



Malvern Quaker Meeting Newsletter

September 2020



The deadline for next Newsletter is Tuesday 29th September.

Elizabeth Rolph

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Meeting for Worship: 10.30 every Sunday

Please arrive in good time, wear a facemask while in the Meeting House, and bring your own cushion and drink.

Back in the Meeting House

Jill Etheridge

On Sunday 30th August, eight of us gathered at the Meeting House, full of joy that this was at last possible - even though we did all look a bit odd as masked beings! The doors and windows were wide open. So, for one of us who ministered, that was reminiscent of worshipping in open-sided chapels in West African villages, and brought to mind the generosity, e.g. at harvest festival time, of those who possessed so little but gave so much.

Other ministry, following on from that theme of gratitude, reminded us of all the blessings we receive through our five senses, and thought compassionately of those who experience sensory deprivation in one or more areas of their being. Finally, someone present who has valued so much the opportunity to worship via Zoom appreciated the extra gift we receive through being able to gather in 'live' meeting: the way this enables us to be in the presence of the 'spark' in each individual, experiencing the 'that-of-God-ness' that can bring such joy and compassion into our hearts. (I hope those who ministered find my paraphrasing reasonably accurate!)

Meetings for Worship by Zoom

Elizabeth Rolph

I will be emailing those who are on the Zoom email list to see what interest there is for a monthly Meeting by Zoom.

Area Meeting via Bewdley Friends' Zoom, Saturday 12 September

Informal learning opportunity, 10.00-10.20 Getting to know Area Meeting -- (2) Conversation with Registering Officers

All members and attenders are warmly invited to join this short online session, the second in a series designed to shine a light on how our Quaker community functions. Penny Osborne-Gajewski, our Area Meeting Registering Officer, and Catherine Quekett, Deputy Registering Officer, will talk briefly about their roles and what makes Quaker marriages special.

This is a free-standing event, and participants may choose to join just for the 20-minute session, or to stay on the link for Area Meeting at 10.30.

Agenda items include Area Meeting's Annual Report, donations to Britain Yearly Meeting and Woodbrooke, resuming in-person Meetings for Worship, and the 2020 Swarthmore Lecture. Full agenda and link to follow.



Vigil for the Earth

As part of the campaign for the Climate and Ecological Emergency (CEE) bill a vigil has been held at the Elgar statue in Malvern. This is a Private Members' appliance bill, that has been written by scientists, lawyers and activists; it is gathering support from a broad range of campaign groups, businesses, charities and individuals. The bill has the potential to become the most significant move forward since the Climate Change Act 2008. See <https://www.ceebill.uk/>



Closing Ceremony on Sunday 6th September

On the final day, Sunday 6 Sept, an interfaith group is directing activities 12-2. The XR Guardians are visiting some time after 2.30 - a spectacle worth seeing. No doubt people will be gathering as we near the close at 4pm.

Meanwhile we stay in close contact with those taking the climate protest to Parliament.

Advices & Queries No 34

Remember your responsibilities as a citizen for the conduct of local, national, and international affairs. Do not shrink from the time and effort your involvement may demand.

The Principle of a Gift

Read by Michael Townson at the penultimate Zoom Meeting for Worship

This states that nothing in the rondelle of life is ever owned. All genes, for example, can be exchanged, free of copyright; energy streams as a gift from the sky and is distributed among all the levels of being that derive substance for it; and in the end, the death of an organism becomes a gift to those that feed on it. Everything essential is gifted, not that it might be hoarded for a monopoly, but that it might be shared as a common property. Within the living realm, these gifts are given largely without design or intention. At the same time, we all depend on them. We need the gift, we need the sunlight that happens to fall upon us, the smile of other people who like us whether or not we did anything to deserve it. Put simply, in the words of Michel De Montaigne: "because he was he, and I was I." The gift of the smile, given for no reason, invites us towards the other and guarantees.

Extract from Andreas Weber, Matter and Desire

Guy's testimony**Melanie Jameson**

Many of you will recall me talking of Guy, who became a Quaker in Long Lartin prison. Although terminally ill, he was unable to get the compassionate release which would have allowed him to spend his last months in the community. To mark the anniversary of Guy's death, his Quaker Prison Chaplain has circulated his testimony, which speaks directly to us and gives you some idea of his unquenchable spirit.

"There was something immensely powerful stirring in people throughout England in the 1640s and 50s. There was a collective spiritual need to challenge the status quo - something was afoot. People were concerned about the way the church operated and were searching for spiritual Truth and a way to live out their faith in the world. In a nutshell they felt a need to transform how things were. They believed this was for the good of all. It was a crisis point in our history.

Well Friends, I believe we need to re-ignite the spiritual fire of those early pioneers of our faith. We must be true to their legacy and humbled by their endeavours. Collectively and individually we need to speak up, to act wherever we can. God does not expect us individually to change the world but we are asked to do whatever we can. This is not now simply the right thing to do, it is the only thing.

When we see millions of refugees fleeing war zones, people persecuted for their faith, colour or sexual-orientation or children dying in the streets from knife crime, we cannot remain silent and pass by. We need to help, protect, write letters, mediate and speak Truth to those in power. To remain idle is to condone wrong action.

So Friend, don't just think what you can do, do what you can do."

As he requested, Guy's ashes are in the Quaker burial ground at Evesham Meeting.

Unholy Row in Holy Land

Richard Bartholomew

You may have noticed that the governments of the United Arab Emirates and Israel reached an agreement to have full diplomatic relations. Usually this would be seen as a move to de-escalation of tension and a step towards peace-let's hope so. However many ordinary Palestinians and the Palestinian Authority came out against this agreement as they had hoped that those Arab governments that do not yet have diplomatic relations with Israel would hold off from taking this step until a lasting peace settlement has been made between the Palestinians and the Israelis. The sticking point has been the fact that the Palestinians want the, currently occupied, West Bank of the River Jordan to be regarded as their territorial base for which they are internationally-recognised as the legitimate government, whereas the current Israeli government wants to keep some Israeli settlements there, occupied only by Jewish settlers. You may feel that like many other international flash-points there is little that you can do about this.

Yes but No but Yes- because actually there is a small step that we can all take if we choose. Like most peace-making it is small but if repeated it can not only do no harm but may well build some trust and lead towards a greater sense of peace in the region.

The answer? We can choose to buy the agricultural produce that Palestinians farmers, both Christians and Muslims, work hard to harvest and bring to our shores. This is promoted in the UK by a social enterprise and community interest group called Zaytoun (Arabic for olive), locally their products are sold by Colin & Lorna Archer of the Worcester- Palestine Friendship Assn. I am happy to receive orders from you to collect from the Archers and deliver to your door. Contact me if you want the full price list at but for the headlines Olive oil sells from £10 for 500 ml,
Dates – these are actually the juiciest I have eaten at £4 for 250g,
Almonds (£4 for 150g) and
Couscous (£2.70 for 250g).

There are also Zaytoun bags for life (£5.50) and the best deal ever 5 Olive Tree Saplings for only £20. So plant them and start to produce your own olive oil (in about 20 years maybe)! Something for the Peace Garden perhaps?

If you are interested then e-mail Richard.bartholomew@btinternet.com or ring me at 01684 574399 and tell me your order, with cheques being made out to Colin Archer as he has to buy the produce himself from Zaytoun and I will arrange the collection and delivery to you. If you want to know more about Zaytoun go to <https://www.zaytoun.org/>
It's date!