



# Faringdon Quaker Meeting

NEWSLETTER 137 April to May 25

---

## Meeting Affairs

Shared Lunch Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> of April

Meeting for Business for Worship Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> of May

## Area/Regional Meeting for Church Affairs

Regional Meeting 5 April 2025 at 10:30 – 16:00

Regional Meeting: Reparations: What do love, and justice require of British Quakers now? How should we act, and why?

*Venue: Jordans Meeting House*

OSAM Meeting Saturday 10 May 2025 at 10:30 – 15:00

Area Meeting Venue: *Faringdon Meeting House*

## Faringdon Peace Group

*US Spy Drones out of USAF Fairford*

*Speaker Chris Cole (Founder of Drone Wars UK)*

*Wednesday 2nd April 7:30*

*Faringdon Meeting House*

*Mon 14 Apr Lakenheath -Peace Camp begins. Stop nuclear weapons returning to Lakenheath.*

## Study Group

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> April – Cilla, Powerful Skills for Challenging Times

## Prayers for Peace

Will take place on the last Saturday of the month at the MH. Coffee 10-12, Meeting for Worship for Peace 10.30-11.30am.

March 29<sup>th</sup> was attended by 7 Quakers

April 26<sup>th</sup>

May 24<sup>th</sup>

## Reading dates.

April	6	Chris
	13	Jenny
	20	Janie
	27	Geoff
May	4	Shirley
	11	Mark
	18	Andrea
	25	Sue

## Collections

April Christian Aid [Christian Aid Week 2025 - Donate](#)

May To be decided at Shared lunch 6<sup>th</sup> of April

We collected £90 for Medical Aid for Palestine in February

## Thoughts on Area Meeting

The afternoon session of area meeting on Saturday 10<sup>h</sup> of May at Faringdon will discuss attendance at area meetings

Janie has kindly offered her reasons to attend area meeting,

She writes, [Why I go to Area Meeting?](#)

There are three reasons why I used to go Area Meeting in person and still attend on Zoom when it happens. Firstly, and most importantly, it is our duty, as members, to attend when we can,

because we don't have a paid hierarchy of clergy to do it for us. Membership, finance, and all the other vital administrative tasks, can only be done at Area Meeting.

The other two reasons are personal. When I first began attending, in about 1980, we were a very small meeting, and we appreciated the support and encouragement we had from Area Meeting. We all used to regret that Oxford, being a large meeting, didn't feel the same need to attend, except for their appointed representatives.

And lastly, I made such friends from Friends in other meetings. Just as we now enjoy knowing Friends in Burford and Charlbury, I enjoyed getting to know Friends from all our meetings. It took time, I felt a newcomer at first, but I'll never regret becoming a regular participant. People are so busy at weekends, these days, and I understand that it's difficult to give up a whole Saturday (it used to be a half day, but every month). But I would do it all again!

Janie Cottis

## Love your enemies

Yes, this is what Christ calls us to do- indeed Christ sees this as a sign of a Christian.

### Luke 6, 27 to 36

*But to you who hear I say, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.*

*To the person who strikes you on one cheek, offer the other one as well, and from the person who takes your cloak, do not withhold even your tunic. Give to everyone who asks of you, and from the one who takes what is yours do not demand it back.*

*Do to others as you would have them do to you. For if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do the same. If you lend money to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit [is] that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners and get back the same amount.*

*But rather, love your enemies and do good to them, and lend expecting nothing back; then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Highest, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your father is merciful.*

Quakers, as a peace church, need to place this commandment at the heart of their witness to the world. Yet, how hard it is to follow! Quakers rightly are deeply care about promoting peace in a troubled world, but Jesus asks us to forgive our enemies—the very people we encounter daily: neighbours, friends, colleagues, even fellow Quakers who may have upset us. Speaking personally, how can I hope to be an agent of peace in the world if I cannot forgive those closest to me?

Resentment often wraps us up, making this commandment incredibly difficult to follow. I found an excerpt in the Alcoholics Anonymous book that offers a path forward. Unsurprisingly, it

echoes Jesus' teaching, to pray for those who hurt us. This section, titled "Freedom from Bondage," resonates profoundly with this call to forgiveness.

### Freedom from Bondage

If you have a resentment you want to be free of, if you will pray for the person or the thing that you resent, you will be free. If you will ask in prayer for everything you want yourself to be given to them, you will be free. Ask for their health, their prosperity, their happiness, and you will be free. Even when you don't really want it for them and your prayers are only words and you don't mean it, go ahead and do it anyway. Do it every day for two weeks, and you will find you have come to mean it and to want it for them, and you will realise that where you used to feel bitterness and resentment and hatred, you now feel compassionate understanding and love.

Simon Clark

**Our beautiful Garden** Thanks to Chris for the photographs and to the gardeners.



### Quaker-led Lent talk on the topic of Risking the Self for Reconciliation

#### **Emma writes,**

On Thursday the 27<sup>th</sup> of March around 20 members of Churches Together gathered in the Quaker house for the 3<sup>rd</sup> session of the weekly Lent talks.

The Quaker house was lit with a warm welcoming orange glow in the dark evening, everyone enjoyed tea, coffee and homemade shortbread before we began. We opened on an overview of previous sessions and then led into a period of prayer and worship, which was closed by reading a passage from Faith and Practice on the topic of reconciliation.

*Mediation is not an easy task. It requires of us an exceptional willingness to listen, to lay aside self, and to enter the minds of those in dispute. We must not try to find acceptance for our own solution to the conflict, but rather act as the ground in which, with our help, others can work out their answers. A few people are natural mediators; most of us can learn the skills if we feel called to that service.*

*Friends' opposition to all forms of violence imposes on them the responsibility to seek alternative responses to conflict and injustice. Mediation is one method which can be offered or suggested.*

We then divided up into groups with different members from the churches and discussed questions exploring how we risk ourselves to help facilitate reconciliation and how can we identify opportunities for reconciliation.

The discussions were fascinating and covered a range of views, the overall feeling was that as people become more isolated from their community, particularly online where people have a feeling of a level of anonymity, it means they are not used to gentle pushback or alternative views, and so it can be harder to reconcile individuals, but this also poses an opportunity for community building and bringing people together in person to cultivate peace and tolerance. Churches Together is one such group where we can work together and see past our differences to our shared values.

There was also a discussion about being your authentic self, and how this can feel vulnerable and a risk, but helps others connect with you and build connection and community, which can then help reconciliation when conflict or disagreement does occur.

We then closed on Epistles 222 of George Fox, inspired by Micah 4:4 from the Bible, "*which every one sitting under their own vine, which is Christ the life, by whom the world was made, that in that ye may all bear fruit to God; and all walking in the name of the Lord, (which is the power,) then you will walk in safety.*"

Emma Markham

## Why Quaker?

Pat writes

### **Why am I a Quaker?**

It feeds my spiritual side in a way that doesn't dictate to me and leaves space for me to relate to God.

### **The testimonies**

Peace – Equality- Truth and integrity - Simplicity - The earth and the environment.

The testimonies are my spirituality in action. They are a shared view how Quakers relate to God.

Patricia Stevens

## Our French Friends

Trish and Gill write,

### On becoming French

Some of you will remember us. We were welcomed into Faringdon Meeting about 20 years ago and felt we had found a home amongst Friends including Janie, John, Arthur and David who at that time were the core of our meeting.

After Trish retired from paid work, we made a big yet very easy decision to move permanently to France in 2015.

We had had a holiday home in Montner, in the eastern Pyrenees since 1990 and always felt that being here was more suited to our principles and certainly enhanced our quality of life. This feeling was reinforced after the UK's sad incomprehensible decision to leave Europe!

Our village is in the countryside with a view of Mt Canigou and yet just 25 minutes, by car, from Perpignan. The Mediterranean Sea with its wonderful clean water and enormous sandy beaches is just 30 minutes from home.

From the beginning we decided we wanted to show our commitment to our new country, and thanks to friends we had made during our holidays, we quickly became integrated in groups, collectives, village life!

One of the most urgent matters was to learn French which we had not studied since GCE O levels. At first, we found a local teacher and then when her work changed, we searched online and found an American prof living in Beziers.

After the obligatory wait of five years, we began to gather the necessary documents and in 2021 we sat a 3-hour French language exam, both written tests and oral, made more difficult by the obligatory masks and plastic screen due to the covid pandemic!

In June 2021 we posted our 750-gram dossier to the Prefecture in Montpellier, knowing that after Brexit we would have to wait a long time for our interview.

In the meantime, we had a surprisingly warm meeting with the local head of police and studied a 24 A4 page document about our adopted country in preparation for our interview in March 2024, on Gill's 76th birthday.

Last week marked the final step as we were invited to the Prefecture in Perpignan for a ceremony of naturalisation, along with 30 others comprising of 15 different nationalities. We felt very moved and delighted in equal measure as we also became citizens of Europe once more and we have regained our right to vote. Our day was rounded off by a lovely party with our close friends who all live in Montner, a real French fête!

The only thing we lack is a local Meeting however thanks to technology and the faithfulness of our Quaker Friends we don't feel disconnected from you.

Avec bisous et câlins Gill Trish et Lily

