



Monteverde Friends Meeting

Monteverde

Puntarenas

Costa Rica

MonteverdeQuakers@gmail.com

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Greetings Friends Everywhere,

A central event of the past year here in Monteverde was the devastation caused by the severe rains of tropical storm Nate. Monteverde Friends Meeting and Monteverde Friends School played an important part in pulling the extended community together and this helped us appreciate, once again, the importance of community, cooperation, caring, and openness to new ways of fostering physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

Although Nate has rung the bell on climate change and we as a Meeting have agreed to reduce our carbon footprint we find ourselves continuing our lives in pretty much the same way. As we learn to catch up to our beliefs in our daily lives, we look to those Friends who have lived uncomfortably for Truth's sake over Quaker history. We are becoming more aware of the need to share rides and the number of electric vehicles is slowly increasing. The new teacher housing completed in the summer deliberately employed sustainable building practices, including a rainfall catchment system, low-flush toilets, a drying room for clothing, and some recycled building materials. We realize, though, that there is much room for improvement.

We often think of our remote community as an imperfect but amazing place to live. We are ever grateful to the founders of our community and are aware of the years of political, social, physical, emotional and spiritual work that has been done. However, the maintenance of this amazing place we call home requires vigilant commitment, particularly in the face of challenges brought by tourism and transportation needs. So, our home is both gift and something we must work to maintain and develop in ways that help to bring growth and reconciliation in our daily lives.

As a Meeting we have become more actively engaged in working for a more peaceful and just world, for example, through visits to the migrant camp near the Nicaraguan border to offer friendship and support, Amnesty International Urgent Action letter-writing, marches, and various environmental and other public events. Also, this past year we initiated a Meeting newsletter "Seeds"(internet address here?), which consists of articles by members and attenders on spirituality and various social justice issues. We hope this will connect us more deeply to the worldwide Quaker movement.

Monteverde Friends School continues to be our principal outreach. The ongoing leading to face environmental, political, and social justice challenges commits us also to the raising young people who learn to live with respect, simplicity, care for others and the environment, and being still and listening. We are very proud of our students, who in response to human rights violations throughout much of the world, including Costa Rica, organized a well-attended march for human rights.

Meanwhile, through all the seasons of rain, wind, and dryness we sit in worship, in awe of the wonder of creation and with a sense of the mystery of the divine presence that inspires, energizes, and ever sustains us.

In Peace,

Tim Lietzke, Clerk

Harriet Joslin, Recording Clerk

(2018 Epistle Committee: Judy Witt, Helena Guindon, Harriet Joslin, Tim Lietzke)