

**Minutes of a meeting of Quakers in Yorkshire
October 17th 2020
Held on Zoom internet conferencing platform**

Representatives

Brighthouse West Yorkshire AM:

CYAM: Pauline Frykman and Ruth McTighe

Craven and Keighley AM:

Leeds AM: Robin Fishwick, Robert Keeble, Una Parker and Pat Gerwat

Pickering and Hull AM:

Sheffield and Balby AM:

York AM: Liz Bryan, Eleanor Tew and Meg Forrest

1. Meeting for Worship

During our opening worship we have heard read Quaker Faith and Practice 10.08.

2. Welcome by the Clerks

Our clerks have welcomed us to our second session of Quakers in Yorkshire to be held online, and have reminded Friends of the necessary adaptations to the conduct of our meeting. We note that 57 Friends have registered in advance to attend today's meeting.

3. Presentations from pupils of The Mount and Bootham Schools

Adrienne Richmond has introduced video presentations made by the College Leadership students from the Mount. The Mount students have shared their reactions to Quaker testimonies, and their concerns about current local and global issues. They stressed the importance for College students to work as role models to all the girls at the school, their hope to make a better world, the importance of stewardship of the world and its many environments, especially their concerns for habitat destruction and pollution. They have considered Quaker simplicity, and the means of creating a 'new normal' with social distancing in school gatherings.

We have also seen a presentation made by the Bootham Head Reeves. They have emphasised the importance of the community meetings that they have continued to hold during lockdown. We have learned about the ways in which the students have sustained their activities in the difficult circumstances imposed by the Covid pandemic: fundraisers, dressing up days, a global climate strike which disrupted their normal routine as they demonstrated their concern for climate change. They have welcomed elderly visitors to a Christmas gathering. They ended the pre lockdown period by sowing sunflower seeds as a sign of hope. The school did everything they could during lockdown, making products such as visors for key workers. We have all been impressed by these initiatives.

The students have been keen to impress on us the ways in which they have been able to share their understanding of being a Quaker today.

We will make the video presentations available to Friends via the QiY website. We thank our contributors from both schools for offering us a vivid picture of school life in difficult times.

4. Report from The Mount

Margaret Bryan, Clerk to The Mount School Governors informed the meeting of the committee changes between 2019 and 2020. She explained how the governors have managed to fulfil their roles during the various phases of the pandemic. Most importantly she has shared with us the way in which the school was able to continue online during lockdown using modern technology to facilitate the education. Notable is the school's all-Steinway status, with 10 new Steinway pianos now in residence.

Adrienne Richmond, the Principal, shared with us some of the challenges the school has faced over the past year, and how it has become a stronger and more cohesive community. She has outlined how the tight-knit community of pupils, staff and parents has been an important factor in sustaining the school's work. Each pupil now has their own electronic device to enable teaching and learning to continue. The results at the end of last term were very satisfactory and there were many delighted students. Adrienne paid tribute to the quality and expertise of the teaching staff in helping the school steer a way through the challenges of the pandemic. Student and staff well-being is at the top of the school's agenda as the whole of society comes to terms with a world that has profoundly changed.

Rachel Capper, Head of The Mount Junior School, told us of the new skills-based, creative curriculum, based on Quaker values now in place. The girls use computer technology, including apps as a regular element of all aspects of their education. They were able to have the first Steinway concert, to visit a care home; netball and hockey matches have been played against other independent schools. In other competitions they were able to play against local state schools. Independence in learning has been an important feature of this period of distance learning, enabled by Microsoft Teams. This has been important for the well-being of the girls, and in returning to school after lockdown their enthusiasm and determination was vividly apparent.

We invite our speakers to forward their reports in writing so that we can post them on the Quakers in Yorkshire website.

5. Report from Bootham

Chris Jeffery, Head of Bootham School, has shared with us the current problems facing Bootham and of maintaining the work of the school during the pandemic. He has told us that the Heads of the Quaker Schools have met online over recent months and they have been able to share issues of mutual concern. Although there have been no confirmed cases of COVID-19 at Bootham, two of the houses have had to lockdown briefly because of suspected cases. He concurred with the Mount team in suggesting that teaching at home or online could not be the same, or as good, as the real thing.

Chris has said that recent months have been the most challenging he has faced in 16 years as a head. The school faced a particularly difficult disciplinary situation, followed by two snap inspections in the first part of the year. Although it was incredibly difficult to

begin with, the *annus horribilis* may not have been quite as adverse as it seemed at the time.

The School certainly merged stronger at the end of the year. The word 'community' has been of central importance, and staff and students have shown remarkable resilience, with care for and connection to everyone paramount. The approach adopted has been greatly admired, and thanks to distance learning arrangements the special relationship between students and staff has been observed and appreciated by parents. Nothing could have prepared the schools for the day to day difficulties of coping with the impact of the virus. But in many ways, through its engagement with Quaker principles, the school has been better prepared than might have been expected. Chris has expressed his pride in the work and achievements of the staff in maintaining the community and a high standard of teaching and learning.

Helen Todd has reported to us on the reaction of Bootham Junior School to the challenges of the pandemic. During the lockdown everyone pulled together to develop the skills in IT necessary to deliver the curriculum in changed times. The focus has been on the care of every individual pupil.

They have had a joint art scheme with a partner school in the US. The junior school has been able to welcome pupils from the Minster School, which was forced to close during the pandemic.

All the pupils in Year 6 are involved in leading aspects of the school life and all pupils currently work in a happy thriving place.

Cathy Woodbine, Acting Clerk of the Bootham School Committee, has told us about the work of the governing body. The Governors have been in awe of the way in which the school's leadership team have responded to the crisis. She has told us of the shock to the school caused by the death of a much-loved member of staff.

The start of 2020 saw the sudden resignation of the clerk to Governors on health grounds and the Treasurer to take up a position overseas. The challenges for the acting clerk and treasurer were quickly followed by the emerging pandemic.

Expenditure has had to be carefully managed due to the pressures placed on fee income in the light of the broader financial pressures from the pandemic. Nevertheless, Bootham has started the new academic year in a secure position.

We invite our speakers to let us have their reports in writing so that we can post them on the Quakers in Yorkshire website. We thank our speakers for their contributions to our meeting and for the vivid picture they have shared with us of the life of the schools in extraordinary times.

6. Nominations and Appointments

a. From Quakers in Yorkshire Nominations Committee

Our Nominations Committee brings forward nominations for appointments as follows for the period from 1st January 2021 until 31st December 2023 (except where stated otherwise):

Position	Nominated	Area Meeting	Notes
Clerk of Trustees	David Olver	Craven & Keighley AM	1st term
Arrangements Committee	Pauline Frykman	Central Yorkshire AM	From 17/10/2020 1st term
	Eleanor Tew	York AM	From 17/10/2020 1st term
	Robert Keeble	Leeds AM	2nd term
Safeguarding Coordinator	Liz Schweiger	Leeds AM	1st term
Retreat Nominations Committee	Jennifer Maclennan	Lancs Central & North AM	2nd term
	Sallie Ashe	Sheffield and Balby AM	2nd appointment to fill a vacancy for 1/1/2021 until 31/12/2021
Breckenbrough School Committee / Governors	Stefan Lewicki	York AM	2nd term until 31/12/2024
	John Littlefair	Pickering and Hull AM	2nd term until 31/12/2024
Glenthorne Management Committee / Trustees	Mike Watson	Craven & Keighley AM	2nd term until 31/12/2024
The Mount School Committee / Governors	Margaret Bryan	York AM	2nd term until 31/12/2024
	Joan Concannon	Parent Governor	2nd term until 31/12/2024
	Shoanna Mackay	Co-opted Governor	2nd term until 31/12/2024
Bootham School Committee / Governors and Treasurer	Juliette Healey	Co-opted Governor	1st term until 31/12/2024

These nominations being acceptable, these Friends, and nominated governors, are appointed accordingly.

b. From Area Meetings

We have received nominations for appointments for the period from 1st January 2021 until 31st December 2023 from Area meetings as follows:

Position	Nominee	Area Meeting	Notes
Quakers in Yorkshire Nominations Committee	Helen Brockley	Brighthouse West Yorkshire AM	3rd term
	Chris Fellows	Pickering and Hull AM	1st term
Outreach Projects Committee	Linda Southwick	Sheffield and Balby AM	1st term
	Janice Every	Pickering and Hull AM	2nd term

These nominations being acceptable, the Friends named are appointed accordingly.

c. Nominations Required

The convenor of our nominations committee reports that they are still searching for nominations for:

Position	Nominations Sought
Arrangements Committee	1 member from Sheffield and Balby AM
U19s co-ordinating group	2 members
Junior Holidays Committee	1 or 2 members
Breckenbrough School Committee / Governors	2 members
Bootham School Committee / Governors	2 members

We give thanks for the prayerful discernment and work of the members of QiY and AM nominations committees for finding nominations for service to Quakers in Yorkshire and uphold them in their continuing efforts.

d. Bootham School Governors

Notwithstanding the memorandum of understanding between Quakers in Yorkshire and the York Schools (minute QiY 2018/01/11 refers) some appointments of Governors at Bootham School have not been made as set out. In order to rectify this situation we record here the names and terms of service of the current Governors of Bootham School, making any necessary retrospective appointments.

Name	Term of Service (1st Jan to 31st Dec)	Term	Representing / Position
Simon Hetherton	2020-23	1st after a break	BOSA
Rachel Hicks	2020-23	1st	Parent Governor
Sharon Hodgson	2019-21	Final 2 years	QIY
Catherine Woodbine (formerly Limb)	2019-22	2nd	Acting Clerk
Nigel Lindley	1st October 2019-22	1st after a break	Co-opted Governor
Donald Purves	2018-21	2nd	QIY
Graham Ralph	2018-21	1st	QIY
Alex Raubitschek	2019-22	2nd	BOSA
David Stanton	2020-23	2nd	QIY
Malcolm Sterratt	2017-20	2nd	QIY
Tillman Jacobi	2020-23	1st	Parent Governor
Heather Woolley	2017-20	2nd	QIY

We ask our clerks and nominations committee to work with Bootham School Governors to ensure that such appointments are brought forward in future in accordance with the procedures laid out in the Memorandum of Understanding.

7. Quaker Chaplaincy in Yorkshire Universities and Prisons

Robin Fishwick and Richard Levitt have spoken to us about their work as University Chaplains in Leeds and Emma Roberts and Ruth Corry have told us about their work as Quaker Prison Chaplains and Visitors.

Detailed notes of the presentations have been made by the clerks and are attached to these minutes.

We thank our Friends for sharing their experiences of chaplaincy and prison visiting with us.

8. Young People Programme

We thank Rosie Roberts, Alison Ralph and Sue Riley for their offer to support the youth programme of QIY 17 October 2020.

Lee Lester, Youth development worker for Sheffield and Yorkshire planned a day for young people aged 10-17 to explore what it means to be a young Quaker today. Sadly, no young people were able to attend. Lee Lester would like to work with the arrangements committee of QIY from the start to enable a successful young people's programme for the next QIY in January 2021. Previously there was a tradition of young people attending Quakers in Yorkshire: to restart this could aid inclusivity and diversity in our community. A commitment from Friends to work with Lee is needed.

9. Concluding Minute

There being no further business to be taken at this time, we conclude, hoping to meet again on 18 January 2021 on Zoom.



Arthur Pritchard
Co-Clerks



Gavin Burnell

Notes on the Chaplaincy Session

Robin Fishwick explained that he has a diversity of roles in the university chaplaincy service, as a Quaker chaplain, as the coordinating chaplain and as a member of the Churches Higher Education Liaison Group (CHELG).

The University chaplains cover four of the Universities within Leeds, a total of approximately 100,000 people. The work is overseen by a chaplaincy trust, of which Quakers were co-founders. The chaplaincy is an ecumenical partnership covering a broad range of churches, operating as an independent trust, separate from, but recognised by, the Universities.

Robin started as a volunteer Quaker Chaplain, but in recent years has been undertaking a paid role as the coordinating chaplain, working alongside chaplain service managers and student outreach workers. Robin's role involves coordinating the team of the chaplains, regularly meeting with the lead chaplains to the four Universities (of which he himself is one), the chaplaincy managers and student workers. The chaplains also work closely with different partners in the Universities such as the student well-being team, accommodation providers, student unions, counselling services and individual academic departments as needed.

In the run up to the EU referendum and the death of Jo Cox, it became clear to the chaplaincy that they needed to do more to address the divisiveness that had been generated and consequent distress to students. This led to the setting up of Team Unity jointly with the Muslim Student Advisor at the University of Leeds. Other faith contacts, local or national (such as "Mychaplaincy" which supports Jewish staff and students) are also involved. The initiative has focussed on activities and events to bring together different groups within the Universities, to foster a sense of unity and to promote shared values such as introducing the Unity Pledge.

Robin's role as a specifically Quaker chaplain is three-fold, to provide a Quaker voice on the chaplaincy team, to provide opportunities for Quaker worship and to support Quaker students and staff. Much of the work of chaplains is to provide support with distinct features: an ease of access; a longer-term engagement; and bringing a breadth and depth of conversation that other support services cannot. As well as the pastoral support and enabling worship, the chaplaincy is there to provide faith-based expertise, spiritual accompaniment, promoting interfaith engagement and religious and ethical literacy

The regular Quaker meeting for worship held at the chaplaincy is called Breathe, as a way of making it non-sectarian and open to all. As a result, it attracts worshippers with a variety of spiritual backgrounds.

A copy of Robin's PowerPoint presentation will be placed on the QiY website.

Richard Levitt spoke of his experience as assistant Quaker Chaplain through the story of the young Franciscan told by Douglas Steere in his 1955 Swarthmoor Lecture, that preaching comes about through service. Richard drew parallels with the work of the chaplains, offering service rather than preaching.

Richard highlighted three things he felt that chaplains need:

1. Endurance - the sense of having been there and sticking at it because you don't know what effect you are having - sometimes the effects can take a long time to come.
2. Curiosity - why do people want to listen to me, why are they different? How can we be open and question those we interact with?
3. Need to be ready to ask for help from others, not trying to deliver a message.

Emma Roberts has spoken to us about her work as a Quaker prison minister (now termed Quaker Chaplain) and her new role as a paid Quaker Chaplain in the prison service.

Emma started visiting Leeds prison in 2005, working with the then chaplain and later taking over as the Quaker chaplain for a total of around seven years, but has recently started as the Quaker chaplain at Long Sutton Prison.

In Leeds she worked with the Anglican chaplain to arrange a weekly talk by speakers from a range of different faiths. Later she founded a group to provide a semi-structured worship, or contemplation, group. In addition, pastoral support of prisoners is an important part of prison chaplaincy.

Multi-faith working is integral to modern chaplaincy work in prisons. Emma's experience has been that she has been welcomed into the chaplaincy teams. The type and class of prison makes a big difference to the nature of the Quaker prison community, with lower security class prisons tending to have prisoners with shorter sentences and a higher turn-over of inmates. The higher security prisons have more stable populations and Long Sutton Prison now has a paid Quaker chaplain position because a group of prisoners registered as Quakers has formed there.

Emma was clear that Quaker chaplains are not there to fight the injustices of the prison system no matter how manifest. Working in the system can be frustrating and bureaucratic and requires great resilience on the part of volunteers and chaplains, at times maintaining patience and letting things unfold as they will is all that can be done. Emma spoke of prisons and prison chaplaincy centres as special, often strange, places, and despite the peculiar situation that some prisoners find themselves living their lives in, there can be tranquillity and peace. Emma spoke of a sense of being transformed by the experience of being a Quaker chaplain and the contact with the prisoners.

Ruth Corry has spoken to us about her experiences as a volunteer visitor to Askham Grange open women's prison. The team has been visiting for over 25 years, and for much of that time has worked with a Quaker prison chaplain, though no one is currently in post in this role. The team of five has carried on in the pattern that has been developed, led by the Leeds chaplain.

In the prison women are being helped towards their release - as it is an open prison, the women residents often have jobs outside the prison. The visitors run a craft group once a month, with materials given by the York meetings. Card-making is very popular with the prisoners, who can then send them to keep contact with family and loved ones.

The volunteers run “drop-in” sessions in the prison chapel - now renamed the “sanctuary” as a multi-faith space - for listening and conversation with the residents. The sessions, which sometimes follow Muslim prayer time, are an opportunity for interactions between residents and someone who is not staff. The sessions are sometimes concluded with a session of “Quaker stillness”.

Unfortunately, the need to keep both residents and visitors safe has resulted in the curtailment of visits since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Ruth spoke of the value she has found in this service learning about prisons and especially the distinctive experience of women in prison and the discrimination in sentencing often faced by women when convicted. She noted that of the prisoners in England Wales, only 4.6% are women.

Ruth has been impressed by the education and training activities available to the prisoners, as preparation for release.