AFSC Meeting/Church Liaison Program

AFSC has initiated a new and developing program in 2012. In the coming year, we hope to hear from volunteers willing to take on this service and help us to refine and improve the model.

What is an AFSC Meeting/Church Liaison?

An AFSC Meeting/Church Liaison is a direct connection between an individual Quaker meeting/church and AFSC. Local liaisons volunteer or are appointed to help AFSC and Quaker congregations to work for peace and justice.

Goals

1. Inspire involvement in AFSC’s programs.
2. Build support and awareness of AFSC’s work regionally, domestically, and internationally.
3. Support your meeting/church’s peace and social concerns activities.

What does an AFSC Meeting/Church Liaison do?

All AFSC Meeting/Church Liaisons take part in certain core activities each year. Each of these activities helps Liaisons achieve the program’s goals. The activities include:

- Lead the meeting in activities that support AFSC’s program goals.
- Post notices about AFSC’s work regularly in the meeting or church’s newsletter and on meeting/church bulletin boards and make announcements at the rise of meeting/services.
- Offer a First Day School service project once a year.
- Offer AFSC Adult religious education resources to the meeting/church.
- Run fundraising activities to educate Friends about AFSC’s impact on constituents once a year, while offering an opportunity to give.

Local liaisons don’t do all of this alone. All local liaisons are encouraged to work in pairs, as co-liaisons. Those in larger meetings/churches have formed AFSC teams. With a partner or a team, you can split tasks according to talents and skills so that your activities are that much more successful – and rewarding.

Recruiting a co-local liaison: Most local liaisons have taken on the role not only because of their commitment to AFSC, but because someone asked them. When you consider someone, just invite them to sign on!

Inspire Involvement in AFSC’s Program Work

Each year AFSC will identify focus areas which offer opportunities for meetings/churches to assist AFSC in meeting its program goals, which are determined by AFSC program plans. Each meeting/church liaison is asked to choose one to two areas to bring back to the meeting and invite the meeting to take up. For each area there will be different levels of possible engagement from letter writing campaigns to minute writing to event hosting to establishing a committee focused on a concern. Focus areas for 2012:
• AFSC’s Work in Israel/Palestine and Why Divestment Is Important
• AFSC and Occupy/Unoccupy Together: Supporting the Movement’s Commitment to Nonviolence, Economic Justice and Inclusion
• Immigrant Allies: Coloradans for Immigrant Rights and Our Meeting
• Religious Intolerance in Indonesia and the United States: Ways that AFSC and Your Meeting Can Create More Welcoming Communities

Provide a First Day School Service Project to your Meeting/Church’s First Day School

Each year AFSC will ask you to conduct a service project in collaboration with your meeting/church’s First Day School program. For example, the service project may involve supporting a school in Zimbabwe or Haiti, or a “recycle sale” to raise money for a specific AFSC project. Educational materials about the constituents served will be provided so that the young people involved can feel connected to the people served.

Provide Adult Education Materials to the Meeting/Church

AFSC will provide study materials and study guides that can be used by meetings for adult religious education. This year AFSC has published An Introduction to Quaker Testimonies with a brief study guide. The booklet is available online for free or can be purchased from www.QuakerBooks.org. The study guide is downloadable at www.afsc.org/friends.

Run a Mitten Tree Fundraiser (to be initiated in 2013)

Each year you will be provided with photographs and information about AFSC constituents and will be asked to invite members of your meeting/church to take home a set of materials, to consider the people impacted by AFSC’s work, and what that particular family is led to give to support AFSC’s work. Each family is invited to fill a mitten on a tree for AFSC and for local service work.

Stay connected to AFSC’s Work and Keep your Meeting/Church Informed

Acting in Faith: Connecting Friends to the Work of AFSC (www.afsc.org/friends) is a blog written for Friends about AFSC’s work and Quaker social action concerns. Visit it regularly and join in the dialogue by posting a comment. When you become a Friends Liaison, we encourage you to subscribe to the Acting in Faith monthly eNewsletter with updates about posts on the blog, meeting newsletter submissions, and news about Friends actions connecting to AFSC work.

An important role of Meeting/Church Liaisons is to listen to the concerns and interests of Friends in your meeting: Where is the energy for activism and witness within your meeting? What concerns and questions do Friends have about AFSC’s work? We encourage you to forward the ideas, comments, and questions you hear to AFSC’s Friends Liaison, Lucy Duncan (contact information below).

Quarterly Conference Calls to Stay Connected

Liaisons are supported by quarterly conference calls. These calls offer opportunities to join the conversation, ask questions, and learn from AFSC staff and fellow volunteers. In addition to these opportunities, Friends Liaisons will be invited to on line presentations led by AFSC program staff.

Other Opportunities
Quaker Meeting/Church Liaisons may also want to engage in the following activities:

- Help to bring an AFSC staff member to your monthly meeting or church, to your quarterly meeting, or yearly meeting. Let Lucy Duncan, AFSC’s Friends Liaison know of your interest in such an opportunity.
- Post and announce AFSC job openings to your monthly meeting/church quarterly meeting or yearly meeting.

Resources and Support

AFSC’s Friends Liaison, Lucy Duncan, is available to answer questions, to provide materials, to serve as a first point of contact for Friends and meetings. You can contact her at lduncan@afsc.org or 215-241-7062.