



# Forty-Three newsletter

Number 511  
November 2021



## Oxford Friends Meeting

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### Climate Action

Laurie Michaelis

*Some of the ideas in this article are developed in more depth in a paper about 'Agency in Climate Psychology', written for Climate Psychology Alliance. You can access it [here](#) or e-mail me for a copy.*

If climate negotiators are true to form, they will pull an all-nighter on Friday 12 November, the last day of COP26. We have a slightly tamer plan, for a *Friday with Friends* that evening on climate action among Oxford Friends.

Back in June, Local Meeting discussed writing to our MPs about the climate crisis.

I suggested finding out what Oxford Friends are doing, as a foundation for our message, so of course I was given the task. Sixteen of you responded to my request on the General Circulation e-mail list. Friends mentioned a wide variety of actions, including being part of Extinction Rebellion, campaigns on the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill, fossil fuel divestment, Stop Ecocide, and others. One Friend is writing a novel

addressing climate change. The most frequently listed actions related to lifestyle. Thirteen Friends said they had stopped flying. Many have stopped driving, become vegetarian or vegan, or made efforts to reduce home energy use and support renewable energy supplies.

Conversations about climate action often get polarised – should we prioritise lifestyle change or

policy campaigns? Is food more important, or transport, or population? Why should sheep farmers or coal miners lose their livelihoods? There is a simplifying tendency that wants to know who is right and who is to blame for the problem. Perhaps if we could agree on that, we would have a clear path to solving it. In nearly forty years of climate-related work, I've come across many people with a

religious zeal for their particular fix, based on their preferred theory of change.

The climate crisis, its causes, and the potential human responses are part of multiple complex and deeply interconnected systems. They include markets and economies, law and justice, technology, politics, social structures, cultures, human psychology and behaviour. Processes in

**Oxford Quakers  
Climate Action  
Friday with Friends  
12 November, 19:00  
in the Meeting House  
and on the Zoom  
Afterwords link**

**Please send newsletter contributions well in advance of the intended publication date.**

Contributions, preferably of 500 words or fewer, can be emailed to [newsletter@oxfordquakers.org](mailto:newsletter@oxfordquakers.org) or a paper copy can be left in the pigeonhole of any editor. Items for the calendar (on the last page) can be emailed to [office@oxfordquakers.org](mailto:office@oxfordquakers.org).

different systems reinforce themselves and each other, contributing to trends such as growing material extraction, processing and consumption.

We need the passion and energy of true believers, but because of this complexity, simple solutions tend to lead to disappointment. In 2014 I interviewed [Quakers around the world](#) about their experience of climate action. I asked what sustains them and others in a life of witness. One Friend who teaches graduate programmes on leadership and change spoke about the way focusing on outcomes can lead to burnout. Others mentioned the importance of buddies, community, and a spiritual life. If we can act because it feels right rather than to produce a result, and if we can find joy, humour, and friendship in our actions, we are more likely to sustain them.

I feel I'm part of an ecosystem of climate action. My own lifestyle choices matter to me, partly as a way of learning what is involved in 'net zero' living. It's also important for me to work with others in my community, and be part of networks and movements supporting ecovillages, permaculture, and the spiritual and healing aspects of living into the climate and ecological crises. I try to discern what action is right for me, and how that is changing. I'm not much good at fun but I get lots of quiet time, fresh fruit and veg, chocolate, exercise, sleep, and chats with friends. I respect and value others who bring different gifts and energies, who have different needs or work within different constraints.

People engaging with the climate crisis may take different approaches at different times. They may move through phases of reflection, lifestyle change, activism, therapy, relationship building, play... or they may combine these as parts of an engaged life. Our *Friday with Friends* on 12 November will be an opportunity to share how we are finding our way.

## Memorial Bench

Brigid Schroer

A black steel bench with curved and slatted seat, laser cut and crafted by hand, faces the war memorial. A design along the back commemorates — barbed wire; silhouettes of soldiers in round helmets trudging, standing, facing out alert, guns at the ready; one turns away, bowed under his bulky pack. Two spade handles lean as if dug in trench earth. Crosses, low and tall, overlap to form a cage. Lacquered poppies gleam beside them, scarlet, startling.

Under the warm September sun, a low tree throws shadow, embroidered at the edges, over the grass. Across the road, tall sandstone houses rest in eighteenth-century elegance. Nothing in the scene suggests a different England from the one they died for. Time folds up, a tattered sheet weighted with loss and change.



*Photo by Tijn Vercaemer via Wikipedia Creative Commons, cropped from original by M Hughey*

## Like to do a Book Review?

Newsletter Team

The Newsletter team occasionally receives review requests from John Hunt Publishing, especially relating to their Quaker Quicks series. If you are interested in writing a review, please contact us at [newsletter@oxfordquakers.org](mailto:newsletter@oxfordquakers.org). We can arrange for the publisher to send you a review copy (PDF or hard copy). Three review requests pending at the moment are below. (Descriptions are quoted from the publisher's promotional material.)

### **Quaker Quicks - That Clear and Certain Sound** by Pamela Haines

*That Clear and Certain Sound* is a collection of meditations on being alive in these wonderful and perilous times that encourages us to stay alert to the sound of truth even in the most unlikely places. To reach for solid ground in all aspects of our lives, and to stretch from there toward lives of greater connection and integrity.



### **The Winds of Homecoming** by Christopher Goodchild.

Written in the true spirit of the wounded healer, *The Winds of Homecoming* draws from and is enriched by the poetry and writings of Rainer Maria Rilke. These fifty short meditative reflections offer you hope and inspiration to embrace your loss and loneliness, transforming what is limiting and restrictive into something freeing and infinitely expansive.

### **Quaker Quicks - In Search of Stillness** by Joanna Godfrey Wood

*In Search of Stillness*. How to go within to find stillness and peace, inspired by early Quaker writings. The book teaches a quick and easy meditation and applies this to life issues we face today.

## November Appeal

### Tabora League for Children, Tanzania

Tabora League for Children (TLC) is a registered charity operating three day-centres for vulnerable or orphaned children and young people in Tabora, Tanzania. Quoting directly from TLC's website, TLC's vision is to help children to be "educated, empowered, safe, healthy, and happy" – and to grow into "independent young adults with improved life chances".

TLC's website further states that its purpose is to:

- ◆ Provide a secure and nurturing environment for their children and young adults.
- ◆ Ensure children's regular attendance at school.
- ◆ Provide all their children and young people with:
  - ◇ sustainable nutrition and clean water,
  - ◇ support to achieve their potential in school,
  - ◇ health education and care, and
  - ◇ support for their development to become independent adults.

If you would like to help please follow this link online:

<https://www.tlctanzania.org/how-to-help>

or make a donation by direct bank transfer to:

Tabora League for Children

Barclays Bank

Sort code: 20 97 48

A/C No: 63693430

or by Paypal on the TLC website

[www.tlctanzania.org](http://www.tlctanzania.org)



Photo from Tabora League for Children Newsletter, 2021



# St Frideswide Pilgrimage

Saturday 16 October 2021



## Pilgrimage

Elisabeth Salisbury

As long as I can remember I have had a yearning to walk the pilgrim route to Santiago de Compostella, a longing I accept will now never be fulfilled. I have visited many of the stations on the route in France and heard of others' experiences. The idea of a pilgrimage is close to my heart. So when I heard there was to be a pilgrimage in Oxfordshire with walkers converging on the Cathedral from places around the county I decided to sign up. I'm so glad I did.

I live near the assembly point for those walking the shortest route, from St Margaret's Church. On a bright sunny afternoon we were met in the church by the vicar, Daniel, and his wife and son. The inspiration underpinning the whole exercise was the 23<sup>rd</sup> psalm, the Lord is My Shepherd, which we encountered in different guises. At each stop on the way Daniel read the psalm and we sang a hymn, sometimes a setting of the psalm but once, I'm proud to say, a hymn by a Quaker (John Greenleaf Whittier's "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind"). There were prayers and reflections on the readings, and throughout the journey the chance to talk to new people to hear about their religious experiences, their ideas, and their hopes and longings.

On arrival at Christ Church we were treated to tea in the magnificent Dining Hall (cue more conversation

and sharing – food always features largely in pilgrims' tales). The final hour of the day followed in the Cathedral, where we were invited to visit seven different prayer stations. Each focussed on a different aspect of our lives and included a practical action that reflected this. For instance at Station 2 – The Valley of the Shadow of Death – we were invited to take a piece of string and, for each of our worries and concerns to tie a knot in our string and leave it behind at the foot of the cross. Even if the symbolism of the cross isn't in your theology, sitting thinking about losses and sorrows in one's own or others' lives was a rewarding experience.

I wish I had more space to tell you about each of the prayer stations. They were so creative and inspiring. At Station 5 – I Can Lack Nothing – we could take a little cut-out of a sheep and write on it a recent blessing or an occasion when we had had a glimpse of love, and leave it on the altar as a prayer of thanksgiving.

The pilgrimage was certainly a blessing for me.



*Female Pilgrim*

Teniers, David the younger (1610 - 1690)



## **Kinder Ground OSAM Session about the 2021 Swarthmore Lecture**

**Anne Watson**

On 8 October the Oxford *Friday with Friends* slot was used for a meeting for OSAM (Oxford and Swindon Area Meeting) to come together to reflect on the Swarthmore Lecture for 2021. These annual lectures are a high point in the annual Britain Yearly Meeting Gatherings. Swarthmore lectures are published in book form and can be found on a high shelf in our Meeting Library. A list can be found at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swarthmore\\_Lecture](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swarthmore_Lecture) and recent lectures are available on YouTube.

In 2021 the lecture was given by Thomas Penny, a Quaker who for many years has been a political journalist covering several prime ministers, a recession, and a pandemic, as well as being a voluntary youth worker for young Friends.

Penny's title was: 'Kinder Ground: Creating Space for Truth'. The metaphor 'kinder ground' came from a shepherd bringing her flock down from the heights of the Yorkshire Dales to lower and gentler pastures for the winter. Thomas used this to suggest that Quakers can seek 'kinder ground' for difficult and potentially divisive discussions and arguments about

the serious differences for which we might have strong views. Kinder ground can be created by listening to, and learning about, each other's truths while finding and understanding the seeds of untruth in ourselves and others.

The lecture, and the discussion on 8 October, exposed three tendencies I recognise in my own actions and reactions. One tendency is not to engage in discussions about which I have no strong views either way and am happy to 'go with the flow'; this sometimes means I follow the strongest voice uncritically. Another tendency is to appear to agree with people for the sake of maintaining a good relationship, when perhaps I may think they are deeply wrong; this sometimes means that I do not speak 'my' truth. Another tendency is that when I do have a deep commitment to something I can sometimes align myself to others who hold similar commitments without carefully questioning all the arguments that are assumed to go with that commitment.

From a more community-minded point of view the lecture also confirmed for me that Quakers can play a traditional role in bringing people together on 'kinder ground' to explore differences through listening and learning. This is at the heart of our peacekeeping and conflict resolution projects. Maybe there is a local role we can play as well as an

international role. Maybe there is a role for our Meeting House in this.

The Friday with Friends was led by June Buffery, Laurie Michaelis, and me and was structured with three questions and small group discussions. June asked us to consider the seeds of untruth in ourselves and others; Laurie asked us about creating 'kinder ground' to listen to each other in our meetings and communities; I asked about influences from the lecture on our individual and corporate spiritual witness.

It was refreshing to hear how people from across the area were thinking about truth and listening to each other. Since we mainly talked about these matters in small groups we heard about individual approaches to seeking and living our truths, and particular difficulties some Friends had with current issues such as gender rights and XR direct action when it disrupts other people's lives. It was also good to hear what some meetings are doing. For example, Charlbury are involved in outreach work in which they try to provide space for discussion and education about issues of Quaker concern. There was a feeling that it would be helpful to have more people in OSAM who have the skills of peaceful resolution of conflicts. OSAM might get some training from Quaker Life to help us.

The meeting was also an experiment to see how sharing 'meetings for learning' might work across OSAM. This idea follows the outcomes of Deb's snapshot survey across OSAM in which sharing meetings seemed to be a way forward to enrich our worshipping communities. As members at Oxford Meeting we are also members both of Oxford and Swindon Area Meeting and also of Britain Yearly Meeting. The activities of BYM are undertaken on our behalf and BYM is the public face of British Quakers.

Thirteen or fourteen Friends from four meetings participated (one Zoom connection was unstable). Given the size of Oxford meeting, and the *Friday with Friends* slot we were using, there were surprisingly few people from Oxford. It would be helpful to know some reasons for relatively low attendance from Oxford. If you have any comments that might be helpful in thinking about future blended OSAM-wide meetings, or engagement with OSAM and BYM more generally, it would be very helpful to share them. For myself, I have not always made the time to attend events such as the one I have reported here. But over the last few years I have found being part of OSAM, and of BYM, enriches the spiritual dimensions of my being as a Quaker.



Heart by Ursula Kneisel  
Photo by Sue Smith

## Orange Hearts to Welcome Refugees

Sue Smith

Oxford and Headington Quakers came together last week to show our hearts and support the **"Together with Refugees"** Week of Action.

**The orange heart** represents compassion for people fleeing war and persecution. Inspired by the refugee nation flag, and the colours of a lifebelt, the heart symbolises hope and kindness. It calls for a kinder, fairer and more effective approach to supporting refugees.

We were pleased to join with Christian Concern for One World (CCOW) and other churches to take part in an event in Bonn Square leafleting the public and encouraging people to send messages of support. As the Nationality and Borders Bill returns to Parliament, we want to convey to the Government that we want the UK to offer protection to people forced to flee their homes.

The Meeting House was alive with orange hearts! Those of you that have come in person to the Meeting House in the last week, will have seen how every window was decorated with hearts, thanks to the work of our Kickstart apprentices, Lorren and Jarrell. Refreshed with tea and coffee from the Kindness Café, we made cards and badges. Our very skilled and talented knitters and crocheters produced little orange hearts, and a garland for the Meeting House door.

## Pablo Neruda and Exile is Round



Portrait of Pablo Neruda by Karima Brooke

*Exile is round in shape, a circle, a ring.  
Your feet go in circles, you cross land  
And it is not your land ...*

Pablo Neruda, Exilio (The Exile)

## Seeking Sanctuary, Quakers, and Sanctuary Hosting

Juliet Henderson

Offering sanctuary is an ancient practice probably dating back to the beginning of our species. More recently in England, from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, sanctuary was a legal procedure recognised by both canon and secular law ensuring that once fugitives and felons had crossed the threshold of a churchyard the community was obliged to feed them and keep them safe for up to 40 days. As well as allowing time for negotiations for legal alternatives to their crimes and allowing those who confessed to their crimes to go into exile rather than be punished, it also marked churches as having a sacred duty to protect the vulnerable. This has continued into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, particularly in times of civil unrest in the US. Sanctuary for felons in England, however, was outlawed by James I in 1632.

From a more specifically Quaker historical perspective, when the Religious Society of Friends came into being in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, many Quakers had to seek sanctuary from persecution in England and the American colonies. Both George Fox and William Penn had repeated experiences of imprisonment and persecution. In the case of Penn, this led to his founding the Quaker colony of Pennsylvania, built on Quaker values and testimonies and providing sanctuary to religious dissidents and other persecuted peoples.

Today, as Quakers in Britain, we work in different ways to welcome and offer sanctuary to those escaping the effects of war, climate change, economic exploitation, and inequality – so often the result of Western politics and colonialist policies. The Quaker *Sanctuary Everywhere* movement began in 2017 after the production of the [Sanctuary Everywhere Manifesto](#) at Meeting for Sufferings. More locally, Oxford has been part of the [City of Sanctuary UK](#) movement since 2008 and has many organisations, asylum seekers, and refugees. These include [Asylum Welcome](#), [Refugee Resource](#), and Sanctuary Hosting. The idea for [Sanctuary Hosting](#) came at the Refugees Welcome demonstration in Oxford in July 2015 where many, including members of Oxford Meeting, volunteered to open up their home to a vulnerable migrant, refugee, or asylum seeker.

Sanctuary Hosting currently urgently needs more people in Oxford, where most of the refugees wish to be located, to host refugee guests. In this context, to encourage more to host, four Friends from Oxford Meeting - Karima Brooke, Steve Brooke, Anne Watson, and David Jeffery - kindly agreed to share some of their own experiences in short interviews, guided by the three questions below. Some of their responses are included as close to live voice as possible.

### **(1) Can you explain how the promptings to host refugees moved from first calling to reality?**

*'It's hard to identify first promptings, I've always had a spare room open to others who needed it.'*

*'We were among those who put our names forward at the Refugees Welcome rally outside the Sheldonian 6 years ago.'*

*'Do you remember all those photos of little boats trying to cross the channel in 2015? We've always been involved in working with refugees and the homeless, and at the rally in 2015 put our names forward.'*

*'Since the Huguenots, and earlier, the UK has always taken in refugees. It just struck me that if the government was criminalising and stopping them, it was we 'ordinary people' who had to help.'*

*'We have the benefit of a free house from the university linked to my work. Wanted to share that benefit with others less fortunate than ourselves while here.'*

*'We first heard about Sanctuary Hosting through a Sunday meeting, and the idea was present with us over many Sundays. The move to action may have been finally having enough space to host. We were also frustrated when the UK slashed its budget for international development – the UK is responsible for so much political instability globally, and we think there is an obligation to take responsibility for this.'*

## **(2) What uncertainties or difficulties did you experience?**

*'No uncertainties but then we could choose how long we wanted people to stay and take a rest at times. We have a spare bathroom and bedroom which helped both sides have some independence.'*

*'We worried about upsetting our guest with questions about what brought them here or not being able to give them the support needed. Sanctuary Hosting though doesn't expect hosts to help people with the legal process.'*

*'A newly married couple from Eritrea were our first guests. He had been here for a fairly long time and acquired refugee status. She had just arrived via Sudan. She was unfamiliar with our kitchen appliances and did not want to listen to our guidance. She just switched the microwave on and off at the plug which meant we had to re-programme it every time. Or pressed all the buttons on the washing machine at the same time which triggered the child lock. In the end, we stuck tape all over the sockets. It was funny really.'*

*'You get to meet each other before they move in. It can feel like a slightly unequal situation. They are generally more worried and scared since they have never lived in a white person's house, or a place which does not belong to a relative.'*

*'There were all the usual uncertainties about having a stranger in your house. Would it be safe? Would you get along? Would there be serious misunderstandings? But Sanctuary Hosting took us through an initial training, and we were reassured to know that both we and the guest were assigned a support worker as a matter of course.'*



*Syrian refugee in Istanbul, 2016  
alexhillphoto, public domain*

## **(3) What stories do you have about your guests and what you have learned from them?**

*'Learnt so much about how cruel the immigration system is. Particularly for unaccompanied minors who get kicked out when they become adults. Terrible.'*



*'Learning about yourself while learning about others.'*

*'We have learnt the need for guests to rely on digital devices to contact everything they need: solicitors, health, food parcels, family, other people from their language community.'*

*'The extent of human resilience and the kindness of those in desperate circumstances. Learnt tolerance. An Iranian convert to Christianity challenged my way of thinking. But seeing the sacrifices he made for his faith and the support he received from his church changed my perspectives.'*

*'The Eritrean couple stayed in touch and sent photos of their baby when they were dispersed (relocated) to North of England. You get a sense you're a small part of their story.'*

*'We can offer them the stability they need at times of upheaval.'*

*'We have been hosts to three or four people who are very well-used to living a fully gadgetted modern life so, while we have had people who needed to be inducted into kitchen and bathroom appliances etc. etc, this only applies to about half our guests. Illiteracy has also been an issue with some guests.'*

*'Some of our guests have tried to persuade us to eat breakfasts that they have cooked for us - piles of spiced vegetables with masses of onions etc. etc. We tried, we really tried.'*

*'We have hosted only one guest so far, and he was wonderful. I personally had a lot of my own misconceptions about asylum seekers and their homes challenged. We have built a friendship, and while I don't expect we will have this of every guest, it is still a blessing.'*



## Poems from a Friend

Juliet Henderson

*Michael Taylor, is a translator, writer (some of you may have heard of his book [Rembrandt's Nose](#)), and poet. He is also an old friend who kindly shares monthly collections of his poems. His work always reveals to me the deeper spirit and essence in just about every aspect of our and others' lives. This October collection is no exception, and I am moved to share it with Friends.*

### SUMMER'S END, by Michael Taylor

#### BUTTERFLIES

To be airborne, to be light, to lift, to glide  
above flowers and be one with the wind  
the sun sleeping between trees.

To be nowhere and everywhere at once  
forever free  
as though air could shift like dreams.

To slip like music from instrument  
to instrument, to be nothing  
and everything in one breath.

To be those exhalations of summer  
quivering on wings as frail as thought.

To be anything really but this self  
plodding from place to place.

#### SWALLOWS

They have gone. The west wind  
has cleared the sky of them.  
I didn't even see them assemble on  
wires.

They've gone.

The air is strangely still.  
The silence is the silence of their not  
being there.

#### CLOUDS

You'd think they had been tossed in a game  
or idle experiment  
with shadow and light, veils behind veils  
or walls piled on walls.

Some lead nowhere.

Others are cities lost in sand.

Some are as huge  
as the palaces of demented kings  
but in another minute  
it's as if they had never existed.

Light always wins. Light  
sweeps above, between, below  
the shifting romances  
they're always building.

Photo by SL Granum



### RAIN

One by one the raindrops fall in the dust.  
Then by twos and threes, then in a sudden rush.

“At last,” you think, imagining  
what it feels like to be the earth

### ROCK

Inside rocks it’s dark. They crop up in fields or fall from cliffs or tumble down slopes.  
You pick them up or stumble upon them. Impermeable to light, they open to air. You  
follow their windings where rivers churn, animals take shelter, men once hunted.  
They are mostly irregular. Even when shaped by the sea, their ovals and ellipses are  
imperfect. Except for sheets of alabaster, they do not let day through. They are like  
darkness made hard. But a starless moonless impenetrable darkness. This is  
something you cannot truly understand. If you were inside one of them you couldn’t  
discern it’s color.

### BEEES

The forest sings. You’d think  
it would be still on an evening like this.

But hundreds of wings  
hum among the high leaves.

Even down here  
earth and moss and ferns  
murmur among the long shadows  
and sunbeams.

Whether heard or unheard  
the forest sings.

### LEAVES

Summer’s torn. Scraps of warmth scatter  
this way and that under trees  
They’re bronze and yellow and orange and red  
yet you would live forever in the green  
they leave behind and seem to defy.

### STARS

They will not fly away. They shone  
before I was born  
and will shine long after I die.  
Serfs and kings saw them.  
They shone for emperors  
and philosophers, for Ovid  
by the Black Sea and Homer’s heroes  
beneath the walls of Troy  
and the nameless masters  
who breathed life into bison  
on dark walls.

When all the animals have gone  
and there will be no one to miss them  
they will still shine.

Photo by SL Granum

## Sonnet 8, Intercambio Tango

Karima Brooke



It takes two to tango, the saying goes.  
Cheek to cheek, hip to hip, closer, closer,  
A quarter turn, then the tempo slows.  
Who consents, submits, plays aggressor?

One lifts the other, the violins swell,  
Art mimics life and so life becomes art.  
Dance may be a flight from an unvoiced hell,  
Or simply a chance to try a new part.

Some say men with men were just practising;  
Others take a hidden from history view.  
Photos of *tanguista* women kissing  
And changing roles mid-way is nothing new.

If a tango partner's needed today,  
Who cares it's a he, a she, or a they?

### Resources for Advice on End-of-Life Planning

Anne Watson & Sherry Granum  
on behalf of the Pastoral Care Group

Several Friends responded to our General Circulation message about making the worrying but necessary decisions about the end of life. We felt it might be helpful to give a brief list of sources of advice, collected by Quaker Life.

Wills: [Citizens Advice](#) can help, or consult the simple guide on the Government website [www.gov.uk/make-will](http://www.gov.uk/make-will).

Funeral wishes: There is a form setting out the appropriate information at <https://www.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/support-for-meetings/funerals-1#heading-1>. You may also wish to consider paying for your funeral in advance through a funeral plan made in conjunction with a funeral director. A funeral wishes form can be kept by Oxford Meeting office for access by the funeral group.

Powers of Attorney: A 'Lasting Power of Attorney' (LPA) enables friends or relatives to act for you while you are still alive. There are two different types of LPA. One covers personal health and welfare, the other covers property and financial affairs. The health and welfare LPA can only be used when you're unable to make your own decisions. By contrast, the property and financial affairs LPA can be used, *with your permission*, as soon as it is registered. No LPA can take effect until it is registered with the [Office of the Public Guardian](#) (for England and Wales), a process that can take up to five months to complete.

The gov.uk website offers online step-by-step [guidance for making your own LPAs](#), enabling many people to do this without the help of a solicitor.

## All-age nativity: An opportunity to get involved

Matthew Gee  
Children & Young People's Committee

We really hope that you will all take part in our all-age, single-meeting nativity play as part of our next all-age meeting for worship on **Sunday 5 December at 10:30**.

Oxford Meeting has a long practice of holding three all-age meetings for worship each year, which are an opportunity for children, teenagers, and adults to worship together rather than in our separate meetings. All-age meetings typically include some programmed or semi-programmed elements, and some singing. They currently take place within the 10:30 'single' meeting on the first Sundays of March, October, and December. The December all-age meeting often – although not always – includes a nativity or Christmas-themed play.

We are having to experiment with slightly different formats for all-age meetings for worship at present due to coronavirus restrictions. We are also aware that as a result of restrictions due to coronavirus, Friends are currently worshipping in smaller groups. Therefore, we wanted this December's all-age worship to be something where we can come together as a community and include all the different Friends in our meeting: whether young or old; worshipping on Zoom or the meeting house; part of the Sunday meeting or a mid-week meeting.

Therefore, this year we are planning that, rather than the nativity play being performed solely by the children's meetings, we have an all-age, all-meeting blended nativity play. Our vision is that each scene will be performed by a different group of Friends in the meeting. In order for those who worship in the meeting house and on Zoom to all take part and hear, we think this will need to be recorded in advance, rather than being performed live.

Your task is to find a group of other Quakers who you can work with to produce one brief scene of a nativity play. That might be an existing group in the meeting – such as the garden volunteers, or people who attend the breakfast meeting, or Young Adult Friends – or it might be a group of Friends who just come together for this. Once you have found a

group who are willing to take part, let Matthew Gee or another member of Children & Young People's Committee know by **Sunday 14 November** that you want to take part and the approximate size of your group. On 14 November, we will give each group the title of a scene in the nativity story. It might be something like 'travelling to Bethlehem on a donkey' or 'the angels appear to the shepherds'. Your group then has from 14 November to 28 December to come up with a way of presenting your scene.

Again, you can be creative about

this – it might involve acting, or music, or a painting, or a poem, or whatever appeals to you. You might want to tell the story of your scene in a traditional way, or you might want to think about its relevance to contemporary issues. The only limit is that there will be a tight time limit for each scene (probably about two minutes), and you (or we) will need to be able to film your scene (e.g. on a mobile phone, iPad, or Zoom). If your group needs technical assistance we will hopefully be able to link you up to Friends in the meeting who can help.

Children & Young People's Committee will then weave together the different contributions of scenes, together with contributions from the children's meetings, into something that will be shared as part of a blended all-age meeting for worship on the theme of 'community' on 5 December.

We really hope that Friends from across our community will feel able to take part, and hope this will give Friends a chance to reflect on an aspect of the nativity story, together with other members of our community, in a fun and creative way.



Romanian Icon—Nativity

# Quaker Videos in this Month's Forty-Three

Michael Hughey

In the first video, Ben Pink Dandelion and others discuss the evolution of Quaker beliefs and traditions. In the second, Debbie B. Ramsey, a Quaker and career police officer, describes her efforts outside the Quaker Community to put her faith into action. The third addresses the issue of how we can help visitors and newcomers to feel welcomed and included.



**Ben Pink Dandelion**  
Quaker Author and Scholar  
Woodbrooke, Birmingham, England

## [What are the Quaker SPICES?](#)

*Simplicity  
Peace  
Integrity  
Community  
Equality  
Stewardship*

7 Minutes

<https://youtu.be/eOAmZchZbTo>

*Quaker Speak*



**Debbie B. Ramsey**  
Stony Run Friends Meeting  
Baltimore, Maryland

## [Serving Outside the Quaker Community](#)

*I am very, very happy to know that where I worship speaks to many, many aspects of a community that is in need, that is in harm's way, who are threatened, and that's just how we put our faith in action.*

4 Minutes

<https://youtu.be/uJbpTKxCTjs>

*Quaker Speak*



**Lisa Graustein**  
Three Rivers Meeting  
Boston, Massachusetts

## [What's the Difference Between a Welcoming and an Inclusive Space?](#)

*...Things we are doing that create barriers to people bringing their whole selves.*

7 Minutes

<https://youtu.be/A6jrtMCE6PQ>

*Quaker Speak*



# 43 St Giles Community Noticeboard online!



## Events November



### Remembrance Sunday

All are welcome to join our silent vigil for peace, held outside the Meeting House at 10:30 on Remembrance Sunday, 14 November.

This year, we are pleased to contribute a prayer to the Remembrance Day Service itself.

The Kindness Café will provide tea and coffee to warm you up during or afterwards, in the Garden Room of the Meeting House.

### Annual Service to Remember the Homeless

Tuesday 9 November, 14:00  
St Michel at North Gate

A service to remember all those who have died on the streets over the last year. All are welcome.

### White poppies for

peace are

available

in the lobby of

the Meeting House.



**Kindness Café**  
Serving tea, coffee, cakes and kindness —

OxfordQuakers@themeetinghouseoxford



**riends!** follow us on facebook and instagram



**ooh!**

# CALENDAR FOR NOVEMBER 2021

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many meetings and events are being held via Zoom-Rooms.  
Please contact the office for more details.

Email: [oxford@oxfordquakers.org](mailto:oxford@oxfordquakers.org)  
Telephone: +44 (0)1865 557373



Photo by SL Granum

## OXFORD MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

Meetings for worship are via Zoom and/or in person.  
For more information, contact the Office at  
[office@oxfordquakers.org](mailto:office@oxfordquakers.org) +44 (0)1865 557373

### First Sunday of each month:

Meeting for Worship 10:30-11:30 (in person & Zoom)  
MfW for Business 12:15 (in person & Zoom)

### All other Sundays:

Meetings for Worship 09:30-10:15 (in person and Zoom)  
11:00-12:00 (in person and Zoom)

### Monday:

Young Adult Friends 19:00-21:00 (in person and Zoom)

### Tuesday:

Meeting for Worship 07:30-08:00 (in person only)

### Wednesday:

Meeting for Worship 07:30-08:00 (Zoom only)  
Meeting for Worship 11:30-12:15 (in person & Zoom)

### Friday:

Meeting for Worship 07:30-08:00 (Zoom only)

## HEADINGTON MEETING FOR WORSHIP

Headington Meeting meets each Sunday at 10:00  
at Old Headington Village Hall,  
Dunstan Road, Headington, OX3 9BY

For full details see

<https://headington.quakermeeting.org/>

## From Quaker Faith and Practice

*"All our senses are given to us to enjoy, and to praise God. The smell of the sea, of the blossom borne on the wind, of the soft flesh of a little baby; the taste of a ripe plum or bread fresh from the oven, the feel of warm cat's fur, or the body of a lover – these are all forms of thanksgiving prayer. ..."*

*When Jesus said, 'I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly', I do not think He was speaking only of spiritual life – I think He meant us to have positive delight in all the good things in this wonderful world which his Father created."*

Bella Bown. c.1980  
QF&P 21.24

*Forty-Three* is available online:  
<https://brooksidepress.org/quaker/>  
and on the Oxford Quakers website:  
[www.oxfordquakers.org/newsletter](http://www.oxfordquakers.org/newsletter)

If you are considering writing an article or notice but would prefer it not to go online, please don't hesitate to contribute it. Just indicate that the piece is not for inclusion in the internet version. The same applies to calendar items.

*The views expressed in this newsletter  
do not necessarily reflect those of the editors.*

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