

## **Report on Meeting for Sufferings (MfS), Friends House, London, 6th February 2016**

The epistle of the 2016 Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC), that had met recently in Peru, was read in the opening worship. It is available on the FWCC website: <http://fwcc.world/plenary-2016/epistle-from-2016-friends-world-committee-for-consultation-world-plenary-international-representatives-meeting>. Hearing this I felt really uplifted, to be part of a world-wide community of Friends, beyond the thirteen thousand or so in the UK.

Then it was back to business. Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee (QPSWCC) sought our advice on possible Quaker involvement in a scheme to support the private sponsorship of refugees. I was able to outline some of the practical issues involved, based on our local experience of working with refugees. Overall, the reaction was mixed. To paraphrase the minute, QPSWCC was asked to "proceed with caution".

Looking ahead, we were asked to encourage - which I'm doing now - as many Friends as possible to attend Yearly Meeting. This year it will be held over the late May Bank Holiday weekend in Friends House, London 27-30 May. And, Friends, if you are planning to go, please register your intention here <https://forms.quaker.org.uk/bym/>. This helps the planners no end. And please look out for - and use - the spiritual preparation material.

In 2011 Quakers in Britain made a corporate commitment to become a low-carbon, sustainable community and to support each other to live out this commitment. Five years on, MfS was dismayed to hear that so few Area Meetings had signed-up to the Sustainability Gathering in March. I felt I had to "fess-up" that SEAQM had yet to nominate someone. Since then I am delighted to report that Rosemary Sturgiss will be our representative at this important event. Linked to this, we were asked to point out to Area Meetings that they need to make time for their representatives to report on this key issue.

As usual, a set of the papers, including the minutes, can be found on the Quaker.org website at <http://www.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/meeting-for-sufferings/papers-and-minutes>. And there is a full some report in the 12th February edition of the Friend (Volume 174 No 07)

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