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Editorial: Mabuhay to all our readers! I have learned this greeting from the Philippines Evangelical Church. “Mabuhay” has a variety of meanings. It means, greetings, welcome, congratulations or good day! As we move towards our Gathering in Bhopal, it is thrilling to see how much growth within diversity is taking place in our Section.

An abbreviated version of Britain Yearly Meeting’s paper to the World Council of Churches is included, for your reflection on the place and contribution of Quakers worldwide.

Friends are praying for victims of disasters in our region, and may wish to send practical aid to China and or Myanmar (Burma). Also an update on Friends’ work in Kenya is included. If readers can assist Friends from developing countries to attend our Gathering, this will further energise our dialogue. Several

Friends are waiting and praying that we will be able to raise sufficient funds to bring them to Bhopal. We have much to give to and learn from one another and only infrequent opportunities to meet face to face. *Valerie Joy*

AWPS Gathering 6-12 Nov & Young Friends Event 12-15 Nov. The Pastoral Centre is now fully booked from 6-12 November, with spaces still available for the Young Friends Event. An array of pre and post Gathering events is planned, including cultural tourism as well as intervisitation of Friends in India. The agenda embraces contributions from the Quaker world and contains practical conflict resolution, dance, theatrical performance, worship, business, speakers, music and worship. The planning for the YF Event 12-15 Nov, is being done by the Young Friends who are in touch with one another about this.

Friends can support this Gathering: For many, travel to India is a distant dream, not to be realised at this time. We are trying to bring Friends from less developed countries, so that our whole program will be balanced and informed by conditions in Indonesia, the Philippines, Africa, Nepal, as well as supporting significant numbers of Indian Quakers in their attendance. If you could raise some funds in your Meeting and forward them to our Treasurer, we could bring others to Bhopal. Thanks for your consideration of this request!

Young Adult Friends (YAFs)

At the Young Friends Event in Bhopal, 12-15 November, the following draft terms of reference for YAFs worldwide will be discussed. Meanwhile, Young Friends are encouraged to consider these and what it will mean for YAFs in the AWPS. **FWCC Young Adult Friends Committee: Terms of reference**

Background:

Young Adult Friends meeting during the 22nd FWCC Triennial in Dublin recommended that the Central Executive Committee form a YAF Committee to be a catalyst for YAFs in all the Sections. This will help support and sustain the momentum among YAFs from the 2005 World Gathering of Young Friends and provide a means to see the fruits of this work on-going. They further recommended that YAF groups still holding surplus funds from the 2005 Gatherings pass those funds to FWCC in

furtherance of this work.

1. Mission Statement

The Young Adult Friends Committee (YAFC) will provide structure, support and co-ordination within the current generation of Young Adult Friends (YAFs). It will network, listen and facilitate according to discerned leadings of the Spirit within the global YAF community and reach out to those Friends not affiliated with FWCC.

Continuing the mission and spirit of the 2005 World Gathering of Young Friends, the committee will work to strengthen the spiritual lives of YAFs through sharing our various expressions of faith, learning from our Quaker heritage and continued discernment as to how they are being led. This Committee will also advocate for full inclusion of YAFs and their concerns within FWCC as a whole and within its constituent yearly meetings.

2. Membership

The CEC, after receiving recommendations from its Nominations Committee, shall appoint two co-clerks and up to 10 other members. Membership shall include one or two members of CEC and shall represent the geographical spread and theological varieties of Friends, as well as having an age and gender balance.

YAFs appointed to this committee should be at least 18 years and less than 35 years old at the time of appointment. They should also be active within their local YAF organisations, if one exists in the area, and be capable of region communicating with other YAFs [preferably in person] within their Section

3. Committee Functioning

The Committee shall meet by conference call at least one time per year, at times and intervals it shall decide, as well as conducting business by correspondence. The committee may identify opportunities to meet face to face at the time of other international Quaker gatherings. The World Office shall provide administrative support to the Committee, including participation in meetings. The Committee when appointed shall have the power to co-opt up to four corresponding members to aid full representation of the variety of Quaker experience, including the languages spoken by Friends. It may also appoint sub-committees and working parties to carry out, by correspondence, specific tasks delegated to them.

4. Finance

The budget for the committee's operation shall be part of the FWCC World Office budget.

5. Strengthening YAF voices around the world

The activities of the committee may include some or all of the following:

- Encourage the creation of YAF organisations/committees in FWCC Sections and regions where they do not already exist (e.g., AWPS and the SoA)
- Actively encourage regular face to face meetings and/or regional gatherings where possible
- Facilitate travel to Section gatherings and also travel between Sections
- Facilitate contact with YAFs who are not currently involved in worldwide Quaker activities, especially those whose Friends' group is not affiliated to FWCC
- Involve isolated YAFs wherever possible including International Members
- Investigate using electronic study groups and training for travelling ministers
- Consider options for training the translators/interpreters of the future
- Review the comments produced at the Dublin Triennial responding to the query "What can FWCC do to help your YM nurture young adults under 40?"
- Prepare for a YAF element for the World Conference of Friends in 2012
- Receive minutes from Section or other regional YAF organisations and committees and follow them up
- Prepare and share materials to help YAFs strengthen their presence and voices within their own yearly meetings and worshipping groups.
- Present reports and proposals to the CEC for inclusion in FWCC publications, budgets and programmes

6. Review of the Committee: The committee shall be reviewed by CEC by 2012 in consultation with YAFs.

Young Friends in India: Bhopal YM had a camp for their YAF's from 7-11 May, where Devdas Shrisunder, Christopher Lall and others presented a variety of Quaker subjects for discussion.

The Nature and Mission of the Church, is a report forwarded by Janet Scott, BYM. It has much for AWPS Friends to ponder on, given the increasing diversity of our Yearly Meetings and groups. The full report is on our website at www.fwccawps.org/Publications >Resources, Articles. It covers the purpose of the church, Gospel Order, our Testimonies. I hope that you will agree that the subject is very relevant for us in AWPS, since we work together in God's

invisible and visible church, from a variety of theologies and practices.

A Response from the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain to the World Council of Churches Faith and Order consultation, a stage on the way to a common statement Paper 198.

[What follows is an abbreviation of a response submitted to the World Council of Churches]. Although it is written by, and on behalf of, one Yearly Meeting, the writers recognise that there is a variety of Quaker practice throughout the world. “We speak only for ourselves, but we have shared our draft response with other appropriate Quaker bodies and are therefore satisfied that our views are not significantly at variance with what would be said by a wider spectrum of Quakers”.

The approach of the response is to start from our own theology and understanding rather than from the questions asked. We hope that by doing this we shall be able to put forward a sustained and coherent account of our own ecclesiology in the interests of furthering understanding.

Quaker ecclesiology: For the first Friends, Quakerism was ‘primitive Christianity revived’, Christianity as it ought to be. Quaker concepts of the church were drawn up, positively on the basis of an understanding of the New Testament, and negatively, in contrast to the church practices of the seventeenth century which were seen as unbiblical. The Quaker tradition of ecclesiology has to be seen as much in what it rejects as in what it affirms. The tradition of rejection of ‘outward forms’ can now be a difficulty for us in ecumenical endeavours. (*Because some Christian traditions use outward forms as a means of identification. Ed*)

It is all those called and gathered by God to walk in his Light and Life, thus forming the invisible, catholic church of all those who do the will of God and are obedient to the Light in their hearts; this church is not limited by nation, language, or religion. “There may be members, therefore church among all the several sorts of Christians, men and women of integrity and simplicity of heart who loving to follow righteousness, are by the secret touches of this Holy Light in their souls, enlivened and quickened, thereby secretly united to God” Robert Barclay, *Apology* 1675.

It is the visible church gathered by God’s Spirit, of those who profess the Christian faith, meet together to wait upon God in worship, bear testimony to the Truth, and care for one another.

It is salutary to remember that all of us can fall into apostasy if we lose our sense of the pre-eminence of the inward truth over the outward order in which it is embodied and expressed.

The invisible church: For us the most important aspect of this is that the ‘true’ church is the invisible church of those who respond to God. The church is neither a formal organisation nor an institution, nor even visibly religious: it is the community of those who are called and gathered by God. The potential membership of this invisible church is universal; every human being has the capacity to be reached by God. Whether everyone is so reached is known only to God. However, its universality rests securely not on humanity but on the Light, ‘the Light that enlightens everyone’ as John 1:9 puts it. We must ask, ‘do we recognise the work of God?’

The visible church: The consequence of this approach is to see the visible church in a humble capacity as a sign and a servant of God’s purpose. The visible church witnesses to the Light in every aspect of its life, its worship, its decision making, its organisation, its mission and its service. It tries to know in itself and to make visible and active in the world, the will of God, the love of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. It shows what life is like when it is transformed by God, and it becomes God’s instrument in the transformation of the world.

The nature of the church: is dependent on and defined by its relationship with God. Just as God is mystery and yet known to us, so the church cannot be confined by our descriptions and yet can be a secure home. The church points to the qualities of the Light and is a channel for the activity of the Light. Its unity depends on it turning to the Light; its holiness on the submission of its whole life to the sanctifying power of the Light; its catholicity on the recognition of the Light wherever it may be found; its apostolicity on its response to the same Spirit and Light known by the apostles. All members of the church share in the responsibility of living in the Light themselves and of helping others to do so. The church is also a community under the direction of the Holy Spirit which guides, leads, directs, inspires and empowers individual members and the gathered meeting. As a creative Spirit, it can lead into new understandings and activities: as the eternal Spirit, it is not changeable but inspires words and acts of love, peace, self-sacrifice, forgiveness, mercy and grace.

The Society of Friends worldwide exhibits a diversity of practice which demonstrates that no one form is a full expression of the grace of God. In this light, we ask, what in our structures and practices is temporary, and what is of God’s eternal reign? 1 Cor. 13:13 suggests that the eternal

elements are faith, hope and love. What in the structures and practices of each church has ceased to embody these? In the experience of the Religious Society of Friends, one key sign of God's reign is equality (Cf. Gal. 3:28). In this light, we welcome the greater participation of women in the institutional life of the churches and encourage further development of this and the integration of other marginalised groups into the corporate life of the churches.

We are raising several questions that have not yet been addressed by the Faith and Order consultation:

- How do we recognise the Holy Spirit at work in each church?
- How is Christian witness manifest in its life?
- How do you express your faith and how do you find the words to state eternal truth in new words to new times?
- How do you ensure that gifts and ministries are recognised and used for building up the church and serving the world?
- How does your worship bring you into the life of Christ and empower you to live in the life of the Holy Spirit as you carry out God's will?
- What would a visible unity based in love look like?

Editor: These are questions worthy of discussion in your church or meeting, or a future AWPS Gathering. If led, please send your comments on the content of this report to AWPS- but first read the full text.

Philippines Evangelical Friends Church (PEFC). We have requested information on the working on many aspects of this Yearly Meeting, soon to become affiliated with FWCC. I learned for example, that the Bible College in Manila, trains pastors from all over Asia: Philippines, Korea, Myanmar, China, Indonesia and Cambodia. Jaime Tabingo says "It's great to mould their young lives into a Christ-like character and fit them for full time work for the Lord". Pray for the PEFC influence on pastors across Asia.

News of Friends :

- Shelagh Willet of Botswana writes: how much I enjoy this publication and hearing about what is happening in your extraordinarily widely spread out section of FWCC. I can

remember when it was started and what a huge challenge it seemed, to try and link people from such a diverse group of countries, cultures and languages. One thinks of Africa as challenging because of a similar diversity in the ways of worship, languages etc but at least it's all one continent! I hope your Section will go from strength to strength.

- Ruth Watson is in touch with Margaret Bywater, who tells her the Worshipping Group in Phnom Penh is meeting regularly and provides great support to Friends there. If Friends are visiting Cambodia, get in touch with Margaret at margby@online.com.kh
- Matthew and Amy Skinkman have recently moved to Singapore and are looking for Quakers with whom to worship. If there are others newly arrived in Singapore, please contact these Friends by email on mshinkma@yahoo.com or by mobile phone, +65 8228 1094. They have been put in touch with Ruth Watson, who is working with isolated Friends living west and south of Hong Kong.
- Michael Tan from the Philippines is welcomed as an International member to FWCC and AWPS. Michael is an academic, married with two young children. We greatly look forward to meeting Michael and his family one day, as is the case with Bonifacio Quirog, also in the Philippines. Michael writes, "my attraction to the Friends was a need to remain Christian, in the sense of being a follower of Christ, with Zen and Quaker silence providing an important anchor".
- Thomas Taylor from Ann Arbor writes "it was wonderful to see AWPS Friends in Dublin, in 2007. Nancy and I do like receiving Newsletters in the post. I have been serving on the AFSC International Programs Executive Committee for the past 6 years, and the work at the QUNOs has been very much on our minds. A group of us have planned another visit to our Senator Stabenow who is on the Senator Budget and Finance Committees, lobbying her to see the value of the UN rather than the military as a vehicle for peacemaking. We see real hope in the growing possibility that Barak Obama may very well occupy the White House, with a whole new agenda that we can come closer to agreeing with.
- Sandy Shanssem of the Netherlands YM writes: "I have been spending time in India off and on for the last few years and would like to meet Quakers in Varanasi. Do you know of any there? I am involved with a nonprofit organization, NIRMAN. We could put an ad in the paper and have a meeting there, but I am only in town for up to a month each visit. I teach painting, and look for organisations that would like a few art classes. I am also considering visiting Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and some islands, looking for schools or orphanages where the children don't get painting classes. Do you have any suggestions? I will be

in those countries from late January 2009. Currently I am a member of the Holland Friends in Holland. I was a clerk there for two years a couple of years ago". sandyshansen@wamol.com

Africa News:

The World Office draws our attention to the work of Eden and Jim Grace, FUM workers in Kenya. Their work is curtailed because of a depletion of funds. While the problems in Kenya have dropped from the headlines, the situation remains volatile; the needs of the internally displaced families and thousands of children are unmet, and peace and reconciliation work is more vital then ever.

Eden Grace writes: "Early in 2008, Kenya experienced its worst violence since independence. Our family had to leave Kisumu and take refuge in Nairobi. Our kids are exhibiting alarming post-traumatic symptoms. The spike in cost of living has thrown us into personal financial crisis. The work is more demanding than ever. Our stress is so high.

I have been privileged to work alongside the Friends Church Peace Team over the last four months. There are now over 50 individuals committed to the work of the Team, all volunteering enormous amounts of time and energy toward the vision of a lasting peace in Kenya. The Team has accomplished great things! It has provided over 15,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) with staple foods, soap, blankets, sanitary towels, clothing, and messages of love and spiritual encouragement. Approximately 11,000 of these people were not being served by any other aid agency! Now that the Kenyan government, responding to international pressure, is forcing the IDPs to leave the camps, the Team is shifting to Phase II of its work. There is a catastrophic tragedy unfolding here under the government's short-sighted policies. The forced resettlement of IDPs, without any process of reconciliation, will inevitably plant the seeds for future, more vicious violence. The Peace Team is now engaging intensively with what we're calling the "receiving communities" (the public calls them "the aggressors") in order to listen to their hurt, pain and anger, and begin to open up the possibility of truly reconciled communities.

The Peace Team members are just ordinary Quakers. They aren't rarefied, "professional" Quakers. They are coming from almost

every Yearly Meeting; they are pastors, teachers, farmers, mothers, retired people, students, etc. I need to plead with you not to forget the work of peace and reconciliation in Kenya, as other global crises seize the headlines and Kenya fades away. Peace is a long term process. The Friends Church Peace Team will be working for as long as is necessary, and we will need your sustained prayers and contributions in order to do so.

We are working at both Lugulu and Kaimosi Hospitals, implementing new programs and training new management and car staff. As a family, we're coming up to the end of our 4th year in Kenya, and we still feel as called and committed as ever. We've learned a lot, and we're ever aware of how much more we need to learn. We are humbled to be entrusted with this ministry. And we continue to need your support. I know it's easy to get excited about new ministries, new projects, new field staff, new priorities. But the Lord's work is accomplished through sustained, long-term commitment, not quick bursts of energy. Our family can't continue to live and work here if your interest fades away. Please stay with us, and encourage others to join us. Make a financial contribution toward our ministry. Share this newsletter. Stay engaged. It's so important".

FWCC General Secretary Nancy Irving asks that donations towards the work of the Graces be sent via the World Office. If coming from our Section, via our Treasurer, Topsy Evans.

Pemba Church Revival: Moses Musonga writes: We are looking at the revival of Pemba Friends Church. The problem in Pemba after the missionaries from Britain left is that there was no proper ownership of what was left behind. The Yearly Meeting itself was dying and there was no ownership. Most of the property was therefore abused by some people who were entrusted with leadership. The good side is that the mission properties still bear the ownership of Friends Industrial Mission of Pemba Yearly Meeting.

Our action plan for Pemba Friends Mission Centre is as follows:

- (i) Nairobi Yearly Meeting has agreed to assign Mombassa Monthly Meeting to supervise work at Pemba Friends Mission Centre and revive the church.

- (ii) To start computer services (Cyber Cafe) in the mission house on the ground floor and start a computer training college on the upper floor. We will install Ms word - Swahili Version.
- (iii) a company in England can send a consignment of computers to Africa so long as we are able to pay for the freight and taxes. We will request the World Office in co-operation any other partners to help us make this dream a reality. The computers can be sent to Mombassa since in Kenya there are no taxes on computer imports.
Moses Musonga, Secretary.

Quaker United Nations Committee New York

The first meeting for the new Director, Andrew Tomlinson and David Atwood was warmly thanked for managing both the New York and Geneva offices. Work on the Peacebuilding Commission in Burundi is a joint AFSC and QUNC project. Emerging Conflicts and Crisis work is shifting from Uganda to Central Africa, and the DRC in particular. QUNC is also looking at issues surrounding Iran in terms of building a coalition with other NGOs such as the WCC and the Mennonites. Concerns about the environment and sustainability will be addressed through quiet diplomacy rather than expertise on issues.

Developments in QUNO Geneva: Applications are being sought for the position of staff member responsible for the Global Economics Programme at QUNO Geneva. Details are being posted on the QUNO website at www.quno.org

Also available are a series of QUNO Publications, including a very new one 'Children Imprisoned by Circumstance' concerned with children who end up in prison because their chief carer is imprisoned.

On 9th May, in Bangkok, David Atwood, the Director of QUNO Geneva attended a conference on Armed Violence and Development. The Conference produced an Asia-Pacific Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, which was signed by many countries in the Region including Australia, DPR Korea, Indonesia, Japan, Nepal, the Philippines and the Republic of

Korea. One of the clauses in the Declaration says ‘We agree to strengthen our efforts to integrate policies and programs as appropriate, for the prevention and reduction of armed violence into national, sub-regional and international development plans and strategies, in order to reduce incidence of armed violence.’

If you would like to receive the whole Declaration, together with the list of countries who have signed it, please ask me to send you one. It could be useful for lobbying your government on the subject! Topsy Evans <tevens@c130.aone.net.au>

Japan Yearly Meeting: Early discussions are taking place to plan a visit in 2009 from Australian Friends Drew Lawson and Fiona Gardner to hold spiritual retreats with Friends in Japan and also students from the Friends School Tokyo. Please pray that this will happen and provide mutual insights into God’s presence in our lives, through the links provided by FWCC.

Teaching Conflict Resolution in Schools:

Amongst the AWPS, many Friends are teachers, interested in finding suitable programs to teach the principles and practice of resolving conflicts. Katherine Smith from Australia writes: “There is a version of HIP (Help Increase the Peace) and AVP written for schools and colleges and is publicly available. It is designed for both AVP/HIP trained and non- trained teachers and there is a teachers manual available. The course is called Transforming Conflict and further details are available at www.transformingconflict.info.” Editor: I looked at this site and saw programs for different ages included. If our readers would like to share their teaching resources that they find useful in the practice of conflict resolution, I could put them in touch with those who are asking for this assistance.

AFSC’s Response to the people of Myanmar’s *Nargis* Disaster

Quietly, since 2005 the AFSC has begun to build trust among a variety of local Burmese coming from diverse institutions, and ethnic, religious and regional backgrounds. They are community developers, opinion-shapers, religious leaders and peace-makers. While some work within formal establishments, many work

informally. Over years of repression, networks have formed of people who trust each other and support each other to do what they can to help the citizens of their country. With valuable assistance from other concerned organizations in the region, AFSC has begun a process of accompanying a variety of civil society actors in different venues.

They cannot meet publicly or gather as a group inside Burma. For now, they are volunteers working out of homes, businesses, monasteries, temples and churches. They go out in small teams loaded with relief supplies collected from local and international sources. They travel in ordinary small trucks and cars – trying to appear as inconspicuous as possible. They avoid having international personnel with them as there are numerous checkpoints along the road. They distribute the medicines we brought through monastic school systems to communities that they are supporting. They described other needs – food rations, basic medicines, pumps to pump out contaminated wells, plastic sheeting, fuel for pumps and for vehicles to get supplies, fuel and charcoal for cooking. AFSC grant money will be used to purchase these basic supplies, and deliver them to areas outside of the city, using local individuals, the Monastic Network and using local transport.

AFSC will continue to support these networks that are working 'small in scale but wide in scope'. Another staff person is poised to follow-up as soon as we receive word that more assistance is needed or that restrictions on movement and aid have eased. We have started to think about the medium term, and what type of support we can best provide as people begin to rebuild. We listen, watch, wait, and pray for the relief of the people of Myanmar. Donations can be made via the AFSC website, or by Cheque (Cyclone Nargis) in the cheque memo, and sent to AFSC, 1501 Cherry St, Philadelphia, PA 18102.

A Friend in Chengdu reports on the quake

Patrick Wood lives and works in Chengdu, capital of Sichuan province and just 70km from the epicentre of the quake and has been giving Hong Kong Friends personal updates of events. It seems that the authorities have sufficient clean water and fresh food

to meet requirements. Tents and blankets and housing solutions are the most urgent need at this time.

Patrick suggests we donate to a small British Charity "Development Organisation for Rural Sichuan" also called DORS. They are active in rural Sichuan and can get assistance direct to the grass roots. DORS has been working in Sichuan for 12 years and their website is:

<http://www.dors.org.uk/page.asp?pagekey=13&language=0>

Overseas Friends may donate via Julian Stargardt, the AWPS Associate Treasurer, email: Friends HK@gmail.com

Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT):

A small planning meeting took place in Sydney in May to further develop the plan for an Australasian chapter of CPT. Meetings will take place in August 2008 in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. It is then hoped that CPT and its volunteers will be able to respond to crises in our own Section. Enquiries: valerie.joy1@optusnet.net.au

Quaker Institute for the Future: Berrett Koehler, a prominent USA book publisher, has agreed to publish the book that the *Quaker Institute for the Future* team have been working on. The tentative title is ***Right Relationship: The Hands-On Guide to Building a Whole Earth Economy***. It will be available Jan 2009.

The book will deal with the following questions:

- How does the economy work?
- What is the economy for?
- How big or small should the economy be?
- What is a fair basis for distributing the benefits and burdens of the economy?
- What forms of governance are suited to a flourishing and dynamic whole earth economy?
- How can we get there?

It is now generally accepted that global warming is occurring. The latest scientific estimate is that we have until 2015 to make significant changes to the current business-as-usual practices before we tip over the 2 degree Celsius threshold and into the dangerous consequences for human life as we know it. If we are to bring the human economy and the integrity of Earth's life support

systems into a right relationship, the fundamental questions posed need coherent answers.

The book is positioned in relation to an ongoing campaign aimed at a movement for policy level and institutional change. Go to <http://mecteam.blogspot.com> which discusses this and other issues.

Robert Howell, Aotearoa, New Zealand YM



Devastation in Myanmar where informal aid is the only help

If you appreciate receiving the AWPS Newsletter, you may wish to contribute towards the cost of production. Annual cost is AUD \$20.

Please send this, or its equivalent in your currency to your Treasurer. This office bearer can then make an annual remittance in \$AUD to AWPS Treasurer, Topsy Evans, PO Box 181 Glen Osmond, SA 5064 Australia. Your donation can be even more useful by combining with other Friends to send a lump sum, so minimising bank charges. If you would like to use internet transfers, please contact Topsy Evans on tevans@c130.aone.net.au for our bank details. Please also remember AWPS in your will—**Thanks**

If undelivered please return to:

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