

# THE YOUNG QUAKER

May 2018 • Issue 18 • Free

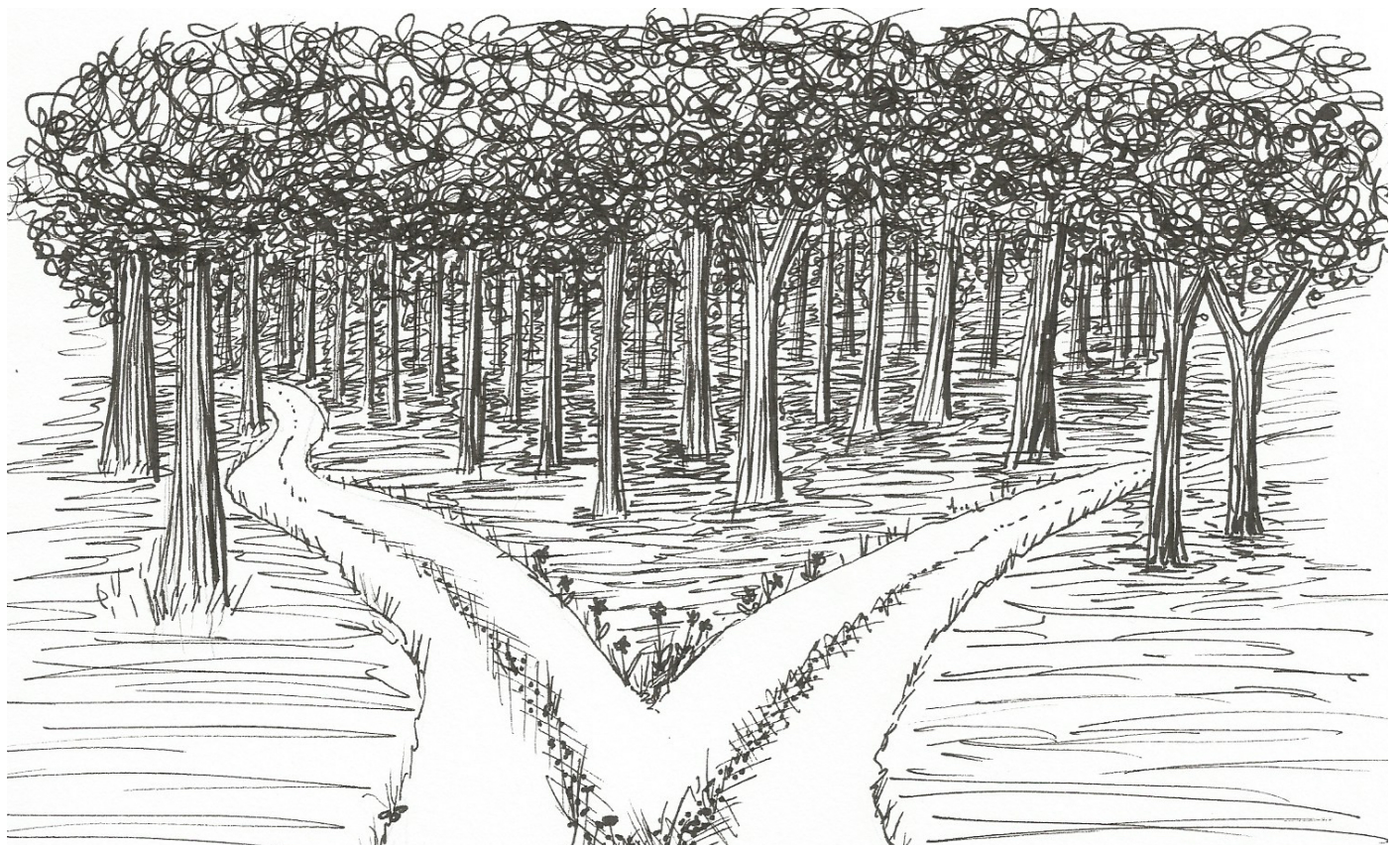
## *Finding Home Issue*

“We need to see the problem of homelessness as only one end of a spectrum of evil that has the massive subsidies to owners at the other. It is a problem that will be as difficult and painful to solve as slavery. Slavery as an evil shared many of the qualities of the present housing situation – it benefited the wealthy, created an underclass and denied them human rights. The solution was painful, for abolition often required that slave owners abandon their investment with no recompense. To change our attitudes to housing will be no less of a challenge to us than slavery was for the reformers, not only because institutional evil is hard to recognise but also because so many of us benefit personally from the present situation.

We must first understand the present system and become clear about the extent of right and wrong that it contains. If we could achieve this, we could first work towards a consensus on goals and then, I hope with other churches, start on the secular arguments.

This is a challenge that the Society, and indeed other churches, must face. If we fail to address the roots of an issue in which most of us are unwittingly part of the problem, we will need to look very carefully at the claims we make about our contribution in the world.”

Richard Hilken, 1992; 1993



23:23. 23:23 of QF&P. This short passage of *Quaker Faith and Practice* says so much about the nature of home in our contemporary society. It's radical demand that we confront our daily collaboration with housing injustice. It's extremely challenging comparison of structures of housing inequality with the ultimate system of oppression: slavery. It's frank honesty that the struggle against inequality will be one of pain and sacrifice, as well as joy and empowerment. Yet, more than this, the true force of 23:23 is that it offers a discernment on "home" that goes beyond bricks and mortar. A meaning of home in which the personal merges with the political, the spiritual with the social, and the desire for the transcendent with the need for transformation. It is this, an inherently more elastic, but still deeply personal understanding of home which we hope to explore further in the pages of this issue of *The Young Quaker*.

# News

## Thank you Chris and Gabriel

By Chloe Scaling

In this edition of *The Young Quaker*, we say thank you to Chris Venables and Gabriel Martel. Chris left the Engaging Young Adult Friends project in April and Gabriel finishes his term as YFGM Co-ordinator in June.

They have both worked incredibly hard to represent and provide a voice for young Quakers in Britain. They've helped to kickstart and maintain the Young Quaker Podcast, increased Britain Yearly Meeting's use of social media and are working to get young adults on the national board of trustees. In their work at Friends' House, Chris and Gabriel have been keeping the conversation about change and renewal alive and holding the leadership to account. Thank you both!

## The Young Quaker Podcast Becomes Silent Star

By Jessica Hubbard-Bailey

The sister publication of TYQ, The Young Quaker Podcast, has been making a splash in local, national, and global media. In February we released our 'silent podcast', broadcasting an entire Meeting for Worship.

The almost silent episode, dubbed 'slow radio', stimulated much conversation in the media around the nature of silence in a busy and hectic world, and what Meeting for Worship can offer.

The Church Times, the Friend, I news and the Guardian all published pieces about it, and our podcast host, Jess, was interviewed by several Radio stations and for a short BBC film about the decision to broadcast a Meeting. You can find links to all the coverage on the podcast libsyn page. We'll also be recording at May YFGM, so make sure you come and say hello!

## Meeting for Sufferings (MfS)

By Laurence Hall

Meeting for sufferings (MfS), the national Quaker representative council, discussed conflicts in meetings, integrity in public life and British Yearly Meeting (BYM) finances at its' latest gathering. Most of interest to us was the discernments on sustainability and inclusion. There was a report and much ministries about how Quaker structures should respond to our sustainability commitment. Representatives from all concerned groups, including YFGM, will discern an action plan to put to MfS within the year.

BYM trustees' report sparked passionate ministries demanding deep reflection and radical action to ensure that communities that official Quaker structures mostly excludes, such as our generation, are fully included and empowered within British Quakerism.

For more please contact your MfS reps at [yfgmmfs-rep@riseup.net](mailto:yfgmmfs-rep@riseup.net)

## Young Quaker New Economics Gathering

By Stephen Clement

"Anyone who believes that exponential growth can go on forever in a finite world is either a madman or an economist."

- Kenneth Boulding, Quaker and Economist

Young Quakers are uniquely placed to reimagine an economy putting people and planet first.

Join Young F/friends from across Britain on Saturday 30 June 2018 at Friends House, London for a day of conversations and workshops with people like Andy Haldane (Bank of England), Fran Boait (Positive Money), Joe Earle (Rethinking Economics), Hazel



Sheffield (Far Nearer Project) and many more.

We'll be looking at rethinking finance, food justice, democratic workplaces, energy democracy, local economic alternatives, new land use, radical housing and more.

For more information and to sign up: <http://bit.ly/YQuakersNEconNow>

## London Young Friends Feminism Event

**By Sasha Lawson-Frost and Laurence Hall**

The London Younger Quaker Worship group recently put on a fun, interactive workshop which explored some acknowledged and unacknowledged voices in the history of the feminist movement.

Organised in collaboration with Monique from diversity trainers /Threads Equality Agency/, the Workshop was held at Westminster Meeting house, and was joined by Quakers from throughout London. Together they discussed the complexity of the history of the feminist movement and which historical events have been included and excluded from traditional narratives. Of course the group added many Quaker moments to this feminist time line. The result was a deeper understanding of feminism today; as shown by long and detailed feminist history displayed across the room.

## Peace Witness Update

**By Sam Donaldson**

102 people were arrested during the #stopDSEI protests last year, and following these arrests there have been a real mix of results. A few people pleaded guilty, while the majority went on to plead not-guilty.

Of those who went on to plead not-guilty, a considerable number have had their cases dropped by the Crown Prosecution service (CPS). There have also been some surprising wins, with a series of great not-guilty verdicts being pronounced in February, including two trials with Quakers involved: Jo Frew and Sam Donaldson. (Unfortunately, both these not-guilty verdicts are now being challenged by the CPS and taken to the high court.) In the latest trial, five protesters from Faslane Peace Camp were found not-guilty and hit with relatively large fines (roughly £720 each), taking the number of guilty verdicts up to 15. Continued support is much appreciated.

## EMEYF Spring Gathering

**By Taz Cooper**

Thirty-seven Young Adult Friends and two children from Europe and the Middle East gathered in the Moyallon Center, Northern Ireland, 25th March - 2nd April, to worship together and explore the theme of community. We heard from local Friend Simon Lamb a short history of Ireland Yearly Meeting, which though theologically diverse, has never divided, reminding us of the possibility of continued unity amongst Friends worldwide. We visited Belfast's Peace Walls, where memorials of the Troubles bore strong rhetoric on both sides, but the walls themselves were covered in graffiti expressing wishes for love and peace. We also visited Dublin, where Ireland Junior Yearly Meeting welcomed us to explore integrity. Back in Moyallon, we heard from David Morton of Quaker Service about Friends' offering a non-judgemental space for families of those imprisoned in the Troubles, both Catholic and Protestant, to talk together at Quaker House, which continues today. Our own Quaker service involved laying new gravel in the grounds of the meeting house, where on Easter Sunday we joined local Friends for what I found a moving, inspiring Meeting for Worship. I look forward to attending next year's Gathering in Russia!

# I did not choose my birthplace

*Hirad Babakhani, a refugee from Iran, writes about what he understands as home.*

## Why I left

In Iran, I was not allowed to wear a t-shirt at university, I had to hide my beliefs as I grew up in an atheist family. I could be arrested and whipped by officials, if they could have caught me drinking alcohol, however, they caught my brother and got whipped sixty times. But that did not stop us drinking the handmade alcohol with no labels on. I had to use various proxies to have access to Google or YouTube. And I saw people shot in the streets after a silence protest march.

*I could be arrested and whipped by officials*

## The journey

I had to walk through mine fields, rivers and mountains passing through countries to get to a safe place. I had to experience the most inhuman experiences and got humiliated all the time. Other people looked at me like an unknown human species. I wished I was a dog, so, I could have been treated better. Actually, a cat would have been good too.

## Back in home

Now, I have been in the UK more than six years mostly in Bristol. I am now studying civil engineering and working for the Environment Agency as an engineer.

*I do not know if I am British or Iranian any more.*

So, what is home for me is a question that I do not know the answer. That might be due to an identity issue. I do not know if I am British or Iranian any more. "The Home" could have been where I grew up with my family and friends. The presence of love

and belonging with the people I came of age with. The silly jokes and pranks which just made sense to us. The smell of cooked food when I was opening the door and I could guess what we'll have for that dinner. The pets we have had and the noises I could produce to make them confused. These senses & feelings can take me to an imaginary place that I have missed greatly.

## Now in the UK

However, realistically that is not available any more. Life is hard and harsh sometimes. I live in the UK with loneliness. Now, my physical home is a place that includes a warm bed with my laptop, the kitchen and my fish-tank.

## New Home

But when I think deeper about it, in the UK there is a sense of home too. The families I do have contact with and the Quaker meeting that I attend, gives me some sense of home. They make me feel like I am a part of a family. In these places I feel that I belong to somewhere again, as they share my values. So much so that I feel I can do my silly jokes again occasionally.

*The families I do have contact with and the Quaker meeting that I attend, gives me some sense of home.*

So, when I drive back to Bristol on M32 and see the yellow castle on my right-hand side, I feel relieved that I live in a beautiful city and there are some people happy to see me again.

# On creating a home

*Lynda Berry reflects on her experience of creating home.*

Home is where the heart is. Home is emotions, a set of feelings. Home is a place, outside of us, and within us.

Sometimes I long for a house, a place that lends some sense of security. A place that is really mine. Living here in Sussex with a landlady, her child, and a fellow lodger, can be idyllic, and quiet, but it is not my house. I rent one room in it and have the right to use others. This is my room, but there is much I would change about it. I don't have a bed, because my contract was only for six months, and I had no clue where I might end up, so I didn't bother getting one. I have a mattress, and a little table and a wardrobe.

*Living here in Sussex can be idyllic but it is not my house.*

When I first moved here, my Quaker friends wanted to show me that Sussex was an amazing and beautiful place. They succeeded by taking me birdwatching one day in Pagham. It was good to get away from my weekend hermiting, like I normally do, and see the Canada geese fly in formation, the occasional bird of prey, a white stick like heron, and the lap wing.

*I left home on an argument that was never resolved*

I haven't seen the house I grew up in for 5 years at least. I left home on an argument that was never resolved, and my parents have a shaky version of. I have learnt to live with this, and managed without the house I mostly grew up in. When I had a crisis and recalled my teenage years, after suppressing them, I had unending longing to go home, to go back to Portsmouth, to find my first crush and see my old friends. The memory of my first love felt like the return home for my soul, they felt like home, and the memory evoked such a deep longing within me. It

felt like I had returned to my truest self, my real self. Indeed a first flame is a hard love to set aside.

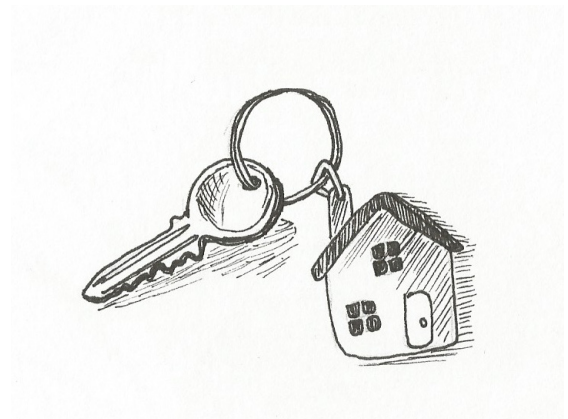
*The memory of my first love felt like the return home for my soul*

But since my first love broke my heart, I have decided never to return to Portsmouth (for now), and have made this effort that Sussex, would indeed be my new home. A better version of a home which to my mind has been completely lost, perhaps a less idealised home or love; something slowly becoming more real. Home is inside of me, but it is also a place and people I have chosen.

So, this interlude in deep dark Sussex is coming to a close. My internship ends in a few months and it feels like a million years since I arrived here. I want to move forward on a positive, because coming here was a positive. What comes next I guess I will have to try and figure out for real now.

*Home is where we feel love*

Home is where we feel love and accepted for who we are and safe. If I lose Sussex for whatever reason, I can uproot and make a new home, as long as I feel loved, inside and out, accepted and safe, anywhere could be home.



# Finding Home

**By Kit Reed**

Last year, I was really struggling with a sense of identity. I couldn't picture myself and who I felt I was as a person; my perception of myself was really fragmented and I couldn't seem to form a coherent whole image. All I saw were aspects of myself in my interactions, and I tended to just focus on the bad ones as a result. At the same time I started to question my gender identity, and I started really thinking about who I was as a person and what kind of presentation of myself I felt happy and comfortable displaying to the world, because it felt like I was showing the world myself. I came to the conclusion that I didn't necessarily feel happy having to choose between boy or girl as categories and figured non-binary worked for me. By exploring this, I felt like I had a much better image of who I was in my head, and of what people saw when they looked at me. I now feel like knowing more about my identity has allowed me to feel at home with it, and recognise stuff I really like about myself. I'm still questioning my identity and if it turns out that I'm not nonbinary then that's okay too, but for now I really feel at home with how I view myself, and that's really good.

**By Elly Setterfield**

Home is something I've found difficult for several years now. Is it where I grew up, or where my parents now live? Is it somewhere I've chosen to live, and, if so, how do I know which place? How long do you need to live somewhere before it's considered your home - and is it possible to live somewhere without it being your home?

I've lived with most of these questions throughout my twenties, but the older I get, the more I find that perhaps "home" doesn't necessarily have to be a physical location. Home is where I feel accepted and supported, be that with friends (or Friends!), family, or just by myself, with God and my own thoughts. It's where I can relax, or feel comforted when life is hard. Sometimes "home" is a feeling, not a place.



**By Miriam Chapman and friends**

Home is camomile spearmint tea. It is someone washing up your tuppaware at the end of a long day. We are fortunate to have our basic needs met and more, and I feel so lucky to be surrounded by the kindest, most considerate, intelligent women. Forever grateful for our home, the sanctuary.

**By Anonymous**

I was one of those kids who had what's traditionally referred to as a turbulent childhood. I moved house ten times by the time I was 12; I went to three different primary schools and three different secondary schools; I spent a year at a prestigious boarding school, abruptly followed by a year at a women's refuge with my mother and baby brother. I'm the child of two immigrants and two divorces. Suffice to say, home is a complex concept for me. I never had the experience of growing up somewhere, or growing up with a consistent group of people. But twice in my life, I have found myself profoundly and immediately "at home" - the first morning I woke up beside my now wife, and the first time I attended a Quaker meeting.

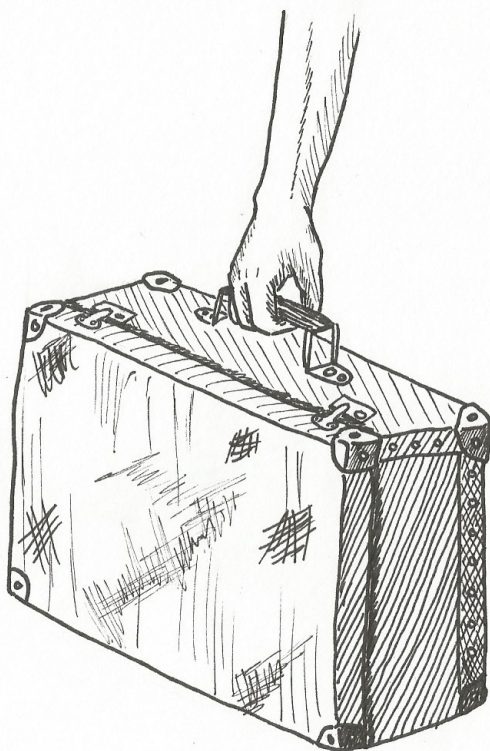


## *Young Friends share their reflections on finding home, in Quakers and in the world.*

**By Zoe Wide**

A 10 year old version of me would have described home as wherever my family was, regardless of the four walls that contained us. However, my life is now far more transient. I live between four houses, my siblings have left home, my parents are divorced and I am supposedly an adult.

I am able to visit my parents, my boyfriend, my siblings and I live with friends who care for me. By my 10 year old definition, I should feel at home wherever I am. But more often than not, I feel adrift, feeling perpetually a visitor. I miss having a haven, that one place that is definitively mine. This leads me to wonder, that whilst love might hold a home together, it is not the sole criteria. I miss home because I miss the safety, security and sense of belonging it gave me. It was the place I had put down roots. But it is not all doom and gloom. I suppose the beauty of a transient life is I get to find the best foundations to plant my roots and find a home that is my own.



## **Silence**

**By Anonymous**

Afraid of silence  
 Afraid to sit alone  
 Always music or something playing  
 Through a laptop or phone  
 Wanting people to message,  
 Don't leave me alone in my head  
 Silent only when reading,  
 Or tucked up in bed  
 I'll never walk alone,  
 People talking in my ears  
 Maybe silence is not  
 The biggest of my fears.  
 I worship in silence,  
 An hour every week,  
 But I don't want to be lonely:  
 Does that make me weak?

**By Anonymous**

Home is somewhere that you return to. It's most obvious form is a house - usually a family house that a person grew up in and returns to when life shifts them around and they need to recoup. Home can come in a lot of other forms though. A meal can bring you home if it is something that you've eaten for most of your life.

I think home is continuity and that means it is possible to locate your home in things that you do, or communities that you are a part of. That is why people often describe Quakerism as a 'home' - it is a place that is available for a visit, that brings peace and stability, and despite whatever challenges or changes that might spring up on a person, their relationship to Quakerism can continue. I have two homes - Quakerism and playing music. I started playing the guitar and going to Quaker meetings both in my mid-20's, so they are not a part of my growing up 'home', but they create a sense of home now because I know I can keep building parts on, adding to them, and living with them for the rest of my life - so they're my home!

# Pointing the way home

*Laurence Hall tells a very personal story of how relationships make and break what we mean by Quaker home*

Home is relationships. So much talk about home is of place and property but what really binds us to somewhere is the relationships with others formed within that location. Like any relationship home can produce feelings of alienation and lost as much as joy and belonging as the relationships with the people of that place change.

It was in a London meeting house that I become a Quaker. The relationships formed in that meeting gave me a deep sense of spiritual community which acted as a grounding for the Quaker values I live by. The Quakerism that I came to understand within this community was based on a radical equality, which flowed into every aspect of my life. This is not to say that the meeting was perfect but it was my spiritual home for many years.

*The Quakerism that I came to understand was based on a radical equality.*

Yet, as my past tense writing shows this positive relationship with the meeting didn't last. The need for roof repairs led to a proposal to add two new flats on the meeting house. The issue arose of should these new flats charge market or social rent? Some argued for market rent as it would provide a financial footing for all London meeting houses. Yet the meeting is in a city in the middle of a housing crisis. As someone who has lived in London near all my life I've seen through my relationships how housing inequality has ripped apart my community. Many of my friends & their families were either forced out of our neighbourhood or live in sub-standard, precarious housing. How can the meeting even consider become part of this system of inequality and suffering?

The radical egalitarian foundation for the relationship I had developed with the meeting began to crack and crumble. I researched and put forward

plans for the new flats to be sustainable and socially just but these fell on deaf ears. In the following months the meeting house changed from a place of egalitarian transformation to one of deep doubt and alienation as I struggled to come to terms with the new nature of my relationship to the meeting.

Yet, due to a funding shortfall the new flats were dropped and despite my doubts slowly I began to rebuild a positive relationship with the meeting. Sparked by a wider desire to build a more inclusive Quakerism I was to become an overseer and hoped to live out Quaker equality through a transformed relationship with the meeting.

Yet these hopes of renewal ended at one business meeting. The resident wardens left and with no warning it was decided to charge the still unaffordable 80% market rate. I was doing Quaker peace witness on that day and as it wasn't on the agenda I only found out later. My relationship with the meeting was destroyed by this single decision as the Quaker equality on which it was based was taken away by the desire to make money from the bricks of the meeting house. It was no longer my spiritual home but another architectural commodity where I meet personal friends.

*The commodification of home destroys any real sense of home.*

It is this commodification of home that in the end destroys any real sense of home. Home is no longer understood in terms of human relationships but becomes an object of profit without deeper spiritual meaning. The relationships within are reduced to simple abstract numbers instead of the complex relations of Quaker equality. Therefore, despite the great loss I feel, only when the meeting recovers that egalitarian fact of Quaker home will the silent screams of the victims of housing inequality stop drowning out all else in that meeting house.



# Finding home in Quakers

*Sasha Lawson-Frost reflects on her experience of finding sanctuary in Quaker meeting.*

The idea of 'home' has been a recurrent theme for me in the past couple of years. For me, the concept is also deeply tied to the religious and ethical convictions which I hold as a Quaker.

Part of what home means to me is a place to feel safe and secure. It's hard to see how you could feel at home somewhere if you are constantly afraid, or if your well-being is under threat. Not having a home in this sense is emotionally and physically exhausting. Beyond that though, it can also have a profound impact on how you can understand the world and reality.

*It's hard to see how you could feel at home somewhere if you are constantly afraid.*

I went to my first Meeting for Worship just over a year ago. At the time I had been sofa-surfing and staying in hostels for a few months. Before that, I had been living with my ex who was abusive. I was scared all the time. Besides the fairly rational fear of ending up with nowhere to sleep, triggers and reminders of things that had happened in the were omnipresent and unavoidable. I felt lost. I had become so wrapped up in the narrative of events that had been created to excuse my ex that without him I didn't feel real. It was like I had ceased to be a person.

To say that I found a sense of home when I went to that first Meeting a year ago would be an exaggeration. I still felt scared, and the silence freaked me out a bit. But what it did do was sow the seeds for finding a new kind of home. One in which I now feel safe and nurtured in ways I didn't think possible before.

*It sowed the seeds for finding a new kind of home.*

Learning how to love can be transformative. Love doesn't just affect our relationships; it can change the way we approach our world and our selves in a deep and pervasive way. I didn't talk to people much at all before I left my old flat. I was often too scared to go outside. It was only when the circumstances forced me to ask for help that I started to see things differently. I had to tell my university tutors about what had happened, and their patience and compassion came as a shock to me. I had one friend at university who I felt able to confide in at this difficult time; a student from a local evangelical church whose Bible study group I had started going to the year before. It was through the many treasured discussions I had with her that I started to feel the need for a spiritual home, as well as a physical one. We had very different theologies, and I wasn't even sure what kind of God I believed in. But the small gestures of love that I had been blessed with had felt like epiphanies. If God hasn't been revealed in these acts of kindness, I thought, then what else could that the word possibly mean?

*I felt lost and uncertain, but that was ok.*

Quakers provided me with a way of exploring this new understanding of God without saying a creed or taking part in spiritual practices that I didn't feel ready to commit to. I felt lost and uncertain, but that was ok. Attending weekly Meeting for Worship provided me with the foundation from which I could learn to see others and myself in a bold and adventurous new light. It's not that I had discovered something new about the world. Rather, I was learning to find a home in it. I was learning to see that of God in everything, which meant something like seeing light and beauty as a gift. It meant adoring and cherishing ordinary acts of love above all else. Quakers have, in a literal and tangible way, transformed the way I am at home in the world.

# Home, university and grief

*Chloe Scaling writes about experiencing grief for the first time at university.*

I've never been one to get homesick, adapting easily when away from home. For two and a half years at university, I felt at home in Durham, staying there to study in the holidays when I could rather than going "home" to my parents. I love my family, but found it easy to move away. Using the word "home" was always confusing: I didn't know if I was referring to Durham or Pickering, where I grew up and close family still live.

*I love my family, but found it easy to move away.*

However, this year has been different. I'd been back in Durham for a week before the start of term after Christmas when my dad turned up on my doorstep, bearing the news that my grandma, his mum, had died the previous night. This was my first close encounter with grief. I'd found out the previous day that my grandma was ill, but her death was sudden, a shock to all of us.

When my dad told me the news, my heart broke. After the initial sobs and stories of what happened, I began to think of the essay deadlines I had that week and how I could be expected to hand them in on time. As my dad drove home again, I walked to meeting for worship, sobbing again, then got extensions for my essays and made other practical arrangements so I could take some time out. Hours after being told, I still couldn't believe she was dead. To know it was true, I had to go home and be with other people who were grieving. It's the only time I've ever felt the urge to go home and I was sure that it would help.

*It's the only time I've ever felt the urge to go home.*

Getting a train home on the first day of term was the strangest experience. Everything had changed and

I was still in shock. All I could face listening to was Tom Odell: his music is so familiar to me and nothing would be unexpected. I've come to feel that listening to those two albums is like coming home. It's a portable home and still incredibly comforting to me. The song "Sparrow" is especially dear to me because if my grandma were an animal, she'd be a sparrow. Listening to The Griefcast podcast has also really helped me to know that I'm not alone.

*When I arrived home, everything seemed normal.*

When I arrived home, everything seemed normal. I had an extra-long hug and a cry with my mum, then we ate, drank wine and the rest of my family carried on with life and work. Mum told me that everyone grieves in different ways, but I was the odd one out in the house, the only one who couldn't face doing much. Going home didn't help as much as I thought it would. Even after the funeral, I'm not sure she's really dead. Some part of me is still in denial.

*Going home didn't help as much as I thought it would.*

Now, going home fills me with a not-insignificant amount of dread. Usually, dad and I would drive through to the village to see her, have a cup of tea and watch a bit of *The Chase* before heading on to Durham, but that won't happen again.

Durham doesn't feel right anymore because life has changed for me in a way it hasn't for the people around me. Pickering doesn't feel right because I've been away for so long and the rest of my family are carrying on with life as if nothing has changed. For me, everything has changed. Soon, I'll graduate and Durham won't be home at all, but a memory. I don't know where I'll call home. It will all change again.

# Britain Yearly Meeting 2018

*Laurence Hall reports on the major decisions made my Britain Yearly Meeting earlier this month.*

Over a thousand Friends from all over Britain came together to discern and decide on whether or not to revise Quaker Faith and Practice, our book of governance and spiritual experiences. Within Friends House, over four days, our Quaker community used the non-hierarchical method of Quaker discernment on a genuinely moving and mass scale to beginning the process of revising our red book.

Yearly Meeting began this task by reflecting on how our community reached this point of decision. Quakers have a long tradition of revising our books of faith and practice to ensure that our practices keep in line the constant revelation that we realised within our faith. This current decision came after four years of work by the revision preparation group. They organised research, workshops, books and a mass QF&P reading exercise that was embraced by Meetings all over the country. Their two major findings were that the current governance chapters are inadequate and the whole book needs to be revised to ensure the voice of a new generation of Quakers are heard within its pages. Therefore the main recommendations before Yearly Meeting were that the whole book should be revised, starting with the governance chapters, and that those governance chapters should include core elements with separate supplementary pamphlets to provide the detail.

*It was recommended that the whole book should be revised.*

It was in making this decision that the true moving power of mass Quaker discernment was founded. Over the course of Yearly Meeting, our community showed that even of this most important of subjects that we could come together through our non-hierarchical method to ensure that experiences of all who were present could be enabled and not wasted on a truly empowering mass scale. It acknowledged Friends' fears and hopes for the revision in both its

process and outcome. Yet the Yearly Meeting came to unity in supporting revision and urge the process to be as inclusive and radical to ensure all Friends can be part of this time of great reflection and renewal for our Society of Friends.

This need for reflection and renewal ran through the sessions beyond the central discernment.

In the Quaker Socialist Society's Salter Lecture Diana Jeater gave a challenging talk on Britain, Africa and Quakers. Drawing her research of African history and her work with grass-roots reconciliation in Zimbabwe to demand Friends to recognise and challenge the complex systems of inequality that sustain white supremacy over black Africans.

A similar theme ran through sessions on inclusion and privilege, in which Friends shared their experiences of exclusions and the need for true inclusion within our community so we can sincerely live out our equality testimony within all our Meetings.

This was the central to the Swarthmore Lecture given by Young Friend and concept artist Chris Alton. He spoke of how his art and his Quakerism not only challenged the existing system of repression, but also how both must create radical alternatives that show the power of loving equality. He particularly focused on his own disempowering experience of precarious work and housing which current Quaker structures and culture do little to counter. Our Quaker community must do its best to create a new world in Quaker values are truly lived.

This demand that our community of Friends become the real living embodiment of Quaker equality must become the central force of the long process of the revision of Quaker Faith and Practice that is now about to begin. For it is only when our faith's radical plurality is truly lived through its radical equality that we can we build a spiritual home that is really empowering to all.



## Writers...

The editors would like to thank all those who have contributed to this edition of *The Young Quaker*.

It would be impossible to produce the magazine without the ideas, articles and illustrations that you send in.

We're always looking for new material. If you've got an idea for an article, photo, drawing or poem you'd like to see in *The Young Quaker*, get in touch with us. The next issue, due out in time for the next YFGM in October, will have a submission deadline of 21st September.

Read TYQ online at:  
[www.theyoungquaker.org.uk](http://www.theyoungquaker.org.uk)

Contact us:  
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## What is...

**The Young Quaker** is a magazine for young Friends everywhere, produced in print and online. Published by Young Friends General Meeting, TYQ comes out three times a year, to coincide with YFGM weekends, meaning that you can expect a new issue in February, May, and October, full of news, comment, and more.

**Young Friends General Meeting** is a community for young adult Quakers aged 18-30ish, in Britain. Our main events are the three General Meetings which take place at Quaker meeting houses around the country in February, May, and October each year.

If you'd like to get involved in YFGM, come along to a YFGM event, or to find out more visit [www.yfgm.quaker.org.uk](http://www.yfgm.quaker.org.uk) or email [yfgm@quaker.org.uk](mailto:yfgm@quaker.org.uk). You can also find the YFGM group on Facebook.

**Quakers**, or the Religious Society of Friends, are a religious group with Christian origins. Quaker worship is mostly silent, with people speaking when called to do so by the 'Inner Light', sometimes called 'that of God within everyone'.

Central to Quakerism are the Testimonies of Peace, Equality, Truth, Simplicity and Sustainability. A commitment to these principles has put Quakers at the forefront of political and social issues; campaigning for the abolition of slavery and more recently for the legalisation of same-sex marriage.

# YFGM Catch Up (February 2018)

By Michelle Dumont and Jenny McCarthy, Co-clerks

Despite it being February, Friends have enjoyed the sunshine and Brighton beach - though we have not all been for a swim!

We've made some significant business decisions about our policies and internship and learnt more about the business process. We have also heard moving stories from refugees and learnt about what support we can offer. We have found out more about Quaker Prison CHaplaincy.

We have explored both dancing and walking as spiritual practices, and have discussed what meeting for worship means for us.

Once again we were pleased to welcome newcomers into our growing community and look forward to meeting again in Manchester in May