

Among Friends

No 143: Autumn 2018

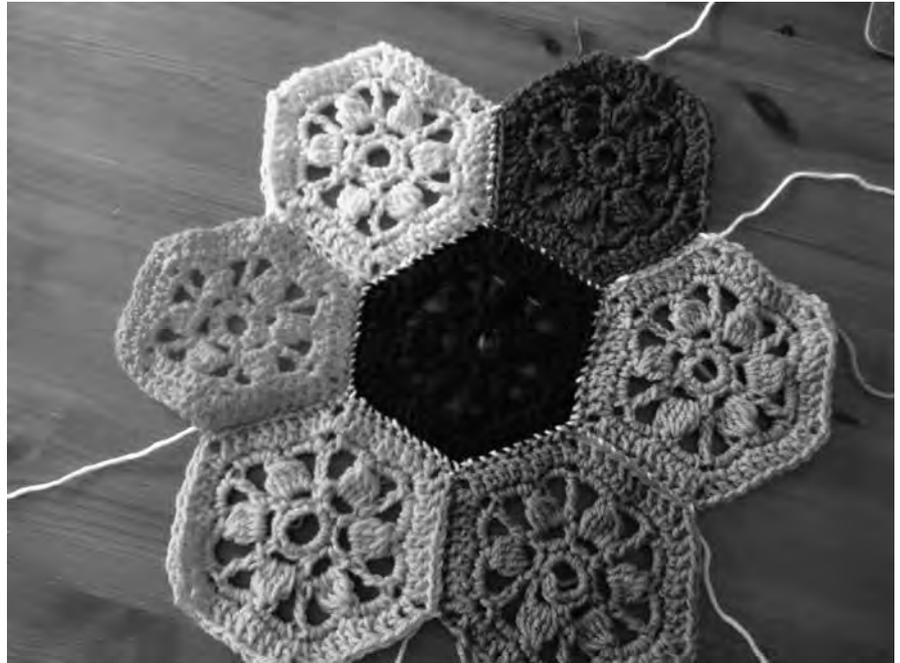
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A Rule of Life

Dear Friends,

At the last session of the Soul of Leadership, a programme offered by Shalem, the Institute for Contemplative Leadership, based in the USA, and Woodbrooke, which I was fortunate to take part in between January 2017 and June 2018, we considered creating a personal Rule of Life. In some ways, it may seem strange to use something that came out of the monastic tradition, and is therefore intrinsically communal, to shape a personal path. Yet, while the content of a personal rule of life may be individual, the intention to create such a framework can be a shared endeavour, and requires a community to test it against, and to keep us mutually accountable. This, of itself, builds community, physically, or virtually.

We were encouraged to experiment with elements that may go into our rule of life, and to create a model of it. Mine turned out to be a piece of crochet craft I had been idly working on, to use up some wool, and because I find that manual work aids contemplation.



Hexagons

Photo: EMES

The piece is made up of hexagons of different colours. It immediately suggested to me different areas of my life – physical body, emotional/psychological well-being, family and friendships, learning and growing, work, the wider social and community engagement. All of which are clustered around a central piece, which I identified as “worship”, or my awareness of, and relationship to, the Divine. On closer examination, each hexagon is made up of larger and smaller clusters, each of which can represent an activity, a situation, a person. A rule of life, therefore, can be as simple as bringing into awareness the many already existing facets of my life, or it can be an intentional effort to pay attention to, deepen, widen and extend, particular strands of my experience.

One last insight my humble bit of craft suggested to me: it is very much an “unfinished” piece of work. So is my life. It will go on growing and developing, as long as I draw breath – the Ruach of God, poured on all creation from the beginning of time.

Marisa Johnson, Executive Secretary

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Brylie and Elvin's worship experience

Brylie, Finland YM writes:

Yesterday, Elvin and I went to Quaker worship. We arrived early, as I had the key to the meeting from setting up the previous week. Elvin quickly took to helping set up for yesterday's meeting. He carried out cups, saucers, and bread plates for the fellowship seating, and placed them around the table. Then, he helped arrange the chairs in the meeting circle, even moving chairs all by himself. Finally, he set the small table in the centre of the circle and placed the bible and decorative stones atop.

He was then a bit hungry, so we got him a slice of the fellowship rye bread.

It was now time for worship, and Elvin picked seats, next to one another, for me and him. The group settled into the silence. Elvin chewed his bread, bit by bit, until it was gone, and then sat still, quietly breathing. The meeting seemed to settle after a few minutes had passed, with quiet stillness enveloping our group. Elvin sat holding my hand until our quarter-after departure from the room.

We had planned to leave the meeting at that point, to go to a children's festival in town. As we were nearing our shoes and jackets in the hallway, Elvin looked up



Brylie and Elvin Photo: Brylie

at me and said he would like to stay at the Quakers a bit longer. We fetched a couple of racecars from my jacket pocket, found a large sheet of paper and drawing colours, and spent the remainder of the hour drawing a racetrack for the cars. Elvin got to show his racetrack, complete with bandstand, flags, firetruck, trash truck, and two monster trucks, to the Quakers after the rise of meeting.

Love and Light.

The new EMES Clerk and Treasurer

At our recent Annual Meeting in Bergen, Representatives appointed a new Clerk: Davorka Lovreković of German Yearly Meeting and a new Treasurer, Penny Heymans, of Norway Yearly Meeting.

Davorka is a well known Friend, who has served in various capacities both EMES, particularly through our Peace & Service Consultation and QCEA. Davorka was also General Secretary of Church and Peace in the recent past, and is currently President of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation.

Davorka will serve as Co-Clerk with Sue Glover Frykman of Sweden Yearly Meeting until the end of 2018, and then as Clerk until the rise of the Annual Meeting in 2021.

Penny Heymans is also a very long-standing active Friend in FWCC circles. She clerked several EMES Peace & Service Consultations, and until recently represented EMES on QUNO New York. Before

retirement, Penny managed Quaker Service Norway for many years.

Penny will act as Assistant to the current Treasurer, Martin Touwen, until the end of 2018, and will take up sole responsibility from 2019 until the end of 2021.

We welcome both Davorka and Penny most warmly to our Executive Committee.



Davorka Photo: Johann David Rohde-Liebenau

Border Meeting, 6 – 9 September 2018

Adapted and edited from a piece by *Daniel Flynn* for the Belgium and Luxembourg Yearly Meeting newsletter:

60 Quakers from ages 16 to 88 from 8 countries gathered in Bornheim-Walberberg, Germany, high on a hill between Köln and Bonn. The theme this year was *The Testimony of Equality: where do we as individuals stand?*

Despite cruel persecution, early Friends were stubbornly determined to demonstrate that in God's sight, all persons are equal. This belief resulted in Friends contributing significantly throughout the years to the creation of a more just society. This Border Meeting focused on: where do we stand today?

On Saturday morning, speaker Stefan Mann, a socio-economist born with both the privilege and the burden of being a descendant of Thomas Mann and Werner Heisenberg, described his own experience, in both personal and professional life, of hierarchy, privilege and discrimination: "Between Hierarchy and Equality".

Opening the Meeting on Friday evening, he offered ten challenging statements in English and German for a warm-up merry-go-round discussion.

Following his talk on Saturday morning, Stefan offered ten discussion themes in small groups. Group facilitators/reporters volunteered to lead discussion on each theme and participants were free to move from group to group:

- Unequal pay for the same hours of work is a direct contradiction of the principle of the equal worth of all people.
- The granting of equal rights to same-sex couples is only a beginning. A further step would be to grant the same rights to a unit of three persons living in a committed relationship.
- Since private inheritance perpetuates inequality, all legacies should go to the state.
- Trade unions play a vital part in promoting equality.
- We should follow the example of the Swedes who, fifty years ago, introduced the practice of addressing all persons on a first name basis, regardless of the status of the person.

- The practice of allocating secondary-school-aged children to different types of school depending on their ability is a violation of their right to equal treatment.
- Since the granting of citizenship confers unearned privileges on people, it should be abolished.
- Private health insurance should be abolished; the quality of medical care should be independent of the wealth of the patient.
- Inherited titles should be abolished by law.
- The practice of awarding permanent safe positions to civil servants creates inequality among employees, and is no longer in keeping with the times.

On Saturday afternoon, three simultaneous groupings of two presentations each were offered.

- Some aspects of poverty in Germany led by Kajo Mentges
- Why is there so much inequality? led by Tony Weekes
- What is inequality – and why bother? led by Jenny Helstroffer
- Roots of equal dignity led by Martin Touwen
- Inequality and race led by Andrew Lane
- An unexpected life led by Phil Gaskell

On Sunday morning before the closing Meeting for Worship, 88-year-old Kurt Strauss spoke passionately about the need for us all to renew our efforts to counter rising anti-Semitism today and other forms of discrimination. He emphasized his message by telling a small part of the story of fleeing from Nazi Germany in 1939 with his immediate family. Other members of his family perished. His father had faithfully served Germany in World War I military service and mistakenly thought that that would protect the family.

Before the weekend's closing Meeting for Worship, BLYM Peace Secretary Karen King gave a presentation regarding Stop Fuelling War asking all to support it any way we can.

As in previous years, Saturday and Sunday morning began with Odehtics outside led by Susanne Odeh and Saturday evening ended with Singalong and further contributions led by Annie Janssen.

European and Middle East Young Friends - Travelling Slow

George Thurley, Britain Yearly Meeting, writes:

I, and several others besides, travelled slow to our most recent Spring Gathering. By train, bus and boat (and eventually car) I travelled from Brussels to Moyallon, accumulating people along the way. My primary motivation for this was initially to travel more sustainably (i.e. to avoid flying). But I have increasingly come to see it as a spiritual practice, that Quakers should encourage as much as we can. As far as I can make out, there are three main strands to the spiritual element of travelling slow.

The first part goes hand in hand with sustainability – travelling slow, over land and sea, even if we're going much faster than our ancestors ever did, helps us to feel part of nature, of the earth's ecosystem, and not above or separate from it. When I flew to Bergen for this year's Europe and Middle East Section (EMES) Annual Meeting, I certainly marvelled at the fjords from above as we descended, but it felt more akin to looking at specimens in a glass case, or microbes through a microscope, than feeling myself a part of the landscape, as I did on the train along the North Welsh coast, gazing one way at the craggy peaks looming above, and the other out to sea.

Per Ingvar Haukeland spoke about this sort of theme at that very same EMES gathering. He presented his thinking around Himmeljorden (Heavenearth), the great separation between people and the rest of creation, and the need for a great integration where we realise that out is in, and in is out. Our chosen means of transport definitely plays into this – I certainly find it much easier to feel part of nature when travelling by land or sailing the sea.

Secondly, is the intentionality of it. Travelling slow helps us to arrive wherever we're going with hearts and minds prepared, cognisant of where we've come from as well as where we're going. Travelling to Moyallon, I was aware of leaving England and Anglo-Saxon culture, travelling first across Wales, and then Ireland, with their shared Celtic roots. That gradual transition helped me to feel that I had a better, more complete understanding of the relationship. It also gives the distance the appropriate significance, the right weight – flying somewhere and back in a weekend distorts our scale, and reduces the

significance of the journey. Taking a day or more to travel gives our journey, as well as the destination, the time and space it merits.

Thirdly, of course, is the company. If we're organised enough, the journey can become an extension of the gathering. I suppose that this is also possible when flying, but planes feel less sociable to me. We've all had that experience of the increasing density of Quakers as we get closer and closer to the gathering, or even speculating about whether the likely-looking stranger on the train will converge on the same place as you. At the most recent EMES gathering, the bus from Bergen to Hylkje was at least 75% babbling Friends (and their luggage), resulting in a rather bemused bus driver and a full bus. When we travel slow, and in company, we share our experience, and can enrich it.

Travelling slowly and in company is of course not a new Quaker practice: Friends travelled in the ministry, often in pairs, from the very start of the movement, visiting other meetings, sharing their gifts and speaking their truth. This was, and still can be, an opening experience as two Friends travel together, encountering many others and deepening their connection, community and faith. One of the pair might serve as an elder, to the other's minister, offering pastoral and spiritual support to their partner through the intense time of travelling, giving ministry.

Intervisitation (essentially encouraging Friends to visit Friends in other countries, whether as part of their holiday, or expressly to see other Quakers) is something that the Britain Yearly Meeting committee I'm on (Quaker World Relations Committee, so basically the committee that is responsible for building links between BYM and all the other Quakers around the world) has been trying to encourage, and so I'm interested to see how it might develop, and the links to sustainability. At the most recent BYM in London, we organised a workshop with Robin Mohr, secretary of FWCC section of the Americas, who told us about their Travelling Ministry corps – whereby individuals can sign up to be "volunteer ministers" and meetings can request one of the corps to visit their meeting, to give a talk, lead a workshop, initiate a discussion or whatever else is needed, and the minister can offer. It seems to have been a success in linking

South and North America. There may be opportunities to develop these ideas in our section and globally, as FWCC has now established the Young Adult Friends Development Fund (or YAFDF, pronounced yafduff as I have christened it) as a successor to the Quaker Youth Pilgrimage. The fund, as I understand it, will support young adult Friends to travel within or between sections, and interact with young Friends (that's under 18s) as they go, and proposals will most likely be solicited soon. Looking forward for EMEYF, some of us have already begun to think about travelling slowly to our upcoming

Spring Gathering in Russia. Sleeper trains run from Paris, Berlin and Warsaw to Moscow – perhaps we could organise an entirely EMEYF carriage. You can get from London to Moscow in 48 hours by train, and even if we can't all get the sleeper, there are normally Friends in big cities, who would be willing to put us up overnight... And for those more cash-poor than time-poor, EMEYF does have a sustainable travel bursary fund (or at least will do for 2019) to help Friends who might not otherwise be able to, to choose to travel slow.

All Poland Gathering

All-Poland Friends Gathering in 2018 took place on 26-28 October in Poznań. Friends gathered within the hospitable walls of the Poznań Lutheran centre, praying, discussing, making decisions. The centre is a usual meeting place for the Poznań worship group for their meetings for worship but this time it accommodated 23 Friends from all over Poland and abroad. In the Poznań gathering, there were represented the members of three worship groups that have existed in Poland for the last few years: from Białystok, Poznań and Warsaw. What was especially joyful was the fact that four members of a newly formed group from Pomerania (near Gdańsk) have been present too. As it is not connected with any big city and as it gathers in a small village, it is called and it calls itself the Pomeranian-countryside worship group.

Another joyful thing was that among the guests there were two Friends from the Ukraine, Yuriy and Slavik, who had earlier met with some Polish Quakers having participated in the Quaker meeting in Kiev in early September. Polish Friends were happy to welcome them as for some of them it is Russian, that our guests speak very well, and not English, that lets them communicate with Friends abroad. Communication with Ukrainian Friends turned out to be much easier, however, as they both spoke very good Polish.

During the gathering, Friends participated in presentations and workshops, the themes of which were our understanding of the things we value most in Quakerism, the activity and spirituality of Rufus Jones and the personal understanding of who is God for us. The Nomination Committee has been chosen as well

as the Treasurer, the Clerk and the Co-clerk. There was also discussion on plans about future publications of Quaker literature in Polish and the difficulties that arise thereof. Two books are being currently translated into Polish and are going to be published soon: Rex Ambler's *The Quaker Way* and *God is silence* by Pierre Lacout.

The place of All-Poland Friends Gathering in 2019 has been chosen. Next year we are going to meet in Opole in the south of Poland. Although there is no worship group in Opole, Friends hoped that this city can attract some isolated Friends who live in Lower and Upper Silesia.



*Julia Ryberg and Katarzyna Kaczmarkiewicz
Photo: Zbigniew Kazmierczak*

*All Poland Gathering**Photo: Zbigniew Kazmierczak*

Norwegian Young Friends Pilgrimage to England in 2018

Per Ingvar Haukeland, co-leader of the Norwegian Young Friends, writes:

For 8 days in July 2018, 6 Norwegian young Friends and 2 adults went on a pilgrimage to special places in our Quaker history. This is the third time we have made such a pilgrimage, but this time we made a longer journey to reach more places.

Although we Quakers do not have any sacraments, nor any practice of pilgrimage to speak of or seeing one place as more holy than the other, we experience a profound sense of connection and meaning to our own history through these historic places.

This time, we arrived in London and looked up the Quaker gardens and Bunhill meeting house near the Bunhill Fields Burial Grounds, where we found the stone marking the area where the tradition states that George Fox was buried. We visited Friends House, guided by our Norwegian Friend, Kristin Skarsholt, who worked there at the time, and we were shown around in the archive, seeing several original texts from the first Quakers and also the correspondence between British Friends and the first Norwegian Yearly Meetings.

This year marks the 200th anniversary of the first Yearly

*Norwegian Young Friends at Pendle Hill* Photo: *Per Ingvar Haukeland*

Meeting in Norway. We were also given the opportunity to see the medallion for the Nobel Peace Prize from 1947 and met with many people working with exciting and important topics at Friends House.

From there we went north to Woodbrooke Quaker study centre, where we spent two days, learning about Quaker history, decision-making processes, clerking, testimonies, and we visited the Cadbury chocolate factory and learned about how the Quaker Henry

Cadbury built up a small town, Bournville, that was built to care for workers and their families. It was wonderful to also just experience the beautiful place that Woodbrooke is.

From Woodbrooke we visited Fenny Drayton, where George Fox was born. We went into the church there and met some people there that told us the fountain that Fox was baptized in is still inside the church. They told us also about the house Fox grew up in, which the foundations still remain under water in what is now a pond.

Next on our journey was a meeting with Ben Pink Dandelion at Clitheroe Meeting house, who told us about the history of the 1652 country. We climbed thereafter Pendle Hill from the steep north-west side, which is where Fox is said to have ascended the hill. An amazing view at the top. We could see all the way to the ocean and the surrounding areas, which we learned was similar to what Fox saw.

After Pendle Hill, we stayed at the YHA in Slaidburn, getting a feel for the area that Fox walked through on his way to Sedbergh. We came to Brigflatts meeting house and had a great meeting there with Tess, who told us the story of Fox and the early Quakers in the area. We visited also the burial ground at Brigflatts. From there we visited Firbank Fell, and Fox's pulpit, where we could experience the good acoustics of the area and how it must have felt to be there back in the 1600s. There was a church there then, which is now only ruins.

Moving onward to Kendal, we received a great reception by Friends at Kendal Meeting and a nice tour of the Quaker Tapestry. We spent the next three days at the old Quaker school in Yealand Conyers where Sue and Alan received us with much care and hospitality.

The day after we were lucky to visit Rex Ambler, who gave us a talk about the Experiments with Light that inspired our young Friends. We were supposed to visit Lancaster castle that day, where many Quakers were imprisoned and where we had visited with other groups, but we went instead for a walk on the hill behind



Norwegian YFs at Fox's Pulpit Photo: Per Ingvar Haukeland

Yealand to digest the talk with Rex and enjoy the nice view.

The final day, we went to Ulverston meeting for worship, and was received with great hospitality. We were given a very interesting tour of the meeting house and a shared a wonderful lunch after the worship. After that we visited Swarthmoor Hall and learned about the story of Margaret and Judge Fell and how the house became an important meeting place for the early Quakers.

Our last stop was at Sunbrick burial ground outside Ulverston, without any gravestones and where, among others, Margaret Fell is buried.

Returning to Norway from Manchester, we left with a great sense of community. The young Friends reported afterwards how important the trip was for their Quaker identity, and that they now understood better why they are Quakers and how grateful they are to have this broader, international Friendship. We will come back in a couple of years with a new group, but after we presented the journey at our Yearly Meeting, several adult Friends also want to go. We could also try to invite other young Friends from Europe and the UK to participate in such a pilgrimage, which creates lasting bonds.

If anyone is interested in helping organize this, please let us know. We who participated on the pilgrimage this year, as with earlier years, are all deeply moved by the heartfelt reception and hospitality everywhere along our journey. We can truly feel the Friendship!

Thank you!

Humanising Europe's borders

Update from the Quaker Council for European Affairs

Andrew Lane, QCEA Director, writes:

Hello from Brussels

We have a simple faith in a complex world. This creates a challenge for my colleagues and me as we engage in international affairs on behalf of you. We have to engage with the complex realities governments face, whilst representing the clear and deeply held values of Friends. We then have to be able to communicate what we are doing clearly, honestly and simply.

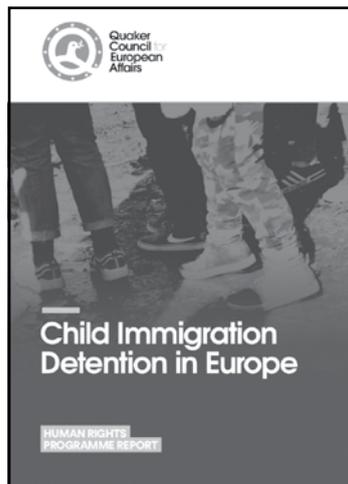
For this issue of *Among Friends* I have chosen two current projects explaining what we have done and what we plan to do in just a few words. Find out more at QCEA.org

1. Child Immigration Detention

In 2017-18: QCEA has now published two annual Child Immigration Detention reports, providing the most up-to-date and complete statistics of where migrant children are in detention. The report has been used

to meet with EU institutions and member states, and has been praised for its clear communication and consideration of often forgotten gender and mental health issues.

In 2019-2020: QCEA will continue to hold meetings with EU and European governments - informing them in an accessible way about appropriate care for children on the move (not incarceration). To measure our progress the QCEA team stays in contact with the policymakers that we meet to see how they use the ideas from our meetings in their work.

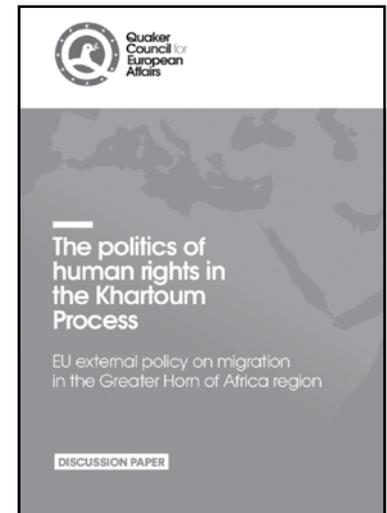


2. Humane EU external policy (alternative to border militarisation)

In 2017-18: QCEA has convened EU institutions, European governments, academia, human rights organisations to meet in Quaker House to discuss the

increasing tendency of Europe to militarise borders controls and fund border militarisation in Africa. In 2018 QCEA worked with policymakers to produce an assessment of the human rights impact of the EU-led Khartoum Process (external migration policy), maintaining the relationships to the extent that policymakers offered to take this critical report to their intergovernmental conference.

In 2019/20, QCEA will continue this work, meeting governments to seek to ensure that vast new EU funds for 'border security' will not be used to violate the human rights of vulnerable people, or to suppress freedoms in recipient countries. Find out more at www.QCEA.org/MFF



Coming up in the QCEA Peace Programme

- 15 November: QCEA public event on Cobalt and Conflict Minerals with a focus on opportunities for peacebuilding in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Quaker House Brussels).
- 22-23 November QCEA Inclusive Peace and Security workshop (Quaker House Brussels).
- 10 December: Building Peace Together event jointly organised between QCEA, Church and Peace and the German Protestant Church (Berlin).
- January – Launch of new QCEA report on Peace Education: Opportunities for Europe

QUNC - Quaker United Nations Committee

Jalka writes:

Since spring of 2018 I have been on this committee as a delegate of the European and Middle East section of Friends, EMES. The committee supports the work of the Quaker office at the United Nations in New York. There is a similar committee supporting the Quaker office at the UN in Geneva.

QUNC - New York is a joint body reporting to the Central Executive Committee of FWCC as well as to the AFSC Board of Directors. The Committee consists of five members appointed by the AFSC and five members appointed by FWCC. By participating on this committee I had the chance to be explained how QUNO performs in planning and organizing their projects. The meeting for business gave space for sharing about how plans are carried out. QUNO's long term goal is that *it will have finished its work when the UN fully carries out its responsibility to build peace and prevent violent conflict. QUNO will work with the wider UN community in the pursuit of this goal while remaining committed to supporting the use of nonviolent means in achieving it.* (from the QUNO 2008 Strategic Plan). QUNO is one of the continuous examples of Quaker presence in the development of movements for peace.

Since the first Peace Congresses in the 19th century the engagement for peace is growing. Peace became an area of interest. The first professor for Peace Studies was the British Quaker Adam Curle, teaching at the University of Bradford in England. The 20th century brought with it that Peace politics reached towards agreements on general rules against wars: agreements that are mutually binding by the power of an organisation prior to all. These ideas brought about the concept of the United Nations. On the way towards the foundation of the UN two Peace-Conferences in The Hague first in 1899 and then in 1907 took place, with hard struggles for binding rules towards disarmament and for peaceful means in dealing with conflicts. The next step was in 1920 with the founding of the "League of Nations" as the first institution acting on international law for international peace issues. The obstacles were enormous. The League of Nations failed. The next step was the "Kellogg-Briand Pact" in 1928 - shortly before the worldwide financial crashes. In 1945 the founding of the United Nations was a new attempt to develop the binding institutionalised international law

for the sake of peace making. All these organisations are steps towards a peaceful world, prevention of violence and the global protection of Human Rights. From the very beginning of peace movements until today, Quakers have always taken part.

However, never in the history of mankind has such a delegation of political power ever happened. Efforts to work on the realisation of such political moves are quite new. We are the children of the time that must acknowledge and support first steps towards a new global approach of handling conflicts. International organisations that will voluntarily submit to a superior power are unique. This new approach is about conflict transformation and mediation - not using violence or not waging war. The goal is disarmament.

I see the United Nations as a deeply contradictory project. It is about working for a future realisation, which may become true, or may not. This is a grand experiment, keep going in a sheer endless field of frustrations, - which means persistence is needed. I believe that peace work is about maintaining the suspense, not to transform tensions into violence of any kind. Whatever develops and grows must develop and grow out of differences. Peace also does. This is not an easy task. All women and men working in this field need respect, appreciation and recognition for their efforts. Unfortunately, the opposite often is the case. Peace work is often seen as a fruitless effort. A big mind shift is needed!

And with this I appeal to our Quaker community for a more outspoken appreciation of Friends (and all other people) who engage in this grand project of humanity. I wish that Quakers worldwide would realise that nowadays working for peace is one of the most important goals! Working for peace, despite all failures, is a work in progress, aiming to bring about another community for all humans. Therefore, I write this message about the work done by our QUNO Friends with the appeal to please support them with appreciation, spread the message and share financially what you can by supporting their projects and hold them in the light.

France is currently the third largest arms exporter in the world and this is where the rights of man were written so we have our work cut out! Led by our faith towards 2020. Please get involved.



Human Rights panels

Photo: QUNC



Quaker United Nations Committee

Photo: QUNC

News from Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre

Warm greetings from Woodbrooke!

As usual, we continue to offer training and support to Friends serving their Quaker communities throughout EMES, whether that is at one of our regional events, on-the-road at their local meetings, online or onsite at Woodbrooke.

August saw Nicole Hirschfelder of University of Tübingen, Germany lead an online course looking at the life and witness of **Bayard Rustin**, one of the most important civil, human, and labour activists of the twentieth century.

In September, it was our pleasure to welcome playwright, scholar and activist, Peterson Toscano. His course, **Transgress & Transcend**, explored issues of gender and sex in the Bible, whilst October's **Forced Migration and Human Rights** took a timely look at the current global migration crisis.

Looking forward, January's **Being a Quaker Clerk: an online course for clerks around the world**. This is an online course is an opportunity for Quaker clerks around the world to learn together. You will consider the clerk's role before, during and after a Meeting for Worship for Business and look at the differing styles of clerking



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around the Quaker world:

www.woodbrooke.org.uk/item/being-a-quaker-clerk-an-online-course-for-clerks-around-the-world/

February's **Changing Shape of Eldership and Oversight** will explore the history of Quaker ways of providing pastoral and spiritual care and the different patterns now being used to support Friends and meetings.

www.woodbrooke.org.uk/item/changing-shape-of-eldership-and-oversight-present-experience-and-underlying-tradition/

We'd also like to highlight March's **Inspiration and Practice** will explore the spiritual depth of ecumenical and interfaith work, considering how we might help encourage moments of openness and insight, and honestly deal with the barriers of substantial difference.

www.woodbrooke.org.uk/item/inspiration-and-practice-the-spiritual-grounding-of-our-ecumenical-and-interfaith-work-booking-page-for-general-bookings

We are particularly looking forward to our partnership event with Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA) in March. At a time when the United Kingdom prepares to leave the European Union after over 40 years of membership, 'EU, Brexit and You', will take time to reflect on European cooperation, and give Friends the opportunity to witness against the separation and isolationism which is on the rise across Europe. Bookings will open later in the year but for more information or to register your interest, please contact martin.leng@qcea.org

We continue to offer workshops to meetings throughout Europe through our Woodbrooke-on-the-Road programme. We have a number of courses ready-made or can develop something particular to meet your needs.

See www.woodbrooke.org.uk/wotr for more information or please get in touch.

Download our on-the-road brochure:

www.woodbrooke.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/WoodbrookeOnTheRoad_DIGITAL.pdf

Courses at Woodbrooke

Be the Change 21 -23 December

Embark on a purposeful spiritual inquiry into a more life-affirming way of being in this world through video clips, story, conversation, reflection, journaling, movement

and stillness.

www.woodbrooke.org.uk/item/be-the-change/

Nurturing Authentic Spirituality 28 February - 03 March

This course, led by Ben Pink Dandelion and Alex Wildwood, gives you a chance to share your spiritual aspirations, histories and practices and to identify those areas where you feel you need help. Building community through worship and creative listening, you will define personal strategies for daily faithfulness. www.woodbrooke.org.uk/item/nurturing-authentic-spirituality-a-rule-to-live-by/

Online Courses

What to do about Money 23 January – 20 February

Join Maud Grainger as she explores our relationship with money and the choices we make about how we use it, as individuals and as Meetings.

www.woodbrooke.org.uk/item/what-to-do-about-money/

A Friendly Introduction to the Quaker Way 28 January – 10 March

Annie Womack sets out the Quaker 'basics', considers the history and international reach of Quakerism, and the importance of spiritual experience to the Quaker Way.

www.woodbrooke.org.uk/item/a-friendly-introduction-to-the-quaker-way-2/

Deepening the Life of the Spirit 11 February – 24 March

This retreat, led by Julia Ryberg, offers spiritual nourishment and renewal in the midst of everyday life. Each week you will be invited to rest and reflect, explore spiritual practices, meet the Spirit at work in your life and share with your retreat group and guide.

www.woodbrooke.org.uk/item/deepening-the-life-of-spirit-an-online-retreat-exploring-prayer-and-spiritual-practice/

The **Catchpool Fund** exists to enable Friends and meetings from Europe (excluding Britain Yearly Meeting) to participate in Woodbrooke learning. It offers financial support for courses at Woodbrooke, online courses and for meetings having an 'On-The-Road' workshop. It can also help with travel costs. For more information see www.woodbrooke.org.uk/catchpool

We look forward to exploring these themes and others, either onsite, online or where you are. Look out for our latest brochure for more details.

Diary Dates 2018 and 2019

More dates for 2018 and 2019 are available on the website: www.fwccemes.org. Please send items for inclusion in the diary to emes@fwccemes.org.

Woodbrooke offers a weekly virtual Meeting for Worship at 1pm GMT/12 noon CET:
<https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/about/online-mfw/>

23-25 November 2018: Church & Peace Conference: The Paths are the Goal, Karlsruhe, Germany
brigitta.a@dmfk.de

29-31 March 2019: German speaking Border Meeting

24 April – 3 May 2019: Europe & Middle East Young Friends gathering, Western Russia.
More information from <http://www.emeyf.org/sg2019>

25-28 April 2019: Ireland Yearly Meeting, Dublin.
office@quakers-in-ireland.ie

1-5 May 2019: EMES Annual Meeting, Budapest.
emes@fwccemes.org

10-12 May 2019: Belgium & Luxembourg Yearly Meeting
quakerclerk@gmail.com

10-12 May 2019: Netherlands Yearly Meeting
secretariaat@dequakers.nl

20-24 May 2019: Britain Yearly Meeting
ym@quaker.org.uk

30 May – 2 June 2019: Sweden Yearly Meeting
kvakargarden@kvakare.se

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Among Friends is the newsletter of Europe and Middle East Section of Friends World Committee for Consultation. We want Among Friends to reflect the diversity of Quaker life and experience across the Section and welcome articles, photos and news of forthcoming events.

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Deadline for Among Friends 144: 1 March 2019