

**Report by Jill Anderson, member of Mexico City Friends Meeting and current
PYM Representative to the Reunión General de los Amigos en México (RGAM)
July 6, 2012**

The XXXVIII Reunión General de los Amigos en México met Friday evening, June 1st through Sunday afternoon, June 3rd 2012 in Mexico City. For the first time in over twenty years, Mexico City Friends Meeting hosted the Reunión General at the Casa de los Amigos. It was a historic event.

There were almost 40 people in attendance: including five people from Ciudad Victoria Friends Church, one Friend from a new Worship Group in Oaxaca, and Friends from Alaska, Guatemala, England, and Pennsylvania. Friday evening was spent in conversation. There were many warm hugs and lots of excitement as people arrived to a reception of hot chocolate and tamales. We also received thoughtfully prepared packets with information and several brochures and essays in Spanish by Quaker thinkers around the theme. The theme for this year's Meeting was "Revelando la Luz Interior", or "Revealing the Inner Light."

Saturday was spent in plenary sessions, worship-sharing groups, two brief conferences, and several delicious and filling meals.

The Meeting began with a prayer by Manuel Guzman of Ciudad Victoria Friends Church and the hymn, "Dulce Comunion." At the first plenary session, the clerk of the Reunión General, Bronwen Hillman, noted the tremendous diversity of nationalities and life paths among us. Each of the three meetings that currently form the RGAM shared the state of their meeting. Mexico City Friends Meeting noted the increase in attenders, the two members who had recently attended the World Gathering in Kenya, and the historic nature of the meeting's decision in unity to host the RGAM. Manuel Guzman of Ciudad Victoria shared the insecurity and violence within which their church members were living, and noted the current process of re-evaluating the use of funds from the parking lot for the church's philanthropic project "Casa de los Amigos." Lorena Cassidy, the organizer of the Oaxaca Worship Group, shared that they meet every week on Saturdays and every two weeks on Sundays. There are always 2 and sometimes up to 10 people gathered in un-programmed worship. Sometimes she reads from PYM *Faith and Practice* also.

In the first of three conferences we discussed the history, differences and commonalities of programmed and un-programmed Friends. Nicholas Wright, Tino Barreras, and Rosa Marta Soto shared their experiences with un-programmed worship. Manuel Guzman shared his experiences and perspectives on programmed worship. We ended a discussion in which many people shared their various experiences within Quakerism with the queries: "What is a Quaker? What is it that unites us as Quakers?" In the second of the conferences we responded together to the query: "Why are we here? What brings us together?" Nicholas Wright shared the history of the Reunion General de los Amigos en México. A friend from Ciudad Victoria shared the meaningfulness of her experience of trust and hospitality in Mexico City in comparison to the insecurity and distrust they are

living with due to the narco-violence in Tamaulipas. Another friend talked about the need for a response to the violence in Mexico must come from a profound spiritual source. Another friend talked about the great respect and admiration she has for friends from Northern Mexico and from Mexico City. Finally, Paty Constantino, Judith Vargas, and myself led the third conference about our experiences at the 6th World Gathering of Friend in April 2012. Judith made a film and photo slideshow that we showed, and we each shared our main impressions of the historic gathering. Reading aloud the epistle was a particularly moving moment, as is noted in the attached RGAM epistle.

Five different worship sharing groups met in two different sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. In the first session we considered the following two queries: “How does the Inner Light reveal itself in my life? How do I feel when I experience it?” “How do I get in touch with the Inner Light? Am I willing to let it shine?” In the second session, we considered: “How do we show our faith in action so as to bring about healing while distancing ourselves from selfishness and selfish goals? What kinds of action does the Inner Light lead us toward individually and as a community in Mexico?” I participated in the English-speaking worship sharing group. It was characterized by honest and deep sharing in both Spanish and English about recent personal experiences and our individual spiritual paths. The worship sharing themes, quotes, and queries are also included in this report as an attachment.

On Sunday morning, we gathered in the Casa de los Amigos for the final plenary session, a full Meeting for Worship, and a group photo.

This was my third opportunity to participate in the Reunión General de los Amigos en México. I felt that it was an honor and a responsibility to serve as the Pacific Yearly Meeting representative. PYM was certainly able to save money and carbon costs, especially since the gathering was hosted by my home meeting in a rather unexpected turn of the Light. However, I think there was some disappointment that PYM did not send a new visitor to get to know Quakers in Mexico. The PYM representative as a new visitor has been such a visible and significant part of the experience for so many years. I hope my participation as PYM representative has been helpful and informative this year, and I am grateful for the chance to serve in this capacity. However, I do recommend that future PYM representatives come from outside of Mexico City Monthly Meeting.