

by Matthew Legge

I recently caught up with Jane Orion Smith to discuss her 18 years with Canadian Friends Service Committee, and what she learned along the way.

**Q: What motivates Quaker service work?**

**Orion:** Quakerism is a religion of response. The motivation is a response to the Inner Voice, not just what we think is right. Quaker service work is deeper than analysis or emotion – it's rooted in our experience of Spirit, in the core of our being. This is not exclusive to Quakers, but it's our touchstone.

**Q: Why does Quaker service work matter?**

**Orion:** The world yearns for justice and peace – calling us to respond. Because service work is rooted in a deep knowing, that knowing emboldens us to not give up, whether or not there's progress, whether or not there are people who seem to care, that Inward Voice keeps us going. There are issues that aren't popular and can take decades, maybe even centuries, to resolve, but Quakers keep working on them. We can't do it on our own strength – we need each other and we need our spiritual centre. Few are willing to keep on with an issue that doesn't seem to show results, but Quakers are looking at more than outward signs.

**Q: What personal qualities or support structures around you have helped you most in your service work?**

**Orion:** Patience is a pretty big one! It can take a long time for people to come around on an issue or to discern a way forward that's collectively held. Being plain-speaking and trying to create a culture of open-mindedness is, I think, really critical within any organization. When there's a conflict it's so important that people are able to talk about it and try to move it forward. Conflict can be painful, but it's also an opportunity to deepen relationship. Of course, that requires a willingness from all parties, and that doesn't always happen, but organizations become sick by avoiding conflict. Conflicts are three-dimensional entities. I'm looking at it and analyzing it from one perspective, but people see it from different perspectives, and we need each other to understand it in its full depth. So the more we can let go of our own opinions and assumptions and try to hear things from different perspectives, the more we can come up with better solutions. The key is to listen deeply and also to let go.



Credit: Janet Ross

## Reflections on Service: An Interview with Jane Orion Smith

Jane Orion Smith holds up a bowl she received from CFSC.

We always talk at CFSC about the work being all about relationship - with our partners, our committee members, our fellow staff. Even having social conversations with people from out of town who drop into Friends House [where the CFSC office is located] is an opportunity to find out what's going on in their communities, to get to know them. That relationship building is the foundation for the work that then happens with them, with their Meeting, and in developing an understanding of the Yearly Meeting as a whole, which is vital. To know one another in the things that are Eternal – and mundane!

**Q: What work opportunities stand out from your time with CFSC?**

**Orion:** I was fortunate to work on same-sex marriage legislation, our response to 9/11 and the anti-terrorism legislation and civil liberties concerns that followed, conscientious objection and the War Resisters, and ecumenical justice. I served on the board of KAIROS for 10 years as chair, treasurer, and in other roles. CFSC pushed me to grow in so many ways, to see the deep complexity of any issue, and to

*Continued on page 4*

# KEEPING UP WITH FRIENDS

## CFSC welcomes Verena Tan

We're pleased to welcome Verena Tan as the new program coordinator for CFSC's criminal justice work! Verena has a lot of experience in working with people who have been harmed by the current system. During the course of her law degree in Australia, Verena worked in grassroots defence of Indigenous people. After completing her degree, she spent some time in Louisiana, where she acted as a volunteer lawyer, providing legal counsel and assistance to prisoners on death row. Back in Australia, Verena continued her work with marginalised people who have difficulty accessing legal help, while working for Victoria Legal Aid. She has also been involved in providing input to the Australian government on the criminal justice system around issues including mental illness, rights for prisoners, and discrimination. Verena will be working for CFSC part-time while completing a Masters in Social Justice Education. You can contact her at [verena@quakerservice.ca](mailto:verena@quakerservice.ca)

## Truth and Reconciliation: Quakers in Action

A new resource aims to help us engage in the hard work of reconciliation. The resource offers queries for reflection, explains what Friends are doing across Canada, and explores truth-telling about colonial legacies, Indigenous Peoples' right to consent, and the question of whether or not Canada is guilty of genocide. At just 27 pages, this resource is accessible, while also being full of worthwhile information. It

is available for free download (13 mb PDF) at <http://quakerservice.ca/QuakersinAction> and we also have print copies (please contact us).

## Two prison farms set to reopen

An analysis found that Canada's prison farms:

- Provide much needed rehabilitation programs: animal therapy, productive labour and physical exercise, working collaboratively with others, and training in farm management and operation;
- Have been proven to prevent re-offending and increase employment opportunities for formerly incarcerated persons; and
- Could offset the cost of food contracts within correctional facilities.

CFSC is pleased that the government of Canada included funding in the recent budget to re-open two farms in Kingston, Ontario (at Joyceville and Collins Bay Institutions). This is an issue Friends have been tracking for years, including sending information to government, and helping to fund a documentary about the value of these farms.

## CFSC expresses concern with killing of protesters

On Friday March 30 crowds gathered at the border fence separating Israel and Gaza. Smaller groups of protesters rushed forward throwing stones and burning tires. In response, the Israeli Defence Forces fired upon the marchers. At present count, 31 Palestinians have been killed in this and subsequent similar incidents. Well over 1,000 have been recovering from wounds. CFSC has written to Minister of Foreign Affairs Chrystia Freeland calling on Canada to condemn the use of lethal force against protesters, to champion an independent inquiry into what happened, and to assess the general methods of crowd control used by the Israeli military.

As reported in the Summer 2016 issue of *Quaker Concern*, we are deeply concerned by the apparent situation of Israel employing crowd control methods that systematically violate human rights, and exporting such methods to Canada through military and law enforcement trainings. We are further concerned that Canada sells weapons to Israel. Weapons made in Canada may well be used in rights abuses, and in killing unarmed civilians. As such, we repeated our urgent calls for Canada, as it accedes to the Arms Trade Treaty, to cease selling weapons to human rights abusers. Read the letter at: <http://quakerservice.ca/GazaLetter>

## Quaker Concern

Canadian Friends Service Committee

**Quaker Concern** is the newsletter of Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers). Published three-times a year, it features articles on CFSC projects and concerns of Friends.

**Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC)**, is the peace and social justice agency of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Canada. Since 1931 we have been a small team, mostly volunteers, but we've had a significant impact.

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By Dick Cotterill & Joy Morris

The number of older offenders (those aged 50+) incarcerated in Canadian prisons is on the rise. It has now exceeded 25% of the people in our federal institutions. Together with this come new realities of deteriorating mental and physical health. Walkers and wheelchairs are common sights. Dementia and Alzheimer's present new challenges to prison staff. It has been reported that in order to deal with the disruptive behavior of older prisoners, they have been isolated from others by being transferred to maximum security and placed in administrative segregation (solitary confinement). As recently stated by Catherine Latimer, executive director of the John Howard Society of Canada, "If people are sufficiently senile that they can't remember the nature of their crime, what's the point in continuing to punish them for it?"<sup>1</sup> And what about older people who are on parole, living in the community, whose mental and physical health deteriorate to the point where they fail to meet the conditions of their parole and are sent back to prison? For example, a person suffers from dementia and forgets to report to his or her parole officer, or becomes argumentative. This has happened.

While palliative care is offered in Canadian prisons, access for family members is limited and healthcare workers are reluctant to administer pain medication. Although it is widely accepted that people should be allowed to die in community-based palliative care centres rather than in federal institutions, it is not happening. In the past seven years 254 inmates have died in federal prison as a result of natural causes. Of these, 88 had applied for compassionate parole. None of them were released.

Another new concern relates to medical assistance in dying. New guidelines brought in in November 2017 allow the Correctional Service of Canada to act as a "facilitator or enabler" of death. Medically assisted death is now legal for anyone who meets the appropriate criteria. However, the most essential criterion is informed consent. When someone is in prison, they often see no positive future ahead of them. Under these circumstances, consenting to medically assisted death is effectively being coerced. A decision to request medically



## Canada's Aging Prison Population

assisted death should be made on the basis of the person's physical and mental health, and imprisonment is not directly part of these, although it has obvious impacts on them. Giving an inmate the option of medically assisted death without offering them the alternative of more caring palliative options skates very close to the realm of capital punishment. Although Canada placed a moratorium on the death penalty in 1967, it was not abolished until 1976. By then, Canada had hanged 710 people. These new guidelines put us in danger of backsliding from our country's moral stance against capital punishment, in effect if not in name. We believe that this is wrong, and that terminally ill inmates should be released so that they can end their lives in the community with family and friends. If they choose medically assisted death under these circumstances, then and only then should that option be available.

Canadian Friends Service Committee will continue to work with our partners to advocate for better palliative care, compassionate release, and the banning of medically assisted death while incarcerated. For more information, see the annual report of the Office of the Correctional Investigator at <http://www.oci-bec.gc.ca/cnt/rpt/pdf/annrpt/annrpt20162017-eng.pdf>

**Dick Cotterill** (Halifax Meeting) and **Joy Morris** (Calgary Meeting) serve on CFSC's criminal justice program committee.

<sup>1</sup> quoted in Karstens-Smith, Gemma. "Elderly inmate's death highlights lack of aging strategy in Canada's prisons." *CBC*, January 25, 2017, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/seniors-in-jail-canada-1.3951603>

## Reflections

learn how best to communicate in the process of discernment, how to speak and frame things so they could be heard and understood. Funnily, I learned this most working in the governance and administrative areas of CFSC.

**Q: You helped CFSC navigate many challenging decision-making processes, some in which Friends had very divergent opinions. What advice would you give to people seeking to make difficult decisions in community?**

**Orion:** Deborah Fisch, former Friends General Conference staff, used to say her job was to “love the body.” By “the body” she means the community, and by “love” she doesn’t mean the feeling, but acting in a caring, compassionate way. I can’t emphasize enough the importance of becoming self-aware, so you know when your ego is in the way. It’s a daily discipline. And we’ll have times of failure, but hopefully we learn from those failings. In community, we’re trying to make a decision that I call the “will of the all.” So that relinquishment of the ego is key. And sometimes it’s just not the right time and you have to wait for things to shift.

I remember asking Margaret Clare Ford when she was CFSC clerk, how to work with people who didn’t listen and seemed to not be open to others’ views or experiences. I was pretty frustrated. “Orion,” she said with her wry smile, “they are the stone against which we sharpen ourselves.” A challenge like that forces us to deeply analyze the person’s perspective and to develop a real precision about why we think differently. There will always be that person who’s a challenge, but they’re actually also an opportunity to better ourselves. We also need to hear and see the truth coming from anyone, and particularly from those whose personalities may not click with our own.

**Q: You’ve experienced discrimination because of your gender expression and sexual orientation, but as far as I can tell you never seem bitter or hateful about it. Why is that?**

**Orion:** I haven’t found hate to be useful. The first person it destroys is me. But when you work with difficult issues and are dealing with general stress of a leadership role, you are vulnerable to behaving badly. I’ve always had people I could talk to confidentially. You have to be able to lay out all your garbage and assumptions, the bad things you can think when you’re in stressful situations. You have to clear those things from your body to get to the place where you need to be in order to respond compassionately and productively. We’re all human. We all have terrible thoughts and feelings at times. Being self-aware that you’ve got this poison in your system that you have to purge before you act is how you don’t fall into hate. Hate is never going to solve anything. When we’re in a

state of alienation we cannot heal. Healing is all about relationships.

When I’ve been angry it’s usually because people aren’t listening. A lot of Quakers might think LGBT2SQ issues in the community are essentially resolved, but they aren’t. God joins a couple in marriage; Friends are but witnesses to what has already been done – we just discern whether to take a marriage under our care. But whether to take a same-sex marriage under their care – on the basis of sexual orientation, not the couple’s readiness for marriage – is still at the discretion of local Meetings. As a Yearly Meeting we haven’t said the possibility of such discrimination is intolerable. We still have trouble listening to marginalized people who articulate how to make Meetings more welcoming. For example, most churches say “everyone is welcome” – few mean it. An “everyone welcome” sign without a rainbow flag actually says to many LGBT2SQ people that other people are welcome but they aren’t. It can be salt in the wound. And not just for gay people. It’s hard to build and sustain a truly diverse community! It’s more complex than we realise. It means cultural change – and Quakers are not always so good at change, despite our belief in continuing revelation.

Listening and responding to the needs of marginalized people requires more than empathy. If the action being asked for – like a rainbow flag or being properly addressed by our gender preference or name – isn’t harmful, then why wouldn’t you do it? We need to ask marginalized people what will make Quaker Meeting a more welcoming space for everyone, and be willing to change, and be changed.

**Q: Can you tell readers why you’re no longer working at CFSC?**

**Orion:** I had a bad fall on the ice five days after my 15th anniversary of working for CFSC. I’ve spent three years trying to heal and recover from a traumatic brain injury, but I remain too disabled to work. My days have to be carefully planned and paced or I’m toast. Mostly I’m toast anyway! I still can’t process or organize well. I’m easily stressed out. My wife Janet and I had to work together on the text for this interview after it was done – so I probably sound pretty good here! My disability is a lot about learning how to *be* – and getting value out of that – rather than *doing*. Fortunately, I had a good teacher in Alex Mungall, a f/Friend who had multiple sclerosis. He was formidable in his *being* – it was life changing, knowing Alex.

I’m not less than who I was because I’m disabled. In some ways, I’ve really deepened. No one should feel sorry for me – I’m on an adventure of sorts. Not one I’d recommend for anyone, but if you find yourself there, you can find your way

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forward. I miss my competencies, but most of all I miss being with people and going wherever I want without a second thought, because everything aggravates my symptoms. I've learned what an inaccessible world this is for people with disabilities. I'm in pain 24/7. I'm learning how to live alongside it. I'm figuring out how to form new relationships as a different person, in a town where few knew the "old Orion." It is humbling. I have faith that there's a path of grace in all this, a new vocation rooted in *being over doing*.

I cannot thank CFSC enough for how compassionate and generous they've been with me on this journey. Sadly, it's not the norm when this kind of thing happens. When I tell people

about it they're stunned at the care and responsiveness that my employer has shown. I'm extremely grateful for my time at CFSC. I grew in more ways than I can name. There are so many incredible unsung heroes I've worked with – staff, volunteers, partners, donors – who taught me so much and who gave so much to CFSC. It has been a deep pleasure to work with these f/Friends on issues large and small, and I'm leaving with lasting friendships.

**Jane Orion Smith** served the second longest term in CFSC's General Secretary role, behind only Fred Haslam, the first General Secretary in 1931. **Matthew Legge** conducted this interview in his role as CFSC Communications Coordinator.

By Jennifer Preston

**D**uring the first week of February I traveled with CFSC associate member Paul Joffe to northwest British Columbia to make presentations on the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. Such presentations, and dialogue on Indigenous concerns, are critical for human rights education.

Last year Paul and I had presented in Prince Rupert to a group of northwest Indigenous leaders who wanted to know more about the *Declaration* and free, prior and informed consent (FPIC). A key for these leaders was to gain a better understanding of how to use the *Declaration* to safeguard their rights, including those relating to lands and territories. Out of this presentation grew the idea of a larger tour, so that community members could participate, and non-Indigenous people could attend as well. The Office of the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs, Kispiox Seniors Association, Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs, Kaien Islands Elders, and the Gitwilgyoots Tribe all stepped forward to sponsor the tour.

Among the organizers was Hup-Wil-Lax-A Kirby Muldoe of SkeenaWild, who also accompanied us as guide, driver, and general friendly host. Kirby transported the team from location to location, including through a major snow storm with delays for avalanche warnings! The trip traveled along the beautiful Skeena river, and Paul and I learned more about the history, cultures, and traditions of Indigenous Peoples in the region from Kirby, whose family is both Gitxsan and Tsimtsian.

Each day, we were in closed meetings with Indigenous leadership, where they could really drill down into very specific issues and how the *Declaration* could best be used. In the evenings we gave public presentations to large and diverse audiences. Paul and I discussed the history and significance of the *Declaration* and offered suggestions on how Indigenous Peoples can use it. Indigenous communities in northwest BC are inundated with resource extraction proposals and government negotiations that often do not protect, or even

## Engaging with Indigenous Peoples in BC's Northwest



Totem poles outside the Gitanyow Museum where Jennifer and Paul met with hereditary leaders and staff of the Gitanyow People.

acknowledge, human rights. So moving forward, implementation of the *Declaration* will be an important tool in strengthening Indigenous Peoples and their communities.

Discussions focused on the right of self-determination, FPIC, sustainable development, identifying rights holders, and governance. We also shared strategies around litigation, policy development, and general capacity raising.

SkeenaWild produced a short video on FPIC to promote the tour. It can be viewed at [www.undripnorthwest.ca](http://www.undripnorthwest.ca). That site also has a video of the public presentation we gave in Terrace. The tour received good local media attention (you can listen to a CBC radio interview starting at 36:30 <http://www.cbc.ca/listen/shows/daybreak-north/episode/15519897>). Everyone involved hopes the tour contributed to both capacity building and good relations in communities. Paul and I were invited to return and continue

*Continued on page 7*

By Matthew Legge

**B**orys Wrzesnewskyj, Member of Parliament for Etobicoke Centre, recently introduced a Private Members' Motion (M-163) seeking to establish an Ambassador for Women, Peace, and Security.

This concept of women, peace, and security has been advanced by the international community since 2000, but it seems Canada is starting to take it more seriously, with a newly updated National Action Plan and "theory of change."

Canada's approach has received mixed reviews from both the media and some civil society groups. That gender inequality is intimately linked to and exacerbates armed conflict is clear. The importance of women to building peace can't be overstated. For instance, the full and active inclusion of women during negotiations significantly increases the chances of reaching lasting peace agreements.<sup>1</sup> Quakers might be dubious about some types of inclusion of women though - like the notion that to achieve a more secure or peaceful world we need more women serving in the military. CFSC would suggest that new approaches to peacebuilding are needed, not just greater involvement by women in the same generally unsuccessful and often deeply harmful approaches. One under-used option is unarmed civilian protection. Groups that Quakers and others have been very involved with, such as Christian Peacemaker Teams, Peace Brigades International, and Nonviolent Peaceforce, have long achieved very high levels of leadership by women in direct protection of women, girls, men, and boys. Some female Friends have also expressed to me their discomfort with being held up as needing special protection when men and boys are also victims of violence (including sexual violence) and when there are many other reasons to want to stop wars.

There is one particularly positive element of M-163 that is worth highlighting. I welcome that the motion acknowledges "Canada's own challenges, including gender-based violence and underlying gender inequality" and the need to "develop a framework to implement the Women, Peace and Security agenda domestically." This fits well with CFSC's belief that peace must be built everywhere, not just in countries coming out of recent wars. Too often we in relatively rich and stable places think of peacebuilding as something that just needs to happen elsewhere.

## What specifically is the motion proposing?

According to the motion, the Ambassador will:

<sup>1</sup> Stone, Laurel. "Quantitative Analysis of Women's Participation in Peace Processes" in O'Reilly, Marie et al. "Reimagining Peacemaking: Women's Roles in Peace Processes." *International Peace Institute*, 2015, <https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/IPI-E-pub-Reimagining-Peacemaking-rev.pdf>

## An Ambassador for Women, Peace and Security?



1. promote research and studies relating to root causes of, and preconditions leading to, violent conflict and to conflict resolution and prevention, for respect for women's and girls' human rights, and to conditions conducive to peace,
2. support the implementation of education, training and counselling in nonviolent conflict resolution,
3. initiate, recommend, coordinate, implement, and promote national policies, projects and programs relating to the reduction and prevention of conflict and empowerment of women and girls and the development and maintenance of conditions conducive to peace,
4. encourage the development and implementation of gender- and peace-based initiatives by governmental and non-governmental entities including engaging with stakeholders, educational institutions and civil society,
5. lead the implementation of the Canadian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security,
6. promote gender equality and the integration of gender perspectives into peacebuilding and peacekeeping,
7. review and assess the Departments' yearly Action Plan reporting.

If that's not fully clear to you, you're not alone. Of course, what's proposed in the motion may not be the final mandate if this Ambassador position is created.

## What's an Ambassador and what can they do?

There are three types of Ambassadors. Most often Ambassadors are based outside of Canada, either as Ambassadors to a specific country, or representing Canada at the UN on a specific issue. This position would be an uncommon third type - a functional Ambassador, based in Ottawa. If created, the Women, Peace and Security Ambassador should have three

*Continued top of next page*

Continued from page 6

## Ambassador

general roles:

1. a policy input role in Canada,
2. the authority to represent Canada in select international forums, and
3. traveling the country to get direct input from the Canadian public.

These three directly complement each other. Ideally they'd help to create coherence. For instance, Canadian policies would be better informed by international discussions and laws, as well as by grassroots peace concerns in Canada. The details of this position are extremely important though. Each of these three key roles must be formalized, and adequately funded. The Ambassador needs a small staff team as well as the ability to draw on Global Affairs staff, so as to have access to the best available government knowledge and expertise.

The Ambassador also needs certain powers like the right to go directly to relevant Ministers if necessary. Though this would not be used often, it would be important in meaning that information and recommendations could not be blocked from reaching decision makers.

If created, these and other details will determine the extent to which the Ambassador position can have a meaningful impact.

Continued from page 5

## Indigenous Peoples

the conversations, and hope to do so later this year.

Both the Canadian and British Columbian governments have committed to fully adopting and implementing the *Declaration*. Audiences at our talks were happy to hear about the progress of *Bill C-262*, federal legislation to implement the *Declaration*. During the tour, the successful vote in the House of Commons took place to send this Bill to the committee stage.

Although federal and provincial governments have promised to rebuild Nation-to-Nation relationships with Indigenous Peoples, few feel these promises have been fulfilled. With a dramatic increase in resource extraction proposals throughout the northwest in recent years, many are deeply concerned that their Indigenous rights are being undermined by decisions made far from their traditional lands by non-Indigenous governments.

Some of the leaders we spoke with during the tour were folks I'd had the chance to meet previously when a delegation attended the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in New York in 2016. Then when Chief Na'moks of the Wet'suwet'en Nation and other Indigenous leaders from the Gitksan and Haida Nations traveled to Geneva to appear before the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Of course one of the biggest questions is who would be chosen – a career Foreign Service Officer or an outsider? What would their personal priorities be? What specifically would they be accountable for, and how will they report (reporting to Parliament would be best)? Another big factor, and one most of us might not think of, is how much the government signals they are behind the person (for instance by giving them an office in a powerful location, or not).

CFSC staff and members had met with Borys Wrzesnewskyj in the past due to his interest in establishing a Ministry of Peace. In a best case scenario this Ambassador would be an easier to achieve first step in that direction, perhaps part of an "incremental approach" to changing Canada's orientation away from militaristic responses and toward more creative and successful peacebuilding ones. Even in this best case scenario, we will still need to continue to actively engage. Respectful and persistent pressure from faith communities and other groups would remain important in encouraging the Ambassador to work for true peace. As we know, there will always be many pressures pushing in the opposite direction! CFSC will continue to watch this issue closely as it unfolds, and to support the Canadian Peace Initiative's calls for a full Department or Ministry of Peace.

*Matthew Legge is CFSC's Peace Program Coordinator.*

(CERD), CFSC was able to provide some technical support. The Indigenous leaders reported to CERD on the continued discrimination faced by Indigenous Peoples in Canada.

The trip to Geneva was a success. In its September 2017 report on Canada, CERD highlighted a diverse list of human rights concerns and elaborated on specific actions required by Canada to redress ongoing violations and omissions. In particular, CERD urged Canada to implement the *Declaration* through a legislative framework - including a national action plan; reform of national laws, policies, and regulations; and annual public reporting.

The Committee also urged Canada to incorporate the FPIC principle into the Canadian regulatory system, and amend decision-making processes around the review and approval of large-scale resource development projects. CERD added that environmentally destructive development of the territories of Indigenous Peoples should be prohibited. CFSC will continue to work in partnership with Indigenous Peoples toward the full implementation of the *Declaration* and genuine reconciliation.

*Jennifer Preston is the program coordinator for Indigenous Rights at CFSC.*

# FRIENDS ON THE MOVE

CFSC peace program coordinator **Matt Legge** was on Vancouver Island in March speaking about the practical peace skills he's been researching for a forthcoming book. In particular the talks raised issues like how we can engage with people we disagree with in the most constructive ways possible, and what evidence shows are the false or biased views that keep us from reaching our potential for inner and interpersonal peace. Matt spoke at Mid-Island (Nanaimo) Meeting, Duncan United Church, Victoria Meeting, and Cowichan Valley Meeting. A few photos are

available at: <https://bit.ly/2GDt50x>  
Video of the public talk in Duncan is available at:  
<http://pasifik.ca/2018/03/03/the-peace-virus/> A brief TV interview Matt gave is at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3EoTpBC1No8>

CFSC staff **Jennifer Preston** continues to live out of her suitcase. She attended UN headquarters in New York to participate in an Expert Group meeting on sustainable development hosted by the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) in January. In February she was in Vancouver to present on the

*UN Declaration* at the Union of BC Indian Chiefs' Council. March had her in Ottawa with other members of the Coalition for the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples to meet with federal government representatives in preparation for the upcoming sessions of the UNPFII. Most recently she was joyfully close to home, presenting at Wilfred Laurier University on the history of the *Declaration*. The presentation happened at Laurier's Centre for Community Research Learning and Action, hosted by the university's Indigenous Rights and Resource Governance Research Group.

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