



Friends World News

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World Committee for Consultation
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

fwcc.world

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About the Friends World Committee for Consultation

The purpose of the Friends World Committee for Consultation is to encourage fellowship among all the branches of the Religious Society of Friends. The Quaker community circles the globe, spanning a rich diversity of regional cultures, beliefs and styles of worship. FWCC programs unite Friends around the world through Spirit-led fellowship.

Our work with the Quaker United Nations Offices, both by appointing members to their governing committees and by providing consultative status, offers a means to engage Quakers in world affairs. Our consultation extends to those of other faiths through work with the World Council of Churches and Christian World Communions.

Our Mission

Answering God's call to universal love, FWCC brings Friends of varying traditions and cultural experiences together in worship, communications, and consultation, to express our common heritage and our Quaker message to the world. (Approved 2006)

History

In 1937, after years of concerned work to reconnect a fragmented Quaker world, the Second World Conference of Friends created the FWCC "to act in a consultative capacity to promote better understanding among Friends the world over." Today, Friends from yearly meetings and groups in 75 nations continue this work. Around the world there are four cooperating, autonomous FWCC Sections serving Africa, the Americas, Asia and the West Pacific, and Europe and the Middle East. FWCC's World Office is in London.

FWCC World Office

The world office is based at Friends House in London, England. It serves four main roles:

- Organise world gatherings, including triennial meetings and consultations of Quakers world-wide.
- Support and maintain contact with the work of the four FWCC sections and the Quaker United Nations Offices.
- Coordinate the International Membership programme, which joins isolated Friends and worship groups to the wider Quaker community.
- Promote an understanding of the world-wide character of the Society of Friends, through conferences, staff travel, correspondence and publications, and through ecumenical and interfaith work on behalf of Friends.

Further information about FWCC and its activities can be obtained from the World Office or the Section Offices, whose addresses are on the back cover of Friends World News. Contributions to the work of FWCC are always welcome and can be sent to any of the offices.

Friends World News

Friends World News, the bulletin of FWCC, is published twice yearly. If you wish to receive a personal copy, please contact the World Office (or the Section of the Americas if you live in North America). There is no set subscription fee, but a donation would be welcome. Please send to the World Office anything you would like considered for publication in Friends World News – articles, letters, news, photographs and other illustrations, about the activities and religious witness of Friends. All materials received will be acknowledged although the editor cannot make any commitment to publish. Please say if you wish photographs or other materials to be returned.

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Cover photograph: *The Light*, skylight in the Large Meeting House, Friends House, Britain Yearly Meeting, London UK, photograph by David Botwinik.

Thank you for your donations to
FWCC, past, present and future.

- Together we are building a strong and vital Religious Society of Friends.
- Together we are strengthening the worldwide network of Friends.
- Together we are bringing our Quaker message to the world.

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*For more about FWCC please visit
our website:*

fwcc.world

Greetings to Friends everywhere . . .

There are several places in the Bible where Paul says essentially, there are things you don't yet understand. When I read these words, I believe Paul is talking to us still. There is a depth of spiritual understanding that eludes us as we attempt to move between the heaviness of being human, and the ethereal trust in the God-infused life. We love and trust God, we affirm other religions and we celebrate the hope this brings, and yet as a human family we struggle with selfishness and greed, we struggle with how to help our neighbor, and we have political leaders who do not choose for the common good.

I am often asked, "What is the Quaker response?" My 89-year-old mother says she relies on two things: her love of God and being a Quaker, both of which give her hope.

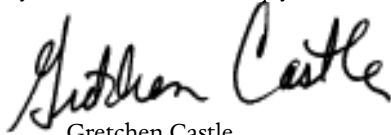
As Quakers, we have some distinctive, though not exclusive practices, that help us and offer some ways of being in the world. Talking recently with 15 to 18 year-olds about 'Profound Diversity', we discussed the Quaker contribution to the world today. We create spaces for dialogue and listening, working in small circles to build trust and understanding. We bring unlikely people together, creating change by helping people make connections. We also allow multigenerational work to teach us and to empower younger voices in leadership. We are bold and courageous - and prophetic. It sounds right, but in reality it can be difficult unless, and even when, we are grounded in God. But the world needs prophetic truth-telling and seeing things in a new light. As Quakers, we can bring a way of being in the world, a way of worshipping a bit more thoughtfully, even amidst more apostolic surroundings or a more secular culture. In every culture, Quakers have the possibility of bringing a fresh, God-centered, thoughtful prophetic voice to the world.

Even as we might feel a greater sense of urgency, the truth is, Quakers have been working along persistently for over 350 years to improve the human condition, to see that people are treated fairly, and to illuminate God's light among us.

So at this time . . . and throughout time, let us continue to recognize God's transformative power in our lives and let us begin there. Let us bring love into fullness on earth, and let us work with our usual determination to make the world a better place. Let us each do our part, the measure God has given us to do, and let us do it with joy and gratitude.

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called to work according to God's purpose. – Romans 8:28

May God bless us all and may God bless the spaces between us,



Gretchen Castle

GENERAL SECRETARY, FWCC WORLD OFFICE

Inspiration in Burundi and Rwanda

by Gretchen Castle

A highlight for me this year was traveling among Friends in Burundi. The full report from Simon C. Lamb is on the World Office web site, but I want to share with you the precious experience I had there because it was an extension of the Central Executive Committee meeting in Rwanda and it illustrates the value of FWCC's work among Friends.

Three of us arrived to very warm greetings at the airport and then were taken to meet with a large group of Young Adult Friends who had traveled long to meet us, to listen to what we had to share about Quakers, historically and in present day. We also had a chance to hear from them about their desire to share in leadership and to be active in a Quakerism that is clearly important to them. They were very inspiring!

In worship the next day we were asked to share briefly, speaking to nearly 1000 Quakers, all of us blessed by the music of nine choirs of all ages, by messages of hope from leaders of the church, enjoying fellowship afterwards in which people were so gracious and the children so beautiful!

For me perhaps the most inspiring experience was having a meeting with church leaders and the representative from Africa to QUNO Geneva, in which we exchanged questions and perceptions of Quakers around the world, peace work in Burundi, and ecumenical work. I felt buoyed up, encouraged, and held by these Friends. Words seem inadequate — but the richness came in the mutual curiosity and support. We shared. Burundian Friends appreciated our visit from the World Office, and we felt so grateful to get a glimpse of their strong faith and openness.

Friends in Burundi are one of the largest groups of Quakers. They are filled with the Holy Spirit! Their engagement, their welcome, their faith, and their commitment to Quakers was truly inspiring! As I shared greetings from Friends around the world, they asked that their greetings be returned. They expressed their wish to feel connected to the family of Friends, and indeed they are! I trust that as you read this, you will smile and feel held, even as you say a prayer of gratitude for them. Let us all be a blessing to one another!

The Central Executive Committee met in Rwanda after attending the Africa Section Triennial, meeting new and old Friends, singing familiar and unfamiliar hymns, and tending to its business.

There were several business items that moved FWCC forward in its structures, its programs, and its convening role among Friends. The full set of minutes can be found on the FWCC World Office web site. Here are some highlights:

One Organization

Four Section Offices and one World Office make up the five offices of FWCC, each with its own convening functions and financial structures, FWCC is committed to finding new ways to increase collaboration and efficiencies, working together as one organization. We are developing a more integrated strategy in fundraising support and learning, in working with a new International Nominations Committee appointed by each Section (with the clerk appointed by the World Office), experimenting with sharing resources and doing some joint communications.

World Quaker Day (WQD)

Under the theme *Gathering in Worship Around the World*, Friends everywhere are invited to use the videos and curriculum for children and adults provided on the WQD website (worldquakerday.org). They were developed by the Section of the Americas, and can easily be translated to other languages. An updated map, *Finding Quakers Around the World*, will be distributed to as many monthly/local meetings as possible.

Issues of privilege and historical injustice

Minute CEC 17-17: “We have taken up a concern raised by several Friends for how FWCC’s work in every part of the globe is affected by a history of colonialism and inequality, and by media distortions that influence perceptions of people in other parts of the world. . . . We too often hurt each other by assumptions we make, stories we tell, misunderstandings, favouritism, and superficial relationships. Even as we commit to forgiveness, it is difficult to forget or undo long-standing injustices and slights. We recognize that a key part of FWCC’s work is to overcome these historical patterns, and to foster and model authentic relationships of equality and mutuality. . . .” See the full minute at www.fwcc.world

Support of Young Adult Friends

FWCC supports all Friends to engage in multi-generational learning, empowering new leadership and ministry among Friends and across cultures. Having explored a wide range of possibilities, FWCC developed objectives and guiding principles for funding future youth work. FWCC will be developing a structure for implementation of this funding process.

Enhancing interaction among Friends

Having undertaken a visioning exercise on building bridges within the world Quaker community, we agreed to strengthen our relationships with yearly meetings, with those

Quaker groups not currently affiliated with FWCC, and with isolated Friends and small worship groups. These relationships vary widely across Sections and are often complex. We commend the work being done to develop relationships and encourage organisational partnerships and extended participation where possible. We are reminded of the vibrancy of being together face-to-face even as we also gather in many new ways.

Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO)

We approved a new Memorandum of Understanding for the management of QUNO New York with the American Friends Service Committee. We are grateful for the work of QUNO New York and Geneva and the responsiveness to Friends concerns. FWCC continues to appoint Friends from its four Sections to both governing committees to ensure collaborative communications across the world and to support work being done in the name of Friends at the United Nations.

Meetings

The Central Executive Committee will meet April 29 to May 4, 2018 in Moyallan Northern Ireland.

The CEC agreed that World Plenary Meetings should be held in 2023, 2030, and 2037, the 100th anniversary of the founding of FWCC. The locations for these meetings will be discerned in due course.



Friends in Burundi surrounding Simon C. Lamb, FWCC clerk

Sustainable Financing

Report from the FWCC Treasurer

At the Central Executive Meeting in Rwanda, FWCC agreed to take steps to ensure that we have a balanced budget from 2019 onwards. Thanks to Michael Wajda's report on fundraising by the World Office and Sections, action is now being taken to make our finances more sustainable. Although each Section has different traditions of fundraising, our mutual approaches will help bring us closer together both financially and spiritually.

Having nearly completed the audit of the 2016 accounts, our general fund has increased back to a satisfactory position at £84,000. This was due to 1) continued support from main funders and 2) the change in the value of the pound. For instance, Britain Yearly Meeting increased its grant and we benefited from additional donations from the Asia-West Pacific Section and from the Europe and Middle East Section. The value of the pound has fallen against the dollar during 2016 after the Brexit vote, which has meant that the planned dollar contributions increased. We expect costs, such as flights to rise less than the gain from the fall in the value of the pound. In addition, the value of our investments held up and our Foreign Exchange gain was £19,000.

Although our total funds have reduced from £640,000 to £367,000, most of this was planned transfers from our restricted and designated funds to pay for the World Plenary Meeting in Pisac, Peru. The Gathering was a great success, yet due to fewer higher-paying delegates and last-minute additional travel costs, we incurred a loss. However additional fundraising reduced the final loss to around £27,000. We are now raising 'seed money' for the next Plenary, to be held in 2023.

During the audit we were surprised to discover that £54,000 of our investments dating back 25 years were actually a pension fund asset belonging to a previous General Secretary. We had to remove these from our accounts and make significant adjustments from designated and endowment funds to ensure that our general fund was brought back up to an acceptable level.

Our recent agreement with the Quaker World Relations Committee of Britain Yearly Meeting resulted in the joint employment of a Sustainability Communications Officer. She will give us a higher profile with Young Adult Friends in this key area of Quaker work which has worldwide significance. We also issued a new leaflet on the importance of remembering us in your will, which has already had some success.

We are grateful for the continued contributions of Friends around the world and for trusts whose steadfast support has enabled us to continue to serve Friends everywhere. My term ends at the end of this year and I am delighted that Fenwick Kirton-Darling will carry on as the FWCC treasurer.

Alastair Reid
FWCC TREASURER

Sharing the Good News

Africa Section

At the Africa Section office we play significant role in helping Friends to have an understanding of how Friends are spread throughout the world; where and how to find a Quaker meeting/church within the section for visiting Friends and the different Quaker peace groups within the section.

Census

The section has conducted a Census of the various Yearly Meetings. The findings have been shared but we are not sure if the information received forms an accurate picture of the total number of Quakers in the section.

Communication

We have made tremendous progress on the Africa Section Website, fwccafrika.org, which is still under reconstruction; we have connected the Africa section with the rest of the world through social media and keep updating with the latest developments within the section. Follow us on twitter [@FWCC_africa](https://twitter.com/FWCC_africa) and Facebook [FWCCAfricaSection](https://www.facebook.com/FWCCAfricaSection).

Leadership

Joshuah Ligare Lilande has ended his service as the section clerk, following Bainito Wamalwa's nomination who takes over from him as the new clerk of the Africa Section. The changes have been effected already and the section continues to run smoothly.

Triennial Conference

The Africa Section had a successful triennial conference in Kigali, Rwanda. Compared to previous section gatherings, the turnout was overwhelming. This improvement shows desire for African Friends to be actively involved in the Section activities. The total number of delegates in attendance was 260, an increase of nearly 100 from the previous triennial.

Most Friends at the gatherings were excited to meet and interact with Friends from other countries for the sake of friendship and continuity of Quaker growth and expansion in Africa.

Young Friends

We are happy to report that since last year, five Young Adult Friends (YAFs) from Africa have been considered for the QUNO Summer School; we have accorded the necessary support and advice as a Section. The YAFs desk is doing tremendous work connecting



FWCC Secretaries gather in Rwanda. Left to right: Robin Mohr, Section of the Americas; Ronis Chapman, Asia-WestPacific Section; Marisa Johnson, Europe and Middle East Section; Gretchen Castle, World Office; and Churchill Malimo, Africa Section.

Young Friends in the Section to ensure sustainability and realisation of living ministry for YAFs as pointed out in Pisac to bridge gaps in leadership. A gathering is still being considered if it's the right time to gather YAFs at the Section.

Finally

We call upon Friends to prayerfully consider Kenya as it holds a second national election in October or November; our thoughtfulness and sincere prayers will help in realising peaceful processes.

Churchill Malimo

AFRICA SECTION SECRETARY

Asia-West Pacific

Bringing Friends together in new ways

One of our biggest challenges in the vast geographical region that is the Asia-West Pacific Section is to find new ways to bring people together. Gathering together is important to Quakers and always has been. We meet together in order to share our joys and concerns, to nourish each other, to offer a 'tender hand' when needed, to encourage each other as we tread our own spiritual journey. We gather as a community to act together to make the world a better place.

However many of us hesitate these days before we travel. Conscious of the impact on the environment of long-distance travel, Friends are seeking new ways to come together.

Friends are asking us to find new ways to gather as a worldwide family of Friends. Here are some examples:

International Membership

Recently we were delighted to have two applications for International Membership from the Singapore worship group. We usually try and find a traveler who can visit applicants but this time they both had their membership visits by video conference call. The visitors all commented that it was a privilege to have these membership conversations and were pleased with the depth of conversation that evolved.

On line worship

For the last three months AWPS has been holding an online meeting for worship twice a month on the second and fourth Tuesday. The Zoom video-conferencing platform is used for this meeting. There is half an hour of worship and participants are asked to contribute ministry by writing in a chat box that all participants can see or by speaking. This is followed by a half hour of fellowship. Friends from a number of countries in the region participate. Let me know if you want to join us: ronisc@fwccawps.org

Crossing cultures — sharing stories. Sharing our stories on line.

Sharing our stories builds individual friendships and also builds community. Many stories are shared whenever Quakers gather. We are beginning to share stories from across the Section on our website, fwccawps.org

Carbon offsetting

We still do some travel as part of our service to build and develop the Friends World Committee. AWPS has joined Greenfleet. Greenfleet carbon offsets are native reforestation projects that compensate for the emissions created by our travel activities.

On line learning

Many Quakers in our part of the world are benefitting from the online courses that Woodbrooke Study Centre in Birmingham, UK offer to the world. We took this a step further recently by organizing a seminar over the internet between Woodbrooke and a group of Quakers in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The tutors were in Birmingham and the participants were together at the Quaker Settlement in Whanganui, New Zealand. The weekend was a great success and we hope will lead to more experimenting with distance learning.

Meeting in the old fashioned way!!

Quakers in Australia and New Zealand invite a Quaker from another YM in AWPS to their Yearly Meeting each year. This year, Cris De La Cruz, senior pastor from the

Philippines Evangelical Friends ministry (based in Manila) attended Australia Yearly meeting and travelled among Australian Friends for two weeks.

Cris reflects on his time in Australia:

Our Quaker Friends here are very passionate about so many things. I am even more challenged by their commitment to diversity, peace advocacy and environmental care.

I especially admire their openness to having dialogue and meaningful conversations with me regardless of our differing world views and path to spirituality. I consider it a blessing to be able to share our core values as Evangelical Friends and affirm our commitment to Christ and Biblical Christianity.

I must say that I am enriched in so many ways because of these meaningful interactions.

The AWPS Committee meets in Japan in October. Please hold us in your thoughts and prayers.

Ronis Chapman

AWPS SECRETARY

Europe and Middle East Section

The EMES Annual Meeting was held in Bonn, Germany, from 4-7 May. The theme, *Vibrant Meetings, Vibrant Section*, was introduced by Simon Best, Head of Learning at Woodbrooke. According to Simon, members of a vibrant Meeting: live in and do things with spirit and energy; respond to and do what Love requires of them; work to build the Kingdom here and now; live their faith in the world; are strong, confident, sustainable and connected; are inclusive; support and nurture people in their own Quaker communities; and share and learn together.

The Annual Meeting considered a Quaker response to the Conference of European Churches' open letter, "What future for Europe? Reaffirming the European project as building a community of values", in preparation for the 2018 General Assembly in Novi Sad. The letter is available on the EMES website: fwccemes.org

We also heard about many of the different projects that have received funding from the Small Grants Fund (now nicknamed the spiritual growth fund). The fund, which is financed by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, aims to help Meetings in the Section (outside Britain Yearly Meeting) in their outreach work and to strengthen their Quaker communities.

The present focus (2017-19) of the EMES Ministry & Outreach Programme is to consolidate the work that has already been done and to encourage Friends to engage in three specific inter-related areas:

- the documentation of a Meeting's Quaker faith and practice,
- the history of a Meeting or group
- the documentation of lives of influential Friends.

The process and results of these documentations are seen as valuable for inreach and for outreach. The Programme is funded by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust.

EMES is currently exploring ways to ensure that teenagers in the Section continue to have opportunities for transformational meetings with one another now that changes in the Quaker Youth Pilgrimage are planned. A Forum for those involved in work with young people and children has been created as a networking tool and plans for a Quaker youth event in Sweden in the summer of 2018 are in progress.

Thanks to a successful fundraising drive amongst Yearly Meetings, groups and individuals within the Section, funding for the Amari Play Centre in Ramallah has been secured for the next two or so years, which means continued support for this important piece of work.

The Central European Gathering (CEG) met in May, bringing Friends (and families) from the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary and other central European countries together. The small Meetings in the region are growing and there are plans to become a “regional” yearly meeting, covering worship groups and local meetings that do not otherwise fit into a “national” yearly meeting.

The joint triennial gathering of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden Yearly Meetings was held in Sweden in late June and attended by some 170 participants. Members of the Executive Committee represent EMES at Yearly Meetings and Gatherings in the Section. Most of these gatherings' Epistles - letters to Friends everywhere – can be found on the FWCC World Office website: fwcc.world

Marisa Johnson
EMES SECRETARY

Section of the Americas

The work of several years of planning, fundraising, and praying has culminated in the first cohort of the **Traveling Ministry Corps**. The seven ministers in the 2017 Corps – four from North America and three from South America – have begun visiting meetings and churches throughout the Americas. The launch of this program is extremely exciting for us, as we continue to live into our vision of a vibrant tapestry woven of the various threads of Quaker faith.

Before the Section Meeting in March, the 2017 Corps gathered for training and

preparation. Ministers will visit or connect with Friends in North, Central, and South America in the hopes of crossing the boundaries created by distance, language, and belief. After a year, the 2017 ministers will gather to learn from one another and to train the 2018 Traveling Ministry Corps. The application process for the 2018 Corps, which will consist of Young Adult Friends, is in full swing. For more information about this program, visit fwccamericas.org/traveling-ministry.

The **2017 Section Meeting of the Americas** took place from March 23–26 in Stony Point, New York. More than 120 Friends from 30 Yearly Meetings gathered to meet, complete business, and share fellowship. The theme was *Vivir la Paz — Living Peace* (John 16:33). In addition to approving nominations and a two-year budget, we also had Bible Study in the manner of Godly Play, gathered in home groups each day, and held the Traveling Ministers in the light. Highlights of the Section Meeting included our three morning plenary speakers, Carl Magruder, Kirenia Criado, and Jonathan Vogel Borne, who brought spirited and enlightening messages. More information, reports, and the three plenary speeches can be found at fwccamericas.org

We are now turning our attention to the fourth annual World Quaker Day on October 1, 2017, by encouraging Representatives and Friends in the Americas to begin planning a way to celebrate. It is gratifying to see awareness and participation of this event growing over the years, and hope to see many more meetings and churches mark the day this year. We are gathering ideas and resources on our website at www.fwccamericas.org/wqd. We are excited to see what new plans Friends come up with this year!

Robin Mohr

SECTION OF THE AMERICAS SECRETARY



Collaboration in Burundi: Domecian Sabongewa (former Evangelical Friends Church International – Africa Region), Joyce Nahimana (Rwanda Yearly Meeting), Moses Chasieh (American Friends Service Committee)

Sustainability Communications Officer



Susanna Mattingly took up the newly created post of Sustainability Communications Officer in the FWCC World Office on 4 September.

Susanna's role is to build Friends' collaborative efforts around the concern of sustaining life on earth. She will work jointly with FWCC and Britain Yearly Meeting's Quaker World Relations Committee to expand the network of Friends doing this work. This will involve working with Britain Yearly Meeting and other yearly meetings around the world to take further action on two minutes:

- *Kabarak Call to Peace and Eco Justice*, World Conference of Friends, Kenya 2012
- *Sustainability Minute*, approved at the World Plenary Meeting, Pisac, Peru 2016

Susanna grew up in a Quaker family and has experience of other Friends' traditions through the Quaker Youth Pilgrimage. She has a keen interest in making an impact in the area of sustainability and brings experience in communications, international marketing, event organizing, and programme coordination and evaluation. Susanna has worked with Carbon Trust, the UK Sustainable Investment and Finance Association, and Three Faiths Forum. She holds a BA in Politics with International Relations.

Her new role entails working with existing Young Friends' networks, connecting them across FWCC's four Sections. The story of Friends' concerns and actions on sustainability, and how these are shaped by the spiritual imperative to make the world a better place, will form the basis of videos and materials that can be shared both across Quaker traditions and within Britain Yearly Meeting. There will be opportunities to work with other Quaker partner organizations such as the Quaker United Nations Office, Quaker Peace and Social Witness, Quaker Earthcare Witness, Quaker Council on European Affairs, Friends Committee on National Legislation and others.

We are grateful to Britain Yearly Meeting, through its Legacy Fund, for supporting this new position. With all the sustainability work generated within Britain Yearly Meeting, we look forward to connecting Friends worldwide in order to strengthen our commitment and amplify our voice. Please join us!

We welcome Susanna to the FWCC World Office. Feel free to contact her at **susannam@fwcc.world** or on +44(0)207 663 1196.



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Save the date . . .
WORLD QUAKER DAY
October 1, 2017

prayer and thanksgiving, and let our hymns of praise resound across the world.

Find more information on the World Quaker Day website:

www.worldquakerday.org

FWCC invites every Quaker meeting and church from around the world to celebrate **WORLD QUAKER DAY (WQD)** on October 1, 2017. As the sun rises in each area of the world, we want to remember that Quakers are worshiping through every time zone, celebrating our deep connections across cultures and Quaker traditions.

We are united in love and can accompany each other on this special day that draws us together. As we worship, let us hold each other in



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Save the date . . .

WORLD QUAKER DAY

October 1, 2017

