Greetings from the General Secretary

It is my privilege to offer greetings from Friends around the world to one another. It is our responsibility to help Friends appreciate the strength and joy of our diversity and to know that each one of us belongs to the Quaker fold. I am often asked what unites us. I could generate a substantial list, but it always begins with, ‘We share the love of God.’ As a Quaker, we ask ‘What is it that God requires of us?’ and while the answer is not always easy, it is more often than not, clear. We are asked to be faithful and to give all of ourselves to God’s purpose for us, both individually and corporately. And what a joy and blessing this is!

The last year has been one of listening and responding to God’s call. FWCC has been drawing Friends into a strong network around sustainability, climate action, and care for all of creation. We are now integrating the issues of sustainability with privilege and historical injustice. We are hearing the call to strengthen resilient communities of faith as we feel our world shifting round us. With God’s help, we will continue to bring Friends together with purpose, amplifying the Quaker voice at a time when our perspective and way of life will be increasingly useful to the world.

Join us as we articulate the spiritual imperative to live in faith, to help the human family respect all of God’s creation, to work for peace and justice, and to live in the hope of God’s preferred future for us.

Gretchen Castle
GENERAL SECRETARY, FWCC WORLD OFFICE

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.

Connecting Friends, Crossing Cultures, Changing Lives . . . through Faith

Gretchen Castle, General Secretary, FWCC World Office, London UK
The Work of the World Office

The Quaker community circles the globe, spanning a rich diversity of regional cultures, beliefs and styles of worship. Today there are at least 400,000 Quakers in 87 different countries. The majority of yearly meetings, across all Quaker traditions, are affiliated with FWCC.

Through its five offices, the World Office and four Section offices, FWCC builds networks for witness, fellowship and worship among Friends. The World Office:

- organizes the World Plenary Meeting every 6–10 years, gathering representatives from yearly meetings and other Friends from around the world
- energises World Quaker Day to celebrate the global Quaker presence
- gathers Friends responding to climate change through the Sustainability Program, funded by Britain Yearly Meeting
- manages the Young Adult Friends Development Fund, which supports and strengthens the network of Young Adult Friends aged 18–30 around the world
- administers the International Membership Program which allows isolated Friends and worship groups, far from any organized Quaker group, to be included in the worldwide Quaker family
- represents Quakers at the global level in ecumenical, interfaith, and Quaker United Nations Office engagement. Quakers benefit from this presence at the world level.

Five Strategic Areas of World Office Work

- Working for the sustainability of all of God’s creation
- Addressing spiritual issues of privilege and historical injustice
- Funding Young Adult Friends in their travel and ministry
- Building Bridges across Quaker traditions
- Developing greater financial and organizational stability

Five Elements of World Office Work (see pp. 4–11)

1. Support Section work and strengthen connections across sections
2. Bring Friends together in multiple ways using technology and meeting face-to-face
3. Generate profound diversity work
4. Represent Friends at the world level
5. Amplify the Quaker voice through strengthened networks
1. Support Section work and strengthen connections across Sections

**World Quaker Day 2019**

On the sixth World Quaker Day, October 6 2019, the theme was Sustainability: Planting Seeds of Hope for the World We Love. Church to church, meeting to meeting, country to country, and section to section, Quakers felt the power of God collecting us into a faithful community.

Friends across the globe engaged in worship, fellowship and special activities that reinforced a sense of sharing, both between Friends and with the wider world. The World Office received reports from over 62 meetings and churches from around the world. We heard of people planting trees, hosting sustainability discussions, and sharing meals while thinking of Friends around the world. Many of the activities involved teaching children about FWCC’s four Sections, and in Cuba they taught ‘children to live in balance with nature through planting ornamental plants and cleaning up the gardens.’

The submissions provide joyful reading. We are left with eager anticipation for the next World Quaker Day October 4, 2020 when we focus on What Does It Mean to Be a Quaker Today? World Quaker Day provides us with a chance to remember one of FWCC’s key messages: we are united in our diversity.

**Young Adult Friends**

The Young Adult Friends Development Fund was launched in September 2018, designed to strengthen the network of young adult Friends around the world. The fund has been created from Quaker Youth Pilgrimage monies, and aims to generate similar powerful experiences of deep spiritual connection and encouragement for young Friends between 18 and 35 years, across all four FWCC Sections.

The Young Adult Friends Development Applications Committee (YAFDAC) funded two projects in 2019:

Visit [www.fwcc.world](http://www.fwcc.world) for resources to be inspired.

You can find the full reports on the World Quaker Day website at [www.worldquakerday.org/2019reports-2/](http://www.worldquakerday.org/2019reports-2/)
1. The Young Quakers Christian Association-Africa (YQCA) Triennial Conference and leadership training programme which supported a group of 19 young adult Friends to attend the YQCA conference and joint training, and the FWCC Africa Section Meeting of Representatives in Jinja, Uganda.

2. EMES Young Adult Friends Intervisitation Project which brought two Young Adult Friends from Section of the Americas to travel among Friends in the Europe and Middle East Section to increase understanding and learning between Friends of different theological and geographical backgrounds.
2. Bring Friends together in multiple ways using technology and meeting face-to-face

*Friends Around the World Directory*

In September FWCC launched the new online version of the directory *Friends Around the World*: [www.fwcc.directory](http://www.fwcc.directory)

This central directory of yearly meetings and unaffiliated monthly meetings helps Friends stay in touch with each other, promoting intervisitation and communication. The purpose of the online directory is to create a website, accessible anywhere, as up-to-date as possible, containing all the information about Friends that people might need in their travels.

*Donation Opportunity*

To support the work of connecting Friends around the world, you can make a donation online: [http://fwcc.world/about-fwcc/donate](http://fwcc.world/about-fwcc/donate)

We have also produced a handbook version which can be ordered on the Friends Around the World website: [www.fwcc.directory/buyfaw](http://www.fwcc.directory/buyfaw)

*International Membership Program*

FWCC’s International Membership Program acts as a support for both isolated Friends and newly established worship groups. It nurtures individuals and supports groups by organising intervisitation, sending out correspondence, promoting conferences, and providing information about other Friends organisations. A listing with the International Membership Program provides recognition and presence within the world family of Friends.

At the end of 2018 there were **115** FWCC individual international members, an increase of **5** on the previous year.
3. Generate profound diversity work

**Building bridges across Quaker traditions**

It has always been the work of FWCC to build understanding among Friends from different Quaker traditions. For those who have been around FWCC for decades, we see this point in time as an opportunity. Younger generations assume diversity, having seen it on multiple screens. There is less fear when we gather, replaced by an overwhelming longing to connect, if not at least heightened curiosity and appreciation. We are looking for opportunities to meet with those Friends who have traditionally not been part of FWCC to develop relationships and to explore how we might know one another through Christ.

**Case study: A Shared Quaker Voice on Earth Care**

Throughout 2018 and 2019 several Friends from across Quaker theological traditions in North America came together via video conference calls and one face-to-face meeting to discuss what Quakers are called to do about the interlocking ecological issues affecting all of creation. Participants of this group include Friends affiliated with Evangelical Friends Church – North America, Friends United Meeting, Friends General Conference, Quaker Earthcare Witness, and other unaffiliated Friends. The group worked with FWCC to produce a short video ‘Quakers Coming Together to Care for the Earth’, which shares Friends’ personal testimonies on environmental justice, earthcare and stewardship. Each of these Friends has felt a spiritual calling to take action in their own lives and at times, as part of the Quaker organizations that they are affiliated with. They have hosted two world-wide webinars for Quakers.
4. Represent Friends at the world level

Ecumenical Engagement

FWCC engages in ecumenical and interfaith activity at all levels on behalf of Friends worldwide. FWCC participates in the Christian World Communions Conference of General Secretaries, which brings a collective faith perspective to challenging national and religious problems. In October 2019 Gretchen Castle, FWCC General Secretary, was appointed chair of the CWC, a first Quaker and first female appointment.

The FWCC work in sustainability has also opened up opportunities to do related interfaith and ecumenical work.

Connecting to the World Council of Churches, FWCC participated in the Ecumenical Diakonia and the Sustainable Development Goals in April 2018 and in the WCC Central Committee. The FWCC World Office promotes Thursdays in Black to stand in solidarity against violence towards women. More information about this campaign can be found on the World Council of Churches' website.

Quaker United Nations Offices — New York and Geneva

QUNO acts on Quaker concerns at the United Nations. FWCC supports both Quaker United Nations Offices (QUNO), in part, by appointing half of the members of the governing committees. The FWCC General Secretary serves ex officio on both committees. The FWCC appointees are drawn from the four Sections in order to ensure broad Quaker representation. The committees set strategic direction, discern program priorities, and ensure organisational stability. The committee helps root QUNO’s work in Quaker testimonies as they go about the work of peacebuilding, human rights and refugees, and climate change.

As the world body for the Religious Society of Friends, FWCC holds General Consultative Status at the United Nations, giving QUNO the highest level of accreditation at the UN.

For more information on QUNO, visit their joint web site at www.quno.org
Quakers at the 2012 World Conference of Friends in Kabarak, Kenya.

Friends at the World Plenary Meeting in Pisac, Peru, 2016.
Five Elements of World Office Work (5)

5. Amplify the Quaker voice through strengthened networks

Sustainability

In 2017, FWCC launched a dedicated program to promote sustainability action in the global Quaker community, designed to generate interest and engage a greater number of Friends more deeply on the issue of sustainability and to articulate the spiritual imperative to sustain life on Earth. It is staffed by Susanna Mattingly.

The project builds on several significant global Quaker commitments to sustainability that have been made in recent years — notably the Kabarak Call for Peace and Eco Justice (World Conference in Kabarak, Kenya 2012) and the Pisac Sustainability Minute, (World Plenary Meeting in Pisac, Peru 2016) which called on Yearly Meetings around the world to take action on sustainability. Through the sustainability program, FWCC is gathering stories of Friends’ experiences of climate disruption and sharing inspiring examples of Quaker climate witness across the globe, working to build a movement and gather the global Quaker voice on this issue.

Throughout 2018 and 2019, FWCC published a number of case studies and videos highlighting the global Quaker response to climate change. The video Quakers and Climate Change Around the World focuses on three Friends from different theological traditions sharing their experiences of climate change and how their Quaker faith inspires them to take action.

FWCC representing Quakers in a coordinated interfaith call for more ambitious climate change targets, including a net-zero emissions target before 2050.
FWCC joined the new multi-faith initiative Living the Change, representing Quakers in a global community of religious and spiritual institutions to champion sustainable living. In October FWCC joined with Quakers in Britain to call for enhanced faith dialogue with the UK government on climate ambition.

In December 2018, FWCC attended the UN climate talks COP24 in Katowice, Poland, alongside colleagues from the Quaker United Nations Office, and represented Quakers at an international interfaith coordination meeting.

Addressing spiritual issues of privilege and historical injustice

The FWCC Central Executive Committee, has taken up a concern for how FWCC’s work in every part of the globe is affected by a history of colonialism and racial inequality. At their meeting in 2017, they approved a minute on ‘Addressing Spiritual Issues of privilege and historical injustice.’

It is FWCC’s vision to engage Friends around the world in conversation around these issues as a consultative engagement, leading to and informing the next World Plenary Meeting in 2023. This is envisaged to be done by sharing stories, publishing a study booklet with queries for opening dialogue, and asking meetings to share what they are learning with the World Office. As the Plenary will be in Southern Africa Yearly Meeting, we want to learn from local Friends about how apartheid affected their lives and what we can all learn from that atrocity.

“As people of faith, we are motivated by a spiritual imperative to sustain life on earth. Quakers are among those who recognise a personal and collective responsibility to take action so that the poorest and most vulnerable people do not suffer as a consequence of our actions.”
— Gretchen Castle, General Secretary, Friends World Committee for Consultation

“We too often hurt each other by assumptions we make, stories we tell, misunderstandings, favouritism, and superficial relationships . . . a key part of FWCC’s work is to overcome these historical patterns, and to foster and model authentic relationships of equality and mutuality. That requires a willingness to name destructive patterns as they occur, to recognize when we have made mistakes, and to ask for and offer genuine forgiveness.”
— Minute 19: Addressing Spiritual Issues of Privilege and Historical Injustice, FWCC Central Executive Committee 2017, Rwanda
Five Offices

In 1937, after years of work to reconnect a fragmented Quaker world, the Second World Conference of Friends established FWCC as a worldwide committee to promote international contacts and cooperation among Friends worldwide. Today there are four regional Sections serving Africa, the Americas, Asia West Pacific, and Europe and the Middle East. The FWCC World Office is in London.

All five offices have their own websites, financial structures, and programs, yet they work collaboratively and share a sense of direction and service to Friends. Section Secretaries and Section clerks serve on the FWCC Central Executive Committee.

Each of the four Sections has within its geographic boundaries a variety of cultures, different languages, and the range of Quaker traditions, including evangelical, unprogrammed and programmed Friends.

Section of the Americas

FWCC Section of the Americas strives to weave together the strands of Quakerism across the Americas. 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. The Americas Section held its first meeting in 1938.

In the 1970s the Section of the Americas held a hemispheric conference which provided an opportunity for Latin American Friends to become better acquainted and discuss areas of shared interest and concern. Over the following decades, groups of Friends and Yearly Meetings from many countries have joined and transformed what was originally an organizing committee into what is now the Comité de los Amigos Latinoamericanos (Committee of Latin American Friends, or COAL). www.fwccamericas.org
Europe and Middle East Section

FWCC EMES is the collective body for Quaker meetings in Europe and the Middle East. All individual members of yearly meetings and groups affiliated with EMES are members of FWCC. The European Section of FWCC was recognised in 1938, at the first FWCC Committee Meeting held in Vallekilde, Denmark. The name was changed to Europe & Middle East Section (EMES) in 1992.

MES maintains close relations with Europe & Middle East Young Friends, the Quaker United Nations Office in Geneva, and the Quaker Council for European Affairs in Brussels. www.fwccemes.org

Africa Section

The FWCC Africa Section, which was founded in 1971 is based at the Friends International Centre, Nairobi, Kenya. The Section is in touch with yearly meetings and groups of Friends in Africa within the context of FWCC’s aims and purposes.

The Section provides a useful point of consultation for other FWCC offices, for other Quaker organisations and for international matters such as FWCC representation at UN conferences. The Section has developed many useful partnerships with other Quaker organizations, including Friends United Meeting and Britain Yearly Meeting’s Quaker Peace and Social Witness. www.fwccafrika.org

Asia West Pacific Section

The Asia West Pacific Section brings Friends of varying Quaker traditions and cultures together to celebrate Quaker heritage and to work collectively on international concerns. Asia West Pacific Section is the newest of the sections and was formed in 1985 and the first business meeting was held in 1988 in Tokyo at the FWCC Triennial.

The Asia West Pacific Section spans a myriad of countries and languages, and worship styles are varied in meetings and churches across the region, with programmed meetings, unprogrammed meetings and evangelical churches in membership. The Section also has many small Quaker groups and individual Friends scattered across the region. www.fwccawps.org
Finding Quakers Around the World

*Discover the world of Quakerism across the globe — download the map...*

To download the map, please visit our website: [www.fwcc.world](http://www.fwcc.world)

To obtain hard copies of the map please contact:
FWCC World Office
173 Euston Road
London, UK, NW1 2AX

or email
world@fwcc.world

**Quick Facts:** Top 5 countries with the most Quakers:

1. Kenya (119k)
2. USA (80k)
3. Burundi (48k)
4. Bolivia (28k)
5. United Kingdom (23k)
Between January and December 2018 we recorded 72 yearly meetings and gatherings of Quakers held around the world. The FWCC World Office wrote to each gathering with a letter of greeting.

The World Office received 50 Epistles from Quaker groups around the world, which are posted on the FWCC World Office website.

An Epistle articulates a collective sense of experience and how God has moved among Friends during a gathering, be it a yearly meeting session or an FWCC Section meeting, or a Young Friends gathering. It is approved by that group during a meeting for business. Epistles have potential to facilitate understanding among Friends, and they help us appreciate that we are part of a world family of Friends.

“In listening to one another we have been both inspired and challenged by our religious diversity. Viewed from a distance, our Quaker community may seem like a single body. Up close, it sparkles in its infinite variety. Diversity in our beliefs and language is a richness, not a flaw.”

— Epistle from Britain Yearly Meeting, held at Friends House, London 4–7 May 2018

“We leave this gathering committed to respond to the individual and collective calling to strengthen our Friends’ groups, so that young people may know the divine through our religious communities.”

— Reunión General de los Amigos en México / General Meeting of Friends in Mexico (RGAM)

Asia West Pacific Section Gathering, Hong Kong, 2018.
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.

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. 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 TIAA-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.

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 Young Adult Friends Development Fund, whose purpose is to develop connections across sections and across the theological spectrum, has come from Quaker Youth Pilgrimage funds from both the Section of the Americas and the Europe and Middle East Section.

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
2018 Income
Total Income £337,097

2018 Expenses
Total Expenses £295,387

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
Your Donations (supporting FWCC’s work)

We seek to inspire Friends locally and at the world level. We connect isolated Friends and communities through travelling in the ministry. We are active in the Quaker United Nations Offices and in world level ecumenical activity. We work to amplify the global Quaker voice on issues of sustainability, privilege and historical injustice.

All this work needs funding. Your gifts make this continuing work possible. Your gifts allow us to connect Friends, and to support the Quaker experience by Connecting Friends, Crossing Cultures, and Changing Lives.

We are currently raising funds for the following:

- **Core Funding**: £125,000 per year.

- **Travel fund for the FWCC World Plenary Meeting** in South Africa in 2023: £200,000 by 2022 year-end.

- **Sustainability**: Part-time Sustainability Communications Officer is £22,500 per annum plus an annual expense and travel budget of £2,000 after September 2020.

- **Building Bridges Among Friends**: £5,000–10,000.

- **Addressing spiritual issues of privilege and historical injustice**: £65,000 (£50,000 contracted staff for 2½ years + £15,000 for production and distribution of materials).

- **Young Adult Friends Development Fund**: Any contribution to increasing this fund is welcome.

- **Translation and Interpretation**: £5,000–10,000 per year.

- **FWCC Africa Section Support**: £9,000 per year.

- **Faith-building — growth and vitality of Friends and interpreting Quakerism**: The budget can vary greatly, but it would be enhanced by an additional £5,000–£10,000.

- **Fundraising**: £25,000–£50,000.

For more detail on supporting FWCC’s work, write to Gretchen Castle at gretchenc@fwcc.world

For enquiries about donations or grants, please email Elaine at elaineb@friendsworldoffice.org
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