**Pisac Presentation Talking Points**

**Friends World Committee for Consultation**  ****

**February 2016**

***Connecting Friends, Crossing Cultures, Changing Lives***

Please use any of this that is useful to you as you make presentations about your experience at the World Plenary Meeting.

1. **World Plenary Meeting,** January 19 – 27, 2016 in Pisac, Peru. 320 Friends plus an additional 60 Friends from Peru and Bolivia who joined us for the week-end. Friends came from 37 countries, and 77 yearly meetings, 8 independent monthly meetings, and 2 worship groups. Ninety Friends were Young Adult Friends (under the age of 35). Approximately 1/3 were native Spanish speakers.
2. **Origins of FWCC**: FWCC was established in 1937 as a result of having worked vigorously between the Americas and Europe during World War I, bringing a vision for Friends to work together across the world. A bourgeoning Young Friends movement, with gatherings of Young Friends in both England and the United States, significantly strengthened a sense of Quaker community among those who would soon become leaders on both sides of the Atlantic. The first world gathering in London in 1920 was focussed on strengthening the peace testimony. Many more Young Friends conferences and “international conferences” were held in Europe as well as in the United States, throughout the 1920s and into the mid- 1930s. Concerns leading up to World War II, including concern for Friends in China and Japan, created a growing sense of international character for the Religious Society of Friends. The American Friends Service Committee actively gathered some consensus around an ‘international Society of Friends. All this lead to a more highly representative Friends World Conference in 1937 at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania USA, where the approval for the establishment of FWCC came to fruition. In 1929, the German Yearly Meeting epistle asked: “Does Quakerism consist only of yearly meetings, which independent of one another manage their own affairs in their own districts, or is it a great Society of Friends, reaching away over all boundaries and nations?” The epistle went on to answer: “We believe that the time has come to put all our common strength together where the great tasks lie… Let us go further along the road which leads from the limitation of our single yearly meetings to the community of a great Society of Friends.” The FWCC World Office, the Middle and Near East Section, and the Section of the Americas were all staffed in 1938. The Africa Section was first staffed in 1971, and Asia West Pacific in 1986. Connections in Central and South America and the establishment of COAL, as part of the Section of the Americas, began in earnest in the 1980’s. With a major reorganization in 1955 and a significant world conference in 1967, Herbert Hadley felt that FWCC had come into fuller maturity, with a repurposing of what it meant to be a world body of Friends.
3. **FWCC Mission Statement**: *Answering God’s call to universal love, FWCC bring 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.*
4. **FWCC’s work**: FWCC works both verticallyand horizontally. **Vertically:** Representing Friends at the world level, FWCC send representatives from each of the Four Sections to both Quaker United Nations Offices (QUNO) in New York and Geneva, as well as the FWCC General Secretary to serve on the governing committees, meeting 1-2 times per year. QUNO has the highest level consultative status, which is through FWCC as the world office. FWCC represents Friends at the world level at the World Council of Churches as an observer with opportunity to appoint people to various positions, including a Friend who serves on the Faith and Order Commission. The General Secretary represents Friends at the Christian World Communions General Secretaries annual meeting which open many doors to what other Christian Communions are doing. It greatly increases Friends presence in the world.

**Horizontally**: FWCC supports work at all levels, including the important work of personal spiritual growth and the growing vitality of Quaker meetings. We do this by sponsoring Quaker Day and making connections, sharing resources that Friends are creating, and most importantly, supporting the work of the four Sections. Where possible, FWCC makes connections across Sections.

1. **On FWCC’s behalf**, please extend greetings from Friends from all over the world. Please extend FWCC’s gratitude – for gifts of the Spirit, for the engagement and connections between one another, for the financial gifts both to the World Office and to each of the Sections, for prayers to strengthen us as a peaceful presence, for our vision of a better world, and for caring about the health and growth of the Religious Society of Friends in all corners of the world.
2. **World Plenary Meeting Theme**: *Living the Transformation; Creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God (Romans 9:19).* What does this mean to you? What did you experience at the Plenary that you want to share? Feel free to use the World Plenary Meeting Study Guide with your meeting or church (you can get it on the FWCC web site in English and Spanish). Reading the full chapter of Romans 8 can also be very helpful in understanding since it is a rather complex chapter.
3. **What is the value of World Plenary Meetings**? What would you say? It often sounds too small to say we need to make connections with each other, but being with each other in this very special spiritually grounded experience, truly is transformational for many people. Looking back on one’s life, many Friends will relate international connections with other Friends as pivotal in their lives. Why do we need each other? We need the companionship that family offers, and the value of accompanying others and being accompanied in life cannot be over stated. Relying on one another for inspiration, for loving eldership, for discernment, and for the opportunity to ‘walk with God’ together is a gift we have been given. Lastly, we are not alone in the work we each do, and this gives us the opportunity to amplify our collective voice. We are better together. We are a delightfully diverse collection of Quakers, unified by the Holy Spirit.
4. **What stories will you share**? Please send any of your writings on to FWCC, to your Section, and to each other. Keep connecting with others as you continue to make meaning out of your experience. It is all rich and it is all a gift. Be a gift to each other.
5. Continue to watch the FWCC web site as we will continue to post things there. **fwcc.world/peru-2016 Feel free to share out the many resources: World Plenary Epistle, Sustainability Minute, World Plenary videos, FWCC slide show**