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

Our work with the Quaker United Nations Offices, both by appointing members to their governing committees and by providing consultative status, offers a means to engage Quakers in world affairs. Our consultation extends to those of other faiths through work with the World Council of Churches and Christian World Communions.

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

History
In 1937, after years of concerned work to reconnect a fragmented Quaker world, the Second World Conference of Friends created the FWCC “to act in a consultative capacity to promote better understanding among Friends the world over.” Today, Friends from yearly meetings and groups in 75 nations continue this work. Around the world there are four cooperating, autonomous FWCC Sections serving Africa, the Americas, Asia and the West Pacific, and Europe and the Middle East. FWCC’s World Office is in London.

FWCC World Office
The world office is based at Friends House in London, England. It serves four main roles:
- Organise world gatherings, including triennial meetings and consultations of Quakers world-wide.
- Support and maintain contact with the work of the four FWCC sections and the Quaker United Nations Offices.
- Coordinate the International Membership programme, which joins isolated Friends and worship groups to the wider Quaker community.
- Promote an understanding of the world-wide character of the Society of Friends, through conferences, staff travel, correspondence and publications, and through ecumenical and interfaith work on behalf of Friends.

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

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

Contents

Our God is a Great Big God . . . . . 1
Report from the FWCC Treasurer . . . 2
Christian World Communions . . . . 4
Upcoming Meetings . . . . . . 5
Earthcare Webinars . . . . . . 6
Young Adult Friends Development Fund . 7
Sharing Good News (Section reports)
World Quaker Day 2019 . . . . 8
Asia-West Pacific Section . . . . 8
Africa Section . . . . . . 8
Europe and Middle East Section . . 10
Section of the Americas . . . 10

Invitation to Online Sustainability Conference . . . . . 11

Cover photograph by Jeremy Bishop on unsplash.com.

Thank you for your donations to FWCC, past, present and future.

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

Please give generously to support the world family of Friends.

Please consider FWCC in your will.

For more about FWCC please visit our website: fwcc.world
Our God is a Great Big God

I was leading a session at Moyallon Camp in Northern Ireland, where the theme was Our God is a Great Big God. The song by the same title was catchy, and the kids sang it with real gusto. That phrase has stuck with me. When I contemplate the abundance of God, even the expansive horizon in front of me is not big enough. It is beyond human imagination.

If God is so big and all-encompassing, then is it not fitting that we think big, too? Can we expand our imagination to include a world that is loving and peaceful and just? Can we ask for too much?

Drawing to the end of the year and to the end of a decade, what will the New Year bring? What do we dare hope for?

Here is my wish list, resolutions from this Quaker’s perspective:

1. May every child know he/she is loved, and belongs to other people, whatever constellation it takes on.
2. May God soften the hearts of people in power, moving humanity away from selfishness toward an appreciation for the common good.
3. May we all learn to suspend judgement, assuming the good in each other and taking responsibility for our own actions.
4. May we affirm hope and the power of love, which for many of us finds expression through our love of God.
5. May we find within ourselves enough faith to move mountains, to believe in the miracle of Jesus, and to reject all fear.
6. May we love without ceasing.

What would you add? Where is your imagination taking you? To what does God call you, and how will this year be different for you?

Martin Luther King said, “I have decided to stick to love . . . hate is too great a burden.” How will your burden be lifted? How will you allow the Light of God to guide your foot steps?

I am grateful for the Quaker family, for our sensibilities, for our love of life, for our joy in faith. May we celebrate each other and new life in the coming year.

In God’s care,

Gretchen Castle

GENERAL SECRETARY, FWCC WORLD OFFICE
Report from the FWCC Treasurer

Dear Friends,

At FWCC, we are very grateful for the support of Friends around the world in providing the funds which enable us to carry out work of FWCC on your behalf. The work of FWCC is sustained by gifts from individual Friends, which come to FWCC either directly, or through Local and Yearly meetings, or FWCC Sections. Some are the result of earlier generosity as legacies and trust funds. They all represent concrete expressions of support from across the Quaker world for the work of FWCC. We recognise that this is a time when pressure on personal finances is growing.

The challenge for the FWCC World Office is to achieve a balance between operating income and expenditure, whilst also accumulating reserves for future work including the proposed 2023 World Plenary and the costs of senior staff replacement, also expected to be in 2023. We are challenged, as a world network, to operate in an increasingly sustainable way, both financially and environmentally.

Our unrestricted funds received a welcome boost from the results of further investigations into the TIA-CREFF account, which was previously considered to be for the pension fund of a former employee and has now been found to belong to FWCC.

In 2018 unrestricted income (excluding the TIAA-CREFF account) exceeded expenditure, resulting in a surplus, before unrealised losses on investments, of £8k, whilst restricted income exceeded expenditure yielding a surplus of £68k before unrealised investment losses. The CEC decided to start putting money aside into designated funds for the World Plenary (£15k) and the Senior Staff replacement costs (£5k), hoping to continue to do so each year from now.

The FWCC World Office operates internationally and so is subject to global economic movements in exchange rates and stock market values. The added uncertainty of the UK position in the Brexit process is an added factor. FWCC World Office holds investments and cash in both British Pounds and US Dollars. At the end of 2018 stock market investment values were significantly down on the year resulting in an unrealised loss of £38k. In 2019 the stock markets have since recovered, although remain volatile.

A consultant fundraiser had been retained during 2018 and early 2019 with the objective of encouraging individual donations as well as supporting Sections in their fundraising efforts. The consultant is being engaged for particular fundraising activity.

Our funds for supporting Young Adult Friends in developing connections across section and across the theological spectrum has received a further boost with the transfer from Section of the Americas of their Quaker Youth Pilgrimage Fund.
We are looking to the future, trusting that the means will be forthcoming to carry out the work laid upon us.

Fenwick Kirton-Darling  
TREASURER, FWCC WORLD OFFICE

If you would like to see more information regarding the World Office Finances, please check the Open Charities website at [http://opencharities.org/charities/211647](http://opencharities.org/charities/211647)
Quaker General Secretary to serve as leader of world ecumenical conference

Not only was October 2019, the month the World Quaker Family celebrated the 6th annual World Quaker Day, but it was also the month that Gretchen Castle, the General Secretary of the World Quaker Office was appointed the chairperson for the Christian World Communions Conference.

Gretchen, will be the first woman to be the chairperson. Quakers, yet again, are leading the way for a worldwide representative to be a woman.

What is The Christian World Communions and what do they do? The Christian World Communions is made up of general secretaries from Christian communions who have a world presence. They meet annually as the Conference of General Secretaries for fellowship and support as religious leaders, learning about shared common missions and concerns, and promoting Christian unity as a constructive influence in the world. It is comprised of those communions who have a global presence and a world office.

The previous chairperson, Martin Junge of the Lutheran World Federation tweeted, “I am happy about the unanimous readiness of the Conference of Secretaries to receive her gifts and her leadership.”

Gretchen Castle, General Secretary of FWCC World Office and new chairperson of The Christian World Communions with the previous chairperson, Martin Junge.
In a time when we are challenged to come together across the globe, we are reminded that spaces where Christians can come together are more important than ever. Gretchen’s new position is continuing the message of FWCC “to encourage fellowship among all the branches of the Religious Society of Friends” and now within Christians around the world. The Friends World Office, along with the four sections the Quaker family are celebrating the happy news.

*The Conference of General Secretaries typically includes the following:*

- Anglican Communion
- Baptist World Alliance
- Disciples Ecumenical Consultative Council
- Ecumenical Patriarchate
- General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
- International Old Catholic Bishops’ Conference
- Lutheran World Federation
- Mennonite World Conference
- The Moravian Church
- Moscow Patriarchate
- Pentecostals
- Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity
- Reformed Ecumenical Council
- The Salvation Army
- Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers)
- World Communion of Reformed Churches
- World Convention of Churches of Christ
- World Methodist Council

*Other organizations include:*

- World Council of Churches
- Global Christian Forum
- World Evangelical Alliance

**Upcoming Meetings**

The *Europe and Middle East Section Annual Meeting* will take place 30 April–3 May 2020 in Paris, France.


The *Africa Section Meeting* will take place in March 2021 in Mwanza, Tanzania.

The next *World Plenary Meeting* is planned for July 2023 in Durban, South Africa.
Friends Uniting Across the Branches to Care for the Earth and God’s Creation

A positive story on how sustainability is bringing Friends together.

Climate change is not a cheerful topic. Even less cheerful are the problems effecting Friends across the globe caused through climate change such as unpredictable crop cycles, rising sea levels, and soaring temperatures in congested cities. However, despite the unsettling changes, there is still some hope as our Friends in North America have shown us.

A group based in North America have come together, across the different branches of Quakerism to unite in their common goal of caring for the Earth. They united across the programmed and unprogrammed traditions and through different use of religious language to unite in their care for the world, and the people on it. Working with the FWCC World Office, the North American group of Friends have invited Friends worldwide to explore what Quakers can do for Sustainability through a series of online webinars.

The first webinar included Lindsey Fielder Cook, Representative for Climate Change at the Quaker United Nations Office, Geneva, and Adrian Halverstadt, Director of Evangelical Friends Church — North America. They shared their personal testimonies on environmental justice, earthcare and stewardship, and discussed the interlocking ecological issues affecting all of creation. Through the webinar, Friends were able to learn about others who are united in wanting to work towards a better future and hopefully inspired through knowing they’re not alone.

The second webinar continued the sustainability conversation amongst Friends and looked at a variety of activists. It hosted an impressive array of four women of all ages from the FWCC section of the Americas. These included: Emma Condori Mamani, a lifelong Quaker from La Paz, Bolivia who spoke about climate change and access to clean water; Emily Wirzba who lobbies on energy and environmental concerns for the Friends Committee on National Legislation (US); Beverly Ward who is the Field Secretary for Earthcare for Southeastern Yearly Meeting; and Kallan Benson, a Friend from Annapolis, Maryland who is a coordinator with the Fridays for Future climate strike movement.

So despite all of the worrying and negative impacts of climate change, our Friends in North America are showing us all that through the Quaker testimonies and processes we can unite to work together to tackle issues around sustainability. We can stand together.
So while we’re all working out what our role is in the climate crisis, Friends in North America have shown, if we allow everyone to be part of the process of exploration, there is hope.

**Further reading and opportunities:**

- You can watch both webinars on the FWCC sustainability resources page on our website.
- We want to hear from you. In February 2020 we will be hosting an online conference exploring where we as Friends are in the sustainability debate. The conference will have videos with interviews from Friends across the globe who are involved in sustainability through political action, theological expression, and more. Following the speakers will be two hours of worship sharing. Come join, listen to Friends across the globe, and share your experiences.

Faith Biddle  
*Sustainability Communications Support Officer, FWCC World Office*

---

**Young Adults Friends Development Fund**  
**Deadline to apply 15 January 2020 and 15 July 2020**

In 2019 FWCC World Office accounted there was a Young Adult Friends Development Fund. This was designed to strengthen the network of Young Adult Friends around the world. The fund was created from Quaker Youth Pilgrimage monies, and it has already been successful in joining friends from the section of the Americas with Friends in Europe.

If you would like to apply for the fund, you need to:

1. Be a Young Adult Friend of 18+ (up to 21, 25, 30 or 35 depending on circumstances)
2. Show how you will engage with other sections of FWCC.

Remember the principal aim of pilgrimages will be to strengthen Quaker identity by offering opportunities to explore Quaker roots, history and heritage in many contexts, and to enable Young Adult Friends to experience deep spiritual fellowship at international level, across different branches of the Quaker family, or across different variations of the same branch. Be sure to stress how your proposal will meet this aim in your application.

You can find the application on our website at [http://fwcc.world/fwcc-news/yaffund](http://fwcc.world/fwcc-news/yaffund) or email faithb@fwcc.world if you have any questions.

We look forward to sharing with you the adventures of the successful participants!
Sharing Good News
World Quaker Day 2019

On the 6 October 2019, Quaker around the world celebrated the sixth annual world Quaker Day. The theme this year was *Sustainability: Planting Seeds of Hope for the World We Love*.

Thank you to all those who sent in their reports from the day. It was wonderful to go through the reports to learn about what Quakers around the world have been up to. Some of the highlights have been tree planting, singing, dancing, and sharing meals together.

We have included a few highlights from the four different sections below and the rest of the submissions photos are uploaded onto the World Quaker Day website. You can see the full reports at [www.worldquakerday.org](http://www.worldquakerday.org). Below are a few examples from the four FWCC Sections.

Next year, World Quaker Day will be on Sunday 5 October 2020. The theme is: *What does it mean to be a Quaker today*?

Be sure to put the date in your diary and start thinking about how you will celebrate.

**Asia-West Pacific Section**

In a section that encompasses many languages, Friends in the Asia West Pacific Section of FWCC held international Skype calls across their section with fellow Friends, shared meals, planting trees and much more.

For example, one group in Taranaki Monthly Meeting, New Plymouth, New Zealand said:

“We have interpreted *Sustainability: planting seeds for renewal of this world we love* literally and have started an on-going Tararanki Quaker Native Tree Nursery Project to nurture a collection of native seedlings (either found or grown from seeds collected by Friends) to plant out for restoration of native forest at some future date. The first plant collected in time for World Quaker Day is shown here and is a native Kowhai rescued from a growing wild in a suburban garden where previously it would have been pulled out and discarded.”

**Africa Section**

Friends in Africa gathered across the continent to plant trees, engage in discussions around sustainability, sing songs, and celebrate being part of a large Quaker family.

For example, at Hill House Meeting in Ghana, they asked themselves “How does sustainability run through Quaker testimonies?”

Collectively the meeting said their ‘discussions went beyond the grim global environmental challenges being caused largely by human activities to how to create a better world we love with Quaker testimonies individually and collectively.’
Friends gathered at Jønnbu in the Hills in Oslo on World Quaker Day 2019.

Taranaki Monthly Meeting, New Plymouth, New Zealand, celebrated with a special morning tea, cakes, and fellowship before Meeting for Worship.
Overall they agreed “Hill House as an environmentally friendly place, to continue to plant more trees, nurture them and individually live by Quaker testimonies of simplicity, truth, equality, peace and sustainability.” At their next business meeting, they have agreed to explore the feasibility of limiting the use of plastic bags in their shopping.

Read the full report from Hill House, and more from the Africa section on the World Quaker Day website.

**Europe and Middle East Section**

In Europe and the Middle East Friends gathered in large and small numbers to celebrate World Quaker Day. We heard from gatherings in the hills of Oslo, and cosy shared lunches in several meeting houses in the UK, including one Westminster Meeting in London where Gretchen, the General Secretary from the World Office, spoke about Friends around the world.

**Section of Americas**

The Section of the Americas did not disappoint in their World Quaker Day submissions. We saw friends from across the branches celebrating by learning about the four sections of the family of Friends, sharing meals, planting trees and much more.

For example, we heard from Friends at Lake Forest Friends Meeting (Illinois Yearly Meeting), the early elementary first day school class learned about the 4 sections of FWCC. Then they shared that information, telling the meeting there are Quaker children all over the world. They also made cookies for coffee hour to help everyone celebrate World Quaker Day.

See the full reports from the section at [http://www.worldquakerday.org/](http://www.worldquakerday.org/).

Friends at Lake Forest Friends Meeting (Illinois Yearly Meeting) learning about the four sections of FWCC on World Quaker Day 2019.
FWCC Sustainability: An Online Conference with Friends Worldwide

How does God call us to act?

“Be on guard. Stand firm in the faith. Be courageous. Be strong.”

— 1 Corinthians 16:13

What

We are inviting you to join an online conference on sustainability with Friends around the world. As Friends, we recognise the need to respond to sustainability. In 2016, at our last world gathering, we generated the Pisac Sustainability Minute which has led to exploring the work Quakers are doing on sustainability across the world, asking Friends and Yearly Meetings to take action to promote sustainability at all levels, including the global level.

But now, almost four years on, we recognise the need to gather, to share, to understand where we as a family sharing this urgent concern.

Why

This online conference will create space to hear from one another around the world on matters relating to sustainability and to understand how as Quakers we feel we are being called to act. The conference is being held in part due to the request at the World Plenary Meeting in Peru in 2016 that FWCC bring Friends together in-between our world gatherings in order to maintain connection and community. But specifically, this will allow us to gather the Quaker voice to move forward on sustainability concerns. How do we feel called to act? How does our radical faith speak to us?

The details

On Saturday 22 February 2020, there will be an online conference spanning 11 hours. You will be able to join one of three start times, for a duration of 3 hours.

All worship sharing will be in English (for French and Spanish interpretation see table).

The following table lists the UK time zones and corresponding times across the world:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>UK Time Zone</th>
<th>Corresponding Time Zones</th>
<th>Language Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Session One | 8:00–11:00   | • Canberra 19:00–22:00  
               |                      | • Manilla & Hong Kong 16:00–19:00              |                         |
| Session Two | 12:00–15:00  | • Nairobi 15:00–18:00  
                |                      | • Kigali and Bujumbura 14:00–17:00             | French available        |
| Session Three | 16:00–19:00  | • Chicago 10:00–13:00  
                   |                      | • Philidelphia 11:00–14:00  
                   |                      | • La Paz 12:00–15:00                      | Spanish available       |
Each start time will have 45 minutes of videos with 5 speaks. The speakers will come from each of the four FWCC sections and represent diversity of Quaker traditions, ages, and gender in order to represent the fullness of who we are across the world. After we hear from the speakers, there will be two hours for worship sharing.

The purpose of the worship sharing will be to listen to how we are responding to God's call to care for creation. How are we co-creators with God and each other? Volunteers will gather what they believe is the sense of the meeting which will be shared as a statement the following week. This will help guide us as we move toward the World Plenary Meeting in 2023 in Southern Africa Yearly Meeting.

**Aim of the online conference**

- To galvanise and gather the Quaker voice on sustainability
- Share progress, ideas and learnings since Pisac minute in 2016.
  Where are Quakers now?
- Explore how God calls us to this — we are stronger when we are together.

**Structure of the conference**

**Before**

We ask you to come with hearts and minds prepared. Look at the sustainability resources on our website to empower yourself on how Quakers are affected in the world. Learn about what Yearly Meetings and churches have committed to since 2016. Read, look at other faith groups, and ask yourself what do I want to do and what do I think is possible?

**During**

We will hear from five different speakers of pre-recorded video content and then there will be two hours of worship sharing. French interpretation will be available during the second start time, and Spanish interpretations will be available in the third start time. Sign-language upon request only.

In this context of worship sharing, we will do our best to hold the space respectfully while allowing many Friends to speak. Because it is an online worship, we will have one elder who will call on each person to speak. This elder will ensure the ministry is no longer than three minutes. We understand this might be tricky online, but we want to allow ministry from as many Friends as want to speak. The elder can also then allow for listening space between Friends. There will be additional elders who will help hold this online worship space.

**After**

A group of Friends from the world office, in London, UK, will listen to the whole 11 hours of the conference and 6 hours of worship sharing. They will gather a sense of the collective worship sharing and produce a written statement. This written
statement will be read to a committee with representatives from around the world the following day and will be circulated in the following days.

Due to the different time zones of the conference, we will not be able to read this back in live time. It will be distributed to participants and other Quaker bodies in the weeks following the Conference and will be taken to the world plenary in 2023. We ask you to read the statement to your meetings or churches and continue the conversation among our Quaker Family.

Technology — Zoom conference

We will be using the platform Zoom to host this call. This means, if you want to join the conference, you will need access to an internet connection and a device that is able to run Zoom. We also suggest that you use a device that has a webcam and microphone as this will allow the fullest participation.

You will be able to join the conference on your own, or as a group of three or four. If you’re hoping to join as a group, we suggest you do not join with any more than four or five people because it will make the worship sharing section of the webinar difficult to hear.

If you are not able to get access to the internet, a camera or a microphone, please email sustainability@fwcc.world so we can possibly connect you to someone in close proximity. Do what you can to seek out places to connect.

Registration

To register your place, sign up via EventBrite on our website by February 13, 2020.

You can find the link to this on our website at fwcc.world/sustainability/conference2020/register.

For all the details of the event see: http://fwcc.world/sustainability/conference2020.

If you have any questions, please email sustainability@fwcc.world.
WORLD OFFICE
173 Euston Road
London NW1 2AX, UK
GENERAL SECRETARY: Gretchen Castle
PHONE (OUTSIDE THE UK): +44 207 663 1199
PHONE (INSIDE THE UK): 020 7663 1199
E-MAIL: world@fwcc.world
fwcc.world
UK Charity 211647

SECTION OF THE AMERICAS
1506 Race Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102, USA
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Robin Mohr
PHONE: +1 215 241 7250
E-MAIL: robinm@fwccamericas.org
www.fwccamericas.org

AFRICA SECTION
PO Box 41946
Nairobi, Kenya
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Job Bikokwa
PHONES: +254 2 570 077
+254 2 567 601
E-MAIL: fwccas@gmail.com
www.fwccafria.org

EUROPE AND MIDDLE EAST SECTION
PO Box 1157, Histon
Cambridge CB24 9XQ, UK
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Marisa Johnson
PHONE: +44 1223 479585
E-MAIL: secretary@fwccemes.org
www.fwccemes.org

ASIA-WEST PACIFIC SECTION
PO Box 6063 O’Connor
ACT Australia 2602
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Ronis Chapman
PHONE: +61 402 745 548
E-MAIL: roniscc@fwccawps.org
www.fwccawps.org