

# Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC)



## Recognition of a Worship Group by FWCC

When there is a large enough group of Friends in one place, the group may want to form a Worship Group. The number of members will vary, and usually there will be a number of International Members or people with membership in another country, as well as regular attenders.

After the decision to form a group worshipping after the manner of Friends, one person should be designated to serve as convenor of the Worship Group. The convenor is responsible for the arrangements for Meetings for Worship, including informing others of the place and times of those Meetings. One member of the group should be appointed as contact person with Friends elsewhere (including FWCC) and for local enquirers. This may be the convenor although it is good practice to share and rotate the responsibilities around.

As the worship group develops its spiritual life and continuity as a worshipping community, FWCC encourages an application for formal recognition by FWCC. To apply, the Convenor of the group should contact the International Membership Secretary at the World Office or the appropriate Section Secretary with relevant details. These would include the number of regular worshippers and how frequently the group meets. Where FWCC gets to know a group well through one of its Sections, it may take the initiative in considering formal recognition.

The International Membership Applications Committee will consider the application at its next meeting, in consultation with the section secretary. If the committee discerns that the group is ready for recognition, it will minute this.

Recognition establishes a link so that intervisitation may take place. Information can also be exchanged regarding any new Friends known to be moving into the area. The name and address of the group's contact person should be notified to the International Membership Secretary for inclusion on the list of Worship Groups.

The Worship group will be made known to the officers and staff of the FWCC Section and the World Office so that they can try to include the group on the itinerary of their travels. It is also useful for the contact person to remain in regular contact with their FWCC Section, as the Sections have their own newsletters and can help link the group to other Friends in the region.

Worship groups are encouraged to join in the business and worship of their FWCC Section as much as possible. Each Section has regular business meetings that worship groups may be able to send representatives to. Many small groups are finding that they can have regular contact with other Friends using social media and other electronic forms of communication that helps to nourish the life of their meeting.

## FWCC enables Friends to work together by

- ◆ Arranging conferences and gatherings
- ◆ Encouraging intervisitation and travel under religious concern (including Quaker Youth Pilgrimages)
- ◆ Participating in ecumenical and interfaith events
- ◆ Sharing information about Friends around the world; publishing bulletins, *FRIENDS WORLD NEWS*, as well as books and pamphlets about Friends in several languages
- ◆ Facilitating understanding and cooperation between mission and service bodies of Friends worldwide
- ◆ Maintaining contact with isolated Friends and groups through intervisitation, correspondence and the International Membership Committee
- ◆ Furthering Friends' concerns such as peace, disarmament, women's rights, economic justice, racial equality and environmental concerns, and witnessing to our faith in the world
- ◆ Acting as Friends' official voice at the United Nations and its agencies

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# About the Friends World Committee for Consultation

Connecting Friends • Crossing Cultures • Changing Lives

The Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) helps to transcend the differences among Friends; these differences include language, culture, nationality, and in the emphasis placed on different aspects of our common Christian and Quaker heritage and witness. It is a channel of communication among Friends, helping us to explore and nurture our identity as Quakers so that we can discover and be faithful to our true place in the world as a people of God.

## The Sections

There are four sections which range in size from near 160,000 Friends in Africa Section to around 12,600 in the Asia-West Pacific Section. The Sections also differ widely in staff, programme and financial resources. Within the overall aims of FWCC, each Section is autonomous, holding regional gatherings, publishing materials and organizing its own programmes.

Your section office should be your first point of contact for matters relating to forming groups and other local issues.

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## The World Office

The World Office, which is currently situated in London, England, serves as a centre of worldwide communication for FWCC and its affiliated groups. Nearly all yearly meetings in the world are affiliated to FWCC; their members are the FWCC membership. Cordial contacts are maintained with those yearly meetings that have not affiliated.

The Committee appoints a General Secretary who works from the World Office. The World Office organizes Plenary Meetings and other world gatherings and consultations, implements Committee decisions and serves the Sections and maintains contact with isolated Friends and worship groups (International Members) throughout the world, as well as the Quaker service bodies. FWCC acts as the representative body of the whole Quaker family in worldwide ecumenical bodies and at the United Nations.

By means of correspondence, publications and staff travel, the office seeks to bring Friends in closer touch with one another and help them to experience the world-wide character of the Society of Friends.