

## Report to Quakers in Yorkshire Meeting 20<sup>th</sup> January 2024

### Easter Settlement 2023

Easter Settlement 2023 – Friday 7<sup>th</sup> to Monday 10<sup>th</sup> April was a gathering of 47 adults, 7 children and 2 babies. 8 friends stayed over on Monday night.

The theme was “Dancing in the World – a Choreography of Engagement” and from the start ‘dance’ glided its way through the weekend like a leitmotif, one that could be applied both metaphorically and descriptively.

Jonathon Baynham led the children in the Children’s programme and included an ongoing construction project which included Friends young and old.

Brenda Rigby described the weekend -

(“Easter Settlement was a joy this year, my second ever visit. Fifty-nine of us gathered this time, including two babies. We shared Cober Hill with about 40 Scottish country dancers. Like the Settlement, they are there every year too. The staff had quite a weekend!

Easter Settlement takes a lot of planning and the organising team were on the go all weekend. Everything flowed, to a title of ‘Dancing with the World’. Three excellent presentations during the weekend gave us much inspiration. Jan Arriens spoke to his title ‘Our spiritual path’. He included a suggestion from the Spanish poet Antonio Machado that: ‘Traveller, there is no path. / the path is made by walking.’

In its anniversary year, Paul Rogers gave us a whirlwind tour through 50 years of the work and development of the Bradford School of Peace Studies. He left us hopeful despite his title of ‘Reflections on 50 years of trying’. From an individual Friend’s Quaker concern back in the late 60s and early 70s, the department is now a renowned institution that continues to research and teach peace, reconciliation, and the nature and causes of war.

While the earlier speakers ‘Zoomed in’ to the gathering, the Bursar of Breckenbrough School shared with us in person her enthusiasm for the work, practice and the ethos of the school which caters for boys within the autistic spectrum, proud of the achievements of their students. Her title was ‘A different perspective on life’ – and that was definitely what she gave us.

There was fun and frivolity in the evenings and much music, as well as time to walk to the sea one afternoon. A meeting for worship through dance was a novel experience for most of us.)

### A Survey

After Easter Settlement 2023 the planning group took time to reflect on the aims and successes of the past and present and invited Settlers to take part in a survey. Many thanks to Jonathon Baynham who organised it and the 36 Friends who took part.

Generally feedback was positive and friends commented on the mix of discussion, learning and fun in an all-age gathering. One or two complained about the cost and the food.

Jonathon Baynham and Craig Barnett are looking into the possibility of a different kind of gathering at another venue with varied accommodation for 2025.

### Easter Settlement 2024 Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March to Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April

The theme for Easter Settlement 2024 is

“Hope, seeing light in the darkness”

By exploring our hopes from the past, the present, and for the future, this Easter Settlement is an opportunity for Friends to find vision, refreshment and renewal. Ben Wood, theologian and author of “The Living Fountain” has agreed to start the weekend with a talk.

We hope to provide opportunities to meet friends, discuss and reflect, be creative, have fun and enjoy the countryside and sea.

Increasing site costs means that providing a full, subsidised young and children’s programme is not financially viable. As such there will not be a planned programme for children and young people this year, although families are welcome to attend (at full rate) and make their own arrangements. Jonathon Baynham, our Youth Development worker is organising a Link group (for 11-18’s) to run concurrently with at least part of Easter Settlement, at Scarborough Meeting House.”

This year we are asking friends to book online through the Quakers in Yorkshire website and pay by bank transfer but help is available if anyone would find this difficult.

We see 2024 as an opportunity to celebrate over 100 years of Quakers gathering at Cober Hill.

Pauline Leonard  
18<sup>th</sup> January 2024