



NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2021



Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter. The next one will be in December.

This edition includes many reflections from Yearly Meeting Gathering. After news from the Meeting House, we start with a look back both at the Pandemic, and hearing about how Michael Woolley's Quakers in Chichester research came to be written. We end with the wonderful words of a song *Truth's a Seed*.

Meeting for Worship in the Meeting House

Business Meeting agreed a new format allowing 29 people, with 5 single seats and 12 which could be single or double. The double chairs are a metre apart, the groups of chairs 2 metres apart. **Booking would no longer be necessary.** It was agreed to open the garden doors in addition to other doors and windows for extra ventilation. Although there is a dislike of wearing masks/face coverings it is felt they are necessary at the present time.

Events for September

Thursday 9 th Sept	5.00 pm	Meeting for Worship	On Zoom:
Saturday 11 th Sept	9.00 am	Ride and Stride	MH will not be open but there will be a signing in sheet on the door
Sunday 12 th Sept	10.30	Meeting for Worship	In MH and on Zoom:
Wednesday 15 th Sept	3.00 pm	Tea Time Chat and Create	On Zoom:
Thursday 16 th Sept *see note below	5.00 pm	Meeting for Worship	On Zoom:
Saturday 18 th Sept	10.30 am	Area Meeting	On Zoom:
Sunday 19 th Sept	10.30 am	Meeting for Worship	In MH and on Zoom:
Tuesday 21 st Sept	7.30 pm	Interfaith: Sikhs and Seva talk	On Zoom:
Wednesday 22 nd Sept	2.00 pm	Art Group get together	Oxmarket Art Gallery, East Street Chichester
Saturday 25 th Sept	10.30	Regional Meeting "We are all Quakers: a non-theist, a Christian and a Buddhist-Quaker explore what each can offer Quakerism" To register, please contact: sussexandsurreymquakerclerk@outlook.com or write to RM Clerk, 4 Hazeldene, Seaford BN25 4NQ before Tuesday 21st September.	On Zoom and Lewes Meeting House
Sunday 26 th Sept	10.30	Meeting for Worship	In MH and on Zoom: Password: 1652

	12.00 after MfW	Picnic in Priory Park (weather permitting)	Priory Park
--	-----------------------	--	-------------

*Midweek MfW on Zoom will be reduced to the **3rd Thursday** of every month as from **16th September**, 5pm-5.45pm.

Midweek MfW in the MH will recommence at **7pm -7.45pm**. on the **1st Thursday** of each month from **7th October 2021**.

Future Dates

Events for October and November are available to see on QNet. It has been agreed that an email will be sent to those on QNet at the beginning of the month reminding Friends to view the Events Calendar and for other news and information such as the month's Charity. For those Friends with no computer access, the Pastoral Team will keep you informed. The log-in for QNet is: <https://quaker.app/>

Peace Lecture on November 11th at 6.30pm as a blended meeting. Sue Curd will be speaking on Greenham Common Peace Camp's 40th anniversary, subtitled 'Peace is complicated.'

This month's charity is the Disasters Emergency Committee which highlights on its web site



the need for support for work in Haiti following the earthquake, and for Afghanistan with the disaster unfolding there. DEC continually works with a range of worthwhile projects.

To donate please click here: www.dec.org.uk

Future Charities

October

Friends Without Borders

[Make a donation - FRIENDS WITHOUT BORDERS](#)



November

Oasis of Peace

[Direct Donations - Wahat al-Salam - Neve Shalom \(wasns.org\)](#)





Ted Brown celebrates his 97th birthday on 11th September – all your Friends wish you a very Happy Birthday.

Children’s Meeting Update - Caring and Sharing and ‘More Trees Please!’



We’ve now held four enjoyable Sunday meetings with the children over the summer months with a fifth planned for 5th September. We have taken Caring and Sharing as our theme with each session based around this in some way. So far this has included thinking about the different ways we look out for our friends, considering how some of the smallest creatures are dependent on each other, (some great play dough models of tiny sea creatures came out of this session), and sharing a story about caring for the natural world by replacing lost trees.

Teddy, Juno and Otis certainly all produced some lovely ‘More trees Please’ posters at the end of our most recent session based around Mini Grey’s book *The Last Wolf*, an adapted version of the Little Red Riding Hood story. In this modern version, the heroine, Little Red, discovers the rather elderly Last Wolf, Last Lynx and Last Bear living together in their secret house in the forest and listens to them lamenting the past when there were endless miles of forest “awash with flowers and bees and dripping with honey...when you could lie on a branch and wait for lunch to wander right under your paws.”



After sharing the contents of her lunchbox with the hungry animals, they escort her home and Little Red realises how most of the forest has now been cut down to build houses and that wild things are suffering as a result. Later that evening, she and her Mum set about planting ‘seeds’ for new trees, with Mum commenting: “All you need is a seed, some earth, sun, air, water and... for a really wonderful tree, about a hundred years.”



With this in mind, and to inspire us to produce our best possible tree posters, the children, after listening to the story, rounded up the grown ups and took us on a short expedition to find the plaque next to the tree planted to celebrate Queen Victoria’s jubilee in 1897 in New Park Road – a venerable tree indeed!



Jill, Fanny and Maria



Art Group News

We shall meet again on Wednesday 22nd September in the afternoon at 2.00 pm at the Oxmarket Gallery. Once we have viewed the latest Exhibition we shall go for a cup of tea to discuss future meetings. Everyone welcome.

A couple of months ago at the OxMarket there was a display by The Arts Society, Chichester and Torie (Konrad), one of our members of the Art Group entered her oil painting of her cat against a pink background. We are so thrilled for her to know that it had a red blob next to it (indicating sold!). Well done Torie!



Anne Cosway gives some insights into The Great Visitation of 1665

During lockdown I've been delving into my books and came across the Penguin Classic A Journal of the Plague Year by Daniel Defoe (of Robinson Crusoe fame). Given our present predicament with Covid I thought I'd explore it.



Daniel (1660-1731) was only five when the plague broke out, but he was a professional writer and during his life he amassed a solid library of reference books to help him in his reporting, among them London's dreadful Visitation (1665) and God's Terrible Voice in the City (1667) etc.

He was born in London, son of a butcher. By 1683 he was established as a hosiery merchant. In 1688 he joined William III's army in fighting Louis XIV's Catholic and aggressive France. He seems to have got himself into various scrapes because of his writings and was pilloried and later imprisoned. Through all this he continued undeterred and produced some 560 books, pamphlets and journals. Robinson Crusoe appeared in 1719, Journal of the Plague Year 1722.



The Journal purports to be the narrative of a resident in London during 1664-5, the year of the Plague. The burials in mass graves, the terrible scenes witnessed by the supposed narrator are described with extraordinary vividness. It is unique in that, accepting it as fiction, every generation has also taken it as history. The work stands as the most reliable and comprehensive account of the Great Plague that we possess, and parts of it stand comparison with our predicament today.



Below are two quotes from the journal:



The hurry of the people was such for some weeks that there was no getting at the Lord Mayor's door without exceeding difficulty; there was such pressing and crowding there to get passes and certificates of health for such as travelled abroad, for without these there was no being admitted to pass through the towns upon the road, or to lodge in any inn.

One day, being at that part of the town on some special business, curiosity led me to observe things more than usually, and indeed I walked a great way where I had no business. I went up Holborn, and there the street was full of people, but they walked in the middle of the great street, neither on one side or other, because, as I suppose, they would not mingle with anybody that came out of the houses, or meet with smells and scents from houses that might be infected.



Michael (Woolley) shares his story about **How I wrote 'The Quakers in Chichester'**

The Quaker Podcasts (short biographies of famous people associated with the Chichester Meeting) were dreamt up by Jenny Cole who asked me to help her. When the day came for their launch I was due to speak but the technology let us down. This was sad for Jenny though not so bad for me as I was having a bad day health-wise. However the words I had drafted might interest some Friends so here they are:

The Quakers in Chichester came about because I am a bad Quaker. There used to be a plaque on the Meeting House wall asserting that the first Meeting House on the site was erected in 1698. One Sunday, during Meeting for Worship in 1997, when our minds are supposed to be on higher things, my eyes strayed to this. "Party!" I thought, and subsequently suggested over coffee to a senior member. One thing led to another and a committee was formed. "The first thing we need" I opined "if we are to celebrate our history is to know what it is." Someone excitedly reported that she had Millington's notes.

Eric Millington had been a Friend but had died some time before. He was an historian and had assembled various "notes" or "aides memoire" about the Meeting. When he died and his things were being cleared someone noticed these and rescued them from the bin men. In due course they were handed to me, in two Tesco carrier bags, filled with scraps of paper. Scraps was the right word, there were envelopes with pencilled notes on the back, odd file cards (but all loose), one or two sheets of A4. "What on earth am I going to do with these?" I thought - before deciding, very wisely as it turned out, to use my new computer and its spreadsheet programme. I took the papers one by one and copied them into the programme with the date to which they referred. And having done that I sorted them all by date - and had a chronology. There was still work to do however as there were some inconsistencies - was the first Priory Road Meeting House built in 1698 or 1700 for example. The obvious answer was to consult the minutes and I was delighted to find the right minute book in the East Sussex Record Office at Lewes. It was 1700, phew! I had bought myself some time.



The 1700 Meeting House

And one piece of research led to another - I read Quaker histories and histories galore, always thumbing the indexes to "Chichester" and "Quaker" and sometimes reading entire books. More notes were added to the chronology.



Then there was the question of what to do with all this research - and the idea of a little book, importantly a readable little book which might interest ordinary members. And here too my new computer came up trumps for publishing today allows one to type up ones own words and have them printed. The first edition was published in 1998 and I think there were 400 copies. After a while people started to get in touch about things I had omitted, notably William Clayton and his move to Pennsylvania and the chronology was extended again. I also included more material in the text of a second edition, I think 600 copies, printed after the first sold out. This process continued through four editions but when another reprint was needed new information from correspondents had dried up so I didn't change the text except for the end papers. I think four editions and a reprint is honourable - and more to the point it means that the research will not now be easily lost.

I have to add that we didn't have a party in 2000, but a great celebration: exhibitions in the Meeting House and the Museum for which, excitingly, I got the Nobel Prize. This was not for me you understand but had been awarded to Quakers in 1947 and realising the prize itself must be around somewhere I made enquiries and discovered it was in a cupboard at Friends House. Having made sure that the museum had suitable insurance (it's quite a large medal in solid gold) we borrowed it. There were also two trips to the 1652 country, ten plaques around the City all with the word "Quaker". Most are still in place - one was lost (on the new museum of all places). There were the first of the Quaker walks in Chichester, the first of the Quaker Lectures in the Chichester Festival and significantly the visit of 30 or so Americans from Pennsylvania, who were in England on a pilgrimage to the 1652 country. They extended their trip and stayed with Friends here. The celebrations ended in November, 300 years since the opening of the first Meeting House. We invited Bishop Eric, who came - a nice piece of reconciliation. There was some anxiety about whether we should reserve seats for him and his wife, which was not felt to be Quakerly but an elder "accidentally" left her scarf on some of the front seats in an ingenious compromise. God works in a mysterious way.



I offered the chronology (now properly filed) to the Meeting librarian some years ago but she suggested I hang onto it. I now propose offering it to the West Sussex Record Office. The computer on-line version is hosted free by Weebly. On-line research materials have the virtue of being very easily searchable but computer hosters like Weebly can easily close down or change their policies. I will leave my site with Weebly but if the Meeting wants to guarantee continuance of the chronology on the web it should think about what to do now. To search for the Weebly notes on the web go to michaelwoolley.weebly.com: if you click on the notes they can be really slow to download but do appear eventually. If the worst comes to the worst I intend leaving a paper print out with the Record Office. To access Jenny's podcasts go to: <https://chichesterquakers.org.uk/history>



Yearly Meeting Gathering was held on Zoom this year and here are some Friends' reflections:

Reflections of Sue (Hibberd)

My yearly meeting journey began when I received an email from a member of agenda committee way back in April 2021 inviting me to prepare ministry to give as a spoken introduction to the session "Acknowledging and Welcoming Gender Diverse People" I was asked to include my personal experience, in my life, in my own Meeting and in other contexts (such as in the SOGII group). I was offered a support group from Agenda committee leading up to and after the talk. Some agonising days followed as I wrestled with questions such as "why me?" "Surely I am too old?" but I was given reasonably convincing answers and the rest as they say is history.

I was asked to submit my first draft in May. I dreaded that first zoom support group meeting. I was terrified I might not have written to the brief. I needn't have worried. The group were very positive about this first draft; so initially I didn't feel much more was needed. But of course, nothing is ever finished and as I continued more reading and research, I began to work on the presentation, I swapped one paragraph with another, I thought of different approaches. I was constantly reducing the number of words. Draft followed draft and I hoped each one was an improvement. Draft copies were needed for June, and July. July's copy went to the clerks to help them prepare minutes; to the speech to text reporter to prepare for unusual spellings; and to Friends with specific difficulties following speech and written word on screen. It also went to the Friend, and other journalists likely to be present, clearly marked *DRAFT*. I was reluctant to let go of each draft feeling possessive on the one hand, and that it was unfinished on the other hand! Eventually one person from my support group, said very gently, "would you like me to remove the word *draft* and send it in as your final submission? It is wonderful". And so, I admitted that I could do no more.



I want to thank those of you who supported me on the day by your presence and all those who were holding me in the light off screen. It was a nerve racking, near panic attack experience but judging by your many lovely comments I am almost daring to believe that it "went alright on the day".

How did I feel about the rest of Yearly Meeting? The zoom experience would never come up to the memories of many happy years going to residential Summer Gatherings. That all seems a world away from zoom YMG 2021. I missed seeing the younger children playing around the campus, I missed the teenagers in some of our groups. I missed all age worship, and the children from the youngest to the oldest reading their own minutes. I missed meeting up with Friends we have met over the years and sharing picnics with them. There was a feeling of regret and emptiness. I missed the musical evenings and the fun.

However, despite all that, zoom YMG worked in its own way. Carrying thoughts of my own introduction in my head throughout, much of it for me now is one big blur. Meeting for Worship on the first Sunday, with 500+ Friends was deeply moving and inspiring. I enjoyed the George Gorman lecture and the Swarthmore lecture. I enjoyed the excellent musical entertainment one evening, and the choir that Rebecca talks about was a triumph, and her solo, beautiful. The other Yearly Meeting Introductions, on racism and climate change also prompted good sessions. The clerks worked hard to allow many Friends to offer ministry and excellent minutes followed. Since then, several press releases have been issued to National Newspapers.

Our work on anti-racism, gender diversity, and climate change is only just beginning, so how do we take these topics forward?

Reflections from Kate (Hughes)

I have attended 3 Yearly Meetings: 1 Gathering at Warwick University, 1 BYM at Friends House and 1 Online (this year) - all very different and interesting in their own ways. This year I missed the 1st half as I was in Chew Stoke with my sisters sorting through our parents' photos and I arrived back in time for a blended watching of The Swarthmore Lecture at Chichester Meeting House.

Subsequent to that I decided to simply watch the preparatory and participate in whole meeting sessions on Gender diversity and inclusion and Climate Justice.

The preparatory videos on people's experiences of gender issues and talks on gender were well-presented and I knew a few of the speakers, some of which didn't attend the actual full meeting session (led by our own Sue Hibberd) due to anxieties regarding negativity in at least one case and I'll admit to some apprehension on that count myself. The preparatory talk was watched by about 55 Quakers/attenders (36 of which gave their pronouns alongside their names - as did I - and 20 of which I had met through the journey I am on with Chichester Quakers, SOGII, Mermaids, QGSDC and my daughter, Isabel). The full meeting session watched by 550 Quakers/attenders, with Sue's brilliant introduction, was so positive and widely inclusive that all my fears were swiftly dispelled. From that point on (and indeed the minute from that session shows how) the group came together to carry on with the work that Sue began and the final sentences about providing places of worship and community that are welcoming and supportive to trans and non-binary people who want to be among us and affirming trans and gender diverse Friends in our Quaker communities when read out to us by the clerk really lifted my heart.

Likewise on Faith-based action for climate justice, Lindsey Fielder Cook, Lesley Grahame and Anya Nanning-Ramamurthy gave us an introduction to climate justice issues from different experiences, ages and geographical locations in our rapidly heating-up world. Once again the session following, with even more people in attendance than the previous one, including friends from Manchester, Brighton and Quaker environmental groups, discussed together ways of building Quaker collective action, sacrificing our privileges for the common good and working together to challenge our existing political economic systems which foster injustice and instead (recognising that climate justice work is anti-racist work) seeking to prioritise the needs of people on the front line of climate change.

I hope that in both these vital areas of equality, that Quakers are able to move forward in both these important areas of work.



Reflections from David (Hibberd)

YMG on Zoom had to be a very different gathering to the one I had been eagerly anticipating. Meeting together on Zoom was not going to be the same as being at Bath University for a weeklong residential.

So, could it succeed or was it too ambitious?



- A zoom Yearly Meeting Gathering over 3 weeks is that possible?
- Could it be a 'gathering' in the normal sense but then what is 'normal'?
- It was frustrating to see friends from all round Britain YM but could not greet them, catch up with news, or eat with them as at a face to face YM.
- Did I have the zoom stamina to last for three weeks on Zoom?
- Could I navigate a timetable of events and groups from morning until epilogue?
- Could I expect the Quaker Business method to tackle complex and challenging topics with several hundred Friends on 'zoom'?

The timetable was full but it gave the opportunity to spread out my time looking at a computer screen. Each day all were sent a reminder of what they had chosen for that day and all the necessary links and I came to look forward to this daily contact! Friends from YMs around the world could join us – a couple in Australia and a Friend in California joined groups I attended, for example, despite the challenging time differences.

I focused on the YM sessions, and these are well reported in The Friend. The theme for YM was 'For our comfort and discomfort: living equality and truth in a time of crisis', with the focus on three main sessions:

- Anti-racism, our Quaker journey,
- Acknowledging and Welcoming gender diverse people
- Faith based action for climate justice.

These were hardly easy topics, but the sessions showed that our Business Method really can cope well with challenging topics despite being on 'Zoom'. The depth of the worship on the first Sunday morning was special and also showed that a truly gathered MfW was very possible even on Zoom.

Meeting on Zoom was always likely to have its problems, as the start of the Swarthmore showed, but the longest journey was to our sitting room or study to log-on! Also, we could listen to the Salter, George Gorman and Swarthmore lectures in comfort. These are all available on the YM section of the BYM website and the book of the Swarthmore can be ordered from the Quaker Book Shop.

I missed the children and young people being around us all the time, but they had a full Zoom programme and their minutes showed how much they gained from it all. Also do take the time to read the excellent epistle from Junior Yearly Meeting.

The session on committing ourselves to be a truly anti-racist church showed we still have a long way to journey on this. Gender issues are also not the easiest to tackle and the feelings over Climate Change are strong and deep. Often the ministry was powerful and deeply felt:

"Gender diversity is not a choice it is a discovery.... We all want to belong...Belonging is not about fitting in, it is about being accepted as oneself."

I have often wondered what it must feel like to introduce a session at YM and what help and support was available to the introducers. I now know!

It was a bold decision to organise such a complex on-line gathering but to me it was a great success and this YMG is one I will certainly remember.

Reflections of Sue (George)

As I have learnt to do at previous YMG I chose to follow particular themes, there is always a huge variety of topics on offer it's impossible to take part in everything. I gained a lot from the preparatory material, though I missed the usual discussions pre YMG at local level.

I was glad to be at home and able to fully relax between sessions, but I missed the stimulation and fun of sharing reactions with other Friends – I have usually gone with a group from my local meeting who have shared self catering accommodation, meal times were great for catching up and discussing what we had heard at various sessions.



I Zoomed into sessions on what it's been like using Zoom, because I have been struggling with that. I went to sessions on the complexities of the relationship between YM Trustees and Meeting for Sufferings. My interest arising from our current local tensions between our local meeting, and AM Trustees, and also because I will be one of our AM reps on MfS for the next triennium.

I found the main sessions that I was able to get to, very thought provoking, and valued the Clerking. In the main sessions I was sometimes stirred and shaken into new ways of thinking, and have huge appreciation of those who introduced the sessions, and the Clerks, and technical team without whom nothing would have happened. I enjoyed catching up with the lectures, Swarthmore Gorman and Salter, on YouTube so I could hear them more than once to take in more of what was offered.

What am I left with? A muddle of thoughts – a sense that maybe COVID with all its horrors has been a big shove towards change, which potentially gives hope for what will happen to The Society of Friends in the years ahead. An appreciation that my struggles with Zoom, and deep feelings of missing the face to face contacts, are probably partly due to my age and discomfort with IT. The beginning of a sense of the possibilities for bringing Quakers together in different ways that are more accessible to many and easy for some, but also a concern about those who can't/don't access the Internet. How do we keep together as a spiritual community while change is happening? I have a yearning for a simpler structure overall, I question the multiple layers of organisation, the many buildings. I heard and welcomed much heartfelt commitment to working together to become a truly diverse faith community. I could not be at all sessions and perhaps that's why I didn't hear any concerns about the inequalities in Britain today e.g. rising levels of child poverty, the inadequate supply of affordable housing.

Reflections from Philippa (Garety)

This was my first Yearly Meeting Gathering. I was sad that it was not to be wandering around the campus of Bath University, attending all sorts of events, wacky and sober, and meeting Friends 'in real life'. Since I have become less able in recent months to manage long hours on zoom, I chose selectively, and principally went to The Swarthmore Lecture and the sessions on affirming gender diversity and anti-racism. I was very sorry to miss the sessions on climate justice.

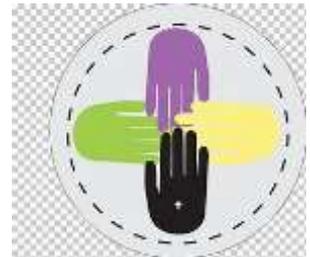
My impressions: overwhelming at first, and then, when I made myself concentrate, and got to grips with Sched, all amazingly well organised. The preparatory materials I looked at were fantastic – I thought Mark Russ on the blockages to anti-racism for the Society of Friends thoughtful and clear: his proposition was that Quakers being (or seeing ourselves) as individually 'good' could lead to avoidance of the recognition of the nature of racism and a failure to take on responsibility for our part in systemic white privilege.

The document on language and terminology for gender diversity and sexuality was a great resource as well as the videos of talking heads of a truly wonderfully gender diverse group of Friends describing their experiences; both of these helped me broaden my understanding and language for trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming identities. Might we look at these in SOGII?

And Sue Hibberd had already described to me how thoroughly and supportively the writing of her prepared ministry for the gender diversity session had been. Sue's eloquent and heart-felt ministry (wonderful to witness our Chichester Friend giving her all) and that session on gender diversity were a highlight for me – brave and thoughtful and full of what love requires of us.

The session on antiracism was equally moving – when a Friend spoke of their experience of not feeling welcomed, as quoted in the Friend:

'Ministry was then offered by one Friend which visibly shook them and others: 'All I want, and all I have wanted for the longest time, is to feel equal and, again, here, in this room, I don't. I hear people talk all week about George Floyd but we are here now, in the UK, in your Meetings, feeling like outsiders every day. This is not the experience I was promised.'



This ministry was also quoted in the Epistle. The clerks (all three so impressive – I loved watching them take in the ideas and questions of Friends, with such grace, as they calmly revised and re-revised their draft minutes!) had opened with 'We are not seeking a consensus, we are seeking the will of God,'.

My experience of YMG, while not relaxing with others in the sun, zoomed as it was, for me achieved this, being truly 'kinder ground' 'carefully seeing and listening'.

Reflections from Sue (Curd)

I knew I would find it hard to be committed to whatever I chose out of the vast choice workshops and yearly meeting sessions and so was kind to myself, just one thing most days, sometimes just an epilogue. It seemed to work as a plan, I felt connected to the yearly meeting, travelling on the same path. I also didn't want to stay seated staring at a screen, so I switched to 'no video' for YM sessions, sat in an easy-chair and let the ministry soak in, marvelling at the clerking. Of course for participatory sessions I sat at the screen. The most fun session was learning to sing in Welsh.

The words that remain with me from the Salter Lecture were 'my humanity is bound up in yours' and that rings even louder now as events in Afghanistan unfold. I gained a great deal from the Gorman lecture, 'we have no time but the present time' - a call to 'liberate our Quaker inner story' - loosen up, let go - discern what to keep/discard/reduce. Invite in more dreams - tears and laughter. Learn how to live as a river flows. Quite a prophetic voice it seems to me. The Swarthmore Lecture - truth in an era of fake news seems a wake-up call - let's be careful that we aren't guilty of group-think as many of us read the same newspapers and listen to the same radio and tv news (The Guardian, Radio 4 and Channel 4 News, he said). Read and listen outside of our comfort zone - how can we be bridges if we don't listen to the other perspectives, how can we understand other points of view, how can we be the space that enables change? I'd written down in my notes 'Get our hands in the soil, sift for truth.'



I attended a session put on by a local meeting who had put a Black Lives Matter banner in the Meeting House garden. It was torn and burnt by someone in their small community. Not everyone in the Meeting had agreed that the banner should be there, over time they've continued putting out messages on banners. It's a communication with their locality, it provokes thought, it's a witness to truth. How courageous.

Some days I only attended the epilogue. A wonderful closing of a day to be quietly with Friends to listen to prepared ministry and let it sink in deeply with the day done.

Reflections from Rebecca (Grove)

Earlier in the year I got an email from Tony Biggin, asking me if I could be in a virtual Quaker choir as part of YM. Tony Biggin has written the Quaker oratorios Gates of Greenham and Cry of the Earth. I had been in both many years ago at the Royal Festival Hall, and more recently had sung in the 'The Living Spirit' composed by him at Friends House. It was amazing to meet up with him again and other Quakers, who I had remembered from past musical Quaker events.



We were invited to sing two Quaker songs: 'George Fox' and 'Truth's a seed', both were very much on the theme of truth. 'Truth's a seed' is written by Tony Biggin and the words are by Alex Davidson. I think the words to this are really beautiful and seem to echo the sentiment of our Swathmore Lecture, so I am including them here. I am hoping video recordings of both songs will be available to listen to on the Friends in tune website - www.friendsintune.com

Truth's a seed

Truth's a seed but not a pearl
truth is a way not destination
longs to be freed to grow, unfurl
Breaking from creed to new creation

Chorus: Truth is a seed. Speaks to our need.

Truths in leaven not in laws,
truth is the change to new perceiving -
journey through seven secret doors.
found in the strange and pain of grieving.

(Chorus)

Truth's awakening from sleep,
freed from the act of seeing blindness
Truth's where we take the hidden leap,
found in the act of love and kindness.

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/chichesterquakers

