

Annual Report 2012

European and Middle East Young Friends (EMEYF)

www.emeyf.org

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I. OVERVIEW

- **Spring Gathering** in Wehlen/Germany, with the theme „Encouraging Community“, brought together Young Friends from Germany, the UK, Belgium, Switzerland, Norway and Russia. Two Georgian Young Friends were prevented from joining Spring Gathering due to German Visa Policies. Workshops were facilitated by Guests from German Yearly Meeting. Participants experienced being part of a spiritual community and reflected on how they can have positive impact on their home communities.
- About 20 Young Friends from Europe and the Middle East participated at the **World Conference of Friends** in Kabarak/Kenya, where they met Friends of all ages and parts of the world. They spoke about EMEYF at sessions of Young Adult Friends and brought home stories and concerns from Young Adult Friends in other sections – including a trust in the process of change.
- Consequently, **Annual Meeting** in Bad Pyrmont/Germany was used to ask „What does it mean to be a Young Friend in Europe/the ME“, and to start a thorough and spirit-led process of envisioning EMEYF's aims and structure that resulted in structural changes carried out 2013.
- **Financial support** by numerous Area Meetings of Britain Yearly Meeting as well as donations by German YM, Sweden YM and Netherlands YM allowed participants who needed bursaries to attend our events. The grant by JRCT covered core costs like planning these events and paying for secretarial services.

II. ELDERS' AND CLERK'S REPORT¹

EMEYF may look back on 2012 with a sense of pride and a little exhaustion! We have achieved a lot and laid the foundations for a great journey of transformation. We have gathered together, travelled together, built community together, witnessed together and, most importantly, worshiped together.

At our **Spring Gathering** we were grateful to have the opportunity to come together, spend time, tell our stories, and to help each other grow, all in the beautiful natural setting of the Sächsische Schweiz in Germany.

Our time there was spent encouraging and building community, and we felt a sense of deep spiritual fellowship. We supported each other in growing into responsibility, from being nurtured and encouraged by community to wage and encourage community in the wider Quaker world as well as in our private, professional and social/political contexts.

To reach the tiny ferry across the Elbe to Wehlen, we travelled from all over Europe. As we travelled back to our own diverse communities, we carried with us the bridges we have built and the skills that will help us to build more.

As Young Friends spread all over Europe, we often feel like isolated idealists when we are faced with decisions and asked to speak truth. Our gatherings can help and encourage us, and we want to explore and encourage ways of living this encouraging community throughout the year as well.

Friends from across EMEYF attended the **World Conference of Friends** in Kenya. It was an opportunity to experience the many different Quaker traditions around the world, build new friendships and connections and a chance to meet other Young Adult Friends from around the world.

During the Conference we all participated in the Young Adults Friends Gathering that ran in the evenings. We began with the aim of writing a minute from Young Adult Friends on the state of the Quaker World; our Quaker World. This tender process did not yield the neat and tidy minute we had hoped for. Instead, the process showed us the brokenness of our Quaker world and the tender differences that have the potential to divide us if we do not find a way to meet together in unity in the Spirit.

This process was painful and uplifting at the same time, and has had a profound effect on those who were present – the memories of which continue to haunt and inspire us. At Kabarak, with Young Adult Friends from around the world, we did not turn away from each other after this let-down, but ended the week by exploring, in loving tenderness, our differences and our similarities and by doing so our pain began to heal. We were united in a way that was much more important than agreeing a minute together.

We carry this experience of the need to live through brokenness to find the wholeness within it with us, as a living minute in our hearts and spirits. This process continues now that we have returned to our own Quaker communities.

1 This text was first published in the Annual Report of FWCC-EMES 2012

In November we met again at our **Annual Meeting** in Bad Pyrmont in Germany. This Annual Meeting was different from any other Annual Meeting. The only item of business we considered was the essential one of nominations. Instead, we strove to find a way forward for EMEYF by exploring our needs and visions for (Young) Friends Communities. We felt the need to break down some of the structures and history that seem to be a burden. Rather than desperately running after agendas, we decided to spend as much time as needed for small, slow and sometimes stumbling steps, and to be prepared for ways opening. We acknowledge that it is time to lay down the aspects and structures of our community that do not help us to live in the Spiritual Community we seek.

Reassured and reunited in the vision of what we are seeking, we know that EMEYF must evolve and continue to be a living community if it is to survive. This is a work in progress. It is about the Spirit, it is about the Structure, it is about Energy and Revitalisation and it is about Worship, Love and Light. It is a process that has its roots in painful awareness of our brokenness, and sometimes failings, and it is growing into a process where the way forward is about taking ourselves, and the Religious Society as a whole, back to the radical faith that inspired those brave people who were willing to become testimonies of a living Spirit and create the Religious Society of Friends.

We look forward to continuing our journey, and look forward to you joining us on it!

The fellowship that we have enjoyed has also been made possible by the generous support of Yearly Meetings, Area Meetings, and individuals. We thank them for having helped to enable our growth.

III. EPISTLE OF SPRING GATHERING 2012
(next two pages)

EMEYF Spring Gathering 2012 Epistle

From April 6th to 13th 2012, seventeen young Friends met for the EMEYF Spring Gathering in Wehlen, near Dresden (Germany). Focusing on the theme of 'Encouraging Community', we shared stories, discussions and exercises in order to develop greater understandings of the elements and challenges of encouraging communities. We were lucky to have guidance and help from Miriam Krämer and Davorka Lovrekovic, invited speakers from German Yearly Meeting. The growth of our group work is presented in this tree. Our initial thoughts and guiding questions accompanied us on a fruitful path towards community at this Spring Gathering, which we hope to carry back home into our own lives.

We thank EMEYF and the Spring Gathering committee for organizing and facilitating such an inspiring event.

Questions providing the roots of our activities included:

- What communities am I part of?
- What is my part in community?
- What do we want to take responsibility for?
- What do we have to take responsibility for?
- How do I live in community?
- What resources help us to live brave lives?
- How am I encouraged by community?
- How can I encourage community?

We branched out our awareness of community to look for answers to these questions through our activities during the gathering, such as:

- discussions
- cooking together
- creativity
- singing
- creative listening
- puns
- hugs
- music
- laughing
- meeting new friends
- eating lunch by the river in the sun together
- Davorka's introduction to 'broken world'
- Miriam's nuclear eggsercise
- visiting Frauenkirche in Dresden
- talking about the Kenya 2012 World Conference
- playing the 'unable and unwilling' game
- creating clay communities
- talking about our own lives
- being alone in nature
- reflecting on and celebrating each others' attributes and skills
- enjoying the experience of being together
- talking about our communities at home and comparing them to how we build a community here
- an introduction to the Quaker business method, leading into our business meetings
- discussing conflict resolution in Israel and Palestine
- meetings for worship
- human contact
- exploring how we discern the will of God
- using verbal and non-verbal means of communication
- respecting the need for personal reflection or quiet space at times
- taking care of each other (when in need) and finding this rewarding, whilst appreciating the help of others when the situation is the other way around

Epilogue gave us time to share silent worship, candles, music, thoughts and friendship, developing both consciously and subconsciously our understanding of how we can encourage community.

- "I feel strengthened in many ways, personal, in belief...and encouraged to live community. I have been reminded of how important truth to others, but mainly to myself, is."
- "Friendships...understanding...space."
- "I've been reminded of the importance of Friends, community and the light they bring...Young Friends events offer a lot in these areas. Also that my own Quaker communities now probably lie elsewhere. [I sense]...an awareness that it is time to move on, and probably also to leave well."
- "Thank you Friends, for letting me share in the growth of this community. I came here knowing no one, not even myself, yet here we have grown close friendships. We have travelled a journey together. I have learnt so much from you, which I hope to take with me and develop within myself and the communities which I am a part of."
- "Building bridges...new Friends...productive, co-operative work on similar problems...enjoying VERY much building/encouraging community here with Quaker Friends."
- "I've found the fellowship really inspiring and the support in the silence."
- "More clear ideas of what I want and what I don't want from life."
- "The gathering taught me that in peace and reconciliation you need to look for the root cause of people's unhappiness and aggression, not just respond to the symptoms/behaviour."
- "Fun...laughter..."
- "I felt we got to a place so deep it was uncomfortable (especially in the sessions on the second day.) Personally, that doesn't bother me at all - in fact I really felt connected with everyone because of this shared experience."
- "I found a place/community in which I can be true to every part of myself, in which I feel acceptance, understanding, love and peace. I feel that even with large distances we will have to face between us we are and will be a true and real community."
- "I feel community with people when we do things together. That's a good focus for me to have and something I will encourage."

Finally, some wisdom from a Quaker text, shared by Davorka...

"In a true community we will not choose our companions, for our choices are so often limited by self-serving motives. Instead, our companions will be given to us by grace. Often they will be persons who will upset our settled view of self and world. In fact, we might define true community as the place where the person you least want to live with always lives."

European and Middle East Young Friends – Consolidated Accounts – FY2012

IN	FY2012	Category	Euros €	£ Sterling	£ As Euro	Consolidated €	
Grants	FWCC–EMES YFGM						
	Trusts	JRCT	JRCT	4,300.00 €		4,300.00 €	(1)
Donations	Individuals		DONATION – INDIVIDUALS		£84.00	95.76 €	95.76 €
	Collections		DONATION – COLLECTION		£210.00	239.40 €	239.40 €
	YF Groups						(2)
	MMs		DONATION – MEETING		£30.00	34.20 €	34.20 €
	YMs		DONATION – YM	1,850.00 €	£794.46	905.68 €	2,755.68 €
	Inland Revenue Gift Aid						
Activities	Spring Gathering	Surplus	SPRING GATHERING – SURPLUS	1,568.53 €		1,568.53 €	(4)
		Subsidy Refund		476.40 €		476.40 €	(5)
		Fundraising	SPRING GATHERING – FUNDRAISING		£935.00	1,065.90 €	1,065.90 €
	Annual Meeting	Cash Returned	ANNUAL MEETING – CASH RETURNED	277.71 €		277.71 €	(6)
Administrative	Secretariat		SECRETARIAT		£180.00	205.20 €	205.20 €
	Stationary & sundries		STATIONERY SUNDRIES	12.45 €		12.45 €	(8)
Interest			INTEREST	2.66 €	£7.28	8.30 €	10.96 €
Transfers							(9)
Exchange Rate Difference							
Other				0.30 €		0.30 €	
Subtotal Income				8,488.05 €	£2,240.74	2,554.44 €	11,042.49 €

OUT	FY2012	Category	Euros €	£ Sterling	£ As Euro	Consolidated €	
Annual Report & publicity							
Spring Gathering	Planning Group n+1 Subsidy		SG PLANNING	200.97 €		200.97 €	(10)
Annual Meeting	Travel CC		ANNUAL MEETING – TRAVEL	243.25 €		243.25 €	
	Bursaries						
	Food		ANNUAL MEETING – FOOD	300.00 €		300.00 €	(11)
	Accommodation						
	Stationary & sundries						
CC Meeting	Travel						(12)
	Accommodation						
	Expenses						
Administrative	Secretariat						(13)
	Stationary & sundries						(13)
	Bank charges		BANK	32.10 €		32.10 €	
Exchange Rate Difference							
Representatives	QCEA						(14)
	EMES						(14)
	Others						
Transfers							(15)
Other	Outreach						
	Trees for Africa contribution		CONTRIBUTION	38.00 €		38.00 €	(16)
	Training						
Subtotal Expenditure				814.32 €	£0.00	0.00 €	814.32 €

Income over expenditure **10,228.17 €**

Balance Sheet Assets	FY2012	Euros €	£ Sterling	£ As Euro	Consolidated €	
	Bank accounts	9,971.78 €	£8,671.65	9,885.68 €	19,857.46 €	(18)
	Cash in hand of officers/secretary	36.78 €			36.78 €	
	Total Assets				19,894.24 €	
Liabilities						
Accounts payable	Secretariat	1,000.00 €			1,000.00 €	(19)
	Annual Meeting 2012	Travel	69.90 €	£173.50	197.79 €	267.69 €
	Total Liabilities				1,267.69 €	

Net assets at end FY2012 **18,626.55 €** €1.14 <http://www.xe.com/currencytables/?from=GBP&date=2012-12-31> (21)

EMEYF FY2012 Notes to the consolidated accounts

- (1) Three-year JRCT grant received towards core costs and main objectives
 - (2) National groups, other than YFGM, and German YF, which is now paid directly by German YM
 - (3) Includes FY2011, FY2013 in addition, plus one-off SG2012 donations from German YM
 - (4) Including fundraising received into SG2012 account
 - (5) Loan of €476.40 provided to SG2012 in FY2011
 - (6) SG2012 fundraising funds received directly into main EMEYF account
 - (7) Refund from QCEA for unused printing allowance in FY2011. See also liabilities.
 - (8) Defrayment received for postage within allowance
 - (9) It was not necessary to transfer between Euro/Sterling accounts in FY2012
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- (10) Seed funding for SG2013 in FY2012
 - (11) Donations for AM2012 nearly covered costs
 - (12) No in-person CC2012 meeting held: virtual meetings organised instead of physical meetings to save costs
 - (13) Invoice for Secretariat not received during FY2012: see known liabilities. Note also FY2011 printing refund under income.
 - (13) *ditto*
 - (14) Formal representatives not sent/appointed in order to save costs
 - (14) *ditto*
 - (15) It was not necessary to transfer between Euro/Sterling accounts in FY2012
 - (16) In addition to €68 donated from EMEYF attendees and handled as-agent. Total €106 transferred to Dutch Quakers for TFA
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- (17) Spring Gathering 2012 covered its own expenditure, and returned a surplus
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- (18) EMEYF holds Euro and Sterling accounts to minimise exchange costs
 - (19) Awaiting invoice from QCEA for FY2012
 - (20) Expenses from Annual Meeting 2012 (November 2012) not yet processed
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- (21) Significant and healthy recovery from previous levels at end of FY2011