
Epistle of the 84th Yearly Meeting of Quaker Friends in Cuba

Quaker Friends:

Between the two Americas there is an island called Cuba; to the east and on the seashore lies Gibara, the seat of our meeting. Filled with hope, and gathered under our theme, "Strengthening our Quaker roots," we are convinced that all we do will be in the service of love, the root and foundation of our faith.

We thank God for the presence of our brother Stephen Angell, professor at Earlham School of Religion, and member of Oxford Monthly Meeting, Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting. His presentations led us to reflect on the following topics: the nature of Quaker community, Quakerism and Holiness, the Holy Spirit and revelation, Quakerism and the light of Christ, Quakerism and the testimonies. Through these messages we began to confirm our own knowledge and thus reaffirm our Quaker roots. We are also grateful for the visit of brothers and a sister from our bridge with New England: Noah Baker, Benigno Sánchez, and Victoria Rhodin, with whom we exchanged many blessings.

During the past year our Yearly Meeting has achieved new goals: fifteen students have enrolled in the Bachelor of Theology program offered by the Evangelical Theological Seminary of Matanzas, new leaders have arisen with a calling to pastoral work in mission fields, and a new Monthly Meeting has been established (Retrete, near Banes).

After participating in AFSC's Quakerism workshops, we have come to believe that the hand of God is opening opportunities to spread our Quaker faith. Feeling the call to deeper service, we place ourselves in God's hands as instruments of peace. We are convinced that this dream is a call from God, who presses us to make it real. For this reason we have approved the creation of a Latin American center for peace and Quaker studies, for both Christian and non-Christian groups. We think that the first step will be summer school courses.

The Yearly Meeting of Friends (Quakers) in Cuba has been praying for the ecology of the world and for the countries which suffer natural disasters, violence, and economic crises. In the midst of a confused world, we want to express our willingness to act, to preach, to give testimony, helping to build the kingdom of God in our daily life. We trust that we can make real some of the words we have sung as the theme of our meeting:

Swords will change to plowshares.
The maneuvers of war will end:
No more invaded peoples,
No more homeless children,
No more people without work, nor without bread.

Thus we invite the Quakers of the world to unite with us in working for peace.

In the light:
Yearly Meeting of the Church of Quaker Friends in Cuba.