Malvern Quaker Meeting





Newsletter September 2025

Items for the next issue of
the Newsletter will need to reach me by 31st October 2025.
Past editions of the Newsletter are on our Meeting website www.malvernquakers.org.uk.

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If you are not on the Meeting's email list and would like to be, or have changed your email, please contact emailadmin@malvernquakermeeting.org.uk

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Heritage Open Sessions at Malvern Meeting House 2025

Jill Etheridge

The Meeting House opened on a Monday afternoon, 15th September from 2-5pm, and on Thursday morning, 18th September, 9am-12 noon. We were gratified to find that more members of the public came along than has usually been the case when we have set up displays in national Quaker Week. Many wanted to hear about Quakerism, not just about our fine Arts and Crafts listed building and its furniture, made in Brynmawr in the 1930s. About 17 visitors came to each session, which included refreshments on offer. Below are comments from many of those who came along.

> *I was very impressed by the warm friendly atmosphere in the Meeting House and the welcome given to us by the Friends.*
>
> *I found my short stay very life confirming and thought provoking. Thank you for the tea also.*
>
> *A warm friendly welcome, just what I would expect of the Quaker movement. Thank you.*
>
> *Visited Monday 15th September around 3pm, really enjoyed visit, very informative, will see you Sunday morning! – thanks.*
>
> *Thanks for opening and your welcome. – Always good to meet folks who care.*

Thank you very much for the Open Day and leaflet. I like the Humanity of Quakers, and human logic. Many thanks.

Very interesting. All notices are clear. Thank you for the welcome.

Interesting building warm and welcoming.

Fascinating history & I was made very welcome.

Well worth my visit today to learn about the Quaker principles which I feel very drawn to be involved with. It has been educational and inspiring.

Thanks to all who helped with the setting up, stewarding and catering.

Advices & Queries No 33

Are you alert to practices here and throughout the world which discriminate against people on the basis of who or what they are or because of their beliefs? Bear witness to the humanity of all people, including those who break society's conventions or its laws. Try to discern new growing points in social and economic life. Seek to understand the causes of injustice, social unrest and fear. Are you working to bring about a just and compassionate society which allows everyone to develop their capacities and fosters the desire to serve?

Child Rescue Nepal – a supporter's perspective

Elizabeth Evans

*I first heard of **Child Rescue Nepal** (CRN) in a Radio 4 Appeal by Richard Stilgoe two years ago. I sent a donation and as a result found myself receiving regular updates on their work. I'm a regular visitor to Nepal, having previously worked on projects there and grown to love the country. I happened to be there last year at the same time as the CEO of CRN, so we met up for a chat and this year I actually joined a supporters' group in March and gained an insight, first-hand, into CRN's work.*

Child Rescue Nepal is a UK charity which focuses on children who have been drawn into child labour for various reasons, mostly related to poverty and ignorance.

The charity works in conjunction with a number of local Nepalese NGOs and government authorities. Its work consists of:

Rescuing children from child labour

- Along with the government authorities, CRN physically rescues children who have been reported as working. The authorities may then go on to prosecute the employer, but they rely on charities to support the child. This is where the involvement of Child Rescue Nepal and their partner NGOs is crucial.

Providing care and support for rescued children

- The child first goes to a safe house until it's been established whether they can be reunited with their family.
- Where they can be reunited, efforts are made to ensure the child goes to school. Bursaries are provided to cover the cost of uniforms, books and stationery etc. The family receives follow-up visits by the charity's staff, who check the child is going to school and provide advice and support. The family may also receive livelihood support, for instance, for goat rearing, pig farming or tailoring, to prevent them being vulnerable to traffickers in the future.
- Where it is not possible for the children to return to their families they go to live in family-style care homes and attend local schools. If they still need support when they leave school, CRN funds hostels where they can live and receive tailored support.

Prevention measures

- Education is one of the best ways of protecting vulnerable children. Children who regularly attend school are less likely to be drawn into child labour, so CRN funds teacher training to make school a more enjoyable experience for the children, motivating them to attend school.
  It also funds free midday lunches in some schools and the building of school toilets. Its action focuses on the trafficking-prone district of Makwanpur.
- It is essential to raise the awareness of parents and children to the danger posed by traffickers who lure children into the cities with the promise of good jobs; instead, many girls end up in the sex industry. CRN spreads the message via various means, including anti-trafficking dramas in schools and local radio broadcasts.

The supporters' visit

Along with CRN staff and local partner organisations we visited some of the schools CRN support in remote mountain areas. It didn't look that far on the map, but it was a scary trip by jeep, driving across riverbeds and winding our way up narrow roads with stomach-churning drops. I wasn't the only one to get out of the jeep and walk some particularly hairy sections. As usual in Nepal we were given a warm welcome in the schools. A woman who'd been rescued years before and was now qualified to work in a local health post talked to us about her experiences. At night we had the dubious pleasure of sleeping on classroom floors or the lucky ones (like me) on camp beds. Wildfires could be seen creeping down a nearby mountainside, but no one appeared perturbed, and they had gone out by morning. Signs of the 2015 earthquake were also visible in some of the cracked farm buildings down the road.

Back in Kathmandu we visited two hostels run by CRN's local partners and met some of the young people living there, now training and preparing for adult life. I also attended a day's workshop with CRN's partner organisations, hearing about their problems and aspirations.

I was particularly impressed by the individual care CRN gives to the children, not just immediately after their rescue but for years into adulthood. As a small charity their impact is impressive, with a steady flow of children being rescued every year and many other vulnerable children being given the chance of a better education.

https://childrescuenepal.org/

Special Collections

In September the Special Collection for September was for Child Rescue Nepal. A total of £165.15 was collected.

The Special Collection for October is Escaping Victimhood. (www.escapingvictimhood.com).

King's Principles of Nonviolence

Hugh McMichael

Father Richard offers a summary of Martin Luther King Jr.'s principles of nonviolence:

1. Nonviolence is a way of strength and not a way for cowards. It is not a lack of power which allows us to be nonviolent, but in fact the discovery of a different kind of power. It is a choice, not a resignation; a spirituality, not just a tactic.
2. The goal of nonviolence is always winning the friendship and the understanding of the supposed opponent, not their humiliation or personal defeat. It must be done to eventually facilitate the process of reconciliation, and we ourselves must be willing to pay the price for that reconciliation. King based this on Jesus' lifestyle and death and on Ephesians 2:13–22 and Romans 12:1–2.
3. The opponent must be seen not so much as an evil person, but *as a symbol of a much greater systemic evil—of which they also are a victim!* We must aim our efforts at that greater evil, which is harming all of us, rather than at the opponent.
4. There is a moral power in voluntarily suffering for the sake of others. Christians call it the "myth of redemptive suffering," whereas almost all of history is based on the opposite, the "myth of redemptive violence." The lie that almost everybody believes is that suffering can be stopped by increasing the opponent's suffering. It works only in the short run. In the long run, that suffering is still out there and will somehow have to work its way out in the next generation or through the lives of the victims. A willingness to bear the pain has the power to transform and absorb the evil in the opponent, the nonviolent resister, and even the spectator. This is precisely what Jesus was doing on the cross. It changes all involved and at least forces the powers that be to "show their true colors" publicly. And yes, the nonviolent resister is also changed through the action. It is called *resurrection* or *enlightenment*.
5. This love ethic must be at the center of our whole life, or it cannot be effective or real in the crucial moments of conflict. We have to practice drawing our lives from this new source, in thought, word, emotion, and deed, every day, or we will never be prepared for the major confrontations or the surprise humiliations that will come our way.
6. Nonviolence relies on a kind of *cosmic optimism* which trusts that the universe/reality/God is finally and fully on the side of justice and truth. History *does* have a direction, meaning, and purpose. God/good is more fundamental than evil. *Resurrection will have the final word*, which is the very promise of the Jesus event. The eternal wind of the Spirit is with us. However, we should not be naïve; and we must understand that most people's loyalties are with security, public image, and the comforts of the status quo. [1]

Little Friends — Liz Flanagan

Only one mother and child at Little Friends. We had a lovely time apple printing, playing fruit noughts and crosses, cooking apple turnovers, eating apple cake and chatting. Sox enjoyed all the attention too.



QCEA Donation — Message from Andrew de Sousa

I wanted to express our thanks to the Malvern for your donation to QCEA and support over the years. As we are facing a very challenging and unstable situation in Europe right now, we are developing new strategies for QCEA and hope to work closely with Friends across Europe. Please feel free to reach out to us with ideas, request for information, etc. to help us promote peace, equality and peace within European policies.
In Friendship,
Andrew

This is an annual donation of £500. Ed.

Training Day on Exploring the Spiritual with Children and Young People — Mary Corfield

On 13th September Liz Flanagan and I boarded a train for Birmingham where we spent an inspiring and energising day with a large number of people in sharing ideas for children's meetings. This was facilitated by two Friends from the Training Team from Britain Yearly Meeting.

We discussed ideas for sessions, and for planning a session, and resources that could be used. It was lovely to meet other people and share ideas with them about working with different age groups. The idea of getting different children's meetings together for joint events was also discussed.

We were given a delicious lunch and endless cups of tea and coffee. Liz and I discussed the day all the way home.

Prisons Week — Melanie Jameson
Convenor of QICJ Working Group

National Prisons Week is upon us again, running from Oct 12-18 in England & Wales. This national event was initiated in 1975 for churches to consider the needs of prisoners but has evolved over the years. Now we are encouraged to consider the criminal justice system (CJS) in its widest sense and pray/hold in the Light all concerned: victims of crime, prisoners and their families, along with those working in the CJS and the many volunteers. I would add David Lammy, now Secretary of State at the Ministry of Justice. Each group can become our focus in turn as we progress through the week.

This comes at a time when prisons continue to be chronically overcrowded and fail to retain staff in a challenging situation where frustrations can boil over into violence. This is despite having a Minister for Prison, Probation & Resettlement (James Timpson) whose family has long experience rehabilitating offenders through training and employment. Recalls to prison are at an all-time high as an under-funded Probation Service struggles to cope. Labour has carried out reviews, some of which are feeding into the Sentencing Bill currently making its way through Parliament, but the problems are deep-rooted and systemic. A former Quaker Prison Chaplain continues to highlight the issues of neglected maintenance and staff low morale at HMP Wandsworth www.wandsworthprisoncampaign.co.uk

Every year at this time, Quakers in Criminal Justice (QICJ) takes stock and decides what we wish to highlight to the wider family of Friends – bearing in mind the national message from the Churches, articulated as follows: *'Prisoners' Sunday (Oct 12) marks the first day of the ecumenical Prisons Week, a week of prayer which raises awareness of the issues faced by those affected by the criminal justice system. The theme this year is 'Jesus looked at him and loved him' (Mark 10:21), and he looks at you and loves you too.'* The message concludes with a plea that we would amplify: *"Ask yourself if there is one thing you as an individual, or as a church, can do to help any of the people for whom you are praying".* https://www.prisonsweek.org/

So, what are we highlighting for your consideration? Firstly, the vital ministry of our CJ frontline workers, Quaker Prison Chaplains (QPCs), who have to cope with the challenges and frustrations of a difficult environment, while providing encouragement, seeking that of God in everyone and nurturing faith. Is there anything we could do to support Judy Roles, the QPC at HMP Long Lartin, such as funding for any special activity or a subscription to the Friend for the Chaplaincy?

Secondly, QICJ is taking the opportunity to remind Friends of our initiative to welcome former prisoners into Meetings, taking safeguarding considerations into account. Our 'Welcoming All' booklet, which is available to download from the home page at www.qicj.org/ , outlines the issues involved and takes you through the process of considering what you might do in readiness to welcome someone who has worshipped in prison and now wishes to continue his/her spiritual practices in the community. Hard copies of the booklet are available from me.

'Welcoming All' was presented to Friends at the September meeting of the BYM Safeguarding Network so maybe we can look at this at a future Area Meeting now the seeds of awareness have been sown. The next step could be joining the Churches/Meetings in the Welcome Directory who have already indicated that they are prepared to open their doors to people who are looking for a worshiping group on release from prison

www.welcomedirectory.org.uk Training and advice are available from the independent church safeguarding agency 'thirtyone:eight'

Some people have questioned whether QICJ is forgetting the victims of crime. The victim's voice was a valued part of your last annual conference, and our view is that helping prison leavers to integrate into communities is a proven way of reducing future victims – and the focus of the 2024 Swarthmore Lecture by Ben Jarman.

PRISONS WEEK
A WEEK OF PRAYER

Warm Welcome at Evesham Meeting

Elizabeth Rolph



Evesham Meeting is in the process of transferring from Worcester and Shropshire Area Meeting Area (they are currently part of Banbury and Evesham Area Meeting, which is being disbanded). They invited friends from across our area to get together, enjoy a shared lunch and afternoon tea on Sunday 28th September. Six of us from Malvern Meeting went along, for different parts of the day. We were warmly welcomed, and Evesham Friends are looking forward to becoming part of our Area.

The Meeting House is in central Evesham and is a lovely building. There was a strong Quaker presence in Evesham from the 1650s, and the current Meeting House dates from 1698. The former burial ground is now a Peace Garden is open to the public and used and appreciated by locals.

Some of us were taken on a walk round Evesham in the lovely autumn sun. An interesting town with a fascinating history, and Evesham Abbey was one of the biggest and most important in the country. There is very little of it remaining, but the free standing tower is impressive, now set within a lovely park.



I'm sure there will be many more opportunities to get to know Evesham Friends – I'd certainly recommend a visit there.