



# Malvern Quaker Meeting Newsletter

December 2019



**Meeting for Worship is at 10.30 every Sunday**

DATE	TIME	
Every Sunday	9.30 to 10.00	Silent Worship
Wed 4 <sup>th</sup>	12.00–12.40	<b>Monthly Midday Meeting for Worship.</b>
Sat 7 <sup>th</sup>	3 pm	<b>Auction of Promises in aid of Malvern Welcomes</b> at Lansdowne Crescent Methodist Church
Sun 8 <sup>th</sup>	After MfW	<b>Meeting for Worship for Business</b>
Sun 8 <sup>th</sup> (2 <sup>nd</sup> Sundays)	2.45 – 3.30 pm	<b>Little Friends Meetings</b> All welcome but activities aimed at under-8s. Finishing with drinks & cake.
Sun 8 <sup>th</sup>	2.30-4.30pm	<b>General Election/Hustings</b> at Lansdowne Crescent Methodist Church see below
Thur 12 <sup>th</sup> (2 <sup>nd</sup> Thur)	6.00 – 7.00	<b>Monthly Evening Meeting for Worship</b> 30 minutes MfW followed by drinks
Sat 14 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 - 1:00	<b>Area Meeting in Bewdley</b>
Sun 15 <sup>th</sup>	12.00	<b>Sale of Traidcraft Fairtrade Goods</b> after Meeting for Worship Followed by <b>Shared lunch</b> . Soup or a hot dish to be provided, please bring other contributions. Co-ordinated by Judith Badman or Liz Flanagan
Sat 21 <sup>st</sup> (3 <sup>rd</sup> Sat)	10.00–1.00	<b>Malvern Hills Repair Café</b> Check <a href="https://www.malvernhillrepaircafe.co.uk/">https://www.malvernhillrepaircafe.co.uk/</a>
Sat 21 <sup>st</sup>	7.30 pm	<b>Carol Concert by Vital Spark</b> for the benefit of the Maggs Day Centre in Malvern Carols from the mid 18th- mid 19th century as performed from the West Gallery of the parish church, with music provided by the church band from the gallery. As references in Thomas Hardy's 'Under The Greenwood Tree. Instruments to include fiddles, concertinas, recorders and a bassoon – and it will be LOUD! Spiced apple juice
Sun 22 <sup>nd</sup>	10.30	<b>Meeting for Worship with poetry, readings and carols in second half</b>
Wed 25 <sup>th</sup>	10.30 to 11.00	<b>Meeting for Worship</b>
Sun 29 <sup>th</sup>		<b>Fifth Sunday lunch</b>
Sun 29 <sup>th</sup>	6 – 8.30 pm	<b>Earth Vigil</b> Silence and sharing circle followed by vegan supper. Contact Eoin 01684 891566 <a href="mailto:eoin.mccarthy@decisiontrust.org">eoin.mccarthy@decisiontrust.org</a>

**If you are not on the e-mail list and would like to be, or have changed your e-mail, please contact me. Dates for the January sheet by Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> Jan**

**Elizabeth Rolph**

[Newsletter@malvernquakermeeting.org.uk](mailto:Newsletter@malvernquakermeeting.org.uk) or phone 01684 564448

Did you Know..

.... that the dates and News Sheets are put on our Meeting website every month. So if it gets lost in your sea of e-mails, see <http://www.malvernquakers.org.uk/>

**Special Collection** (December and January) **St.Paul's hostel, Worcester**  
**Help people *live through* homelessness** See <http://www.stpaulshostel.co.uk/>

**Hustings - Meet the Candidates** Philip Wetherall  
**for Churches Together in Malvern**

Following the announcement of the General Election for 12th December, Churches Together in Malvern are holding a public meeting, a Hustings, on Sunday 8th December where the parliamentary candidates can be quizzed over their views on a range of topics. The Chairman will be the Revd Nigel Coke-Woods.

The format of the event will be for the candidates to each give a short presentation initially. There will be a short interval before the candidates tackle the audience's questions. They will each be allowed no more than two minutes to answer the question. One supplementary question from the floor will be taken with no more than one minute for a response from each candidate. Finally, the candidates will be given an opportunity for a final pitch to the audience. Unlike previous hustings organised for Churches Together, we are asking for questions to be brought to the meeting or written during the interval.

Put this date in your diary and start thinking of questions you would like to put to the candidates – brevity in the questions to be asked will be considered a virtue. Questions which seek to explore the candidates' personal values will be preferred over those that can simply be answered by looking at party manifestos. We shall stress to the candidates that it is their own views and values which are of interest not the party lines.

I am pleased to say that all those who have already declared themselves candidates for this election have stated their willingness to take part in this hustings meeting. This is likely to be the only chance in Malvern of hearing them together in one place so do come and take this opportunity of meeting them and hearing their views.

## **Election Hopes from the Public Affairs and Advocacy Manager at BYM**

In recent months political debate has been increasingly toxic. We know that divisions may continue to worsen in the run-up to Brexit and the general election. As Quakers, we'd like to model a different approach. We've developed a tool to facilitate positive conversations around the general election. This is designed to enable Friends and other people visiting meeting houses to share their hopes for the outcome of a general election. See <https://www.quaker.org.uk/resources/free-resources/political-guides> You can find it under the heading 'Election hopes display'.

See also her blog and briefing on how Quakers can engage with their local parliamentary candidates  
<https://www.quaker.org.uk/blog/sharing-quaker-values-how-you-can-prepare-for-a-general-election>

## **Sanctuary Everywhere Update from QPSW**

Thanks to an incredible response from Quakers, the Sanctuary Everywhere appeal has received £45,000 of donations and pledges – in just over four months. Combined with

projected savings in other areas of the Quaker Peace & Social Witness budget, this has enabled Quakers in Britain to commit to staff this work throughout the whole of 2020.

This extension means that we will be able to continue advocating for migrant rights, creating a culture of welcome, and working to ensure that our national network of 99 Sanctuary Meetings can be sustained and supported. By doing this work, Quakers are taking an important stand against racism and helping to end the hostile environment.

## Betty Hudson

Here are photos of Betty with her brother in about 1950 and again at her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday party in September. Belated congratulations – it's great to see you looking so well.



## A DAY RETREAT for Quakers who work in mental health

29/2/2020 10.30 – 4.30; Edgbaston Meeting House, Birmingham

A day of worship, reflection, sharing, connections and gentle activities.

There is no charge for the day – but please book a place. There will be lunch and you will be asked to pay on the day for this. To book search Eventbrite: Birmingham: 29/2/20  
Contact Alison Mitchell mhdo@retreatyorkbfund.com for more information.

**The year has given you an extra day – use it to care for yourself!**

Funded by the Retreat York Benevolent Fund

## Quakers in Film

From Westerns to romcoms, take a look at seven films that feature Quaker characters

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/blog/quakers-in-film-and-tv>

## Update from Uganda

## Betty Hudson

Friends in Malvern are supporting Rovia by donations to Farmers Overseas Action Group. She has gone back to the commercial college for a further term to get her "book keeping" up to scratch so that she can retake that paper. There is enough money in her account with FOAG to see her through, administered by my friend Sister Sophie in Uganda. As she has already done one retake (without extra tuition) I have said she needs to succeed this time as I don't feel that we can go on endlessly supporting her.

In addition Sr. Sophie has asked for help with a lad called Rogers who until he got a wheelchair was confined to his bed in the house. Now that he is mobile he has asked for help to buy tools so that he can repair, phones, radios and electrical goods. To this end I have sent some money to Sr. Sophie, via FOAG. I don't know anything further about his abilities, age or other circumstances.

See. <https://www.foag.org/home>

## Reflections during Prisons Week

Melanie Jameson

When I consider the situation in our prisons I draw on two different perspectives: firstly, my knowledge of the overall situation and secondly, monthly visits to a high security prison.

A good place to gain an overview of government policy and priorities is the recent Spending Review: has the Ministry of Justice once more been subject to savage cuts? Surprisingly, it hasn't. But what has funding been allocated for?

This is not good news: the creation of an additional 10,000 prison places in a mistaken attempt to reduce crime (at an overall cost of £2.5 billion); £100 million to increase security in prisons through the introduction of more security scanners, mobile phone detection / prevention technology. Of course, this is part of the drive to restrict the flooding of prisons with psycho-active drugs which have been largely undetectable up to now. Widespread drug use increases unmanageable behaviour and build-up of debt, both of which can lead to violence, while putting a huge strain on health services. Year after year, inspections paint a picture of diminishing 'purposeful activity', depressing squalor and increased levels of self-harm. Is it not obvious that the uptake in drug use is, in part at least, due to the failure to provide meaningful ways of 'doing time'?

Perhaps there is some hope in the final item in the Spending Review, which is un-costed: additional funding for crucial probation reforms that will help reduce reoffending and improve post-custody supervision. This conceals the massive U-turn - and £11 million price tag - linked to terminating contracts and re-thinking Chris Grayling's ill-conceived 'Transforming Rehabilitation' initiative, whereby Probation Trusts were dismembered and private companies bid for the rehabilitation of short-sentenced prisoners.

Where is the additional money to support the wholesale reforms that came in this April, which are still far from embedded? The groundwork has been done, the contracts awarded, the governors supported in their new role as commissioners of services to meet the needs of their populations. These reforms include identification, assessment and support for prisoners with Specific Learning Difficulties (such as dyslexia) - my particular area of interest and involvement. Technology is to have a larger role in supporting learning and to ensure that people leave prison with everyday IT skills. However providing the necessary IT infrastructure in all our older establishments is a huge challenge. I am 'watching this space'

Moving to the personal perspective of monthly contact with a disparate group of men who have chosen to meet in silence in Quaker-led worship. 'Friendly Fridays' as they have become known, begin with each person entering the room shaking hands with those already seated in a circle around the beautiful oak table and candle holder carved by one of our members. Some bend over to smell the fresh flowers on the table since there are no plants of any sort or even grass visible from their blocks. We always have to wait for the various categories of prisoner to arrive, often necessitating further efforts from the Chaplain.

When we are finally assembled, she welcomes us, we are encouraged to hold anyone with special needs in the light, then we sink into silence with occasional contributions. Having concluded by joining hands, through which a unique rhythm passes for several minutes, we join in refreshments and conversation. Some stay on for specific Quaker study. This opportunity to trust and be trusted, to show and reciprocate kindness, to share the concerns of others and look beyond the limitations of daily life, must surely do more for rehabilitation than any government scheme.



## Advices & Queries No 27

Live adventurously. When choices arise, do you take the way that offers the fullest opportunity for the use of your gifts in the service of God and the community? Let your life speak. When decisions have to be made, are you ready to join with others in seeking clearness, asking for God's guidance and offering counsel to one another?

## Up and Coming conferences

### **QPSW Spring Conference 2020 – Journeys of Witness**

20–22 March 2020, The Hayes Conference Centre, Derbyshire

Quaker Peace and Social Witness works with and on behalf of Quakers in Britain to turn our faith into action. This is an inspiring and inspiring weekend and you will meet Friends from across Britain and hear about a range of QPSW work, including climate justice, learning from peace activists in East Africa and work in Israel and Palestine.

Keynote speakers will be Esther Leighton and Sam Donaldson.

[www.quaker.org.uk/events/2020-qpsw-spring-conference](http://www.quaker.org.uk/events/2020-qpsw-spring-conference)

### **Major conference on Christian and spiritual peacemaking**

Saturday 25 April 2020, Maria Fidelis Catholic School, London

The Network of Christian Peace Organisations, of which Quaker Peace and Social Witness is an active member, is holding a major conference with the provisional title “Prophets and Reconcilers”, on Saturday 25 April at the Maria Fidelis Catholic School in London

Speak to the Clerks or your Overseer if you might be interested in going to either of these.

### **Sustainability Online Conference with Friends worldwide**

Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) World Office are hosting an online conference with friends worldwide to gather a collective Quaker voice on sustainability. The conference will hear from speakers and will be followed by two hours of worship sharing.

Join us on Saturday 22 February 2020. Register on our eventbrite link via

[fwcc.world/sustainability/conference2020](http://fwcc.world/sustainability/conference2020)



QCEA works to bring a Quaker vision of peace and human rights to Europe. One of the concerns they are currently addressing is anti-migrant violence committed by police and private security forces in Europe. They've been working behind the scenes to tackle the problem at the policy level, deploying “quiet diplomacy” to help make constructive discussions happen.

One example of this is QCEA bringing concerned academics and activists together with representatives of European governments to discuss Croatia's brutal policing methods they were using to show they were tough on immigration. As a result of QCEA's unique role as a facilitator, an EU member state has learned that abusing the rights of migrants and refugees will not be rewarded politically.

To support their work go to <http://www.qcea.org/home/involved/donate/>



## LIBRARY MATTERS

Mary Corfield

This is to let you know that there will shortly be a number of new books in the library, I think there will be something in this new stack of books to interest everyone. They will be in the library by the beginning of December. Do have a look and see what you think! In keeping with previous policy, it is thought that a loan period of no more than two months is held to be appropriate for books borrowed from the Meeting library.

To give you an idea of the subject matter of some of the titles I have summarised a few of them below:

**VOICES OF MODERN ISLAM:** What it means to be Muslim today by Declan Henry  
“This is an easy and accessible introduction to Islam combined with discussion of several contentious issues associated with the religion... “

**TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD** by Rhiannon Grant  
“How do Quakers tell the truth about God? This book explores this key theological process through fourteen short chapters. .... Telling the truth about God can be a challenge for Quakers – but this book helps us meet it.”

**DREAMS OF LEAVING AND REMAINING** by James Meek  
“Since Britain’s EU referendum the nation has been profoundly split: one side fantasizing that the referendum will never be acted upon, the other entrenched in assumptions about reclaimed sovereignty and independence. ... James Meek charts how the NHS is coping with the twin burdens of austerity and an aging population and asks what we can recover from the debris of an old nation as we head towards new horizons, and what we must leave behind. There are no easy answers.”

**GENERATION Y, SPIRITUALITY AND SOCIAL CHANGE** edited by Justine Afra Huxley  
“Young people are doing faith differently. They are redefining community, ministry and ritual for a new era. In the face of planetary crisis, the next generation no longer see faith as a private matter; instead they are integrating it with activism and the need for systemic change...”

**A TRAVELLING QUAKER WRITES** by Dewi Heald  
A light alternative introduction to Quakers particularly looking at the differences between Meetings and what Quakers have to say. Some challenges to seasoned friends too.

### **Malvern Quakers witness at the Remembrance Service**

**Melanie Jameson**

At this year’s service of Remembrance, Quakers were again represented, for the fourth year running. Friends/Quakers were represented by Jo and Phil Bates and Andrew Jameson. Our wreath of white poppies was laid by Jo Bates. (Last time we checked, the wreath was no longer there.) This year the ceremony consisted of three parts, the wreath laying outside the Library, a service in the Priory, and then a short service at 11 o’clock on Monday the 11th. The “military” trend which we have noticed in recent years has expanded to include a march past and salute in Graham Road on the way to the Priory. While we wondered what the purpose of this was, at least a long ceremony in front of the library with readings and speeches on a cold day was avoided.