

To all Friends everywhere

“The human mind may devise many plans, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will be established.’ (Proverbs 19:21, NRSV)

This letter of greeting comes to you in a year when so many plans have been disrupted, along with our ways of working and of meeting. We had planned a week-long gathering for up to 2000 Friends of all ages to worship and build community, and to discern leadings for our yearly meeting on “Listening, prophecy and reconciliation: allyship in a climate emergency”. We had hoped to welcome among us many Friends from other yearly meetings. Instead, due to the coronavirus pandemic and continued uncertainty over what would be possible, our Yearly Meeting is short, held by electronic means, and for only necessary business and to worship together.

Nevertheless, our greetings to you all are as warm and loving as always. We have been learning again the importance of faithfulness in keeping our meetings and building our Quaker communities, whilst discovering new and unexpected ways to connect and worship together. One hundred years since the first world gathering of Friends came together to affirm a worldwide opposition to war and to building the social conditions for peace, we are thankful to belong to our world family.

The issues of privilege and climate injustice, which have been exercising our yearly meeting, are still urgent. Inequalities have been exacerbated by the pandemic and the response to it. Tackling systemic racism is a spiritual imperative. The impact of changes in the climate grows. Work and learning on these issues continues around our yearly meeting.

In these extraordinary and challenging times, we have seen that it is possible to make changes in our way of life. We have hope. We trust that the leadings of love and truth will come right.