

Let the Living Water Flow!

Study Booklet



Friends World Committee
for Consultation
SECTION OF THE AMERICAS

Comité Mundial de Consulta
de los Amigos
SECCIÓN DE LAS AMÉRICAS

Photo credit: Judy Goldberger

Let the Living Water Flow! Friends Serving God's Purposes is the theme for the series of local and regional gatherings organized by the Friends World Committee in 2012-2014.

Drawing inspiration from speakers and threads running through the World Conference, the Living Water theme is deeply spiritual, and a call for renewal. It is a direct reference to John 4:7-14, to the text of the Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice, and to the sense that we were repeatedly called to act on our principles, not just talk about them. The Living Water is also a practical expression for the ecological concerns of Friends worldwide, recognizing water as a life-sustaining and increasingly scarce resource.

This theme, then, is a call to act. As Kenyan Friend Esther Mombo cautioned us, we can't be so heaven-minded that we are useless on Earth. And as a young Friend from the Americas, Noah Baker-Merrill, said: we have no time but this present time in which to be faithful.

If we don't have the Living Water flowing through us, we're dead: spiritually and physically; for each of us and for the Religious Society of Friends collectively. This was an important gift of our time at Kabarak: the renewed and palpable sense that the Living Water flows through all of us, despite all the other things that separate us, among Friends specifically, and all the cultural divisions you can name.

Every generation of Friends has to rediscover the purpose and the strengths of the Religious Society of Friends for themselves and in their own time. Without this renewal, the unique combination of individual faithfulness and social gospel that is the heart of the Quaker movement will risk being lost.

"The Friends World Conference in 1937 saw a vision of creating the Friends World Committee for Consultation. Its aims and purposes are to foster mutual understanding and a sense of interdependence between all the groups of Friends through channels of communication, and by the exchange of ideas of fellowship and searching after truth. This is being achieved through intervisitation, the

written word, and gatherings together both large and small, in regional groups and on a world scale.” (from the European Friends Conference, 1947)

In 2014 the Section of the Americas will offer four open consultations with the theme *Let the Living Water Flow! Friends serving God's purposes* to consider together the concerns we share as Friends.

El Salvador: February 21-23

California: March 14-16

Bolivia: March 28-30

North Carolina: April 11-13

All four consultations are weekend-long, residential conferences that will include workshops for Friends to develop our intercultural communication skills for intra-Quaker dialogue and our everyday lives, and for supporting Quaker leadership in the 21st century. Other workshops, specific to different locations, will include topics such as Quaker history and identity, bivocational ministry, conflict resolution, the environment and service project opportunities.

Our hopes are that Friends will:

- learn new skills from one another to sustain and grow our meetings
- affirm our mutual Quaker identity
- consider the future of Friends as a whole over the next century
- commit to practices to foster a thriving Religious Society of Friends.

How to use this booklet

This booklet is intended for two purposes: to encourage small group conversation and to deepen individual reflections.

Historically, Friends read the Bible daily at home. Such reading was often followed by a deep silence. Today, reading significant passages from the Bible or *Faith and Practice* at the opening of meeting for worship takes place in some meetings. Of course, reading at home is still recommended too.

For experienced Friends, a word or passage that has been previously overlooked may take on a deeper or more significant meaning with each repetition. This process of revisiting, seeking, experiencing and finding can be called “continuing revelation.”

This booklet is an invitation to test, experiment, and see how these old concepts fit our condition today. Some people enjoy writing and drawing as a response to a sentence or paragraph; for others, silent contemplation is enough. In each section there are additional queries to consider after each passage.

If you are a group leader, try to discern which passage might best engage your group and invite them to respond.

What is worship sharing?

a structured worshipful experience in which all participants are invited to speak (usually to a query). Worship-sharing provides an opportunity to reflect deeply on a topic, to build community with others, and to feel the movement of the Spirit within the group.

From *Faith and Practice* of Pacific Yearly Meeting

Guidelines for Worship Sharing

Preparation

Sit comfortably, feet flat on the floor, Rest your open hands on your thighs. Close your eyes and concentrate on your breath. If you become aware of any bodily tension, send your breath to that part of your body.

Read the passage or the queries out loud. Re-read the passage to yourself several times in silence. If a word or phrase especially attracted your attention repeat it in silence or out loud.

Speaking:

We speak from our heart, out of personal experiences and feelings; avoid abstract ideas and generalizations beyond our experiences.

We speak for ourselves, out of prayerful silence.

We may speak, or pass (and perhaps speak later), to any query.

We avoid speaking more than once until everyone has had a chance to speak.

We leave space between speakers.

Listening:

Between speakers we pray and reflect on what was shared.

We are hesitant to answer, disagree, dispute, or comment on the thoughts of one another.

We respect confidentiality; we repeat nothing beyond the group that we have heard from others within the group without their permission.

While others are speaking, we listen attentively—rather than “tuning them out” to prepare what we will say.

We seek to hear what God may be saying to us through another’s words—especially when we feel resistant to those words.

Biblical Passages on the Living Water Theme

On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, 'Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" John 7:37-38 NRSV

O hope of Israel! O Lord! All who forsake you shall be put to shame; those who turn away from you shall be recorded in the underworld, for they have forsaken the fountain of living water, the Lord. Jeremiah 17:13 NRSV

Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon. A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water." John 4:6-15 NRSV

Queries:

What other references to the Living Water do you know?

Can we see people around us with the eyes of Jesus?

Are we springs of living water?

What obstacles exist to living water flowing in our lives?

How are you working in projects that promote God's justice?

How are Friends around you serving God's purposes?

Cross-cultural Ministry from Nancy Thomas

Travel in cross-cultural mission has been a part of the Quaker experience from the beginning. George Fox's visits in Barbados and Jamaica and among Native Americans in the colonies, as well as Mary Fisher's visit to the Sultan of Turkey, exemplify this aspect of Quaker mission. In this section, I will draw from the experience of eighteenth-century Quaker John Woolman and his experience as a traveling Friend among Native Americans. Woolman is most well-known for his prophetic ministry against slavery in the colonies, but other aspects of his work are instructive as well. The experience I will explore is what we would call today a short-term mission trip that took place in June 1763. But while the trip itself was brief, it reflects a long term concern of Woolman's and his attitudes and actions have much to teach us.

The first lesson I learn from John Woolman's cross cultural experience concerns his motives. At the deepest level, love drew him to the Native Americans, a love that included a concern for social justice. It was love that led him to brave the dangers, even though "the thoughts of falling into the hands of Indian warriors was in times of weakness afflicting to me." Love not only motivated the journey, but provided the criterion for his ministry. He spoke up in the meetings as he felt "the current of love run strong."

This love of course was connected to the life of the Spirit in him. Woolman's commitment to listen to and wholly follow the Spirit's leading provides the second lesson. The experience began two years before the actual journey, as Woolman attended to the "inward drawings" of the Spirit. He tested his leading first by sharing it with his wife, and they waited together for a year before presenting the concern to the local and regional meetings of Friends. ...Woolman went with the blessing of family and the group of Friends with whom he was most closely associated, who confirmed his sense of the Spirit's leading. His quiet dependence on the Spirit continued throughout the journey, as well as in the various times of ministry. He depended on the Spirit to know when to listen, when to speak, and, eventually, when to leave.

In considering these purposes, we need to keep in mind that this was a very short mission trip. Plans for evangelization, beginning a new meeting, or carrying out a project to better their condition would have been out of proportion to the

time allotted. But the goals of learning from the culture, discovering how God was already at work, experiencing first hand the hardships, and being willing to teach as God led have a certain compelling simplicity and integrity.

Woolman's holistic view of mission also instructs us. His concern did not focus only on the spiritual condition of people, but on their whole life situation. He saw social justice, freedom from war, and a healthy life style as part of the mission of God among the peoples of the earth.

Finally, John Woolman as a cross-cultural traveling Friend demonstrates "mission from being" as well as from "doing." Who he was as a person, public or private, was more important than what he said or what he did as a Public Friend. This focus on being was an integral part of his mission. In one of his times of reflection on the journey, thinking of the troubles of both Native and African Americans, he wrote, "I was led into a close, laborious inquiry whether I, as an individual, kept clear from all things which tended to stir up or were connected with wars, either in this land or Africa, and my heart was deeply concerned that in future I might in all things keep steadily to the pure Truth and live and walk in the plainness and simplicity of a sincere follower of Christ". He won the trust of those with whom he traveled, as well as the people in the village, more by the way he treated them and the sincerity of his concern than by his formal ministry.

Applications for Friends in the 21st Century:

1. *Intentionally adopt the attitude of learners.* The attitude of the learner is subtle and does not come naturally. People from Western cultures bring their wealth, their education, their specialized skills and tools, and, often, an unconscious attitude of superiority, hidden under the idealism that wants to help those less fortunate. Respect for another culture involves more than altruism and an interest in quaint customs. It includes openness to learn from perspectives, stories, experiences, and relationships different from our own. It includes a commitment to search for the footprints of God in that place and a willingness to be surprised.

2. *Encourage travel and public ministry by majority-world Friends.* The twentieth century saw the balance of the world's Christians shift from Europe and North America to the nations of the Southern Hemisphere. The twenty-first century is seeing the shift in the balance of the missionary movement, with more

missionaries now being sent from places that were formerly considered “mission fields.” Another important way Quakers in the north can encourage Quaker leaders from the Southern Hemisphere is by taking seriously their contributions to theological development. Theology, as the growing understanding of God’s person and mission in the world, needs the unique perspectives of leaders and thinkers from other parts of the world. Guatemalan, Rwandan, and Indian Friends potentially have much they could teach the rest of the church on issues such as social justice as part of the gospel of Jesus Christ, or holiness and integrity in the midst of corrupt and often violent situations. Andean Friends could add much to a theological understanding of the land and our relationship to it, of reconciliation and of Jesus Christ as Mediator. These are all matters pertaining to theology and life experience.

The genius of the original Friends movement was partly in the ability of George Fox, Margaret Fell, and so many others to integrate Scripture and the leading of the Spirit with the specific context and problems faced by people in seventeenth-century England. We call this “contextualization” in today’s theological jargon. Friends’ distinctives were contextual theology, specific answers to specific life situations. Many of these distinctives have proven to be more than answers to seventeenth century questions and now define Friends in all contexts. But we need to let the new contexts wrestle with twenty-first century realities, under the authority of both the written and the living Word, to enrich Quaker theology and the distinctives that flow from it.

3. *Recognize the wider Body of Christ.* Even as we affirm the richness of our Quaker heritage, we need to recognize that we’re part of something bigger – the universal church of Jesus Christ-- that spans generations, genders and cultures.

4. *Nurture a spirituality of ministry in mission.* Some things don’t change with time. The old Quaker emphasis on listening to God and moving under the direction of the Spirit continues to be a vital part of all public ministries, including those that cross cultures.

God still calls people to participate in mission. The call to travel as a Public Friend comes to people who know how to listen. And these are people who learn to listen not only at the beginning of the journey but also on the way. God still calls ministers to a life of purity and love. God calls us to be, before calling us to do, and the being is part of the doing, as John Woolman so beautifully modeled.

God still calls people to "be with." A call to be a Public Friend cross-culturally still needs the testing and confirmation of the church. God calls us to be with the church even as God calls us to move out into the church's surrounding context.

God calls us to be with those to whom we are sent. Perhaps the greatest lesson of my years among the Aymara was the importance of relationships. More than strategies devised, lessons taught, sermons preached, greenhouses built or textbooks written, it's loving relationships with other people that build the bridges to transformation, justice, reconciliation, and all the other things that mission means.

Listening to God, listening to others, being the people God wants us to be, and being genuinely present with others, these are still the spiritual foundations for the ministry of Public Friends.

Excerpted from "Learning to Learn: The Journey of a Cross-Cultural Public Friend", *Walk Worthy of Your Calling: Quakers and the Traveling Ministry*, edited by Margery Post Abbott and Peggy Senger Parsons ©2004 Friends United Press, reprinted by the Wider Quaker Fellowship

Queries:

How many cultures (of language, age, theology, race, economics, etc) do you encounter regularly?

What are the multiple cultural barriers we have to cross to reach out to the world?

What is the mission that God has called you to?

Bivocational Ministry from Esteban Ajnota

The economic situation that has battered all sectors of the world economy in the past four years has not spared the religious world. The churches and congregations of all denominations have had to adjust to reality.

From the evangelical Christian point of view, this has revived the discussion of a person who has actually never ceased to exist, but who has not received the attention or respect that is merited. I'm referring to the concept of the bivocational pastoral leader, who is a person that serves his or her congregation but gets all or part of their personal resources from some source other than the congregation.

On the other hand, when we study the pages of the New Testament, which is the doctrinal and practical foundation of the church, we encounter the practice of bivocational ministry as a foundation of Christian ministry in the first century. The elders or pastors who were set up in the new churches were all active members of their communities and that was even a requirement to be considered for the position.

Queries:

Do you know of examples of bivocational ministries in Quaker history?

How are Friends already practicing bivocational ministry?

How can you maintain and protect family life when you are called to bivocational ministry?

Quaker Leadership from Jennifer Isbell

Given Friends' strong foundation in the earliest Friends' desire to return to a model of church akin to that of first century Christians, it seems Friends would easily and naturally embrace a model of leadership that is after the pattern of the first disciples. We can see that for early Friends and contemporary Friends, the primary call is to stay close to the guiding presence of God with us. The posture of expectancy Friends take in worship and in living close to the leadings of the Spirit indicates a solid foundation in the belief that God is available and interactive.

...Friends also believe that the in-breaking of God may require something of them. It is the arrangement of Friends monthly and yearly meetings that gives anchor and structure to what could otherwise deteriorate into self-directed ideas that leave one isolated and unreflected and unmeasured by any community's guidance, tradition, practices and encouragement. Simply, Quaker leaders must rise from the good ground of vital meetings, and they must participate with meetings that are fully functioning bodies of Christ in order to stay close to the sound and appearance of God and God's desires for the world. Meetings and their practices provide the spiritual anchor for leaders, whether they serve in the meeting or in the world. .

Leading Quakers: Discipleship Leadership, A Friends Model, 122-23,
©ESR 2008, reprinted by permission

Queries:

In what area(s) of your life (in or outside of meeting) are you able to practice being a disciple-leader?

When is it your time to follow? To lead? What tools of discernment do you use to know the difference? Does your worship community have tools to assist with these questions?

How can we encourage one another, peers and younger Friends, to lead from a living, changing, unpredictable relationship with God? How can we learn to see God's hand in leadings we would rather not follow?

Servant Leadership

Unselfish servant leadership refuses to rest on the inherent power of a position and desires to empower and release others for ministry. Servant leadership focuses on the needs and growth of those being led, not the needs of those who are leading....

The term servant leader was created and popularized in the early 1970s by Robert K. Greenleaf.... As a leadership model, servant leadership has crossed many boundaries and has been applied in universities, health-care organizations, and foundations. When applied to the Christian leader, servant leadership is characterized by authentic service that prioritizes the enrichment and enhancement of those served. The test for Christian servant leadership is the progressive spiritual health, freedom, and autonomy of those served. Servant leadership focuses on the needs and growth of those being led, not the needs of those who are leading....

The call for leadership to serve finds deep roots in one of Jesus' final gestures toward His disciples. Only hours before His crucifixion (John 13), Jesus washed His disciples' feet (the act of a servant). This event reflected the full extent of His love for them. This servant-gesture sealed the meaning of Christian love and ministry in the minds of the disciples. What they experienced was a call of service to others. It was an example for them and all those who follow in their footsteps. Serving is not just another way to lead. It is leadership according to Jesus. It must be heeded.

Howard Young, "Rediscovering Servant Leadership"
http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200202/200202_032_serv_leader.cfm#author

Queries

What examples of servant leadership have you seen in your own meeting?

How have you demonstrated servant leadership in your own ministry?

In what ways does the Friends understanding of ministry encourage or inhibit servant leadership?

Encounter with the Scriptures from Ruth and Manuel Coronado

The Quakers understood that the Word of God has power when the reader is ready to hear. They inserted a Biblical text into other historical contexts without the interpretation being affected. These readings were brought into being in the company of the Holy Spirit, which was the original Giver of the Scriptures. This way of reading the Scriptures was not only an experience of getting information, but also a transformative experience that was converted into a rich and beautiful methodology. This method of reading could be seen in the written epistles of the earliest Friends, which were aimed at those sisters and brothers who were in prison or under other persecutions or tribulations. The epistles were full of Biblical fragrances. They interwove Biblical history with external experience in order to understand our interior experience and invite us to see the world from a Biblical perspective. When they were reading the Bible, at the same time they were being read by the Holy Spirit. They gave emphasis to the power that was offered by the images and symbols of the Bible for spiritual life in any historical context. In the words of Robert Barclay, we can look in the mirror of the Scriptures and find similarities between our own spiritual life and that of our ancestors in faith.

Queries

What helps you to ready yourself to read or hear the Scriptures?

Have you experienced the Holy Spirit “reading you” as you read the Scriptures?
What is that like?

In what ways have you discovered that Biblical history helps you to understand your interior experience?

Quaker History from David Byrne

The history of Friends has its roots in a man of God called George Fox, who came to be the founder of the Society. At the age of 23, George Fox experienced personal salvation and mental peace in 1647, which he gained through Jesus Christ. That experience was the culmination of four years of spiritual searching. From that time on, he became a preacher and a powerful leader with a positive Christian message. George Fox began to preach in the year 1647, contrary to the belief that the Religious Society of Friends began in 1648. Friends, together with others freely professed their beliefs in salvation through Christ by means of grace and faith alone; in the authority of the Holy Scriptures; in the universal priesthood of believers, and in the spiritual nature of the Church. George Fox and the primitive Quakers carried forward their interpretation of Christianity as a practical and spiritual religion, rejecting all visible sacraments.

Elbert Russel, Quaker historian, says that if Quakerism were related organically to contemporary history, it should be, due to its chronological position, the final stage of the English Reformation, which is to say, the most protestant phase of Protestantism.

Queries:

Why do you belong to the Friends Church/Religious Society of Friends?

What were the influences that attracted you to this movement? Where did those influences come from (history, experience, Bible, testimonies?)

What influence does the past have on the present? Which parts of history influence your current behavior?

Conflict Transformation by F. Peter Phillips and the New York Yearly Meeting Committee on Conflict Resolution

Our structural traditions may contribute to fostering internal conflict. Unlike most other faith communities and secular institutions, monthly meetings do not have an operational hierarchy that can be called upon to lend authority at times of internal strife. Our quarterly meetings no longer serve as enforcers of spiritual discipline, chastising Friends who “walk wayward.” Within programmed meetings, the pastor seldom has the authority to correct or admonish behavior that is hurtful to the body. Meetings without pastors have Ministry and Counsel Committees, but no corporately authorized source of admonishment or adjudication in the event of misbehavior. The delicate practice of elderring has too often been seen as authoritarian and punitive instead of authoritative and lovingly instructive. We have no human resources department, no bishopric or Holy See or episcopacy. Quaker communities caught in self-destructive conflict have no institutional resource to which to turn for a ruling.

“When Conflicts Arise: Crisis or Invitation,” *Friends Journal*, April 2013

Queries:

How does “conflict resolution” differ from “conflict transformation?” In the first, what is resolved? In the second, what is transformed?

What is my own response to conflict within my Meeting?

How does my Meeting understand the meaning and purpose of internal conflict? What role does conflict have in a spiritual community and a spiritual life?

In my Meeting, where does responsibility lie for identifying and addressing conflict within the community? How is this responsibility shared in the Meeting?

What is my personal responsibility for identifying and addressing conflict within the Meeting? What authority do I (or other individual Friends) have to intervene in conflict situations?

Living Water and Transformation by Simon Lamb

...Jesus is saying that it is possible to have a relationship with God that is real and personal and ongoing. And like the fountain of water he talks about, this relationship is both renewing and refreshing. In recording this John the writer is adding to what he has already mentioned concerning the transition from John the Baptist's outward water baptism to Christ's inward baptism which transforms the heart. Christ is making it clear that the spiritual landscape that the woman had grown up with was changing forever. The outward was being replaced by the inward. The symbol, the shadow and outward form were being replaced by reality and personal experience.

Queries

Think about the earliest experience you can remember of God (or the Spirit) in your life. Where was it? What was it like?

In Simon's talk we heard about Christ offering us water which quenches all our spiritual thirst. Our spiritual lives can include times of drought, and times of plenty. Have you had these experiences, and how have you dealt with them?

Can you think of a time when you were transformed by the living water? What does it feel like to be called to something new, challenging and perhaps difficult?

Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice

The Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice was approved on 24 April 2012 at the Sixth World Conference of Friends, held at Kabarak University near Nakuru, Kenya. It arose from the FWCC Consultation on Global Change in 2010-2011.

In past times God's Creation restored itself. Now humanity dominates, our growing population consuming more resources than nature can replace. We must change, we must become careful stewards of all life. Earthcare unites traditional Quaker testimonies: peace, equality, simplicity, love, integrity, and justice. Jesus said, "As you have done unto the least... you have done unto me".

We are called to work for the peaceable Kingdom of God on the whole earth, in right sharing with all peoples. However few our numbers, we are called to be the salt that flavours and preserves, to be a light in the darkness of greed and destruction.

We have heard of the disappearing snows of Kilimanjaro and glaciers of Bolivia, from which come life-giving waters. We have heard appeals from peoples of the Arctic, Asia and Pacific. We have heard of forests cut down, seasons disrupted, wildlife dying, of land hunger in Africa, of new diseases, droughts, floods, fires, famine and desperate migrations – this climatic chaos is now worsening. There are wars and rumors of war, job loss, inequality and violence. We fear our neighbors. We waste our children's heritage

All of these are driven by our dominant economic systems – by greed not need, by worship of the market, by Mammon and Caesar.

Is this how Jesus showed us to live?

- We are called to see what love can do: to love our neighbor as ourselves, to aid the widow and orphan, to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable, to appeal to consciences and bind the wounds.
- We are called to teach our children right relationship, to live in harmony with each other and all living beings in the earth, waters and sky of our Creator, who asks, "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the world?" (Job 38:4)

- We are called to do justice to all and walk humbly with our God, to cooperate lovingly with all who share our hopes for the future of the earth.
- We are called to be patterns and examples in a 21st century campaign for peace and ecojustice, as difficult and decisive as the 18th and 19th century drive to abolish slavery.

We dedicate ourselves to let the living waters flow through us – where we live, regionally, and in wider world fellowship. We dedicate ourselves to building the peace that passeth all understanding, to the repair of the world, opening our lives to the Light to guide us in each small step.

Bwana asifiwe. A pu Dios Awqui. Gracias Jesús. Jubilé. Salaam aleikum. Migwetch. Tikkun olam. Alleluia!

Contributors (more at <http://fwccamericas.org/events/2014-Consultations.shtml>)

Nancy Thomas is a member of Northwest Yearly Meeting. Nancy and her husband Hal have served regularly since 1972 as Friends missionaries in Latin America. She is an accomplished poet and writer, as well as a teacher.

Esteban Ajnota Ajnota is a pastor in the National Evangelical Friends Church of Bolivia. He works as a family therapist, counseling, guiding and promoting family and couples health, and restoring families.

Dr. David C. Byrne is the director of the Coalition for Hispanic Ministries that is dedicated to advance Hispanic ministries in North America - especially among Friends. He has worked as a youth pastor and senior pastor at churches in the U.S. and as a missionary in Mexico City with Evangelical Friends Mission.

Manuel de Jesús Coronado and his wife *Ruth Maribel Bueso* have served as leaders of the Ambassador Friends Evangelical Church in Chiquimula, Guatemala for the past seven years. At 19, Manuel felt God's call to full-time ministry and trained at the Berea Friends Theological Seminary in Chiquimula in pastoral studies and as professor of theology. Ruth heard Jesus' call at the age of 18. In 2011 she finished her studies in Theology and Pastoral Training at the SEMILLA Latin American Anabaptist Seminary. They both hold university degrees in Secondary School Teaching.

Simon C. Lamb is a member of Richhill Preparative Meeting, where he is now an elder. He runs a bakery. Growing up in the Evangelical unprogrammed tradition of Ulster Friends has deeply influenced Simon's faith over the years. He was clerk of the European committee of the World Gathering of Young Friends in 1985. Simon serves as assistant clerk of FWCC's Central Executive Committee and clerk of the International Planning Committee for the 2016 International Representatives Meeting of FWCC.

F. Peter Phillips is a professional arbitrator, mediator and consultant. He is also the Director of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Skills Program at New York Law School and Clerk of the Conflict Transformation Committee of the New York Yearly Meeting.

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SPACE TO WRITE OR DRAW

Introduction to FWCC

The Friends World Committee encourages fellowship among all the branches of the Religious Society of Friends/Friends Church. In the Americas, the Quaker community extends from the Arctic to the Andes, spanning a rich diversity of regional cultures, beliefs, and styles of worship. FWCC Section of the Americas offers programs that unite Friends across the hemisphere through Spirit-led fellowship.

Our Mission

Answering God's call to universal love, FWCC brings Friends of varying traditions and cultural experiences together in worship, communications, and consultation, to express our common heritage and our Quaker message to the world.

Our Work

Representatives of affiliated yearly meetings conduct the business of the Friends World Committee for Consultation. Visitation and travel in the ministry encourage Quakers to live out their personal commitment to the Religious Society of Friends/Friends Church and build spiritual unity across diverse traditions. Conferences and workshops for Friends in neighboring yearly meetings from across a region or an entire continent provide a meeting ground for deep worship and connection, so Friends may learn from one another. Online and print resources in English and Spanish assist those exploring the Quaker faith. The Section publishes directories of yearly meetings, local meetings, and churches; epistles; and a calendar of yearly meeting sessions in the Americas.

Our Roots

In 1937, after years of concerned work to reconnect a fragmented Quaker world, the Second World Conference of Friends created the Friends World Committee for Consultation “to act in a consultative capacity to promote better understanding among Friends the world over.” Today, Friends from yearly meetings and groups in nearly 60 nations continue this work. Around the world there are four cooperating, autonomous FWCC Sections serving Africa, the Americas, Asia and the West Pacific, and Europe and the Middle East. FWCC’s World Office is in London.

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