

Representative to Friends World Committee for Consultation
Section of the Americas
Report to Annual Session 2019

SUMMARY

None

Gathering of the Friends World Committee for Consultation Section of the Americas (FWCC) / Comit e Mundial de Consultacion los Amigos, Seccion de Las Americas (CMCA)

PYM's two representatives, Emelyn Buskirk and Jan Turner along with five other women from PYM attended the section meeting of the Friends World Committee in the gathering held in March, 2019 in Excelsior Springs Missouri. The Spirit of Love was moving in the gathering. That was the result of the hard work that was done by the staff and volunteers of the FWCC to bring together all parts of the Quaker family from all over the Western Hemisphere. That is the calling of the Friends World Committee/Comite Mundial. According to their literature, we "act on the testimony of equality as we seek to cross barriers of geographical distance, language, culture, racism, theology, gender, age, access to power and material wealth." Many of those barriers were overcome in Missouri as we worshiped together, did business together, learned together, and got to know each other in small groups. For us, this was spiritually nurturing as Spirit moved through those broken boundaries.

The language barrier was broken again and again as all presentations were given bilingually, using the two main languages of the Section of the Americas: Spanish and English. Everyone was included through the use of translation and interpretation. Often the translation was consecutive, first a chunk in one language, then in the other. This gave access to those who spoke little English, and let us English speakers be edified by what our Spanish speaking brothers and sisters had to share. One of us had the privilege of attending a worship sharing groups led by a young Bolivian woman. There was joy by the efforts of all us bilinguals as we searched for the right words as we translated for each other.

Working together across theological divides prepared us to be more effective in our efforts to heal a suffering world. For example, the presentation on environmental sustainability was given by two Evangelical Friends and one Liberal Friend. That was our own Shelley Tanenbaum! Adrian Halverstadt, Director of Evangelical Friends Church of North America, gave us guidance about how to talk to Evangelical Christians about the environment. Hint: Don't talk about the science: talk about the Bible. He also gave us a deeper understanding of what the Bible says about earth care. The most recent issue of Quaker Earthcare Witness' newsletter includes an article about this workshop.

<https://www.quakerearthcare.org/article/awaking-across-friends>)

All in all, it was a wonderful experience for those of us who got to attend.

Submitted by Emelyn Buskirk with help from Shelley Tanenbaum