

CHELTENHAM QUAKER

MARCH 2010

MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

Cheltenham: Sundays at 10:30. Children are always welcome in our Sunday meetings for worship. If during the hour parents feel it is appropriate, they can go with them to the children's room, where they will be joined by one of the children's meeting volunteers. Fifth Sunday shared lunch.

Thursdays, 12:30 to 1:00 Meeting for Worship, followed on First and Third Thursdays (4th and 18th) by shared lunch.

DIARY (ALL OF THESE MEETINGS AT THE MEETING HOUSE UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED)

February

Su 21 12.00 **Meeting for Learning:** Contemplating Mortality: making sense of the end of life, facilitated by Nan Dower and Nancy Sentance

Th 25 12.30 **Thursday Worship** for half an hour.

Su 28 11.30 **Meeting for Discussion about Meetings for Learning** [Details below]

March

We 3 2.00 **Peace Group** at the Meeting House. All welcome

Th 4 12.30 **First Thursday Worship** for half an hour, followed by Shared Lunch

Th 4 2.00 **Searchers:** How do we respond to misfortune?

Su 7 11.30 **Local Meeting**

Tu 9 10.30 **Ecumenical Prayer Group** at the White House, Gotherington Lane, Bishops Cleeve

Th 11 12.30 **Thursday Worship** for half an hour.

Sa 13 2.00 **Area Meeting** at Cirencester Meeting House

Th 18 12.30 **Third Thursday Worship** for half an hour, followed by Shared Lunch

Su 21 12.00 **Meeting for Learning:** Quaker Housing Trust, facilitated by Alison Crane

Th 25 12.30 **Thursday Worship** for half an hour

April

Th 1 12.30 **First Thursday Worship** for half an hour, followed by Shared Lunch

Su 4 11.30 **Local Meeting**

We 6 2.30 **Peace Group** at the Meeting House. All welcome.

Th 8 12.30 **Thursday Worship** for half an hour.

Sa 10 9.00 **Glenfall Spiritual Adventure Day** (Details below)

Su 11 2.00 **Area Meeting** at Wotton-under-Edge, The Chipping Club Room, Chipping Car Park

Mo 12 8.00 **Christians at Work** The Revd. Nicholas von Benson on "Mediating family disputes".

Tu 13 10.30 **Ecumenical Prayer Group** at the White House, Gotherington Lane, Bishops Cleeve

Th 15 12.30 **Third Thursday Worship** for half an hour, followed by Shared Lunch

Searchers

The next meeting will be at 2.00 pm on **Thursday, 4th March** in the Meeting House, when our discussion topic will be "How do we respond to misfortune?" All friends are very welcome, but please note the earlier starting time.

Keith Oakey

Glenfall Spiritual Adventure Day, 10th April 2010 - Sharing our Spiritual Experiences

Quakers emphasise the experiential aspects of workshop and spiritual life. Here's a chance to share our experiences and understand those of others. To share deeply we need a safe and trusting environment. Glenfall provides a great location and the activities have been chosen to foster trust and openness. Sharing in group activities outside Meeting for Worship could enrich your own spiritual life, and allowing others to share in your spiritual experiences could benefit them. If you haven't already filled in a form, please take action soon - only a few places are left. The closing date for applications is 28th March, but it looks as though all places may be filled before then. Forms were attached to the February issue of the Cheltenham Quaker, and can be downloaded from the events section of the Cheltenham Quaker website. Rowland Carson can supply spare paper copies if you are not online. Each person taking part will receive an email (or letter if not online) confirming the activities in which they are to participate, with more details of any preparation and things to bring if required.

Rowland Carson

Website

At the Meeting for Worship for Business in February 2010 we opened a discussion on how the Cheltenham Quaker website and the News of Friends email system could better serve the needs of Friends. The Website Committee can come up with ideas for technical improvements or new facilities, but it exists to execute the will of the Meeting, and there is no point in implementing things that are not wanted or needed. We want to provide enhancements for the online community within the Meeting, but not of course in any way that excludes those who are not online (about half the Meeting, based on the number known to have email addresses). Fostering a sense of community can engender a sense of "us" and "them" - we want to avoid that, and to be inclusive rather than exclusive.

So, is there some aspect of the Cheltenham Quaker website that you would like to see improved or expanded in some way? Is there some feature you use elsewhere online that is missing from our website? Do you ever think "If only I could ..."?

And the News of Friends email system - what do you think of it? Are there too many messages? (Is your Delete key being worn down?) It was originally set up in response to the demise of the paper Monthly Meeting Newsletter, but for most people it does not really fill that gap. Could it or should it be trying to do so?

Would you like to have some sort of facility to exchange messages online with Cheltenham Quakers? (That would of course require suitable security features to ensure use only by authorised people.) Would you like to be able to swap Sunday rota duties online? Is there something completely new wanted?

No promises can be made about what will get changed (there may be practical reasons for not implementing suggestions), but without feedback things will carry on as before.

We can see from the website statistics how many visits each page gets, but we can't tell if those visits are by local Friends or someone unconnected with Quakers. It would be useful to know how much the website is used by people in the Meeting. If you do visit it regularly, please send Rowland Carson an email (address in the Red Book, or use the feedback system on the website) and say what pages you visit and how often. It would also be quite interesting to know if any of those online have NEVER visited the website, or only looked at it once, and why - so feel free to feed that back too. If no messages arrive, we'll know that no one reads the newsletter either!

Rowland Carson (for Website Committee)

Notes from Local Meeting

Nominations Committee: The Meeting agreed to forward to Area Meeting the name of Iris Terrell as an Overseer for Cheltenham Quaker Meeting.

Philip Paull is to continue for a further year as Assistant Treasurer for Cheltenham QM. Helen Pemberton is to have responsibility for Cheltenham QM data base and the publication of the membership list, as Philip Paull had indicated a wish to stand down, and Nancy Sentance has been appointed to be the to Meeting's joint librarian with Margaret Cooper.

"Becoming Friends: living and learning with Quakers: It was reported that Woodbrooke and Quaker Life have developed a new course that aims to nurture and support those who are new to Friends. A number of people are now coming along to our Meetings who are not familiar with Quakerism, and we welcome this opportunity to be able to offer them support. It was agreed to purchase five copies of the paper pack for the course at £10 each, and to publicize the online course (www.woodbrooke.org.uk/becomingfriends). Cost £5.

John Cross