



HEREFORD QUAKERS NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2019

Fri 1st	11am	St Johns Methodist Church	<i>see below</i>
Sun 3 th	10.30am	Mtg for Worship	Business Meeting
Thurs 7 th	12.30pm	Mtg for Worship	Picnic Lunch
Fri 8 th	2pm	Experiment with Light	
Sun 10 th	9.45am	Reading from QF&P	Chap.24 <i>Peace Testimony</i>
Sun 10 th	10.30am	Mtg for Worship	
Tues 12 th	7.30pm	Education Group	<i>see below</i>
Tues 12 th	12.30pm	Mtg for Worship	Picnic Lunch
Thurs 14 th	7.30pm	Book Club Broomy Hill	<i>'Howards End'</i>
Sun 17 th	10.30am	Mtg for Worship	
Thurs 21 st	12.30pm	Mtg for Worship	Picnic Lunch
Fri 22 nd	2pm	Experiment with Light	
Sun 24 th	9:45am	Reading from Q F & P	Chap. 27 <i>Unity and Diversity</i>
Sun 24 th	10.30am	Mtg for Worship	Shared lunch Food Bank
Thurs 28 th	12.30pm	Mtg for Worship	Picnic Lunch
Sun 31 st	10.30am	Mtg for Worship	

Unless stated otherwise Meetings are at Friends Mtg House, King Street,

Friday 1st March is **World Day of Prayer** (formerly Women's World Day of Prayer): a women-led, global, ecumenical movement. There will be a service at St John's Methodist Church, St Owen Street, at 11.00 with coffee from 10.30. The theme is 'Come - Everything is Ready!' and the resources were prepared by women in Slovenia. All are welcome.

Sheila Milne

Fearing people may think **Education Group** has packed up entirely I would like to just give advance warning of two meetings. All Friends, whether able to attend YM or not are asked to uphold the discernment. Two topics in particular *Climate Justice* and *Privilege* are mentioned in advance papers so...

Tuesday March 12th, Robert Milne will introduce a discussion on our personal and local response to what AM has now called "*Climate Disruption*". Yearly Meeting will be looking at issues around economic justice & climate justice, so this may help our preparation **Tuesday April 23rd** we think together around the topic of *Owning Power & Privilege*. More guidance on reading matter later.

Jane Straker

Area Meeting Provisional Dates

March 9 th	Brecon
May 11 th	Almeley- Wooten
June 8 th	Ross
July 14 th	Pales Fellowship Day
Sept 14 th	Abergavenny
Nov 9 th	Hereford

Donations in January raised

£131 for

Child Soldiers International

News from Trustees

Our Clerk's signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between Trustees and Local Meetings will be on the agenda for the March MfBfW. It's effectively our constitutional document, and as such a useful reference. A copy is available in the Meeting House.

Area Meeting's accounts for 2018 have been summarised in pie chart form, which hopefully helps us understand them more easily. Area Meeting monies mostly come from the "Capitation" on each Member (not Attender), and are mostly spent on administration and governance - such items as public liability insurance, inspection of accounts etc. At a glance, you can also see AM's financial contribution to the running of The Pales, hopefully a transitional arrangement. This visual summary will be included in our Annual Report & Accounts for 2018. A copy is on the noticeboard, and you should have also received all these documents with the Minutes of MfBfW held on 3rd February

Chris Robertson has produced guides for keeping safe and secure online - the abridged version has been circulated to you, and another copy is on the notice board.

Hereford Meeting's Trustee is **Liz Chave**, who will always endeavour to answer any questions, and feed any concerns back to Trustees.

Preparing a Report on our Spiritual Life

Dear Friends, In order to deepen understanding and friendship bonds across the Area Meeting, each meeting is asked, every two years, to produce a report on its Spiritual Life. As many of you will know, this typically includes report of practical and communal activities, such as shared lunches, Education and Outreach activities, and other events which have uplifted and enriched us.

Our next report is due to be read at Area Meeting in May, so we would like a draft of this to go before Business meeting in April. This year we would very much like more individual input into the report. We are therefore asking for your contributions. You are welcome to write as much or as little as you like. Brief responses in poetry or prose, and pictures, are equally welcome. Having said that, please be aware that long contributions are unlikely to be quoted verbatim in the final version. We suggest contributions that answer any or all of these questions in relation to your experience over the last two years.

- How are you nourished and sustained?
- Where do you find comfort and support?
- Where do you find inspiration?
- What challenges you, and how do you respond?

As well as trying to assimilate as much as possible into the body of our report, we intend to have what in the media world might be called "pull quotes" displayed on tessellating hexagonal piece of paper. Blank hexagons will be available from late February onwards, and you are welcome to take some away and write or draw directly upon them yourself.

Contributions can be sent by email (tascott3@msn.com) or submitted by hand up to and including Sunday 17^h March. We do hope that many of you will be able to make a contribution.

Libby Hudson

“What action, if any, should we be taking as a Local Meeting in response to the latest information about climate change?”

David Straker brought this concern to last BM

I raised the subject of how we should respond to the latest dire predictions about climate change at Business Meeting as I feel it is such a significant matter, that while we may wish to follow up with discussion in another context, we should start by acknowledging more fully as a worshipping community that climate change has become a critical issue of fundamental importance to all of our lives. It is all too easy to push such acutely disturbing information to the back of our minds but I would suggest that we need to face this realistically as a Local Meeting and as members of our Area Meeting.

We need to cope with this as gently and supportively of each other as we can whilst doing what we can individually and collectively to contribute to the solution however remote and removed from the scale of the problem that may seem. There are two well worded documents produced by Friends House that give valuable guidance **Green Advices and Queries for Quakers, and Minute 36 Our Canterbury Commitment**. Both can be read online

PS Quakers see this as an issue of economic and social justice. I find myself trying to measure my decisions against a yardstick which says “What would be the impact of my actions being shared by a billion families?” It’s a hard one to answer.

NB On **Tuesday 12th March** our Education meeting will be about what personal actions we can take on this issue. It is hoped that Friends who are interested will form a group on that occasion, to consider our responses to climate change. They are invited to contact Ruth Stanier beforehand to start an exchange of ideas which we can bring to the meeting; those unable to attend the meeting on 12th March are also invited to take part in this. Ruth will forward to them a list of ideas on sustainability produced by Robert”.

Also the group maybe interested in planning for an exhibition which relates to the Quaker approach to climate change which is planned for the **Night of the Churches on Saturday 22nd June**.

Intro. To Green Advices & Queries

We depend for our lives upon the sun, the rain, the wind and the diversity of living things around us. Notice the changing patterns of the day, from dawn to dusk, and the wonder of the night sky. Take heed of the changing seasons, from winter to spring, to summer and to autumn. Each has its particular beauty. Mountains, lakes, rivers and forests can all inspire us and provide places of peace and opportunities for worship. The natural world also presents us with challenges, to which we should be ready to respond. Take time to recognise, respect, appreciate and enjoy the whole miracle of the universe.

From our Canterbury Commitment

“The action we are ready to take at this time is to make a strong corporate commitment to become a low-carbon, sustainable community.”

“Sustainability is an urgent matter for our Quaker witness. It is rooted in Quaker testimony and must be integral to all we do corporately and individually.” (A framework for action 2009-2014)

“The produce of the earth is a gift from our gracious creator to the inhabitants, and to impoverish the earth now to support outward greatness appears to be an injury to the succeeding age”

John Woolman 1772

Refugees in Hereford

From Jane Straker

I would like to update Friends on what is happening in Hereford City. We currently have just over 100 Syrian people living in Hereford who have arrived under the United Nations Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. Some have been here for 2 years now while others arrived in autumn 2018. All who arrive under this scheme have the right to remain for 5 years and during this period have the same rights to work, to claim benefits, to use the Health Service, and to education for their school age children as we all have. Before their 5 years end they will need to apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain unless they wish to return to Syria. I have not met any amongst the current group who do not wish to stay here. For the first year people are here they get considerable help from Refugee Action, the official body appointed by the Council to provide a place to rent, help with enrolment at schools and GP's surgeries, and guide them through the complexities of living in a strange place while their English is still rudimentary. English classes are provided on two days each week. As each family reaches the end of their first 12 months support from Refugee Action is cut off. They get a short transition period with some support and English classes are still available.

However it is at this point that help from Hereford City of Sanctuary becomes more important. As you can imagine, people may still need support with the complexities of coping with our official systems and with English conversation. They also just need local information. Beyond practical issues there is the importance of making people feel welcome and included in our society. Of course the families themselves form a support network and friendships but feeling they have English friends is important

Herefordshire City of Sanctuary (HCoS) Drop in is held each Friday morning from **10.00 – 12.00** in the Meeting House and is staffed by volunteers from HCoS many of whom are also Friends. We offer this space free of charge as an expression of our commitment to supporting refugees which we took when we became a Sanctuary Meeting. Several Friends are offering support to individual families the focus of which may vary from general friendliness to quite defined help with education, or accessing some service. we took when we became a Sanctuary Meeting.

HCoS is hoping to organise some awareness raising event/s in Refugee Week in June. Do we have any inspiration about what form they could take?

More About Herefordshire City of Sanctuary ...

HCoS is an organisation in the early stages of development. A Steering Group was set up early last year in response to the expected arrival of a group of asylum seeking families in Hereford. We felt a rapid response would be needed to support people coming with many less rights than the group of refugees already here. Refugee Action has a base in Hereford and is set up to support Refugees in their first year. Asylum seekers were to be supported by G4S, who were not expected to be based here but rather visit weekly. In fact the money allocated to rent accommodation was insufficient for Hereford prices, so the government's proposal to disperse asylum seekers to our area has not come to fruition.

This does not leave HCoS without a role. After a year Refugee Action's support for families ends, though English classes are still offered. Friends will know we have made use of the Meeting House without charge for meetings of the Trustees of HCoS and also on a regular basis on Friday mornings to offer a Drop In place of welcome to any refugee or migrant seeking us out. This facility is still not as well used as we had hoped however we feel it has offered significant support to some. Examples include: helping a migrant to prepare for an English exam; supporting another migrant to find work with some advice about possible employers; helping a refugee family to select suitable venues for two wedding parties, one for men one for women; offering contact details of Samaritans to a severely depressed European migrant. To support us in our work we have had a useful afternoon of training from Herefordshire Mind. We have also made a trip to Gloucester to see the work being done there.

Current requests have included helping a family find a washing machine after a move of flats to more suitable accommodation left them without one. Free cycle helped in this case; but a coach and wheelchair user's taxi to a social event were a drain on limited funds. We have recently learnt that some families are unable to afford a TV licence but would like to use television as a means of improving their English. At some point we would like to repeat a very successful cooking day with some of the Syrian women but this would necessitate hiring a kitchen. The demands on limited funds add up. Obviously building a small fund for these sort of purposes makes us a more useful support to our contacts.

The March appeal is for Hereford Council City of Sanctuary Group.

Deadline for April issue is 25th March
Editor- pat.gundrey@gmail.com

For more information about Quakers
Clerk -ruthstanier@smquakers.org

TESTIMONY TO THE GRACE OF GOD AS SHOWN IN THE LIFE OF...

MARGARET ROWAN 21-3-1930 – 24-10-2018

Margaret married Irving Leverton in 1952 and they had four children, for whom Margaret was obviously a very loving mother. When someone recently commented to one of her daughters what a lovely family they were, in the context of the care they had shown to Margaret during the last stage of her life, the daughter replied: "We are a lovely family because we had lovely parents!"

Irving died suddenly in 1983. Margaret spoke of experiencing a reassuring Presence at that time of great sadness, and described a sense of feeling uplifted and supported.

During the next few years, Margaret explored more political areas, joining her daughter Ruth in visiting peace camps at Greenham Common, and supporting local women's group activities. It was at this stage that she became a Quaker, finding Quakers a calm and caring community where she could give and receive support.

Margaret was a Samaritan volunteer and a founding member of the Friends of Hereford Samaritans. Through Samaritans she met another volunteer, Bill Rowan. Margaret introduced Bill to Quakers, and in 1987 Bill and Margaret were married at Hereford Quaker Meeting House.

Margaret joined Bill at his home in Little Birch, and took on the challenge of living alongside Bill's son Jonny, who had Down's Syndrome. Bill had a market gardening business, with which Jonny was able to help. Margaret joined in working with both the market garden and their very beautiful flower garden. Bill and Margaret were very hospitable, and loved sharing their magnificent garden and excellent cooking. Bill and Margaret helped establish Hereford Open Door, providing food and support for homeless people in Hereford. For many years they worked devotedly to organise the food, raise funds, collect useful clothing and show great friendship to the people who came for meals.

Margaret was loved and appreciated by everyone at Hereford Meeting. She had a quiet wisdom, unflinching courtesy and a gentle, quick-witted sense of humour. She served the meeting as overseer and on catering committee, and was actively involved in peace activities. For many years she was responsible for providing flowers for the table on Sunday mornings, and she and Bill took responsibility for the meeting house garden.

Towards the end of her life, Margaret had Parkinson's disease. She wanted to continue to be of service to others even after her death, and - as she had requested - her brain and spinal cord were donated to Parkinson's UK for research into the disease.

Hereford Palestine Solidarity Campaign

Invite you to come and watch the film

JEREMY HARDY

VERSUS

THE ISRAELI ARMY

Palestinian Director – Leila Sansour

Mon 25th March 2019

Refreshments from 7.15

Film - 7.30

Friends Meeting House

21 King St

Admission free

Donations welcome

We are showing this film as a tribute to Jeremy Hardy, who died on Friday 1st February 2019. This is what he said about this film...

"In 2002, I was approached by the Palestinian director, Leila Sansour, to front a documentary about the *International Solidarity Movement*, anti-occupation activists operating in the West Bank and Gaza. She wanted me to go to Bethlehem. I was quite flattered, unaware that she had asked ninety eight other people, working downwards from Madonna.

Leila assured me that, because the ISM is a non-violent movement, I would be in no danger. Unfortunately, while I was on the plane, Ariel Sharon launched a full-scale invasion of the Occupied Territories. I got to Bethlehem shortly before his tanks. The ISM were indeed peaceful, the Israeli Army, not so much. It all got a bit hairy"

Kyrle Du Haume