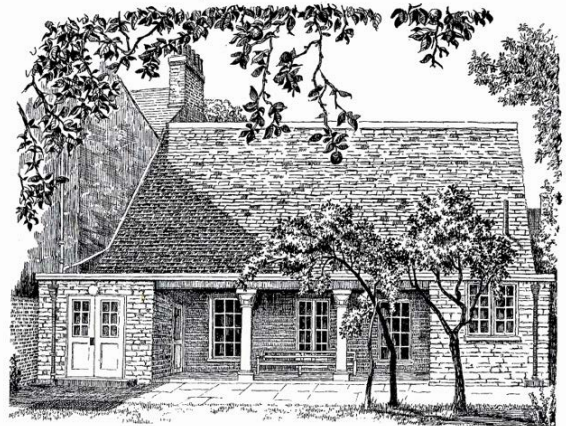


# Forty-Three Newsletter

Number 543  
October 2023



## Oxford Friends Meeting

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## This is NOT Fair Trade: Oxford Quakers go to No Faith in War

Sue Smith

*Refusal to fight with weapons is not surrender. We are not passive when threatened by the greedy, the cruel, the tyrant, the unjust. We will struggle to remove the causes of impasse, and confrontation by every means of nonviolent resistance available.*

*QFP 24.10*

Nine Oxford and Swindon Friends (Alan and Virginia Allport, Linet Arthur, Judith Atkinson, Judith Baker, Tas Cooper, Gwithian Doswell, Sue Smith, Rita White) made the long journey to East London to be part of No Faith in War day – Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> September. It is part of two weeks of protest against the Defence and Security Equipment International (DSEI) Arms Fair at the Excel Centre.

This time we from Oxford were few, compared to 2019, when hundreds of Friends came from all over Britain. Last time we brought 25 Friends from Oxford

Meeting. This time we were nine. I was not surprised. I asked myself why?

Many Oxford Friends are older and more infirm than we were five years ago.

Many of us are confused by the war in Ukraine. A number have Ukrainian guests, or Ukrainian friends, who challenge our peace testimony. It is often hard to express the need to work for peace many years before a war begins – by which time it is usually too late. The new police and criminal justice laws have put people off taking nonviolent action, as the repression of protest has strengthened.

We imagine that for many other meetings these are reasons too.

But for the nine of us, it was a day of building relationships, renewing our commitment and bearing witness against the immorality of the arms trade. We took our banner – resplendent in dark blue with

bombs and people, saying ‘This is not Fair Trade! Quakers for Peace’. It makes a tremendous splashy statement.

We were taking strength and faith from many Friends who wrote and said they wished they could be with us, had life been different.

The epilogue was the high point of the day – sitting in a big circle in the shade of the trees, in a pool of reflective silence, with the planes, trains, and lorries grinding past. The final song moved me greatly – when I rise’.

It is so simple and effective at continuing the spirit of green peacefulness and commitment to resistance.

*‘And when I rise, let me rise  
Like a bird joyfully.  
When I fall, let me fall  
Like a leaf gracefully  
And when I stand, let me stand  
Like a tree, strong and tall.  
And when I lay, let me lay  
Like a lake reflecting all.  
When I resist, let me resist  
Like the sea, relentlessly.  
And when I sing,  
I will sing  
Like the wind wild and free.’*



Image provided by S Smith.

**Untold Stories of Hopeful Work**  
**Oxford Quaker Meeting House, October 27<sup>th</sup>**  
When the future is hard to face, what shape does hope take?

**Anne Watson**

Join us at the Oxford Meeting House for an evening exploring journeys in 'hopeful' work.

Ranging from the global to the local, we'll hear four testimonies of hope in the face of injustice, and explore together what the stories mean for the tellers, ourselves, and our world. Led by David Gee who is also a contributor to the current Woodbrooke Online course 'Hope as a Practice' (see <https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/courses/hope-as-a-practice/>)

There will be cake.

7 p.m. for 7.30 p.m.. Finish by 9.30 p.m.

All welcome.



*Image provided by Anne Watson*

## **Peace Pilgrims Walk**

**Sam Donaldson**

On Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September, a small band of peace pilgrims set off from Oxford Quaker Meeting House, after enjoying the warm hospitality of Friends, both young and old.

We set off for a week of walking, towards the London DSEI arms fair - the world's largest arms fair, where corrupt arms dealers and representatives from despotic governments gather together to buy and sell ships, planes, bombs and guns, that fuel death and destruction across the world.

Each day we began our walking with the reading of a short blessing for travel, adapted from Carola Mooshbach:

*May we have a good journey  
a pleasant conversation  
an exciting book to read on our way  
open eyes for the wide open space  
open ears for what is new  
calm amongst blowing horns ringing  
bells shouting  
time for the stars of the strange skies  
with safe steps on distant paths*



*Witnessing against the arms trade and the DSEI arms fair. Photo provided by Sam Donaldson*

Over the week, we were blessed with scorching sun (which at times was a little too hot for our liking!), and for the first few days we all soaked in the beauty of the English countryside. As we walked, we talked, sharing stories, jokes, reflections and more. Each day there was a wonderful blend of deep and serious conversations and much humour and laughter, darkness, and light, which kept us flowing ever onwards.

At eleven o'clock every morning we began an hour of silent walking, in solidarity with all those suffering because of war across the world, and in solidarity with all those risking liberty and life to work for a more peaceful world.

At the end of each hour of silent solidarity we then gathered and read the Peace Prayer:

*Lead us from Death to Life, from  
Falsehood to Truth.*

*Lead us from Despair to Hope,  
from Fear to Trust.*

*Lead us from Hate to Love, from  
War to Peace.*

*Let Peace fill our Heart, our  
World, our Universe.*

*Peace Peace Peace*

After a delightful rest day at the Catholic Worker Farm on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> September, where walking boots were removed and blisters tended too, we continued on into London, with lush English woodland being replaced by all the hustle and bustle of urban environments.

On our final day, we walked around all the offices of the big arms dealing firms in London, holding short vigils outside each one, hearing words from those suffering directly because of the arms trade. We then walked on towards the docklands, to join the candlelight vigil outside the Excel Center, a fitting way to mark the end of our peace pilgrimage.

Along the way, we were blessed with incredibly generous hospitality, beginning with the Oxford Quakers, followed by Andrew and Robin at Watlington, the Catholic Workers at Rickmansworth, Jacky at Wembly, and Phil and Debbie at Westminster Quakers. This wonderful hospitality made such a huge difference at the end of long, hot days of walking, and really touched us, making the pilgrimage such a special experience for us all!

I'll finish this account with the words of priest, poet and peace activist Daniel Berrigan, which we read when we finally arrived at the DSEI arms fair on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September:

*Some stood up once and sat down.  
Some walked a mile and walked away.  
Some stood up twice and sat down.  
I've had it, they said.*

*Some walked two miles and walked away.  
It's too much, they cried.*

*Some stood and stood and stood.  
They were taken for dummies.  
They were taken for fools.  
They were taken for being taken in.*

*Some walked and walked and walked.  
They walked the earth.  
They walked the waters.  
They walked the air.*

*Why do you stand?  
they were asked, and  
Why do you walk?*

*Because of the children, they said, and  
Because of the heart, and  
Because of the bread.*

*Because  
the cause  
is the heart's beat  
and the children born  
and the risen bread.*

p.s. You can hear more about the peace pilgrimage and the wonderful people we met along the way on the Peace Pilgrimage podcast:

[Peace Pilgrimage Podcast | Podcast on Spotify](#)



Original image from [Wikimedia](#). Modified by M. Hughey

## Women in Black: Creating a Culture of Peace

Gwithian Doswell

If you pass the Martyrs' Memorial in St Giles on a Saturday between 2pm and 3pm, you may notice a black, lace banner adorned with an olive branch and the simple lettering 'Women in Black'. This is where a small but committed group of women stand in silent witness for an hour most Saturdays to call for an end to violence, militarism, and war.

Women in Black (WiB) is a world-wide network of women working for peace with justice. It began in 1988 in Israel as women peace activists, dressed in black, organised weekly vigils in Jerusalem to protest Israel's continuing military occupation of Palestinian territories. They themselves took inspiration from the women's Black Sash movement in South Africa which had opposed Apartheid.

Around the world, many Women in Black vigils focus on different peace-orientated themes each week, including the links between conflict and climate change, nuclear disarmament, gun crime, violence against migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, the arms trade etc.

This month, Women in Black, Oxford are hosting a public speaker meeting at **43 St Giles on Saturday 28 October from 3:15 until 5:00 pm with tea and cake**. They have invited **Sue Finch**, a feminist peace activist.

Together with the late Cynthia Cockburn, Sue co-authored a history



of the WiB network, **“Women in Black: Against violence, For peace with justice”**. There will be a vigil at the martyrs' memorial before the meeting. Please contact Gwithian Doswell ([gwithian@btinternet.com](mailto:gwithian@btinternet.com)) if you would like to attend the tea party and/or would like more information about the Oxford vigil.

The Oxford WiB group was revived in January 2022. It is small and would welcome more members.

## Monday 11 September 2023

Ali Smith

About 70 gathered in the garden of Friends House, Euston Road and walked to Tavistock Square where there was a period of quiet.

We walked to Trafalgar Square and the Oxford banner had another outing with other peace banners. On the way we were able to hand out information and engage with people about the Arms Fair.

One woman I spoke with was encouraging and quite moved by our presence but said she thought there would be little change in our lifetime. A cheerful man I met made connections with other global concerns and was very downbeat about the outlook. “What have we learned from history?”, but five minutes later I noticed him still attached to the walkers, smiling, and talking.

From Trafalgar Square we went to unmarked offices of arms dealers Northrop Grumman, Leonardo, and BAE which were situated in side streets in the area of Piccadilly. At each there was a ten-minute silent, still vigil.

I was going to include a picture of the Oxford Banner together with some of the other colourful peace banners. Looking through the pics on my phone, my finger hovered over the ‘delete’ button of this boring looking picture I’ve included which is of our witness outside the Northrup Grumman offices. But I decided against deleting it.

A man is watching us from a window of these unremarkable offices. He looked so ordinary; just doing his job. I was struck by Arendt’s quote ‘the banality of evil’ when



reporting on the trial of Eichmann for his Nazi crimes\*. By this she didn’t mean that Eichmann’s acts were banal, but that those ghastly events occur if we aren’t constantly alert. The man looking at us out of the window of these unremarkable buildings could have been having a break from ordering toilet tissue or writing an invoice for a clutch of ICBMs.

In any case he was no killer. But his work supports the aims of a monster: Northrop Grumman. The 4<sup>th</sup> largest arms company in the world, with sales of \$30 billion in 2020. (CAAT and SIPRI. More info here;

<https://caat.org.uk/data/companies/northrop-grumman/> )

I suspect humans will always be blighted by Masters of War, but to be dangerous they need to be normalised, supported by The Ordinary. We don't have to let them be normalised though, and the Walk of Witness was to make that clear.

Walk of Witness organised by Quaker Roots with CAAT.

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*“Evil comes from a failure to think. It defies thought for as soon as thought tries to engage itself with evil and examine the premises and principles from which it originates, it is frustrated because it finds nothing there. That is the banality of evil.”*

– **Hannah Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil**

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*“The trouble with Eichmann was precisely that so many were like him, and that the many were neither perverted nor sadistic, that they were, and still are, terribly and terrifyingly normal. From the viewpoint of our legal institutions and of our moral standards of judgment, this normality was much more terrifying than all the atrocities put together.”*

– **Hannah Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil**



Photo by J Henderson



# Quaker Questions and Answers

## Linnet Arthur

Luke Young

### Who, when, where and why – are you?

Retired academic, grew up in Derbyshire with 4 sisters and a brother, father a paediatrician, mother an occupational therapist, have lived in Oxford for around 30 years, currently delighting in the freedom of retirement.



### Do you have a memory that brings you comfort in times of hardship?

I rely on family and f/Friends for comfort in times of hardship, rather than memories.

### How long, if you are, have you been a Quaker (or attender)?

51 years. I joined when I was 16 as a “birthright” Friend – a status which I think no longer exists. My mother and grandparents were Quakers, and it seemed an easy option to have my name put down. I rather regretted it afterwards, however, because I felt that I did not know enough about Quakers at that time. If I had gone through the normal process of joining, I

would have been more aware of Quaker principles and practice.

### What brings you joy?

So many things – laughter with family, friends and Friends, gardens, playing piano duets, singing, wild swimming, punting, autumnal colours, spring flowers, the hedgehog in my garden, my cat and much more.

### Do you have a passage from Quaker Faith and Practice that you would like to draw Friends attention to?

I like the passage in Chapter 21 about personal journeys - 21.22:

*“There is, it sometimes seems, an excess of religious and social busyness these days, a round of committees and conferences and journeyings, of which the cost in ‘peaceable wisdom’ is not sufficiently counted. Sometimes we appear overmuch to count as merit our participation in these things... At least we ought to make sure that we sacrifice our leisure for something worthy.*

*True leisureliness is a beautiful thing and may not lightly be given away. Indeed, it is one of the outstanding and most wonderful features of the life of Christ that, with all his work in preaching and healing and planning for the Kingdom, he leaves behind this sense of leisure, of time in which to pray and meditate, to stand and stare at the cornfields and fishing boats, and to listen to the confidences of neighbours and passers-by...*

*Most of us need from time to time the experience of something spacious or space-making, when Time ceases to be the*



Photo by J Henderson

*enemy, goad-in-hand, and becomes our friend. To read good literature, gaze on natural beauty, to follow cultivated pursuits until our spirits are refreshed and expanded, will not unfit us for the up and doing of life, whether of personal or church affairs. Rather it will help us to separate the essential from the unessential, to know where we are really needed and get a sense of proportion. We shall find ourselves giving the effect of leisure even in the midst of a full and busy life. People do not pour their joys or sorrows into the ears of those with an eye on the clock.”*

*Caroline C. Graveson, 1937*

**What was the last book that you read?**

*Women Talking* about women in a remote Mennonite community discussing how to respond to a group of men in the community who had drugged and raped over a hundred women and girls. My choice was inspired by seeing the film of the book at a Quaker film night.

**What would you say to someone coming to Meeting for Worship for the first time?**

Welcome and read the leaflet, “Your first time at a Quaker meeting”.

**Can you describe what Quakerism is to you?**

A way of being in the world.

**If you could do anything, what would you do?**

Invent a way to remove all the excess carbon in the atmosphere, restore natural habitats and provide education which enthuses people of all ages about learning.

## Monthly Appeal – October 2023

### The FOCAGIFO Hope Institute, Kampala, Uganda

When Ruth Ninsiima graduated as a High School teacher, she decided not to apply for a job at a government school in Uganda. Instead, she embarked on a much more challenging career path.

Her elder brother, Gideon Byamugisha, invited her to take on the running of a vocational school which he had recently founded in Kampala. An ordained priest in the Church of Uganda, Gideon was acutely aware of how difficult it was for children from poor backgrounds to acquire the skills that would enable them to support themselves and their future families.



When Gideon invited Ruth to run the Hope Institute, he had only recently been diagnosed HIV-positive. At the time, for a priest in Uganda to reveal his HIV-positive status was unheard-of. But Gideon decided to be completely open about his HIV-positive status. As part of his ministry, Gideon founded the Friends of Canon Gideon Organisation (FOCAGIFO), which in turn led to the establishment of the Hope Institute, led by Ruth Ninsiima, in the year 2003.

Under Ruth's leadership, the Hope Institute has trained nearly 3,000 young women and men as electricians, plumbers, hairdressers, caterers, builders, fashion designers and motor mechanics. Moreover, every pupil attending the Hope Institute is also trained in social responsibilities, including sexual behaviour.

In her report for the first six months of 2023 (available at [g.and.a.williams@ntlworld.com](mailto:g.and.a.williams@ntlworld.com)), Ruth describes how the Hope Institute operates, but also the challenges it faces, which she summarises as:

- Limited **technical equipment**, especially computers for students to use during and after classes, but also in exams
- Funds for a new **Training Block**, which is urgently needed to support the students' studies
- **Operational costs**, especially to pay staff on time for their dedicated work
- Space for expansion of **teaching and learning** activities, but also for **recreation and accommodation** (most students are boarders).

To support the work of the FOCAGIFO Hope Institute, **please make a BACS payment to**

G and A Williams Partners  
a/c 50323628  
Sort Code 60 70 03  
Natwest Bank.

**Alternatively Send a cheque to**

G and A Williams Partners  
93 Divinity Road  
Oxford  
OX4 1LN

Your donation will be acknowledged, and no charges will be made to cover administrative costs. You will also receive a report on the work of the Hope Institute.

# We are all connected: Living the spirit of Ubuntu

## All-age meeting for worship – 1 October 2023

Matthew Gee

Our next all-age meeting for worship is on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> October, as part of the 10:30 single meeting for worship. All-age meetings for worship are a chance for us to worship as a whole community, where children and adults come together to worship jointly.

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> October is also World Quaker Day, so we have taken our theme from the World Quaker Day theme of *Living the spirit of Ubuntu: Responding with hope to God's call to cherish creation and one-another*, as Friends around the world will be exploring this theme in different ways. Friends can find out more about this theme on the World Quaker Day website: <https://fwcc.world/worldquakerday/>



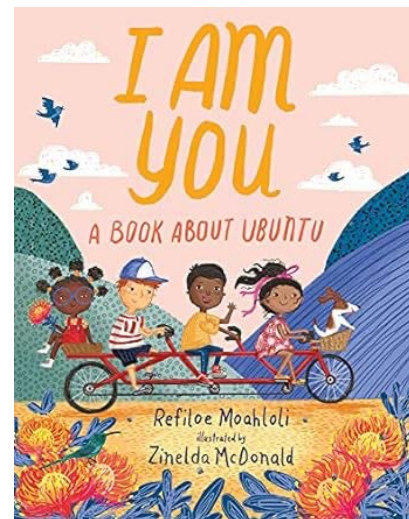
The children's meetings will join the main meeting for worship at 11:00, and over the next half hour, there will be an opportunity for children and adults to worship together.

### Video

*Living the Spirit of Ubuntu  
Southern Africa Yearly Meeting  
January 2023  
Hartespoort, South Africa*

[https://youtu.be/DW\\_L7Vlvmo8?si=IS67dKptNzDqGY9W](https://youtu.be/DW_L7Vlvmo8?si=IS67dKptNzDqGY9W)

There will be a reading from the picture book *I am you: A book about Ubuntu* by Refiloe Moahloli; a worship-sharing activity thinking about how we notice being connected; and a simple song, *All of Life is Connected*.



Oxford Meeting has a custom of holding three all-age meetings for worship each year. There will also be all-age meetings for worship on:

- Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2023
- Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2024

Find out more about all-age meetings for worship in Oxford at:

<https://oxfordquakers.org/cyp/all-age-mfww/>



## Quaker Videos in this Month's Forty-Three



### Quaker Faith in action

*Quakers discuss how and why they put their faith into action.*

**Quakers in Britain**

<https://youtu.be/bli9uxgy9gM?si=ejlgFvu4kZ1y-D8>

**3 Minutes**



**Max Carter**

New Garden Friends Meeting  
Greensboro, North Carolina

### Are You a Liberal or Orthodox Quaker?

‘Many seekers have discovered Quakers through online quizzes like Beliefnet, but what do they mean by “Liberal” and “Orthodox” Quakers?’

**QuakerSpeak**

<https://youtu.be/cp8YmhFjP30?si=-FkYPNKF4b2oX2Md>

**6 Minutes**

### **From Quaker Faith & Practice 24.40**

#### **Disarmament**

*Our conviction is that Christianity has this to say to the world: ‘Your reliance upon armaments is both wrong and futile. Armaments are the weapons of organised violence and outrage. Their use is a denial of the true laws of living. They involve the perpetuation of strife.*

*All Friends Conference, 1920*

## October 2023

Many meetings and events are held via Zoom. Link for all Oxford Meetings for Worship:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87383304611?pwd=Vkkya2ZweVVRZjRmOE1JVDBFdTdwUT09>

Please contact the Office for more details:

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

### 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)



Photo by J Henderson

### 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/>

The views expressed in *Forty-Three*  
do not necessarily reflect those of the editors.

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**Please send newsletter contributions by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, the submission deadline.**

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 office pigeonhole of any editor.

For more information: tel. +44 (0)1865 557373 or visit [www.oxfordquakers.org](http://www.oxfordquakers.org).