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April 2012

To Friends everywhere

Dear Friends

We send greetings from Ireland Yearly Meeting held for the first time at Quaker House, Dublin from the 12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> April 2012.

Our theme was ‘Building Community’ and verse 7, Chapter 4 from ‘The First Epistle from John’ ‘Dear Friends let us love one another, for love comes from God’

The Meeting welcomed the new edition of ‘Quaker Life and Practice’ A book of the Christian experience of the Religious Society of Friends in Ireland which seeks to reflect joy and gratitude to God for the increase of our Christian understanding and religious development.

Our Ministry and Oversight theme “Seek to know one another in the things which are eternal” gave much food for thought. The human vocation is to find the divine within our own being and to show the love and grace of God through our actions. We aspire to live in the eternal in the here and now.

We heard of the pioneering work of Friends in the area of Mental Health.

Quaker House is situated beside Bloomfield Care Centre a Quaker Foundation which is celebrating 200 years (though now on a new site) and is recognised as a centre of excellence for the care of older people. Sadly today there is still stigma attached to mental illness but we hope that our Quaker values reflect in how we treat others.

Irish Quaker Faith in Action continues to support the majority of projects seeking its assistance.

We heard about the work of the ‘Quaker Bolivian Education Fund, Jubilee House in Nicaragua and the Hlekweni Friend’s Rural Training Centre in Zimbabwe.

Ireland Yearly Meeting has agreed to formally endorse Christian Aid Tax Justice Campaign which seeks to address the root causes of poverty.

The Public Lecture “Guided by the Spirit: the heart of Paul’s challenge for today” given by Timothy Peat Ashworth gave us a heartfelt and scholarly view of Paul’s writings alerting us to small differences in translation from the Greek, small differences but with big meaning. We may have faith ‘in Jesus’ but in our lives should we mirror the faith ‘of Jesus’ He spoke of Spirit and Community the spirit being invisible like moving air or breath. The breath of God animates the community.

We received a report on Civil Partnership from a group set up by Yearly Meeting in response to a concern from Junior Yearly Meeting in 2010. We recognise that there are considerable differences among Friends on the issue of holding a special meeting to celebrate a Civil Partnership. We are reminded of our Yearly Meeting theme. “Dear Friends let us love one another. For love comes from God.”

We enjoyed Young Friends reports of their activities throughout the year and congratulate Carolyn McMullan on all she has achieved as Youth Coordinator. The Ceili organised by Young Friends on Friday evening gave us all a great opportunity to let our hair down.

We end our epistle with a quote from George Fox’s epistle to Friends in Ireland in 1655 which appears in the new edition of ‘Quaker Life and Practice’

And all my dear Friends, dwell in the life and love, and power and wisdom of God, in unity one with another, and with God; and the peace and wisdom of God will fill all your hearts, that nothing may rule in you but the life, which stands in the Lord God.

Signed on behalf of Ireland Yearly Meeting

**Felicity A McCartney**  
Clerk