

Epistle from Quakers Uniting In Publications (QUIP) Annual Meeting, 2019

To Friends Everywhere,

Greetings from Canby, OR, where Quakers Uniting in Publications met March 28-31, 2019. Friends from across the US, Britain and Kenya gathered below the tall pines to address the theme, Building Bridges: Quaker writers and publishers, working to bring us together.

With authors sharing their works from across the Quaker spectrum, we began with a challenge to consider how faithful we are to the roots of our faith and whether we live the substance of our faith over the forms. This was mirrored later as a Friend called us to be truthful as we act in the world, as a Living Presence in Christ wherever there is suffering.

In a worship framed discussion, we heard and responded to queries asking where we are as people of the Word, and where we are going. The process helped us to see shared successes and challenges in our publishing ventures.

Bridges from our faith to the world are provided through our Faith and Practices and our periodicals. A panel of Friends from diverse yearly meetings and an independent monthly meeting in the northwest shared the challenges and joys they have experienced creating and revising Faith and Practice.

Through discernment in this writing, they spoke of grappling with understanding our core beliefs and practices. Others shared their experiences working in their yearly meetings on these books which often are used to help newcomers understand our faith.

Our periodicals are also bridges, offering authors and publishers visibility to the wider world. We heard about how the book review process furthers that visibility.

In our final evening we heard from two Friends whose relationship, begun in deep spiritual divide, has been nurtured over the years by their continued relationship, initiated by their correspondence. Their story told to us presented the rare treat of being asked to share our wisdom as they bring this story to fruition in a publication - another vehicle to build bridges between Friends and out into the world.

In a final workshop, we heard a panel of three share experiences of responding to the challenges of today, navigating the difficult conversations. This is an area where the writings of Friends can bridge the gap, moving us from the perceived need for perfection to stepping into discomfort as we address issues like white supremacy. Panelists reminded us that writing and speaking from our experience and being true to our faith is an authentic way to reach others who then may be ready to join this work.

We depart having been blessed with being together for periods of deep worship and creative discussion with Friends who do the ministry of building bridges by seeking to publish Truth – and the experience of humility that this work brings. We invite others to join us next year at our annual gathering and throughout the year at www.quakerquip.com