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Quakers for Racial Equality 2022 report for AFM State of the Meeting

As Quakers for Racial Equality continue to do the spiritual work of addressing racism in ourselves, our institutions, and our society, we find joys and challenges in presenting online forums and connecting with others working for racial justice. In 2022, some themes from our monthly forum topics are Quakers of European descent accepting responsibility for harms to Indigenous peoples and for Quaker slaveholding, learning more about dismantling white supremacy, acknowledging the land and peoples where AFM is located, and connecting with groups working for reparative justice for Black people and for Indigenous Nations.

This year, Quakers for Racial Equality has emphasized Indigenous issues more than in the past with forums on Quakers and Indigenous Boarding Schools, Decolonizing Quakers, sharing from a presentation about Muscogee Creek Freedmen, and the forum with Rev. Chebon Kernell on "Making Amends to Indigenous Peoples." The Chebon Kernell forum was a particular highlight because of his inspiring speech, responsiveness, and the incentive to work on relationship building with Muscogee Creek people for and beyond land acknowledgement. This forum reached our broadest audience ever, with 94 registrants including F/friends from as far away as Alaska. This broad reach was made possible through connections made with the "Toward Right Relations with Native Peoples" group of Friends Peace Teams and the "Beacon Hill Black Alliance for Human Rights, Decolonizing Decatur Committee." We look forward to further work on our responsibilities for repairing harm and strengthening relationships.

Another joy was coordinating with and /or gaining support from other committees/ groups within AFM on racial equity issues. Quakers for Racial Equality, Green Friends, and Social Concerns co-sponsored the forum on the South River/ Weelaunee River, which has impacts on both environmental justice and Indigenous rights. QRE also worked with the Reparations and Right Relations Ad Hoc group on forums about "Racial Equity in Housing and Local Efforts for Reparative Justice," and on "Racial Disparities in Education and the Wealth Gap." Representatives from QRE participated in the Ad hoc Anti-Racist Policies and Procedures group that developed the Interpersonal Racist Incident Policy approved by AFM. In addition, QRE members had monetary and /or moral support from AFM to attend the White Privilege Conference, FGC, and webinars about Reparations for Quaker Slave holding, Trauma Healing, and Radical Anti-Bias Training. Through these opportunities, we gained new insights that we shared through forums with AFM and beyond.

This year QRE had an impact both virtually and at the Meetinghouse. Having online forums with speakers and participants from anywhere in the U.S. and even Belize was a pleasure. The QRE Virtual Literature Table also expanded our impact and allowed us to share a wider range of resources. At the AFM meetinghouse, QRE increased our reach by distributing brochures about Quakers for Racial Equality, the Committee on Undoing Racism in AFM, and the Friends of Color group, and by placing a large poster with opportunities for racial justice work in AFM in the Greeting Room.

One challenge has been finding enough volunteers for the monthly "Listening Ear for Concerns about Racism," the weekly "QRE Virtual Literature Table," and for taking on new projects. Active QRE members feel stretched by involvement in other AFM committees, SAYMA racial justice training, and community groups. We feel the urgency of so many social justice issues and our own limitations. We invite others to join us, share tasks, and bring your perspectives on racial justice work.

QRE members are encouraged by supporting the racial equity work of others in AFM and the community. We see that addressing racism is now more thoroughly intertwined in the life of the Meeting through the Committee on Undoing Racism in AFM, the Ad hoc Reparations and Right Relations group, Friends of Color, Casa Alterna, the book group reading works by and about People of Color, and Social Concerns committee projects such as the Voting Rights Banner project. We look forward to AFM actively following up on its commitments to reparative justice for African Americans and making amends to Indigenous Peoples. In the local community, we hope to coordinate with the Beacon Hill Black Alliance for Human Rights on dismantling white supremacy, lifting up the history of Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color, and working for reparative justice.