

# CHELTENHAM QUAKER

## OCTOBER 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.)

<b>September</b>			
Sunday	25	noon	<b>Worship Sharing</b>
Sunday	25	morning	<b>Sale of Fair Trade Products</b>
Sunday	25	noon	<b>Meeting for Learning</b> see below
<b>October</b>			
Sunday	2	11.50am	<b>Local Meeting for Worship for Business</b>
Sunday	9	1.30pm	<b>Area Meeting for Worship for Business</b> at Nailsworth FMH
Thursday	13	2.00pm	<b>Discussion Group on QF&amp;P</b> see below for details
Sunday	16	noon	<b>Meeting for Learning – Sustainability</b> see page 3 for details
Wednesday		7.30pm	<b>Cheltenham Interfaith Group</b> , see page 2
Sunday	23	morning	<b>Sale of Fair Trade Products</b>
Sunday	23	noon	<b>Worship Sharing</b>
Sunday	30	10.30	<b>Semi programmed Meeting for Worship and talk</b> see below

**Meeting for Learning:** on **Sunday 25 September** David Gee is coming to facilitate a Peace and Remembrance workshop after MfW, which Friends from other local meetings are very welcome to attend. We plan to have a bring-and-share lunch after the workshop so that we can have more informal discussions with David.

David is a writer, campaigner and facilitator. He has worked for Quaker Peace and Social Witness and the Alternatives to Violence Project. He is a co-founder of Forces Watch, which critically scrutinises the ethics of armed forces recruitment practices and challenges efforts to embed militarist values in civilian society.

[www.forceswatch.net](http://www.forceswatch.net)

David has published two books:  *Holding faith: creating peace in a violent world*, which explored nonviolence and social change, and  *Spectacle, Reality, Resistance – confronting a culture of militarisation*

**OCTOBER COLLECTION** is for Cheltenham Open Door. This charity, originally founded in 1992 as Open Door at Christmas, has now expanded and developed its work supporting vulnerable, disadvantaged and lonely people throughout the year, working to relieve poverty, hardship and social and emotional distress. Donations of food and clothing (see their list of items required) and money can be taken direct to their premises at 39 Grosvenor Street, GL52 2SQ, or donated by post, or online at [cheltenhamopendoor.org.uk](http://cheltenhamopendoor.org.uk) Tel: 01242 577418

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.

**FIFTH SUNDAY on 30 October:** The theme of the semi-programmed Meeting for Worship will be  *The Lessons of War?* 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 Gus Hales from Veterans for Peace and followed by a shared lunch.

**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 17 October** at the latest

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

## NOTES ON LOCAL MEETING

**Nominations:** The following Friends were appointed: Rowland Carson as Supporting Friend; Alwyn Burton as a second Spiritual Care contact and also as Funeral Friend; Evelyn Shaw as Funeral Friend; Nigel Smith as Assistant Lettings Officer; News of Friends Correspondent Cal Anton-Smith.

Philip Paull has been released from his role as News of Friends Correspondent and from his work on Treasurer Schedules.

**Criminal Justice:** Friends are setting up a bank account to support the prison work we do. Details should soon be available of how Friends can make donations.

## NOTES ON AREA MEETING

**News of Friends:** we recorded that the ashes of Mike Lang were scattered in the Cheltenham QMH garden on 26 July.

**Gloucester Meeting House:** Colin Gerard introduced a paper on Gloucester Meeting House options which he had presented and discussed at Gloucester Friends' Meeting for Business on 4 September.

He told us of trustee concerns on the costs of maintaining Gloucester Meeting House, the shortfall of income to cover these, and the burden of responsibility carried by a small number of members and attenders of Gloucester Meeting and others, for managing this situation. We share the wish of trustees to uphold and enhance Gloucester Meeting as a worshipping community and ask Friends across the Area Meeting to send Colin any thoughts on discerning the way ahead by **31 October – by email**, or by post.

**Safeguarding:** Our safeguarding coordinator Wendy Gerard presented our updated Safeguarding policy, reminding us of our guidance from Advices and Queries 18 and 24. This follows full opportunities for consultation with Local Meetings and recommendation by trustees. We ask that each Local Meeting identifies a named Friend for the coordinator to contact on safeguarding matters as they arise and provides the coordinator with their names.

**How does the Truth prosper among you?** We were glad to hear of a sense of quiet vitality from Wotton Friends. Numerically one of our smaller Meetings, they reported a sense of mutual support and variety in ministry and a slow but steady growth in attendance.

**Nominations:** Tim Howarth has been appointed as Trustee for the rest of this triennium.

**Sustainability:** Cheltenham Quakers have used the inspiration provided by the 'Living Witness project' climate impact calculator to decide on improvements to the QMH and to take steps to make these happen. In October they plan to hold a meeting for learning, to offer a chance to Friends to share their stories. (see diary **16 October**)

Painswick QMH has been made more energy efficient. The Meeting uses fair trade products and liftshare arrangements to sustain their weekly meeting for worship. Three Painswick Friends gave accounts of energy saving to be done in their use of computer equipment.

Stroud Friends see some reasons to be cheerful on progress over the last twenty years and propose to hold a meeting for learning to share experience. They suggest that AM sets up a Sustainability Focus Group to take our interests further among our own community and other faith groups.

From John Meadley (Painswick) came an account of his work on agriculture and pasture-fed grazing animals in this and other countries and from Colin Brown (Forest) a note on his family's experience of building an 'eco-house'

We learned from Alison Crane of grants available from QPSW, closing date for applications early October <http://www.quaker.org.uk/our-work/grant-making/sustainability-economy#heading-1> and of initiatives such as training facilitators for a "footpaths to a greener life" course and "carbon conversation" groups. We supported the idea of making an application to this source to further our learning and asked Alison Crane, Nigel Smith and Sue Barrance to take steps to follow this up. We also asked our Friend Amelia Schafer Rutherford to share this material as appropriate at the Quaker Rep Council in October.

**Quaker Summer Camp:** Martin Quick, our Quaker camp convenor, reported on this year's camp held in Charmouth, Dorset, 13 - 20 August with some 20+ participants of all ages. This included expeditions, walks, boat-making, good sharing and daily meetings for worship.

## STUDY GROUP: QUAKER FAITH & PRACTICE

This group started on Thursday 8 September with the topic *Approaches to God – Worship and Prayer* from Chapter 2 of Qf&p. Joy Heaven reported that twelve Friends met and all agreed that it had been a happy and successful group. The next meeting will be facilitated by Cal Anton-Smith on **13 October**, the second Thursday, at 2.00pm in Cheltenham Meeting House. Rowland will have copies of the text to be discussed.

**AFTERNOON WORKSHOP on Saturday 26 November on *Exploring our Gifts*** will be led by Sue Tucknell (Bristol) from Quaker Life Network. More details in the next newsletter but please note the date now.

## **MEETING FOR LEARNING 16 October**

### **Sustainability – sharing our stories -**

Gloucestershire Area Meeting is encouraging Friends to share their stories about sustainability, arising from the gathering in March attended by Ruth Davey and Jen Cothier. Cheltenham Friends will have the opportunity to do this, not only at the Meeting for Learning, but throughout October, and there will be a display in the Meeting House to inspire us.

Stories may be something from personal experience that you have done, or sharing your insights, feelings, or dilemmas. We are encouraging hope and celebration, rather than ranting, fear or guilt, but obviously negative thoughts can be expressed if that is where you are at the moment. The focus may range from practical tips for low-carbon living, to spiritual connections with the earth.

On 16<sup>th</sup>, resources – eg photos, books, quotes, other people's stories, as well as writing and drawing materials, and other opportunities for creativity, will be available as a source of inspiration. You can then put pen to paper, make something, have a conversation, or just reflect. This will be an all-age activity.

We would like people to contribute to the display before 16<sup>th</sup>, by sharing favourite quotations, poems, photos or inspiring book titles. You can also include your story in advance of 16<sup>th</sup>, for example if you are not able to come to the session. Display boards will be in place from October 2<sup>nd</sup>, so you can pin on your contribution. Alternatively, Pat is looking forward to receiving your inspiring jpg images as attachments by email. She intends to collate and show these at our meeting. Quotations, poems or book titles can also be emailed.

Alison Crane and Pat Dannahy

### **ADDITION TO LIBRARY: Karen Armstrong - *St Paul – The Misunderstood Apostle***

At least it is easy to be modest when trying to follow the erudition of Karen Armstrong writing about St Paul and some of the commoner interpretations of his ministry. I would not be astonished if I was told that she can recite St Luke's Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles in the original classical Greek, as well as sections of the 14 books of the New Testament attributed to his authorship. She combines what she considers are the facts supported by independent historical evidence with plausible proximal interpretations of the earliest years of Paul's evangelical activities following the crucifixion of Jesus. I am not competent to evaluate the strength of her arguments beyond noting that they differ from those I have encountered previously. I had not read about there being significant differences in beliefs, priorities, and practices both among those disciples based in Jerusalem and between them and those who spread the good news further afield. I have long wondered who set off to Alexandria, to the Upper Nile, and eastwards to Baghdad and India, but these are not dealt with by Karen A. She maintains her focus on St Paul and his activities in the eastern Mediterranean and Rome, and I would expect that her scholarly analysis of these will stand for many years to come.

Peter Robinson

### **CHEL TENHAM INTERFAITH GROUP**

*The Bible and the Qur'an* by Dr Georgina Jardim. October meeting (date to be decided). She is founder of the Holy Book Club in Gloucester that reads the texts together. Trustee of the Cheltenham Christian Arts Festival and author of *Muslims for Universal Values*. Born in South Africa and a member of the local Baptist church she brings the experience of the struggle against apartheid.

More information from the Interfaith website [www.cheltenhaminterfaith.org.uk](http://www.cheltenhaminterfaith.org.uk).

### **\*\*JOB VACANCY – CARETAKER/CLEANER\*\***

Steve, who has been doing this job for the Meeting House for a number of years, is leaving due to other commitments. Are you interested, or do you know anyone who might be interested in taking this on?

The work includes general cleaning, and setting the Meeting Room up for Sunday worship. The timings are flexible, but need to be when the building is not in use. Hours average about 15 hours a month, and the pay is £11.55 an hour.

For more information contact Alison Crane.

## AREA MEETING

The Area Meeting is the primary meeting for church affairs in Britain Yearly Meeting. Its role is to develop and maintain a community of Friends, a family of local meetings who gather for worship and spiritual enrichment. It should provide that balance between worship, mutual support, administration, learning, deliberation and social life which can make its meetings enjoyable occasions and build up the spiritual life of its members.

Area Meetings act as facilitators and co-ordinators, ensuring that their constituent local meetings have access to opportunities for fellowship, spiritual development, and spiritual and pastoral care, including the care of children and young people. They also provide mutual support through the shared testing of concerns... and carry responsibilities for ensuring the right stewardship of local and area resources.” (QF&P 4.02)

## AREA MEETING DIARY 2017

(highlights refer to meetings to respond to the query: *'How doth the truth prosper?'*)

Day	Date	Time	Meeting	Location
	January			
Sunday	12 Feb	1.30pm	Cirencester	Cirencester FMH
Saturday	11 March	1.30pm	Cheltenham	Cheltenham FMH
Sunday	9 April	1.30pm	Wotton	Chipping Clubroom
	May			
Sunday	11 June	1.30pm	Forest	Staunton Village Hall
Thursday	6 July	6 for 7.0pm	Nailsworth	Nailsworth FMH
	August			
Saturday	9 Sept	1.30pm	Painswick	Painswick FMH
Sunday	8 October	1.30pm	Stroud	Old Town Hall
	November			
Sunday	10 Dec	1.30pm	Gloucester	Gloucester FMH

### Notes:

Following agreement at July 2016 AM, this calendar introduces a reduction from 10 to 8 Meetings for Worship for Business, with the 'free months' (in blue) being May and November in addition to January and August (as before) and one evening meeting and two Saturday afternoon meetings in the year.

In allocating LMs to dates, we kept in mind the meetings agreed for *'How doth the truth prosper?'* (Stroud and Nailsworth) and noted requests to

- avoid the winter months for longer journeys needed to Forest or Wotton; and
- greater ease for Stroud Meeting to book a venue on a Sunday afternoon than at any other day/time
- avoid Saturday bookings for Gloucester Meeting.