VIBRANT JOURNEYS OF FAITH
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What are VIBRANT JOURNEYS OF FAITH?

Journeys of faith often begin with a nudge, and in time grow into vibrant experiences of Spirit. My own journey of faith began at the annual Friends General Conference Gathering which led me to a deeper understanding and involvement with FGC and the Religious Society of Friends.

I know I am not alone in feeling the transformative nature of the FGC Gathering. The 2018 Gathering at the University of Toledo in Ohio created a week of intentional community devoted to worship, loving friendship and learning that will resonate long into the future for many Friends.

With the generous support of Friends Foundation for the Aging in 2018, Spiritual Deepening eRetreats upgraded its technology and is improving participant support. eRetreats, the Welcoming Friend Project, and the Ministry on Racism Program’s virtual meetings for worship are demonstrating that when approached thoughtfully, technology can enhance our spiritual lives.

Publishing the Word remains a longstanding calling of FGC. QuakerPress released three new titles in 2018, and QuakerBooks sales stabilized through the vigorous efforts of the Publications and Distribution Committee, the Manager of QuakerBooks, and support of Friends.

I am inspired by the steps FGC is taking to address the impact of racism within our own body and that of the greater Religious Society of Friends through the Institutional Assessment on Systemic Racism. The Institutional Assessment captured Friends’ concerns on issues of equality, justice, access, participation, and the recognition that we cannot fully know the Divine if we don’t know and love the full breadth of humanity.

FGC belongs to each of us. Together we hold stories both profound and challenging that when shared move us deeper into vibrant journeys of faith. Journeys, that when boldly taken, lead toward wholeness.

Faithfully,

Frank Barch
Presiding Clerk
Joan Broadfield considers reading a form of activism. “Asking people of color to tell their stories can be yet another extension of white supremacy. We’re asking people to tell their stories on our time. Reading is about taking your time, not theirs, to learn.”

Currently volunteering at the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Library at Friends Center, Joan draws inspiration from the writings of Quaker authors such as Margery Post Abbott and Debbie Humphries. “We walk in the world to serve with passion, love, commitment, and community. We can see this clearly in a book. Books shine a light so nicely.”

There’s joy in unplugging and inviting spaciousness into our daily lives. Joan recalls how “Parker Palmer spoke of the practice of Lectio Divina, the dipping in and out of a book—reading and then stopping to absorb.”

“Friends in print have important things to tell us about who we are and where we have been.”

QuakerBooks of FGC promotes Quaker writers and curates a catalog that nurtures Quaker faith for readers of all ages and experiences. Yes, the book may be cheaper elsewhere, but a purchase from QuakerBooks comes with something other retailers don’t offer – a commitment as a Quaker institution to pay a living wage and provide health insurance for staff. Plus, your purchase helps FGC ensure access to the books, pamphlets, and leaflets that other non-Quaker retailers would not carry.
“Quakers have something that can help other faiths,” Carter Nash shares about what drew him to FGC’s CIRC (Christian and Interfaith Relations Committee). “By working with other religious bodies we can be more effective and leverage our voice better.”

For Carter dialogue with other faiths, both Christian and non-Christian, present opportunities for a deeper understanding and more nuanced approach to an issue. Interfaith dialogue strengthens everyone’s voice and deepens insights as to “why Friends would support or oppose an issue.”

Working through complexities is part of Carter’s nature. He has given much thought to the FGC Institutional Assessment on Racism and sees, as in his interfaith work, the importance of holding the core of Quaker faith while listening to others.

“I am a man who is black, queer, and disabled. I’ve been followed, beaten, and harassed for each of these. But if I focus on only one part of my identity, I am not whole,” Carter observes. “All bias has cross-cutting issues. I don’t have anger or hate towards any group because of the demeaning way a few people have treated me.”

The strength of Quaker faith for Carter lies in our wholeness. “There is that of God within each of us. There is love within each of us. We need to give love and accept it.”

As FGC’s voice within the World Council of Churches, the Parliament of World Religion, other ecumenical bodies, and the broader Quaker Community, CIRC (Christian and Interfaith Relations Committee) brings Quaker perspective to interfaith discussions on equity and justice.

“There is that of God within each of us. There is love within each of us.”
Thanks to grant support from the Friends Foundation for the Aging, Spiritual Deepening eRetreats (online programming) launched a new and inviting e-learning platform with updated content, easier navigation, and greater flexibility.

Young Adult Friends created an eRetreat of their own to nurture post-Gathering connections. Additionally, the FLGBTQC community expressed interest in eRetreats as a way to foster deeper community.

“As a new student in the School of the Spirit, I rely on QuakerBooks for my required reading material.”
— Virginia Friend and QuakerBooks customer

“The workshop and plenary speakers helped me to grow in personal understanding at a very deep level.”
— Michigan Friend and 2018 Gathering Participant

“I loved exploring our identities and talking about the issues that divide, as well as, unite us.”
— Pennsylvania Friend and Friend of Color Retreat participant

Under the theme, The Power of Truth, workshops and plenaries nurtured Friends spiritually and inspired Quaker action. With dynamic presence and a powerful message, Rev. William Barber II addressed an auditorium filled to capacity on America’s Need for a Moral Revival.

Friends of Color strengthened community beyond the Pre-Gathering Retreat by holding monthly virtual meetings for worship.

The Committee for Nurturing Ministries Consultation Weekend brought together clerks from 15 yearly meetings to share ideas and foster mutual support.

“The small group was a wonderful way to learn and be in the Light. A great way to complement our Ministry on Sundays”
— Texas Friend and Spiritual Deepening in-person meeting participant


Quakerbooks processed 1,389 orders, and shared thousands of books, plus Quaker pamphlets and leaflets.

THE GATHERING
• Hosted by Lake Erie Yearly Meeting and held at the University of Toledo, the FGC Gathering welcomed 982 Friends that included 64 participating in Junior Gathering and 44 in the High School Program.
• Under the theme, The Power of Truth, workshops and plenaries nurtured Friends spiritually and inspired Quaker action. With dynamic presence and a powerful message, Rev. William Barber II addressed an auditorium filled to capacity on America’s Need for a Moral Revival.

MINISTRY ON RACISM & NURTURING MINISTRIES
• Friends of Color strengthened community beyond the Pre-Gathering Retreat by holding monthly virtual meetings for worship.
• The Committee for Nurturing Ministries Consultation Weekend brought together clerks from 15 yearly meetings to share ideas and foster mutual support.

SPRITUAL DEEPENING PROGRAM
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• Young Adult Friends created an eRetreat of their own to nurture post-Gathering connections. Additionally, the FLGBTQC community expressed interest in eRetreats as a way to foster deeper community.
“I wanted to somehow bring my spiritual life into my work life,” Kylin Navarro Burger of Berkeley Friends Meeting says of her discernment during graduate school. “I really needed to be faithful to God’s call while being led down a path that was invisible to me.”

Trusting Spirit, Kylin’s path became visible once she took a class on death and dying. Today she works as a hospice social worker. “Being a Quaker in the world and in my work is one in the same in terms of my spiritual journey. It’s finding a way to bring loving witness and presence to what I do.”

That practice of loving presence is part of her approach to anti-racism work through Pacific Yearly Meeting’s Ministry & Oversight Committee, and why she was drawn to the FGC eRetreat on *Understanding and Healing White Supremacy*. “I’ve taken workshops in secular spaces, but having a Quaker framework is really powerful.”

Finding balance involves acknowledging priorities and limitations. Kylin’s work schedule did not allow her to take the Spiritual Deepening eRetreat as presented. Instead, she made it her own by reading materials and discussion posts as she could. Whether online or at small in-person groups within Quaker meetings or churches, the flexibility of the Spiritual Deepening Program helps Friends uncover new ways to grow in relationship with Spirit.

“Being a Quaker in the world and in my work is one in the same in terms of my spiritual journey.”
2018 Initiatives

WELCOMING FRIEND PROJECT
How do meetings and churches encourage attendance and future engagement of newcomers? The Welcoming Friend Project with a working group of 10 monthly meetings across 7 yearly meetings collected stories, especially from people whom meetings have struggled to serve well, to learn how welcoming practices succeed or fail. Information from the project will be compiled into best practice resources to help welcome a variety of newcomers into the heart of the meeting.

FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE FUND
For over a half century, Friends Meeting House Fund (FMHF) has helped over 200 Quaker meetings and churches become more accessible and sustainable.

FMHF, in partnership with Everence financial services, offers competitive mortgage rates and loan options for meetings and churches considering major renovations or new structures. Each year FMHF makes grants to help meeting houses invest in energy efficiency and accessibility updates. In the last year, over a dozen meetings brought their projects to FMHF Board members.

FGC COMMUNICATIONS
FGC engages Friends with information on programs, events, resources, and projects daily. From social media, to e-mail newsletters, new website content, and print mailings, FGC is always seeking fresh ways to connect with Friends, meetings and churches. For example last year, FGC’s Quaker Finder helped 75,000 people locate meetings!

By collaborating with Emily Provance of New York Yearly Meeting and her Digital Outreach Trainings, FGC helped 17 monthly and 2 quarterly meetings design a more engaged social media presence. FGC also created query-led Community Posting Guidelines for meetings, churches and Friends interested in promoting a digital environment that is life-enhancing.

QUAKER CLOUD
Quaker Cloud helps meetings and churches tell their stories with an easy-to-use website platform. Quaker Cloud features allow meetings and churches to connect with first-time visitors, post events, projects, and videos, as well as, share and archive committee minutes. Meeting website administrators receive ongoing technical support, and now confidential group emailing capabilities directly from Quaker Cloud.

A teacher for 19 years, Regina Renee Ward was a natural to run an emergent program for middle schoolers during the 2018 Pre-Gathering for Friends of Color and their Families. As word of the program spread, Junior Gathering Friends “came to hang out and share their experiences with the younger ones.”

Regina Renee guided middle schoolers to reflect on their own spiritual journeys. “Yes, you’re Black, Latinx, or Asian and you’re also a Quaker. What do you want your life to look like? What decisions are you making now that will affect you later? Do you have a Quaker lens?”

Regina Renee finds in FGC “an outlet to use my spiritual gifts that is not available at a monthly meeting level. FGC welcomes my gifts in ways that have been life giving.”

SERVE FRIENDS — VOLUNTEER WITH FGC
Are you led to make an impact on the Religious Society of Friends? No matter your age, FGC needs your skills, experience, and hands-on help. Whatever your availability and interest, there are ways you can make a difference.

“I wish more Friends understood Central Committee as a way to share gifts not available elsewhere,” remarks Regina Renee Ward. She, like many Friends, enjoys Central Committee as “a prolonged gathered meeting bringing together the best of meeting for worship and the best of meeting for business.”

Contact your yearly meeting’s nominating committee or FGC staff to see how you can further your own spiritual journey and make an impact for Friends by becoming an FGC committee member and/or volunteer.
When Liz Oppenheimer and Jeanne Burns heard numerous participants of color at the White Privilege Conference (WPC) respond, “Show up” when asked how to confront racism, the message resonated.

Liz and Jeanne participated in workshops on racism at FGC Gatherings that proved foundational, but attending the WPC was transformative.

The WPC “ripped off the veils of whiteness” Liz remembers. “We saw how white privilege is embedded in everything. Unpacking whiteness over and over in workshops and keynotes, we heard participants say we just have to show up to start. We took that advice seriously and paid attention differently.”

“This is about knitting community and sharing power in meaningful ways,” Jeanne reflects, “This comes from love and valuing relationships. It’s about growing in unconditional love.”

FGC supports Friends, especially of white European descent, in recognizing white privilege and understanding structural racism. In 2018, FGC offered discounted rates to the White Privilege Conference (WPC) and WPC Global, and hosted discussion spaces during the conferences for Friends to unpack learnings in a spiritually grounded and supportive atmosphere.
The Institutional Assessment on Systemic Racism

Central Committee resolves that in all FGC decision-making processes beginning now with the FY 19 budget, each body shall answer the following query with respect to each decision, “How does this decision support FGC in its goal to transform into an actively anti-racist faith community?

Read the full Institutional Assessment Report to Central Committee at www.FGCquaker.org/report

FGC expresses deep gratitude to all who participated in the Institutional Assessment on Systemic Racism, and extends a heartfelt thank you to the ASSESSMENT’S TASKFORCE:

Marvin Barnes (Lake Erie Yearly Meeting)
Justin Connor, co-clerk (Baltimore Yearly Meeting)
Janice Domanik (Illinois Yearly Meeting)
Michael Doo (Baltimore Yearly Meeting)
Vanessa Julye (Philadelphia Yearly Meeting)
Sharon Lane-Getaz, co-clerk (Northern Yearly Meeting)
Carolyn Lejuste (Lake Erie Yearly Meeting)
Katrina McQuail (Canadian Yearly Meeting)
Elanna Reber (Philadelphia Yearly Meeting)
Marijke van Roojen (Northern Yearly Meeting)
Dwight Wilson (Lake Erie Yearly Meeting)
Keira Wilson (Philadelphia Yearly Meeting)

“It’s been a valuable experience to try and look at how we address concerns of Friends of Color in FGC,” reflects Institutional Assessment co-clerk, Sharon Lane-Getaz. “It was eye-opening to see what we’ve been able to uncover in a short amount of time, and encouraging to see the reactions from Central Committee.”

Participants in the Institutional Assessment mirror a wider problem noted Sharon. “This system is broken everywhere. We have this horrible history, and we’ve tried to bury it. It’s a system that we contributed to inside and outside of FGC. But if there is any place where we’re going to make progress, it has to happen here, in spiritual community.”

Sharon feels the optimism and hope of Friends “that FGC will right the wrong. Friends are holding the experiences and opening into them. There’s a feeling that we’re going to be okay.”
Where do VIBRANT JOURNEYS OF FAITH lead?

I’ve learned in my own journey that by remaining obedient to Spirit, a greater truth is revealed. Yes, we can experience vibrant journeys of faith in many ways while being led toward transformation.

I’ve watched FGC grow in our own vibrant journey. Today, we are serving yearly meetings with clerk consultations, anti-racism resources, and the Welcoming Friend Project. We are supporting monthly meetings and churches through Quaker Finder and Quaker Cloud for websites. Meetings and churches are using FGC toolkits, in-person Spiritual Deepening programs, and the Friends Meeting House Fund.

The Spiritual Deepening Program is guiding many Friends into life-enhancing experiences of Quaker faith. QuakerBooks and QuakerPress are inspiring spiritual journeys through reading. And, to make it easier for families to attend the 2019 Gathering (June 30th to July 6th), FGC is reducing Gathering program fees for children and high school students while offering more family scholarships.

I am grateful to the Friends who worked so diligently on the Institutional Assessment on Systemic Racism, and I thank each of you who participated in the surveys and focus groups. Your stories hold our challenges and possibilities.

I also would like to thank former Junior Gathering Coordinator Patsy Arnold Martin and former Associate Secretary for Development Traci Hjelt Sullivan, who have left FGC for new adventures, for their combined 25 years of incredible service. Your impact on the Religious Society of Friends will resonate long into the future.

Finally, I am grateful to the many Friends, meetings, churches, and foundations who gave so generously this past year, and to FGC’s committee members, volunteers, and staff for your attentive stewardship of the resources entrusted to us. Together we have brought FGC to a place of greater fiscal sustainability. This is an achievement we all share, and one that allows FGC to nurture Vibrant Journeys of Faith.

In the Spirit,

Barry Crossno
General Secretary

We can be pretty far along a path, as Kylin Navarro Burger described, before we realize how we have been following Spirit all along. Or as Liz Oppenheimer and Jeanne Burns shared, Spirit’s voice can rise through another person asking us to show up.
Dear Friends,

What a joy it is to join the FGC staff!

I knew I felt led to the position of Associate Secretary for Development soon after my interview. I came from working my former job, scrambled to prepare, and made it to the interview just in time. I felt frazzled and nervous. Then, Barry Crossno, the General Secretary, said “Let’s start with a moment of silence.” As we settled into a brief period of worship, my anxiety disappeared and I was reminded why I felt called into service to Friends. This is the next step in my own spiritual journey.

As I begin this work of leading our development program, I am grateful for all the Friends who invest time, expertise, and resources into FGC, and for those who participate in the many FGC programs. Your support makes FGC possible.

I hope this 2018 FGC Annual Report Vibrant Journeys of Faith has inspired you to learn even more about how FGC is nurturing meetings, churches, worship groups, and Friends. And I invite you to renew or begin your important financial support. Your gifts are essential in keeping FGC’s vital services strong.

I feel blessed to serve Friends throughout the USA and Canada. Thank you again for your support.

With gratitude,

Faith Josephs
Associate Secretary for Development
FGC by the Numbers

Read FGC’s audited financial statements since 2012, as well as, FGC’s financial story 2004 to 2018 at www.FGCquaker.org/finances

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Over 130 USA and Canadian Friends from 16 yearly and 14 monthly affiliated meetings and churches provide guidance to FGC as our Central Committee. Annually, Committee members come together in a weekend-long gathered meeting to make governance decisions.

Additionally, committee members bring knowledge and skills to FGC subcommittees such as executive, nurturing ministries, personnel, finance, communications, long range conference planning, and more.

BALANCE SHEET

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<tr>
<th>ASSETS</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>405,445</td>
<td>218,672</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contributions receivable</td>
<td>56,679</td>
<td>53,096</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inventory</td>
<td>63,000</td>
<td>57,524</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepaid expenses and other</td>
<td>38,763</td>
<td>53,046</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>4,613,557</td>
<td>4,134,680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property and equipment, net</td>
<td>332,260</td>
<td>356,769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial interest in charitable remainder trusts</td>
<td>155,000</td>
<td>132,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial interest in perpetual trusts</td>
<td>368,000</td>
<td>352,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,032,704</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,357,987</strong></td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>LIABILITIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable and accrued expenses</td>
<td>221,014</td>
<td>87,464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred revenue</td>
<td>29,532</td>
<td>34,688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total liabilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>250,546</strong></td>
<td><strong>122,152</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NET ASSETS</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unrestricted</td>
<td>4,452,362</td>
<td>4,042,882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporarily restricted</td>
<td>583,796</td>
<td>451,153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanently restricted</td>
<td>746,000</td>
<td>741,800</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total net assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,782,158</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,235,835</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, volunteers contributed $34,942 in unreimbursed expenses in FY 2018.
Supporting FGC’s future

Learning about planned giving and making a planned gift are important steps in securing the future of FGC. Planned gifts may be eligible for immediate tax deductions, a reduction of capital gains taxes when applicable, and may even provide income for you and your heirs - all while supporting a strong FGC.

“FGC reflects the values of Quaker spirituality and service. Nothing in the world is more deserving of support. Planned giving is a good way to carry our faith and practice into the future.”

— Stephen Lyrene
Friend and FGC Planned Giving Donor

LEARN HOW YOU CAN STRENGTHEN THE FUTURE OF FGC.

Contact our Associate Secretary for Development, Faith Josephs at faithj@FGCquaker.org or 215-561-1700 x 3004.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE OFFICERS 2018 - 2019

Frank Barch, (PHLYM)
Presiding Clerk

Marvin Barnes (LEYM)
Assistant Presiding Clerk

Rebecca Haines Rosenberg (BYM)
Recording Clerk

Mathilda Navias (LEYM)
Assistant Recording Clerk

Joan Sampieri (LEYM)
Treasurer

SUBCOMMITTEE CLERKS

David Bantz (AFC)
Communication Policy, Strategy and Infrastructure

Jean-Marie Prestwidge Barch (PHLYM)
Nurturing Ministries

Marvin Barnes (LEYM)
Clerk’s Advisory Committee

Bert Frey (ILYM)
Friends Meetinghouse Fund

David Haines (NEYM)
Long Range Conference Planning

Jada Jackson (PHLYM)
Personnel

Constance Lezenby (PHLYM)
Property

Douglas Mertz (AFC)
Development

Nancy Moore (BYM)
Clerk, Publications and Distribution

David Nachman (IMYM)
FGC’s Structures Handbook (Blue Book) Committee

Frank Perch (PHLYM)
Finance

Ann Riggs (BYM) and Dot Walizer (BYM)
Christian and Interfaith Relations

Sally Weaver Sommer (LEYM)
Nominating

Clerk to be named
Anti-Racism Implementation Group

WHO REPRESENTS YOU ON EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE?

Alaska Yearly Meeting
Jim Cheydleur

Baltimore Yearly Meeting
Nancy Moore

Canadian Yearly Meeting
Anne-Marie Zilliacus

Illinois Yearly Meeting
Janice Domanik

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting
Sally Weaver Sommer

New England Yearly Meeting
Michelle Riendeau

New York Yearly Meeting
Karen Snare

Northern Yearly Meeting
John Greenler

Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting
No representative this year

Philadelpia Yearly Meeting
Carter Nash

Piedmont Friends Fellowship
Karen McKinnon

South Central Yearly Meeting
Jan Michael

Southeastern Yearly Meeting
Minerva Glidden

Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association
Kit Potter

Intermountain Yearly Meeting
DeAnne Butterfield

AT LARGE

Anne Pomeroy (NYYM)
Ellie Greenler (NYM)
Katrina McQuail (CYM)
Jill Nanfeldt (NYYM)
“Joy is finally the greatest source of nourishment for the spiritual life, because it is God’s greatest gift to us.”

— Paul Lacey