

Minutes of a meeting of Quakers in Yorkshire

Held at Bootham School, York, on 21 October 2017

Representatives

Brighouse West Yorkshire

George R. Race

Central Yorkshire Area Meeting

David Bunney Denise Stimson

Craven & Keighley Area Meeting

Sylvia Boyes David Olver Chris Petrie
Alison Tyas Liz Watson Mike Watson

Leeds Area Meeting

Pat Gerwat Robert Keeble Pauline Leonard
Janet Naudin David Robson (prevented)
Brian Senior Edward Starkie

Pickering & Hull Area Meeting

Sam McNair Diana Sandy (prevented)

Sheffield & Balby Area Meeting

Sue Goodson Margaret Lawson June Lewis
Faith Rodger

York Area Meeting

Ruth Davies Hilary Evens Nicholas Evens
Ann Holt Edith Jayne Barbara Penny
Roger Pierce Graham Ralph David Rubinstein
Eleanor Tew

QiY 17/10/01 Reading

In our opening worship we heard a reading of paragraph 23.27 of *Quaker Faith & Practice*.

QiY 17/10/02 Testimony (Malcolm Whalan)

We have heard a testimony to the grace of God as shown in the life of our Friend Malcolm Whalan. This testimony was accepted by Leeds Area Meeting on 9 July 2017. We endorse the testimony and thank the Friends who prepared it.

QiY 17/10/03 Welcome

We have been given a very warm welcome to Bootham School by the Head, Chris Jeffery.

QiY 17/10/04 Elders

We thank Barbara Parry and Sarah Allen for their willingness to serve as Elders for today's meeting.

QiY 17/10/05 Student Presentation

Students from The Mount and Bootham have collaborated in sharing with us their school experiences and how they have been influenced by their understanding of Quakers and Quakerism.

The students of the Mount have collected considerable numbers of Life Bags and Black Bags that have been sent to refugees in Greece. They have been active in helping young refugee women with supplies of underwear and sanitary towels. They have also visited some of the refugees in Greece. Students from Bootham have spoken to us about how their lives are affected by Quaker principles and values. Their report has reflected on how they have been active in 'letting their lives speak'. They have mentioned their musical activities and various charitable endeavours in support of the refugee crisis, the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme and Amnesty International. They have learned recently about the Enigma Code-breaking programme during World War II. They have also supported the 'Loose Chains to Loosen Chains' campaign.

Bootham has welcomed Syrian refugees and helped to look after their children. Further work has been done in support of a charity begun by a member of staff of the school. They have celebrated Quaker Week and United Nations Peace Day.

We have been entertained to a short recital of music for flute and piano and a guitar solo. Students have answered a range of questions about school life, with particular interest about Saturday school at Bootham, when parents can visit the school for lunch.

The reports from the students will be available on the QiY website. We thank staff and students for making such a rich contribution to our gathering.

QiY 17/10/06 Reports from The Mount

Margaret Bryan, Clerk to the Governors, has spoken to us and paid tribute to the work of Tim Phillips, her predecessor. Adrienne Richmond, Principal of The Mount has offered a full report on the school year, including the progress of the new performing arts centre. We have also heard from Helen Lambeth, the Business Manager, who has told us how the school has achieved a financial surplus.

Their reports can be read in full on the QiY website. We thank Margaret, Adrienne and Helen for reporting to us.

QiY 17/10/07 Reports from Bootham School

Chris Jeffery, Head of Bootham, has spoken to us of the direction in which the school is going, in the strategy for the next five years. Helen Todd has given us a number of insights about the Quaker experience and understanding of the children in the Junior School. Stephen Sayers, Clerk to the Governors, has also reported on the work of the governing body, and explained that the revised Memorandum of Understanding and Articles of Association between QiY and the schools has been approved. He has indicated that there are many positive signs growth and for a prosperous Quaker future for the school.

We have also received a financial report from Gavin Blackstone who has succeeded Andy Woodland as Bursar to the school. All these reports can be read in full on the QiY website.

We invite Friends to engage with all of the issues that have been raised in these reports. We thank Chris, Helen, Stephen and Gavin for reporting to us.

QiY 17/10/08 Testimony (Malcolm Edmunds)

We have heard read part of a testimony to the Grace of God as shown in the life of our Friend Malcolm Edmunds. This was accepted by Leeds Area Meeting on 9th July 2017. We endorse the testimony and thank the Friends who prepared it.

QiY 17/10/09 Release and Appointments

RELEASE

The Mount

Jill Tinsley has asked to be released from serving on The Mount School Committee. We agree to this request.

APPOINTMENTS

Nominations for appointment are brought to us as follows:

From QiY Nominations Committee

QiY Clerk of Trustees

Barbara Windle (Friargate) to serve a second term as Clerk of QiY Trustees from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2020.

Junior Holidays

Elizabeth Backhouse and Matthew Beck (Scholes) to serve jointly on Junior Holidays Committee from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2020.

Rebecca Gilmour (Huddersfield) to serve on Junior Holidays Committee from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2020.

Custodians of Archives

Oliver Pickering (Ilkley) and Diana Exley (Rawdon) to serve a third term as Custodians of the Yorkshire Quaker Archives and Philomena O'Hare (Carlton Hill) to serve a first term from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2021.

Under 19s Coordinating Group

Rosemary Daley (Hebden Bridge) to serve on the Under 19s Coordinating Group for one more year.

Arrangements Committee

Faith Rodger (Sheffield Central) to serve a second term and Robert Keeble (Carlton Hill) and Kurt Strauss (New Earswick) to serve first terms on Arrangements Committee from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2020.

Glenthorne Quaker Guest house

Peter Coltman (Adel) to serve as a trustee of Glenthorne Quaker Guest House from now to 31 December 2019 to fill the vacancy created by the death of Christine Wilde.

These names being acceptable, we appoint our Friends and thank them for their willingness to serve.

QiY 17/10/10 Modern Slavery: Presentation by Kevin Bales

Kevin reminded us that Quakers were the first to establish a committee of ten Quakers to challenge slavery. The committee extended to include two Anglicans. This became the first human rights campaign and in 1807, 20 years later, the slave trade became illegal. However, slavery still exists today.

Four anti-slavery movements have been established over the years. There are today 40.3 million slaves worldwide. All countries (except possibly the very smallest) have slaves. Slavery is the same as it has always been, but for the fact that the price has dropped. The average slave in 1850 was aged 19 and cost the same as a house or oxen. Today the cost is much lower. For example in India, an entire family can be bought for about £10. If one of them collapses, another can be obtained. Disposability is the key difference today.

Kevin raised the question of the relationship between slavery and environmental change using the illustration of gold mining in Ghana, for which mercury is needed. With no safety equipment the slaves will die. A powerful example was one where children in Bangladesh were engaged in the fishing industry, but run the threat of being killed by tigers whose source of food has been withdrawn because of their activity. Slavery can cause environmental destruction and environmental destruction causes slavery.

There were a number of examples. In the Amazonian basin the enforcement of anti-slavery legislation has virtually stopped, possibly because of the political situation. Many

slaves and anti-slavery workers have been murdered, often by slave owners. We learned of the common things that we consume from slave activities - such as prawns, and products using metal like plumbing accessories.

The global total of slaves (40.3 million) is the equivalent of the population of Algeria or California. If slavery were a country, then it would be the third largest emitter of CO₂ (after China and the USA). The average cost to free a slave is \$650 so \$23 billion, or the annual global expenditure on submarines, would pay for the release of them all. If ex slaves replant forests they have destroyed, they could generate carbon credits. We have the example of Free the Slaves which has worked with a village in India, where, with funding from the World Bank, a group of women are replanting trees.

There were a number of questions which sought clarification on a variety of issues. Although slavery is illegal everywhere, when conflict breaks out, slavery will come into being and sometimes it is state sponsored. A question was asked about the impact of the Modern Slavery Act in relation to Britain Yearly Meeting's investments. Large companies are required to publish a statement on their supply chains. A leaflet he spotted some 30 years ago, which summarised individuals' stories, prompted Kevin's interest in slavery, which then was a phenomenon which many people did not think existed. The University of Nottingham has established a unit focusing on slavery – an MA course will teach people how to help to liberate slaves.

There is a clear need for education and rehabilitation for those who have been liberated and Kevin has just started a review of integration techniques to work out what is most effective. He gave us ideas of how we can act – for example establishing a slave-free community by thinking about what we buy and cooperating with others. To respond to the slave owners, we can all question what is really going on, for instance, in chicken processing plants or car wash outlets where we think slaves might be engaged. Looking at supply chains, he also told us that some big companies are keen to get their practice right. Some firms should be avoided. He also named the different organisations involved in anti-slavery activities.

We thank Kevin for a truly stimulating and enlightening presentation which has made us acutely aware of the extent to which slavery exists and how as Quakers we can respond. 'Friends know how to change the world', he assured us.

QiY 17/10/11 Closing Minute

We thank our Friends at Bootham School for their very warm welcome and hospitality today. We hope to meet again at The Methodist Church, Oxford Place Leeds, on Saturday 20th January 2018, God willing.

Chris Love
Arthur Pritchard
Co-Clerks, Quakers in Yorkshire