

FWCC REPRESENTATIVE REPORT
South Central Yearly Meeting
March 29, 2021

Friends from Alaska and Canada to Bolivia and Peru gathered virtually for the Friends World Committee for Consultation Section of the Americas meetings from March 12-21, 2021. The theme this year was "Here, For just such a time as this," in reference to a story from the Book of Esther. The virtual meeting had 330 attenders, more than double previous attendance. The virtual format allowed many younger Friends to participate, as well as Friends who may not otherwise be able to attend, including Friends from Cuba. Friends spent the time in business meetings, home groups, daily worship, Bible studies, social gatherings, music programs and singing.

There have been many challenges since that last gathering in 2019, including many deaths of many dear Friends of FWCC. A special time for remembering departed Friends was scheduled and it was very moving. During a year when travel became impossible, the Traveling Ministers Corps began ministering to Friends virtually; and the Section of the Americas was able to distribute technology grants to yearly meetings to help them stay in touch virtually with their member meetings. (SCYM was fortunate enough to receive one of those grants.) The Section especially helped Latin American Yearly Meetings to obtain and develop the digital tools to stay connected with the Section and with each other. Latin American women had their own virtual gathering, and there is one planned for men. Regional meetings were held virtually over the course of the year.

I was honored to serve as co-clerk of the Finance Committee for the Section this past year, and served on the budget subcommittee. Budgeting proved to be a challenge, given the uncertainty about what the future holds, and whether or not travel will become feasible. For this reason, we budgeted only for FY 2022 instead of for the upcoming two fiscal years, which would be the norm, and we budgeted two different scenarios, one in which travel became possible and one in which it remained impossible. Budgeting for FY 2023 will be an ongoing process, and there is a tentative plan for a smaller virtual Section Meeting in the Spring of 2022.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Laub, FWCC representative