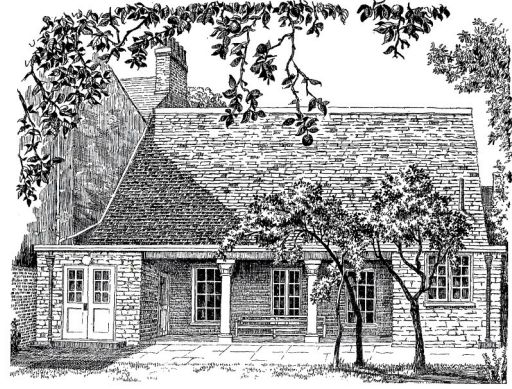


Forty-Three newsletter

Number 513
January 2022



Oxford Friends Meeting

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Remembering Desmond Tutu

**Bernard Clarke, Caroline Roaf,
Jeanne Warren, Ann Watson**

Desmond Tutu's death on 26 December brought world-wide outpourings of admiration, along with comprehensive analyses of his extraordinary life.

Several Friends share here their own memories of Tutu's visits to Peers School in 1990, and the Sheldonian Theatre in 2010.

Bernard Clarke, Headteacher of Peers School 1988-1999:

One of a number of remarkable features of Peers School, Littlemore, in the 1980s and 90s was its well-established and very active link with Katumba II School in south west Tanzania. In alternate years, small groups of students and staff from each school would travel 5000 miles to spend a month living and working with their counterparts.

It was the link, in particular, that prompted a number of colleagues to get me to invite Archbishop Tutu to come to Peers during his visit to Oxford for an honorary degree – the sort of speculative letter headteachers sometimes write with no expectation of a reply.



Desmond Tutu
7 Oct 1931 – 26 Dec 2021

*Photo by Benny Gool,
Wikimedia Commons*

So, what joy when, a few weeks later, his secretary rang to ask if he could come to lunch!

For many young people at that time, 'Desmond Tutu' was scarcely, if at all, a name. So the archbishop became a feature of the curriculum for every student.

The visit was for everyone, and the only space that could accommodate 500 students, the entire teaching and support staff, governors, and numerous visitors was the sports hall.

Caroline Roaf, a stalwart of the Katumba Link, had been nominated chauffeur to collect the archbishop ... because she had the cleanest car!

Inevitably, there was a hint of uncertainty about how several hundred young people would react to the arrival of somebody of whom they had only recently heard. As he beamingly walked into the sports hall, waving and shouting "Hello, everybody", the spontaneous ovation was simply breathtaking. He then demonstrated his consummate ability to communicate with any and everybody. The entire audience was charmed into rapt silence ... and laughter.

Lunch in the dining hall followed, and the archbishop greeted and shook hands with almost everybody in the

Continued next page ...

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 or a paper copy can be left in the pigeonhole of any editor. Items for the calendar or community noticeboard can be emailed to office@oxfordquakers.org. For information: tel. 01865 557373 or visit www.oxfordquakers.org

queue, demonstrating his self-confessed ability to get to the front!

It was all over in a little over 2 hours, but what a privilege to be in the presence of one of the genuinely great men of the age and what a genuinely unforgettable experience for everybody.

Walking around the campus during the afternoon, I came across a 15 year old, sitting by himself, crying. I asked him what was wrong. His reply, "He didn't shake hands with me".



*Desmond Tutu and Bernard Clarke 1990
Just as the wind turned the umbrella inside out ...
Photo supplied by B. Clarke*

Caroline Roaf:

I've been recalling Desmond Tutu's visit and the amazing experience of picking him up and driving him to Peers School. (I was selected because I had just taken ownership of a second-hand car, and a colleague, when asked who should be the taxi, pointed at me and declared mine to be the only clean car on the campus.)

But the real surprise to me – never having met any kind of celebrity before – was his professionalism.

I'd collected him at Christ Church with his chaplain (his wife was driven in a second car by Paul Wilmott); after about two minutes chit chat he suddenly turned to me (as I quivered with fright in case I drove into something on the journey) and said "Now tell me about the school". I had to think faster than I've ever thought in my life to give him some salient points: the Tanzania link (which was in process); the curriculum; the 'every child matters' philosophy; and I can't remember what else.

BUT we eventually got to the Sports Hall (his weight having nearly broken the car's axle as we drove in over humps etc. on the way). When he addressed the audience (and who will ever forget that), blow me down if he didn't weave in everything I'd told him. I was utterly gobsmacked at his pure professionalism and what to me was the unimaginable skill of a superstar. He'd absorbed what he needed with a mere ten minutes notice, and then turned that into something to inspire hundreds of youngsters and their teachers for ever.

And it was pouring with rain – and I happened to have a large green broly which he borrowed, and I kept it as a souvenir for years and years until it utterly fell apart ...

Anne Watson:

Some time in the early 90s Desmond Tutu was visiting Oxford on his way to an Anglican conference. I was teaching in Peers School, which at that time was the most racially and socially diverse school in Oxford. Bernard Clarke was the headteacher, and other Friends and attenders were also there.

One of the staff was married to one of the people at Christchurch who were hosting Desmond, so she suggested he might visit our school. We were not used to having whole-school assemblies of any kind, and the only place everyone would fit in was the public Sports Hall, with everyone sitting on the floor. Imagine that – about 500 adolescent students (I am guessing the numbers) unusually sitting on the floor waiting for an unusual event.

It was raining heavily, and soon a diminutive figure under a huge umbrella appeared at the entrance. Instantly everyone fell silent. His charisma filled the

hall as he beamed and spread his arms wide as if to hug everyone. He had recently coined the phrase 'rainbow nation' for South Africa. As he appeared to embrace them with his gesture he called them the 'rainbow people' and told them that without all the colours there would be no rainbow – the sign of hope.

It was very moving to see the students' reactions to this tiny black very important person speaking to them as if they were special.

Jeanne Warren:

Desmond Tutu died early on Boxing Day. I feel lucky to have heard him in person once in my life, when he gave a talk in the Sheldonian some years ago on a visit to Oxford.

He had a wonderful presence. I remember him telling us all that God loved us. He opened with a typical bit of humour, remarking that there was an Oxford degree called a 'Desmond': a 2–2.



Monthly Appeal - January 2022 Oxford Winter Night Shelter / The Living Room

Elisabeth Salisbury

At almost the last moment the City Council has refused permission for OWNS to open again from January to March.

OWNS (the Oxford Winter Night Shelter), like the Gatehouse a project of Churches Together in Oxford, was not able to operate in 2021 because of COVID restrictions. In 2022 it was planned that, instead of using seven different Churches each working one night a week, the entire project would be at one Church — making organisation, and COVID secure precautions, easier.

Selection and training of volunteers went on even while it was not clear if the Night Shelter would be allowed to operate. Although the Night Shelter will not be open, funds are still needed for staff, running costs, and food and drink for the guests of the Living Room, which is open in the day to provide a warm welcoming space where guests can shower, wash clothes and find some peace from the discomfort of living on the streets.

If you can help financially here are the details for giving:

Bank: Barclays Cornmarket
Sort Code: 20-65-20
Account: 83541320

Cheques made out to OWNS to be sent to:
57C St Clements Street, OX4 1AG



Painting by Hugo

Editor's note: Every once in a while during the Afterword of a zoom MfW, we glimpse some of Hugo's wonderful artwork. We asked him whether he would like to contribute something to the newsletter and he sent us this amazing Central and South American caiman.



Caiman, by Hugo Spencer

Quaker Faith & Practice Revision

Tas Cooper

The Book of Discipline Revision Committee (compiling the next book of Faith & Practice) welcomes your ideas! Please send extracts you like and other suggestions for what you'd like to see in a new book of Faith & Practice via our online form <http://forms.quaker.org.uk/qfp-idea/> or write to Michael Booth at Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London, NW1 2BJ — or at qfp@quaker.org.uk.

Further information is here:

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/resources/quaker-faith-and-practice/revising-quaker-faith-practice>

I should also add, if anyone would like to find out more about what the committee is currently doing, they can ask me! Email tascooper@hotmail.com or phone 07849 247141

Being Humble and Bold?

Deb Arrowsmith

27.12.21

Reading the Epistle from heads of Quaker Agencies (The Friend 17.12.21), I was struck by the following paragraph and, as we launch ourselves into the choppy waters of 2022, I wonder how the encouragement resonates with you?

“We call on Friends to be humble and to be bold, to be faithful and determined, to work inwardly and outwardly, within our Quaker communities and outside them, to build the just and peaceful world God tells us can be ours.” Got it? Right, best get on with it, then?

I felt this directive could slot straight into our little red book: “Be humble and bold ... faithful and determined ... work inward and outward and ...” Perhaps – shake it all about? I wondered. We are already exhorted to live adventurously, walk cheerfully, let our lives speak – and that’s just no. 27; there are 41 other Advices and Queries to get to grips with.



Photo by SL Granum

Don’t get me wrong; we all need support, encouragement, and sharing perhaps, of what we Quakers are all about and the difference we can *actually* make within ourselves, our families, communities, towns, cities, and countries. I was pleased God got a mention though – right in there saying (apparently) it *is* possible. A just and peaceful world *is* possible, but the reality is that we actually have to *do something* to achieve that.

So, what have we been doing about it this year in Oxford Meeting House? Well, there’s stuff that’s routine for us but deserves a mention: the Remembrance Day vigil, Hugh’s giant hanging poppy, white poppy sales and white poppy wreath, and now inclusion of us and our message of peace in Oxford’s Service of Remembrance itself. Then the COP26 posters developed by our SEE Justice group, and the many willing volunteers leafleting on the street raising awareness of Quakers’ responses to climate change. We got rid of gas in favour of controllable electric heating. Good work folks!

We are known as a distinctive worshipping community keen to help out alongside other people of faith involved with refugees, asylum seekers, and the homeless. We held the only in-person meeting of the Council of Faiths this year too. We open our doors as much as we can to so many groups of so much variety we make Heinz beans look mean.

Then the unleashing of staff and the support of the meeting has allowed two apprentices, Jarell and Lorren, to make a fresh start on their careers with support. We will shortly welcome a third apprentice – Joe – but more of that next month. The need for change in some our processes (simpler, streamlined working together) has been met with substantial enthusiasm around Oxford and Swindon Area

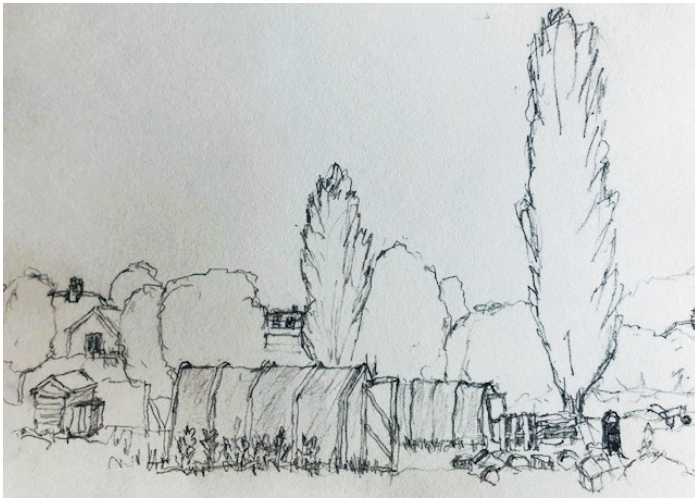
Meeting (OSAM), in the smaller meetings particularly.

Encouragingly, we may be able to collectively agree to consolidate our financial work across the area; there is a strong desire to pool our resources in outreach as well – to help each other, offer ideas and support, and to share best practice using OSAM-wide links

to advantage. Collectively we have a stronger voice, as long as we are all singing the same words, of course, and getting the collective message over.

And then there’s you and me ... what have we done to change; to make a difference? I know Quakers individually, quietly, persuasively, engage practically and financially with causes dear to their hearts and our testimonies, but can we be bold and humble together in 2022 and let people know?

Well so far I’ve merely changed into my pyjamas and fluffy slippers at an Area Meeting to make a point about change, and I’m not sure that’s really going far enough! I have wondered for so long about work and worship – one and the same I thought – and how best to achieve being “faithful and determined” as our Quaker agency heads would wish us to be. Here’s hoping that in 2022 we cannot just *think* this through together but rather *action* it together and see it carried along by humble but bold and lively spirit.



City Farm, by Juliet Henderson

Breath

Juliet Henderson

Life's a privilege
 Of breath sucked in
 By the bloody miracle
 Of the infant calling for its mother's love
 That becomes a shifting pattern
 Of inhalations and exhalations
 Steering the soul
 Through its brilliant intensities
 Its digestions and
 Its moments of calm repose
 The same breath
 Threaded through time
 Till the last racketing moan
 And there's no second time round

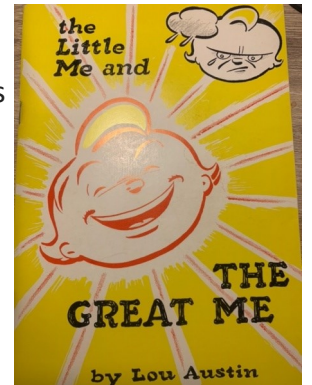
Three Small Books

Carol Lange

Author Lou Austin says these three small books are for "Teachers, parents and all who love children". It was suggested at Meeting that I share them with *Forty-Three*. I used them with my two daughters. They used them with their children.

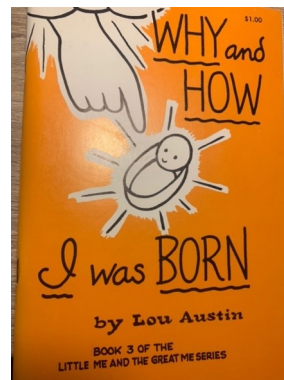
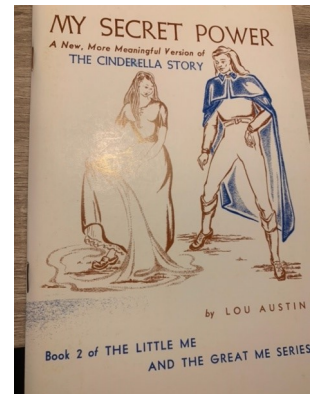
1. *The Little Me and the Great Me*

"This series aims to revive an old neglected truth: that there are two forces, two wills in every person: one, the will of the human self, the other - the will of the divine self. Between these two forces there is a continuous running battle."



2. *My Secret Power*

"A New, more meaningful version of the Cinderella story."



3. *Why and How I was Born*

"When we leave God out of the picture, we miss the glory and the meaning of His truly priceless gift - procreation. Reverently we should appreciate that in this vital matter, God has made us, in a very real sense, co-creators with Him."

The books are by Lou Austin and can be obtained from:

The Partnership Foundation
 Capon Springs, West Virginia 26823, USA

Aims for a New Year

Keith Wilson

Give over thine own willing, give over thy own running, give over thine own desiring to know or be anything and sink down to the seed which God sows in the heart, and let that grow in thee and be in thee and breathe in thee and act in thee; and thou shalt find by sweet experience that the Lord knows that and loves and owns that, and will lead it to the inheritance of Life, which is its portion.

(QF&P 26.70 - Isaac Penington 1661)

At the start of this new year I've been thinking that, when they're formulated just right, goals and targets – resolutions if you like – are very useful in encouraging us to try harder. But if they ask too much, they can be discouraging and demotivating. For me, Isaac Penington's exhortation to "give over thine own willing ..." asks too much. I note that he doesn't say "try to do these things"; he presents them as imperatives – in modern parlance, he says "just do it!" I'm sorry, Isaac, I can't. I am not that Quakerly.

Do Penington's words mean nothing to me? That's not at all what I'm saying. I feel the need to try to respond to God's will, but I have no hope of reaching the level of submission Penington seems to demand. That probably makes me a very bad Quaker, but I am a Quaker nonetheless, and in my everyday life, I do try to feel some purpose and to respond, albeit in very small, even trivial ways to God's will.

Perhaps I've achieved some success in my efforts to see "the other side of the story". When I'm presented with a situation where someone seems to have behaved badly or irrationally, I try very hard to understand why they may have acted in the way they did. I've been gifted with a lively imagination, so I can usually come up with suggestions that are at least potentially credible. And often that gives me a whole new outlook on the matter, which I can sometimes share with others.

I'm much less successful in other areas of submission to God's will, such as frugality. I've tried for a long time to reduce my energy consumption,

to print fewer sheets of paper, not to waste food and so on. I'm still conscious that I could do more, however, and one of the few positive things about lockdown was that it made me think very carefully about minimising waste, as everything was so much harder to replace.

I can't really count seeing all people as equal among my successes because I've felt this to be true for as long as I can remember. Nevertheless, I know that I have no room for complacency; recognising my own prejudices is no trivial task.

When it comes to truthfulness, I would again claim a modicum of success, but certainly no more. I know that, like all Quaker testimonies, it's far from being as simple to put into practice as it sounds. Without deliberately trying to be contentious, I believe that there are situations where a lie is probably a better reflection of God's will than the truth.

To sum up, I can't do the big things Penington requires of me; I don't think I will ever be able to "give over mine own willing" and "giving over mine own desiring" is definitely out of the question! So, in 2022 I'll have to content myself with responding in small ways while always being conscious that I must strive to do better. I hope that's enough to make my life a little more purposeful, and to provide some small justification for my hope of being a Quaker in more than name alone.



Happy New Year!

Newsletter Team

Very best wishes to everyone for 2022.
The Newsletter Team is immensely grateful for all your creative, thoughtful, inspiring contributions to *Forty-Three*.



Photos by SL Granum

Jane and Simon Fisher with seasonal wassailers

Quaker Voices for Mental Health

Becky Riddell

Friends may be aware that one year ago Oxford Quakers established a special interest group called Quaker Voices for Mental Health (QVMH), supported by the Quaker Mental Health Fund UK (www.quakermhfund.uk).

The second annual QVMH gathering will be by Zoom on Saturday 5 February 2022. More information will be available in January from the editors of QVMH News (QVMHeditors@gmail.com).

Our Garden at 43

The Garden Team

The garden team is putting the garden to rest for the Christmas period and will start meeting again in February. All are welcome to join Thursday gardening 11:00 till 15:00. Gardening, coffee, lunch and wonderful conversation on offer!



Martin Sweeping leaves in the garden.

Photo by Jacqui Mansfield

Peaceful Youth Research Project

Susannah Wright

Editor's note: [Susannah Wright](#) is a colleague of Juliet Henderson's in Humanities and Social Sciences at Brookes University.

Were you a pacifist or involved in peace campaigns as a child, before 1970? Or did you talk to children about pacifism? Were children involved in peace campaigns with you? If so, I'd love to interview you for a University research project about children and the peace movement from 1919 to 1969.

The interview would take no more than one hour of your time and could take place at a time of your convenience. At the moment, all interviews will take place via telephone or video-meeting. For

more information about the wider project and what the interviews would involve, please see <https://sites.google.com/brookes.ac.uk/peacefullyouth1919-69/home>. Or you can email me: susannahwright@brookes.ac.uk.

Throughout the 20th century, thinking about, learning about, and campaigning for peace has been an important element of the lives of many English children. It remains so today. For the period 1919-1969, from the end of the First World War to the end of the first 'wave' of CND mass membership, many thousands of children in England were involved in some way. For some this was a matter of personal conscience. Others learned about the topic at home, in school, through religious groups (including, of course, the Quakers), and political groups. Some were committed and involved campaigners who engaged with or even initiated events and direct action.

For me, though, the perspectives of these children and of the adults who advised and involved them are not highlighted enough in existing texts on the peace movement; these are more about the national campaigns and movement leaders.

In my project on children in the peace movement in England (1919-1969), I want to know as much as possible about these children's experiences and views. I am looking at written sources – from the peace movement, in school magazines, and in individual memoirs.

Some peace movement activists have reported their childhood experiences also in the oral history interviews retained by the British Library and Imperial War Museum. But I believe that there are many more whose stories have yet to be recorded. I've already interviewed a few and feel immensely privileged to learn about their experiences.

If this resonates with your childhood in the pre-1970 period, or you know someone this applies to, please do contact me to arrange an interview, or pass the details on. Given present conditions all interviews would be online or telephone at the moment. Or if you just want to find out more about the project please contact me too!

Quaker Videos in this Month's *Forty-Three* — January 2022

In the first video, a number of Friends describe their feelings about Quaker Beliefs. The second video explores the nature of silence during worship. The third describes Quakers in action at COP26.



Friends' Meeting House Brighton

Quaker Beliefs

Different Quakers share their thoughts on what Quakers believe.

Quakers in Britain

3 Minutes

<https://youtu.be/IUSwpN2-yaw>



Quaker Worship

When worshipping we're all connecting to the divine essence, or God, or Spirit or – we use many different terms but we're all connecting to the same thing within that silence.

Quakers in Britain

3 Minutes

<https://youtu.be/dXCnxQ9dmMY>



What did Quakers do at COP26?

A short summary of the action and activities of Quakers in Britain in Glasgow during COP26.

Quakers in Britain

2 Minutes

<https://youtu.be/qDVwjGK9Qy8>



43 St Giles Community Noticeboard online!



Events January 2022

The office will be open from 4th January with all staff returning from the 10th January

Wednesday 26th January

11:00—15:00

A step by step guide on the basics of using Facebook and creating an account.

ALL WELCOME

facebook WORKSHOP



With our Kindness Café returning..

Come along for tea, biscuits and good company all while learning about Facebook and the pros and cons of social media.



Forty-Three Newsletter

Smart scan ! Pick up a copy of *Forty-Three* Newsletter in 43 St Giles. We print a limited number of copies, but if you have a smart phone you can scan the QR code on the stand in the lobby.

Try this out :

How to scan Open the camera app on your phone. Point the camera towards the Image. Then you'll be taken to the *Forty-Three* Newsletter web page.



Zoom Gatherings for those interested in collaborative work across the OSAM area. Come along to share and exchange ideas and solutions – to help us find common ground.
Communications – Zoom – website – newsletters Weds 12 January
Outreach Zoom (including schools outreach) Weds 19 January
Premises management – Zoom – Lettings/ bookings/ buildings Weds 26 January
All at 17:30—18.30

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89355942467?pwd=MHZEZmF3UWVwVGtqRnFuMDIqdmwrdz09>

CALENDAR FOR JANUARY 2022

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

Telephone: +44 (0)1865 557373

From Quaker Faith and Practice

The remarkable discovery we can make is that love has not deserted us, and that it is available to us now in a new way. Our own willingness to love and to give in the world about us is the secret of recovery and the new beginning.

—Margaret Torrie,
co-founder of Cruse Bereavement Support,
1970

OXFORD MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

Meetings for worship are via Zoom and/or in person.
For more information, contact the Office at
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:

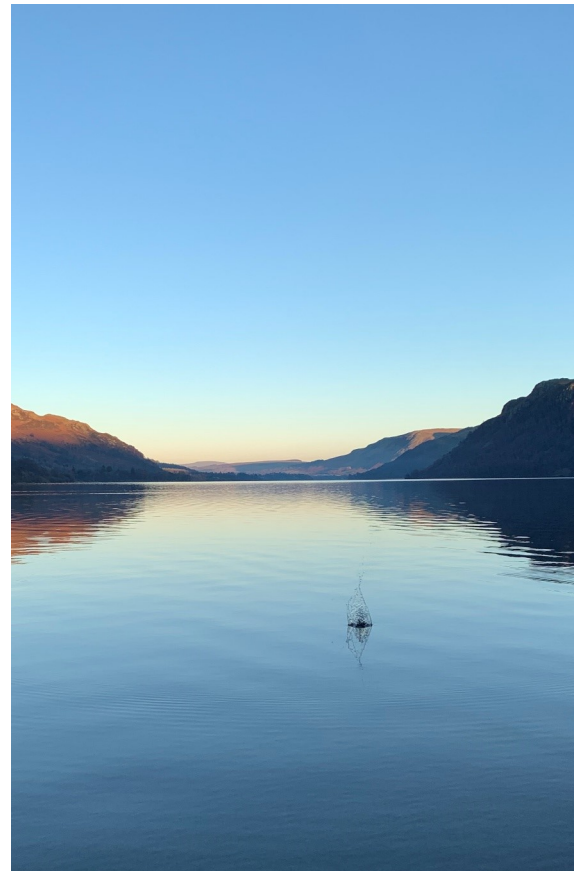
Meeting for Worship 07:30-08:00 (Zoom only)

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/>



Catching the Moment photo by Becca Lewis

Forty-Three is available online,
<https://brooksidepress.org/quaker/>
and on the Oxford Quakers website,
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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