



# NEWSLETTER

Winter 2021



Welcome to our Winter Newsletter. This issue is packed with articles and news from the Meeting House – we seem to have been busy over the last few months!

## Events for December

Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> Dec	7.00 – 7.45 pm	Meeting for Worship	Meeting House
Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> Dec	10.30	Meeting for Worship	In MH and on Zoom
Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> Dec	10.30	Blended Meeting for Worship and Children's Meeting	In MH and on Zoom
Tues 14 <sup>th</sup> Dec	10.30	Art Group get-together	Pallant House Art Gallery, Chichester
Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec	3.00 pm	Tea Time and chat	At Barbara (Shepherd's) home
Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> Dec	5.00 pm	Meeting for Worship	On Zoom
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> Dec	10.30 am	Meeting for Worship	In MH and on Zoom:
Saturday 25 <sup>th</sup> Dec	10.00- 10.30	Short Meeting for Worship followed by coffee and mince pies	Meeting House
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> Sept	10.30	Meeting for Worship	In MH and on Zoom:

## Future Dates

Remember to go to QNet for all Future Dates. It has been agreed to continue to send an email 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/>

## This month's charity is Children on the Edge



Children on the Edge is a child rights organisation created to support the world's most marginalised children, living in some of the toughest situations. They currently work with more than 16,000 children in Bangladesh, India, Uganda, Myanmar, and Lebanon.

By working alongside communities, they design programs tailored to the specific needs and circumstances using their 30 years of experience. This has enabled them to transform the lives of children facing some of the most challenging circumstances, by co-creating protective, nurturing environments in which they can safely live, play, learn, and grow.

You can donate by clicking on this link: [Children on the Edge - Children on the Edge](#)

## Future Charities

Remember that Finance Committee are waiting to hear from you about Charities to support in 2022. So far they have had very few nominations. Email Sue (George) on: [sueg1019@gmail.com](mailto:sueg1019@gmail.com) with your suggestions.

## Remembrance Day



At 12 noon on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> of November a wreath of White Poppies was laid at the Chichester War Memorial in Litten Park. The White Poppy provides a memorial to all those killed in war and symbolises a commitment to peace. The wording on the wreath read:

*"In remembrance of the military and civilians of all nations who have been victims of war. May we all work hard for peace". (Chichester Quakers)*

Bournville Quaker Claire Bowman wrote this impromptu poem for their Remembrance Day Meditation, which was used in Meeting for Worship on that day. It starts with a translation of the words of the Pie Jesu, hence the title.

### Pie Jesu 2021

Holy Jesus, Lord, Grant them rest, eternal rest

Rest to all those traumatised by war  
Death in the fighting,  
And of all that went before

Homes destroyed and pillaged  
The countryside laid waste  
Can we bear to empathise  
With everything they faced?

Brave soldiers set out daringly  
To kill and wound and maim  
And on the other side are warriors  
Doing just the same

Across the world are mothers, children, brothers,  
sisters, aunts  
Whose aching hearts need healing  
Futures blighted, cold and dark

And do they learn?  
And do they change?  
And do they hear the cry  
Of generations damaged  
By those bullets as they fly?

Here's to negotiation, peace  
And love once more restored  
Bring rest and hope and healing  
To our weary world, Oh Lord!

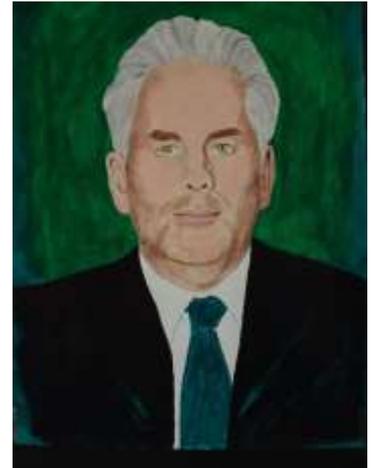
## Michael Woolley's Memorial

***“You can choose to be anything in this life and Michael chose to be kind”***

These were the words spoken by a Friend at the Memorial Meeting for Michael held on 27<sup>th</sup> November and seemed to reflect everyone's contribution to this Meeting.

It was a blended Meeting which went so smoothly thanks to the excellent technical team of William (Bodey), Chris (Grove) and Jenny (Cole). This meant there could be over 25 people in the Meeting House and 40 people on Zoom and were able to share their memories of Michael and give thanks for his life.

There was also a wonderful painting of Michael hanging on the Meeting House wall and this was painted by Alec a few days before the Memorial Meeting.



Michael's commitment to Quakers was emphasised in a memorial booklet, prepared by Michael's partner Alec (Cazas) taken from an autobiography that Michael wrote a short time before his death and here is an extract from it:

*.....In the 1990s he bought a ticket to Mexico and arrived with less than two hundred dollars in his pocket. Mexico though was good to him. He got a job as the English Adviser to the Vice-President of Banca Serfin, a sinecure but well paid, a bit of teaching, a bit of translation. It was lonely sometimes - one weekend he realised he hadn't spoken to a soul from Friday afternoon when he left work until the following Monday morning. The English language newspaper carried a small ad for a bilingual Quaker Meeting and the following weekend he went along, and found he felt very at home. He also met Alec Cazas, his current partner,*

*He was a very committed Quaker, their egalitarianism and commitment to human rights particularly appealed, as did their lightly defined spirituality and emphasis on practical action. He researched and wrote the booklet "The Quakers in Chichester" and for twenty years led the "Quaker Walks". He was an Elder of Chichester Meeting for six years, Clerk to the Elders for three. His faith informed everything he did - Council, Mayoralty, Refugees, Welfare Trusts. He made it clear that whatever other ceremony there were on his death he would like a Quaker Meeting for Worship.*

Remember you can listen to the 6 podcasts recorded by Jenny Cole with Michael about Quakers in Chichester. Just go to the Chichester Quaker Website: [Local Quaker History | Chichester Quaker Meeting \(chichesterquakers.org.uk\)](https://www.chichesterquakers.org.uk)

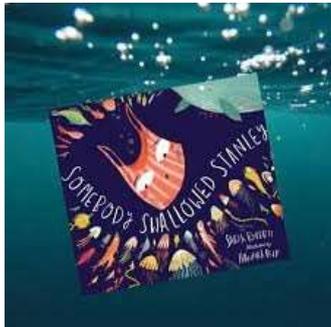


# NEWS FROM THE CHILDREN'S GROUP



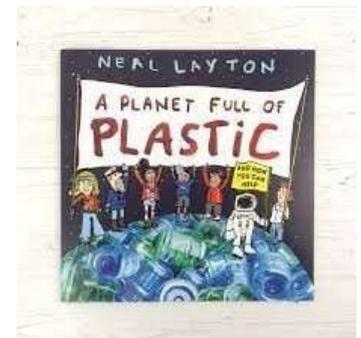
We're delighted to report that the

Children's Group is flourishing with three new families enquiring and meetings averaging one a month! On 31<sup>st</sup> October we had 5 of our regular attendees and made turtles with sponge painted 'shells' after reading "Somebody Swallowed Stanley" - (Stanley being a plastic bag who sea creatures mistakenly want to eat)



On 14<sup>th</sup> November we continued the theme by looking at Neal Layton's book "A Planet Full Of Plastic" and made

Fishy Posters against dumping plastic in the sea.



We're looking forward to meeting again on 12<sup>th</sup> December for some Pre-Christmas fun and activities!

Jill, Fanny and Maria





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## Economic Justice and Sustainability Group

Debbie Carter and Kate Hughes were key to organising Transition Chichester's Ecofest on November 6th. It was a great opportunity for people to find out about local green initiatives and to contribute ideas of their own.

Our Economic Justice and Sustainability Group were invited to have a table at this event. We decided to have general Quaker literature available, and also material with a particular focus on using our money in eco-friendly ways.

We had a steady flow of people wanting to know more about Quakers and about what we can

achieve with our money and investments. We had some great

conversations and we invited children to design a green themed bank note and to say how they would spend it for the environment but adults kept joining in! The whole event was a great success with quite a buzz so, 'thank you' to the organisers

for the opportunity to take part and 'thank you' to the team for being there.



Our 'Our money – saving the planet' leaflet is available if you'd like one.

*Barbara (Hayes)*



## Art Group News

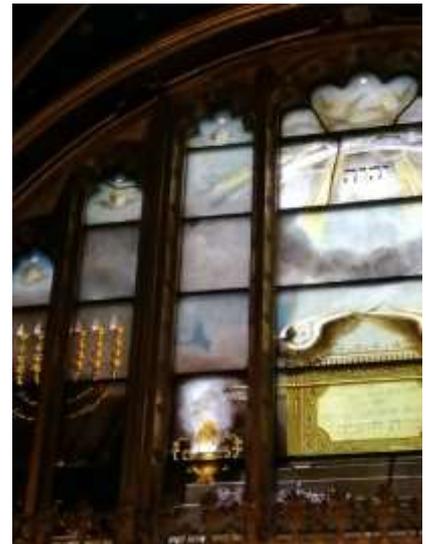
We have had interesting and enjoyable outings over the last couple of months.

First of all we went to the Moon! Yes, we went to Chichester Cathedral and saw the Museum of the Moon installation. An amazing touring artwork by UK artist Luke Jerram. Measuring seven metres in diameter, the moon features 120dpi detailed NASA imagery of the lunar surface. It reminded us of one of the verses from Shelley's famous poem To the Moon:

*Art thou pale for weariness  
Of climbing heaven and gazing on the earth,  
Wandering companionless  
Among the stars that have a different birth,  
And ever changing, like a joyless eye  
That finds no object worth its constancy?*



Then in November we had a fascinating guided tour of St Paul's Chapel at Stansted House. The Chapel has a colourful history. It contains a unique East window with Christian/Jewish iconography and Hebrew Tablets of the Ten commandments. When the Chapel was consecrated on 25th January 1819 (the Feast of Conversion of St Paul) John Keats attended the service, and he used the Chapel's imagery in his poems The Eve of St Agnes and The Eve of St Mark.



As always these outings have a social side with cups of tea afterwards – and often with large slices of cake as can be seen here with Sue (but as a Quaker she kindly offered a piece to all of us on the table!)

## Ford Prison Chaplaincy

With the approval of the chaplaincy manager at Ford, Sue (George) has agreed to serve as a Prison Visitor and chaplaincy volunteer to cover for Paul while he is temporarily unable to carry out his Quaker Chaplaincy work. We all hold Sue in the light as she takes on this important role and she says:



*I am glad to be able to step into the gap while Paul is not able to visit. I have a long-term interest in those under the 'care' of the Criminal Justice system. My initial social work training was as a probation officer, I have also worked residentially in an after-care hostel for ex-prisoners and briefly as a group therapist in Grendon prison. As such I am interested in supporting the work of the Chaplaincy at Ford and post lockdown was able to visit once with Paul. I have applied to be recognised as a Chaplaincy volunteer, which is not a Quaker appointment but means I can visit and be involved in the Chaplaincy work, and be available as a Quaker as needed. I have met with the managing Chaplain who supports my application. I think it is crucial not to lose the Quaker link and am hoping that the record of my previous vetting will mean updating it and clearing me to visit happens without a hitch.*

## What attracts me to the Quakers?

By temperament, I'm analytical and inclined to see many sides to every question, so answering this question in a clear and simple way is not easy for me. Though, on reflection, perhaps this preference for divergent thinking is a good indicator as to why I have been drawn to the Society of Friends. But here are three straightforward reasons I'm attracted.

**Sitting together in silence** Life is full, and thoughts, feelings and memories jostle for attention. As I look back over my 64 years, I can see that all my life I have felt it important to be silent before that which we call God in the company of others. There is a rich variety of settings, whether tremendously conventional (a weekday early morning Communion service at an Anglican church) or unusual (a motley group of people co-creating an evening liturgy in the glitterball enhanced basement of a Catholic church in the West End), in which I have selectively sought out opportunities for sitting still and waiting, letting 'worship and daily life enrich each other'. But Quakers do this all the time and thoroughly. So, my Number 1 attraction to the Quakers is Meeting for Worship.

**Being Friends** Religion seems to me to be both a glorious and also a dangerous business, which can go badly wrong. Strong beliefs and claims to holiness clearly sometimes lead people astray and do great harm. Especially so, as I have seen in my life and work, when people are isolated, or in religious institutions with unfettered hierarchical power. So it is important to me that we engage in faith and practice together, as equals, loving, supporting and challenging each other. The Quaker primacy of friendship as the model of being together seems good to me. I value the community of the local meeting, and the sense of belonging – it is a delight and a safeguard. My number 2 is a community of Friends.

**Testimonies and openness** The inseparable interplay of faith and action permeates the Society of Friends. That the Yearly Meeting Gathering this year engaged with climate justice, anti-racism and gender diversity seemed so right. These are the things which are on our minds. When I first attended Chichester MfW, it was followed by a meeting of SOGII. I heard that in the following weeks, there would be a Mental Health discussion, and the New Economy group was hard at work. Eco-Chi was mentioned too. I was very impressed! All of this seemed so relevant to me, writing as a lesbian mental health clinical researcher who yearns for a more just society. And although the Testimonies are enduring, just as important to me is a radical openness to change, which I have learned can at best be engendered by the Quaker business method. So my third reason for being attracted to the Quakers is the radical openness in faith and action.

I am so glad that I stumbled into Chichester Meeting House one Sunday 3 years ago, and have now joined you as a member. Thank you for your warm welcome.

*Philippa (Garety)*

## Peace Lecture



On 11<sup>th</sup> November Sue Curd, who is writing a novel about Greenham Common, gave the Annual Peace Lecture, her subject: Greenham Common Peace Camp's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The sub-title of the talk was Peace is Complicated. There was an audience of over 40 people, attending both in the Meeting House and by Zoom.

*Dancing on the Nuclear Silos!*

John (Simpson) summarises the talk for us:

*In 1981, 36 women marched from Cardiff to Greenham Common in Berkshire to protest against the siting of U.S. nuclear cruise missiles at the RAF base there. These women set up a camp in tents initially, their numbers swelling later by others from all walks of life, local and abroad; many staying for a few months or days.*

*From the start Quakers gave support. The Newbury Meeting House allocated a room with a shower, washing machine, and telephone. Other Newbury residents were not so supportive. RAGE, the Ratepayers Against the Greenham Encampments was formed, campaigning for the women to clear up the camp and leave. Some local pubs refused to serve the women.*

*Despite operating under the mantra of peace and non-violent direct action with posters and songs, they were opposed by the police and taken to court and some were imprisoned. They also suffered vigilante attention, possessions being damaged or stolen, even excrement being thrown. In April 1983, the women organised the Embrace the Base protest, in which 30,000 women joined hands to encircle the 9 mile perimeter fence.*

*Eventually, the missiles were removed and flown back to the US. In 2000 RAF Greenham Common was decommissioned and the land returned to public ownership.*

*In the summer of 2021, anniversary celebrations were held in Newbury and many of the former protesters regathered.*

This was an inspiring talk about a group of women who were themselves inspiring in their commitment, stretching for long years, to the cause of peace. It was made all the more poignant by folk being present on Zoom who were actually from the original Peace Camp with an important quote "Women get forgotten". There were appreciative comments on the Zoom chat facility: "*Informative, moving and inspiring*"

We have just heard that the direct online donations to the Peace Pledge Union came to £219 and £65 was donated in cash making a total donation of £284

## COP26

A magnificent blanket was knitted and crocheted by our Meeting to go to COP26 and then onto refugees when the campaigning has finished at this conference. Here it is at the September Priory Park Picnic.



## LIVING SIMPLY



*“Live simple that others may simply live” (Mahatma Gandhi)*

How do we live a life of simplicity and what does it mean? This article sets out to explore what it means for me.

When dealing with an ambiguous type of concept I first seek what it might mean. For example, some writers separate out poverty from simplicity using the Latin derivation ‘*sine proprio*’ – ‘without property’, or ‘poverty’.

The Ignatian way makes a clear distinction between Spiritual Poverty and material poverty; the former *“describes a stance of utter dependence before God, ... we depend on God for our happiness and fulfilment”*. (Kevin O’Brien, SJ From The Ignatian Adventure).

*“Pure holy Simplicity confounds  
all the wisdom of this world  
and the wisdom of the body.  
Holy Poverty confounds  
the desire for riches, greed,  
and the cares of this world.”*

(Ch.5. Simplicity and Poverty, Franciscan Charism)

I believe this to be a good start since for me, if one is poverty stricken, that is being in need of the where-with-all to purchase life’s necessities, (ie economically poor) - then one is of necessity, living a life of simplicity. A semantic difference perhaps, but an important one as is emphasised below.

Poverty of Spirit is taken up by Guy Buckler since he feels that it makes way for God; by emptying ourselves through practicing simplicity in our lives we can provide a pathway to Him through prayer.

Buckler expresses the view that *“Whereas poverty is a way of living – a lifestyle which refuses possessions of any kind – simplicity is an attitude and a frame of mind.”* (Franciscan Charism, Ch.5)

To live in Simplicity helps to detach us from the desire for wealth and possessions, which per se leads to self-centredness, whereas we need to remain open to others to an awareness of their value and sanctity (an aspect of chastity).

Thus, living in simplicity aims to give us freedom from ourselves and respect and value for others, and is therefore has to be linked to humility, and chastity - in the sense of an “all encompassing love... respect and honour” of our brothers and sisters.



This approach leads me to believe that Simplicity begins in a joyful appreciation of all His creation.

Some writers have linked a life of simplicity directly with the integrity of creation. I quote Mary Colwell, Catholic Consultant:-

*“Shortly after my visit to Belem I found myself in New York and went for a run through Central Park. Here I saw a wonderful quote from Shakespeare: ‘One touch of nature and the whole world is kin’ from Troilus and Cressida. This is a profound vision that shows that nature is a great unifier and binder: it strips away class, money, power and colour and renders us all humble acceptors of the bounties of creation.”*  
(“Thinking Faith” journal, posted 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2009.)

In her article “The Challenge to Live Simply”, Christine Allen outlines the Catholic project called *livesimply*. This took as its central theme the notions of progress outlined in the encyclical: that it was about being more, not just having more, that we find a truer sense of what it means to be human - not through things, but through our relationships with other people and with God. The project sought to expand the various principles underpinning social teaching: the dignity of the human person, the common good, the preferential option for the poor.

She writes that we have an incarnational faith, and the gospels tell the story of the life, mission and death of Jesus which sets an example as to how we should act towards others. Jesus stood out against the social and cultural expectations of his times in the way he interacted with the Pharisees, in the way his disciples understood him, and most of all on the cross.

Over time humanity has sought a subjugation of the natural world rather than a kinship (family) relationship with it. It is this challenge of building right relationships with one another and the world that is central to the *livesimply* project and one that all the members of the network seek to respond to in the diversity of their work.

Allen quotes the theologian Tina Beattie who interpreted living simply as a life of grace. “*A life of grace is about seeking fulfilment within both ourselves and in our relationships with others.*”

(Adapted from Thinking Faith – “The Challenge to Live Simply”, Christine Allen is Executive Director of Progressio and member of the *livesimply* Executive Committee. Posted in 2008)

What do Quakers think of Simplicity? A glance through Quaker Faith and Practice will reveal several perspectives. I quote one which, I think, chimes the most with the tenor of this article, and which expresses the view that Simplicity “is the heart of Quaker ethics”:-

*20.27 “Simplicity is forgetfulness of self and remembrance of our humble status as waiting servants of God. Outwardly, simplicity is shunning superfluities of dress, speech, behaviour, and possessions, which tend to obscure our vision of reality. Inwardly, simplicity is spiritual detachment from the things of this world as part of the effort to fulfil the first commandment: to love God with all of the heart and mind and strength.”*

In summary, to achieve Simplicity in our lives we need to accept that such an attempt cannot be treated as a stand-alone. It needs to be linked together with a sense of humility, chastity, and an “utter acceptance of dependency before God”. If we wish to put ourselves in the mind of Christ, we like Him, need to ‘empty ourselves’ (ridding of the ego) in order to give us the freedom to do so: we need to seek “a life of grace”.

Simple living is not, perhaps, so simply simple!

Trevor (Beckett)

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