Epistle

To Friends near and far,

We send you greetings of love and peace from our yearly meeting, gathered in Carcassonne on 23-26 October 2026.

We Friends gathered here, for the edification of our meeting and each other, speak of our enduring search for unity. Over these days, as we have sat together in worship and practiced love and peace with one another, that unity has begun to take form.

We witness what happens when we are called from our local meetings to join together: a realization that our project is bigger than our own local communities. Our love, care, and attention has reaches beyond what we think of in our day-to-day lives. We are reminded we are not alone. Nor are we alone as a yearly meeting: we share our challenges and yearning for unity with many Friends across Europe and the Middle East.

We recognize our challenges as a community: we want to be more organized, we look for more Friends to hear the call to service, we recognise the challenge of our aging community, and look towards inclusion, seeking how we can create a truly intergenerational space, learning how we can better welcome the newcomer. We also see our ingenuity and all the tools we have as Quakers to meet our challenges.

The violence and destruction within France and in our world looms large over us, driving a persistent sense that we are needing to find how to respond, but it is also clear we are still seeking how we can best respond.

In our need for unity, among ourselves, and between our local meetings, in our deep concern for the suffering of humanity and of our earth, we are moved to testify through the experience and practice of our Quaker values. We feel a call to accompany each other in our spiritual practice, to hold one another in the testimonies of our lives. What does it mean to live as Quakers beyond our meeting for worship, to live simply, with peace and integrity, in community and equality, as stewards of our precious earth?

We do not answer in one voice. We express our Quaker values in different ways, we speak in different languages, and we testify in different forms. Ours is a unity without uniformity: we are one in spirit and in love. On our hearts we carry existing ministries in building peace. We ask ourselves, how do we continue to carry forward this vital ministry? Can we imagine our next most faithful step together? What is Spirit asking us to do? We seek to discern how our lives may speak, of what is possible when we act together. We commit to uphold our existing ministries and to build new connections and relationships to organisations fulfilling this call; to answer the horrors of war, to welcome the stranger and refugee, and to steward our Earth.

We are carrying our history and heritage as Quakers with us, questioning how to bring our practice into action through our tradition. It is clear we feel a collective responsibility to ministry. What form will this take? The joy and the laughter in the lived ministry of our departed Friend Phillipe Le Gall shows us the way. We are a people, awaiting the call, in unity. May we welcome faithfulness, integrity, and peace within ourselves so we are prepared to carry this light, and may be joined to meet this call together.

In love and friendship,

Signed on behalf of France Yearly Meeting