

Nederlandse Jaarvergadering

Netherlands Yearly meeting Epistle 2026

Dear Friends

From May 8–10, we gathered at the Naturefriends House ‘De Bosbeek’ in Bennekom with some 50 Friends, including guests from Belgium, Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, and Sweden.

We welcomed new Friends and remembered those we have lost.

Our theme was ‘Speaking Truth to Power’. During the introduction, we heard about the American Quaker Rufus Jones, who connected the mystical experience of God to action in the world.

Early Quakers sometimes faced kings and judges. We are rarely confronted so directly with authorities, but rather with other people who stand above us, as well as with systems that perpetuate inequality.

How do we, as Quakers, deal with this? We discussed this in base groups, which often took place outdoors because the weather was sunny.

We heard about the work of the Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA) and the Quaker United Nations Office in Geneva (QUNO), and about the practical implementation of this work. The epilogue focused on ‘letting go’ and placing trust in one another.

At this Annual General Meeting, it was decided to entrust the sale of the Vossiusstraat property to the relevant committees. We also decided to continue supporting Charles Tauber, a member of Netherlands Yearly Meeting who works in Croatia for the Coalition for Work With Psychotrauma and Peace (CWWPP).

From Brussels and Geneva, we heard about the reinstatement of conscription. QCEA and QUNO are working with Quiet Diplomacy, among other methods, to promote alternative security and respect for the rights of conscientious objectors. It was encouraging to hear how in these uncertain times, the work on peace, dialogue, and human dignity continues.

This gives us hope in the good forces at work in the world.

We were inspired by the poem by Emily Dickinson:

‘Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul.
And sings the tune without the words
and never stops at all.’

So let us keep hope.

In Friendship and Unity

On behalf of Netherlands Yearly Meeting

Peter Spreij (Clerk)