

# Among Friends

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## Dear Friends

Much of this issue is devoted to the Annual Meeting which this year was held in Scotland. We enjoyed a warm welcome at the Scottish Churches House (an ecumenical centre owned by nine Scottish churches, the Religious Society of Friends being one of them). This meeting saw the end of the term of service of Anita Wuyts as clerk. Part of the closing minute reads: "Fritz Renken has reminded us of the thousands of lives Anita has touched during her 30 years of service to Friends in both QCEA and EMES and kissed her on behalf of us all." We welcomed Marit Kromberg of Norway Yearly Meeting as the new clerk. We were also particularly pleased to welcome Mara Dzene, on behalf of the newly recognised Latvian Quaker Group.

*Bronwyn Harwood*



*Fritz and Anita*

## Meeting at a Distance

Listening to the concerns being expressed by the International Membership Committee about ways of nurturing isolated Friends, I found myself thinking about how, in our small but very regular once monthly Meeting in Barcelona, the wish periodically arises that we might meet more often. In real terms, however, sustaining the practical arrangements for once a month and taking into account quite complex travel logistics for some who attend, our most recent decision was, four times a year, to extend the morning's worship into a day spent together in Meeting, worship sharing, eating together and a business meeting.

The hunger nevertheless that I know in myself, and possibly others, to worship more regularly, was touched on by hearing the concern shown by other Quakers for those who do not have easy access to a Meeting, and over the weekend of this gathering, in itself a nurturing time, the idea came to try something new, a Meeting which could be sustained if necessary by only one or two, to which all are invited, but which is not restricted to being together on a physical level.

This idea was taken to a worship sharing group and it was warmly supported, and then also supported by the whole group, which has led to a commitment to try to put it into action.

Without going anywhere, you, and anybody you might think of, are invited to this Meeting, which will take place on the first Sunday of every month at 7 o'clock in the evening, *your time* (after consideration, it seemed

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appropriate to do it this way, rather than constant calculations about reaching one unique hour that might require some to get up in the middle of the night!).

The Meeting will, in other ways, sustain the same parameters as others. It will be for an hour, although of course you are free to leave early or enter late as in any Meeting, if that is right for you. It is not necessary to say that you are at this Meeting but you should know that it is being sustained by at least two and perhaps many more, and if it is your desire to say that you have been there – to symbolise the holding of hands at the end, or to bring a concern to the light, or simply to know that there are others like you, perhaps geographically far and wide, but all going to that Light at 7pm in their time on that day, you could send an e-mail, or write a letter, or make a telephone call.

At the moment you are invited to send an e-mail to [caroline.wilson@esade.edu](mailto:caroline.wilson@esade.edu), or write to Conca de Tremp 51, Interior 3, 08032, Barcelona, if it is your wish to connect with others involved and we will try to find ways of connecting with each other that are meaningful within the context (obviously this depends a little on the extent of the desire to do so). **Above all, however, you are invited, alone or with others, to sit and worship at 7pm on the first Sunday of every month, from June on.**

Looking forward to being there with you!

*Caroline Wilson*  
*Barcelona Monthly Meeting*

## Annual Meeting 2006 Easter Sunday in Dunblane

From my bedroom window in the front of Scottish Churches House I could look out into the Cathedral Square of Dunblane. The lovely back garden of the house is on the lower slopes of Holme Hill where the Scottish monk Blane settled and preached in 607AD, establishing a monastery which later formed the foundations of the cathedral. So our Easter Gathering was taking place in an area with a tradition of 1300 years of Christian witness. When some of us heard that members of the Cathedral's Presbyterian congregation would be holding an early morning Easter service on Holme Hill, we set our alarm clocks in order to be outside the cathedral at sunrise. There we joined a group of Dunblane citizens to walk up the hill. On the hilltop different members of the congregation led us in prayers, a hymn and a reading of John Updike's Seven Stanzas at Easter. The message was clear; we should believe in the resurrection as a physical event, not just a metaphor or parable. And the mood was joyful. If some of us Friends felt this was not quite our theology, we were still happy to accept a warm invitation to breakfast (a full Scottish breakfast!) back down the hill in the church hall,

A church youth group returning from a more strenuous walk to Dumyat came in to breakfast; teenagers, hungry, and happy and triumphant at having completed the walk. And I remembered that just ten years ago in Dunblane primary school, 16 children and their teacher had been killed by a crazed gunman. The horror of this event is still hard to comprehend. What use would my vaguely Christian ideas have been if I had been confronted by this gunman or by grieving parents or by the surviving children? One thing is clear; the Christian community of Dunblane, including Friends, has been able to help the town to cope with its grief. It was later during meeting for worship that I realised that perhaps this work of healing could be a manifestation of the risen Christ at work in the world.

The Easter gathering has been an inspiring one, and I am grateful to all those who worked hard to make it so.

*Janet Kreysa*  
*German Yearly Meeting*

## EMES Annual Meeting 2006 panel session on the theme:

### “The Love that we found is not to be owned but to be shared”

This truth presented in the WGYF epistle calls us to action. Young Friends at WGYF want to be the “salt of the earth and the light of the world”, not just in our meetings and Yearly Meetings but the world at large.

We had different ideas about what that “love” is and where it comes from but if each individual knows what it means in their heads then they can, and in fact will want to take that to their communities and beyond. But we need to know what we are bringing to people, what are we offering and why? Do you know what you are offering? Do you have a vision?

I believe that each individual’s vision should come from their faith and into EMES’ organisation, structures and ultimately the organisations vision. So our whole body is infused by the love of God in each one of us. We need to know and understand the nature of each others relationship with God, “to know one another in the things which are eternal” (George Fox)

“Without a vision the people perish” (Proverbs 28:19). But what is that vision and what happens if we follow it? The Message Bible states this verse as “If the people can’t see what God is doing, they stumble all over themselves. But when they attend to what he reveals, they are most blessed”. So, with a vision you can see what God is doing and follow Him.

George Fox said “I declared God’s everlasting truth... that they might all come to Christ to be their teacher to instruct them, their bishop to oversee them”. Christ is our teacher, “seek and ye shall find”. If we attend to what God reveals, we will find His vision for us.

The WGYF vision statement said:

“We believe God is calling us to be a gathering people. There is infinite guidance, love, peace and truth available and ours for the harvest – for Christ’s harvest. We come together to humbly ask for guidance, to embrace our siblings in faith, to understand truths that have been difficult before, and open ourselves to the possibility of transformation”

What is God calling us to be today?

Do we do things because we’ve always done them or because God has asked us to?

Do we take time to find out how God would have us serve?

What happens when we do our own thing and ignore God? The prophet Haggai illustrates this. At the time of Haggai the Jews had returned from exile but had not rebuilt the Temple in Jerusalem. God spoke through Haggai. “The people procrastinate. They say this isn’t the right time to build the temple. How is it that it’s the right time for you to live in your fine new homes while the Home, God’s Temple is in ruins?”

God had been telling the people the whole time but he had to spell it out.

“You have spent a lot of money, but you haven’t much to show for it. You keep filling your plates, but you never get filled up. You keep drinking and drinking and drinking, but you are always thirsty. You put on layer after layer of clothes but you can’t get warm”.

They had been worrying about taking care of these material aspects without taking care of their duty to God.

God goes on through Haggai, “Climb into the hills and cut some timber, bring it down and rebuild the Temple. Do it for me. Honour me”

When the people attended to what God had revealed guess what happened? They ate and were full, did not go thirsty and kept warm and as in God’s promise in Proverbs they were blessed.

Spend time seeking God and what he wants us to do. Don’t just be satisfied with some food and drink and clothes, attend to God and rebuild God’s Temple here and now.

*Aidan McCartney, Ireland Yearly Meeting  
EMEYF Representative, EMES Executive  
Committee*

# Without a vision the people perish

*Without a vision the people perish.*

*Without a vision the Quakers perish.*

*Without a vision I perish.....*

What then is my vision?

A vision is something big, something far away, but something to work for; something that gets me going; something that will inspire me.

Here I go: my vision is to realize God's Kingdom on earth!

I hope you agree this is not a small vision, but I know I am in good company: in your company and in the company of the lives and history of Friends of more than 350 years.

I strongly believe that there is "that of God" in everyone. I cannot always find it, but I know it is there. I strongly believe that there is "that of God" in myself. I cannot always find it, but I know it is there. And right there, in you and in me and between you and me is where the realization of God's Kingdom will start.

I think we sometimes underestimate who we are. We are created in the image of God; we are children of God; we are part of God; we are co-creators with God.

I want to share a vision I had in Pendle Hill – the Quaker centre for study and contemplation in Philadelphia, USA.

We were having an interesting course on the Celts and in an interval I stood outside the house on a hill and at my feet was the garden: the pond, grass, trees, bamboo, flowers and birds. From far I saw a woman walking into that garden. Suddenly I had the vision that I was God; that I had created this beautiful place and that I had made people to live and work in it.

The people were totally free to do whatever they liked; whether they would live and work in peace or live and work in conflict and war, and all the graduations in between.

I was standing there, pouring out my love, but the people would have to open themselves to receive it.

Some time later the woman who had walked in this "paradise" came up to me and said "this is a very special place" to which of course I agreed wholeheartedly.

We are sons and daughters of God; and to specify, to me God means love, light, trust, acceptance, forgiveness.

All these aspects are in ourselves, as are there their opposites, bitterness, anger, fear, loneliness, feelings of hopelessness and failure and too often the latter get the most attention.

Let us have patience and kindness with ourselves. Let us see the dark and the light, in ourselves and in others. Let us try not to judge too severely. I am sure God doesn't.

Let us use sharing groups to get to know and accept each other and ourselves; let us share our "successes" and our "failures", after all they make us the person we are, and the better we know each other, the more we come to respect each other.

Above all let us be together in the meeting for worship and really open ourselves to that still small voice of Love that we can hear or feel in our hearts when we listen carefully. Transformation can and will take place.

And then we might get some of these infectuous symptoms that are so beautifully described in the spring edition of *Among Friends*, the symptoms of inner peace, like:

- An unmistakable ability to enjoy each moment
- A loss of interest to judge other people
- a loss of the ability to worry (this is a very serious symptom)
- Frequent attacks of smiling
- An increasing tendency to let things happen rather than make them happen

Then we'll go out into the small or the big world and do the things we want to do from our heart and I am sure we will realize, all of us, in our own way, a piece of the Kingdom of God on earth, because "the love we found is shared and spread, and action takes place".

*Inge Herrebout  
Netherlands Yearly Meeting*

## Visions to be shared

I was travelling among Friends in Burundi and Rwanda in 1990 with Zablon Malenge, FWCC Africa Section Secretary. In Bujumbura, our hosts took us into a Friends church made of mud bricks. One wall leaned inward precariously, miraculously held in place by faith and the beams that supported the leaky tin roof. The place was already filled with a very youthful congregation eager to hear what we had to say. I wondered what! could possibly say that would measure up to their level of anticipation. My sense was that as long as I was friendly and positive, the message was already in place - the Quaker vision of a great people to be gathered, and that these two Friends cared enough about them to come from far-off Kenya and England to be with them. We were living evidence for these local Friends of the world-wide community of Friends. I have often thought about that event and wondered how many of those young Burundian Friends have survived the killings that that country suffered since the time I was there. That o'er-leaning wall has come to symbolize for me the precariousness of life for those who live without the protections we enjoy in the "west". More about community later.

This ties directly into our theme. I don't know what the Hebrew word for perish is, but it seems to allow great leeway in translation:

"Without a vision, the people **perish**;" (King James)

"Without a vision, the people **get out of hand**;" (Jerusalem)

"Where there is no **revelation**, the people **cast off restraint**;" (Gideon)

"Without a vision, the people is **made naked**;" (Standard Revised).

It is marvellous how various translations give breadth to our understanding of vision, revelation, or goal. Let us contemplate these variant disasters in a positive light:

**perish** - so the vision gives life.

**get out of hand** - the vision keeps the people in hand, it helps them focus on worth while common goals

**is made naked** - the vision keeps the people clothed, warm, protected.

And, what is the second half of this Proverb - the action prescribed to make that vision a reality? It's simply to

obey the law:

"Without a vision, the people get out of hand: but he that keepeth the precepts, happy is he."

Follow all the rules - keep kosher. I think this was written by the guys in charge of maintaining civil order - that was important in a time when the Israelites were soon to be rounded up and sent into Babylonian exile. And the proof that their god was the true god was that in the end, they won out. The violent religion of the Old Testament is still very much alive today. In the USA and in many other parts of the world, apocalyptic religions are growing the landscape like weeds. They have taken over the White House and much of the congress in Washington - the end is nigh, they preach, and it's going to be violent Big Time. In spite of the successful models of Christ, the early Friends and Anabaptists, Gandhi and Martin Luther King, the ocean of darkness Fox saw in his vision is still with us and covering the earth. There's a lot for that ocean of Light to overcome.

We all know that there is an ocean of Light and like our vision of Proverbs 29, it is life-giving, it requires keeping focussed on the vision of peace and clothing ourselves in the raiment of HOPE. How do we keep that hope alive and real?

We're going to have to take chances, get out of our comfort zone. To share the love and the vision, it requires from us the following:

1. Being grounded in our faith in a God of peace rather than war.
2. Integrity as a way of life - knowing that might does not make right - the Truth does.
3. Persistence in our testimony to equality. Remember how long it took slavery to end once pioneers like John Woolman got clear in their own minds and started to work on the consciences of their fellows - it took several generations. And, now there is a growing consensus that human rights trumps national and cultural sovereignty and so women and other enslaved people in parts of the world which still deny basic human rights can hope to be released. How can we seize the opportunity and work as their allies?
4. Perspective. We are part of a global majority of people who want peace and justice which will be heard. Maybe the folks in Washington and their cronies in other seats of power don't recognize it, but if we have

confidence in our collective voice and build allies of non-violence in other religions and faiths and well as the secular population, that majority will grow.

5. The Vision is about communities rather than individualism. This is so important that Howard Brinton, first Director at Pendle Hill saw community as a significant Friends Testimony. We in the rich world have a lot to learn about community from our brothers and sisters who live in economic deprivation but know how to share. The cult of individualism we are experiencing in the “North” is widening the gap between rich and poor and we need to find the political and economic means to reverse that trend.

6. Model simplicity - an attitude of sharing rather than accumulating. There is change happening even in the U.S.A. - GM and Ford are not selling as many Sport Utility Vehicles as people begin to realize that owning those things is part of the problem rather than contributing to a solution. Maybe we'll even get back to trusting strangers enough to hitch hike and get a lift.

7. There's hope in our Quaker youth - the bright eyes on the faces of those young Friends we met in Burundi with their own visions of possibilities. Each generation brings another World Gathering of Young Friends, and there are always tangible lively results and new vision from both the preparation and the experience.

8. Gratitude. There are miracles of hope happening all around - notice them and say, “thank you, God”. That shows faith in the vision.

9. Take the time to spell out your vision. Be specific. FWCC does it with a mission statements. What would your mission statement look like?

Since retiring from FWCC, I have served on the Policy Committee of Friends Committee on National Legislation, a Quaker lobby in Washington that has a task that can feel like Sisyphus with his rolling rock. All the social progress made from President Roosevelt onward is up for grabs under the current right wing

hegemony. But yet, it is a pleasure and an honor to work with the FCNL staff who never seems to give up in spite of the Herculean task before them. Our committee meets with the staff of 34 in Washington four times a year to learn and advise. For each two-year congress, we set the FCNL priorities of issues to address. Every few years, we work over and revise our statement of Vision, the Statement of Legislative Policy to take to the Annual General committee meeting in November for approval. The Statement begins with these four “we seeks” -

“We seek a world free of war and the threat of war.

We seek a society with equity and justice for all

We seek a community where every person's potential may be fulfilled

We seek an earth restored.”

The preamble to the statement includes how lobbyists and committee members try and work. It says, in part: “We listen to others, convey our beliefs about policy issues, urge members of Congress and others in government to support specific policies and actions, and try to shape and support legislation consistent with our convictions. We work to educate Friends and like-minded people to participate in the political process, whether as voters, activists, or elected officials’

Now, that's not huddling with others who agree with you - talk about getting out of your comfort zone! In fact, even in these times when right wing conservatism is so much in the ascendancy, there are still those in Washington with whom we agree on particular issues and they find FCNL staff to be a great comfort, particularly when they organize conferences or research and write language for bills they wish to introduce.

Here are Friends sharing and acting. God bless 'em.

Thanks for listening. Keep the faith.

*Thomas Taylor  
Lake Erie YM and FCNL*

## Latvian Recognized Meeting

### – report presented at the EMES Annual Meeting

The first records about Quakers in Latvia go back to the time of late 17 and early 18 Century in the Duchy of Courland and Riga city. These Quakers might be some nobles of German descent, British or other traveling Friends. I have not found any connections of Quakers with Letts who formed the bulk of the native population, who in those times were not free people.

Then Tamara Zalite (born Eiduss, 1918-1990) who was born in a Jewish family in Russia, but spent most of her life in Latvia, did a secretarial job at the Friends' House in London in the late 1930s and worked with the Quakers till June 22nd 1941.

The first Latvian Quaker is a member of Madison Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends is Gundega Korsts, from Wisconsin, USA. She visited Latvian Friends in Summer 2005.

There have never been any members of the Religious Society of Friends, nor any Quaker Meeting in the territory of Latvia before us.

The first time when some Latvian seekers met for Quaker worship was in 1995 and then Hans Weening, Executive Secretary of Europe & Middle East Section, FWCC was contacted and he came to visit small Latvian group of seekers in Riga and brought the Journal of George Fox.

Since then intense email correspondence was established with Friends from different Quaker traditions, Latvian

seekers travelled to visit Friends and Meetings in the USA (1999 & 2002), Finland (2002) and Friends House in Moscow, Russia, read Quaker literature, journals, Faith & Practice books and other publications.

Since 2002 there have been held regular unprogrammed worship meetings in Riga with 4-5 seekers.

In September 2004 four Latvians Ivars Abelis, Inese Ansule, Marina Skilvalte and Yelena Belayeva participated Baltic Friends Gathering in Nida, Lithuania. After this Quaker Gathering we continued as the Latvian Quaker group, all four have become International members, and meetings for worship are held regularly in Liepaya, Riga and Daugavpils.

The next event the Latvian Quaker group organized was the Eastern Baltic Friends Meeting Seminar "Exploring Quaker Faith and Practice" in Jurmela, Vaivari, 29.04.-02.05.2005 with 40 participants.

This year we applied and on 15 March become the Latvian Recognized Meeting under the care of IMC FWCC with 5 International Members, 2 Applicants for Membership and 7 regular attenders regularly meeting for worship in 3 biggest cities of Latvia Riga, Daugavpi and Liepaya with one applicant from Valmiera which is in Northern Latvia.

*Contact person for Friends in Latvia:*

*Ivars Abellis: ivars43@yahoo.com*

## Quaker United Nations Organisation

News from the Representatives appointed by EMES to serve on the two Quaker United Nations Committees. Lindsey Cook is a member of Britain Yearly Meeting, currently living in Bonn, and has just recently, on our behalf, attended her first QUNO New York committee meeting. Martin Kunz is a member of German Yearly Meeting, currently residing in London, and represents us on the QUNO Geneva Committee.

### QUNO New York

"As stewards of Friends testimonies at the United Nations in New York, Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) and the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) agree to work together to witness to the testimonies of truth, peace, and social and economic justice at the United Nations and its various organisations based in New York.

Dear Europe and Middle East Friends

In late March I flew to New York City to represent you - Europe and Middle East Quakers - at the Quaker United Nations Committee (QUNC - NY) in New York

The meeting was inspiring on many levels. QUNC-NY is newly formed, and is responsible for 'seasoning, discerning and choosing program priorities for QUNO-NY's work'. We are all Quakers. We are from around the world. And we represent the different theological paths that Quakers have taken over the years.

For me, this meeting was a chance to support the office which offered me an internship twenty years ago (dare I count?). The experience of working with QUNO was powerful; I later went on to work with various organisations, including the United Nations, on human rights and humanitarian issues. The QUNC meeting was also a chance to talk with Quakers from Africa, Asia and the United States, and with Christian evangelical Quakers. The QUNC's dynamics blossomed with these different paths all merging into a shared commitment to support Quaker presence at the United Nations.

Quaker priorities at the United Nations Offices are not static. They are often defined by the needs of the time, and the specialisation of staff members. The former Quaker Representatives, Jack Patterson and Lori Heninger, recently finished seven years of deeply committed work with QUNO. We are now looking for a new Quaker Representative, and should have the post filled by late October, when QUNC meets again. This new Representative, and the experience he or she brings, will help define the future priorities of QUNO work.

At present, QUNO-NY gives unique and effective guidance to the United Nations Community in the fields of 'Emerging Conflicts and Crises', and in 'Prevention and Peace Building' (supporting the Peace Building Commission). In particular, QUNO staff member Jessica Huber and programme assistants Marin O'Brien and Richard Bailey are highlighting Northern Uganda, Columbia and Zimbabwe as dangerously 'under attended' conflicts which see great human suffering but are not receiving needed international attention.

For me, being a part of the QUNC-NY is a reminder of how remarkable is our position at the United Nations. We are one of the very few international

non-governmental organisations (NGO) to be granted a vote with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). QUNO-NY has general consultative status through ECOSOC, unique because it is given only to those NGOs working on a wide range of issues with the United Nations. Yet we are not only an NGO. We are a faith-based NGO. We speak not just from principle but from the values which our Christian foundations so radically defined.

Love thy Neighbour. Love your enemy.

*In peace,  
Lindsey Cook*

## QUNO Geneva

### Instead of a standard report ...

... on the work of Quaker Office at the United Nations (QUNO) Geneva ("we met two times and discussed many interesting topics" ...) I'll take the liberty of making a few comments on the ministerial of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Hong Kong in December 2005: I had the unique chance to extend a business trip to China and attend (not at QUNO's cost ...) the WTO meeting as an observer member of the QUNO delegation, seeing QUNO in action for the first time in eight years.

Looking at the outcome of that marathon ministerial, one could just report very briefly that nothing was decided, apart from further meetings.

However, this in itself is interesting enough: In previous years outcomes tended to favour the powerful and rich nations. This time, the poorer countries, partly under the leadership of India and Brazil, were better organized to voice their interests (and objections), while on the other hand Europe and the US have not yet realized that in order to maintain growth in global trade (which they claim would benefit all) they, too, have to give in, rather than just demand.

Key issues still on the table are the subsidies for less than 30.000 cotton farmers in the US, which threaten the livelihood of millions of small cotton growers in sub-Saharan Africa in particular. Subsidies for EU farmers, which result in agricultural exports at dumping prices,

unfairly undercutting Third World farmers, which should have a natural advantage on commodities like sugar.

The industrialized countries on the other hand demand open markets for their banks and insurance companies, their electricity and water suppliers - the so called utilities, which are a highly sensitive topic when it comes to the issue of universal (affordable) access.

And there is the topic of migration under the heading of GATS - General Agreement in Trade in Services: While 'the North' takes it as a given, that its managers and consultants can travel all over the world in pursuit of profits - most of the labour migration from 'the South' (or East) takes place illegally: Construction workers from the former Eastern Block countries into Western Europe, agricultural workers from Mexico into the US, ... There are those who question whether an agreement on this type of 'service provision in the shape of a person' should be encouraged via the negotiation of an agreement, pointing out that existing programmes (e.g. in the US) have been badly administered, resulting in the abuse of workers. On the other hand, a number of national delegations of

developing countries in Geneva, with whom QUNO works closely, have expressed a strong interest in a legal framework: Rules, even if badly implemented, are still better than the 'law of the jungle'.

So what did QUNO do in Hong Kong: Three legal experts were there to help developing countries assess draft proposals and put their demands in to 'treaty language'. With thousands of negotiators talking at all levels, the Quaker input probably was not key in the non-outcome of the ministerial. But the fact that the Indian delegation asked QUNO to arrange a meeting where it could explain its position to Non Governmental Organizations present in Hong Kong shows that QUNO is seen as an honest broker, a friend for the less privileged. And: Just before the Hong Kong meeting the right of poor countries to affordable generic medicine, an area of previous QUNO involvement, finally was officially recognized.

More detailed reports on Hong Kong and on the other work areas of QUNO (Human Rights, migrants, women in prison, small arms, disarmament, ...) are available on [www.quno.org](http://www.quno.org), which also has a free electronic alert system for all new QUNO publications.

*Martin Kunz*

## 22nd FWCC Triennial

August 10–19, 2007 at King's Hospital School, Dublin, Republic of Ireland

Theme: *Finding the Prophetic Voice for our Time*

*Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy.*

*(1 Corinthians 14:1, NRSV)*

*It is love, then, that you should strive for.*

*Set your hearts on spiritual gifts, especially the gift of proclaiming God's message.*

*(1 Corinthians 14:1, TEV-Good News for Modern Man)*

The 22<sup>nd</sup> FWCC Triennial will take place from 11-19 August 2007 in Dublin, Ireland. The Triennial is the world business meeting of the Friends World Committee for Consultation. Representatives gather to review what has been done in our name, and to consider future tasks and programmes. Further information can be found on [www.fwccworld.org](http://www.fwccworld.org)

Invitations have now gone to all Yearly Meetings to send Representatives to the Triennial Meeting in 2007.



In addition there are just over eighty places available to 'observers' at the Triennial. Twenty of these come from the host country (Ireland) and **a further twenty from the rest of the host section (Europe and the Middle East)**. Interested Friends from across Europe and the Middle East, especially those who have not previously experienced an FWCC event, are encouraged to apply for an observer place. All applicants should have the support of their Yearly Meeting or local Quaker

group.

However demand is expected to outstrip supply and certain selection criteria will apply:

Observers must be able to pay the full cost of their attendance (£675/Euro975), and be over 18 years of age.

All those present are full participants in the Triennial. Preference will be given to those who are able to contribute to the work of the Triennial, and whose presence complements the balance in Friends' traditions, geographical spread, age and gender that we hope will be represented. How can observers assist at the Triennial? There are many ways in which help

can be given, such as:

- in interpretation and translation (in Spanish or French, or other languages);
- as facilitators for worship sharing groups; as part of the pastoral care team;
- helping with exhibitions, sales or in the office;
- recording meetings;
- convening small groups;
- photography, journalism.
- IT and website updating work

Contact FWCC World Office for an application form:

FWCC, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2AX

## News in brief from Friends around Europe and the Middle East

### Ama'ari Camp Play Centre

The Play Centre is running very well and the 45 children are enjoying their time there, learning and playing. The children had the chance to showcase all the things they learnt at our mothers' day party. It was an enjoyment for the mothers who were very proud of their children. The Play Centre was full of flowers and joy.

Wafiyeh, our senior teacher, had recently participated in a Kindergarten Teachers' Exchange programme in Berlin Germany. Through my connection with the Barenboim Said Foundation, Wafiyeh took part in this exchange together with another 16 kindergarten teachers from other schools across the West Bank. Wafiyeh was an active member amongst the group and she gave a demonstration of how she delivers the concepts to the children through songs and shapes. She visits so many kindergartens in Berlin and came back with lots of ideas to implement in the Play Centre. This visit opened new ideas to her and she in turn will train the other 2 assistant teachers on the things she learnt. Last year through the Barenboim-Said Foundation teachers we were able to offer music lesson to the children and I am working on doing so next year.

We have a photographer in Ramallah for 3 months,

his name is Skip and he visited the play Centre with me and he was moved by the energy and the good

will the teachers are working there and the engagement of all the children in the activities taking place there. He is still interested in making stories of some of the children of the Play Centre and I arranged for him to visit again next Saturday and take pictures of the life in the camp. Mr, Skip does not stop talking to every one he meets about the positive will and enthusiasm of the Play Centre Team and the lively spirit there. I can say that I am very proud of what we are doing there in every respect.

*Muna Khleifi, Supervisor*



### Investment in Hope - New DVD

This DVD tells the story of how Friends in Ramallah partnered with Friends from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Baltimore Yearly Meeting and others not only

to rehabilitate the old Meeting House and Annex in the centre of Ramallah, but also to establish Friends International Centre in Ramallah to carry out a wider ministry.

Further information available at <http://ramallah.quaker.org>

Friends in Europe should contact Bronwyn Harwood for a copy of the DVD. This will be provided free of charge for use with meetings and groups wishing to learn more about the work. We hope such use will lead to collections and donations for the work of FICR which are urgently needed to ensure the ongoing work.

## Spiritual Hospitality

Extract from a letter:

I enjoyed the spring 2006 number very much. In response to the predicament of the 'Middle-Spotted-Woodpecker-Quaecker' (report from German Friends) I can report that, thanks to popular demand, *Opening the Door: the Spiritual Hospitality Project report* has had to be reprinted.

This research project explored how Quaker meetings could be more visible, welcoming and inclusive, extending their appeal to a wider spectrum of the local community. The report is a thought-provoking examination of the way we Quakers hide ourselves away in the treetops- plus lots of ideas for better practice. Copies are now available direct, at £6 (9 ) plus postage, from me: Stevie Kraye, 1 Dolfor, Ciliau Aeron, Lampeter SA48 8DE, Wales (UK). Stevie. Kraye@care4free.net

*Stevie Kraye  
Britain Yearly Meeting*

## STOP PRESS EUROSATORY 12 – 16 June 2006

Yvonne Kressman of France Yearly Meeting phoned to say that she plans to hold a silent vigil at the main gate (near the metro station, Villepinte) and invites Friends to join her. Please phone Yvonne on 003390672919 for more details. From the 5<sup>th</sup> of June she will be in Paris and can be contacted via the Quaker Centre, 114bis, Rue de Vaugirard, Paris 0033145487423

## Peacebuilding – what is the role of Europe?

Come and find out at a joint conference:

QCEA's Associate Members' Conference held in conjunction with QUNO Geneva and QPSW

**20 – 22 October 2006**

(Starts with supper on Friday and ends after lunch on Sunday)

*Chant d'Oiseau (Birdsong) Conference Centre,  
Brussels, Belgium*

### Speakers:

o **Karel Kovanda**, Deputy Director General, DG External Affairs, European Commission, on the role of the EU in peacebuilding in the world (confirmed)

o **Carne Ross**, JRCT Visionary, on Diplomacy for those who need it most (confirmed)

o **David Atwood**, Director, QUNO Geneva, on the global context of the EU Foreign Policy and peacebuilding work (to be confirmed)

- Workshops on a wide range of Quaker peace work

- Discussions on the EU's and our response to terrorism

- Meet Friends from across Europe

Cost: £135/ 195 per person (including registration, meals and accommodation), excludes travel. For participants who are Associate/Supporting Members or who represent a Monthly Meeting which is an Associate/Supporting Member the cost is £120/ 170.

Booking is essential as places are limited!

For UK bookings contact: Anne Wilkinson, QPSW, Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ, phone: 020 7663 1062,

e-mail: [annew@quaker.org.uk](mailto:annew@quaker.org.uk)

## Diary Dates 2006 & 2007

We are short of space for full postal addresses and phone numbers. Please contact the EMES Office if you need this information.

**2 – 4 June France International Salon for Peace Initiatives, Paris.** French Friends are coordinating international Quaker involvement on behalf of FWCC. Contact: Jeanne Henriette LOUIS, [jeannehenriette@ifrance.com](mailto:jeannehenriette@ifrance.com) or Joy Liengaard [joyazima@wanadoo.fr](mailto:joyazima@wanadoo.fr)

**2 – 5 June Switzerland Yearly Meeting, Aeschi.**

**6 – 8 June France Eurosatory.** For further information about the planned Quaker presence at the International Arms Fair contact Jeanne Henriette Louis or Joy Liengaard

**29 June - 2 July Nordic Yearly Meeting,** (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden Yearly Meetings) Nordiska Folkhögskolan, Kungälv near Gothenburg, Sweden. See [http://www.kveker.org/index\\_trossamfunn\\_eng.htm](http://www.kveker.org/index_trossamfunn_eng.htm) for more details

**13 July – 11 August Quaker Youth Pilgrimage** in Ohio and Indiana, USA for young people aged 16 to 18.

**29 August – 1 September France Yearly Meeting.** Contact Louise Elias 0033 4 68 26 58 86

**4-8 September Woodbrooke** Special week for translators. 1046 Bristol Road, Birmingham B29 6LJ 0044 (0) 121 472 5171. [enquiries@woodbrooke.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@woodbrooke.org.uk)

**7 - 10 September Middle East Quaker Yearly Meeting,** Brummana High School, Brummana, Lebanon. Contact Sabah Baz, [bazfamily@hotmail.com](mailto:bazfamily@hotmail.com)

**8 – 10 September. Quakers Worldwide: similar testimonies, different witness.** Quaker World Relations Committee (Britain Yearly Meeting) Conference at Woodbrooke.

**15 - 17 September Border Meeting Strasbourg Meeting our neighbours**

Contact: [nancy.krieger@wanadoo.fr](mailto:nancy.krieger@wanadoo.fr) or Mike Zipser, 20 rue du General Rapp, F 67000 Strasbourg, France

**22 – 24 September Woodbrooke** Bi-lingual Anglo-German weekend

**12 - 15 October German Yearly Meeting,** Schloss Scheny, Lichtenfels, Bavaria

**20 – 22 October QCEA/QUNO Geneva/QPSW Conference.** Brussels. See inside page for details.

**17 - 19 November EMEYF Annual Meeting,** Bad Pyrmont, Germany. Contact [emeyf@qcea.org](mailto:emeyf@qcea.org)

**17 - 19 November EMES Peace and Service Consultation,** Brussels. Contact Bronwyn Harwood, [emes@fwcc.quaker.org](mailto:emes@fwcc.quaker.org)

### 2007

**8-11 February Gathering of European Clerks at Woodbrooke**

Among Friends is the newsletter of Europe and Middle East Section of Friends World Committee for Consultation.

Also available at: <http://www.fwccemes.org>

We want Among Friends to reflect the diversity of Quaker life and experience across the Section and welcome articles, photos and news of forthcoming events.

There is no set subscription fee for Among Friends. We depend on voluntary subscriptions. Costs of printing and distribution are rising and we hope those who are able to pay will consider an annual donation of around 10 Euros.

If you wish to make a bank transfer, please use the details below:

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**For holders of UK bank accounts** please send cheques or CAF vouchers in GBP to the EMES office. Scottish Charity number: SC 036528

Deadline for Among Friends 101: **1 August 2006**