



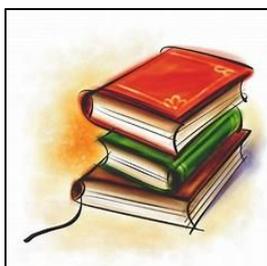
NEWSLETTER

May 2019

The theme of the last few months seems to have been “Learning Through Experience”. Many events have been held by all Groups and so there has been a greater understanding of different ideas and cultures.

Contents:

- Library News
- Art Group News – a play reading about a changing world
- New Economy Group – how would a group of students engage with a new experience
- Inter Faith Planning Group – enjoying the Passover traditions of a Sedar Meal
- Sanctuary – sharing a wonderful experience of welcoming a large group to Chichester
- SOGII (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Inclusion Group) talks about the meaning of the loving support of a Meeting
- Issy’s Baking days – Rebecca learns the secrets of making Easter Biscuits
- Third Sunday Talk – but also experiencing a walk – where to?
- Children’s Group – young people learn from a visit
- Discussion Group feels that the concept of equality is very diverse and all encompassing
- Ramblings – a second reflective contribution on The Light



Library

New Library Books

Some additional books have been donated to the library. These include:
‘A Light that is Shining’ by Harvey Gillman
‘The British Quakers 1647-1997, highlights of their history’ by Alastair Heron.
Both of these books will be helpful for enquirers.

We also have a copy of an American publication *‘Mom – I Need to be a Girl’*, by Just Evelyn, the story of a teenage boy with gender dysphoria and his transgender experience.

Are there any books that you would like to see added to the library? Please talk to Barbara Shepherd

Art Group News



The reading of the play *Say Something Happened* by Alan Bennett provided a thought provoking and often very amusing afternoon. The play focussed on Mam & Dad, an elderly couple living in Yorkshire, whose lives are lived their way. That is until June Potter from the council shows up and suggests...

'change'. There was certainly a universal message. Everyone knows the feeling of getting older or getting left behind, but we saw it here from both perspectives, the younger generation dealing with the world changing due to things out of their control and them being left to deal with it, while the older generation are made helpless in a world that they helped create, now unable to do anything due to things out of their control. While it was true when Bennett wrote this play, it is arguably more poignant now than ever before. We decided that the young lady June from the council was shown to be even more lonely than the elderly couple a typical Alan Bennett paradox?

The Group is also involved in an art project based on the Tree of Life – the creative talents of us all are going to be challenged!

Next month we are looking forward to hearing from Barbara (S) about the crafts of Uzbekistan after her exciting trip there. There will be lots of visual images!

New Economy Group



How would young students on a third year Undergraduate Business Studies Degree Programme conduct a Business Meeting using the Quaker Business Method? This was the situation that the New Economy Group were involved in when an invitation came from Dr Rob Warwick, Reader in Management and Organisational Learning at the University of Chichester to present a Session on the Ethics module of the Degree Programme.

Our Session was entitled the Quaker Business Method and we decided our aims were:

- *To look at Quaker values and experience of business and refer to the Quaker New Economy project*
- *Explore the decision making process in the Society of Friends and consider its relevance for the workplace/business.*

We achieved this second aim by dividing the students into small groups and they conducted a Business Meeting using a scenario we provided to make decisions on two issues. All engaged with the task, although some found the concept of speaking only once very difficult. One person taking the role of Clerk commented how hard it was **not** to speak, and a second acknowledged that normally they would be formulating their response rather than really listening to what someone else was saying. We had excellent feedback from Rob Warwick: *I was very much struck by how well the students engaged with both the ideas and the nature of experience.*

The New Economy Group were also interested to note that Church Action for Tax Justice (CATJ), in partnership with the Fair Tax Mark scheme, has announced that Fair Tax Week in 2019 will run from the 6th – 14th July 2019, incorporating Tax Justice Sunday on the 7th July.

The two organisations are working together in a bid to see Fair Tax Week and Tax Justice Sunday become an established part of the calendar, just like Fairtrade Fortnight and Living Wage Week, where organisations that do the right thing when it comes to tax are not only recognised but celebrated.

QUAKER INTERFAITH EVENT: In April Chichester Quakers hosted members of the Sussex Jewish Outreach Group for a Passover Haggadah.



The Haggadah is the book which tells the story of the Exodus of the Israelites from their enslavement by the Egyptians more than 4,000 years ago. The Seder is the order of the service which describes the rituals of the annual celebratory meal, indicating when and how each rite is performed, although there is some flexibility on what is included which was reflected in the evening's event.



There were moments of thoughtful reflection but it was a convivial and happy evening nobly and ably led by Nick Beck.

(There will be an extended article about this event in the Interfaith Planning Group Newsletter to be published in June)

Remember the visit to the Chithurst Buddhist Monastery on Saturday 1st June - details from Bill



The **Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Inclusion** group

At the last meeting time was spent discussing an issue raised at Area Meeting in March. SOGII (the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Inclusion group) were asked to discuss and report back as to how information on gender identity can be gathered in an appropriate and Quakerly manner for the Tabular statement. The Tabular statement is a numerical spreadsheet and the information gathered is confidential, published and considered at Yearly Meeting, and the data recorded with the aim of reporting patterns of membership. The group appreciated the sensitivity of the task and were pleased to produce a minute which will go on to a future Area Meeting.

The group also heard from Yvonne who reported back from the recent Woodbrooke weekend "A Friendly Introduction to Gender Diversity" which she co-facilitated with Fred Langridge. Following the event several of the attendees spoke at their Local Meetings and told how this had given the opportunity for others to share their situations. This highlighted how Friends can often be struggling alone to cope with personal or family situations without the loving support of the rest of their Meeting and the enormous importance such opportunities can bring.

On a lighter note several of us are hoping to take part in Worthing Pride Celebration's Parade on 13th July and look forward to showing that at Chichester Quaker Meeting **EVERYONE** is "Safe, Welcome, Valued and Respected"!. Any Friends interested in joining us can get more details from Maria.



Sanctuary Group



ASYLUM SEEKERS VISIT CHICHESTER



Seventy asylum seekers from Portsmouth visited our Meeting House on Friday 12th April on a day trip organised by the Quakers and supported by Stagecoach buses and the Cathedral. The visitors came on Stagecoach 700 buses, courtesy of Stagecoach and were taken on a short guided tour through the Bishop's Garden and the Cathedral Close to North Street and the Meeting House where they had lunch. The numbers were a challenge as the original plan was to cater for 25 however a lot of Friends pitched in and all was well on the day. There was face painting and Easter egg hunts before an afternoon which included the options of a football match, play in the Priory Park play area or a visit to Chichester Cathedral.



Some of the men took time out to go to the Swanfield Mosque for Friday prayers before having an informal match against Nations United, the Sanctuary in Chichester team.



Up to 200 asylum seekers are accommodated in Portsmouth while their applications are being decided by the Home Office. They are not allowed to work but are given very basic accommodation and a small allowance (£37 a week). The charity Friends Without Borders runs a dropin coffee shop and advice service for them in Portsmouth and helped organise the outing which was very much enjoyed by all.

Good Friday Baking Day – Easter Biscuits by Rebecca



I went to my first baking day on Good Friday with Barbara and Vera at Issy and David's house in Emsworth. Barbara bought with her Easter Biscuits mixture, which I rolled, cut out and put in Issy's Aga to bake.

Everyone enjoyed sitting in Issy and Dave's beautiful garden and chatting with tea and coffee. Later, Barbara gave me the recipe which is one used by Mary Berry. This includes cinnamon, mixed spice, and currants. The biscuits can also be served without currants and cut into Easter

shapes, such as rabbits. A good time was had by all.



On Easter Sunday Maggie and I served the biscuits after Meeting for Worship with other Easter treats. I look forward to making these biscuits in the future.

Third Sunday Talk



Mary Iden came to talk **Meadows in Chichester**. Mary's walk and talk was well attended on March 17th, and she sold £31.10 worth of plants to us. She brought primroses and alder buckthorn trees both of which will attract pollinators, particularly the brimstone butterfly whose caterpillar eats young buckthorn.

Mary's campaign to create meadows in the town has been carried out, despite hostile mowing regimes from the various local authorities responsible for the green spaces around Chichester. She's been successful at the back of the New Park Centre, and this is where we walked to see what has become of the wild flower plugs she planted up about three years ago. We saw little rosettes of leaves of yarrow and hawksbit, and the red dead nettle was already flowering, along with some of the previously mentioned primroses. She said that this bank was entirely in the wrong place in that it faced north and was far too fertile for wild flowers (according to the books), but actually it still works as a place where the pollinators can gather nectar. She mentioned that in the summer the bank stays greener and damper than the surrounding shaved areas as the vegetation is taller and more likely to withstand drought conditions. So it just shows that nature will do whatever she can with un-mown areas.

On the way back to the Meeting House after everyone else had peeled off to go home, Mary showed me a little area just inside the nearest Priory Park gate to the MH, that she wondered if Quakers would like to grow as a wildflower area? It's currently covered with grass on the edge of a bank and is at quite an angle.

Mary asked that anyone who bought an alder buckthorn whip put their email address on her sign up sheet, so that she could log where the trees have been planted. She promised to send instructions about care of the trees to everyone too. Anyone who missed this request can contact her directly on TCBuckthornsForBrimstones@gmail.com

Members of the **Children's Group** were delighted to welcome pupils from Sidlesham Primary School on Thursday 28th March. This followed a request from the school, who are doing a topic comparing different types of worship. The group of thirty Year 1 and 2 children, (age range 5-7 years), were with us for nearly two hours and during that time were lively and curious and really applied themselves to the prepared activities.



The children saw how the room is set out for Meeting for Worship and were encouraged to look for differences from other churches and mosques which they had visited or discussed at school. In small groups we read and talked about the Quaker Testimonies using the booklet "Let's Explore the Quaker Way" and the children enjoyed decorating their own selection of motifs from the tablecloth and learning what they represent. We explored the Meeting House and talked about what happens in the Children's Meetings, explaining how we gather together for a range of activities. At the end of the morning, we held our own short Meeting for Worship with the children. Two Year 2 pupils acted as "elders" and the only slight fidgeting came at the end of the period as one of the "elders" still had his eyes closed and hadn't realised the quiet time was over! It was a very special morning and we were all greatly moved by the children's energy and depth of thinking for such little ones.



Discussion Group

In the spring of 2019 Friends met fortnightly to discuss the Quaker Quest booklet "Twelve Quakers and Equality".

In the first session different definitions and concepts of "Equality" were discussed ("Equality versus Equity" the idea of "Fairness" and whether that is the same as equality; respecting diversity and removing discrimination and believing that if there is "That of God in everyone" everyone deserves the same dignity and respect).

Over the six weeks that we met it became obvious that the concept of equality is very diverse and all encompassing. Topics that were discussed included:

- The impact of social inequality on adverse physical and mental health.
- How the concept of equality means we are all special.
- How the light within can help us to love God and our neighbour as ourselves.
- The need for truth to challenge prejudices against differences.
- The need to consume only our fair share of resources.
- How involvement in restorative justice, human rights struggles, and equal opportunities policies are examples of the equality testimony in action.
- How the honours system (MBE, OBE, CBE etc.) illustrates that inequality is still accepted as a way of the world.
- The need to respect and respond to differences especially the need for welcoming acceptance of gender diversity.
- The problems caused by modern capitalism's emphasis on materialism.
- Possible prejudice against the "undeserving poor" caused by the idea that "God helps them that help themselves".

To read a longer article about this very interesting topic and discussion group go to the Quaker Website: <https://chichesterquakers.org.uk/quaksch/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/12-Quakers-and-Equality.pdf>

You will remember one of our Attenders wrote a reflective piece for the Newsletter about The Light. There are going to be three articles – here is the second. Read and enjoy.



THE LIGHT (Part 2)

The way of the wicked is like darkness;
They do not know over what they stumble...
(Proverbs 4:19)

In Part 1 I briefly described the historical development of the visual artists' use of light to differentiate holy figures from the secular ones. **Here, I turn to the perceptions of writers and musicians.**

It may seem strange to commence with the concept of darkness but it has long been a tradition to use the symbolism of light and dark to indicate good and evil. Dante and Milton conjure up very well the dramatic use of such a device.

THE DIVINE COMEDY (*Dante Alighieri*)

The Inferno.

The “Divina Commedia” is an allegory of human life, in the form of a vision of the world beyond the grave, written with the object of converting a corrupt society to righteousness: “to remove those living in this life from the state of misery, and lead them to the state of felicity” (Dante)



The poet Dante (c1265 -c1321) writes himself into this, his own work. In Canto 1 Dante is lost and alone in a dark forbidding forest. To survive this ordeal, he must visit the three realms of the afterlife, beginning with Hell. While Dante seeks a way out of the forest, he meets three beasts: a leopard, a lion, and a wolf. The precise nature of these allegories are controversial, but they do contribute to the dramatic intensity of the scene, and are most likely to represent sins or vices.

Dante in the Dark Wood
by Gustave Dore (1890)

(the Gutenberg Project)

Dante must penetrate to the eternal, divine light to view the underlying order of the universe (Cantos 33.55-56, and 85-96) but must first of all travel through hell. Once within the depths of the divine light, Dante perceives a geometric image of the Holy Trinity (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) (Canto 33.115-45)

(<https://dantesthedivinecomedy.wordpress.com/divine-study/inferno-study-guide/>)

PARADISE LOST (1667) John Milton

The first book starts with Satan, who has been banished to Hell after his revolt against God.

Book 1

A dungeon horrible, on all sides
round,
As one great furnace flamed; yet
from those flames
No light; but rather darkness visible
Served only to discover sights of
woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades,
(*spirits*) where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never
comes
That comes to all, but torture without
end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur
unconsumed.

Book 3

Hail, holy Light, offspring of Heaven
firstborn,
Or of the Eternal coeternal beam
May I express thee unblam'd? since
God is light,
And never but in unapproached light
Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee
Bright effluence of bright essence
increate.

THE HOLY BIBLE.

The Bible contains many references to both light and dark and combinations thereof, but I have selected a few that particularly appeal to me.

"They do not know nor do they understand; They walk about in darkness; All the foundations of the earth are shaken." ([Psalm 82:5](#))

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light:

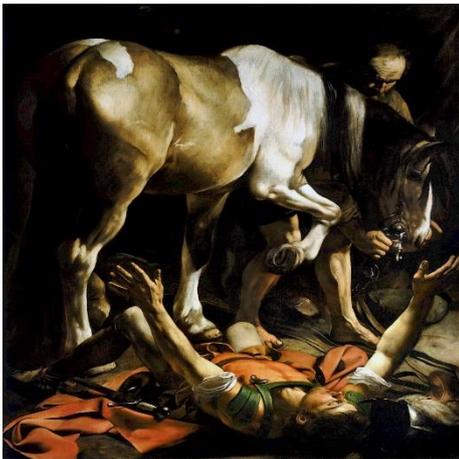
They that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined."

This verse from *Isaiah (9.2.)*, combining both darkness and light is wonderfully apt for my purposes, and will act as a bridge to the following section on *The Light*. This verse is evocatively set to music by Handel in his oratorio "The Messiah" (no.11)

"Arise, shine; for your light has come, And the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. [Isaiah 60:1](#)

These words also have been jauntily set by Handel in his oratorio for soloist and chorus (no.9 "O Thou That Tellest Good Tidings")

"This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. ([John 3:19](#)).



Perhaps the most striking reference to the Holy Light in action is that of the conversion of Saul (St. Paul). This, **Caravaggio** has dramatically captured in his painting. Paul was on the road to Damascus to arrest members of a Christian group in order to take them to Jerusalem for punishment – when he is surrounded by light:-

"..suddenly there shined about him a light from heaven:/And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?/And he said, who art thou, Lord?/ and the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest" ([Acts, 9.1-9](#))

*Conversion of the way to Damascus
(Trivium Art History Project.)*

MUSIC

In music there is the Lux Aeterna (Eternal Light) which has formed part of the Roman Catholic Mass for the Dead for centuries and there are many musical settings of this from traditional 13th century plain song to more elaborate versions more suitable for concert performance.

Thomas Tallis (c1505 – 1585) made an arrangement from what is thought to be a 10th century hymn:-

O Nata Lux de lumine
Jesu redemptor saeculi
Dignare clemens supplicum
Laudes preces que sumere

O Light born of light
Jesus, redeemer of the world
Mercifully deem us worthy
To offer prayers and praise

Herbert Howells ((1892-1983) composed "Hymnus Paradisi" in which the Sanctum est verum lumens (Holy is the True Light) was inserted: an anonymous Gregorian chant from the Salisbury Diurnal's Antiphon at First Vespers, Feast of All Saints.

Holy is the True Light,
and passing wonderful,
lending radiance to them that endured in the heat of the conflict,
from Christ they inherit a home of unfading splendour,
wherein they rejoice with gladness evermore.

Alleluia!



*Belshazzar's Feast, Rembrandt c1636-8
(National Gallery, London)*

“Belshazzar’s Feast”, is a cantata by **Sir William Walton** (first performed 1931), scored for chorus, soloist and orchestra. The work concerns the downfall of Babylon based on The Book of Daniel, and is structured approximately into three main parts: the first gives voice to the lamenting Israelites who predict the downfall of Babylon; the second depicts the feast itself; the third is a hymn of praise following Belshazzar’s death.

The image reflects the action described in **Daniel 5.5:-**

“...came forth fingers of a man’s hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king’s palace: and the king saw part of the hand that wrote.”

It will be noted that this work and that below combine the visual, literary and musical arts.



*The Light of the World
William Holman-Hunt, c1900 -1904 (St.Paul’s Cathedral)*

The Light of the World is an oratorio composed in 1873 by **Sir Arthur Sullivan**. Sullivan wrote the libretto with the assistance of George Grove, based on the New Testament. The story of the oratorio narrates the whole life of Christ, focusing on his deeds on Earth as preacher, healer and prophet, and was inspired by the Holman Hunt painting.

(en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Light_of_the_World_(Sullivan))s

It is time that I took my leave of you, in the meantime you may like to pause a moment to reflect on the quote expressed at the foot of this painting:-

“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock:
if any man hear my voice, and open the door,
I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.”
(Revelation 3.20.)



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