

WIDER QUAKER FELLOWSHIP, AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

LETTER 156, DECEMBER 2022

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Dear Friends,

I thought that all the Wider Quaker Newsletters had been loaded onto the Quaker website but that is not the case. Currently I am, slowly, scanning the older paper newsletters into my computer and hope to download these to the website next year. The paper file goes back almost to the beginning of the WQN in New Zealand, but many early letters are missing. The file currently starts with letter 11 written by Frances Menefy in 1980. If anyone has a stash of the early letters I would appreciate having them.

I had not realised that the Wider Quaker Fellowship was originally an initiative of FWCC. Does anyone know any more of the history?

Apparently from time to time in New Zealand the WQF letter writer would give an explanation of the organisation of New Zealand Yearly Meeting and Monthly meetings and so on. That is not something that I want to do. Just about everything about NZ Quakers can be found on the website - www.quakers.nz



What I do want to talk about is a book, this is the new revision of the New Zealand Friends' "Quaker Handbook: The Handbook of Practice and Procedure".

New Zealand Friends should be able to find the new Handbook on the website (I confess I couldn't find it), or obtain a physical copy from your Monthly Meeting, or I think, you may be able to buy one from Quaker Book Sales — quaker.books@quaker.org.nz

In most rooms set up for Meeting for Worship in New Zealand there will be a small table in the centre of the circle with flowers, the Bible, and some relevant Quaker books or magazines.

The Handbook, despite being important is not usually there. Instead you will find one or more Faith and Practice books (New Zealand, Australian, and British versions), a copy of Advices and Queries, perhaps a Quaker Hymnal, and pamphlets for new enquirers.

Perhaps we should have the new handbook on the table. There is a very useful glossary at the beginning (Quaker language can sometimes be mystifying to newcomers), and section **1.1.1 Purpose of the Quaker Handbook** outlines exactly what the book is intended to do

The Handbook is a practical and informative guide to Quaker practice in Aotearoa New Zealand. It is not a rigid set of rules and regulations but a description of what has evolved as a result of our experience of working and seeking together.

It is intended variously for use as a “how to” manual; as a reference book; and as a guide to deepening one’s understanding of the Religious Society of Friends. We hope that all will find it useful, particularly those who:

- are new to the Society,
- have been newly appointed to a committee,
- have been entrusted with a task rarely performed,
- want to find out more about Friends’ practices,
- wish to reflect more deeply on Quaker life.

From the time I became active in my local Worship Group I constantly referred to the handbook as it was then. While it is always important to have the guidance of experienced Friends when taking on a job in the meeting, it is a great benefit to be able to refer to the written suggestions and direction. I found it particularly helpful when on what is now called the Pastoral Care committee. The year I joined that committee we opened every meeting with a discussion of one of the concerns listed in the Handbook for that committee.

I consider Quakers a do- it- yourself religious organisation. In New Zealand we don’t have ministers or pastors to take the responsibility for running things. We only rarely pay people to do specific tasks. So not only do-it- ourselves but amateur as well. We need this little handbook. It is very well and clearly written. The type is a good size for most of us. Between the table of contents and the index we should be able to find the answers to most of our queries about the organisation.

This revision has been in the works for several decades; goodness I was on that committee about ten years ago. It is extremely pleasing to me to see the new book . But please note, as life goes on further revision, additions, and deletions will be necessary. For now, however, the task has been completed.

Yours in friendship Carril Karr

I send you my best wishes for a safe and harmonious holiday period. Avoid Covid! Many people, myself included, are suffering from a variety of post Covid ailments which are very debilitating.

On one of my calendars there is this quote from Mother Theresa—

*We can do no great things;
We can do small things
With great love.*

The Wider Quaker Fellowship is an association of persons of diverse backgrounds who wish to have ties with the Religious Society of Friends without necessarily being in its membership, or who, through isolation, illness or some other circumstance are unable to attend Meeting for Worship. The purpose of the Fellowship is to reflect Quaker life and thought.

Any person who finds the fundamental Quaker testimonies and the Quaker way of life, with its emphasis on sincerity and simplicity, compatible with his or her philosophy of life is welcome to join the Fellowship.

If you wish to make a donation to the WQF—

To make a donation on line, the YM Kiwi bank account number is 38 9001 0669022 02

Be sure to put your name and that the donation is for Wider Quaker Fellowship in the reference spaces. For a tax donation certificate email: ymtreasurer@quaker.org.nz with the amount and date of the donation and your name and address.

Kiwi bank has stopped accepting cheques if you don't do internet banking you will need to deposit any donation directly into the YM account at a Kiwibank branch.

Summer Gathering 2022

Wednesday, 28 December 2022 - Monday, 02 January 2023



Event Details

Event Type: National Gatherings

Venue: Marsden Bay Christian Camp
89A One Tree Point Road
One Tree Point
Ruakaka
Whangarei 0171
New Zealand

Website: <https://marsdenbay.co.nz/>

14 December: Final day to enrol

The Quaker Settlement Seminar schedule has been published but I do not have a copy and it hasn't been put on either the Whanganui Settlement website or <quakers.nz> yet.

You might try both those sites in mid January.