

## Friends Peace Teams – Asia West Pacific Report

### PART A: REPORT

#### Achievements/Activities:

Friends Peace Teams is a Spirit-led organization that develops long-term relationships with communities in conflict around the world to work for justice and healing, and to create enduring cultures of peace. AYM is represented by Valerie Joy and Pia Reiersen on the newly established Global Coordinating Team, which contains representatives from each of the five regional groups, plus committee clerks.

#### The Five Regional Groups are:

- Asia West Pacific (AWP)
- African Great Lakes (AGLI)
- Peacebuilding *en las Americas*
- North America
- Europe (newly established in 2022)

The North Caucasus has been under the care of AWP for since 2014, which beautifully brought forth the Power of Goodness and expanded into Ukraine. Friends gather on the FPT Europe Regional Group to give better attention to the Ukrainians and friends in the North Caucasus where FPT offers psychosocial and trauma healing as they grapple with the pressures of a war. They also include members active in Iraq, Palestine, and Israel. They organised a regional training in Türkiye in December 2022. AWP and Europe peace workers continue to meet monthly and collaborate.

Outside of their attendance to Working Group meetings, AWP organizes training and activities with Europe.

**The AWP Working group** meets monthly and is clerked by Pia Reiersen (NSWRM), and several AYM members serve on this group- as well as from Aotearoa/NZ. More would be very welcome. Jane Drexler continues as our bookkeeper. Friends can send financial support to Elizabeth J. Drexler, 5/5 Que Court, Riverside, TAS 7250 Australia or transfers to Friends Peace Teams Asia West Pacific Inc., BSB: 032 086 Acct No: 366770 SWIFT Code: WPACAU2S and notify <[jane.drexler@hotkey.net.au](mailto:jane.drexler@hotkey.net.au)>.

A Face to Face FPT International meeting is being held in early May in Pennsylvania. Pia Reiersen is representing AYM. Young Friends were strongly encouraged to attend, but none were available. One Australian Young Friend is looking to attend the [2023 Regional Peace and Justice Training](#) in Tagaytay City, the Philippines from 7-13 July. The link for further enquiries is: <https://friendspeaceteams.org/regional-training-2023-july/>

Others are invited to join this Regional Training, serve as extended volunteers at Peace Place in Central Java, or discuss other opportunities for Young Friends wishing to deepen their knowledge of peace and justice worldwide via FPT.

#### New Area of Involvement:

Kins, the Asia Coordinator has recently outreached our training to the refugee camps on the Thai-Myanmar border. There is interest amongst these people to attend the Regional Training at Tagaytay the Philippines. The cost for the training is USD 400, + travel to the Philippines. Could individual Friends or Regional Meetings consider raising funds to assist some of these potential peace workers?

The development of our work in **West Papua** is assisted by a grant from the Thanksgiving Fund. Here we work in orphanages with teenagers and young people, many of whom have lost parents in the violent conflict. The peace workers outreach into the forests where children hide in fear and bring them into

Sentani, a regional centre. From facing extreme violence all of their lives, the children are learning and practicing peace through regular meditation and involvement with Power of Goodness (POG) training.

Outstanding new work is with the **Peace Libraries** in several places including West Papua, Indonesia, the Philippines and in the other FPT Regions. The coordinators meet regularly on international Zoom meetings, and promote the work of translation into local languages, use of local stories, printing and publishing. This has encouraged the Qld Regional Meeting Librarian to classify part of their collection as a Peace Library with the peace titles listed on Library Thing.

She has also supplied reading lists for consideration as Peace Library titles for children and adult readers to expand collections.

**Jeju Is South Korea:** Our peace worker Jungjoo has formed a “Community of Practice” with 17 other peace workers, with daily demonstrations against the expanding US Naval Base and other peace, nonviolence spiritual and practical actions.

The ongoing and **deepening relationship between FWCC/AWPS** is a further blessing, where stronger ties are continually being developed between FWCC, FPT, QSA, QUNO, American Friends Service Committee and other Friends’ groups that work globally. QSA’s newly appointed Director is Pia Reiersen, who serves as the clerk of FPT-AWP, further strengthens collaboration. which derives from training in AVP Cultures of Peace and Justice workshop series (CCPJ), Power of Goodness (POG), discernment meetings for all of our workers and interns, and the sharing of power and responsibility through the Global Coordination Team.

**Peaceways Journal:** For the first time, printed copies of this publication were mailed to all in AYM for whom we had postal addresses. This received very positive feedback and will continue annually. Our website is regularly updated with news of all projects: [www.friendspeaceteams.org](http://www.friendspeaceteams.org)

Lastly, the AGLI Coordinator has appealed to AWP and to Australian Friends for immediate funds to help feed and accommodate refugees on the **Congo/Rwanda border**. There has been tension here for decades but is now developing over to extreme need and a war. Donations can be made via Friends Peace Teams-Asia West Pacific BSB 032-086; Acc 366 770. Please put AGLI in the description and your name.

#### **Issues/Analysis:**

- FPT work is expanding at grassroots levels globally, responding to local needs.
- It is based on deep understandings of peace and justice, which derives from training in “Cultures of Peace” (CCP), “Power of Goodness” (POG), Discernment meetings for all of our peace workers and interns and the Global Coordination.
- Our funding in Australia relies on appeals to individual Friends and to Quaker Peace and Social Justice funding bodies.
- Young Friends could consider volunteering with FPT or attending International Training, which is also available via Zoom. Learning from our workers in our Regions would bring a great depth of life and possibly career experience.
- Friends of all ages are welcome to join with our programs.
- Regional Meeting Libraries and Silver Wattle, could consult with QRM Librarians re designating part of their collections as Peace Libraries.
- Support for International Peace Libraries via regular Zoom meetings is encouraged.
- Regional Meetings plan to include worshipful online connections with FPT-AWP to hold discussions on any aspects of our work as listed above.

**AWP Regional Group:** Pia Reiersen, Taisoo Kim Watson, Valerie Joy, Adrian Glamorgan, Jane Drexler, Australia; Kins Aparece Philippines; Nanik, Petrus; Ratih Selly and Sint, Indonesia, JungJoo

Korea; Nadine Hoover, Gay Howard, Tom Martin, Janet Anderson, Deb Wood, Debbie Wood, Fenna Mandolang, Mark Hoover, Cassie Cammann USA.

**Global Coordinating Group:** Pia Reiersen, Valerie Joy, and Clerks of Associated Yearly Meetings and Conveners of all Working Groups.

Contact: [valuable1@optusnet.com.au](mailto:valuable1@optusnet.com.au)