

Friends World Committee for Consultation - 2013 Report to ILYM
David Shiner

The most exciting FWCC-sponsored event of the 21st century, the World Conference of Friends, took place in Nakuru, Kenya, in April 2012. A World Conference occurs only once in a generation, so that event was of major significance. It was also one of the largest gatherings of Quakers in history, with some 850 Friends in attendance. The attendees included four members of Illinois Yearly meeting: Mark Amos, Rose Dennis, Adrian Nelson, and Dawn Rubbert. Each of those Friends spoke in glowing terms about their World Conference experiences at the June 2012 ILYM annual sessions.

The theme of the 2012 World Conference was *Being Salt and Light: Friends Living the Kingdom of God in a Broken World*. Friends from around the globe spoke to that theme each morning of the Conference. Those inspirational speeches, and many other pictures and words from the event, can be accessed through the website of the FWCC Section of the Americas at <http://www.fwccamericas.org>.

The Section of the Americas did not meet in 2012 due to the immense amount of time, energy, and funding needed for the World Conference. However, representatives from throughout the Section did meet in Indiana in March 2013. That was a joyful gathering and also a successful one, with 45 monthly meetings and churches from 14 countries represented by those present. Friends renewed acquaintances, worshipped together, and made progress on matters such as the upcoming Quaker Youth Pilgrimage in South America and the outreach of the Wider Quaker Fellowship.

The 2014 Quaker Youth Pilgrimage will be hosted by Andean Friends in Peru and Bolivia. This will be the first Quaker Youth Pilgrimage in South America, and will take place next summer for a period of about a month. Teenagers who will be between 16 and 18 years old at that time are welcome to apply to participate in the pilgrimage. Again, information is available on the Section of the Americas website.

The Wider Quaker Fellowship (WQF) continues to publish materials of interest to all Friends, both in print and online. Most of those materials are published in both English and Spanish, and all are available on the WQF website, *Voices of Friends* (www.voicesoffriends.org). The *Voices of Friends* site also features a searchable digital library which includes many interesting Quaker pamphlets.

The worldwide office of FWCC, located in London, England, welcomed a new Executive Secretary, Gretchen Castle, late in 2012. Gretchen succeeded Nancy Irving, who retired from the Executive Secretary position after almost nine years of dedicated service. Also "retiring" at about the same time was our own Nancy Wallace, who served as Clerk of the International Finance Committee of FWCC for almost all of Nancy Irving's tenure as Executive Secretary.

The next International Representatives Meeting (formerly "triennial") of FWCC will be held in Arequipa, Peru, in 2016. Quakers from around the world will gather for fellowship and worship, and to learn more about the world family of Friends.