

wsqn

- connecting local meetings



October 2021

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Front page photograph by Jena Oliver, Lanark Meeting

How do we stay with the times?

Living Adventurously Advice 28

(Central & Southern Africa's book of Quaker faith & practice.

Moments of change in Life

In trying to decide what direction to take, at moments of change in life, seek advice from trusted sources and your conscience. Wait for the right time to undertake or relinquish responsibilities without fear, pride or guilt. Embrace the task with loving enthusiasm'.

The capacity and hunger for love is in each of us. It hurts when we see others suffer. Love enables our empathy, makes us want to take away pain and its causes. It's our desire to be kind. Love feeds our struggle for a world of justice, fairness, truth and human dignity. I want these two life forces to be expressed as fully as possible, through me, you, and all people, for our greater well-being, and to realise our human potential. Did God create the universe? I don't know. To me, what I believe now matters less than how I live. Life has taught me to value open-mindedness above ideological conviction – it fits better with ubuntu.

Quoted in Marie Odendaal's Richard Gush Lecture to Southern Africa's Yearly Meeting

And taken from The Friend

Full lecture at <https://youtu.be/Sn6UwE523p.8>

Report on Blended Area Meeting (WSAM) 21st August in Stair (Ayrshire) and online

I took part in this remotely. It was good to see people together in a hall, benefiting from each other's company. I'm sure they enjoyed their soup!

There were around 25 participants, about 10 of them remote.

My internet signal was unusually weak and I wasn't fully heard. It turns out that this was caused by another program on the device I was using which was making continuous demands on the broadband. I ended up having to type some contributions. I'm glad to say my son has now sorted the problem.

I didn't see the two assistant clerks at all, though I heard them well. The Clerk was, I think, in the hall, but had a laptop (presumably muted) separately logged into Zoom giving a picture of him that remote Friends could see, and he would, I think, be able to see on this the image of the current speaker, whether in the hall or elsewhere, that would have been projected on the wall above him for those in the hall and by Zoom for those who were remote.

There were presentations by previously recorder video and audio. It is important that the quality of these should be high. A helpful transcript or summary was supplied in each case though.

The Treasurer reported that we have been spending less than usual basically because no one is travelling very much to meetings and courses. We need to keep up our level of giving though to support the Local Development worker (Zoe Prosser) and the work of Britain Yearly Meeting. And some works will be required on Glasgow Meeting House soon.

We heard reactions to the recent online Yearly Meeting Gathering. The organisation of this was excellent with great technical support. Over 2000 Friends participated, many of whom had not attended before, not necessarily at all the sessions. I commend to you the (rather long) Epistle, which is titled *We have no time but the present time*.

We heard a report on plans for COP26 in Glasgow in November. There is a need for financial help and accommodation. Details can be found in the minutes.

We saw a video made by a young east African scientist working on a United Nations project on the subject of local climate change. He is engaged with how to inform local farmers of what they need to do, as their traditional knowledge no longer suffices.

Leilani Rabemananjara of Glasgow Meeting has started a regular epilogue followed by activities for Young Friends (up to 35-ish), and is now inviting others from the Area Meeting to join in. Again more details can be found in the minutes.

There was a discussion about how the blended meeting had gone. One Friend expressed how much she valued everyone sitting in a circle (or concentric circles). as was done in SE Scotland, but WSAM has often gone for a clerks' table at the front and Friends in rows facing the clerks. On thinking about this, I recall the arrangement we use in the Glasgow Meeting House is actually wide concentric half-ovals. And a similar larger-scale geometry has to be used in Friends House. I think the main thing is that the Clerk should be able to see every speaker. In a blended meeting if there is a screen that everyone can see, then I think speakers should address the camera. You do need people to host the meeting separate from the Clerk.

Jane Mitchell, Argyll

Meeting for Sufferings

This was one of the first three bodies of BYM set up in 1675 'to consider what steps could be taken to secure redress from suffering', always the first item in the minutes until 1750. See the short history in QF&P.

Today, since 1965, Meeting for Sufferings appoints all standing committees of BYM - Quaker Life Central Committee, Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee, Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations, Quaker World Relations Committee.

As such it could be described as the Administrative body holding all and directly responsible to Yearly Meeting. It consists of about 170 representative from the different area meetings and certain standing committees.

Thus Meeting for Sufferings is the standing representative body entrusted with the care of the business of Britain Yearly Meeting through the year.

It has a visionary and prophetic role for all Quakers in Britain, deciding the priorities and setting the direction of the Yearly Meeting in the Long Term Framework. Meeting for Sufferings also plays a vital role in fostering communication throughout the Yearly Meeting and in reviewing and testing concerns referred to it by area meetings. It also gives guidance on policy issues referred to it by Britain Yearly Meeting's trustees.

The current representatives of WSAM are Barbara Robinson and Michael Hutchison.

SIMPLER MEETINGS

There is a series of workshops run by BYM Trustees on creating simpler, more inclusive and sustainable structures. The first one is for Scottish Friends on Friday 15th October although it is possible to join others. These workshops were mentioned in Quake! on 30th September.

“How can we create a central governance structure for Quakers in Britain that encourages joyful participation by many Quakers? How do we make the best use of resources, our staff, money and carbon? Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees are running a series of online workshops, from 15 October, to find out what you think.”

To book a place on a workshop go to:

<https://forms.quaker.org.uk/register-to-join-an-online-workshop-on-simplifying-our-governance-structures/>

The workshops take place on:

Dates:

- 15 October, 6pm – for Friends in Scotland
- 20 October, 6pm – for Friends in Wales
- 23 October, 4pm – for Friends in Yorkshire
- 26 October, 8am – for Friends in South East England
- 27 October, 6pm – for Friends in North East England
- 2 November, 6pm – for Friends in South West England
- 7 November, 1pm – for Friends in East Anglia
- 9 November, 8am – for all Friends
- 10 November, 6pm – for Friends in North West England
- 15 November, 8am – for Friends in West Midlands
- 16 November, 12pm – for Friends in South Central England
- 23 November, 12pm – for all Friends
- 26 November, 8am – for Friends in East Midlands
- 30 November, 8am – for Friends in Berkshire and Oxfordshire
- 1 December, 6pm – for Young Friends
- 8 December, 8am – for Friends in London
- 12 December, 4pm – for all Friends
- 13 December, 8am – for Friends in Bedfordshire and neighbourhood
- 15 December, 6pm – for all Friends

Quaker Concerns

Peace and Justice

Our Peace Cranes exhibition has been visited during Just Festival by over 7,500 people and is continuing at St John's Church now until 13 November.

Peace Cranes: An Exhibition.

St John's Church, Princes St, Edinburgh

31 August - 14 October. Monday - Friday 1:00pm - 3:00pm.

From 15 October – 13 November open Monday – Saturday 10:30am – 4pm excluding [service times](#) (Wed 11am – 11:30am).

The Peace Cranes exhibition fills **St John's Church, Princes St, Edinburgh** with origami cranes folded by people from across the world inspiring reflection on the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and the acceleration of species extinction.

Origami cranes are an icon of hope for peace because of two year old Sadako Sasaki, who lived in Hiroshima when the bomb was dropped and later developed leukemia. Hearing a legend that anyone who folded 1,000 origami cranes would get a wish Sadako set out to do so but soon died. Since then folding origami cranes have become a global sign of hope for disarmament.

In 2015 Peace & Justice volunteer Atsuko Betchaku wanted to make 140,000 cranes to commemorate all who died from the Hiroshima bomb. Atsuko died in 2017. Her vision is realized in this exhibition.

The Origami Crane is modelled on the Red-Crowned Crane, now endangered by human activity. Janis Hart's magnificent installation transforms this icon of peace into a plea for protecting biodiversity.

Includes free origami workshops and online and in-person events on the climate and ecological emergencies with international artists and activists. Details of events coming soon. Organised in partnership with St John's Church.

Sign up to Peace & Justice email list at: [via our website:](#)

<https://peaceandjustice.org.uk/>

Or just email admin@peaceandjustice.org.uk

United Nations International Day of Peace 2021

A joint initiative between Allanton Sanctuary, Dumfries & Galloway Council, and Dumfries Interfaith Group, brought over 40 people, including five Friends from the D&G cluster of Meetings, to an event at Allanton, marking the UN International Day of Peace in September. Allanton Sanctuary, near Dumfries, is the European home of 'May Peace Prevail on Earth International', formerly the World Peace Prayer Society, and so the obvious venue for this event.

We gathered at first in a marquee in the walled garden, to hear an introduction from the Dumfries Interfaith Group, which described the establishment of the Day of Peace by the UN 40 years ago. This year's theme is 'Recovering Better for a Sustainable and Equitable World'. We heard how this might be achieved in terms of a prevailing disposition of care, compassion, kindness and hope among and between us all. We were also reminded that, like flowers in a garden, we all belong to one human family, and our wonderful differences add beauty and joy to the amazing garden of humanity. All of the world's major faiths speak of the ideal of Peace, and we heard quotations from several faiths expressing this, concluding with a reading from an American Interfaith source, which echoed John Donne's 'No Man is an Island' in saying that, " A hungry child, or a homeless person, of any race, on any continent, from whatever background, diminishes us all".

The weather had been kind to us, so we then took a leisurely walk through the grounds of Allanton, to The Henge, (as in Stonehenge), where stands a circle, not of stones, but of peace poles, one for each country on Earth. Here, by the wonders of modern technology, we were joined by others from all over the world! The prayer, "May peace prevail on earth" was intoned and every country on the planet named. It is always sobering to remember how very far from peaceful are the lives of so many of our fellow citizens of the world, compared to our own relative comfort.



Back in the walled garden, our afternoon concluded with delicious refreshments, sourced from a recently-arrived Syrian resident of Dumfries, and many lingered for some time in the warm sunshine.

The presentation from the Dumfries Interfaith Group at the start of the event led on, somewhat unexpectedly, to an invitation to deliver the same presentation as the 'Time for Reflection' at the full meeting of Dumfries & Galloway Council the following week, an invitation which we naturally accepted! As it was possible to record this beforehand, it proved to be a anxiety-free exercise, which we understand was well-received!

Jan Lethbridge, Dumfries

"We invade their countries and justify it by saying that our way of life is better, then boggle at the idea they might think living here is great. We pay no attention to how our actions in other countries have precipitated the situation. There has to be something wrong with a world where the best employment option for a farmer in sub-Saharan Africa isn't being a farmer in sub-Saharan Africa, but crossing the Mediterranean on a punctured lilo, only to spend days dangling under a lorry so that he can end up selling lollipops in a nightclub toilet. Our indifference is staggering. For a lot of these people, their best chance of survival is to dress up as a Leopard and hope to get Twitter onside.

Of course , the true existential threat to us might come from ourselves. If we can look at another human being and categorise them as "illegal", or that chilling American word "alien", then what has become of our own humanity? To support policies that dehumanise others is to dehumanise yourself. I think most people resist that, but are pressed toward it by an increasingly sadistic elite. If you're worried about threats to your way of life, look at the people that are selling the public services from under you. The people who will destroy this society are already here : printing their own money, printing their own newspapers and responding to undesirables at the gates by releasing the hounds." - Frankie Boyle

Accommodation needed.

yet more accommodation for visitors to CoP26. Some are for just a couple of nights, some for the whole fortnight of the conference.

All our visitors will be doubly vaccinated. Some had hotel bookings confirmed early in the year, but have recently had them cancelled. The same hotels are letting rooms at extortionate rates at present.

If you have even a small room, single bed, I can probably find a guest for you! And as we are asking for £20 to £25 per person per night, we should be able to take care of more of the Meeting House repairs. **Mary Alice Mansell**

Climate Change

This is a summary of links to key events and activities at COP26, and includes a poster and booklet for the Against Gender Violence Group's conference. Please ensure that this email reaches members and attenders at your meeting.

A. Britain Yearly Meeting Countdown to COP26

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/our-work/climate-economic-justice/climate-justice-4/countdown-to-cop26>

This has a timeline of events and actions in the run up to the UN climate talks in Glasgow from 1–12 November 2021 – COP26 which will be updated as new information is received - so check back regularly for updates! Includes details of actions, pilgrimages (including Dunbar to Glasgow), vigils, interfaith events etc. The newsletter Quake! will also have updates.

(<https://www.quaker.org.uk/resources/newsletters/quake>)

B. Glasgow Quaker Meeting House has arranged a large number of events during COP26. More details of current planned events are at

<https://sway.office.com/2VI98QeL8oGnO3Kg?ref=Link> ***Please note that it may be necessary to book for some events***

Week 1:

Sunday 31st October

- 11.00-12.30 Quaker Meeting for Worship
- 12.30- 13.30 Welcome to Quaker Pilgrims to COP
- 15.30 -18.00 Views of Young Quakers around the World
- 19.30 - 21.00 A Spiritual Imperative of COP26: A Vision for the Future

Tuesday 2nd November

- 15.00- 17.00 Eco-spirituality and Capacitar well-being practices for climate activists led by Ali Newell and Nancy Adams.
- 19.30 - 21.00 The Loving Earth Project - Caring for what we love in the face of environmental threats

Thursday 4th November

- 9.30-13.00 How to Hold Meeting for Clearness for Activists

Friday 5th November

- 14.00 - 17.00 Loving Earth Exhibition

Saturday 6th November

- 14.00 - 17.00 Loving Earth Exhibition

19.30 - 20.30 - Quakers and Quiet Diplomacy- Ppersonal reflections on the progress of the COP Negotiations

Week 2:

Sunday 7th November

11.00 - 12.30 Quaker Meeting for Worship

14.00 - 17.00 Loving Earth Exhibition

13.00 - 16.00 Online only How to Hold Meeting for Clearness for Activists (in French)

Monday 8th November

14.00 - 18.00 How to Hold Meeting for Clearness for Activists

Friday 12th November

19.30 - 21.00 Evening Reflection, holding in the Light the COP Negotiators

There are **daily periods of reflection** and refreshments: 8:30-9:30, 18:00 to 19:00, with refreshments in the Elizabeth Fry Room 15:00 to 19:00. For three days over the middle weekend of COP, **Loving Earth panels** will be on public display. There is no need to book to view the panels, but capacity in the room is limited.

(C) Other useful websites include:

Quakers in Scotland COP26 pages (<https://www.quakerscotland.org/cop26>) frequently updated.

[Stitches for Survival](#)

[Loving Earth Project](#)

[COP26 Coalition](#)

[Climate Fringe online](#)

[Friends of the Earth Scotland](#)

[Official UK Government COP26 website](#)

(D) COP26 Day of Action, Saturday 6 Nov <https://cop26coalition.org/gda/>.

“Justice won’t be handed to us by world leaders or delivered by corporations. Only we can imagine and build the future that works for all of us”.

(E) A Woman's Perspective on Climate Change Wednesday 3rd November 9:30

– 16:30 at Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House with Dr. Nontando

Hadebe and Kathy Galloway. Afternoon - Margery Bray and piper Allan

MacDonald. Organised by WSAM’s Against Gender Violence Group. See attached poster and booklet. More details available from

awomansperspective@outlook.com

Christian Aid Scotland having an interesting programme. See below for some highlights:

Join Christian Aid at Glasgow's COP26 Global Day for Climate Justice!

Saturday 6 November 11.30am

We will walk together with our partner faith organisations, meeting at Kelvingrove Park from 11.30am. The demonstration will then march to [Glasgow Green](#) for a rally at 3pm.

Keep an eye on our [website](#) and [Facebook](#) for more information.

Find out how you can get creative, stay safe and share the experience on social media.

Check out our [guide](#) to the Day of Action.

The Time is Now - Join Christian Aid, Dr Williams, the Kingdom Choir and the Young Christian Climate Network for a night of music, prayer and inspiration at Glasgow Cathedral.

Monday 8 November 7pm

As the world gathers in Glasgow for COP26, we will stand together against the climate crisis. The time is now for urgent action.

Contributors include:

Dr Rowan Williams, outgoing chair of Christian Aid

Amanda Khozi Mukwashi, Chief Executive of Christian Aid

The Kingdom Choir, London-based choir, led by Karen Gibson

Robert Beckford, Professor of Black Theology at The Queen's Foundation

Sign up to attend online or in-person [here](#)

Creativity, curiosity and climate change

In September, an inspirational panel of artists chatted to Christian Aid Scotland about how creativity makes them curious about the world.

The speakers included ID Campbell, Kathy Galloway, David Coleman and Anna Fisk.

If you missed it – or if you want to enjoy it a second time – you can now catch up on [Youtube](#).

Service of Reflection, Tuesday 2 November 5.30pm

You are warmly invited to a special online service, featuring Dr Rowan Williams and Stirlingshire minister, Maggie Roderick.

We have all been through such enormous change and loss especially those who have lost a loved one. This is a time to come together in a moment of comfort, hope and solidarity to remember those who lit up our lives.

Visit caid.org.uk/reflection to sign up, and the option to share the name of a loved one for the service.

Violence against Women

The Earth Charter

I decided to put this in here because of its implications. Whilst looking through the UN Declaration of Human Rights for our booklet *Women Do Count* I was struck by how out of date that was, and patriarchal, *he/his*. Collating the booklet brought me into touch with a whole new and very different Feminism in the Global South. It also made me realise how redundant was the view of 'Western' democracy and our economic model of growth and development. I was also amazed to find that the UK had not contributed to the Earth Charter and only three from the USA. . . then I realised that this was coming from the more indigenous peoples with a concept and practice of community. The eight pages are beautifully written and freely available on the internet. *Editor*

What is the Earth Charter?

The Earth Charter is a declaration of fundamental ethical principles for building a just, sustainable and peaceful global society in the 21st century. It seeks to inspire in all people a new sense of global interdependence and shared responsibility for the well-being of the whole human family, the greater community of life, and future generations. It is a vision of hope and a call to action.

The Earth Charter is centrally concerned with the transition to sustainable ways of living and sustainable human development. Ecological integrity is one major theme. However, the Earth Charter recognizes that the goals of ecological protection, the eradication of poverty, equitable economic development, respect for human rights, democracy, and peace are interdependent and indivisible. It provides, therefore, a new, inclusive, integrated ethical framework to guide the transition to a sustainable future.

The Earth Charter is a product of a decade-long, worldwide, cross cultural dialogue on common goals and shared values. The Earth Charter project began as a United Nations initiative, but it was carried forward and completed by a global civil society initiative

Shared Global Values ... for Our Common Future

At a time when major changes in how we think and live are urgently needed, the Earth Charter challenges us to examine our values and to choose a better way. It calls on us to search for common ground in the midst of our diversity and to embrace a new ethical vision shared by growing numbers of people in many nations and cultures throughout the world

Mission Statement The mission of the Earth Charter Initiative is to promote the transition to sustainable ways of living and a global society founded on a shared ethical framework that includes respect and care for the community of life, ecological integrity, universal human rights, respect for diversity, economic justice, democracy, and a culture of peace

Decentralized Expansion strategy

“Decentralization for Scaling Up” is a strategy to enable the massive expansion of the Initiative without having to grow the central administration, and to allow for a vast number of self-organizing efforts to multiply and grow. In support of this new strategy, a set of Action Guidelines for Decentralized Expansion of the Earth Charter Initiative were developed. The Action Guidelines are a resource designed to help people conduct Earth Charter related activities in ways that are in harmony with the values and principles of the Earth Charter. The purpose of the Action Guidelines is also to ensure a certain measure of consistency in how decentralized actions on behalf of the Earth Charter are carried out. Following these guidelines, any person, organization, or community can make use of the Earth Charter and put it to work in appropriate ways corresponding to their capacities and opportunities. The twelve points of the Action Guidelines can be found in the Earth Charter website.

Thus there are four sections:

- I. Respect and Care for the Community of Life.**
- II. Ecological Integrity**
- III. Social and Economic Justice**
- IV. Democracy, Nonviolence and Peace**

Read more detail by referring to the Charter on the Internet.

The Way Forward

As never before in history, common destiny beckons us to seek a new beginning. Such renewal is the promise of these Earth Charter principles. To fulfill this promise, we must commit ourselves to adopt and promote the values and objectives of the Charter.

This requires a change of mind and heart. It requires a new sense of global interdependence and universal responsibility. We must imaginatively develop and apply the vision of a sustainable way of life locally, nationally, regionally, and globally. Our cultural diversity is a precious heritage and different cultures will find their own distinctive ways to realize the vision. We must deepen and expand the global dialogue that generated the Earth Charter, for we have much to learn from the ongoing collaborative search for truth and wisdom.

Life often involves tensions between important values. This can mean difficult choices. However, we must find ways to harmonize diversity with unity, the exercise of freedom with the common good, short-term objectives with long-term goals. Every individual, family, organization, and community has a vital role to play. The arts, sciences, religions, educational institutions, media, businesses, nongovernmental organizations, and governments are all called to offer creative leadership. The partnership of government, civil society, and business is essential for effective governance.

In order to build a sustainable global community, the nations of the world must renew their commitment to the United Nations, fulfill their obligations under existing international agreements, and support the implementation of Earth Charter principles with an international legally binding instrument on environment and development.

Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life

A Woman's Perspective on Climate Change

Not the usual stuff about carbon footprints and not a big moan about men!!! As in the booklet, we will be looking at the positive. Yes we own the horror but move on to look for the place of healing and possibly different ways economically to build more healthy communities, to heal the breach between the abused feminine and the wounded masculine. Speakers include:

Dr Nontando Hadebe The cry of the Earth is the cry of Women: Ecofeminism ... a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. Dr. Hadebe is International Co-ordinator of Side-by-Side for gender justice.

Kathy Galloway will speak on women, the environment and the need to change the economic mind-set .

Kathy is an ordained minister, writer and former head of Christian Aid Scotland and of the Iona Community.

In two breakout sessions we will consider a diagram on Sexism and Misogyny and ask how they arise, and we will ask how we use words such as consumer, economic growth, paying for care, etc. What is our vision of a future world? *Fuelled at some point with tea and coffee.*

In the afternoon **Margery Bray and piper Allan MacDonald** will lead us in . . .

A musical Odyssey rebalancing masculine and feminine, looking at women's history in the sacred, seeking to restore the relationship with Mother Earth through Scottish songlines, poetry and music and story telling.

I bring the conference to your attention as, as yet, we are short of Quakers and could easily fill the space with non-Quakers.

Why do Quakers see the inequality and injustice towards women as just another issue rather than the root and underpinning of the whole western culture and economic system of wealth creation and hierarchy? **Margaret Roy**

Painting by Afghan artist Shamsia Hassani



Criminal Justice Network

The National Care Service Consultation, Justice Social Work and the Prison Question Mike Nellis, Glasgow

The Scottish Government is in the process of creating a National Care Service. It is a manifesto commitment, borne of a need to rectify the manifest deficiencies of care services for old people and other vulnerable adults in the early days of the pandemic. Unfortunately, as the blueprint passed through the various government departments, a whole raft of other services were grafted on to it by civil servants and ministers, with who knows what agendas. Some of the additions were integral, some were optional (up for debate); some, if they were to be pursued at all, were to be phased in later, after the initial implementation. These additions were almost invariably presented with much less evidence and argument than had been supplied for the original blueprint, making the public consultation document that went out earlier this year somewhat difficult to respond to.

One of the additions was criminal justice social work, long embedded in local government and somewhat variable in quality across 32 local authorities, from excellent to a good deal less so. Although there are already National Standards for this work, the government thinks that only fully national direction will raise standards. On the basis of the two public consultations I attended (online) – one with Community Justice Scotland, the other with COSLA - it is pretty clear to me that criminal justice social work professionals do not see a better future for themselves in the National Care Service, the creation of which will lead to a lengthy period of administrative disruption in which they will end up as low priority, subservient to the main concern with adult care. They have several good arguments on their side, while recognising that the status quo, of persistently variable standards, is untenable.

But what to do instead? For my own part, to think this through, I went back to the Scottish Prison Commission (the McLeish Report) in 2007, and the Commission on Women Offenders (the Angiolini Report) in 2012. Both were committed to significant reductions in the numbers of people in prison, and both understood that an array of community justice services would be needed to achieve this, with justice social work at its core, linked to housing and health services, all supported by a network of third sector organisations, including, indispensably, support services for victims and survivors of crime. Whilst the Scottish government officially accepted both reports, it has never had adequate

mechanisms for implementing either of them, although it created a national organisation, Community Justice Scotland, in 2017, to pursue this agenda *but without authority* to direct or deliver services. If ever there was a national organisation that justice social work needed to be better aligned with, it is surely Community Justice Scotland?

Even as I pick this as my preferred option, I can see the difficulties, hear the voices countering my arguments, pointing out the gaps. The simple truth is that there are never perfect administrative solutions, no clear and simple ways forward in complex democracies, even in small countries, that will meet all needs equally. But there are better and worse administrative structures, which (other things being equal) make for better or worse services, while opening up some policy horizons and closing down others. When given opportunities to participate in consultations like that on the National Care Service, informed Quakers should take it, alert to both what is being said *and not being said* in government documents, focussed more on guiding values and desirable outcomes than organisational nuts and bolts, and without ever thinking that this particular activity exhausts how we might engage politically. The Working Group of the Scottish Quaker Community Justice Network is currently doing this. Setting a policy horizon in which Scotland, finally, seriously works towards losing its position as leader in the European league table of imprisonment rates, *and all else that that entails* in terms of alternative sanctions and reductions in crime and violence, is something that I hope no Quaker would quarrel with.

No man is an island,
Entire of itself.
Each is a piece of the continent,
A part of the main.
If a clod be washed away by the sea,
Europe is the less.
As well as if a promontory were.
As well as if a manor of thine own
Or of thine friend's were.
Each man's death diminishes me,
For I am involved in mankind.
Therefore, send not to know
For whom the bell tolls,
It tolls for thee.

John Donne

On losing a friend Penny Lilley, Castle Douglas

In the past year two of my oldest friends have died. They were both women who contributed a lot to both my life and the lives of others. My friend, Caro Trustram died on the 3rd of September this year.

I met Caro at a Quaker work camp when I was 17 or 18. My mother had been to a Quaker school and trained as a nurse at the Retreat, the Quaker hospital in York. From her I knew that Quakers were 'good people'. I don't know what drew Caro to a Quaker work camp. She had relatives in Southern Ireland who were part of the Alliance political party so she may have known about the peace-making roles Quakers had undertaken over the years. Once we got talking, we discovered that we were both about to start at the same arts college- she to study dance and drama and myself to do art! We became firm friends and shared a room in our second year at the college. We were part of a larger group of mainly drama students who kept in touch after we left the collage. Some members of this group shared a broadly left-wing view of politics, but did not have any religious or spiritual beliefs in common.

Later, Caro was to live in Belize (central America) where she met her husband Steve, an American artist and highly skilled wood worker. Caro herself was a talented writer and she and Steve wrote and illustrated a book of stories set in Belize. They later travelled to the States, came back to the UK and lived in Whitby, Yorkshire and for the last 3 decades Caro lived in Southern Spain. She became a fluent Spanish speaker and was integrated into the village community where she and Steve built a house. She became a skilled gardener and loved the climate, her neighbours, her family, friends and the lifestyle in rural Andalusia.

During all this time, Caro and I corresponded by letter. I have wonderful letters describing the many places she and Steve travelled to and some times settled. We asked advice of each other and shared many confidences. Now she has died of cancer. Her death was peaceful, at home in the house she and Steve built, lived in together and then later, Caro lived as a single parent, in her village in Andalusia. Her younger son Gaby, a great traveller like both his parents, returned from Colombia to look after his mother.

I feel very sad that she is gone. Caro was a special person. She was fiercely truthful, believed strongly in racial equality, had great integrity and a cheerful optimism. She worked in Belize, Whitby and Spain as an English teacher, which she didn't enjoy very much, but it kept the wolf from the door. She liked being physically active, was strong in her body and enjoyed walking, gardening, cooking, having friends staying and eating in her house, music and dancing. She was an

agnostic, but I believe expressed 'the Light', goodness and generosity of spirit throughout her whole life.

I feel that I want to memorialise this, on the face of it, quite ordinary woman. I did not know about her death until after her funeral. We had had a couple of phone-calls in the final few weeks, but then she became too weak to talk on the phone. I'm sad I didn't try harder to see her before she died. Sad that I wasn't able to go to her funeral in Spain.

How should we remember our friends that have died? How do we tell others about the lives of people that have been important to us? What is the meaning of our lives? I am still pondering these questions. I'd love to hear from other Friends about how they deal with the loss of a special person in their lives. It's not the grief that bothers me. It is the question of how to signify the importance and meaning that person held for myself and others.

Caro is the second close woman-friend I have lost this year. These losses remind me to treasure the friendships I still have, make more effort to visit friends who live far away, and be loving and open with the people I care about.



The Way

Some say my teaching is nonsense
Others call it impractical.
But to those who've looked inside themselves,
this nonsense makes perfect sense.
And to those who put it into practice,
this loftiness has roots that go deep.

I have three things to teach,
simplicity, patience, compassion.
These are your three greatest treasures.
Simple in actions and in thoughts,
you return to the source of being.
Patient with both friends and enemies,
you accord with the way things are.
Compassionate towards yourself,
you reconcile all beings in the world.

Tao Te Ching

"I am the Way." - Jesus

REVIEW: The Struggle for a Human Future, 5G, Augmented Reality and the Internet of Things, Jeremy Naydler, Temple Lodge, 2020

This is a frightening book, all the more so because it touches our deepest fears of who we are and what is our purpose here.

Sadly THE COMPUTER IS GOD. Look at how we bow to it. As I scream at my computer and ask what god I have to appease, I must look like a stereotype of 'pagan' superstition.

Alas, much of the dialogue is obscured in older concepts so it will put many off. However, he juggles with the relationship between the hidden, the subconscious, and how it relates to the conscious to affect how we see and relate to our world.

He identifies an interface between the human and the inhuman. And, before you close its pages, it is not about 'demons'. He identifies two types of inhuman: our social, political, economic system that leads to so much poverty and injustice; and the 'digital'. As a spiritual/religious organisation, the concept of the latter is very much our business.

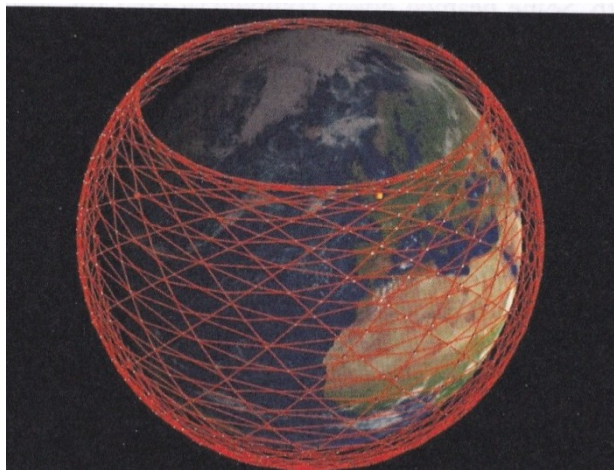
HOW HAVE WE ADJUSTED TO COPE WITH THIS DIGITAL? ARE WE LESS HUMAN?

First, perhaps it is important to consider what the social/political/economic system demands of us. A culture of growth and development creates wealth, creates hierarchy and diverts us from a harmony with the natural world. Culture is how we use language. It determines our daily habits and even our thought processes. And these are unnatural in a 'modern' culture. Modern science, started by the likes of Descartes, reduced the human to a body, even to a machine. How do we treat a machine. *'If the body is a machine, then it can be treated as one. When parts wear out, then you simply replace them with new parts.* Laplace says to Napoleon that God was 'an unnecessary hypothesis'. It is one step to being a commodity, or a consumer.

In the digital world the alienation is increased as we interact with our own creations: television, films, reality games. Dare I use pornography as an example of something that creates unreal expectations and can harm young minds by stifling the growth of healthy relationships? So what does the 'smart' world demand of us?

Then he goes further in one of the five essays to explore the effects and needs of 5G. The 'connected future', smart phones, smart TV, smart washing machines, Alexa, more capacity bandwidth to handle larger quantities of data, to create an Internet of Things. *Breathe!*

Linking up all these devices requires 20,000+ satellites for phase one, and potentially another 50,000 thereafter. See diagram below.



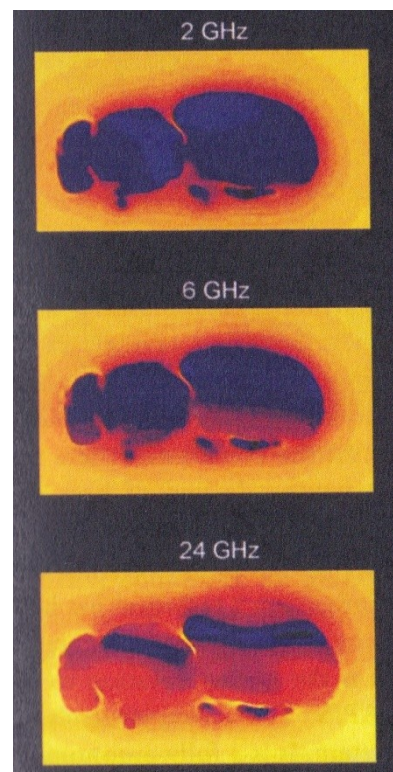
The network of 20,000 satellites *approached in Biggar to host a hot spot that would collect data from smart TVs, washing machines, etc.. And I was told that all new appliances would be fitted so they sent data to my hotspot for transmission on.* Now look at the other diagram showing the effect of these microwaves on insects. Cooked!

My interest is in consciousness and what it is to be a human. That is his interest too. He states that the totality of who we are includes a spiritual kernel 'that is for the most part unconscious'. As 'our deepest truest self it needs cultivating - *the arduous work of inner transformation.* There is a shift from *reliance on result-orientated, discursive thinking that runs along from one thought to another, towards giving more value to the stillness and open receptivity of the act of contemplation.*

This 'contemplative turn' has always been regarded as the foundation of the spiritual life, but it is of special relevance for us today . . . it brings the mind to a standstill: it is not result orientated, it cannot be automated, and it can only be engaged for its own sake. It enables us to gain insight into the deeper meaning of things, about which machine thinking knows nothing. These insights can well up from the imaginal world as powerful archetypal images, for contemplative thinking borders on imaginative vision

There is much in this book to challenge the direction of economic and scientific development.

A bee These satellites will use very small wavelengths similar to microwaves. To function effectively, the antennas needed may only measure four inches, so small they can be placed on lampposts, but in order to function they will be placed 100 metres apart. I have already been



New Booklet and Leaflet: Mental Health in our Meetings

Mental Health in our Meetings

These pages provide resources and guidance to help Friends respond with compassion when people in their Quaker community show signs of mental distress.

Mental health in our meetings leaflet

The *Mental health in our meetings* [leaflet \(PDF\)](#) gives information to help meet the needs of the individual in distress. The viewpoint of the carer and the wider community are explored. There are 'queries' to enable Friends to think about the issues arising.

Quaker Voices on Mental Health

A newly forming group, looking at our Quaker ministry on mental health. Friends are exploring and reflecting, speaking out and campaigning, thinking about wider issues in society. **Contact:** www.quakermhfund.uk/Quaker-Voices-on-Mental-Health

Learn more about the breadth of Quaker Life's work on mental health and the other organisations that are partners in the work

Resources

Encounters with mental distress: Quaker stories

This book shares Quakers' experiences of mental distress. You can [buy](#) *Encounters with mental distress: Quaker stories* from the Quaker bookshop website.

Your Quaker community can use the *Encounters accompaniment* [leaflet \(PDF\)](#) to explore themes in the book.

Mental health conversations

[Mental health conversations \(PDF\)](#) explores Quaker witness on mental health. It is based on conversations with 23 Quakers who have lived experience of mental distress. [Read about The elephant in the room in the Quaker blog](#) written alongside the conversations project.

Dementia in our Quaker meetings

Dementia is an issue faced by many Friends. They might experience it directly or when caring for or loving someone with the condition.

[Dementia in our Quaker meetings \(pdf\)](#) offers some thoughts on being together in a Quaker community when dementia is present. The reflections here might be helpful for someone living with dementia, for those supporting someone with the condition, or indeed for anyone in the wider Quaker community.

Quaker Life Representative Council

Quaker Life Representative Council's theme in October 2019 was mental health. A series of films were made during the event with Friends describing their experience of the workshops and activities that were offered.

Elspeth Smith

Caroline McKoen writes of her aunt: Today is Elspeth's funeral. She was a member of Glasgow Quaker Meeting and I was fortunate to be her overseer or 'friendly friend'. I painted this picture of her about 3 years ago. I'm grateful for having known her.

BLACKSPRINGPRESSGROUP.COM

SUPERB BRITISH POET ELSPETH SMITH HAS DIED

Sad news - one of Eyewear BSPG's first, and finest, poets, the brilliant, epigrammatic and eccentric poet of Blitz memories and the sorrows and dreams of ageing, Elspeth Smith, has died, her family has asked us to announce as her final publisher - we loved her, and were proud to help her reach a widder one is deserved... what a genuinely inspiring and delightful person she is and was! Please read her work, it is truly unique, uncanny, and unforgettable, so apparently minimalist, so complex and rich many cake layers down. Empty champagne flutes have never seemed so sinister.

Elspeth Smith was born in Ceylon in 1928 to British parents and spent her childhood on a tea plantation. During the Second World War she was sent to school in Edinburgh and then to St Leonards-on-Sea, Sussex. She has lived and worked in Huddersfield for over forty years. She died in Scotland in 2021, with her family by her side.

Her pamphlet *Wishbone* was published by Smith/Doorstop (The Poetry Business). Her debut collection, [Dangerous Cakes](#), came out from Eyewear in 2012, to critical acclaim.

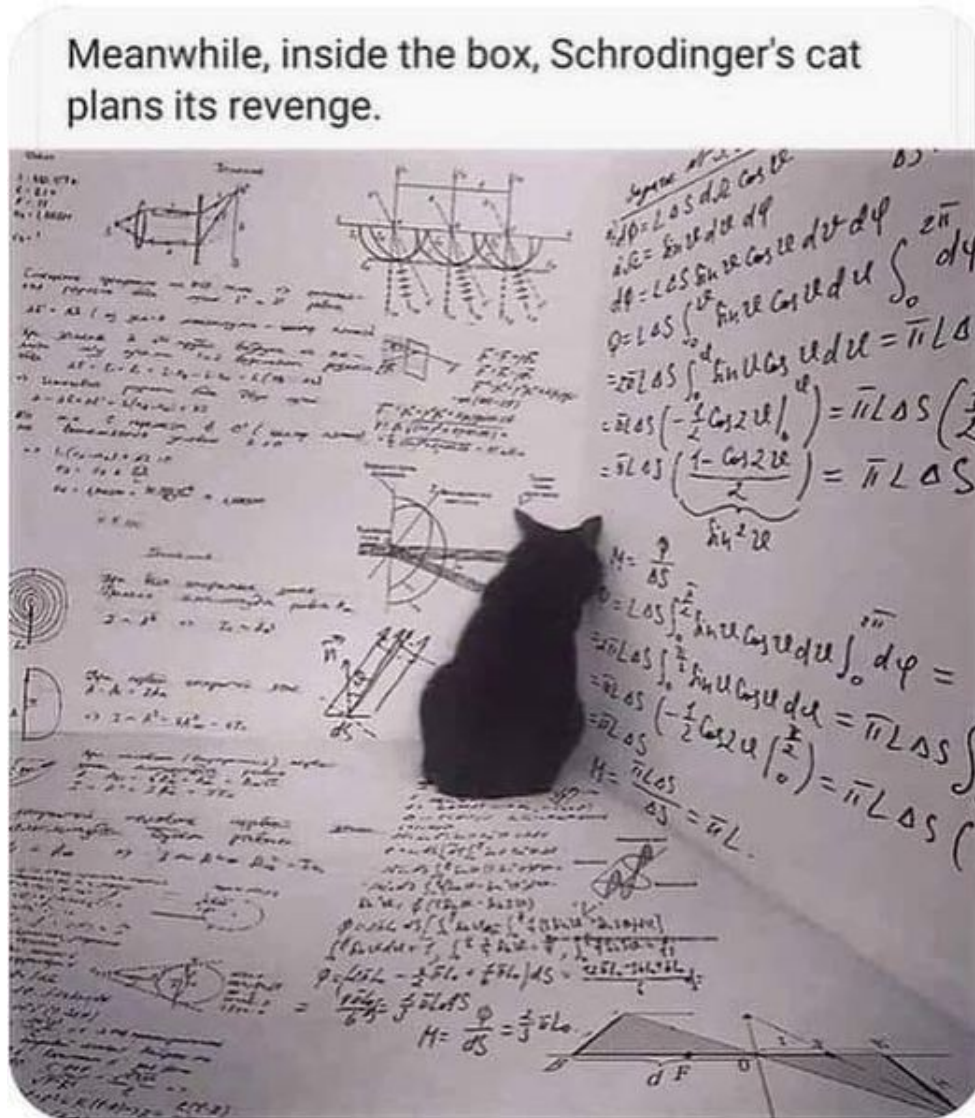
Smith's poems are tiny parcels of benign delightfulness with danger at their centres. A patch of grass, a fresh covering of snow, an old shoe box take a sinister turn if you dare to join the party. – **Lorraine Mariner**

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Experiment with Light

Over the summer our group has been looking at the Quakerism of James Nayler. Our next meeting is on 27th October at 2pm – link from Margaret Roy who will also supply the background papers. We are using the book loaned to us by Stuart Masters. This time our topic may revolve around, is Christ the same as the Light? All are welcome.

Found on face book and knowing how much Quakers like their cats



Daphne Wassermann has a request.

A neighbour of ours has just died and leaves two cats, brother and sister, aged about 8. Apparently Minnie needs to go on a diet! The neighbour's children are looking for a good home for the cats. If you know of anyone who would like them please contact Daphne.

News from Meetings

Wigtown Meeting

+After a few months of a blended meeting using hired premises, we have now been meeting face-to-face in the Meeting House and by Zoom on alternate Sundays. While this is not totally satisfactory it is better than nothing. We have not been able to open up the Meeting House for letting purposes and this is missed by the local community who were frequent users. Possibly, like most of the population, there is a sense of marking time until the Covid crisis is finally over. We enjoyed the picnic Saturday with the other South-west meetings on a lovely sunny Saturday in September and hope to do something like that again.

Dumfries

STORM arrives on her way to Glasgow and COP26.



Meanwhile Glasgow Meeting walking group are getting away from it all.

Castle Douglas, Dumfries and Wigtown Meetings had a picnic at Dhoon beach near Kirkcudbright. Although well into September, we enjoyed a beautiful sunny warm day. There were 21 of us plus two children.

We brought our own lunches and also some food to share. Some of us played frisbee and beach ball games with the children. A lot of fun and laughter.

It was so good to chat and catch up with each other that we have planned a shared lunch for the cluster in November.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

6th December	Area Meeting	by video/telephone (7-9 pm).
15th January 2022	Area Meeting	11:30 am – 4 pm at Glasgow.
7 th March	Area Meeting	by video/telephone (7-9 pm).
9 th April	Area Meeting	11:30 am – 4 pm
6 th June	Area Meeting	by video/telephone (7-9 pm).
20 th August	Area Meeting	11:30 am – 4 pm
8 th October	Area Meeting	11:30 am – 4 pm
5 th December	Area Meeting	by video/telephone (7-9 pm).

We confirm the dates for the holding of Area Meeting in 2021 and January 2022, subject to the necessity of holding the meetings by Zoom rather than at these venues. Further to minute 66/10, an incorrect date was given for the August meeting, which is corrected here. Some venues will be announced later.

20 th November	GENERAL MEETING	10.30 am	<i>You need to register beforehand.</i>
12 th March	GENERAL MEETING	10.30 am	
11 th June	GENERAL MEETING	10.30 am	
10 th September	GENERAL MEETING	10.30 am	
12 th November	GENERAL MEETING	10.30 am	



Hold in the Light

With health issues. **Helen Macdonald of Wigtown Meeting**
 Paul Burton of Glasgow Meeting
 Barbara Robinson of Glasgow Meeting
Derek Reed of Glasgow Meeting **On the loss of his friend.**

And all at Glasgow Meeting to sustain through the days of COP26

West Scotland Quaker News is published by West Scotland Area Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), 38 Elmbank Crescent, Glasgow G2 4PS. Telephone 0141 248 84 93

The opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of individuals, They do not necessarily present the views of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). The deadline for contributions or the next issue of WSQN is 31st December 2021.

Copy should be send in Word format only to the editor Margaret Roy.