

The Friends World Committee for Consultation is an amazing opportunity to put our Quaker faith into practice. FWCC was established in 1937 to be a channel of communication between Friends, helping us to explore and nurture our identity as Quakers so that we can discover and be faithful to our true place in the world as a people of God. The FWCC Section of the Americas includes more than 40 yearly meetings in Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru and the United States. PYM names five Representatives to FWCC each year. This year they are Jim Anderson (Chico), Ann Boone (Redwood Forest), Robin Mohr (San Francisco), Alyssa Nelson (Davis) and Ruth Ross (Orange Grove).

In the last five years, the Section has gone through an extensive process to review its vision and purpose and to align its activities with a realistic budget. Like many organizations, this has meant a significant reduction in staff and other expenses. Careful planning and forward thinking leadership have enabled FWCC to go through this process without abrupt shocks to staff or programs. The Wider Quaker Fellowship is developing a new website, "Voices of Friends," to serve as an online portal to the various branches of Friends. In the next year, the Executive Secretary, Margaret Fraser, will be leaving her job and this will be another major transition for the organization. In 2011, the Annual Meeting of the Section will be a very small, business-only session, in order to free up time, money and other resources for two other major initiatives of FWCC.

The Global Change Consultation began with the growing concern among Friends around the world on issues of change including environmental, climate, economic and social change. Friends worldwide see these issues as inter-connected. To hear and explore Friends' voices on global change as widely as possible, the FWCC World Office has established a process for local "clusters" to meet in the tradition of Friends for worship and discernment of a particular concern, in this case global change. The first step is to organize or join in a cluster gathering in your community. The intention is to discern whether (or not) there is a distinctive Quaker response to global change. For more information on how you can participate in this process, visit the FWCC display at PYM, ask one of the PYM Representatives, or visit the Consultation website at www.fwccglobalchange.org.

Beyond the Global Change Consultation, FWCC has announced the Sixth World Conference of Friends will be held in Kenya in August 2012. The theme for the conference will be "Being Salt and Light: Friends Living the Kingdom in a Broken World." FWCC invites all Friends to consider this theme in regional gatherings over the next two years. A powerful interest group on this theme was led by Jim Anderson and Janet Leslie at College Park Quarterly Meeting in May of this year. If Friends are interested in organizing or being part of a similar discussion of the theme at another local gathering, please see one of the PYM Representatives.

PYM has been invited to send four delegates to the World Conference. If you are interested in being one of the delegates, please fill out one of the Expression of Interest Forms that are available on the FWCC display table. We have been asked to send equal numbers of men and women, at least one person under age 35, and a mix of people who have never attended international gatherings with those who have. There will also be an opportunity for additional Friends to apply directly to FWCC for an open place at the World Conference. More information is available on the Conference website, www.saltandlight2012.org.