

CHELTHENHAM QUAKER

NOVEMBER 2015

MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

Are on Sundays at 10.30 at Cheltenham Meeting House. There is usually a shared lunch on each fifth Sunday. Children are always welcome in our Sunday Meetings for Worship. On second and fourth Sundays children can go to the children's room where they will be joined by two of the Children's Meeting volunteers.

DIARY (All of these meetings are at the Meeting House unless otherwise stated.)

October			
Sunday	23	morning	Sale of Fair Trade Products
Sunday	23	morning	Food Bank Collection
Sunday	23	noon	Fourth Sunday Worship Sharing
Friday	30	10.30am	Meeting of Elders
Friday	30	10.30am	Coffee Morning at Footsteps Café see below
November			
Sunday	1	11.50am	Local Meeting for Worship for Business
Sunday	8	1.00pm	Area Meeting for Worship for Business at Gloucester FMH
Friday	13	10.30am	Coffee Morning at Footsteps Café see below
Sunday	15	noon	Local Meeting for Learning – <i>History of Quakers, Quakers in Business</i>
Wednesday	18	7.30pm	Cheltenham Interfaith Meeting at Park Campus see below
Friday	20	10.30am	Area Peace Group Meeting Nailsworth FMH
Sunday	22	morning	Food Bank collection
Sunday	22	morning	Sale of Fair Trade Products
Sunday	22	noon	Fourth Sunday Worship Sharing
Friday	27	10.30am	Coffee Morning at Footsteps Café see below
Sunday	29	10.30am	Fifth Sunday semi programmed Meeting followed by talk see below

Footsteps Café: (just down from the Meeting House) We meet on second and last Fridays of the month from 10.30am for a sociable get together. Everyone welcome.

Meeting for Learning Sunday 15 November led by Elma Detheridge on *The History of Quakers, Quakers in Business*.

Fifth Sunday will be a semi programmed Meeting on the theme *Objections to War* followed by a presentation by Jane Mace on the same theme. Please see page three for details.

Cheltenham Interfaith Meeting on Wednesday 18 November will be the National Interfaith Week Celebration at the University of Gloucestershire Park Campus. (expected time 7.00 – 9.00pm) The theme will be *Soul Talk*. We will discuss where the sacred is found today.

NOVEMBER COLLECTION is for County Community Projects. Starting in Cheltenham in 1989, this charity has now expanded to cover the whole of Gloucestershire and Worcestershire. CCP exists to improve the lives of children, young people, families and vulnerable adults by preventing homelessness, strengthening families and supporting independence. Donations can be given through the website www.ccprojects.org.uk or sent to 301 High Street, Cheltenham, GL50 3HW.

Friends who are taxpayers are encouraged to send donations directly to the charity, using Gift Aid or a charity voucher (CAF, Charities Trust, etc) possibly adding a note to say that they belong to Cheltenham Quaker Meeting.

Items for inclusion in the next newsletter should be sent to the editorial email address or by post to the editor Janet Weyers by **Monday 16 November** at the latest

Web address: <http://www.cheltenhamquaker.org.uk/newsletters.php>

NOTES ON OCTOBER LOCAL MEETING

The main points are below. Full minutes for this and for AM can now be found in the pigeonholes in the lobby. **Area Meeting in December** will be at Cheltenham MH. Our Clerk will put up a notice asking for volunteers for various tasks. We hope Friends will be generous in offering this service to our Meeting.

How does the Truth Prosper in our Meeting? In addition to a written report to Area Meeting, we agreed that Nigel Smith would make a short video as part of our presentation.

Meeting for Learning 2016. Elders would welcome suggestions for topics.

Financial Matters. We agreed to give donations of £100 to the Swarthmore Lecture Special Appeal and £200 to each of the following: Quaker Homeless Action; Quaker Social Action; Quaker Council for European Affairs; Ramallah Friends School; The Retreat Benevolent Fund; Quaker Service in Ireland. Details of these charities can be obtained from our Assistant Treasurer June Drummond.

We also agreed to contribute £60 to the Mother and Toddler Playgroup being set up under the auspices of Global Footsteps Management Committee. It will be primarily for recently arrived immigrants and is planned to be held in our Meeting House.

NOTES ON OCTOBER AREA MEETING

Membership: We recorded the death of Sally Mason of Forest Meeting on 12 September. A memorial Meeting will be held at Woodbrooke on Sunday 15 November.

Tabular Statement: Following our concern sent to Meeting for Sufferings in February (minute 15/03) inviting BYM to cease counting gender at all, we note with interest that there is now a new third category box for gender: 'other'.

Appointments: We agreed to release Bill Rowlands (Cheltenham) from his role as Trustee, Pat Stevens (Cirencester) from her role as Elder, and note that Colin Gerard seeks to lay down Clerk of Trustees in a year's time. Nominations Committee have been asked to bring forward a name to serve as Assistant Clerk to Trustees as soon as possible.

Peace Activities: Actions in response to the refugee crisis were reported as follows:

Sarah Eilbeck reported that Gloucester Friends have met with organisers of Brunswick Baptist Church's Free Shop for local asylum seekers and refugees; have made an immediate collection to contribute to that and are considering ways to offer language and support groups in the Meeting House, linked to those provided by GARAS.

Liz Whiteside told us that Nailsworth Meeting has agreed to allocate an immediate sum of £3k to GARAS to match the figure already raised from Quaker Relief Grant Scheme.

Several Friends have written to MP s expressing concern both about the government's stance on taking more refugees in this country and its proposals for possible armed intervention in Syria. Rosemary Andoh said that Wotton Churches Together have written to their MP and the local press. We are encouraged to continue to put this pressure on politicians.

As a separate Peace Group initiative, we are pleased to learn that Liz Whiteside has purchased 200 peace poppies from AM funds on a bulk buy (at a cost of £90) and is distributing them by request to LMs who can then send on any sales income to Peace Pledge Union.

Peace Group now have a Facebook account <https://www.facebook.com/gloucestershirequakers> and encourage Friends to use it and send contributions or news to its manager, Alison Crane.

For information, the GARAS web address is: <http://www.garas.org.uk/What-can-you-do-to-help.aspx> and it gives some practical suggestions of how we can all help refugees.

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

This will take place on Thursday 17 December at 7.00 pm at the Meeting House.

DONATIONS AND COLLECTIONS

At **November LM** we will be considering the charities to be included in our 4-year cycle of 'basket' collections. These are usually smaller charities of either local and/or of special interest to one or more of our members. They do not have to be Quaker charities but they must have charitable status.

Please let Lydia Sutcliffe or me have your suggestions for any charities you would like to see included.

June Drummond

FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING ON 29 NOVEMBER

Objections to war: a Quaker approach

To mark the centenary of a right to conscientiously object to military service in Britain (coming up early in 2016), Quaker Peace and Social Witness have asked me among a small group of others to offer a session on this topic around AMs from September 2015.

The plan for the opening session will be:

- opening worship (5 mins)
- presentation (30 mins)
- activity (20 mins)
- closing worship (5 mins)

The presentation will cover opposition to warfare, past and present, by Quakers and others, with these headings:

1. war, peace and Quakers;
2. conscience and conscription;
3. objections today: and
4. an invitation to personal reflection.

The discussion will include:

1. Changes to our peace witness over time and context;
2. The dilemmas of taking a stand against military force employed in the name of duty and defence;
3. And the present –day situation for conscientious objectors.

The activity is likely to engage us in thinking about the dilemmas of claiming exemption, and the spectrum of responses to testing questions. For early Friends, war of any kind was to be opposed. We will also consider: how are present-day Quakers living this commitment? and how effective is our peace education work in the face of what some are calling the ‘military creep’ into our schools currently being promoted?

Jane Mace

NEW ATTENDERS’ MEETING / DISCUSSION

Elders hope to arrange a meeting for new attenders to our Meeting for Worship. It is anticipated that this would provide an opportunity for those who wish to find out a little more about Quakers & Quakerism to do so, in an informal setting. Topics you might like to explore could include:

- How a Quaker Meeting works
- Quaker history
- Quaker business meetings
- Quaker terminology or jargon
- What goes on behind the scenes

The meeting would involve newer attenders and more experienced Quakers and could take the form of: Informal Q&A; short (informal) presentations; discussions or a mixture of these.

The time(s), date(s) and location(s) of the meeting(s) would be arranged to suit those wishing to come.

Please feel free to talk to any of the Elders about this meeting (See Elders' board near Meeting room) or sign the sheet on the noticeboard to indicate your interest.

We are pleased that you want to explore more about us.

Gloucestershire AM Quakers 2016 calendar (as agreed, October 15)

Day	Date	Time	Meeting	Location
	January			
Sunday	14 Feb	1.30pm	Cheltenham	Cheltenham FMH
Saturday	12 March	10-12.30*	Meeting for learning on housing	Gloucs FMH
		1.30pm	Gloucester	Gloucs FMH
Sunday	10 April	1.30pm	Painswick	Painswick FMH
Sunday	8 May	1.30pm	Forest	Staunton Village Hall
Sunday	12 June	1.30pm	Stroud	Old Town Hall
Thursday	7 July	7.00pm	Cirencester	Cirencester FMH
	August			
Sunday	11 Sept	1.30pm	Wotton	Chipping Clubroom
Sunday	9 October	1.30pm	Nailsworth	Nailsworth FMH
Saturday	12 Nov	1.30pm	Gloucester	Gloucester FMH
Sunday	11 Dec	1.30pm	Cheltenham	Cheltenham FMH

**(start time for the March meeting for learning still to be finalised)*

These are the **changes from 2015** that this introduces:

1. All afternoon AM meetings start at 1.30pm, rather than some at 1.00pm and others at 2.00pm.
2. Cheltenham hosts two meetings this time (in 2015 it was Stroud)
3. Two AMs are on Saturday (March and Nov) rather than just one, as in 2015.

Pat Beard, Jane Mace
12 Oct 2015

From Advices and Queries: Number 33

Are you alert to practices here and throughout the world which discriminate against people on the basis of who or what they are or because of their beliefs? Bear witness to the humanity of all people, including those who break society's conventions or its laws. Try to discern new growing points in social and economic life. Seek to understand the causes of injustice, social unrest and fear. Are you working to bring about a just and compassionate society which allows everyone to develop their capacities and fosters the desire to serve?