

# FRIENDS IN SAN ANTONIO

7052 North Vandiver at Eisenhower

## October, 2014

### The Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice

Friends World Committee for Consultation says, “ The Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice was approved on 24 April 2012 at the Sixth World Conference of Friends, held at Kabarak University near Nakuru, Kenya. It is the culmination of the FWCC World Consultation on Global Change which was held in 2010 and 2011. It is being circulated with the Conference Epistle.

In past times God’s Creation restored itself. Now humanity dominates, our growing population consuming more resources than nature can replace. We must change, we must become careful stewards of all life. Earthcare unites traditional Quaker testimonies: peace, equality, simplicity, love, integrity, and justice. Jesus said, “As you have done unto the least... you have done unto me”.

We are called to work for the peaceable Kingdom of God on the whole earth, in right sharing with all peoples. However few our numbers, we are called to be the salt that flavours and preserves, to be a light in the darkness of greed and destruction.

We have heard of the disappearing snows of Kilimanjaro and glaciers of Bolivia, from which come life-giving waters. We have heard appeals from peoples of the Arctic, Asia and Pacific. We have heard of forests cut down, seasons disrupted, wildlife dying, of land hunger in Africa, of new diseases, droughts, floods, fires, famine and desperate migrations – this climatic chaos is now worsening. There are wars and rumors of war, job loss, inequality and violence. We fear our neighbors. We waste our children's heritage

All of these are driven by our dominant economic systems – by greed not need, by worship of the market, by Mammon and Caesar.

Is this how Jesus showed us to live?

We are called to see what love can do: to love our neighbor as ourselves, to

### Calendar

**5. Sunday .....**  
**World Quaker Day.**  
**Potluck lunch at**  
**11.30 a.m..**

**12. Sunday .....**  
**9.00 am "Exploring**  
**the Quaker Faith:**  
**Living the**  
**Testimonies"**  
**Forum – to be**  
**announced.**

**18. Saturday .....**  
**Workparty, Meeting-**  
**house, 9 am- lunch.**

**19. Sunday.....**  
**Contemplative**  
**Singing, 9.00-9.45**  
**am.**  
**Meeting for**  
**Business, 11.30 am.**

**26. Sunday .....**  
**Forum to be**  
**announced:**

**29. Wednesday .....**  
**Midweek Meeting,**  
**7.00, Gary's home.**



some time but returned last month. Sadly, his father died during the year.

Michael W says, "Feeling very blessed, my years in San Antonio have been some of the most happy and fulfilling in my life! My work is incredibly meaningful, I continue to make great friends, plus SA has a really cool music scene! ...and I'm not too far from home! Very grateful to be here it continues to be a wonderful gift!"

Marian has had an enjoyable and adventurous visit cruising among the islands westward of Seattle with her son, John, and his wife. But on her return she found that her daughter Susan needed to go into hospital with a very serious illness, one of a long series of illnesses she has experienced over the past several years. She was released, early. But will need continuing treatment.

Remember Bil O'? He and his wife Karen moved to Williamsburg a few years ago. And next Spring they're moving to Las Vegas ("lost wages'.) Their address is in the directory.

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As you enter the meetinghouse gateway, turn and look at the little sapling in the corner of the rocks. It's a retama, two or so feet high, with a myriad of tiny, tiny, leaflets in orderly and delicate rows.

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Child Care – do we really want to pay a stranger to come in to be the second person with our children? The children need to get to know us as friends and Friends. There is a sign-up sheet on the notice board in the commonroom, Friends. The FirstDay School Committee needs your help! Help Catherine out!

### September Business Meeting

We'll have information on this Meeting for Business next month, Friends.

### Book Discussion:

Our book club will read *The More Beautiful World Our Hearts Know is Possible*, by Charles Eisenstein. It will meet at Suzanne's

house; ask at thecosmicbody@gmail.com for more details. Suzanne had to cancel Monday 29 September, but it will be "at my house, 7-9 pm potluck. We will be discussing it for several months and take turns hosting and someone else can pick the next book we study. "

### Your Taxes

FCNL has told us how our taxes were spent by the federal government in 2013. Which means income and estate taxes and general revenues. It does not include spending from Social Security, Medicare, and Highway trust funds.

So:

Current & Past wars .....	40%
Health Care & Research .....	23%
Assistance to Low Income households .	16%
General government .....	11%
Community & Economic Dev't .....	6%
Energy, science, environment .....	3%
Diplomacy, war prev't'n. Dev't ...	2%

And if you want to know more, try [www.fcnl.org/13taxchart](http://www.fcnl.org/13taxchart). But we spend 20 times as much on war as on making peace.

### Arthur Dale

In the PBS TV series on the three Roosevelts, Teddy, Eleanor, and Franklin, the AFSC came into the news. In 1933 Eleanor, determined to combat poverty, became interested in the work of the American Friends Service Committee's child feeding program in Arthur, then called Reedsdale. Clarence Pickett, AFSC's Secretary, was invited to the Roosevelts' Hyde Park residence, to discuss AFSC's efforts at vocational reeducation and subsistence living projects there. Eleanor took it up and worked to help Arthur, now called Arthur Dale, up out of poverty. Clarence was appointed chief of the federal Stranded Mining and Industrial Populations program and this involved Reedsdale.

This information can be found at <http://www.arthurdaleheritage.org/history/>, Arthur Dale Heritage, along with much more at the New Deal Homestead Museum there.

## Immigrants' Rights

Meeting has become energized in concerns for the mothers and children coming across the border. An ad hoc committee has been formed to manage this, under P&SC.

As a Meeting, we have decided to assist the immigrants living in the Posada de Guadalupe home in San Antonio and the Karnes County Civil Detention Center (100 miles south of Austin, about 40 from here). The (approximately) 12 immigrant male teenagers that live at the Posada de Guadalupe are between 16 and 18 years of age; they are too old to receive services for children. Father Phil has opened a home for them as a stepping stone to independent adulthood. They are in the process of learning English, getting their GEDs, and applying for their green cards. David and Tessa delivered paper goods to the home this past week and will see what they need in terms of food.

Lee is trying to contact RAICES, the group that coordinates the services for the (mostly) mothers and children and unaccompanied minors that are being held in the detention center to see how we may be able to help out. These two groups have a great need for support and advocacy. If you feel led to be involved in this P&SC outreach, please contact Karen at [spice.farm@yahoo.com](mailto:spice.farm@yahoo.com) or Pam at [pgspurgeon@gmail.com](mailto:pgspurgeon@gmail.com).

## Miscellany

The Whitley Theological Center at the Oblate School is presenting a series, "Portraits of World Mysticism: Learning from Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Sufis, and Hindus." It started last month and the fee for the series is \$325, so wide interest may not be too great. On February 7 next year Michael Birkel of Earlham College will speak on Quaker Mysticism. The fee for a single session is \$40.

To register, send a check payable to Oblate School of Theology to:  
Continuing Education, Oblate School of Theology, 285 Oblate Drive, San Antonio TX 78216.

In an article in *Foreign Policy*, Jeffrey Taylor argues that the world may be on the verge of nuclear war triggered by Vladimir Putin's venturing to the precipice. Could it escalate to a nuclear holocaust? Is Putin that confident that the West would not counter-attack? Would Quaker policies discourage, or convince, him to step back?

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Quakers in the news – Ripley (surely he must have died a way back?), in his "Believe it or Not" depicts "Quaker cannons," logs disguised as cannons during the Civil War, to fool the other side. Next, shall we hear of "Quaker saints," upright logs which don't actually bless anybody?

Friend Judi Dench is one of English stars who have signed an appeal to Scots not to leave the unity of England and Scotland, achieved, ironically, when James VI of Scotland inherited the throne of England as James I. She was probably not over-concerned that if Scotland left the union the national flag, the Union Jack, would have to be changed to omit the cross of St. Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland. Well, her wish came true, though who knows when it will all come up again?

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That other Quaker: .

Peter Baker, in the *New York Times*, cites books by Douglas Brinkley and Luke Nichter about Richard Nixon, as revealing transcripts of tapes in which he comes through as "vain, gossipy, sometimes paranoid, plotting against enemies real and imagined."

And here's Steve Post, of public radio in New York, who just died. He was not a Quaker, and here's proof: he said "I believe people are essentially brutal murderous lying bastards who put on masks of civility to make society work." But would Friend Nixon have agreed with him?

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Jonathan Swift, author of *Gulliver's Travels*, and Dean of the Anglican St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin from 1713, was intensely loyal to his church, launching satirical attacks on its enemies. Yet, it is thought that he was

not very religious and that for him the church was more a ladder of opportunity to positions of high status. He is thought to have had an ambition to become a bishop, yet is also thought to have held the opinion that, as all religions were hypocritical, it was as well not to allow religions to start wars. We might add, nor to allow themselves to be caught up in them afterwards.

That use of the church as opportunity structure will not be strange to early Quakers, who, with Fox, were familiar with it at that time, with Anglican priests more guided by doctrine than by spiritual experience. But to call all religions hypocritical is not Friends' way. How do Friends regard hypocrisy?

And now let us praise Archbishop Tutu and the church which elevated him in South Africa!

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Do you remember the song "Little Boxes?" It satirized modern life with this description of our houses:  
"Little boxes on the hillside,  
Little boxes made of ticky tacky,<sup>1</sup>  
Little boxes on the hillside,  
Little boxes all the same."

The words and music were by Malvina Reynolds. She is said to have written it on the way to sing at a meeting of the Friends' Committee on National Legislation in California. She told her husband she felt a song coming on.

In a comment, Martin Kelley said, "For a group that can talk on and on (and on) about that of God in others, liberal Friends can be very clannish. It's a shame, as there are often good people, holy people, in those Little Box houses, people trying to get by." Let's take that in. Are we just trying to be different?

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In this era of racial equality, do southerners feel ashamed of the way they blotted America's past? And does Ken feel ashamed that his Plymouth forebears in England shipped Africans to America for sale?

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Why are there so many cases of

unarmed youths being shot by policemen around the country? Could it be that guns are so easily available on the street that the white cops are too afraid of being shot by mere black youths? Sometimes the cop is black.

Then, too, there is that sad case of the young black woman, probably intoxicated, car broken down in the middle of the night in a strange neighborhood. Banging on a door, she scares the sleeping resident into thinking somebody is trying to break in, so he shot her, unseen, through the screen door. Maybe, he figures, the intruder has a gun?

How much do guns protect us? To do so, they must be quickly handy, loaded, and without the safety catch on. How often is that?

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In the May issue of *Foreign Policy*, Elizabeth Samet, professor of English at West Point, writes of two views of war, the sentimental appraisal and the realist. The first is expressed in President G. W. Bush's remarks describing the Iraq war as "the highest calling of history." The other by Abraham Lincoln, who, speaking to the Young Men's Lyceum in Springfield, Illinois, and having rejected passion, which had supported "the mighty scourge of the Civil War" said, "Reason, cold, calculating reason, must furnish the materials for our future support and defense."

Yet sentiment is drawn on for glorifying past wars. Was this President Bush's intent, and were his reasons for invading Iraq rational, but tragically incomplete?

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Western nations are cautious in labeling Russian action in Ukraine, presumably for fear of what the words may require from them. President Obama has called Russian actions a "brazen assault." The foreign minister of Lithuania says it is "clearly an invasion." Any of these words, cautious or otherwise, signifies condemnation. What name, we wonder, then would apply to the US "ingression" into Iraq in 2002?

There may be good reasons behind Russian acquisition of Crimea, which was historically Russian until Khrushchev "gave" it

to Ukraine in 1954. But the dramatic way Putin acquired it no doubt pleased many Russians, missing the Great Power status they had held for decades. And could it have been achieved in any other way?

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"We don't see things as they are. We see things as we are" (Anais Nin, taken from the Talmud)  
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The armed forces are crisis-oriented services. They have to be very flexible, capable of quickly meeting the enemy's strategic and tactical manoeuvres and outwitting him. This kind of capability is needed now in combating ebola in West Africa. What organization is capable of building and staffing field hospitals at a moment's notice? The army, and that is what it's doing in Africa. If the army did not exist we'd have to organize something very like it.

But the problem is that nothing is ever as great an immediate threat as an armed enemy force. It was the onset of World War II that finally overcame the Depression by making it possible for the government to pour money into the economy for enlarging the existing armed forces and armaments production. We did not predict the spread of an ebola-like disease into the cities. How could we have politically justified funding a permanent organization of medical staff and hospital-building capabilities for such a purpose five years ago?

## **Killing**

AFSC says, "The news from Ferguson, Missouri, has been extremely distressing. The killing of Michael Brown by police officer Darren Wilson. Military-garbed, heavily armed police, accompanied by dogs and armored trucks, attempting to intimidate people justifiably upset over a senseless killing who were exercising their right to assemble and peacefully protest.

In the streets of Ferguson, we are seeing the consequences of systemic, institutional racism and a culture that does not value people and their lives enough.

This is an example of everything that the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) was founded to overcome.

What can we do about it?

AFSC is already on the ground in the Ferguson-Florissant School District with our program at McCluer High School. We are helping high school students understand the context of what's happening around them, listening to their concerns, and helping them channel ways to create the social change they seek.

In response to the current crisis, we want to expand our program so we can reach more young people and help them be agents of nonviolent social change. And we need your help.

Please give now to AFSC's Ferguson emergency response to help young people in and around Ferguson, Missouri, recover from the trauma of this summer and advocate for their needs.

Meanwhil FCNL said, on September 16, "The bombs have already started dropping, but the crisis in Iraq and Syria could get much worse. This week, your members of Congress are voting on plans to equip and train groups of rebels in Syria. President Obama wants approval for this plan as the first step in a long-term war against the Islamic State.

Urge your representative to vote "NO" on expanding military aid to rebel groups in Syria—and to oppose action on President Obama's proposals for a new war in the Middle East. Call the Capitol Switchboard at 1-855-686-6927 and ask to be connected to your representative's office."

Friends operate on the micro and the macro.

## **Terrible Figures**

Numbers can be awful for what they signify. A UNICEF report says that across the world 6 in 10 children ages 2 to 14 are regularly beaten by their caregivers, including parents. And one in ten, 10%, of girls 15 to 19 have been forced into some sort of sexual act. But in the United States 35% of girls 14 to 17 had

experienced sexual violence. Can this be true? If UNICEF says it, most probably so. 20% of American boys also experienced such violence.

An advocacy group documents recruitment of child soldiers by Boko Haram in Nigeria. And homicide is the leading killer of adolescent boys ages 19 and under in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Venezuela. Compare the lives indicated by these figures to the lives our own children live. The Central American figures lie behind the experience of Tessa in the airport.

## Frocks

We see that a United Methodist minister, “defrocked” for disobedience in marrying his gay son, has been, we suppose, “refrocked” in an attempt to heal the church’s divisions. We Friends don’t have any frocks to de-, and it is difficult to think of any of us being accused of disobedience, though it is possible for members to be “read out of Meeting in the processes described in PYM Faith and Practice. We suppose it might be possible for some to object so strongly to some aspects of this F&P that they rebel and declare themselves to be ungoverned by it. But it provides very little basis for “disciplining” members, something which would be afforded by a more dogmatic stance.

As Brinton put it, at the time of the division of the Religious Society of Friends two centuries ago into “programed” and “unprogramed” meetings, “the priestly type of mind took precedence over the prophetic type,” becoming guardians of the theology of those who spoke in meeting. Later, Elias Hicks held to a separation between the historical and the inward Christ, of which the latter was the principal guide (Hubbard). The Meeting for Sufferings, the PYM “instrument of discipline,” was then controlled by evangelical Friends, more dogmatic than the mystical Friends, and striving to maintain an imposed authority. More liberal Friends were disowned and later

PYM split in two. We’re the descendants of Hicksites, and FUM, and programed, Quakers are the descendants of Gurneyites. But we’re both Quakers, we both quake.

## Letter to the President

This letter has been sent to the President from almost 120 organizations, including our own FCNL:

“Dear Mr. President,

As leaders of U.S. organizations that work to support children and families both in the United States and abroad, we strongly urge you to send the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) to the U.S. Senate this year.

This is the 25th anniversary of the CRC, the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history. Since its adoption in 1989, the CRC has proven a powerful tool to improve laws and policies for children and families around the world. Although the Clinton Administration signed the CRC in 1995, the treaty has never been submitted to the Senate for consideration. . . . .

Here at home, as you know, our own children face unprecedented exposure to adversity, poverty, violence, abuse, and exclusion. As it has all over the world, the CRC would provide us with a comprehensive framework to analyze, document, and report on conditions for children, including how government agencies consider the views of parents and youth. It would help officials at all levels of government develop policies and programs that better meet the needs of children and families. . . . .

We urge you to ensure that the CRC is submitted to the U.S. Senate this year. Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to your response.”

At a time of great concern for families and lone children crossing our border seeking safety and wellbeing, this is very appropriate now.

“I have been impressed with the urgency of doing. Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Being willing is not enough; we must do.” – Leonardo da Vinci

Meeting for Worship is held on Sunday at 10 a.m., followed by refreshments and a Forum discussion at 11.30, usually lasting until about 12.45. Children are invited to join worship for the first fifteen minutes, after which they may go to join with the Young Friends program. Child care is available during Forum.

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