

Netherlands Yearly Meeting

EPISTLE FROM NETHERLANDS YEARLY MEETING

held on Zoom (June 10th) and in person (June 11th) in Amersfoort

Greetings to Friends everywhere

After two years of coronavirus pandemic, this Annual Gathering, too, was special. Important topics that are close to our hearts came together in the content of the event as well as how it took shape. 'Due to circumstances', we gathered online via Zoom on Friday evening and in person on Saturday. On Saturday we were the guests of the liberal christians (a collaboration of the Mennonite congregation, the Remonstrant congregation, and the Association of Liberal Protestants) who offered their hospitality in their church building in Amersfoort. The reason for this set up for our weekend was, that the location we had originally booked for the entire weekend, suddenly was needed to provide shelter for refugees from Ukraine.

The theme of our Annual Gathering was 'Inclusive security'. An important part of the agenda of our meeting for worship for business was our membership of the InterKerkelijk Vredesberaad, IKV (the Dutch InterChurch Peace Council), which we had suspended in 1999 and ended in 2002. During this Annual Gathering, we decided to become active members again. In our role within the IKV council itself as well as via this organization, we intend to develop both the theme 'rethinking security' and the correlation between peace and ecojustice. We are strongly aware of the responsibility as well as the *commitment* that we have taken upon us, also represented in the Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice of Quakers worldwide in 2012.

On Friday evening, Kees Nieuwerth shared with us the historical background of the concept of "Inclusive security", starting with the establishment of the World Council of Churches in 1948 in Amsterdam. Jan Schaake of the workgroup 'Inclusive Security' explained to us in detail what 'rethinking security' means and how this strategy could be realised in the period from now until 2040. Quite clearly he explained which steps we can take to move toward that dot on the horizon. In our base groups, we spoke about: what does this mean for us personally, for us as Dutch Quakers, and in relation to the current affairs?

We concluded, in the words of a well-known song, which Jan reminded us of: "It has already started, don't you notice?" *We can continue with and build on what we already do.* In the small and in the big things, as they are one.

We head home in hopes and with the intention of contributing to the Light finding its way into our broken world.

Peter Spreij
(Clerk)