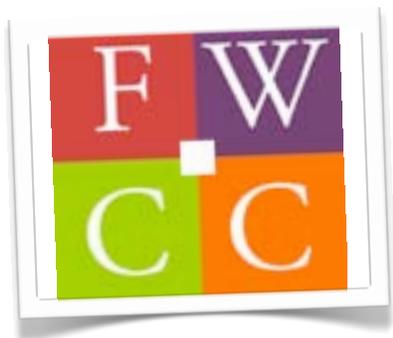


Let the Living Water Flow!

Friends Serving God's Purposes



Study Guide and Resource Booklet
Friends World Committee for Consultation
www.fwccamericas.org/livingwater.shtml

How to use this Booklet

“Let the Living Water Flow! Friends Serving God’s Purposes” is the theme of local gatherings in 2012-2013 in the Section of the Americas emerging from the Sixth World Conference of Friends.

As every corner of the globe faces economic, political and environmental turmoil, we ask ourselves how our small and diverse community can live its faith so that God’s love and purpose for the Earth – the Good News – can be made known to the whole world.



The booklet contains a number of excerpts, activities and songs that reflect on aspects of the theme by Friends from a variety of Quaker cultures. Each piece comes from the authentic experience of a member of our worldwide family of Friends, each seeking to be faithful according to the Light he or she has been given.

As we learn about each other’s experience of God, the divine, the ultimate reality, our task is not to judge, but rather to be open to truth as seen from the perspective of others, whose understanding of our Quaker tradition may be radically different.

We hope that Friends may gather into small study groups – face-to-face and in other ways – to explore together their responses to the texts and the queries. We hope that, by dwelling on texts they may find challenging, Friends will broaden their understanding, deepen their spiritual insights and practice opening their hearts and minds to God’s leadings.

Theme: Let the Living Water Flow! Friends Serving God's Purposes



At the 6th World Conference of Friends in 2012 we were 850 Quakers together, from 112 yearly meetings & groups of Friends, from 51 countries. It was the most diverse gathering of Friends ever in our history. The worldwide conversation about what it means to be salt and light and how Friends are living the Kingdom of God in this broken world brought us closer together.

The local gatherings throughout the Americas in the last year have made a difference in our knowing one another in that which is eternal and in the very ordinariness of our lives. Today the global conversation among Friends

continues. The theme for the series of local and regional gatherings organized by the Friends World Committee in the coming year is Let the Living Water Flow! Friends Serving God's Purposes.

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 in her opening worship message, we can't be so heaven-minded that we are useless on Earth. 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. I think that the reason that each morning's worship was so powerful was that we tasted the Living Water each day. Clearly this is also related to the liberal Quaker's favorite phrase, there is that of God in each of us. This slim booklet offers so much to think about. Enjoy and let us know what works for you and what you would like more of. You can write to me at robinm@fwccamericas.org.

In friendship,
Robin Mohr
Executive Secretary



A Biblical Reflection

By Paul Buckley
Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting



“Living water” is referred to several times in scripture. The instance that first comes to mind for me is in chapter four of the gospel attributed to John that tells about an encounter Jesus had with a Samaritan woman at a well.

In this story, Jesus doesn’t have anything to drink from, so he asks the woman to give him some water to drink. The woman is surprised that a Jewish man would ask a Samaritan woman for a drink, but Jesus answers that if she knew who he was, she would ask him for a drink and he would give her living water – water that quenches thirst forever. A short conversation ensues that highlights the differences in how Jews and Samaritans worship God, ending with Jesus telling her that the time is coming when all will worship God “in spirit and in truth.” This is, of course, an oversimplification of the story. I’ve often wondered why John included it in the gospel – it doesn’t occur in the other three gospels, so it must have meant something important to him.

My biggest stumbling block is that when I hear the word “Samaritan” I immediately think of the Good Samaritan. I suspect that’s the case for nearly everyone – the story of the Good Samaritan is deeply embedded in our culture. So when I read about the woman at the well, I think I know more about the woman than I actually do. I can’t help it.

To really understand this story, I have to remember a couple of things. First, this account was originally written in the first century for a Jewish-Christian community. Second, the gospel of John doesn’t include the story

of the Good Samaritan, so its readers wouldn't have the automatic associations that I do. These two facts have important implications.



Jews and Samaritans both claim descent from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Both peoples recognize the Pentateuch (i.e., the first five books of the Bible) as foundational scripture. Jews and Samaritans both worship Yahweh as the One – the only true God. Each of them claimed that they were the chosen people and the others were heretics.

To an outsider – a Roman, Greek, or Phoenician – they looked almost identical; the characteristic that most noticeably distinguished Jews from Samaritans was in their manners of worship. As the Samaritan woman says in John 4:20, “Our fathers worshipped on this mountain [Mount Gerizim], but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.” As is often the case, groups of people reserve their greatest scorn and contempt for those they most resemble.

Given all this, why was Jesus alone in Samaria and how did he get into conversation with a woman? The gospel tells us he was traveling from Judea to Galilee. Although the shortest route is through Samaria, most Jews went a different, longer way to avoid contact with the Samaritans. Jesus is resting near a well, while his traveling companions went into a nearby (presumably Samaritan) town to buy food. A local woman approaches to draw water from the well and Jesus asks her for a drink.

First-century readers would see several potential difficulties with this scenario. Jews in those days would view any food prepared by Samaritans as spiritually contaminated – as unclean as pork – so the disciples ought not to be buying it. Similarly, water drawn from a well might be acceptable,

but not water polluted by contact with a Samaritan vessel; and yet Jesus asks to drink it. The Jewish-Christian readers for whom this story was written might well be shocked.

Even more shocking is the fact that a Jewish man is alone with and talking to a woman – to any woman, let alone a Samaritan. And just so that it is clear that Jesus knows her to be so, she tells him and reminds Jesus (and the readers) that “Jews do not associate with Samaritans.”



This is when Jesus responds that if she knew who he was, she would be the one asking for a drink and he would give her living water. If she drank such water, he says, she would never be thirsty again. I'm not sure what this story meant to the first-century, Jewish-Christian readers. Clearly, it was meant to call into question their assumptions about relationships with despised others (Samaritans) and socially inferior others (women). Jesus is violating important social taboos to offer a gift of inestimable spiritual value. His example must have been troubling and challenging.



As a twenty-first-century Quaker, the story of the woman at the well speaks to the current situation among Friends. Like the Samaritans and Jews, we claim the same heritage and are most visibly distinguished by our manners of worship. Some Friends hold to their silences the way the Samaritans held to Mount Gerizim. Other Friends find meaning in hymns, readings, and

sermons – just as Jews found meaning in the rituals of the Jerusalem Temple. Jesus rejects both – true worship isn't on a mountain or in a building (nor in either silence or a planned sermon), but “in spirit and truth.”

Rather than ruefully shaking my head at the silly intransigence of people long dead, I need to feel as challenged as the original readers did. I need to look for and feel troubled by my own sense of moral superiority. Living in spirit and truth comes when we let the living water flow – when we don't dam the stream with our own preferences and preconceptions.

Queries:

- Have you ever tasted “Living Water”? Where did you find it?
- Where would you tell others to seek the Living Water?
- Does the Living Water flow freely in your church or meeting? What stops up its flow?
- What keeps the Living Water from flowing in and through you?



Excerpts and Queries

Many of these are extracts from longer pieces submitted by Friends. In the electronic version, to read these extracts in their full contexts clicking on the author's name at the end of each piece will bring up the full article online. Individual Friends and groups may choose whether they wish to use the excerpts in this booklet or the longer pieces to inform their consideration of the theme. The excerpts are arranged under threads related to the overall theme and interspersed with queries to elicit personal and, preferably, shared reflection. Any opinions expressed are the authors' own.

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Clearing Channels



“Our tradition tells us that new growth begun in powerful moments like the World Conference needs tending with patience and prayer for the transformation to endure. Faithfulness isn’t a one-time sprint; it’s a long distance run. But may this be a new beginning. We will seem very much the

same on the outside as we return home. The sufferings and responsibilities, the loved ones and meetings we’ll return to, our appointments and employment will be largely unchanged.

I’ll go home to the northeastern United States, to the forested mountains and valleys that surround my monthly meeting, where the rivers flow fast and free. Last year, a great storm caused flooding worse than we’ve seen in a hundred years. Now the rivers have changed. The riverbeds are different — the heavy stones have been rolled away, the sand and soil reshaped. What lies beneath the surface has been transformed. And so the surface — the part that everyone sees — has changed as well. Like the rivers of my home, if we are inwardly changed in our time together, the nature of our witness, the testimony of our outward lives, will be different, and all we meet will know it, too.

If we are to serve the world’s need, the channels we are must be clear. If we are to carry living water, the channels we are must be clean. There are many

heavy stones in us still to be rolled aside, much debris to be washed away and many paths in us to be made straight. May we surrender to the Flood. May we bring our transformed and transforming hearts home to our monthly meetings and churches. They live close to the ground, where new Life begins. While I know God has called many of us here to vital ministry in the wider world, it is at home — the place where our roots run deepest and we are most deeply known — where the witness of our changed and changing lives is most clearly felt. Whatever happens this week, whatever we say or do together here, it will be the living water we bring home that makes a difference. When we water the roots, we nourish the whole tree. If ever the world needed the authentic, life-giving challenge that animated our spiritual ancestors, it needs it now.

If ever people needed prophets to call us home to the humble, world-transforming power of the Love Who casts out Fear, and to this Love's availability and liberating grace in every heart, we need it today. But this Love can't just be told about in stories.

This Love needs to be lived in lives. There is no other Religious Society of Friends, no other Friends Church in which we can live the message for which this prophetic People is still being gathered. The work is for each of us, for all of us, together. And we have no time but this present time in which to be faithful.

Noah Baker Merrill,
New England Yearly Meeting
Excerpted from his plenary address
to the Sixth World Conference of Friends





"I have a hope after this conference, hope in the change we can do in our little piece of the world. Gandhi said, "Be the change you wish to see in the world." With our hearts full of God's love and the spiritual strength that was given to us through our shared experiences, we have the spiritual authority to make big and little changes in parts of the world that surround us (home, church, work and

community). If we do what we can do, that change will become visible."

Kenya Casanova Sales, Cuba Yearly Meeting,

Excerpted from *Called to be an Example*, Quaker Life, July/August 2012, reprinted with permission



"I was thirsty to know what Creator had in store for me. I hungered. Here I am Lord, use me... On the third day of a Healing and Reconciling Our Communities (HROC) workshop, we looked at reconnecting and rebuilding our communities... As a witness to the healing, I stayed curious and encouraged as much as I could. It seemed that as the shameful stories

were exposed, the light burned brighter. HROC is a quiet way for those who suffered to take their light out from under the bushel basket and become salt . . . We were kind to each other, and sometimes peppery. I heard more stories of violence from each country: broken relationships, drinking excessively while children go without. We looked at the violence of human greed. Every day Kenyans carry firewood from the forest, while we collectively confessed our dependence on fossil fuels. I vowed to honor Wangari Maathai's vision of reforestation.

I came home exhausted and exhilarated. The best part of any world conference is returning back to your own meeting, where you are loved and known. Now I need to learn how to be salt — to transplant healing and reconciliation in my own community. And I will plant that pear tree I've been dreaming of in my yard. The world conference starts when you get off the airplane, not when you embark.”

Minga Claggett-Borne, New England Yearly Meeting
Excerpted from *Being Salt*, Quaker Life, July/August 2012, reprinted with permission

Queries:

How do you see the Living Water flowing in your community today?

How can we help people who return home, exhausted and exhilarated after a special event, to live up to the commitments they make at that time, even as they encounter the discouraging truth that things at home have not changed as much as they have?

“Change starts in ourselves. If not, then how do we expect change, when we ourselves don’t work to make it happen? How could we influence others to take an action, if we ourselves don’t practice what we preach? If we really want better changes, we must be the change ourselves.”

“Friends, living out the Kingdom of God is not really that hard. All you’ve got to do is to believe that as we walk with Jesus we will be able to experience His unfathomable love and compassion, His goodness, His grace. We will be filled with so much of these that we will not have enough room inside us to store these and we just have to give them away to other people. Every one of us are instruments. We are all accountable for the permanent establishment of the Kingdom of God in this broken world. Always remember that the process starts with God in Christ Jesus working in us. And without us, without our willingness to cooperate with God, the mechanism will be incomplete.”



Carmela Lao, Philippines Yearly Meeting
Excerpted from Plenary Address
World Conference of Friends 2012

I Believe We are One



“I am 35 years old, living in the countryside of Kathmandu, Nepal with my wife, five years old son, father, mother and grandmother. Nepal is in between India and China and is popular for trekking and mountain climbing, with Mount Everest, the highest peak in the world. Currently I am working for an IT Consultancy Company which provides System Solutions, mostly in

virtualizing corporate houses, cloud computing, solar systems etc... I am asked often by many friends why I am still in Nepal as I have a valid visa for the US and the UK. I tried to answer them that I am really OK here. They think I am a fool and I think they are mistaken. I am happy as I am, I will try to make a difference from where I am and what I have.

“In this broken world, if the billions of impoverished people in the world can get widespread access to education, health care, and job opportunities, who knows what the unleashing of their talent and energy can achieve. Having met their basic needs, maybe they will start thinking about the environment, peace, justice and God’s Kingdom. Maybe new hope will burst forth. Let’s try to do something together, my dear friends. If we don’t do, who will do it? Somebody said to me, don’t worry God will do. “Hakuna Matata” means no worries. What a wonderful phrase, Friends. But I will do whatever I can till the end of my life to bring peace and joy to impoverished faces.

"I don't understand very well at all about theology, but this my small mind understands: that God loves everybody and he wants us to give saltiness and shine to the world.

I do not understand clearly about trinity, but I know God is with me.
I do not understand clearly about heaven and hell, but I know God is with me.

I do not understand clearly what is sin, but I know God is full of mercy.

I do not understand clearly about salt, but I know I have to be salty.

I do not understand clearly about light, but I know I should shine.

I do not understand clearly about FWCC, but I know I should be connected with it.

I do not understand clearly about unprogrammed Friends, but I know that they are my Friends.

I do not understand clearly about programmed Friends, but I know that they are my Friends.

I do not understand clearly about evangelical Friends, but I know they are my Friends.

I do not understand clearly about liberal Friends but I know they are my Friends.

I do not understand clearly about different types of Friends, but I know they are all my Friends.

I do not understand clearly about Friends' various beliefs, but I believe we are one."

Pradip Kumar Lamichhane,
Nepal Yearly Meeting
Excerpted from plenary address at the
World Conference of Friends 2012





“Romans 8:28, reads “All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose.” It is marvelous to feel that God works with a purpose in our lives. Definitely, time and again, God would speak to my life and would remind me that He

had put me in this world with a purpose and that this experience would help my spiritual life and I could bless others through my testimony. What I experienced is that God is faithful and that whatever He promises to us, He will accomplish it according to his will.”

Karen Patricia Gregorio Henríquez de Calderón, Guatemala Holiness Friends Yearly Meeting
World Conference of Friends, 2012

Queries:

What does your mind understand about God?

What do you believe, even if you don't understand it very well?

Do you believe God has a purpose in your life?

"In our Global Change Consultation process, we learned that all of us are impacted by the efforts of our changing climate, our abuse of natural resources, the greedy values of our financial system. We care deeply about our planet. What can we do together? What can



we do in our homes, in our worshiping communities, in our countries, and even internationally? The question is: Can Friends be the resource in certain niches of these issues—or other issues—for the world to turn to? Can we truly have an impact as we once did? Is there a small part of this challenge of global change where Quakers can be empowered to make a difference?"

Nancy Irving, North Pacific Yearly Meeting
World Conference of Friends 2012



"In a place where more than one million people died, the journey to solve problems is very long. . . At this time, eighteen years since the genocide happened, many perpetrators who received sentences for 17 to 19 years are being released from prison. If we do nothing for them they could return to their evil ways. As Friends we believe these needs must be prayed for and a tangible response given to them, not only in Rwanda, but also in many other countries experiencing similar problems."

Sizeli Marcelin, Rwanda Yearly Meeting
World Conference of Friends 2012



“Our work is not to stand with our arms crossed looking at this world drowning in chaos, sadness, pain. Our work is to lift ourselves up in a rainbow of hope, with transforming actions that help relieve the brokenness, reestablishing everything in just relationship. I call it a rainbow of hope

because our actions can have different shades of color or meaning, but all of them reflecting the Light. Additionally, by bringing together our efforts from different continents and nations, we could witness for life in projects that promote the Kingdom of God and His justice.”

Ramón González Longoria Escalona, Cuba Yearly Meeting
World Conference of Friends 2012

Queries:

How are you working to witness for life in projects that promote God's justice?

How are Friends around you serving God's purposes?

Quaker Moments at Lake Bogoria



Two buses and several vans were scheduled for Lake Bogoria, and I was among the first to board one of the buses. I found an empty seat and slid over next to the window. A few minutes later a woman asked if she could sit with me. Glad to have a willing seatmate, I answered, "Yes, of course." As we settled in for the trip, we introduced ourselves. Her name was Edwina and she was from Ghana. "Yesterday I bought some beautiful batik tablecloths from Ghana," I told her. "Those are mine," she said, smiling. "Yours?" "From my company," she said. "I made them." It was one of those synchronous moments — remember, I was on that bus only because I had bought her tablecloths.

It turns out that Edwina attends Hill House Meeting in Accra, an unprogrammed meeting since 1925. She is also an artist who owns her own company, employing six women to produce handcrafted batik textile goods from her designs. She and I made good traveling companions that day. I hope to see her again — either when she visits family in the U.S. or if I make a trip to Ghana. I can't help feeling we were supposed to meet.

At the entrance to Lake Bogoria National Reserve, the two buses and several vans drove through the gate and stopped. We piled off the buses to buy soft drinks — and some bought cartons of eggs — from vendor stalls while the bus drivers paid the park admission fees. After 20 minutes, William, the guide from our bus, gathered us all in the shade of a large tree. A woman in uniform told us we were to get back on the buses, but all the Europeans, Australians, Canadians and Americans were to get on the first bus; people from other African countries in the next bus; then Kenyan citizens in the two or three vans. We were being separated, she told us, because the cost for each group was different. This would make it easy to count members of each nationality so Kenyan park officials would know the correct amount of money had been collected.

After a minute or two of surprised silence, Friends began muttering: “But that’s not fair” and “We don’t want to be separated.” A woman said loudly, “No, we won’t do it — we want to stay where we are.” This was followed by a chorus of agreement. Given this display of the Quaker testimony of equality, William wisely intervened and suggested we all get back on our original buses and let the park officials count us in our seats, if necessary asking for a show of hands to indicate nationality. So that’s what we did.

Together as Friends — Kenyan, Ghanaian, British, Burundian, Australian, Canadian and American — we saw the southern edge of the Great Rift Valley. We snapped photos of ostriches beside the road, marveled at a half-dozen zebras grazing with a herd of cows and were silenced by the glittering mirror of the lake, its edges “pinked” by flocks of flamingos. Together we

disembarked by the steaming hot springs on the lakeshore and watched the more-prepared among us boil eggs in baggies in the bubbling hot water. We trailed each other along the lakeshore, trying to get closer to the flock of flamingos drifting ever further away as we approached. We were too absorbed in the wonder of it all to worry about our theological or worship-style differences.

Donne Hayden, Wilmington Yearly Meeting
"Quaker Moments at Lake Bogoria",
reprinted with permission
from Quaker Life, July/August 2012

Queries:

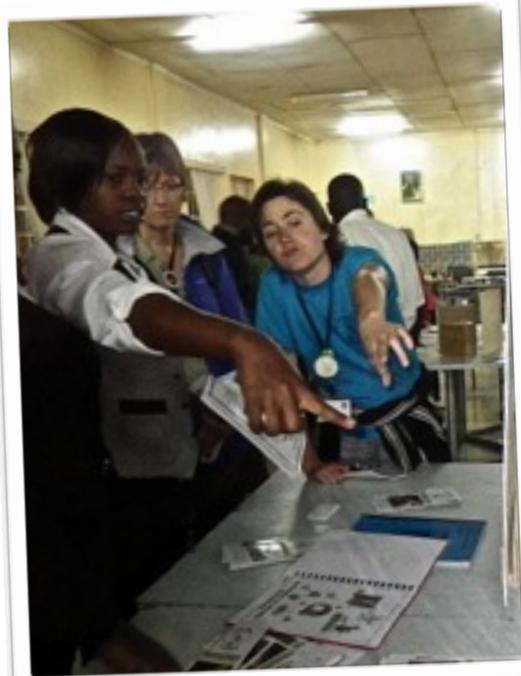
When have you ever resisted authority in order to maintain equality?

Tell about an unexpected encounter with someone you feel you were supposed to meet.

Friendly Water for the World

by Del and Suzanne Livingston

Nearly every family we have met in Kenya, Burundi or Zimbabwe has lost a child due to a water-related disease. In my home in the United States, I can turn on the tap and give a drink to my grandchildren without worrying if water might be harmful. In the Great Lakes region of Africa not only do children die from unclean water, they become blind and/or deaf from unsafe water. According to the United Nations every 20 seconds a child dies from a water related disease. More people die from unclean water than from AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis combined.



In Romans 12:20, we are instructed to give a drink even to our enemies, if they are thirsty. Would we be faithful, if we gave a drink of contaminated water? If we drink polluted water it makes our bodies sick. We cannot get the nourishment from our food if what we eat quickly passes out of our bodies. Children need nourishment for both their bodies and brains to develop properly.

What goes in our bodies has potential to help or hurt us. Consider then, that when we take polluted matter into hearts and souls we will likewise become sick in our hearts and souls. We will not be nourished and our spiritual growth will be stunted. Like those nasty microbes in the water, this spiritual pollution that causes such damage can be difficult to see at an initial glance. So many things that start small can become a huge sickness

in our souls, damaging our relationship with God. Fortunately, God, the Great Healer, has come to cleanse us of this damage.

If we wash our bodies with dirty water we can contract diseases affecting our eyes and ears. It is said half the people in Kenya who are blind or deaf contracted these problems because of unclean water. Likewise, we need to make sure the images and words with which we bathe our eyes and ears are healing and helpful.



In John 7:37-38, Jesus says, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink... Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water." To let the living waters flow we must continue to learn more about Jesus and His way of living. We are not to be hearers of the word, but DOERS. We must let the wisdom of God dwell in us and then spill out. We must give cups of cool water, both literally and figuratively.

Jesus also says, "These words I speak to you are not incidental additions to your life...They are foundational words, words to build a life on. If you work these words into your life, you are like a smart carpenter who builds his house on solid rock. Rain, floods and tornadoes; nothing can move this house."

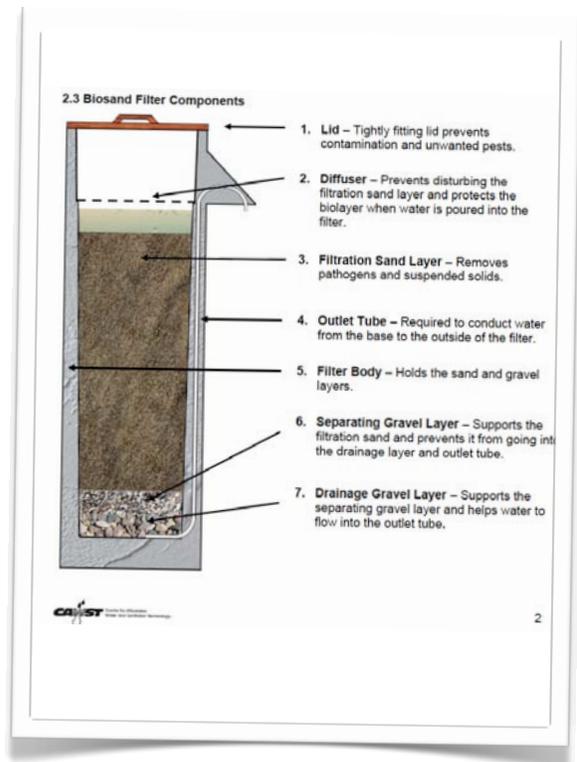
Trying to live out God's directions is vital. My first experience with giving cups of clean water was in Mazatlan, Mexico. The church we attended would run water through their Bio Sand Water Filters and take this water and sandwiches to the adults and children "working" at the city dump. Somehow in the midst of the smells, flies and dirt I felt I was doing holy work. I think this was one of the beginnings of our call to bring clean water to people. So far, we have traveled to Kenya, Burundi, Zimbabwe, India

and Honduras teaching about how to make Bio Sand Water Filters and instructing in sanitation and hygiene. We have truly found the proverb to be true: "If you see your enemy thirsty, bring him a drink. Your generosity will surprise him with goodness, and God will look after you."

How Do BioSand Water Filters Work?

Four actions take place to purify the water that comes through BioSand Water Filters. It starts when untreated water is poured into the top of the filter:

1. The layer of water below the diffuser plate that sits atop the sand creates a biologically active zone. Here, resident bacteria will consume any available source of food, and cannibalize other bacteria. Most of the larger bacteria – cholera, fecal coliform, typhoid (which is a form of salmonella), and bacterial dysentery (caused by shigella) – are killed here. The dead bacteria not only provide food to keep this biozone active, but their debris also forms a layer on the top of the sand (known as the *schmutzdecke*), providing additional filtration.



2. The sand used in the filter (quarry sand or high riverbank sand) has coarse, sharp edges. These surfaces carry a slight electrical charge that attracts certain bacteria and viruses, which adhere to the surface of the sand and die. This is called adsorption.

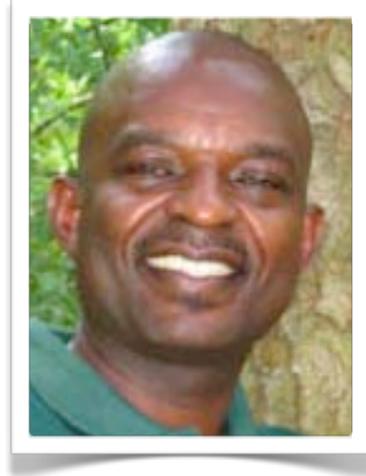
3. Since the filter is wet and full of water, there is little or no oxygen in the sand column below the top few inches. This creates a deadly environment for most of the bacteria and pathogens that contaminate drinking water. This death from lack of oxygen is called anaerobic die-off.
4. Most bacteria and pathogens that contaminate drinking water are relatively large. As water moves down through the filter, the sand provides a final treatment process – physical filtration – that strains out parasites, worms, remaining bacteria, and fine-grain sediments.

By virtue of these four different treatments, BioSand Filters have been shown to eliminate 95-99% of bacteria and viruses, and virtually all parasites and worms. The filter is also effective at removing iron and manganese, and can be adapted to remove arsenic as well.

To be 100% effective, a complete treatment system would finish with a disinfection step, such as the addition of bleach after filtering or use of a solar/UV disinfection system. However, because of the dramatic reduction of contaminants that result from the filtering process, use of BioSand Filters (even without disinfection) will result in significant reductions in disease, provided there is clean water storage and good household sanitation practices. Between continual use of the BioSand Filter and good handwashing and community sanitation practices, likely up to 80% of waterborne diseases could be eliminated.

www.friendlywaterfortheworld.com
info@friendlywaterfortheworld.com

“Kisumu friends church carried a workshop on clean water and sanitation. Young men and women were taught how to make water filters for clean water by Del Livingston. Kisumu and its environment is prone to cholera and water-borne diseases. Filters are needed in this part of the world and Kisumu Friends Church is taking the lead in doing this to the community. Cleanliness is next to Godliness and therefore, clean water drives away problems associated with dirty water. These members need your support and prayers.”



John Muhanji
Friends United Meeting; Nairobi Yearly Meeting
Facebook Excerpt

Queries:

What kind of filtration and purification process is needed to produce clean water in your area?

What kind of filtration and purification process is needed to produce Living Water in your church or meeting?

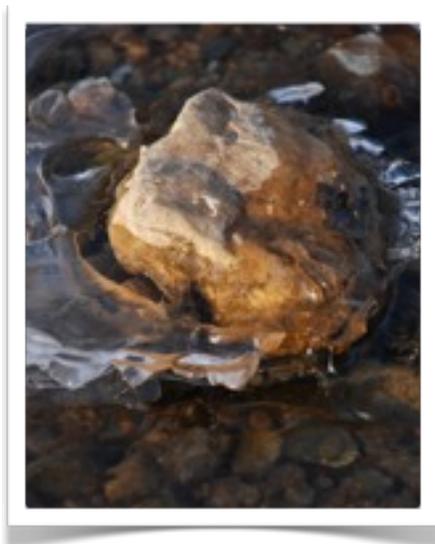
Activity Guide

The following are some activities that may help frame small group study and discussion. The activities are appropriate for all ages and are by no means exhaustive. If your small group has an activity, song, or story that fits with the theme “Let the Living Water Flow! Friends Serving God’s Purposes” and you would like to share it with the larger community of Friends, please email the FWCC Section of the Americas office: americas@fwccamericas.org



Opening Space

Setting a center focus is often helpful in creating a container for worship and study. Begin simply with flowing fabric and a small bowl of water. As the weeks progress in the study, encourage participants to add other water-identified materials they find meaningful – sea shells, water-rounded rocks, glasses of water, etc.



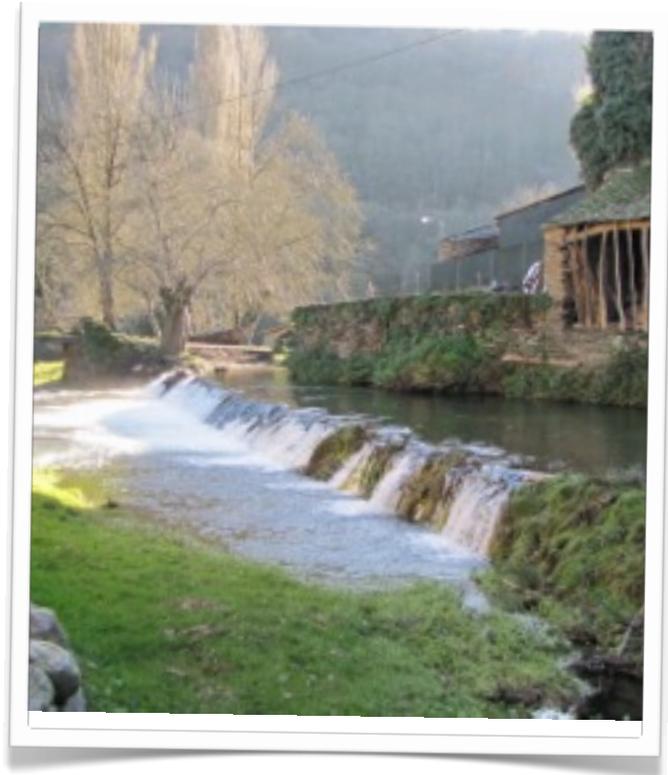
Sister Water by Christina Chung
Fluid, accepting
Ever understanding.
She moves around obstacles
Knowing they will bow to her in time.

Intuitive, deliberate
Never backtracking.
She glides with grace
Confident of her place in this world.

Water, by Emilie Lygren

Slick-backed rocks once ripped from
mountainsides, pieces of glass
broken off branches of trees
and so many pieces of earth
all find their way to the river.
They are given to
the constant working currents,
the blue undersides of streams,
to mud unstuck from banks and wed
to the current movement.

Here, water such a
patient teacher,
reduces rough edges into
roundness,
sands stick into gleaming,
bare swords, holds stones until
their shapes converge.
Stay here long enough
and the parts of you, too,
that have been broken
will be made smooth



At the World Conference of Friends, Kenya 2012
Excerpt by Noah Baker Merrill

I hear flamingos come by their millions at night
to where we stood at noontime
sweating at the sun-soaked hot springs
thirsting for living water

When the Quakers got together
I didn't see flamingos
or lions, or baboons
Well, not many, anyway.

But I saw the miracle.
Not in praying or in dancing
not in preaching, singing, silence
But in the place in all our journeys
where the Resurrection
meets the Damascus Road

Where we are for just a moment blinded
ripped up; laid open
and then made whole

For just a moment
because that's how the healing happens
the work is always ours
but we're given just these moments' winged grace
to help us live our way back whole again

At such a time I heard the hunger unspoken
to know what we've been missing

*Blessed are those who know their need
for theirs is the grace of heaven*

Introductory Activities

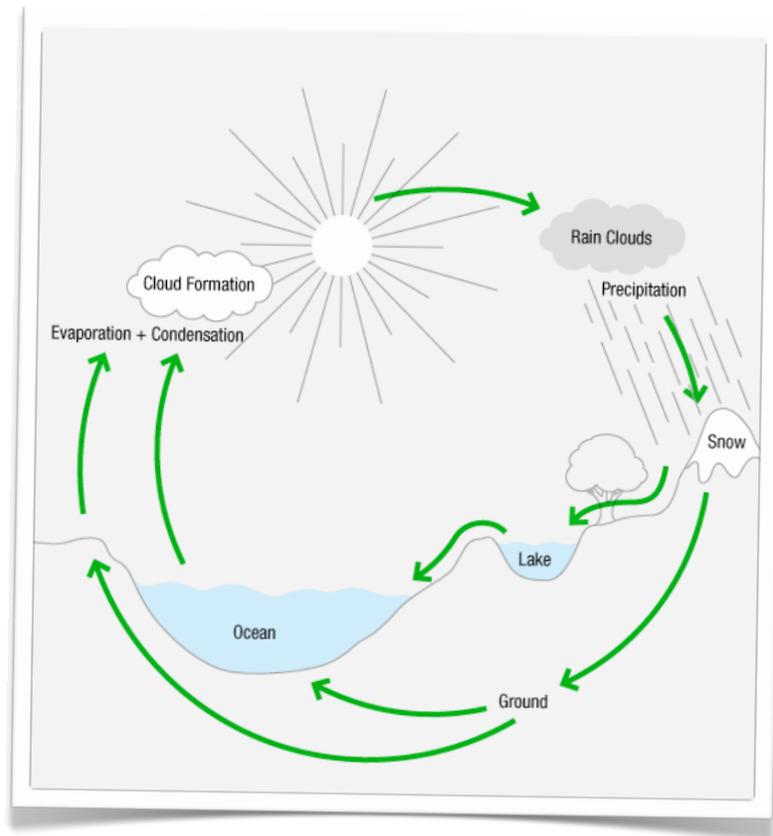
1. Scatter a set of water images: images of water flowing fast, slow, forcefully, gently, through mountains, villages, etc. Ask each person to choose a picture that reflects their spiritual life at that moment. Let people choose in silence and settle into a worship-filled space. Encourage each person to take one minute to say his/her name and, if they would like, share the picture.
2. Give each participant a piece of paper on which to draw or write words about a watery place that is special to them – in particular, a place where they might have experienced the divine presence. Provide markers or colored pencils. After about five minutes, ask the participants each to take one minute, say his/her name and, if they would like, share what was written or drawn and tell why that place is sacred to them.

Small Group Activities

1. For a specified duration, choose a watery nature home near where you live. Even in urban settings, there is almost always a small fountain, creek or stream nearby. Encourage participants to find a place with water that beckons them to sit still for a while. Return to this place throughout the study – this activity could be done as a group or encouraged as a home activity. Ask each participant to spend some time attending to the shapes, textures, smells, sounds, and movements of their sit-spot, and then, ask “Is God here?” As a follow up, ask participants to return to their sit-spot and write a psalm about the water. Encourage participants to write from the heart, not the head.
2. Have the group take turns reading the following psalms (printing out the passages on small strips of paper will make it easy). As they read, make a list of the various forms that water takes. Notice that sometimes water is used literally, and sometimes as a symbol or metaphor:

Psalm 1:3
Psalm 18: 11-14
Psalm 33: 6-7
Psalm 36:8-9
Psalm 65: 9-10
Psalm 68: 6-9
Psalm 69:15
Psalm 78: 15-16
Psalm 104:13-15
Psalm 107:033-35

3. Using the diagram provided, draw the water cycle for the group. Point out how wondrous this system of water is and how fragile – affecting water at one point in the cycle affects water in the entire cycle. Note the parallel interconnectedness of God’s waters and spend some time in quiet reflection.



4. How Much Fresh Water is There? (adapted from Save Our Streams Teacher's Manual, September 1995, published by the Izaak Walton League of America, Inc.)

- Fill a 5 gallon bucket with water before the session. Explain to the group that the 5 gallon bucket of water represents all the Earth's water (including surface water, ground water, polar ice caps, sea water, vapor in the atmosphere, water in people, etc) Ask the group to guess how much of the 5 gallon bucket is fresh water – water available for us to drink.
- Then ask someone to remove 2 cups of water from the bucket. These 2 cups represents all of the fresh water on earth. The rest of the bucket is salt water and not available for us or many other species to drink.
- Then ask someone else to pour out $\frac{1}{2}$ of a cup of the 2 cup measure into a $\frac{1}{2}$ cup measure. The $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups represents all of the fresh water trapped inside the polar ice-caps and not available for us or other species to drink.
- Ask the group to guess how much of the $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fresh, unfrozen water is surface water in rivers, streams and lakes. At this point, take an eyedropper and remove one drop of water. This one drop of water is all the fresh surface water on the earth.
- Reflect with the group the realities of water limitations. How is God calling us to interact with this precious and limited gift of water? Make a list of ways water can be reused, recycled, and conserved.



5. Sensing the Water: This activity will work best if you can take a walk to a nearby park and experience water in a natural setting. If you cannot go outside, recreate a small indoor pond as best you can with a large bowl of water, some plants, sticks and leaves to give it a natural setting. Divide the group into four smaller groups. Assign one of the four senses – sight, hearing, touch, and smell – to each group. Ask each group to experience the water using only the sense it was assigned.

- For the seeing group, what is the shape and color of the water? What do you notice about its movement?
- For the hearing group, what does the water sound like? Is it noisy or quiet?
- For the touch group, what does the water feel like? Is there anything in the water? How does that change the way it feels?
- For the smelling group, what does the water smell like? How do things in the water change the way it smells?
- For all groups – how do you experience God in the water?

Bring the group together to share their observations. What did each person learn about the water? Did they learn something about God? Did they experience life in the water? What does it mean to experience Living Water?



Closing Prayers

In this space of thanksgiving, thank God for providing this precious gift of water both physical and spiritual. Reflect on where water comes from and the route it traveled to get to you. How do you use water in your life? How do you use Living Water in your life? Where does water go when you are finished with it? Where does Living Water go as it moves through you? Make it your intention for the week to use the water you drink as a reminder of God's gifts to you and to all of creation. Use this reminder to remain open to the Living Water available to all.

"God, thank you for water that gives life to all creation. May the water we use every day be a reminder to us of your covenant with us humans and all living things on earth. Help me to use your gift respectfully, to share it freely, and to protect the rights of the many who are without clean water. Amen."

Adapted from Meditations and Devotions on the Millennium Development Goals



Creator God, We cannot begin to thank you for this most marvelous gift of water. We marvel at your bounty and the many ways you nurture us. We are amazed by the miracle of how your water moves around the Earth to sustain your beloved Creation. We acknowledge that there are many times we have not fully appreciated this sacred gift. Forgive us, God, and remind us always "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." (Psalm 24:1) Amen.

Water Songs

USFWI Triennial Conference 1992
reprinted with permission
SHARING THE WATER OF LIFE
WITH THE WORLD,
words by Iola P. Cadwallader
(to the tune of O For a Thousand
Tongues to Sing)



*O God, now pour thy living water on a thirsty land.
And streams of life will overflow with joy on ev'ry hand.
Prepare our hearts and hands to serve as humbly we obey
Thy call to do thy work, in faith, while walking on our way.
Bring silence to our restlessness, renew our quest for right.
Dispel the darkness of our souls, flood now our paths with Light.
Shepherd, who guides us to the water, wipe away each tear.
Turn grief and conflict into peace. Bring Solace to each fear.
Drink often from the living springs that God has freely giv'n.
Reach out to others in their need, make earth eternal heav'n.*

Some Suggested Songs:

Cause Me to Come to the River, By the Waters of Babylon, Down By the
Riverside, Healing River, Joy is Like the Rain, I've Got Peace Like a River,
Here I Am Lord, Spring Forth a Well, Blessed Quietness, How Can I Keep
From Singing?, Peace is Flowing Like A River, Shall We Gather At the
River, We Are the Boat/Somos El Barco, Toma de la Fuente de Agua Viva La
Fuente de la Salvación, Ríos de Agua Viva

Epistle from the 6th World Conference

To Friends Everywhere,

We greet you amid the beauty of the Rift Valley, surrounded by the welcoming embrace of Kenyan Friends. From April 17 to 25, 2012 close to 850 men and women from all the streams of Friends, coming from 112 yearly meetings and groups in 51 countries, have gathered at Kabarak University near Nakuru to consider the theme "Being Salt and Light: Friends Living the Kingdom of God in a Broken World."



The colours, songs, movements, rich diversity and joyful spirit of Friends here gathered have inspired and uplifted us all. We have heard Friends from around the world, including several young, prophetic voices, speak on the theme. They gave a wide variety of interpretations of salt and light in a biblical context and also in how we can apply its meaning to life in our world today.

The call that brought us together was to be salt and light as we live out the Kingdom of God. We received this call with a real sense of urgency in these times of natural disasters, violence, global change, and unequal access to basic needs. We have been reminded that we are sometimes too preoccupied with being heavenly to be useful on Earth. We see this as a challenge to not detach ourselves from the wider society in hope that this will bring us closer to God. Rather, we need to be present and engaged in our communities, while remaining attentive to the Still, Small Voice, in

order to allow the Spirit to work through us.

“The Religious Society of Friends--the Friends Church-- is about nothing if it is not about transformation” in the words of one of our speakers. As Friends we feel called to try to return to the conviction and simple faith of our Quaker ancestors and their transformed lives, so that we may once again become a prophetic people, speaking to God's purposes in these times.

We first have to look inward, both as individuals and as a religious society. Can we end our internal strife? Can we reach out in love to one another as Jesus commanded? We may not understand liberal/evangelical/programmed/unprogrammed Friends but we are Friends. The diversity of Friends at this conference has provided us with an opportunity to live out our testimonies to equality and truth. Our ability to do so has been put to the test. We found ourselves reluctant to go beyond polite acceptance and avoidance of difference. We are not united in all of our attitudes and beliefs, yet we choose to come together to listen, to share, and to hear things we may find uncomfortable and upsetting. As we choose to seek connection in the midst of our differences, we witness the power of God to bless and heal. We may not always understand each other fully, but we are united in our yearning for transformation. We are united in God.

We live in a broken world. We were moved to realise that so many of us here carry a sense of grief, loss, failure or hurt. We were forced to recognise the brokenness in us and in our Religious Society. A speaker challenged us to consider that brokenness may also be opportunity. We are uncomfortable with feeling brokenness and seeing it around us, yet from it we gain strength, empathy and compassion. Rather than trying to heal our brokenness as quickly as possible, we challenge ourselves - and Friends everywhere - to consider what God's plan could be for a hurting individual, and for a hurting community.

We know that the Kingdom is come and coming. We pray that we may experience the Kingdom of God within ourselves here and now, so that we may live it more fully in transforming this world. In this we anticipate the everlasting Kingdom, in which the world will be made whole.

Here in Kenya, we remember the post-election violence that shook this nation in 2008, and the courageous stance taken by our brothers and sisters. We invite all Friends to join us in prayer for Kenyan Friends who are working even now for the prevention of conflict, and for their whole nation as their elections approach. We pray also for all people facing conflict and violence in the world.

Early on in our time together, we were asked the same question that God asked Elijah on Sinai: "What are you doing here?" In the latter half of the conference we have considered many queries that have come out of our work together in small groups. Each of these queries asks, in one way or another, "What will you do after you leave here?" We bear these queries with us, as they are for all Friends to discern how God is leading.

The inward voice of Christ Jesus is what will answer these questions for us. May we be faithful in listening to that voice once we have returned from this gathering. As Christ leads all of us, we can become the salt of the Earth and the light of our broken world.

The Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice



The Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice was approved on 24 April 2012 at the Sixth World Conference Friends, held at Kabarak University near Nakuru, Kenya. It is the culmination of the FWCC World Consultation on Global Change which was held in 2010 and 2011. It is being circulated with the Conference Epistle.

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 rumours 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.

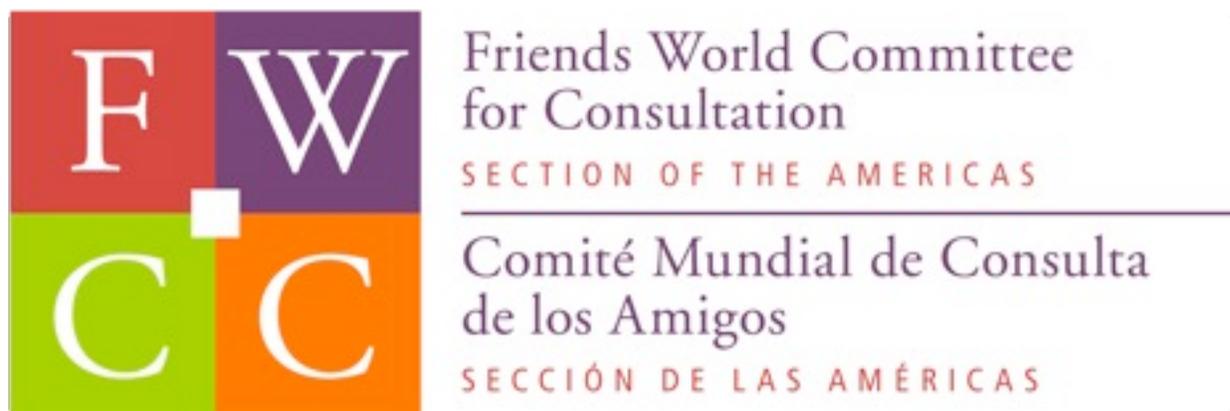
We are called to teach our children right relationship, to live in harmony with each other and all living beings in the earth, waters and sky of our Creator, who asks, “Where were you when I laid the foundations of the world?” (Job 38:4)

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!



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