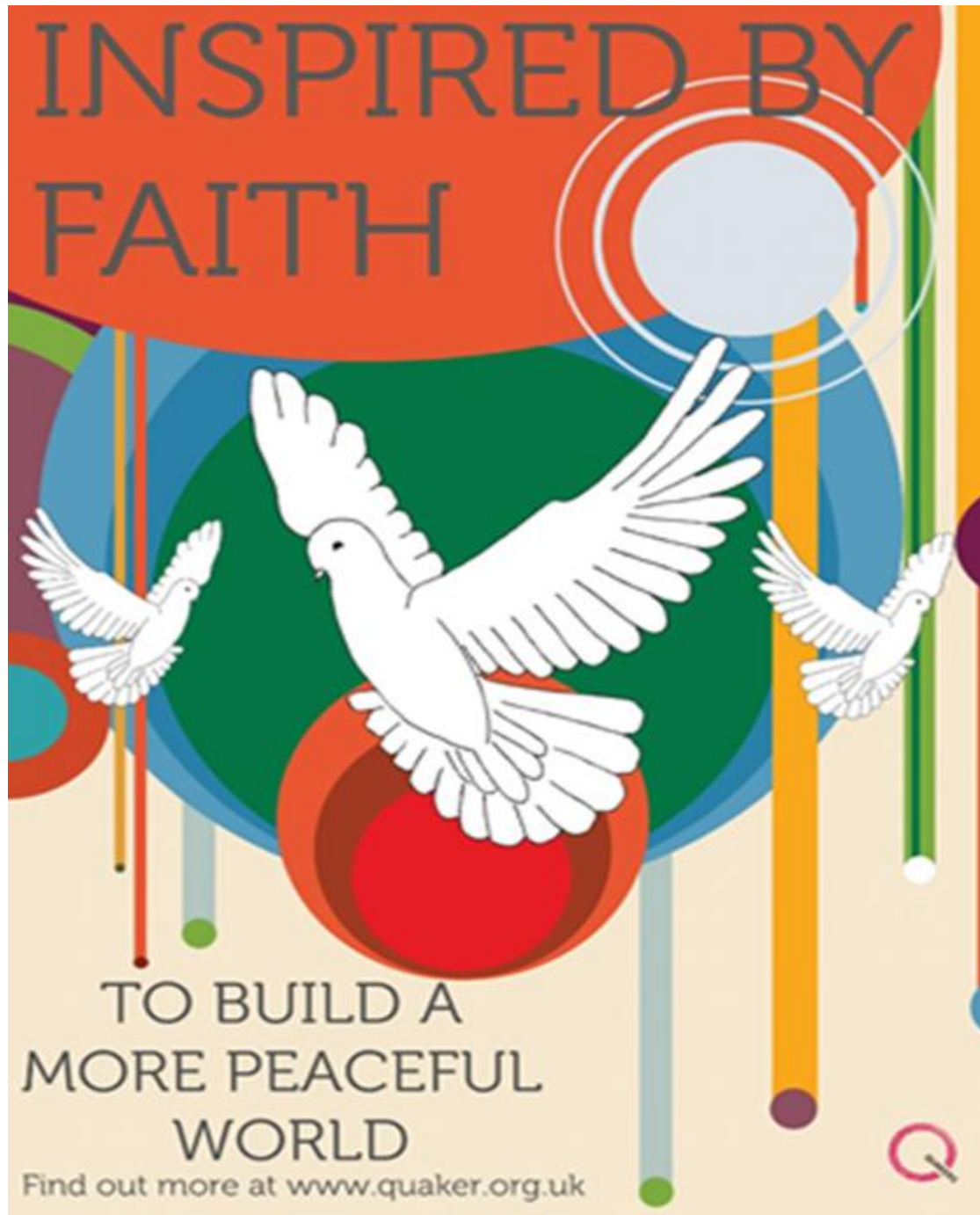


Tayside Quaker

Vol 49 No1 January 2024



Contents

Interfaith Retreats 2024	Page 3
Meeting for Sufferings December 2023 reort	Page 4
East Scotland Area Meeting 2 December 2023 St Andrew's Meeting House	Page 5
Strengthening children's rights: UNCRC bill secures Royal Assent in Scotland	Page 6
The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	Page 9
No Faith in Fossil Fuels	Page 10
News of our meetings	Page 14
The Ballad of George Fox	Page 16
ESAM calling notice 10 th Feb 2024	Page 18

Tayside Quaker is available by email and on paper. If you would like to be added to the email list, please contact the editor at **petercheer@hotmail.com**

If you get Tayside Quaker by email, you have the advantages of receiving it earlier and seeing the pictures in colour. It also saves the AM money.

Contributions are welcome, closing date for the next edition is April 27th 2024

Please send copy to the editor, Peter Cheer

petercheer@hotmail.com

East Scotland Area Meeting

Scottish charity number SC0020698

All opinions in Tayside Quaker are those of the individual writers and not necessarily of The Religious Society of Friends.

Editorial

The cover photo this month is a poster from Quaker Week 2016, with a strap line that is still relevant today.

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Peter Cheer

Interfaith Retreats 2024



Interfaith Scotland is hosting a retreat to Holy Isle off the island of Arran, staying at the Centre for World Peace and Health. The retreat is open to people of all faiths and beliefs. Booking via the Holy Isle website will open in January 2024. More information on the retreat can be found at <http://bit.ly/HolyIsle2024>

Interfaith Week on Iona 14th – 20th September 2024



The Iona Community is hosting an interfaith week on the island of Iona facilitated by Dr Maureen Sier and Frances Hume from Interfaith Scotland; Zarina Ahmad, a climate activist based in Manchester, and Caro Penney, Iona Abbey Warden. The week is open to people of all faiths and beliefs and the focus will be on environmental protection.

Meeting For Sufferings December 2023

Held in person at Friends House and by video conference.

The first session of this Sufferings was an evening event on Wednesday 29 November, arranged to allow the presentation of the late accounts for 2022. Paul Whitehouse, BYM treasurer and Caroline Nursery, clerk of Trustees had explained previously the reasons for the delay but reported that BYM finances were in good health.

For the Saturday sessions a combination of industrial action and engineering works prevented me from attending in person so I joined around 70 others on line with around 40 in Friends House.

After the usual agenda items covering membership, appointments and recognised bodies, the Meeting considered a report from the Book of Discipline Revision Committee. Co-clerks Michael Phipps and Catherine Brewer outlined the progress being made and plans for future work. A first draft was planned for Yearly Meeting 2027, copies available to Friends at the end of 2026.

The feedback received from the Committee's draft on marriage prompted discussion and Sufferings has asked for further consideration from AMs and GMs by August 2024.

Following this was an introduction from Sarah Donaldson, convener of the group reviewing Yearly Meeting, Yearly Meeting Gathering and Meeting for Sufferings. Suggestions for making Sufferings a continuing year-round Yearly Meeting which all Friends could attend were met with a wide range of reactions. Fewer meetings, less time for spirit led discernment and decision making concerned members of Sufferings.

Comments regarding some Friends' perception of ongoing "tension" between Sufferings and Trustees was addressed by Marisa Johnson, incoming clerk of Trustees. In a powerful and moving intervention she spoke of the need to trust our nominations process and spoke of being "absolutely accountable" as a Trustee.

Before lunch the meeting dealt with an item on the appointment of non-members for Quaker service. October 23 Sufferings agreed in principle that appointments to BYM central committees "need not be dependent on formal membership..." Following a contribution from Paul Parker, Recording Clerk, it was proposed that work by the Church Government Advisory Group would be needed to see what this would mean at area and local meetings.

The afternoon agenda included reports from BYM Trustees, Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations and Quaker World Relations Committee.

Adwoa Burnley, clerk to Yearly Meeting introduced the agenda for YM 2024. This will take place at Friends House 26-30 July. A wide and varied programme was being planned.

Full minutes are available on BYM website and full reports were published in "the Friend" 8th and 15th December 2023.

Robert Thompson

ESAM representative.

East Scotland Area Meeting 2 December 2023 St Andrew's Meeting House

East Scotland Area Meeting 2 December 2023 St Andrew's Meeting House

Despite a fall of snow that morning, which made travel impossible for some, a reasonable number managed to attend.

Anneke Kraakman and Kate Douglas reported on the Quaker Life meeting they attended in the wilds of Oxfordshire. The main theme of the meeting was 'Our life is love: finding spiritual nurture in our community.' Another theme was 'How are we post-Covid?' Anneke and Kate shared an exercise they had brought from the meeting, 'Corks and boulders'. In the stream of our Quaker community life there are 'corks' – transient things such as to-do lists and events, and 'boulders' - the unchanging aspects of our Quaker life such as worship, pastoral care, communication.

A leaflet was circulated from Quaker Life 'Our Faith in the Future'.

A presentation was given at the gathering by Tim Gee of the Friends World Committee for Consultation: 'Living the spirit of Ubuntu'. The meaning of Ubuntu is 'I am because you are.' Interdependence.

Martin Pippard reported on the work of the Parliamentary Engagement Working Group, speaking to a paper he had submitted. The appointment of Sarah Komashko as Parliamentary Engagement Officer has been very helpful. She will be attending ESAM in February 2024. The three priorities of the Group just now are Human Rights, Climate Change and Peace Education in schools.

Pam Brunt reported on the work of the Quakers in Scotland Coordinating Group, who are mapping out a possible way forward for Quakers in Scotland. They are coming to the end of the consultation period and hope to present a detailed plan to AMs, GM and OSCR* in early 2024. There will be an update at every future Area Meeting.

*The Scottish Charities Regulator

Norman Alm Dundee Meeting

Strengthening children's rights: UNCRC bill secures Royal Assent in Scotland

(reproduced from <https://www.quaker.org.uk/blog/strengthening-children-s-rights-uncrc-bill-secures-royal-assent-in-scotland>)

Sarah Komashko explains the history and implications of the UNCRC bill, and why it matters to Quakers.

The UNCRC is a vital framework for protecting and enhancing the lives of children worldwide. Image: Mike Pinches for BYM

The UNCRC is a vital framework for protecting and enhancing the lives of children worldwide. Image: Mike Pinches for BYM

In a success for children's rights in Scotland, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill officially

received Royal Assent on 16 January 2024 and will come into force on 16 July 2024. This is a significant milestone in the journey towards ensuring the wellbeing of every child in the nation, and builds on years of advocacy by organisations including Quakers in Scotland and our coalition partners Together (the Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights).

What is the UNCRC?

The UNCRC is the world's most ratified human rights treaty, with every UN member nation except the USA having signed up to be bound by it. It covers rights for children such as:

- The right to be protected from violence.
- The right to have their own thoughts and beliefs.
- The right to good quality health care, good food and clean water.
- The right to an education which develops the child's personality, respect for others' rights and the environment.

This is a vital framework for protecting and enhancing the lives of children worldwide.

What has Scotland done about it?

When the UK ratified the UNCRC in 1992, it became subject to a duty to make the rights contained in the convention enforceable. This has not yet happened at a UK level, but following work by Together and the Scottish Children and Young People's Commissioner, the Scottish Government published the UNCRC Bill in 2020, with the aim of incorporating the UNCRC into Scots law and making it really effective in practice for Scotland's children. The Scottish Government drew on international experiences to ensure a proactive culture of children's rights across local and national government; and to give ways to complain to a judge if any child's rights are breached.

The Parliamentary Engagement Working Group of Quakers in Scotland decided that it was important to be part of the conversation around this bill, and worked with Together and other civil society organisations to respond. In particular, in our response to the consultation on the UNCRC Bill, Quakers in Scotland emphasised that the current practice of armed forces visits to schools was contrary to the rights of children in Scotland. This shows the type of impact that the incorporation of the UNCRC can have.

Incorporation into Scottish law

All Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) voted in favour of the UNCRC Bill, and it originally passed in March 2021. However, it was then subject to a legal challenge, as the UK Government felt that parts of the UNCRC Bill went beyond what the Scottish Parliament is empowered to do. The Supreme Court decided that this was correct, and some sections of the Bill went beyond the Scottish Parliament's powers.

Following this ruling, work was done to update the UNCRC Bill and restrict its scope. The new scope means that the UNCRC Bill's compatibility duty only applies to legislation originating from the Scottish Parliament, and not to UK legislation even if this falls within an area which is devolved to Scotland. While this does limit the scope, it is important to remember that organisations operating in Scotland (and elsewhere in the UK) do still have the duty to comply with the UNCRC under the terms of the Convention itself – but there isn't the layer of court protection and potential remedy which applies to Acts of the Scottish Parliament.

Why does this matter to Quakers, and what happens next?

Quakers in Britain have a proud history of advocating for children's rights, from challenging militarisation in schools to campaigning for equal protection from assault. The UNCRC Bill aligns with Quaker values of equality, justice, and the recognition of the inherent worth of every individual.

By supporting this legislation, Quakers contribute to the creation of a society that actively upholds the rights of its youngest members, fostering a culture of compassion, understanding, and social responsibility. The UNCRC also protects key areas such as good food and clean water which impact other human rights such as the right to a healthy environment, so has potentially wider implications for all individuals and not only children.

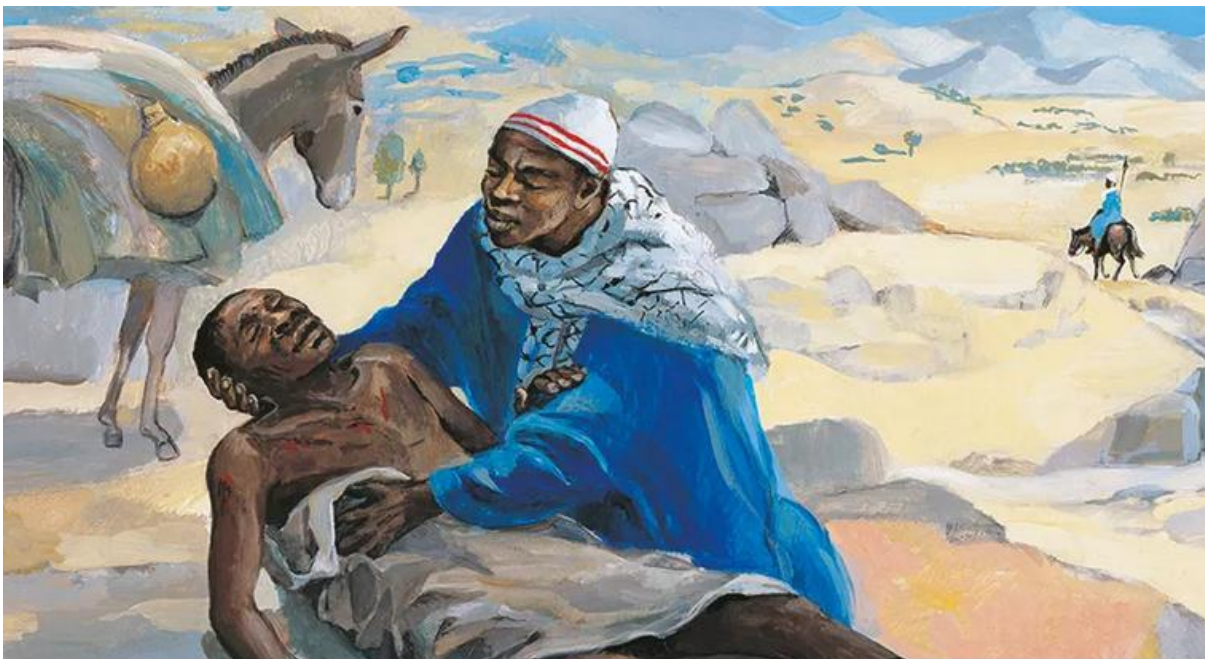
Looking ahead, the UNCRC Act will come into force in 6 months' time. Quakers in Scotland and our partners at Together look forward to the tangible impact this legislation will have on the lives of children – and on all of us by extension! The incorporation of the UNCRC into Scots law is a testament to the power of collective advocacy and a commitment to creating a better future for generations to come.

While ratification of the UNCRC signals an international commitment to children's rights, incorporation makes countries accountable at a national level for their implementation. We hope that the UK Government will look to the

example of Scotland and signal a similar commitment to protecting children's rights.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2024

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is traditionally observed from the 18th to the 25th January – the octave of St. Peter and St. Paul. However, some areas observe it at Pentecost or some other time.



JESUS MAFA. The Good Samaritan, from Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN.

The parable of the Good Samaritan is one of the best known passages of Scripture, yet one that never seems to lose its power to challenge indifference to suffering and to inspire solidarity. It is a story about crossing boundaries that calls our attention to the bonds that unite the whole human family.

In choosing this passage of Scripture for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the churches of Burkina Faso have invited us to join with them in a process of self-reflection as they consider what it means to love our neighbour in the midst of a security crisis. Communities in the British-Irish context may be less vulnerable to acts of mass violence than in Burkina Faso, but there are still many living with the memory and/or the threat of serious violence, centred on issues of identity and belonging. There are also groups within communities, including people from ethnic minority backgrounds and people seeking asylum, who feel particularly vulnerable to violence or being displaced by the threat of violence.

No Faith in Fossil Fuels, a Lent vigil

(reproduced from <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-12/nffif-vigil-from-home-prayer-hour.pdf>)

Vigil from home, Prayer Hour Guide

Give an hour to pray and act for climate and environmental justice, 14- 24 February 2023.

Starting on Ash Wednesday people from across the UK will be holding vigil for environmental and climate justice outside UK Parliament around the clock for 10 days. Together let's pray, reflect, and act for climate justice from home or church.

Prayer is powerful! As the climate crisis wreaks havoc in our world, we are drawn to our most ancient of traditions – prayer. Bringing us to a posture of humility, prayer allows us to lament the brokenness of creation and hope for the restoration of our world.

We have faith that our prayers are heard and can bring transformation, even in the midst of injustice. That is why we gather in vigil, to pray for creation, for our global neighbours, for bold climate action from the UK Government.

As we enter the season of Lent, join us as we pray 24 hours a day, for 10 days at Westminster, London. Pray for an hour, pray for a day! Join the vigil from your home or church as we declare, No Faith in Fossil Fuels.

Why we need climate justice

Around the world creation is crying out. Heatwaves, fires, droughts and floods are becoming more frequent, wrecking lives, land, and livelihoods. Meanwhile, the biggest polluters who have caused this crisis make vast profits from fossil fuels. As creation groans, the poorest, who have done the least to cause the problem, are paying the price. Poverty and debt crises mean poor countries are struggling to respond. This is unjust.

Why we need action from the UK Government

We believe that the UK government has a historic and current responsibility to take bold climate action. The extraction of wealth from many nations kicked off the industrial revolution, leading to Britain being the world's 8th biggest historical carbon emitter.

At COP28, while we celebrated the Loss and Damage Fund becoming operational with support pledged for climate vulnerable countries, the UK's financial commitments were well below what is possible and came from existing climate funds. Meanwhile UK based fossil fuel companies are raking in billions of pounds in profits a year.

As we vigil, as we pray, we call on the UK Government to:

- Make the UK's biggest polluters pay for climate action.
- Deliver and build on the UK's international climate finance pledges and pay into the UN's Loss & Damage Fund.
- Ban new UK-based fossil fuel projects.

Your hour of prayer, reflection and stillness for climate justice Here you will find a guide to spending an hour in prayer and reflection. The hour is split into four 15-minute sections.

Light a candle to mark the start of your vigil.

1. Marvel (15 min)

Take a moment for silence

Read: Genesis 1:1 - 31

Reflect: What causes me/us to marvel at creation?

Pray:

Creator God, You with unlimited imagination

We celebrate all of creation, from the greatest mountain to the smallest grain of sand.

We celebrate the great diversity of people you have brought forth.

We thank you for the earth and the great eco-system we are part of.

We thank you for those that care and protect our environment.

May we all respond to your calling to look after all you have given us,

Amen

- Acknowledge God's creative spirit that imagined and brought the earth into being
- Give thanks for the earth and all that is in it
- Pray for those who till and keep the earth to feed humanity
- Pray for communities around the

world who protect land and resources – for example the Quilombola communities in Brazil who protect areas of the Amazon from destruction

Pause take a moment for silence

2. Lament (15 min)

Read: Psalm 30: 1-6

Reflect: to tackle the climate crisis what do we need to turn away from as individuals, churches and wider society?

Pray:

We lament that this year climate breakdown has destroyed lives around the world,

Communities suffer floods, fires and drought.

People lose their homes, livelihoods and loved ones.

We grieve their losses.

We recognise and repent of our broken humanity that has embedded patterns of inequality.

We bear witness to the vast profits of fossil fuel giants who push us deeper into climate chaos

We bow our heads.

Amen

- Recognise and ask forgiveness for the ways we are complicit in damaging God's world and our global neighbours, for our lack of shock at climate impacts, for the way we live our lives, for our inaction.

- Lament the inaction of governments and those in places of power around the world

- Lament the exploitation of and damage to the natural environment

- Pray for people driven into deeper and deeper poverty by the climate crisis

Pause for a moment of silence

3. Hope (15 min)

Read: Hebrews 11: 1-3

Reflect: What is your hope for how you, the church and UK Government can act for climate justice?

Pray:

God of hope, you sent Jesus so that all may have life, life in all its fullness.
We see the thief of injustice kill, steal and destroy - the loss and damage of the climate crisis, the scandal of poverty.

Help us be part of your vision for all creation, set your hope deep in our hearts.

Keep us steady in solidarity, remembering always our global neighbours.

May all live life in all its fullness.

Amen

- Pray that churches across the UK (including yours) will rise up in hope for climate justice
- Pray that the UK Government will take bold climate action
- Pray for your MP specifically, that they will be a champion of environmental and climate action.

Pause for a moment of silence

4. Transform (15 min)

Read: Romans 12:2

Reflect: In what ways can I/we be part of the transformation of the world for environmental and climate justice?

Pray:

Great Redeemer, you journeyed to the Cross, meeting us in our weakness.
Ready and waiting to transform us by your Spirit while we were still far off, you sought us out.

Great Redeemer, who in Spirit groans with all creation for the redemption and renewal of all things, redeem us from our destructive ways, deepen in us the longing for renewal, transform us and the world around us.

Amen

- Pray that systems and structures that perpetuate environmental and climate injustice will be transformed
- Pray that all will be able to live life in all its fullness
- Pray that global leaders, including those in UK Government will have wisdom, compassion and integrity when addressing the climate crisis

From prayer to action

Joining the Westminster vigil from home is no less political than being there in person. You are bearing witness to the impacts of the climate crisis and praying for the UK Government to take bold climate action. Let's move from prayer to action by telling our local politicians why we're involved.

Here are three ways you can make the prayerful political as you join the vigil and engage your MP:

1. If you are praying together as a church, invite your MP to your meeting or service.
2. Write to your MP – you can do this before or after you take part in the vigil, as an individual or as a church.
3. Tag your MP – if you use social media, take a photo or record a short message after your time of prayer and tag your MP.

Whichever option works for you, make sure you tell your MP why you're taking part in the vigil from home/church, and what you want them to do to champion bold climate action in parliament. You can give them an MP briefing to take away. You can download Christian Aid's MP briefing at caid.org.uk/C4Cjbriefing
Together, let's declare, No Faith in Fossil Fuels, Amen.

News from Local Meetings

St Andrews

These past six months St Andrews Meeting have been reflecting on how best to continue our Local Meeting - something many Meetings are having to face. On the 5th November, Zoe Prosser, Local Development Worker for Scotland, clerked a Threshing Meeting which all Ffriends were invited to take part.

The filling of vacant roles and accessibility of the Meeting House were our main concerns. This Meeting helped to address the issues. One of the ways forward has been for Elders and Pastoral Friends to come together, but at the same time retaining their individual roles. This exercise has proved helpful with more Ffriends participating in the weekly running of our Meeting. We are aware that there are other challenges that face us but were encouraged by the response. This process is ongoing.

Busa Cochrane-Muir

Perth

Perth Meeting continues to meet in the Subud centre twice a month with a small but steady attendance. It is good to have the children back with us and in December we held an additional all-age worship meeting.

In January we held a threshing meeting to consider the place of technology in our Meeting. The challenge is to include all, those who wish to join Meetings on Zoom and those who find a screen in the Meeting room obtrusive.

Plans are progressing for activities this year including more all-age worship. The singing group starts meeting again in February.

Philip Bryers has produced a history of Perth Quaker Meeting. The first part covering the years till 1960 appeared in our newsletter, 'Meeting News', with the second part to follow.



Amnesty International 'Write for Rights' event at Perth Library in December that was supported by Perth Meeting members.

Felicity Bryers

The Ballad of George Fox

(reproduced from <https://fwcc.world/balladofgeorgefox/>)

Friends World Committee on Consultation has acquired the permissions to publish the words to the *Ballad of George Fox* in his [400th birthday year](#).

Also known as *There's a Light that is Shining* or simply *The George Fox song*, it was written by 20th century folk musician Sydney Carter, best known as the composer of *Lord of the Dance*, *When I Needed a Neighbour* and *One More Step Along the World I Go*, all of which have become anthems for Christian compassion.

Although Carter was not a Quaker, he knew Friends well, having served with the Friends Ambulance Unit in World War Two.

The song will not form a part of the [World Quaker Songbook](#) due to be published later this year, as we hope this will have a life beyond 2024. We have however obtained permissions to sing it at the World Plenary itself.

The Ballad of George Fox

There's a light that is shining in the heart of a man,

There's a light that was shining when the world began.

There's a light that is shining in the Turk and the Jew

And a light that is shining, friend, in me and in you.

Walk in the light, wherever you may be

Walk in the light, wherever you may be

"In my old leather breeches and my shaggy, shaggy locks,

I am walking in the glory of the light," said Fox.

'If we give you a pistol, will you fight for the Lord?'

'But you can't kill the devil with a gun or a sword.'

'Will you swear on the Bible?' 'I will not,' said he,

‘For the truth is more holy than the book to me.’

Walk in the light, wherever you may be

Walk in the light, wherever you may be

“In my old leather breeches and my shaggy, shaggy locks,

I am walking in the glory of the light,” said Fox.

There’s an ocean of darkness and I drown in the night

Till I come through the darkness to the ocean of light,

You can lock me in prison but the light will be free,

‘And I walk in the glory of the light,’ said he.

Walk in the light, wherever you may be

Walk in the light, wherever you may be

“In my old leather breeches and my shaggy, shaggy locks,

I am walking in the glory of the light,” said Fox.

c Stainer and Bell, 1964

The [full definitive text](#), including all verses, both versions of the chorus, and a translation in Swedish is linked [here](#).

East Scotland Area Meeting Saturday 10th February

The word 'testimony' is used by Quakers to describe a witness to the living truth within the human heart as it is acted out in everyday life. It is not a form of words, but a mode of life based on the realisation that there is that of God in everybody, that all human beings are equal, that all life is interconnected.
QFP 23.12

11.00 – 1.30pm

Venue: Dundee Meeting House in-person and also on Zoom

Dear Friends, please join us in person or on Zoom on 10th February for Area Meeting at Dundee Meeting House. The agenda and other papers will be circulated before the meeting along with the Zoom link.

Refreshments will be available from 10.30 and after the meeting. If you would like to stay on afterwards to chat and eat lunch, please bring your own sandwiches.

The meeting will start with a presentation by Sarah Komashko, our new(ish) Parliamentary Engagement Officer (PEO). Sarah will be present in person and we will be joined on Zoom for her talk by friends from North Scotland as it also their Area Meeting that day. Sarah will give us an update on the work she's been doing with the PEWG and other British Quaker groups on the climate emergency, human rights, peace education, and democracy, truth and integrity. She also has suggestions of how we as individuals can contribute to the work.

Our business will include updates on finances, the tabular statement, nominations and the work of Quakers in Scotland Coordinating Group.

All are welcome – members and attenders. Please do join us!

Alice Curteis Assistant Clerk

Meetings for Worship

Please note that alternative arrangements are in operation at present.

Dundee: The Meeting House, 7 Whitehall Crescent, Dundee DD1 4AR

Sundays 11.00 am

Meet by Zoom at 11.00am until 12.00 noon. With MfW from 11.15-11.45am,
with social time before and notices/news afterwards.

Thursdays 12.30 – 1.00 pm

St Andrews Meeting House, 2 Howard Place, St Andrews KY16 9HL

Sundays 10.30 am

Children's Meeting - each Sunday during school terms

Enquiries: Genevieve Orr (01333 360396)

Midweek Meeting, Thursdays 1.15 – 1.45pm

Perth: The Subud Centre, 7 St Leonard's Bank, Perth PH2 8EB

Second and last Sundays of each month 10.30 am

meet by Zoom at 11.00am until 12.00 noon. With MfW from 11.15-11.45am,
with social time before and notices/news afterwards.

Children's contact: Anneke Kraakman (07746 117 762)

General Meeting for Scotland

9 March 2024 - South East Scotland AM

8 June - West Scotland AM

14 September - North Scotland AM

9 November - East Scotland AM

8 March 2025 South East Scotland AM

East of Scotland Area Meeting

2nd December St Andrews

10th February 2024

11th May 2024

10th August 2024

23rd November 2024

