would you like to attend an FWCC event? Organize an FWCC event? Connect to other Friends who may not look, speak, or worship as you do? Invite a traveling minster? Be a traveling minister? Be a representative – an ambassador from IMYM to the larger Quaker world? If any of this appeals to you, talk to us or visit the FWCC website:
http://fwccamericas.org/.

Don’t forget to plan a celebration for World Quaker Day, October 6, 2019. See http://www.worldquakerday.org/ for ideas.

You are FWCC. Unlike other Quaker organizations, you and your representatives don’t just support an organization that does good work. To a large extent, you and your reps become the organization by participating, intervisitation, and work as volunteers. Come join the larger circle of Friends worldwide.

And, as with most things, your donations help. Would you or your Meeting consider supporting or increasing your support to FWCC?

With peace and love,
Rob Pierson / Albuquerque Monthly Meeting, robpierson0@gmail.com

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1. IMYM budgets some travel support for our representatives and an occasional donation to help representatives from countries with fewer resources. Otherwise donations to FWCC are at the Meeting and individual level. There’s a “Donate” button at the top of the FWCC website: http://fwccamericas.org/. Here’s a great story... FWCC recently received two substantial bequests made by lovely donors were in their 70s...30 years ago. They lived to be 99 and 101! We can’t promise the same results for donor longevity, but do hope for similar generosity! Thanks!
Dear Friends,

I was asked by IMYM to be an observer at Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW), in an effort to appraise the feasibility of IMYM’s affiliating with QEW. I read that there were two concerns held by Friends about QEW: the “alignment of their decision-making process with Quaker process”, and the “insistence on non-nuclear solutions to climate and energy problems.” I attended the recent meeting in Federal Way, Washington, October 11-14.

First I would like to reiterate that I have been active in QEW for about 20 years, having acted as clerk and served in a number of other positions. At the meeting, I served as the recording clerk and as convener or clerk of the Population Working Group. In addition, I have urged IMYM to send representatives to QEW for a number of years. I am delighted that there is a move in that direction but am concerned that I cannot be a completely objective observer. Nevertheless, I hope that I can provide information to help IMYM decide about this relationship. I am currently an at large member of the QEW Steering Committee.

Each day Quaker Earthcare Witness started with a half hour or more of silent worship. In addition, each meeting that I attended (the Continuing Counsel Committee, the Publications Committee and the Population Working Group as well as the initial orientation meeting and three Meetings for Worship for Business all started and ended with short periods of silence. Members of the Spiritual Nurturance Committee broke the silence that started each Meeting for Worship for Business with one or more readings of Quaker importance.

Every person with whom I spoke who was present at the QEW meeting expressed concern about the state of the Earth, and about those people in politics who seem to be disregarding the need for stewardship of Creation.

As far as I could tell, Quaker process was followed at all times. There was no mention of nuclear energy, pro or con, of which I am aware.

Peace,

Richard Grossman
AFSC
Report for IMYM
May 2019

AFSC is currently working on a 10-year strategic plan and has been seeking Quaker input on direction and focus for the next 10 years through surveys, emails and discussions. In the last year there has been a leap in marketing and online efforts to broaden AFSC’s outreach, effectively aligning with the technology and habits of our age, while making the “Next 10 Years” conversation very effective.

Seeking a just and peaceful world is the core of AFSC’s efforts, manifested through work in countries like Palestine, Israel, North Korea, China, Cambodia, Mexico and Central America, Kenya, Somalia, Haiti and elsewhere. Domestic programs are organized regionally throughout the US, focusing on broad issues like Immigration Rights, Mass Incarceration, Economic Justice and Equal Rights, as well as more specific regional issues like the local New Mexican focus on farm training, immigration and water rights.

AFSC is led by Quaker insight and seeks to be grounded in spiritual leadings as it continues with this important work. Taking the time to gather and season direction for the organization’s next 10 years is the most important work we can do; I was honored to be a part of this rare opportunity when the corporation met in April. AFSC is extending the deadline for finalizing the strategic plan for the next 10 year, so that more input can be gathered.

Much work is being done within the corporation right now to improve the environment between the staff of AFSC and the management and board members, to create better alignment within AFSC overall. Fiscal shifts have led to closure of some programs and integration of others into larger programs, and diligence around listening, support and honoring the work of AFSC staff has become paramount to our continued efficacy.

Immigration continues to lead the focus of AFSC’s attention within the US. A new “fast response” need has arisen and is being developed to help with urgent needs. A successful demonstration was organized quickly around the San Diego border crossing in December, with AFSC organizing a multi-faith, pastor-based protest that garnered press coverage across the US. AFSC is developing internal parameters to be able to move quickly when need arises to organize more events like these in the future.

Efforts to create a just and peaceful immigration process in the US are far from over, so if any are called to help, please know that AFSC is on the ground working hard and can really use your support and input.

In peace and light,
Anna Darrah
Regional Representative from IMYM
American Friends Service Committee