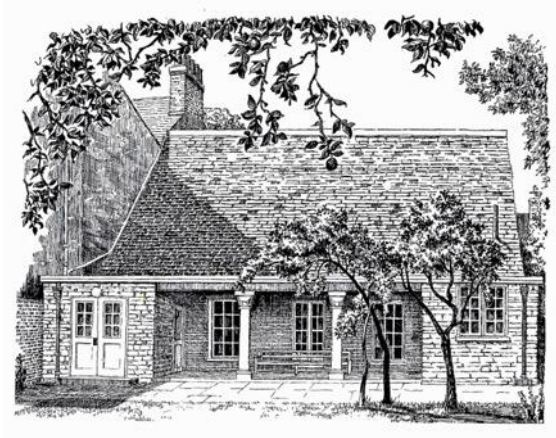
Forty-Three Newsletter

Number 556
August 2025



Oxford Friends Meeting
43 St Giles', Oxford OX1 3LW
+44 (0)1865 557373
office@oxfordquakers.org

The Real Life's Challenge

Ellen Bassani

G. K. Chesterton gives us a challenge for living well by offering four requirements that only the saintly can fulfil. Yet shouldn't we at least try?

1. To love is to love the unlovable

I have surrounded myself with lovable people. The 'unlovable' stay out there and are experienced through the constant diet of news. I'm thus free and safe to revile authoritarian leaders like Trump, Putin and Netanyahu. My disgust represents no real threat to them – I can only point to their behaviour and condemn.

Nonetheless, condemning fellow human-beings makes me feel impotent and uneasy. Where is my fellow-being love? These unlovely men didn't come out of the womb sociopaths, after all. It's likely that early trauma triggered this tendency in at least two of them, if we consider their past.

Trump's early life was scarred by an ill and absent mother and a psychopathic father. According to his niece Mary Trump, Donald is a weak, frightened, deeply damaged individual who was bullied by his father and all too often denounced as a failure by him. Even Trump's mother is meant to have described her son as a poor specimen of a man. It's obvious how power and limelight might fuel the adult Trump who once was the inadequate boy. Becoming aware of his sad journey has helped me feel pity and regret for Trump. With his charisma, he could have done great things. I am inclined to find him pathetic, edging towards lovable.

We can know less about Putin's early life, but survival appears to have shaped his character. Trauma was heaped on trauma in the back streets of Leningrad. The memory of being poor and vulnerable possibly motivates his actions these days. Does any of that explain what appears to be his evil adult character? I can muster little pity, I'm afraid, though perhaps a touch more understanding. About Netanyahu I know least of all and I find I cannot like or understand, let alone love, this ruthless, genocidal individual, despite my very best efforts.

2. To forgive is to pardon the unpardonable

My life has been hard. Traumas were laid upon me by my own neediness and the carelessness of others. I know I've pardoned those who truly hurt me. People do what they do with what they know. Granting forgiveness to myself is much harder. Sometimes I wake up in a sweat, remembering what I let happen to my tender, young self, sometimes I'd rather not think of the hurt I've dealt to others.

What's happening in Gaza and other war-stricken countries makes me want to scream with horror and grief and righteous indignation. However, when I blither on about these perpetrators being unforgivable, I must face the fact that it is not up to me to pardon the unpardonable. It is the victims alone who have that right, not me. Could I pardon if my own children were slaughtered? Would I respond with love, I wonder? Would anyone?

I can stand and call out atrocities. I can demand that my much-loved adopted country speaks out like the Quakers and calls Gaza what it is – a probable genocide. My challenge in this world of unpardonable behaviour is to respect and treasure differences, to hold space for the victims and to try not to add to discord and threat through understandable outrage.

3. Faith is to believe the unbelievable

I'd like to claim that faith is a choice. For me, it is not. Any rational thinker would find my spiritual beliefs self-delusional and perhaps infantile. To examine my faith with an empirical lens would reveal great holes in my reasoning ability. How could I explain the existence of that inner voice, which I have heeded since I was five? To know that I was held by something more than myself kept me alive. Of course there is the psychological balm for a very lost and terrified child. Yet it is so much more. I just know its provenance and have faithfully followed. The mystics of all faith both eastern and western come closest to what I know. Taoists, Hindus, Buddhists, along with Christians, surrender their human ego to be able to listen to that prompting. Each culture expresses the oneness differently, but it is the sense of oneness with all living things that is the true reality, and only a few can experience this. I trot along behind the mystics, trying to attune my spiritual ear, to listen more deeply. Sometimes I manage, sometimes my ego gets in the way. To abandon the quest to know the oneness of being is unthinkable. In his magnificent book *The Perennial Philosophy*, Aldous Huxley puts it like this: "mysticism is when the knower is united with the known." Such bliss is millions of miles from my door, but I keep on striding forward.

4. To hope. To go on hoping when everything seems hopeless.

On the morning of America's ill-advised bombing of Iran, it is difficult to hold onto hope. Yet I do. Which of my life's experiences gives me that power? As I've already mentioned, many traumas have been dumped on my doorstep, and still the hope for another tomorrow stays solid.

Over my life, too many levels of control have been taken from me. The illusion of personal autonomy distorts the reality that we are all powerless, if the circumstances are right. I have no illusions about this.

When I step outside my gate, I step into the unknown. There is anxiety, because hazards exist which I can't see, and which may kill me. Nevertheless, I step out in hope. Why? I've sustained bruises and near misses. Once a truck even knocked me down. Thousands of strangers have helped me. Some have extricated me from dangerous situations. My heroes, be they drug dealers, the local homeless drunk, or a gang of teenage boys, have never threatened or hurt me. I have been in truly vulnerable circumstances, and yet – and yet. Gentleness, protectiveness, and a type of love has been gifted to me by misfits and lost people. Here's the thing. I believe that God is always with me and asks me to be in these awkward positions, to learn and to share. The reward comes from feeling topped up with love from the care I've received. How could I not go on hoping, when I've witnessed the very best of humanity?

So how do I go on hoping, when everything seems hopeless? It boils down to this. I believe the universe is evolving. I believe that a depth of learning and compassion comes out of challenge. Finally, I know that there is an all-embracing loving energy, that will guide, if only we would listen to that inner voice. However, just listening is not enough. We need to gather up our courage and follow and trust we will be led right. To embrace the unknown can be the deepest source of hope.

How am I guided?

Anne Watson

Some passages in *Quaker Faith and Practice* caught my eye recently, and I felt that warmth of recognition and agreement that comes when things in my subconscious connect, like magnets, through someone else's words.

I have been troubled for some time by the use of the phrase 'Christ-centred' to mean a particular understanding, which is not my understanding, of Jesus. The labelling of some Friends as 'Christ-centred' automatically sets up others as 'not Christ-centred' and, having been associated with Christianity most of my life (mostly as a Quaker), I am puzzled by my exclusion and don't understand why such a distinction has to be made among Friends. I try to follow the teachings of Jesus as reported in the gospels (without the bloodcurdling rejections of some people from the kingdom of heaven) and see others around me as living out their daily lives in that spirit. The temporal and spiritual guidance in the Beatitudes seems to be manifested throughout our meeting in a multitude of ways: in worship, care, the sharing of food and domestic chores, social and political action, charity and administration. This is where and how I learn everyday truths of Christianity as a way to live, although I could also encounter them elsewhere with different names.

So I found the following three excerpts helpful to reinstate myself as somehow Christ-centred.

26.60 Richard Rowntree on our continuing development of the spirit of Jesus:

"*Those of us who cannot yet personally witness to the experience of direct encounter with the living Christ can only at our peril deny the truth of the experience to which others testify; just as those who do feel this experience are on equally dangerous ground when on account of it they claim that they alone possess the sole route to that God whom Jesus of Nazareth defined as spirit and whose Kingdom he once likened to a house with many mansions … Though both our practises of worship and our theological understandings now differ widely, these variances may be accepted as elements within the direct continuing development of the spirit of Jesus…*"

I experience 'direct encounter' through human interactions within this world.

26.33 John Lampen talking about the word 'God'

"… we perceive intuitively a connection between the marvels of the natural world, the moral law, the life of Jesus, the depths of the human personality, our intimations about time, death and eternity, our experience of human forgiveness and love, and the finest insights of the Christian tradition."

Yes, I do too.

26.73 George Gorman talking about guidance from God, which I take to be similar to the way in which people talk about Christ as an Inner Guide:

"*I would hesitate to claim that I receive direct guidance from God - I do not hear a divine voice that tells me what to do. But I do have a sense that I am being drawn to take one course of action rather than another. The guidance, however, arises from a countless number of experiences, influences, attitudes and disciplines which I have accumulated over the years and upon which I have reflected. So certain types of action seem to be my natural response to particular circumstances. In them all the sense of the presence of God is real and immediate, but it is not unmediated*".

Yes, I would similarly hesitate. I would also feel similarly drawn, and my meaning for 'not unmediated' is that 'the presence of God' is experienced through all the realities of being human in a physical world.

Quaker Writers Series July 2025 - Bella Cooper-Brown

Jimin Kang

On Friday, July 4, Bella Cooper-Brown delivered a thought-provoking presentation on the process of creating 'dream-like' prose. She shared a range of creative methods including writing with her eyes shut, inventing new words, creating Pinterest mood boards with visual influences, and writing in the absence of internet-connected technology to achieve the effect of what Stephen King describes as writing from a place of 'creative sleep'.

As part of the presentation, Bella shared a series of short stories—such as Denis Johnson's 'Emergency'—as a means of exploring different writers' creation of atmosphere and mood, and attendees enjoyed several brilliantly vivid excerpts from Bella's own novel-in-progress, *Dress Rehearsals*. There was a fantastic discussion about the connections between dreams and metaphors, writers who produce word play and neologisms, and the ability to write from the subconscious. Attendees left certainly inspired, with many questions on their minds about the possibilities of their own creative practices and how to put to the page 'the dream' in their minds.

The Quaker Writers Series is looking for a new organizer! To learn more about the series, please let Jimin know via email (jiminkang2021@gmail.com).

Creative commons license (https://www.deviantart.com/mholtsmeier/art/Enigmatic-Dreamscapes-12-964085381)

Is it now time to lobby for nuclear disarmament once more?

Richard Seebohm

In *The Friend* for 27 November 2015, I reviewed *World in Chains*, a book containing all the arguments I would now like to use for ending the UK's so-called dependence on our nuclear deterrent. At least we adhere to a no first use principle (it could be that the USA currently doesn't). If it is a deterrent we must assume that after a strike by someone on us or on someone else we would retaliate. It is not improbable that someone else would then chime in as well. The resulting radiation and direct damage, in a world now at risk from the climate time bomb, could well end our current profile of humanity and indeed of many created life forms.

What makes the revival of this concern – the established voices maintaining it do not seem all that audible – is the prospect of releasing funds and resources for all the austerity-driven ills that our nation now lives with. It would also lessen our dependence on the USA in its present climate of unpredictability.

I hope Friends will tell me where to go next. It is too important for demos and marches.

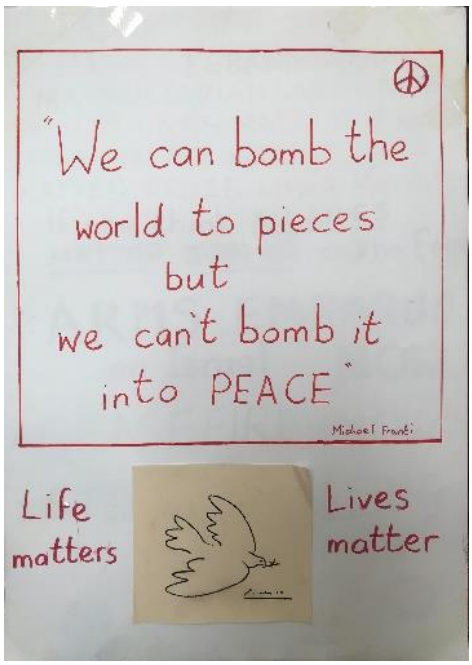


Photo: Gwithian Doswell

"The grief around Gaza was enormous this morning."

Gwithian Doswell

These were the heart-felt words shared with me by a Friend emerging from the 9.30 Meeting for Worship last week. The grief so many of us are experiencing daily can indeed be overwhelming at times - whether we still follow the news or not – whether we still see the horrific images and testimonies posted on our social media by ordinary civilians in Gaza or not.

Constant bombardment, deadly drone and sniper attacks, destruction of water and sanitation infrastructure, starvation, blocking entry of medicine, medical equipment and fuel for hospital generators, disease, fear, evacuation orders and displacement, and endless assaults on human dignity… We know that suffering and cruelty are happening in Gaza on an unimaginable scale. It is easy to see why Palestinians believe the world has forgotten them and that their lives do not matter. As Quakers, many of us recognise that Israel is perpetuating a genocide in Gaza. We feel grief, horror and helplessness day after day**. However**, I have to keep reminding myself that we must not let these emotions paralyse us into inaction or make us silent.

There are **actions we can all take**. However small, I feel that it is important that we do keep taking action.

First of all, I encourage Friends in Oxford Meeting to **sign up** to the **RED LINE campaign** supported by Quakers in Britain, Oxfam, Christian Aid and other well-known charities and humanitarian organisations https://www.quaker.org.uk/news-and-events/news/quakers-join-uk-coalition-demanding-end-to-british-complicity-in-gaza-killings.

Each week we are invited to send a letter to our MP or ministers highlighting another red line crossed when it comes to Israel's violations of international law and unacceptable military behaviour in Gaza. The standard letter can be copied and tweaked to make it relevant for your particular MP. Sympathetic MPs can be supported and thanked for parliamentary interventions and asked to forward our concerns to ministers who are then more obliged to respond.

The Red-Line vigils/actions outside Westminster have now finished while parliament is in summer recess. But the Red Line campaign is continuing. Communities up and down the country are being encouraged to organise our own Red Line protests, to dress in red and declare the red lines we feel should never have been crossed. I recently joined a red-line silent vigil in Penzance initiated by local Quakers. **Could Oxford Friends or Area Meeting Friends organise a similar Red Line witness?**

There is now a **Quaker bloc on the national marches for Palestine**. Visible support matters for Palestinians and for politicians. The next will be in London (and Edinburgh) in September. There is an organising **WhatsApp** group, Quaker Palestine Solidarity, for UK Friends who wish to walk with other Friends under the Quakers for Peace banner. Email qpsw@quaker.org.uk for more information.

Quakers at the National March for Palestine
Photo: Gwithian Doswell

Another way which Friends can be supportive of Palestinian human rights is to participate in local

solidarity and fundraising activities in Oxford such as those organised by groups like **Parents for Palestine** or the local community twinning group, the **Oxford-Ramallah Friendship Association** (https://www.oxford-ramallah.org).

On **16th August**, for example, there is a **Sale of Fine Art Prints** donated by independent artists at St Michael's in the North Gate 9.30am – 5pm– **all money raised will go to the United Nations Gaza Appeal.** If you would like to know more about this event and/or other local solidarity events or actions, please do get in touch with me.

Although international attention is rightly focussed on Gaza just now, the situation in the occupied West Bank, shouldn't be forgotten. The illegal Israeli occupation there must be brought to an end. Machine-toting extremist Israeli settlers are becoming increasing violent, particularly towards vulnerable and unarmed local Palestinian herding communities. Whole villages are being displaced and more illegal Jewish-only settlements and outposts are being established with full state support. Quakers in Britain encourage Friends to **sign-up** to the **EyeWitness Blogs** to receive monthly reports and suggested advocacy actions from the World Council of Churches' Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel UK and Ireland.
https://www.quaker.org.uk/action/palestine-and-israel/eappi (Sign up in the lefthand bottom corner)

Buy fairtrade goods from Palestine, such as delicious olive oil or soap from Zaytoun (https://zaytoun.uk) available in Oxfam shops and often at solidarity events as well. Every sale, every little action helps to build support for Palestinian communities struggling under occupation.

And lastly, Israel has one of the most powerful and sophisticated militaries in the world. It is a highly militarised country. Its economy benefits from a weapons industry which is often markets its products as 'battle-tested' i.e. on Palestinians. The arms trade is highly lucrative to many countries including our own. Bloody conflicts around the world are fuelled by weapons and weapons parts which our own government provides export licences for.

I remember the words of an Israeli peace activist at a talk given in our Meeting House many years ago. When asked what we here in the UK should be doing to help, she said to turn our attention to the militarisation of our own society. There is important work to do here.

If you want to work for peace, visit the **Campaign Against the Arms Trade** website. See if there are actions you can take to protest one of the world's most important arms fair, the DSEI, being held again this September at the Excel Centre, London. Most of the Quaker non-violent peace witness events, including a **silent candlelit vigil**, will be happening in the week in which the 'fair' opens89-12 September. There will be more information nearer the time. Please get in touch with me (gwithian@btinternet.com) if you are thinking of attending.

"*Keep a green tree in your heart and perhaps the singing bird will come*" - Rumi

Quakers from Oxford Meeting protesting the Defence and Security Equipment International Arms Far in 2023.
Photo: Sue Smith

August appeal: Prisoners' Education Trust

The dedication in the Exeter College's new Cohen Court in Walton Street honours the donor's parents "…. who knew that education is the one thing that cannot be taken away".

Prisoners' Education Trust (PET) works to transform prisoners' lives and their post-release prospects through learning and uses research and expertise to improve prison education. Many prisoners are functionally illiterate and therefore suspicious of activities and routines which require the sort of expertise they have failed to acquire in the school system and which have prevented them finding stable and secure employment.

When there are shortages of staff in the prison service the first thing to be cut is the education services, although it contributes substantially to lowering of tensions in the prisons. Boredom exacerbates genuine grievances.

On a daily basis, each prisoner's educational tasks constitute a routine and offer contact with the world outside the prison. The resulting success improves self-confidence. As one recipient of PET funding says "It may look as though it's just a level two or level three qualification, but it's not. It's far, far more than that. That person, when they pass that module, they realise, 'I am capable of it'.

Quakers have always had an interest in prisons and prisoners: Elizabeth Fry is the best known, but she is not alone.

Donate to PET's Summer Appeal – Hope, drive and recovery – where all donations will be doubled while matched funding lasts.

Every donation can help someone leave prison with a qualification and hope for the future. Plus, to double the impact, your donations will be matched up to £10,000, thanks to a generous trust.

Please donate to this worthy cause **online** at https://prisonerseducation.org.uk/get-involved/donate/.

You can also make a donation **over the phone** on 020 3752 5680 or **send a cheque** to: Prisoners' Education Trust, The Foundry, 17 Oval Way, London SE11 5RR

Oxford Quaker Meeting Notices

Asbestos hazard! There is still asbestos contamination in the garage. Please do not go in for any reason. This does not affect the car park.

During **July and August there are some weekdays where the building will not be staffed.** This is when we have no bookings and staff shortages due to holidays. If you need to come in for a particular reason, please make sure you have the necessary codes or contact the office in advance**.**

Save the Date! **Open Doors - 13th & 14th September**. Please make a note in your diaries! This is an important part of our outreach work, and we'd love your support. The office is looking

for volunteers to help host over the two days – meeting, greeting, and being available to talk about Quakerism. Also, if any groups would like to set up a stall or organise an activity, please get in touch with the office.

The **2025 Gift Giving Appeal** (or Schedule) has now been launched, and the Finance team hope you have received an email giving you all the necessary details to enable you to support the Meeting. There are paper copies in the office if you find them easier. Many thanks to those that have already completed the form.

Notice about Homes for Ukraine Scheme – request for sponsor

Friends may remember my lodger Yuliya, who visited Oxford Meeting in 2023 during the course of the year she stayed with me as a lodger under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. During that time, she became friends with myself and Chris Gaal and we have kept in regular touch since she returned to Kyiv at the start of last year. Since this January, the growing struggle in day-to-day life in Kyiv has been increasingly evident from her messages and in her occasional visits to the UK for her work with the cultural NGO Dom Master Klass. Earlier this year, the art gallery she works with in Kyiv was damaged in a rocket attack.

She has been in touch recently, seeking help on behalf a friend of hers who comes from her hometown in the Shostka district of North-East Ukraine. In her own words:

My good friends are looking for a sponsor under Homes for Ukraine Scheme. So, maybe you know someone, who might like to help good family to find their temporary home for a short time. It is a father and a teenage son, their wife and mother died a couple of years ago during the full-scale war, so they have overcome trauma and now they are looking for a new start, and a possibility for a son to finish school and overcome a trauma of the war and a loss of his mother. I know this family very well, I know the father since we both were 5 years old, we used to live in the same house back in my hometown Shostka, so I trust them a lot. ... they are nice people, and it would be great to help them.

Yuliya recently renewed her UK visa - for 18 months - despite her wish to stay in Kyiv, and we know she values the sense of having a secure base to return to if she needs it. Prefacing her above request, she told us: 'I have to be frank, it is getting harder and harder to overcome all the challenges of life here in Kyiv, dear Ruth'.

There is a shortage of hosts under the Homes for Ukraine scheme, so if anyone knows of anywhere that might be able to offer a sanctuary to Yuliya's friends I will pass that information on via Yuliya and both of us will be happy to assist with any questions about what is involved. If Friends are able to circulate the request on to any networks they think might be able to help, that would also be most helpful.

In Friendship,
Ruth Mason

Photo: taken by Katharine, a member of Oxford Proud Voices, during Tuesday night rehearsal at the meeting house.

Diary

International Young Adult Quaker Gathering
Theme: *Learning together from the Inward Teacher*.
13th-17th August 2025
Jordans Meeting House, Buckinghamshire

Film screening: No Other Land
The film is about the Israeli authority's demolition of villages and the forced displacement of Palestinian herding communities by extremist Israeli settlers in Masafer Yatta. A short contextual introduction will be provided.
The Garden Room
Sunday 17th August

Southern Friends Junior Gathering
Theme: *Conflict and climate change*
Residential Quaker gathering for ages 11–14.
23th–30th August 2025
Leighton Park School, Reading.
https://fsse.org.uk

Southern Friends Senior Conference
Theme: *Embracing our differing truths within a community*
Residential Quaker gathering for ages 15–18.
23th–30th August 2025
Leighton Park School, Reading
https://fsse.org.uk

Note that there will be no business meeting or bring and share lunch in August

Regular Events

Beansprouts Children's Meeting (under 4s)
Sundays – 10:30am (first Sunday), 11:00am (others), Long Room.
https://oxfordquakers.org/cyp/beansprouts/

Sunflowers Children's Meeting (school-age)
Theme for August: Light
Sundays – 10:30am (first Sunday), 11:00am (others), Short Room.
https://oxfordquakers.org/cyp/sunflowers/

Tea Cake and Play
Friendly stay-and-play for babies, toddlers and their grown-ups.
Tuesdays, 10:00am–12:00pm, Meeting House.
playgroupsupport@oxfordquakers.org
https://oxfordquakers.org/cyp/baby-and-toddler-group/

Looking further ahead

George Richardson Lecture
An annual public lecture in Quaker Studies given by a leading academic
Theme: *George W. Taylor, a Practical Antislavery Man*
Speaker: Julie Holcomb
3rd September, 7:30pm, via Zoom
https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/courses/george-richardson-lecture-george-w-taylor-a-practical-antislavery-man/

Local Meeting for Worship for Business
Sunday 7th September, 12:00, Meeting House.

Oxford Open Doors Weekend
The meeting house will be open to the public.
13th – 14th September 2025
Oxford Open Doors

Oxford Open Doors Worship
Opportunity for visitors to experience a time of Silent Worship
5:15 – 5:45 PM 13th September 2025

Oxfordshire Ride and Stride for Churches
The meeting house will be open to the public.
Saturday 13th September 2025
https://ohct.org.uk/ride-and-stride/

Oxford & Swindon Area Meeting (OSAM)
Worship with Abingdon Friends (am), picnic lunch and Meeting for Church Affairs (pm).
Sunday 14 September, 10:15am–3:00pm, Abbey Centre, Abingdon.
https://osamquakers.org.uk/about-osam/

Gloucestershire Area Meeting Criminal Justice Group
Theme: *Transformation on both sides of the bars*
Speakers: Tim Newell and Sue Braithwaite
Saturday 20th September. 10.00am-1.00pm
Gloucester Meeting House, and via Zoom

National Quaker Week
Theme: Love Your Neighbour
27th September - 5th October

Bring and Share Lunch
Food and fellowship for all.
Sunday 28th September, 12:15pm, Garden Room.

World Quaker Day
Theme: Love Your Neighbour (Galatians 5:14).
Sunday 5 October 2025.
https://fwcc.world/worldquakerday/

All-Age Meeting for Worship
Theme: Love Your Neighbour.
Sunday 5 October 2025, 10:30am, Meeting House.
https://oxfordquakers.org/cyp/all-age-mfw/

Young Friends General Meeting (YFGM)
National gathering for Young Adult Friends.
17th-19th October 2025
Liverpool Friends Meeting House
https://yfgm.quaker.org.uk/

Britain Yearly Meeting
1st - 4th May 2026, Friends House, London, and via Zoom

Berks and Oxon Regional Meeting
Theme: The heart of the Quaker Way.
Speaker: Ben Pink Dandelion, Honorary Professor of Quaker Studies and Director of the Centre for Postgraduate Quaker Studies, University of Birmingham.
18th October 2025, Swindon Meeting House.

Volunteer Service Opportunities

Children's Meeting Helpers
Support Beansprouts or Sunflowers at 11:00 meetings.
Speak to a CYPC member. DBS and references required.

Tea Cake and Play Volunteers
Help run Tuesday stay-and-play sessions.
Contact Sally Lawson:
playgroupsupport@oxfordquakers.org

Welcomers for Sunday 11:00 Meetings
Provide a warm welcome to all who worship with us.
Contact Paul Fine: paul.fine@lshtm.ac.uk / 07854 618146

Photo: reproduced from September 2024 Edition of Forty-Three

WOODBROOKE
WHERE YOU ARE

Working with
Regional Meeting
at Swindon Meeting House

The Heart of the Quaker Way

with Ben Pink Dandelion

This day looks at the key elements of Quaker spirituality and outlines our shared assumptions as a faith group. We will celebrate the distinctive Quaker understanding of authority, worship, community life, and witness, and how we seek spiritual transformation in order to help transform wider society. There will be plenty of time for discussion and reflection. Ideally participants will gain a clearer understanding of Quakerism and a renewed energy to create vibrant Spirit-led Quaker community.

Ben Pink Dandelion is a Programme Leader with Woodbrooke Quaker Learning & Research. He has written and taught extensively about Quakerism.

Saturday 18 October 2025

10:30am for 11am start, until 4:30pm

at Swindon Quaker Meeting House 79 Eastcott Hill, Swindon,SN1 3JF
with online option, or if venue is at capacity.

To register email: elspethwollen@gmail.com, saying whether you intend to participate in person or online. Please let us know before 6 September if you will be bringing children, so provision can be made.

This free event is being organised for anyone from
Local Meetings within the following four Area Meetings:
Banbury & Evesham | Chilterns | Mid-Thames | Oxford & Swindon

Quaker Video of the Month

2025 Backhouse Lecture with FWCC General Secretary Tim Gee:

"The seed is in all: a journey through the Quaker world"

This lecture explored Tim's personal faith journey while offering insights into the common threads and rich diversity that exist among Friends worldwide, before sharing his perspective on the future of Quakerism. The Backhouse lectures are delivered annually at Yearly Meeting on a contemporary issue. Friends from Australia and overseas have presented these lectures. For more information, see https://www.quakersaustralia.info/resources/backhouse-lectures

From Quaker Faith & Practice 20.20

Living Faithfully Today

For a Quaker, religion is not an external activity, concerning a special 'holy' part of the self. It is an openness to the world in the here and now with the whole of the self. If this is not simply a pious commonplace, it must take into account the whole of our humanity: our attitudes to other human beings in our most intimate as well as social and political relationships. It must also take account of our life in the world around us, the way we live, the way we treat animals and the environment. In short, to put it in traditional language, there is no part of ourselves and of our relationships where God is not present.

Harvey Gillman, 1988

August 2025

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 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

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/

Quakers at the National March for Palestine.
Photo by Gwithian Doswell.

Forty-Three is available online at
https://oxfordquaker.com/newsletter/

and on the Oxford Quakers website,
https://oxfordquaker.com/

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

Editorial Team
Tasha Alden
Sally Bayley
Nicole Gilroy
Jimin Kang
SJ Spencer

Copyright 2025, Oxford Quakers.
All Rights Reserved.

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.