



Forty-Three Newsletter

Number 549

January 2025

Oxford Friends Meeting

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Psalm of Lament over Division, Destruction, Domination

*Scarsdale Monthly Meeting, New York Yearly Meeting
Written communally by the meeting in Quaker discernment.*

O God who speaks from many whirlwinds,
Even those created by human beings.
O Spirit of the Universe, Creator of the Swirling Galaxies.

We stir up division, destruction and domination among ourselves.
And we feel powerless to heal these wounds;
The storms overwhelm us.

We know Spirit breathes in each of us
And we cry out for your direction and guidance.

Help us see your Spirit in all
So we may fan the spark of cooperation, peace and understanding.

We know your Divine power will quell the storms of fear, violence and chaos
So that the gentle breeze of your love will blow through each of us.

Bless the earth our home.
And waft the scent of peace and harmony throughout the world.



*Scarsdale, New York Quaker Meeting House
Photo held by the Scarsdale Public Library*

Exciting fund-raiser for Quaker-supported work in Gaza!

Gwithian Doswell

Brighten up the dull January afternoons! Come along to one of my 'cascade' **Palestinian embroidery** workshops happening in the **Garden Room**, 43 St Giles in the New Year: **Sunday 12th January, 2pm - 4.30pm** and **Sunday 19th January, 2pm - 4.30pm**.



*One of the pieces Gwithian made after attending the Tatreez Collective workshop, a 'Star of Bethlehem'.
Photo credit: Gwithian Doswell*

I will be 'cascading' (ie sharing) knowledge and skills of the wonderfully calming Palestinian embroidery or 'tatreez' stitching technique, learnt at a recent Tatreez Collective event hosted by the Multaka project in the Pitt Rivers Museum. Our finished pieces from the workshops will form part of an exciting large art exhibit to be displayed by the @tatreezcollective in London in 2025.

Materials, patterns and refreshments will be provided. Any donations you feel able to make will go to the **Palestinian Early Childhood Education Programme (PECEP) in Gaza**. All are welcome.

Places are limited so please do register as soon as possible by emailing me at

gwithian@btinternet.com and stating your preferred date. (There is a possibility that I may organise an additional mid-week session. If you aren't available on Sunday afternoons but are keen to participate, please do let me know).

The PECEP kindergartens in Gaza closed in October 2023. At least two of the kindergarten employees have been killed and some of the kindergartens destroyed in the Israeli bombardment.



*"I received this beautiful Palestinian embroidery piece of tatreez stitching when working as a volunteer for the Quaker charity Unipal in the vocational college of In'Ash Al Usra in the town of El Bireh, near Ramallah, over forty years ago" - Gwithian Doswell.
Photo credit: Gwithian Doswell*

However, work by the dedicated PECEP staff continues eg with the organisation of children's activity days for families living in the makeshift displacement camps, and plans for guidance and support for parents in how to best help their children deal with the ongoing trauma in the hope that this may mitigate long-term trauma damage.

More information about the PECEP kindergartens and an appeal for funds for their work can be found in the Friends Quarterly issue number 4, 2024 or via this link on the FWCC Europe and Middle East Section website.

https://fwccemes.org/news/QSN_Gaza_Support

Friends High School, Tokyo Visit

Sian Saul

Young Adult Friends hosted Friends High School, Tokyo on Monday 12th August. We had 30 students along with their teachers and translator.

We began with a Q+A. The students had prepared questions ahead of time and asked about what drew us to Quaker faith, what daily prayer looks like for us, what George Fox means to us, and whether we ever fall asleep in meeting. We heard a little about their recent visit to Pendle Hill and Swarthmoor Hall, among other historic Quaker sites.



Swarthmoor Hall. Photo from Wikipedia



Pendle Hill. Photo from Wikipedia

In meeting for worship, messages were translated so that they could be understood by all. We did our usual joys and concerns at the end of meeting and it was wonderful to hear from the students about the highlights and worries that they had had on their trip so far.

We had dinner in the garden together, in small tables so that we could get to know each other better and the students could practise their English. One of the students told me that their favourite English food so far was baked beans.

To wrap up our time together the students sang Edelweiss for us, and we took a group photo. They also gave us some small gifts such as pens and erasers.



*Friends High School, Tokyo - photo credit:
<https://www.friends.ac.jp/english/index.html>*

January 2025 Appeal

Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel

The **EAPPI** human rights monitors are back at work! Please do read their blogs on the www.eyewitnessblogs.com website and sign up to receive the **Action Alerts**.

The **Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel** (EAPPI) supports ordinary people to live in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. The Ecumenical Accompaniers (EAs) **witness** life under military occupation, accompany local communities and **share the real- life stories** of the Palestinians and Israelis they meet.

Nonviolent and non-partisan, EAs provide a **protective presence**, deterring violence towards civilians. They **monitor human rights abuses** for the UN and other agencies. They **work with Palestinian and Israeli peace organisations** on the ground. On their return, EAs share their experiences and advocate for change – **an end to the Israeli military occupation and a just and peaceful resolution based on international law**.

EAPPI UK & Ireland is an international programme run by the World Council of Churches. In the UK and Ireland it is managed by **Quakers in Britain**. To find out more about EAPPI, visit the website

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/our-work/eappi> .



EAs monitoring the growth of illegal Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Photo provided by Gwithian Doswell

Please donate generously via:

<https://www.eyewitnessblogs.com/donate/>

Or Bank transfer:

Britain Yearly Meeting

Coop Bank, 1, Islington High St, London N1 9TR

Account number – 50234651 Sort Code 08-90-61

If you would like to donate by cheque or CAF

voucher, please make payable to Britain Yearly

Meeting (**write EAPPI on the back**) and send to

EAPPI, c/o Friends House, Euston Road, London

NW1 2BJ

Gwithian Doswell (Ecumenical Accompanier Teams

47 &55, and cover team 2019)

The Treading Lightly Group

Sarah Lasenby

The Treading Lightly Group has asked me to share a piece about our Group in 43 and to say that we would welcome newcomers! We believe there must be others who would value participating in this group. It is a really good way to get to know each other in this large Meeting.

Not surprisingly, we are Quakers, and we meet in the Garden Room on the first Thursday in the month. Although we are a small group at present, we find it so helpful that we want to let others know about it.

It was originally aimed at Friends who live alone; I am actually married with a very supportive spouse, but even so I find our group very friendly and worthwhile. We meet together to get to know each other and to share and give help to each other.

Please just turn up on the next first Thursday 11am - 12.30pm. Usually in the Garden Room.

Quaker Writers Series 2024

Brigid Schroer and the poetry of a mother whose daughter becomes addicted to drugs

Jimin Kang

In a roomful of Friends on Friday, November 29, Brigid Schroer read a series of over two dozen poems chronicling three decades of a daughter who goes in and out of drug addiction.

The poems were a result of journal entries Brigid wrote both as part of a creative exercise and a way to process the challenges that she encountered while witnessing her daughter's struggle.



The Meeting House: Tasha Alden

There were no prefaces to the poems, and little pause between each; later, Friends would say that the effect was like listening to one epic poem that, in its length and honesty, was 'devastating'. We agreed that hearing the poems in Brigid's voice,

without any other embellishment, made the experience that much more powerful.

One Friend pointed out that the stoic manner in which Brigid read, juxtaposed with the vivid and shocking details in her poetry, lent a certain 'omniscient' quality to the narration that invited us simultaneously into Brigid's subjectivity while keeping listeners as distant observers to the experience.

Brigid revealed that when she wrote these poems, she did not write them with an audience in mind. This made some Friends wonder whether the lack of signaling to an imagined audience about what to feel and how to respond (sometimes common in poems that explicitly ask for sympathy, or pity, or a shared grief) pushed listeners towards really discerning, for themselves, what these poems were communicating to them, and consequently away from trite interpretations.

There were long periods of thoughtful silence and back-and-forth discussion.

At the end of the evening the Friends in the room all agreed that we had witnessed something very powerful and were grateful to Brigid for her words.

There is no recording for this event. There will also be no Quaker Writers Series discussion in December due to the holidays, but the Friday evenings will resume in January. To be added to the mailing list (or to express interest in sharing your writing!), please let Jimin know via email

jiminkang2021@gmail.com

News of Friends

Val Ferguson is in the John Radcliffe hospital with an infection (as of end Dec). Please don't visit until she is a little better. Contact Bridget Walker or Jennifer Barraclough to find out about progress.

Mahalla Mason has fallen and broken her femur at her hip. She has had a partial hip replacement operation and is in Horton General Hospital. She is doing well and hopes to be back home before Christmas. Contact Ruth Mason about progress.

Jenifer Wates (of Charlbury Meeting) is hoping to go into a nursing home when she leaves the John Radcliffe Hospital.

Friends will be pleased to hear that **Tina Leonard** had a successful heart valve operation on Thursday at the JR and is doing well. She will be staying with her son before returning home and is happy to receive phone calls and messages. 07984 170779.

Change of address: **Val Ferguson** has moved to Fairfield Residential Home, 115a Banbury Road, OX2 6LA. Her email address is valfergus[[@](mailto:valfergus@gmail.com)]gmail.com.



*A Chinese Lantern plant in the garden of 43.
Photo by Tasha Alden*

Notices

The Children and Young People's group

organisers are always in need of adult volunteers to support the children's meetings and events in various roles. Please speak to a member of the Children and Young People's Committee to find out more. We will need to organise an Enhanced DBS check and take up references before you can volunteer to work with children.

A quick reminder of events that might be of interest:

All-age meeting for worship (worship for our whole community together, with a semi-programmed element and some singing): First Sundays of March, October and December, 10:30-11:30, Meeting House.

Junior Gathering (residential Quaker gathering for young people aged 11 to 14 from across the South of England) 23rd-30th August 2025

<https://fsse.org.uk/junior-gathering/>

In May, the meeting will be participating in **Oxfordshire Artsweeks 2025**, in the non-commercial category. If you would like to exhibit work of any type in the meeting house, please contact rupert.j.booth@gmail.com.

A listing of Oxford Meeting committees and groups, and Friends serving on them,

has been posted by Nominations on the noticeboard in the lobby of 43.

The editors of 43 are expanding the monthly calendar of events

on the back page to include groups, events, and anything else that's going on in meeting. If you have a regular group or an event that you'd like us to include, please email newsletter@oxfordquakers.org with your name, date, time and venue, and contact details if appropriate, by the usual 43 deadline of the 15th of each month.

Calendar

Saturday 11th January: Area Meeting at Oxford Meeting House, starting at 10.30am.

Sunday 12th January, 2pm - 4.30pm and Sunday 19th January, 2pm – 4.30pm Palestinian embroidery workshops happening in the Garden Room. See Gwithian's article above for full information. Places limited - register by emailing gwithian@btinternet.com and stating preferred date.

Recurring events:

The Treading Lightly group meets first Thursday 11am - 12.30pm, usually in the Garden Room.

Oxford Young Adult Friends invite Friends of all ages to join them for worship on the **first Monday of the month at 7pm** in the meeting house, followed by dinner in the Garden Room.

Beansprouts Children's Meeting (worship for children under 4): Every Sunday, 10:30 on first Sunday of the month, 11:00 on other Sundays, Long Room

<https://oxfordquakers.org/cyp/beansprouts/>

Sunflowers Children's Meeting (worship for school-age children): Every Sunday, 10:30 on first Sunday of the month, 11:00 on other Sundays, Long Room

<https://oxfordquakers.org/cyp/sunflowers/>

Tea Cake and Play (weekly morning chat and fun session for babies, toddlers and their grown-ups): Every Tuesday 10:00-12:00, Meeting House.
playgroupsupport@oxfordquakers.org

<https://oxfordquakers.org/cyp/baby-and-toddler-group/>

Quaker Writers Group, last Friday of the month. In the Long Room, 7 for 7.30-9.30.

Contact jiminkang2021@gmail.com for more information.

Forest Foxes (adventure in the woods, around a fire, for friendship and fun for young people age 10-12): 8 February 2025.

Contact juliad@quaker.org.uk for details.



Winter Iris at 43. Photo by Tasha Alden

January 2025

Many meetings and events are held via Zoom. Link for all Oxford Meetings for Worship:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87383304611?pwd=VkkyZzZweVVRZjRmOE1JVDBFdTdwUT09>

Please contact the Office for more details:

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

OXFORD MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

Meetings for worship are in person. Zoom connections are available only when indicated.

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 followed by breakfast 07:30-08:00

Wednesday:

Meeting for Worship followed by lunch 11:45-12:30

Thursday:

Meeting for Worship followed by breakfast 07:30-08:00



Photo Tasha Alden – Garden of 43

Forty-Three is available online at

<https://oxfordquaker.com/newsletter/>

and on the Oxford Quakers website,

<https://oxfordquaker.com/>

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 15th of the month, the submission deadline.

Contributions, preferably of 500 words or fewer, can be emailed to 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.