

CHELTENHAM QUAKER

MAY 2016

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.)

April			
Saturday	23	10.15am-3.45pm	Spiritual Adventure Day in Gloucester QMH see below for details
Sunday	24	morning	Sale of Fair Trade Products
Sunday	24	noon	Fourth Sunday Worship Sharing see below
Sunday	24	morning	Food Bank Collection
May			
Sunday	1	11.50am	Local Meeting for Worship for Business
Sunday	8	1.30pm	Area Meeting for Worship for Business at Staunton Village Hall (Forest LM)
Friday	13	10.30am	Meeting of Elders
Sunday	15	noon	Meeting for Learning see page 3
Sunday	22	morning	Food Bank Collection
Sunday	22	morning	Sale of Fair Trade Products
Sunday	22	noon	Fourth Sunday Worship Sharing
Friday	27	To Monday 30	Yearly Meeting at Friends House see below
Sunday	29	10.30am	Fifth Sunday semi-programmed Meeting and talk see below

Worship Sharing on Sunday 24 April: This will be an opportunity for those who attended the Spiritual Adventure Day to share the day's experience with each other and with those who were unable to attend. These reflections on '*Sitting Under the Bodhi Tree*' will be helpful in planning future events.

Footsteps Café: Coffee mornings here are postponed for the time being, until more volunteers can be found to work on a Friday morning.

5th Sunday in May: The theme of the May semi-programmed worship will be *Quaker openness to other faiths*. Friends are invited to bring prepared readings or to minister as moved on this theme, allowing time for silent reflection between contributions. The talk at 12 noon will be by Salma Kaka (a Muslim visitor) and followed by a vegetarian shared lunch.

Date for your June diary: Pastoral Friends are organising a Summer Social Event and Strawberry Tea to take place at the Meeting House on Saturday 25 June between 4.00 and 7.00pm. All welcome.

CHELTENHAM QUAKERS SPIRITUAL ADVENTURE DAY Saturday 23 April at Gloucester QMH.

'Sitting Under the Bodhi Tree' a day exploring spiritual practices from other faiths led by Ginny Wall. Maps showing the way to Gloucester QMH from the bus stop will be available. If you need to arrange a lift, please see the sign up list.

Dinah Clements

Quaker faith & practice 26.17

I should like to change the name 'seekers' to 'explorers'. There is a considerable difference there: we do not seek the Atlantic, we explore it. The whole field of religious experience has to be explored, and has to be described in a language understandable to modern men and women.

Ole Olden, 1955

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 May at the latest

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

MAY COLLECTION is for Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC). This was formed in 1937 to encourage spirit-led fellowship between Friends from all parts of the world. It aims to bring Friends of varying traditions and cultural experiences together in worship, to express our common heritage and to give our Quaker message to the world. Consultative status with the United Nations and association with our two Quaker United Nations offices offer a means to monitor and present Quaker contributions to world affairs. FWCC unites with other churches in the World Council of Churches in working together for justice and peace. Through the four autonomous, cooperating section offices, FWCC runs programmes in different regions. Quaker groups all over the world can be discovered by contacting the World Office, based in London. Donations can be given through the website www.fwccworld.org or sent to FWCC World Office, 173 Euston Road, London, NW1 2AX.

tel: 0207 663 1199.

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.

MEETING FOR LEARNING SUNDAY 15 MAY

Spiritual Preparation for Yearly Meeting –

Yearly Meeting this year will continue to look at how we live out our faith in the world, starting with hearing our stories. It will look at how we recognise and respond to the promptings of the Spirit to act in the world, and at how we know and use our gifts.

Even for people who can't be at BYM in person, shared spiritual preparation creates the foundations on which Yearly Meeting can build. At this Meeting for Learning, we will be considering how we are **Pushed by the Spirit**.

It will be helpful if you could do some preparation in advance of the session. We will be considering some of the following questions, which you may like to think about:

1. Can you remember a time when you felt you were spoken to in a Meeting for Worship?
2. What was it that helped you to be open and to recognise the nudging of the Spirit?
3. How could you share your leadings and understanding?
4. Was the prompting of the Spirit building on a talent you were already aware of, or by following the prompting did a new gift emerge?

Suggested reading

- 1 Corinthians 12:4–7 & 12–21
- Quaker faith & practice 19.48
- Yearly Meeting 2015, minute 36: 'Call for Equality' – can be found on this page, together with other BYM documents - www.quaker.org.uk/news-and-events/ym/documents-1 Alison Crane

YEARLY MEETING 2016: This will be held from Friday 27 May – Monday 30 May at Friends House, London. This year we are asked to register in advance so that adequate practical plans can be made. Details of how to do this are available from our clerks or online at <https://forms.quaker.org.uk/bym/>. Friends not in membership are welcome to attend, but need to have a letter to the Clerk from an Elder or Pastoral Friend.

Yearly Meeting begins on the evening of Friday 27 May but a number of activities have been arranged on Friday afternoon to give Friends the opportunity to learn more about the wide range of work done by Britain Yearly Meeting, and to get to know one another a little better.

Between 15:00 and 18:00 the Large Meeting House will have displays and literature available and staff and committee members will be present. In the Bloomsbury Suite, staff and committee members would like to welcome Friends to Yearly Meeting with tea and cake and will be available for informal conversations about the work. After tea, brief presentations about a range of corporate work will be given. A full programme will be available at www.quaker.org.uk/ym at the beginning of May.

NOTES FROM APRIL LOCAL MEETING

Premises Matters: We agreed to send a letter to Charities Aid Foundation, which is managing the bequest to us by Betty Willis. They require a brief statement of intent as to how the bequest will be used. One of the proposals for the use of the bequest was to build a small extension to the Elizabeth Fry room. It was agreed that further discernment and investigation is essential before we pursue this option, along with the agreement of Trustees for whatever we do.

Dementia Support: we were asked to consider a concern as regards our ability to offer support to Friends who are suffering from dementia, and their carers. For example, we might wish to consider incorporating dementia friendly facilities into any improvements we make to the building. We agreed that we need to inform ourselves more about the issue, and hope to have a Meeting for Learning on the subject. The Alzheimer's Society meet at the Municipal Offices on the second Tuesday of each month, 10.30-12noon, and any Friend is welcome to attend (details from Elma Detheridge)

Peace Messenger News: Alison reported on three peace related events in Gloucestershire during March, all of which were attended by people from our LM. Firstly, Spirit of Peace, who organise regular inter-faith bring and share suppers, with a speaker, in Gloucester, held an event on 7 March where the speaker was Jo Berry, whose father was killed in the Brighton bombing. When he left prison, she met and now does peace work with Patrick Magee, one of the bombers. She founded a charity to promote peace and better understand the roots of war, terrorism and violence – www.buildingbridgesforpeace.org. It was a powerful event, that had resonances with the "Beyond Forgiving" film that we have shown here. One quote from her talk - *"I'm beginning to realise that no matter which side of the conflict you're on, had we all lived each others lives, we could all have done what the other did."*

Secondly, a talk organised by Ann Davison from FoD Meeting, at Nailsworth Meeting House on 13 March in which Hamed Qawasmeh spoke of the work being done in Hebron, a central concern being education of Palestinian children in Hebron. He also set up the thyme farming project that Ann Davison raised money for last year.

Information at Hebron International Resource Network www.facebook.com/HIRN-388180624554795

British Shalom- Salaam Trust www.bsst.org.uk

And to donate www.crowdrise.com/righttomovementpalestine/fundraiser/rasham

And thirdly, again on the subject of Palestine, Global Footsteps organised a lunchtime meeting on 20 March here, with lunch and a talk by Veronica Pasteur, an EAPPI volunteer who had recently returned from the same area of Hebron that Ann Davison had worked in. She gave us a sheet including things we can do about the situation.

EAPPI also have a good website. www.eappi.org

If you are part of any relevant organisation and would like to share stories of events or activities as part of this report in future months, Alison would be very pleased to have your contributions.

NOTES FROM APRIL AREA MEETING

Membership: Dick Batstone (Malmesbury) died on Saturday 2 April after a long illness.

Appointments: Pat Beard (Cirencester) has been appointed to serve as Meeting for Sufferings alternate, to serve until the end of the triennium.

News of Friends: Lis Parker (Nailsworth) has returned this week from a short trip to the camp on the Macedonia border, now home to some 14 thousand Syrian refugees, where Lis's brother Paul is co-organising 'Hot Food Idomeni', cooking of hot meals each day for several thousand in the camp. We ask any Friends who would like a copy of Lis's notes from this, together with information about opportunities to support 'Hot Food Idomeni', to contact AM clerk.

We are pleased to learn that Judy Roles is now employed as a Quaker prison chaplain at Long Lartin prison, on an eighteen month contract.

Sustainability Gathering 18-20 March:

We were glad to receive inspiring reports from this event from Jen Cothier and Ruth Davey.

We agreed to use the energy from these to start the ball rolling again on Minute 36 (the 'Canterbury commitment' from 2011 Yearly Meeting). We ask Local Meetings to read and use these two reports over the next few months as the basis for other Friends to share their stories, with the intention that Area Meeting comes back to this topic in the autumn. (Copies with the AM Minutes)

Echo Chamber: an installation on conscientious objection in WW1

We were pleased to hear Fiona Meadley's progress report on this and that 37 people in all came to see its first outing at the Brunel goods shed in Stroud in March. We give thanks for the contributions by our Friends Margaret Burt and Margaret Sheldrick to the photographic elements of the project, created with Ruth Davey. We are excited to know that Fiona now feels confident about the installation to be in the Main Meeting House at Friends House on 18 August – 2 September. We ask any Friend willing to help steward this to contact Jill Green of the Quaker Arts Network- quakers@greenfig.org.uk

GLOUCESTERSHIRE QUAKER CAMP

This will take place in Dorset from 13-20 August and all Quakers and families are welcome. Bookings for this need to be in as soon as possible. Please contact Martin Quick of Stroud Meeting for more details, and to book.

KINDLER'S WORKSHOP

Saturday June 18th at Nailsworth Meeting House, there will be a great opportunity to take part in what we hope will be a fascinating and thought-provoking all-day workshop, 10.00am – 4.30pm, run by the Kindlers team, who will consider with us what we mean by "answering that of God in everyone". It will be a chance to consider, among other things, how awareness of divine essence in others and ourselves might transform our relationships, and how to overcome the blocks to love that we experience. It is open to all Friends and Attenders. The cost will be £10 for the day, and a simple lunch will be provided. Bursary help is available, please ask! Please could you book your place by contacting [Judy Emmet](mailto:JudyEmmet@nailsworthmeetinghouse.org.uk).

Nailsworth Elders

CHELTENHAM INTERFAITH ACTIVITIES

Tuesday 3 May: Chris Hewer will speak on *Christianity and Islam: Similar Problems, Different Solutions?* for The Severn Forum. This will be held at the Elwes Building Lecture Theatre, The Park Campus, Cheltenham, GL50 2RH. Chris Hewer was formerly Advisor on Interfaith Relations to the Bishop of Birmingham and is a Fellow of St Ethelburga Centre of Reconciliation, London. He works full time in Christian-Muslim relations, has published many popular books and is very well known internationally.

Wednesday 25 May there will be an illustrated talk by Barbara Curry at the Methodist Church Hall, High Street, Winchcombe on Islamic art. What does the Qur'an say about art? Are faces allowed to be portrayed? Are there any images of the Prophet? Admission £5.

For more details on all interfaith activities tel: 01242 602412 or visit: www.CheltenhamInterFaith.org.uk

TALK ON QUAKER FAMILY HISTORY

Sunday 24 April: There will be a talk by Antony Barlow at starting at 12 noon with special reference to Gloucestershire.

Gloucester Friends are particularly eager to welcome all who are able to also join them at 10.30am Meeting for Worship beforehand. The talk will be followed by shared lunch. This promises to be a chance to look through another window on our inherited tradition - just bring yourself and a contribution to the lunch. (For any queries, do contact Sarah Eilbeck, tel: 01452 423442, sarah@eilbeck.org.uk)

SOMETHING DIFFERENT

This is an invitation to join Friends in France for a musical adventure and/or an artist retreat event at the Maison Quaker in the Languedoc.

For details of the Maison Quaker visit their website <http://www.maison-quaker-congenies.org/>

A new music programme: *Make a Joyful Noise*, Thursday 6 October to Tuesday 11 October. Lift your spirits with a musical adventure, experience or talent not necessary--just a willingness to sing, play, learn or just listen. Cost: 445€ for shared occupancy (575€ private room) includes 5 nights' accommodation, meals, everything but concert admission and one lunch.

Autumn artist retreat: (in English) Saturday 24 September to Tuesday 4 October

We invite artists (professional or amateur) to join us for 6-10 days of creating and camaraderie in the south of France. All are welcome, Friends and friends.

Cost: 695€ private (560€ shared) includes accommodation, most meals and transportation. Additional days are 90€(65€ shared) per day.

To register, contact Judy at centre.quaker.congenies@gmail.com