



Bath Quaker
Meeting

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Bath Quaker News Feb 2018

Bath Quakers check out Grove Street

Bath Quakers met for worship at the Bath Central United Reform Church in Grove Street. This was in preparation for ending our 150-year association with the York Street Meeting House which we vacate at the end of March 2019.



A Google view of the URC Bath Grove Street entrance

We're a growing Quaker Meeting. We decided after a lengthy and thorough process of discernment to leave behind the burden of upkeep and maintenance of a historic building, and to focus on spiritual growth.

The Bath Central United Reformed Church, where we meet from April 2019, is indeed central. It's also accessible, warm and welcoming. It has several meeting rooms for our various sized meetings, including children, and a large kitchen. Discerning any longer term plans will be a matter for Bath Quakers' Meeting for Business. Implementing them would fall to Area Meeting Trustees.

Bath Quakers remains a Sanctuary Meeting and a Safe Space. Bath Friends remain committed to conflict resolution, equality, accessibility, inclusivity and environmental sustainability.

“We went to remember the Quakers who served and died”

Concluding reflections on the Bath war memorial and armistice day event, by Laurence Tindall

When Quakers joined others at the Bath cenotaph on armistice day we took part in a military ceremony at a military memorial site. It's neutered of any reference to real warfare but dedicated to service men and women who we remember lost their lives for our benefit.



Military guests study Bath Quakers' wreath, 11 November 2018

We did not go there to remember Quaker objectors; it's better to remember them where they would be if they were alive now, outside the Abbey on the peace stall, working for the cause. We did not go there to remember the enormously greater number of civilians that were killed and maimed; better to do that by giving a sub to Save the Children or *Medecins Sans Frontieres*.

We laid our white and red wreaths, along with all the other red wreaths, to remember the Quaker men and women who served and died in the forces and other services at home and abroad either as fighters or non-combatants. As Quakers we deserve our place in the military pageant on this basis alone, and it is right and proper to do this.

We did not place our white wreath there as an act of competition as if to imply that the white poppy is more peace loving than the red. We know that the red poppy is genuinely held as a symbol of peace, bought by the blood of the fallen, and we know that we have no special righteous claim to be more peace loving than others.

As Christ taught us there is no hierarchy of love or sin. We all do our best. The subsequent removal of our wreath is only because of a misunderstanding of what it represents. This is of no consequence, since the important thing has been achieved. We have all met on the crossroad where our parallel paths have joined for a moment and that crossroads is called peace and reconciliation.

The state of public discourse; what can Quakers do?

William Heath writes:

The state of political discourse in the UK is both Snafu and Fubar: "situation normal: all fouled up" and "fouled up beyond all recognition" (both are mild

versions of the original US military slang). Who can set a new tone in public discourse? How do we behave and what role can Quakers play?

[Elizabeth Windsor called on the country in a 25 December address to overcome 'deeply held differences', saying:](#) "treating the other person with respect and as a fellow human being is always a good first step towards greater understanding". She returned to the theme in January urging Sandringham Womens' Institute to seek out the common ground, and never to lose sight of the bigger picture.

Our own *Advices & Queries* ask and remind us:

Are you honest and truthful in all you say and do?"

In what ways are you involved in the work of reconciliation between individuals, groups and nations?"

Avoid hurtful criticism and provocative language

Do not allow the strength of your convictions to betray you into making statements or allegations that are unfair or untrue

Think it possible that you may be mistaken.

It's hard to engage with people we fundamentally disagree with, but we have to try, if we are to "be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come, that your carriage and life may preach...and to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one".

Meanwhile Quaker Recording Clerk Paul Parker posted a piece on the British Quakers web site about the value of listening, and of Quakers' pledge to be "a people that follow after those things that make for peace, love and unity'. Here are (very much abridged) five things Paul suggests Quakers can do:

1. look to our own dividedness: hear one another, clear the air, find common cause and begin work; disagree well, listen & learn from one another. What have we done to foster this situation and its challenges? We could support, look after, hope worship and pray together; look to our guide and heed the promptings of love and truth in our hearts.

2. use our own well-tested processes to help test our concerns more widely; send minutes Ato rea and Meeting for Sufferings; bring Quaker discernment to bear. Recognise that we, ourselves, will not have all the answers.

3. look to our wider communities: help unite, be allies to those whose voices are not heard, reach beyond our comfort zone. We have a role to play in creating what comes next; we know how to be inclusive and create communities where all are valued. We have creative facilitators, experienced mediators and wise counsellors.

4. look to our witness: we work on peace on economic justice & equality; and on sustainability.

5. look to our institutions. We have a voice with UK government, with Brussels the UN, and in the public square. We can help hold decision-makers accountable, and uphold them. They may not be as free or as confident as they appear.

See also the Quaker [Toolkit for action: difficult conversations](#) (available from Friends House or via British Quakers' web site).

Do you want to volunteer with the RUH Chaplaincy?

Katie Evans writes:

I visited the [Royal United Hospital \(RUH\) Spiritual Care Centre](#) to find out about opportunities for Quaker involvement. The Chaplaincy Team provides spiritual and religious care to patients, their carers and families and to hospital staff. They support people of all faiths or none.

Would you be interested in volunteering with the hospital chaplaincy as a ward visitor or supporting their Sunday afternoon worship?

Ward visiting

- Ward visitors are assigned to a ward and offer pastoral/spiritual care to patients and staff.
- Time commitment: one or two half day sessions per week. Morning sessions 9:30-12:15, afternoon sessions 1:30-4:30.
- Training and supervision are given, with briefing and debriefing before and after each session. Volunteers begin by shadowing one of the chaplains, then are shadowed before going out on their own.

Sunday worship

- Time commitment: one Sunday a month, 1:30 – 4pm.
- This involves going to wards to ask who wants to come to the service, collecting patients from wards, greeting patients at the Spiritual Care Centre, attending worship service and serving tea and coffee.

To find out more, contact the RUH Chaplaincy Team on 01225 824039 or email ruh-tr.chaplaincy@nhs.net

Climate crisis: things we can do

Margaret Heath writes

As "Extinction Rebellion" protests spread from the UK around the world Lin has urged us all to petition our local council B&NES to declare a climate emergency. It takes 1500 signatures to ensure this gets debated. Please sign by end February.

Can I ask anyone with influence at a secondary school to get Angus Forbes invited to speak about the urgent need for action? He is a listed school speaker, with a great rapport with teenagers and facts and figures at his finger tips.

Other action groups worth checking out include Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth. Local hero Martin Palmer's charity Alliance of Religions and Conservation has done exceptional work with faith groups to ensure they hear "the cry of the poor, and the cry of creation".

A much younger friend of mine is working in Cambridge on environmental friendly food. More and more people are avoiding a diet rich in meat; being a vegetarian or vegan is positive and far easier than it was. Scientists at the EAT-Lancet commission has now come up with a flexitarian diet that would be sustainable in Earth with a 10bn population.

Friends may well have other good suggestions; please add comments on the web site or send them in to the Editor.

...and finally: recipe for moist Victoria sponge as requested

Margaret Heath writes:

- 3-4 eggs
- same weight in easy mix baking margarine
- unrefined light brown castor sugar
- plain flour
- generous couple of rounded teaspoons baking powder
- teaspoon vanilla extract (stronger than "essence")

Use butter for greasing the tins; two 8ins for 3 eggs, 9ins diameter for four eggs. HAVE ALL INGREDIENTS AT ROOM TEMP; leave them out in warm room for over an hour. Heat oven to 150c; I do 140c on my fan oven (too hot makes the cake rise but then sink). Bung everything in a lovely light melamine bowl; mix with fork until no odd patches of flour. Grease your tins with BUTTER, not marg, paying special attention to the edges. Then put in greased non-stick paper too, cut to size.

Spread your mix, slightly hollowed in centre, in tins and look at the cakes through glass door after about ten minutes to check progress; I don't put a skewer in but see if the mix has shrunk away at the edges, indicating cooking is complete.

I leave a short time then invert cakes on to cooling rack and remove non-stick paper carefully. When cakes are cold be generous with your favoured spread; I prefer best raspberry jelly but you may like butter icing or lemon curd? You can sprinkle a little castor sugar on cakes before serving. Good luck!

Diary

Sun 3 Feb 2019 **Mayor's Multi-faith Event** Guildhall 1445

Mon 4 Feb 2019 **Bath IFG AGM** Christian Science Meeting Room 1900

Mon 18 Feb 2019 **Scriptural Reasoning Biblical & Koranic texts**, Islamic Centre

Sat 23 Feb **Issues of Gender, Sexuality & Theology** Modern Church SW at Manvers St Baptist Church 1100-1600 (coffee from 1030)

Chocolate Quarter Meeting for Worship 1100-1130 each third Sunday in the month; after discussion group at 1030 . Colin Graham 0117 986 1277 for info

Further ahead:

BYM 2019 24-27 May, London

If you want diary dates included in the newsletter please speak with or email the editors, or [if you're reading online click here & type them in.](#)

Worship at Friends' Meeting House York Street (until end March 2019)

Sunday 1100-1200; Tue 1800-1830; Wed 1030-1100

Regular Events

Every Sunday	11:00-12:00	Children's Meeting
1 st Sunday of Feb, Apr, May, July, Sept, & Nov	13:00	Meeting for Worship for Business (Preparative Meeting)
1 st Sunday	10:00-10:30	Friends Fellowship of Healing
2 nd Sun odd months	13:00	Poetry Group
4 th Sunday	13:00	Shared lunch

Alistair's favourite image: *Jesus on the Tube*

by self-described "[artist and soul midwife](#)" [Antonia Rolls](#)



“What I like about this image is how Christ isn’t separate from those he is sitting next to him. Jesus is sitting quietly, peacefully on the train with his arms crossed, quite unseen, in quiet companionship with those around him.

“Jesus on the Tube presents an almost comical truth; that to anyone looking at the picture Christ’s presence is obvious, but those closest to him on the train are oblivious, absorbed only in themselves.” - Alistair Paul

Front cover illustration by Stella Penrose
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