



Malvern Quaker Meeting Newsletter

October and November 2021



Meetings for Worship 10.30 every Sunday

Followed by Coffee

The Newsletter

You may be aware that Kevin and I, as the Clerking Team with Melanie Jameson, need to off load some of our Meeting workload. See Peter Bevan's article below. One 'job' that would easily be done by someone else is producing the newsletter. I currently produce it bi-monthly, and include contributions which are not date specific. This is different to Malvern Meeting Matters, which I send out most weeks and is the equivalent of Notices.

If someone else was to produce the Newsletter I would simply forward to them anything which would fit better in the Newsletter than the weekly email. If you would consider doing it even as a 'one off' do get in touch.

Don't forget if you have a notice you intend to give out at Meeting please get it to me on Friday, and those who are not able to attend Meeting will also be kept informed.

Elizabeth Rolph

Newsletter@malvernquakermeeting.org.uk

Special Collections

The Collection for October is the **Friends Housing Bursary Trust**, sponsored by Richard Bartholomew. This is a small Quaker charity established in 1946 to assist Friends or former employees of Friends, 'without affluence' with financial difficulties that are connected to their housing. See <https://fhbt.org.uk/>

The Special Collection for August was **Money for Madagascar** and £244 was raised. We have received thanks for our thoughts and support. Money raised is helping to relieve suffering in Southern Madagascar.

In September we collected for **Friends of Hlekweni** and £200 was raised.

Repair Café

This is now up and running again, but being held in the Cube. This move has allowed a new system with the provision of sufficient social distancing to allow for relatively mask free proceedings. In the words of Chris Dyer:

I would just like to say that this is not a decision that we have come to easily as Malvern Meeting has been a good friend and ally to Repair Café Malvern Hills at some difficult times in the past. We, in turn, felt very comfortable in the MH and with Quaker's environmental testimony. I'm afraid though the MH-RCMH relationship will have to be seen as another coronavirus casualty for the time being.

Why not go and see them there - from 10 am to 1 pm every third Saturday in the month. See <https://www.malvernhillrepaircafe.co.uk/>

Prisons Week October 10-16

Melanie Jameson

This comes after a year like no other when many prisoners have been confined to their cells for 23 hours a day. How would we manage to keep to one very small room for all but an hour (half an hour in some cases) a day?

Prisons are slow to return things to normal, remaining very cautious.

The Prisons Week website introduces the word 'Respair', with the following text:

RESPAIR" is an Old English word which fell out of use many centuries ago but means "the return of hope after a period of despair".

The prayer tradition of lament helps us to make that journey from a dark place of pain, suffering, fear or sorrow to somewhere that the light can get in.

Maybe only through a tiny crack to begin with but bringing a gradual dawning of hope and sense of God's promise that we are loved and will never be abandoned or alone.

No matter how messy and difficult life becomes, God is never distant and longs for us to let him in.

Please pray with us each day during Prisons Week, let us walk together through the week in prayer and grow in our understanding of the value God places on each one of his children, so that like the ravens we may soar, free at last, trusting in the knowledge of his provision and love for us.

THE PRISONS WEEK PRAYER

Lord, you offer freedom to all people. We pray for those in prison. Break the bonds of fear and isolation that exist.

Support with your love prisoners and their families and friends, prison staff and all who care.

Heal those who have been wounded by the actions of others, especially the victims of crime.

Help us to forgive one another, to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly together with Christ in his strength and in his Spirit, now and every day.

Amen

Spirituality Reading Group

Peter Bevan

No this is not about the great books on spiritual awareness and guidance. It is about studying a selection of contemporary fiction chosen by myself to develop through discussion a sense of the spiritual. Each year the 6 books (one a month) are chosen with an overall topic. The topic this year is power and authority with special reference to women - all the books are by female authors and all have women as the main character (more or less). Because of choices related to Zoom and personal preferences I am running the group twice each month - once by Zoom (3rd Tuesday each month 10.30 am) and once In Person (third Monday each month 2.00pm at my flat). Because of this expansion there are a few places left on each day.

Please let me know soon as the first session begins on 18 October and there is the first book to read! If anyone is interested I will send an introduction to the 'course' with details of the 6 books and other notes as well as notes on the first book. Please contact me for further information (01684576825 or peter_bevan@talktalk.net).

Pilgrimage to Climate Change Conference

Several from our Meeting joined the long-distance walking pilgrimage to the 2021 UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow (COP 26) when it passed through Malvern. For more information and action you can take see this [mailing from the Fold](#)



By the river on the way to Upton



Pausing for introductions and reflection at the cholera burial ground



On the way to Hanley Swan



Welcomed by others at Barnards Green

Advices & Queries No 42

We do not own the world, and its riches are not ours to dispose of at will. Show a loving consideration for all creatures, and seek to maintain the beauty and variety of the world. Work to ensure that our increasing power over nature is used responsibly, with reverence for life. Rejoice in the splendour of God's continuing creation.

The Clerking Team

Peter Bevan

Your nominations team on behalf of our local Meeting has been asked to consider the concern of the overload* of our clerking team of Elizabeth Rolph, Kevin Rolph and Melanie Jameson. The clerking team at present covers a variety of roles including editing the newsletter, receiving and responding to correspondence, liaising with Area Meeting Clerk and the Elder and Pastoral Care Team, clerking the local business meeting. There are therefore two different questions to be asked:

1. How are these roles to be separated or kept together to ensure that no one is overburdened?
2. Who might fill these roles as they are at present OR how they could be reorganised to complete the tasks in a different way in future?

These two questions in no way suggests that at present the roles are not being carried out effectively and it is recognised that any changes are the prerogative of LM Business Meeting - not Nominations Committee. Nevertheless we need to consider possibilities. Different Local Meetings manage these roles in different ways.

We could for instance separate editorship of the newsletter from the clerkship role (as has been the situation in the past); we could separate correspondence and incoming mail and liaison with Quaker bodies from clerkship; we could separate clerkship from representing our Local Meeting on local organisations; we could ask Elders and Pastoral Care Team and the Premises Team to be more pro-active in dealing with issues as they arise rather than inviting Local Business Meeting to consider them; Local Business Meetings could be held less frequently and at different times and perhaps for longer and with more sharing. I am sure other computations will come to mind.

There is no escaping from the need for a Clerk and Assistant Clerk who are familiar with Quaker process and ritual, who are members and who would be willing to go on training courses. But clerkship itself can be handled in different ways including shorter tenures.

We are not the only Meeting facing these organisational issues and different Meetings have come up with different solutions. Simplifying decision-making seems to be in favour at present. Fewer people making more decisions. 'How do we best share the information on which to make decisions?'

Please give any thoughts you might have to the Nominations Team of Peter Bevan, Elizabeth Flanagan, Melanie Jameson, and Dick Stockford.

Thoughts from Kevin...

*Peter's original article said that the Clerking team needed *replacement*. This isn't accurate so we've edited accordingly. Our concern has only ever been of excess load.

It may seem that, for example, the LM Clerk component is only a couple of hours a month, however, this doesn't cover hours of preparation and forethought; researching topics that aren't well enough prepared but that *need* to come to LM so that the Clerk can ensure the topic is fully covered during the worship; handling emails where a Friend thinks that something should come to LM but where that isn't appropriate, or necessary, or requires clarification, or forwarding to a more appropriate person, or needs 'mentoring' until the topic *is* sufficiently prepared; checking to see if actions

agreed at previous LMs have been completed before that topic comes back to LM, and so on.

Peter has indicated a number of ‘larger’ ways in which things could be eased. There are also a number of tiny things you can do that would make a significant difference.

First off, please could **everyone** look at the personal name you have associated with the clerk@malvernquakermeeting.org.uk email address and REMOVE it? Replace it with “Clerk” or some such. I am not “Jill”. The whole point of having a “Clerk” email is that it is independent of the real person is behind it.

Likewise “Treasurer”.

Likewise “Newsletter”, especially if the recipient of that might change shortly.

This may seem trivial but it should give pause for thought when emailing: *Is this really clerks business?* (Or did you actually want to email *Kevin* about Wi-Fi?)



Funding Quaker Work

Message from the Yearly Meeting fundraiser

“Beyond our own area meeting, funds are required for the wider organisation of Friends and the work we undertake centrally. Without these, we would be a scattered collection of small meetings with no coherence or shared witness.”

Quaker faith & practice 14.05

In 2020 BYM spent nearly £9,000 and received £3,000,000 in contributions from Friends.

This is where the money was spent:

- Supporting Quaker Communities (28%)
- Witness through action (33%)
- Promoting Quakerism (27%)
- Sustaining church and faith (12%)

We are aiming now for a balanced budget in 2023, which will involve facing some tough decisions on prioritising our work.

- Income from lettings at Friends House & Swarthmore Hall is still very low
- More of the centrally-managed work of Friends will need to be sustained by direct support from Friends
- If everyone were to contribute an average of £20 per month (or £240 a year), we could fund work at the same level.

Go to <https://www.quaker.org.uk/giving>

YOUR FOOD BANK NEEDS YOU

An appeal from the Malvern Hills Food Bank:

Would you like to volunteer at Malvern Hills Foodbank? Do you know anyone who could? Volunteers are the lifeblood of food banks.

Our foodbank was opened in February 2013, to help the people of our district who are referred to us when they are in a time of crisis. At the time we thought that we would only be needed on a short-term basis but since our opening the demand for food and non-food items has more than doubled, a trend which began before the onset of the pandemic.

In the last eight years, thousands of your fellow citizens in Malvern Hills District – more than one in ten in Malvern town - have found themselves in desperate need of assistance because of, for example, sudden unemployment, illness, or accident. Our food bank works as a member of the Trussell Trust nationwide network of over 400 food banks; and in order to continue to help our fellow citizens in need, for as long as is necessary, we are asking for your help.

As a volunteer you will be processing our donations, which, in addition to food items, include personal and household needs such as shower-gel, washing-powder, etc. Each warehouse session is led by an experienced Team Leader who will train you and advise you.

We would welcome you if you are in part-time work, retired or not seeking paid employment and can offer at least 3.5 daytime hours of your time every 3 weeks to help process the food that is donated, help to store the items and assist in packaging boxes ready to be delivered to our clients. You will learn how we weigh, sort, and mark each donation, how we store them, and how to put together the packs that are

sent out to individuals and families. Our volunteers are a friendly and welcoming bunch who will help you learn the ropes in our warehouse in Spring Lane South.

What's in it for me? Whilst we wish that the foodbank didn't have to exist, you will not only be helping others, but you will also find friendship and camaraderie with other volunteers. You will have the opportunity to make new friends, use your skills and learn new ones. The roles within the foodbank are many and varied. You may choose an area that suits you but will have the opportunity to take on more roles and responsibility in time. We are open on Monday mornings (except Bank Holidays), Tuesday afternoons and Thursday mornings.

So, if you feel you would like to help the people in our district who are in need, we would be delighted to have you apply to join us.

For more information about our food bank please visit our Website at: www.malvern hills.foodbank.org.uk. If you would like to apply to join us, please email mhfbvolunteers@outlook.com.

Dell House Open Garden - Wednesday 13th October 2–5pm

We have been opening the garden regularly throughout the year through the National Garden Scheme and have raised over £2,000 for the charities they support. This is our last public opening this year and there's lots of colour still in the garden, as well as our carvings to enjoy. Tea and cake will be available.

£5 entry, £2.50 for tea and cake, payment on arrival but **you must pre-book** by email to stay@thedellhouse.co.uk

