

CHELTENHAM QUAKER

NOVEMBER 2007

MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

- Cheltenham:** Sundays at 10:30. At present there is no regular Children's Meeting, but facilities for children can usually be made available on request. Fifth Sunday shared lunch. Thursdays, 12:30 to 1:00 Meeting for Worship, followed on First and Third Thursdays (1st and 15th) by shared lunch.
- Tewkesbury:** Fourth Sunday, 4.00pm, alternately at Diana Tovey's and at Joyce Martin's.
All welcome.
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DIARY

(All of these meetings at the FMH unless otherwise stated)

October

- Sa 20 6.00 **Harvest Supper** at FMH. Details below.
Th 25 12.30 **Thursday Worship** for half an hour
Sa 27 2.00 **Meeting for Worship** at USAF Base, Fairford, outside the main gate, until 3.00
Su 28 4.00 **Tewkesbury Meeting for Worship** at The Grange, Northway.

November

- Th 1 12.30 **First Thursday Worship** for half an hour
Th 1 2.30 **Resumption of The Searchers**, at Keith Oakey's
Su 4 11.30 **Preparative Meeting**
Mo 5 8.00 **Christians at Work:** "A Christian working in science and defence", Dr. Adrian Mears, at the Cottages, Leckhampton Church.
We 7 2.30 **Peace Group** at FMH. All welcome
Th 8 12.30 **Thursday Worship** for half an hour
Sa 10 2.00 **Monthly Meeting** at Stroud.
Su 11 7.00 **Circle Dancing** to 9.00
Th 15 12.30 **Third Thursday Worship** for half an hour, followed by Shared Lunch
Th 15 2.00 **Peace Group** at FMH. All welcome
Th 22 12.30 **Thursday Worship** for half an hour
Sa 24 10.00 **Spirituality and Social Justice** at Sacred Hearts Church Hall. [Details below]
Sa 24 2.00 **Meeting for Worship** at USAF Base, Fairford, outside main gate, until 3.00
Su 25 4.00 **Tewkesbury Meeting for Worship** at Diana Tovey's, 8 Hanover Court.
Th 29 12.30 **Thursday Worship** for half an hour

December

- Mo 3 8.00 **Christians at Work:** "Prison Chaplaincy", Sue Price, at the Cottages, Leckhampton Church
Th 6 12.30 **First Thursday Worship** for half an hour, followed by Shared Lunch
Th 13 12.30 **Thursday Worship** for half an hour
Su 16 6.30 **Carols by Candlelight**
Th 20 12.30 **Thursday Worship** for half an hour, followed by Shared Lunch

Tewkesbury Meetings for Worship

There will be new arrangements for the Tewkesbury Meeting for Worship, commencing in October. They will continue to be held on the fourth Sunday, at 4.00 pm, but will alternate between Diana Tovey's and Joyce Martin's. Please telephone the Matron at The Grange, Northway, or Diana Tovey.

Diana Tovey

Resumption of "The Searchers", Thursday, 1st November, at 2.30pm at Keith Oakey's

The Searchers group is re-starting on Thursday, 1st November, at 2.30 at Keith Oakey's. The topic will be "Happiness".

Keith Oakey

Spirituality & Social Justice Day, Saturday 24th November from 10.00 to 3.30.

The Spirituality Network for Gloucestershire is holding a Spirituality and Social Justice Day on Saturday, 24th November from 10 am to 3.00 pm at Sacred Hearts Church Hall, Moorend Road, Charlton Kings. It will be a day when we will explore social justice through scripture on our spiritual journey, led by The Revd. Canon Adrian Slade, Diocesan Director of Social Responsibility. The cost of the day is £6 per person, and tickets can be obtained from Pauline Green, The Old House, Parks Farm, The Common, Chipping Sodbury, BS37 6PX, Tel: 01454 311936. Drinks will be provided, but please bring a packed lunch.

Rosemary Hoggett

Note from Gillian Bailey

I thought Friends might like to join a psychology course, which is run by a young well qualified psychologist, who lectures at Bath University. It is described thus:

"This is a course for anyone who wants to gain a deeper insight into the workings of the mind – their own or other people's. Bringing together elements from psychology, philosophy and other disciplines, it is ideal for curious beginners and the course involves tuition, discussion, mental exercises and meditation, all presented in a clear and down-to-earth fashion. No prior knowledge assumed, all you need is an inquiring mind.

Ian Fairholm is an experienced lecturer and researcher in the field of psychology who also has considerable interest in and experience with philosophy, religion, spirituality and meditation."

We did meet at the Isbourne Foundation, but are now attending at his home on Friday evenings, 7.30 to 9.30 pm. See me for any further information.

Gillian Bailey

NOTES FROM CHELTENHAM LOCAL (PM) QUAKER MEETING:

Nominations Committee: Nominations Committee brought the name of Nina Odescalchi to go forward to Area Meeting as a Cheltenham Overseer. Nominations Committee are currently seeking a further nomination for an Elder, and one or two nominations for Overseers, as well as one or two members for Premises Committee.

Opening the Meeting House on Sundays: We expressed our gratitude to Elaine Boulter who has been responsible for unlocking the Meeting House on Sundays for a number of years. We are now seeking a replacement. Details from the Clerk, Ann Caro.

Quaker Week: The Planning Committee for Quaker Week would like comments from Friends about the effectiveness of our endeavours during Quaker Week, with particular reference to the Open Day. Meeting expressed their gratitude to all those who put time and effort into organising and running the event.

Christmas Arrangements: There will be a Meeting for Worship on Christmas Day (10.30 to 11.00), and Nan Dower will be responsible for opening the Meeting House.

It was agreed that an informal readings and carols event would take place on Sunday, 16th December at 6.30 pm, to be organised by Maureen Steffen. Refreshments (mulled fruit juice and mince pies) will be coordinated by Margot Roe.

Area Meeting Cheltenham: It was agreed that Area Meeting would take place in Cheltenham on Saturday 2nd February. At 2.00 pm.

Christian CND: Membership: Cynthia Baron explained the nature and work of Christian CND and it was agreed that we would not at present join the organisation as a Meeting until the legality in the light of Charity law of so doing had been explored, although Friends are encouraged to join as individuals. Quakers should be looking to join groups in a variety of areas where we share similar aims.

A long term framework for the work and spiritual development of Friends: The Clerk outlined the request from Meeting for Sufferings as regards the consultation process about a long term framework for the work and spiritual development of Friends. Having looked at the suggested ways of organising the consultation, it was agreed that we would initially:

- attach a copy of the relevant sections of the questionnaire to the Cheltenham Quaker
 - convene a special Meeting for Worship for Business on 2nd December at 11.50 for one hour.
- Elders would explore ways of structuring the discussion at this Meeting. John Cross

SHARING AND HELPING AT CHELTENHAM MEETING

Nominations Committee are hoping that by now most Friends will have had an opportunity to consider the items in the October Cheltenham Quaker concerning the importance of the tasks and responsibilities involved in the shared life of the Cheltenham Meeting. We do hope that any who might feel able to contribute to this either now or over the next year will be in touch with us.

John Cross on behalf of Nominations Committee

WORK AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT OF FRIENDS 2009 to 2014

It is hoped that in preparation for the special Meeting for Worship for Business at 11.15 on 2nd December Friends will have been able to read and give some consideration to the attached papers.

John Cross

The Long-term Framework

- Meeting for Sufferings is responsible for presenting to Yearly Meeting 2008 a draft Long Term Framework for the future work and life of Friends in Britain from 2009-2014. This is probably the most important piece of work for Sufferings in the coming year and beyond. They are hoping that the Framework can be well grounded through wide involvement of members and attenders from all parts of Britain.
- The purpose of the Framework is to set out a vision for Friends in Britain, the principles that should guide our work and the priorities over the next 6 years. This is intended to inform the overall approach to the use of resources and to bring unity to the work we do so we can achieve more together and strengthen our spiritual lives.
- A questionnaire has been sent to all area meetings and is also available online Meeting for Sufferings would like to ensure the children and young people have a chance to give their views either as part of an all age meeting or in Link Groups and Children's Meeting

You can complete the questionnaire online at www.quaker.org.uk/survey

The following are some ideas for activities that will encourage thinking about the issues raised in the questionnaire and enable young people to respond.

- Make sure you start with some introductions so that people know each others names, you may want to establish ground rules or a working agreement for the session

Quick Think: Quakerism

Ask the group what words/thoughts/ideas they associate with the word 'Quakerism'? Ask people to say words, or short phrases, that they feel express their understanding of the word 'Quakerism'. Explain that there are no wrong answers and to just share whatever comes into your head. You can write these on a flip chart and put them up on the wall.

Our Quaker Priorities

Ask people to think about their 'Quaker priorities' the things that are the five most important things about Quakerism for them now.

- They might be things that are particularly about Quakerism - like meeting for worship or they might be about Quaker beliefs such as the belief of that of God in everyone or Quaker values such as peace /pacifism or equality.
- They might be Quaker activities that they enjoy being involved in, whether this is going to Meeting or campaigning. Ask them to think about what is important about those activities – perhaps try to sum it up in one word or a short phrase.
- Ask them to think about these on their own and give them each a sheet of paper to jot them down on, they don't have to put them in an order – just the five key things

Quaker Priorities – What we share

Ask people to get into groups of four and to share their priorities with each other.

- Ask them to go round the group and share the 5 things that each person has written. Remind them that it is important when they are sharing these not to challenge or disagree with people as these are their personal priorities, they can ask people to clarify things if they are unsure.

- As a group ask them to negotiate their five priorities that they share as a group. Again these could be about worship, beliefs, values, Quaker activities.
- Think carefully about them as they might be able to use the same word to reflect an idea that several people have put as a priority.
- Again - they don't have to put them in an order – just the five key things
- Ask each small group to feedback to the whole group

The Questionnaire

Ask people to get into groups (or three or four together)

- Give people the list of areas of work from Question 2 in the Questionnaire and ask them to rank them as being, 'Very Important', 'Important' or 'Less of a priority' for the Society of Friends as a whole? You can ask them to think of two short reasons why.
- Ask Groups to feedback to the whole group on their priorities and why they think them. Try to draw conclusions from the feedback – are there things that everyone thinks have the same level of priority

Ask people to get back into the same groups, or you could use different groups.

- Ask groups to think about who should be doing the things that you think are 'important' or 'very important' areas of work.
- Should it be: Friends' House, Regional or general meeting, Area (Monthly) meeting, Local meeting, another Quaker group or a non-Quaker group

Visioning

This activity may help you to fill out Question 6. People's feedback and reflections on their vision could be written up on a sheet of flip chart paper and then filled in on that section of the questionnaire.

Part 1: 10 minutes

- Ask people to think about Quakerism and Quakers as they see it now and draw a picture that represents Quakerism for them now.
 - They might want to include their local meeting, link group and other Quaker groups that they are part of – they can include Quaker beliefs and values that are particularly important to them.
 - They can use words if they like.
 - Ask them to mark on the drawing a feature that represents them
 - When they've finished ask them to place them face down in the centre of the group.

Part 2) 10 minutes

- Ask people to think about their vision for Quakerism and Quakers – how would you like to see it
 - There might be things that you think Quakers should think about more, there might be things that you think Quakers should be doing, how might Quakers change the ways they do things and change the world, there might be new and exciting things that Quakers could do you might have ideas for how to tell more people about Quakerism.
 - They can use words if they like.
 - Ask them to mark on the drawing a feature that represents them
 - When they've finished ask them to place them face down in the centre of the group.
 - Ask people to show and explain their drawings to the group. Other people can ask questions for clarification but no judgemental questions are allowed and individuals may choose to answer, not answer, or state that the question is irrelevant to their drawing.

All the other questions on the questionnaire are about the process and the nature of the group and can be filled in by the group facilitator/coordinator.

A Long Term Framework for the work and spiritual development of Friends

A record of our discernment

Meeting for Sufferings is responsible for presenting to Yearly Meeting 2008 a draft Long Term Framework for the future work and life of Friends in Britain from 2009 – 2014. This is probably the most important piece of work for Sufferings in the coming year and beyond.

The purpose of the Framework is to set out a vision for Friends in Britain, the principles that should guide our work and the priorities over the next six years. This is intended to inform the overall approach to the use of resources and to bring unity to the work we do so we can achieve more together and strengthen our spiritual lives.

The Framework will encompass not just the centrally managed work of Friends House but the work and spiritual life of the whole of Britain Yearly Meeting - local and area meetings, listed special interest groups and work undertaken by individuals under concern. For this reason the document is called a "Framework" rather than a "Plan".

Meeting for Sufferings hopes that the Framework can be well-grounded through wide involvement of members and attenders from all parts of Britain. That is the purpose of this questionnaire. It can be filled in by any Quaker meeting, group or individuals though Meeting for Sufferings hopes it will normally be considered at a gathered clerked meeting.

Please read each question through carefully before trying to answer.

It would be very helpful if you could fill in the questionnaire on line. It can be found on the website (www.quaker.org.uk/survey). If you do have to reply on paper please fit your answers into the space available as far as possible, but you are very welcome to add another sheet if you have important comments or contributions which will not fit. If you have further questions, please contact Gillian Ashmore at Friends' House (Gilliana@quaker.org.uk).

The primary purpose of the Religious Society of Friends is the worship of God and the service of God through service to the world. Our insights into this service are encapsulated in our testimonies to Truth, Equality, Simplicity and Peace and our commitment to stewardship of the planet. Based on this understanding all our work will be directed to showing the love of God made active in the world.

The Long Term framework Group suggest the following criteria to guide Britain Yearly Meeting's consideration of a particular project or use of resources — financial, property, people (both employees and members):

- a) Is it properly researched?
- b) Is it rooted in our Quaker history or current Quaker experience?
- c) Does it advance any of our testimonies?
- d) Can it be adequately supported?
- e) Are Quakers especially suited to carry it forward? Are others already doing it adequately?
- f) Has partnership been fully considered? Are any proposed partners the most suitable?
- g) Will it provide experience or information that will better enable Quakers and others to speak out?
- h) Is it innovative or experimental (Quakers are sometimes able to try out new approaches where others are not)?

Q1. Are there other criteria you would wish to add to this list?

Although the Long term Framework is not the place to determine exact projects or work streams, the Framework is intended to identify priorities that Quakers in Britain can consistently support over a period of years and contribute to where they can.

Q2. Please look at this list and indicate how important you feel each of these areas of work is **for the Society as a whole**? It could be that your meeting has a particular project to which you have felt led but you may not feel that is necessarily the most important thing for the Society as a whole; or you may want to hear the Society speak out and seek to influence Government on an issue which your meeting wouldn't be able to contribute to.

Because we need to prioritise, please do not select more than **three** items as “very important”, and not more than **three** as “important”. *(Tick one box on each line, please.)*

| | Very important | Important | Less of a priority at this time |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| a) Sustaining the spiritual life of meetings – inreach and outreach and the nurturing of our young people | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| b) Developing the confident Quaker voice – how we get across our faith and witness in media, in our campaigning, our outreach and our self esteem | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| c) Peace – e.g. international work on post-conflict reconciliation; teaching non-violent ways of handling conflict; influencing Governments to avoid war/arms trade | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| d) Refugees, asylum seekers and trafficked people – influencing government and providing support | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| e) Criminal justice/prisons – e.g. speaking out to government; seeking alternatives to prison, and supporting those damaged by it; supporting restorative justice approaches and projects | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| f) Young people in our communities – influencing government and society to treat young people with respect and to see their welfare as the responsibility of the whole of society; projects which support vulnerable young people and their families | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| g) Sustainability/environment – practical ways for meetings and members to respond to climate change and degradation of the planet; support for projects to help those in the world most affected by climate change and the associated violence and economic disadvantage | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| h) Poverty, inequality and deprivation – actions to help those in our society most damaged by this; campaigning to change policies which cause or reinforce poverty, inequality or social deprivation | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| i) Civil Liberty – campaigning about the erosion of civil liberties in various pieces of legislation over the last few years, partly as a response to the threat of terrorism | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| j) Interfaith and inter-church work – Quakers taking a greater part in working to achieve a more cohesive, tolerant and respectful society, informed about each others' beliefs | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| k) Human rights – including advocacy and education at a local, national and international level. An example is slavery – campaigning to end the illegal slavery of some 27 million people worldwide who are forced to work for no money, controlled by violence and unable to escape | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Q3. If you wish to comment on the question above, or raise additional concerns, please do so here.

Q4. For each of the items you marked as “very important” or “important” in Question 2, please indicate who should be taking the lead. This does not mean, of course, that others have no part to play. (Please tick one on each line that applies, and leave the remaining lines blank.)

| | Friends' House | Regional or general meeting | Area meeting | Local meeting | Listed informal or other Quaker group | Non-Quaker partner |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| a) Sustaining the spiritual life of meetings | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| b) Developing the confident Quaker voice | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| c) Peace | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| d) Refugees, asylum seekers and trafficked people | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| e) Criminal justice/prisons | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| f) Young people in our communities | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| g) Sustainability/environment | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| h) Poverty, inequality and deprivation | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| i) Civil Liberty | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| j) Interfaith & inter-church work | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| k) Human rights | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Q5. If you wish to comment on the question above, please do so here.

Q6. Are there any other comments you wish to make?

Q7. Please say who answered this questionnaire. *(Please tick one)*

- An area meeting
- A local meeting
- A regional or general meeting
- A children and young people group
- A local Quaker group
- A listed informal or similar Quaker group
- An individual on their own (not acting on behalf of a meeting or group)

Q8. Which meeting or group was this?

Q9. How was this discernment reached? *(Please tick one)*

- At or following a special meeting for worship for consultation
- At or following a meeting for worship for business
- At or following more than one event or meeting
- By the Clerk alone, on behalf of the meeting
- By someone else, on behalf of the meeting or group
- Other

Q10. How many people were present at this meeting? *(Please tick one)*

- Under 10
- 10 – 19
- 20 – 29
- Over 30

Q11. Please give the details of someone who could expand on your answers if necessary.

Name:

Telephone and/or e-mail address:

Many thanks for taking the time to complete the questionnaire

If you are returning this questionnaire on paper, please send it to:

The Recording Clerk's Office
Friends' House, 173 Euston Road
London NW1 2BJ

Closing date: 31 December 2007