

Minutes of a meeting of Quakers in Yorkshire

Held at Christchurch, Ilkley on 16 July 2016

Representatives

Brighouse West Yorkshire: Helen Brockley, Hilary Browne, Jean Elliott, John Gaukroger, Anne Marshall, Jill Mollitt, George R. Race, Judy Shorney

Central Yorkshire Area Meeting: David Bunney

Craven & Keighley Area Meeting: Chris Petrie, Evelyn Shire, Alison Tyas

Leeds Area Meeting: Barbara Henderson, Paul Henderson, Brian Meara, Margaret Meara, Veronica O'Mara, Pete Redwood

Pickering & Hull Area Meeting: Helen Clark, Liz Grove, Diana Sandy

Sheffield & Balby Area Meeting: Margaret Lawson, Faith Rodger

York Area Meeting: Roy Love, Eleanor Tew, Christine Wilde (prevented), Barbara Windle

QiY 16/07/01 Reading

In our opening worship we have heard a reading from 21.04 of Quaker Faith and Practice.

QiY 16/07/02 Welcome

We have been welcomed to Christchurch by Paul Henderson on behalf of Ilkley Friends.

QiY 16/07/03 Elders

We thank Judith Sayer of Ilkley and Barbara Parry of Rawdon local meetings for offering to serve as elders for today's gathering.

QiY 16/07/04 Annual Reports and Accounts from QiY Trustees

Barbara Windle, clerk to QiY Trustees, has presented the annual report for Quakers in Yorkshire for 2015. George Race, Treasurer to QiY, has presented the accounts and provided a short commentary. Both reports will be attached to the minutes of this gathering and will also be available on the QiY website.

QiY 16/07/05 Annual Report from Glenthorne

Roy Love has presented the annual report from Glenthorne for 2015. His report will be attached to the minutes and placed on the QiY website.

QiY 16/07/06 Young Friends General Meeting

We have welcomed Rici Marshall, Ellie Fuller, Joseph Fuller and Toni Carmichael Harris of Young Friends General Meeting (YFGM) who have given us a most engaging presentation today.

YFGM is for people aged 18 - 30ish and comprises both Friends who went to meetings as children, and those who found Quakers at a later stage. Rici, Ellie, Joseph and Toni told us their personal histories, meetings, experience and current posts with YFGM, which is an important feature in their Quaker lives. It is possible for there to be very few children in a local meeting and for a child to be seen merely as 'someone's son or daughter' and to think they have no contemporaries nearby. YFGM enables a young person to be a Friend in their own right and can be a point of contact for those who do not have a consistent local meeting, such as when they go to university. YFGM is also a good experience for those new to Quakers, enabling them to make links to those of a similar age. A number of Friends present from different meetings had been Young Friends and their contributions confirmed that participation in YFGM is a means of getting a wider view of Quakers in the country beyond one's local meeting.

After some years with no identified concern, Young Friends adopted in 2014 a concern about the renewal of Trident Nuclear Weapons. As there are a large number of politically engaged young people at their meetings, this subject was particularly appropriate. They focused on awareness raising, holding vigils and identifying other groups who were similarly opposed. A significant move for YFGM was the letter opposing Trident which they and other groups sent to the Government, which was read to us. We heard how being part of a group of young people who share similar views can be very powerful and can overcome feelings of loneliness.

In 2014 Young Friends identified a concern for mental health and mental wellbeing which had been 'in the background' for some time. They have focused on awareness raising. They held a weekend free of business which comprised a number of events including making journals and sessions on mindfulness, the objective being to familiarise themselves with the issues. Some young Friends had contributed from their own experiences.

At every meeting of YFGM some time is spent on meetings for worship for business, as some of those attending may never have attended a business meeting. As a plenary we identified various roles in a meeting for worship for business such as clerk, assistant clerk, co-clerk, treasurer, awkward Friend, doorkeeper, everybody present, a member of the meeting and Elder. In groups of around eight, Friends talked about how the role holder would or should act in that role and we then shared our responses in the full meeting.

YFGM, whose membership numbers between 200 and 300, is an important link to Britain Yearly Meeting and some BYM clerks first learned their skills with Young Friends. They are very keen to nurture or grow these links; their calendar of meetings is on the YFGM website and *Young Quaker* magazine is issued regularly. Currently receiving some funding from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, YFGM may soon ask for more contributions from local and area meetings. We hope that all young Friends we know in our meetings will be encouraged to become involved with Young Friends General Meeting.

This has been a wide-ranging, stimulating and most enjoyable session, with light-heartedness complementing the serious issues with which young Friends are dealing. We thank our Friends most sincerely for their planning and for time they have spent with us today and wish them well.

QiY 16/07/07 Welcome from Rob Hilton

We have received a warm welcome to Christchurch by its minister Rob Hilton, who has given us a summary of some of the recent activities of this ecumenical church that incorporates Methodist and United Reformed worshippers.

QiY 16/07/08 Release and appointment

Tasha Heny has asked to be released from her role on Junior Holidays Committee. We agree to this request and thank her for her service.

Quakers in Yorkshire Nominations Committee has brought the following names to us for appointment:

Chris Love to serve a second term as Co-Clerk of Quakers in Yorkshire from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2019.

This name being acceptable, our Friend is duly appointed.

Safeguarding Coordinator

There are Friends who have indicated a willingness to take on the second role of Safeguarding Coordinator. The Under 19s Coordinating Group are not in a position to bring us a name today. This meeting is asked to authorise a small group to discern the way forward so that a 'between meetings' appointment can be made. It is proposed that the group comprises a Trustee, Kate Marks, Under 19s Group Convenor, Madeleine Kay, Safeguarding Coordinator and a Co Clerk.

We agree to this proposal.

QiY 16/07/09 Closing Minute

We thank Ilkley Friends for their very warm welcome and hospitality today and for the many months of work that have gone into preparing for our visit. We are delighted that a number of children have been with us and thank the Friends who have helped organise their activities. We hope to meet again at The Mount School, York, on Saturday 15th October, God willing.

Chris Love
Arthur Pritchard
Co-Clerks, Quakers in Yorkshire