



News release
For immediate release
Aug. 22, 2017

Everence and Friends General Conference partner to better serve Meetings' financing needs

After thoughtful discernment, Everence® and Friends Meeting House Fund (FMHF) are moving forward with a partnership that makes Everence a preferred provider of loans to Friends Meetings who want to repair, renovate or expand their meeting houses.

Barry Crossno, the General Secretary of Friends General Conference shared, "Everence can provide more flexible financing and make larger loans than FMHF could make when it was operating on its own – this is great news for Friends."

As part of this new arrangement, Everence purchased the existing FMHF mortgage portfolio consisting of 10 loans to Friends General Conference-affiliated meetings throughout the United States. These meetings received the same terms as they previously held through the FMHF and now these meetings have access to the deeper financial expertise of Everence.

Over the last 58 years, the FMHF, established by Friends General Conference, connected Friends-affiliated investors with Meetings in need of loans. Since its beginning, the fund has loaned or granted over \$4.6 million to over 200 Meetings.

Carol Bartles, clerk of the FMHF Board, explained that the FMHF Board could see the limitations of its set-up in the current economy. "As we looked into alternatives, we took three factors into consideration — the commitment to respond to our Friends' Testimonies, serve the needs of Friends Meetings and secure the essential mission of the Fund," Bartles said. "Everence quickly surfaced as the most promising partner."

FMHF approached Everence in June 2016 to explore partnership opportunities to better serve Meetings' financing needs. The purchase of the fund, completed on July 30, 2017, builds on the Everence current church mortgage portfolio.

Matt Gehman, Vice President of Lending for Everence Federal Credit Union, worked with the FMHF to facilitate the loan purchase and extend the partnership with the Friends General Conference. "The partnership between Everence and FMHF is natural, considering our common values of faith, peace and stewardship," said Gehman. "We look forward to expanding the loan program to help meet the financial needs of more Friends Meetings."

Friends can visit fgcquaker.org/services/friends-meeting-house-fund for more information.

Everence helps individuals, organizations and congregations integrate faith with finances through a national team of advisors and representatives. Everence offers banking, insurance and financial services with community benefits and stewardship education. Everence is a ministry of Mennonite Church USA and other churches. To learn more, visit everence.com or call (800) 348-7468.

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For more information, contact:

Allison Schrock
Marketing Manager
(574) 533-9515 ext. 3301
allison.schrock@everence.com