



Canadian Friends Service Committee E-Newsletter

November, 2016

Celebrating with cake!



Tasmin Rajotte (left) and Jennifer Preston (right).
Photo: Rachel Singleton-Polster

Seeking peace and justice can be extremely heavy work. So when they come along, we relish opportunities to enjoy ourselves! We had just such a chance recently when Jennifer Preston celebrated 20 years on staff for CFSC, and Tasmin Rajotte celebrated 15 years.

The celebration took place as CFSC Committee members from across Canada met for two days in October for fellowship, to review our recent work, and to plan for what lies ahead. Important program decisions were made, as well as adjustments to the allocation of CFSC's time and resources. We feel these changes

will help us act on the concerns we carry in the most effective and faithful way. See several more pictures from the weekend at: <http://bit.ly/2fs9CEI>

CFSC releases Annual Accountability Report

We're pleased to launch our 2015-2016 Annual Accountability Report! The report is a mobile friendly snap shot of the past year, offering highlights of how donations to CFSC have been put to use for justice and peace. For a glimpse into what CFSC has been doing for the year we invite you to visit: <http://report.quakerservice.ca> or contact us to request print copies.

We only ask once a year and now is the time: **please make your 2016 donation now.**

Responding to police discrimination

There are many long-standing human rights issues around policing in Ontario. These include racial profiling, discriminatory use of force on people with mental health disabilities and/or addictions, inequality in funding for First Nations police services, and racism and sexism in investigations of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

CFSC has endorsed 21 recommendations to address systemic discrimination by police. Ontario is reviewing its *Strategy for a Safer Ontario* and the 21 recommendations were made to that review. For a link to the recommendations and CFSC's full endorsement letter visit:

<http://quakerservice.ca/news/policing-ontario/>

Churches call for restored funding to UNRWA

Friends have been deeply troubled by the worsening situation of many of the world's refugees. This has included concern for the wellbeing of Palestinian refugees, in particular in Syria, where 95% of the 450,000 Palestinian refugees who have been unable to leave are in need of aid to survive, and in Gaza where the Israeli military blockade continues to make life extremely precarious.

In 2010, Canada ceased its funding to the United Nations' agency UNRWA, which provides relief and basic services for Palestinian refugees. The Religious Society of Friends has joined six other churches in a joint statement calling for restored funding to UNRWA. Read the full letter at: <http://quakerservice.ca/news/churches-call-restored-funding-unrwa/>

Reminder: Last chance to sign for a Department of Peace!

A Department of Peace would work towards building a new architecture of peace in Canada and around the world. It would create a specific body with the mandate of working to prevent violent conflicts, and to help solve them through non-military means.

Creative nonviolent options for transforming conflicts exist; however, they aren't resourced and no government body carries the mandate of seeking their implementation. So they're easy to ignore. We encourage you to help change this as led. Consider signing a House of Commons petition in support of a Department of Peace, and letting your MP know that this issue matters to you. <http://canadianpeaceinitiative.ca/petition>

Editing humans, weapons, and ecosystems

A new update on synthetic biology outlines what's making headlines in the industry. Topics covered include:

- gene drives with the potential to one day eradicate species;
- editing humans – medical trials of synthetic biology with live patients;
- human-animal hybrid “chimeras”;
- allergies to genetically modified chemicals;
- bioweapons; and
- proposals to reshape entire ecosystems using synthetic biology.

The news in this update is only five pages long and easy to understand without a science background. <http://quakerservice.ca/SBUpdate2016-2> (PDF)



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