

Friends World Committee for Consultation Section Meeting 2015
“Friends Woven Together in God’s Love” Colossians 2:2

This year FWCC representatives from throughout the American continent met in Mexico City March 12-15. We met to discuss the future of FWCC, gather inspiration from each other and make new friends. Two of your North Pacific Yearly Meeting representatives were there, Elinor Jordan and Erin Eichenberger, as well as many others from the Yearly Meeting who serve on FWCC committees.

Many structural changes are being made to FWCC. Like other similar organizations, we do not have the money to hire as many staff as we have in the past. Some of the tasks previously taken on by the main office will need to be shifted to local representatives. FWCC laid down the committee name “The Wider Quaker Fellowship” and introduced the name “Communications & Correspondence Program Groups.” Many Friends spoke to the place The Wider Quaker Fellowship and its publications have had in their hearts. The work is expected to be continued by the Communications and Correspondence Program Groups.

One of the exciting changes is the creation of the Traveling Ministry Corps. The goal is to recognize the ministers among us, especially the ones who have something to share with the larger world. FWCC aims to be the organization that shares those ministers with the rest of the Section, to be the connection throughout the Americas. Yearly Meeting Representatives will need to be the resource for finding and naming our own ministers.

The recent Quaker Youth Pilgrimage to Peru and Bolivia was celebrated, the first one to be set in South America. 26 youth, from 16 to 18 years old and from Europe, North and South America participated. They learned about each other and the churches they visited. At the same time, the representatives met to redesign the FWCC Youth Program and ask the question, “What do our youth need from Quakerism?” Different Yearly Meetings had different answers (which is one of the advantages of bringing Quakers from all traditions together at one conference) – the Jamaican representative wanted opportunities for their youth to act on a global scale and influence others. Latin Americans wanted their youth to experience leadership and the North Americans wanted a place for forging strong connections and community.

Your Yearly Meeting Representatives left Mexico knowing there is work to be done and feeling enthusiasm to do the work. Erin was inspired in new ways to work locally on discerning and supporting ministers in her local Meeting and to foster her own Convergent Friends connections. Elinor really enjoyed the Godly Play demonstration and the stories of how that is being used in South and North America. There are already many connections among the Quaker groups in the Pacific Northwest and we plan to use our connections to share our enthusiasm more broadly. We would like more of you to experience what FWCC has to offer. With rifts and disagreements arising among Yearly Meetings near and far, it is important to build bonds of love and understanding between Quakers, especially those who see and experience the Religious Society of Friends differently. FWCC is an organization solely based on this intention and it is doing good work.