



Malvern Quakers

Newsletter

Summer 2012 June - July - August

Being Salt and Light



Melanie Jameson

'Being Salt and Light' – so ran a key theme in the Epistle from the Sixth World Conference of Quakers, who gathered in Kenya recently. This was interpreted as having a strong community focus:

We need to be present and engaged in our communities, while remaining attentive to the Still, Small Voice, in order to allow the Spirit to work through us.

The metaphors of Salt and Light are also a useful way of going deeper into the topics of our three May discussion groups which covered (1) work undertaken in the deprived ward of Pickersleigh, (2) Economic Justice and (3) our Vision for Sustainable Living.

Salt is useless unless it is mixed in with whatever it is called to enhance or preserve. A good example of this is the work of the Big Pickersleigh Project in which members of the community work to meet local needs. The call to Quakers to live more sustainably is another example where we should be as salt, not holding ourselves apart but being ready to take whatever steps our discernment shows us to be necessary.

A light is barely visible in sunlight but shines most clearly where there is darkness and obscurity. We certainly needed some light shedding on the complicated issue of Economic Justice and thank Adrian Lamont for taking this on!

In this edition of our newsletter, Liz Flanagan shines some light into an area that many of us turn away from, that of death and dying.

The Epistle from Quakers world-wide concluded with these words:

'As the inward voice of Christ Jesus leads all of us, we can become the salt of the earth and the light of our broken world.' Something for us all to live up to!

The three May discussion groups, all touching on aspects of 'Living our Testimonies', are described in more detail in the right hand column and on page 3.



1. The Big Pickersleigh Project 2 May

Cally Law

For the first of our discussion groups we focused on social inequalities, especially in relation to the Malvern area. We were fortunate to have a guest speaker, David Wareing, to lead the discussion. He began by giving us statistics which indicated that the Pickersleigh Ward qualified for extra Government funding in order to address the problems resulting from the area's comparative social and financial deprivation.

The Big Pickersleigh Project is an attempt to bring a number of statutory and voluntary agencies together to meet the needs of the area in a more comprehensive and sustainable way and it looks to involve local people in creating solutions rather than them being imposed by external authorities. It has generated various schemes which aim to support families, to mentor young people and help them into work experience and hopefully into eventual employment, and to empower residents to feel they can have a say in the quality of life in the area.

We looked at ways that other church groups are already getting involved and some suggestions were made about our own possible input. One plan that Churches Together are working on is the idea of a Food Bank to help people through crisis situations, such as delays in benefit payments, and the feeling of the group seemed to be that we would like to get involved in such an initiative.

This proved to be an informative and thought-provoking evening and many of us left with a renewed determination to take practical action to try to make a difference locally.

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Malvern Friends Meeting House 1 Orchard Road Malvern WR14 3DA

Email: malvern@wsq.org.uk Website: malvernquakers.org.uk

All Welcome at Meetings for Worship:

Every Sunday at 10.30am

Third Thursdays 12.00 noon (followed by bring-your-own lunch)

All events are held at Malvern Friends Meeting House unless stated otherwise. Please note that attenders should seek permission from Preparative Meeting to go to Area Meetings.

Saturday 19 May - Wednesday 13 June

Embroidery Exhibition 'Creation: A Celebration'

42 panels by Sue Symons

Lansdowne Methodist Church, Malvern WR14 2AW

NB. Complex opening times: see posters or

lansdownemethodist.org.uk for details

Sunday 3 June 4.00

Diamond Jubilee - Churches Together Unity Service

Malvern Priory

Wednesday 6 June 11.00-3.00

Meeting House Open

as part of Malvern Civic Week (2-9 June) see panel

Saturday 9 June 11.00-4.00

Area Meeting at Bewdley Meeting House

Sunday 10 June 12.00 **NEW DATE**

Preparative Meeting

Important agenda item: further discussion of planned developments to the Meeting House

Saturday 16 June 9.30-5.00 approx

Quaker Outing to Ludlow Food Centre and Stokesay Castle

Leaving Malvern Splash 9.30, return journey starts 3.30.

Speak to Liz Flanagan for details.

Thursday 21 June 12.00-12.40

Midweek Meeting for Worship

Sunday 1 July 12.00

Preparative Meeting

Saturday 14 July 11.00-4.00

Area Meeting at Telford Meeting House

Thurs 19th July 12.00-12.40

Midweek Meeting for Worship

Sat 28th July 2.00-2.30

Meeting for Worship at the Peace Garden, Malvern Cube, Albert Road North (formerly Malvern Youth Centre)

Thursday 19 July 12.00-12.40

Midweek Meeting for Worship

Sunday 29 July after Meeting for Worship

Fifth Sunday - Shared Lunch, followed by a Talk and Discussion

with Liz Flanagan and Helen Chiverton about their role in Meeting supporting people spiritually and practically with end of life issues. All welcome. See article on next page

Thursday 16 Augsut 12.00-12.40

Midweek Meeting for Worship

Saturday 18 - Monday 27 August

(plus setting up and clearing up days 16, 17 & 28 August)

Art for Amnesty 2012

See panel on right

Sunday 19 August 12.00

Summer Picnic

at Betty Hudson's home, Rose Cottage,

Newbridge Green, Upton-on-Severn WR8 0PQ

Please travel together after Meeting for Worship and bring a picnic

Notes from Elders

Cally Law

First, we warmly welcome Mavis Price, sister of Hazel Court, into membership of Malvern Quakers

Second, a gentle reminder. Several people have mentioned that they find it hard to hear some of the spoken ministry and feel that this means they have missed out on an important part of Meeting for Worship. We would therefore encourage everyone to remember that many of us 'of a certain age' do have a degree of hearing loss. While it is incumbent upon us to try to address this, we would value Friends speaking as clearly as possible when ministering. Many thanks.

A Community Centre for Malvern

Melanie Jameson

We now have a community centre in Malvern: the former Youth Centre. A lick of paint and internal face-lift and the building is now ready to operate as an internet café and increase its bookings. Its new name is the Malvern Cube – volunteers are needed for reception and café duties.

Unfortunately the expected fencing off of most of the surrounding land by the Council occurred in mid-May, leaving our Quaker Peace Garden untouched, but compromising the Centre's outdoor activities. More campaigning by local people and the Community Centre supporters will doubtless be required.

I now realise that it is not only community centre users who notice our Garden: during the tea break of my weekly Art Class at the College next door, fellow painters were admiring the Garden, with no idea it had a connection to Quakers. We certainly need to raise its profile with proper signage and a notice explaining a little about Quakers and the significance of the words written into the four pathways to the centre.

I feel that the Garden has a unique atmosphere, never more evident than during our meditations / short Meetings for Worship. We are holding these in each season of the year. Everyone is invited to join us for a half hour at 2pm on Saturday July 28th for the Summer Meeting

Thanks are due to Robert Callaway and Andrew Webb for maintaining the Quaker Peace Garden.

Art for Amnesty 2012, the 12th Annual Art Exhibition and Sale in support of Amnesty International, organised jointly by Malvern Quakers and Amnesty Malvern Hills, will be held at the Meeting House from 18 to 27 August, from 11am to 5pm, (2pm to 5pm on Sundays). Official opening on Saturday 18 August at 11am.

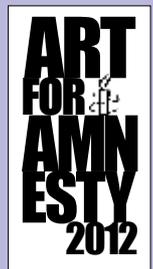
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Stewarding enquiries: Elaine Bass
01684 561440, elaine.bass@virgin.net



OTHER REGULAR MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Second Sunday in month

10 June, 8 July, 12 August

House Meetings for Worship

Contact Betty Hudson for details

Second Monday in month

11 June, 9 July, 13 August

Healing Group

Contact Hazel Court or Mary Callaway for details

Creating Support for End of Life Care and Funerals

Woodbrooke Course 16-18 April, led by Alison Leonard & Hazel Rowntree

Liz Flanagan

Helen Chiverton and I arrived about 4pm, in time for refreshments and a personal tour of Woodbrooke. After the buffet supper – delicious – we assembled for our introductory session on preparing for the course. There was a wide range of people, mostly female and of a certain age, but with a width and depth of life experience. We attended the epilogue in the Cadbury Room before bed.

Next morning, after Meeting for Worship, we began a session on *Preparing for Old Age*. This involved addressing issues of loss, firstly in our past and then anticipated in old age. We had to identify activities, then objects we have to release as we grow older. Then we had to name a place we would regret not being able to visit.

This was followed by a session on *Preparing for Dying* in which Hazel Rowntree outlined the medical profession's perspective and the legal obligations surrounding this issue. In small groups we tackled case studies, looking at medical and personal/family issues. We also had the opportunity to examine relevant forms, including Advanced Care Plans, (similar to birth plans), Advanced Statement of Values and Beliefs, to be used in critical situations, Advanced Directives, Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) and of course, wills.

On a more spiritual level, Hazel talked about her training and experiences as a Midwife of the Soul. This involves accompanying a person in their final hours, having spent time identifying their wishes.

In the afternoon we had some free time in which to read, rest, or as in Helen's case, meditate quietly in the beautiful gardens.

Our next session was entitled *A Good Death*, which involved a guided meditation on identifying a beautiful place to be, and imagining the people you would like with you. We were encouraged to imagine which people we would be willing to have present, or whether you would prefer to be alone to slip away peacefully.

The final session I was able to attend was *Sharing Our Stories*. In this session several people spoke of the deaths in which they had been involved and what made them positive experiences. I was able to talk about my father's death from cancer, which took place at home, with the support of his widow, Macmillan nurses, two daughters, and input from the hospice and the local medical team. Shortly afterwards his younger sister was diagnosed with terminal cancer and with great dignity she organised how she would like her death to be. It was a great privilege to sit with her late at night talking of the past, knowing that my sister, and then my cousins would provide the same support –

continued at foot of column 2

May Discussion Groups *continued*

2. Economic Justice 9 May

Adrian Lamont

Economic Justice is certainly a hot topic nowadays with daily headlines about vast pay bonuses, exchange rate wobbles and growing inequality. A recent Quaker conference considered a number of proposals, such as measures to regulate banks more closely, divide the High Street bank's business from merchant banking activities and stop anti-social trading – such as gambling in food commodities.

What might Quaker values be regarding money? Suggestions include the following:

- Respecting all life as sacred - including money itself – since it can be used for the Spirit
- 'Living simply so that others may simply live'
- The concept of fraternity: respect and care for that of God in every person
- George Cadbury's example of generous gifting and his view of Old money and New money – money becomes new and invigorated when it is given as a gift rather than accumulated

Our session considered some of the darkest aspects of the Economic Justice/ Injustice issue:

- Capitalism thrives on war – driven by the arms trade and over production
- The current challenge of economic reform or War – which way will we go?
- World monetary systems thrive on injustice as shown by the financial institutions' gambling on the International market and benefiting from the varying currency exchange rates
- The role of the IMF and World Bank in the asset stripping of poor countries
- Is the consumer culture in the West leading to economic slavery in the East?

We were pointed to a few of the many lively websites that address 'Economic Justice and Quakers', namely:

- Keith Helmuth on the Quaker Peace Testimony, the Spiritual basis of Economics and Ecology

- Quaker Economist – American Journal
- Quakernomics – set up by Quaker Peace & Social Witness. Recent articles on Growth & Money Creation by banks
- Quakers in Britain contains a whole section on Economic Justice and Better World Economics
- Quakers and Business website
- A number of Area Meeting websites, e.g. York, Derby and Nottingham

(To find these sites just Google 'Quakers and Economic Justice'.)

In small groups, we discussed some of the more intimate aspects of Economic Justice, such as the cost of living compared with wages, and the need for many wage earners to top up with benefits. We talked about the 'Basic income' movement which is gathering pace on the continent – the proposal is to replace benefits with a basic wage from the State. Another suggestion was for a 'Home maker's' allowance. In another group the destructive aspects of Growth were considered – the problem that our growth may well be at the expense of the rest of the world – there cannot be endless growth without somebody else suffering!

One Friend commented how we may feel helpless in the face of powerful economic forces, but can exercise Quaker values in our day to day life.

3. Our Vision for Sustainability 23 May

Melanie Jameson

The third May discussion group returned to a key focus of Quakers nationwide: sustainable living. Rather than grappling with the problems and issues of achieving a lower carbon footprint we decided to envisage a future in which our way of life has undergone the necessary transformation to become sustainable so that we are living in a way that does not deplete the earth's resources. Housing, Transport, Food, Work, Community and many other areas were considered in a way that was uplifting and positive.

This exercise, taken from the Quaker Sustainability Toolkit has also been used effectively in the Inner Transition group, part of our local Malvern Hills Transition network.

all carefully timetabled by my aunt's capable elder sister.

Helen was able to stay till the end and collected information on *Practical Aspects of Funerals* and *Bringing this Back to Meeting* – which is what Helen and I are working on next. We are developing a questionnaire to help Friends identify what support they would like at the end of life, to plan an appropriate funeral, and to work with families in delivering the funeral and/or Memorial Meeting. Any thoughts or materials you would like to share will be most welcome – and thank you to Malvern Meeting in supporting us in this endeavour.

Liz and Helen will be talking about these issues on 29 July - see Diary on previous page.

Malvern Quakers Newsletter

This Summer Newsletter was edited by Andrew and Melanie Jameson.

From now on, the Newsletter will be compiled by Peter Thomas, supported by the Malvern editorial team. Please ensure that any items for the Autumn newsletter (September-November) are given or *preferably emailed* to Peter at petergt@hotmail.com by 10 August. Informal enquiries to 07980 504824.

Please also email Peter if you would like a regular email copy of MQN.



Book review Moving into Membership

Quaker Books, revised edition 2011, 80 pp., paperback, £5
ISBN 978 1 907123 4

Committee on Eldership and Oversight

Andrew Jameson

In the last Malvern newsletter we had a review of a guide for newcomers to Quakerism, designed for those who had no previous experience, but wished to explore (Geoffrey Durham: Being a Quaker - a Guide for Newcomers). The book reviewed here, Moving into Membership, fulfils a similar purpose, but one stage further on – it offers thoughts and advice for Attenders who would like to consider becoming Members. In actual fact it is dual-purpose, being designed also for Clerks, Elders and Overseers, and it expresses the hope that this book will be available to everyone in the meeting.

It is, frankly, a small resource pack made into a book, with practical suggestions on outreach, welcoming the newcomer, nurturing attenders, applying for membership, 'the welcome', and life after joining. The second half of the book is devoted to resources: a reading list with advice and guidance, contact details, and sample texts for attenders.

It concludes with Information for Doorkeepers, Inviting Attenders to Apply for Membership, Information about the Visiting Process, Keeping Records and excerpts from Quaker Faith and Practice.

The new features in this edition are a new Preface on recent changes in the process of acquiring membership, and the latest paragraphs from Quaker Faith and Practice on the same topic.

This is a book which touches upon almost all aspects of the practical side of Quakerism, and reading it is a good refresher on the topic of 'what we are about'.

A Tribute to Pippa Lee Died 2 April 2012

Mary Callaway

I first met Pippa when she made contact to book the Meeting House for some Saturday afternoon sessions of Qi Gong, a traditional Chinese system to improve health and vitality. A few of us joined her. I little thought that only 3 years later, I would be attending her funeral at Greenfields.

Pippa was on our membership list but had by then moved on to 'other things'. She chose not to say that in the 1980s she had been part of the dynamic team of Friends who organised the building of the extension. This I learned from Betty and David, who go back that far.

I learned much later that Pippa was a birthright Friend and past pupil of Ackworth. Her father, Eric Baker, was a conscientious objector in Sheffield during the war. He later found it difficult to get work, and the family moved around the country as he took on wardenship of various Quaker Meetings. There was even a spell in India, when the children were very small. They learned to be self-sufficient and to create their own amusements.

Pippa had a quiet, gentle presence and warm humour. She was very interested in looking after her health and encouraging others to do the same. Her teaching seemed to come from a deep place and I experienced it as a form of ministry. She loved life and learning, and was a passionate gardener. Malvern and Sennen Cove, Cornwall, were her favourite places.

Pippa had cancer for just a few months and chose to deal with it quietly, in her own way. News of her death came as a shock to many. I am pleased to have known her and feel that something of Pippa remains with me, and that she is 'woven into' the life of the Meeting. As we welcome newcomers, we should not forget the love and energy of those who have gone before.

All is Well

Death is nothing at all.
I have only slipped away into the next room.
I am I, and you are you.
Whatever we were to each other, that we still are.
Call me by my old familiar name,
speak to me in the easy way which you always used.
Put no difference in your tone,
Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow.
Laugh as we always laughed at the little jokes we enjoyed together.
Play, smile, think of me and if you want to, pray for me.
Let my name be ever the household word that it always was.
Let it be spoken without effect,
Without the trace of a shadow on it.
Life means all that it ever meant.
It is the same as it ever was;
There is unbroken continuity.
Why should I be out of mind because I am out of sight?
I am waiting for you,
For an interval,
Somewhere very near,
Just around the corner.
All is well.

Henry Scott-Holland

This poem was distributed at Pippa's funeral

'Death is not the extinguishing of the light,
but the putting out of the lamp, because
dawn has come.'

Rabindranath Tagore

