



Epistle of Junior Yearly Meeting 2026

Britain Yearly Meeting

Held at Pioneer Centre, Kidderminster

03/04/26 - 07/04/26

To all Friends everywhere,

We send greetings from the community of Junior Yearly Meeting 2026, held at The Pioneer Centre in Kidderminster from the 3rd to 7th of April. During our time together, we gathered as a community of 49 young Friends and 9 adults to explore the theme of:

“In a divided world, are we living our values to foster acceptance and belonging?”

We opened and closed each day in worship, using a variety of tools to help inspire our reflections. These included drawing, lights, music, poetry and a bonfire. Worshipping together allowed us to grow more comfortable sitting with uncertainty around open questions.

Sasha Lawson-Frost spoke to us about ministry and its many forms, encouraging us to reflect on what ministry truly is, where it comes from, and how it is expressed. We were challenged to think about whether ministry could ever feel angry or unsettling—if words come through us as vessels, is it still ministry when it carries anger, or does it become something else? We recognised that the deep ministry of young Friends can sometimes be overlooked by adults.

Our adult Friends shared their life experiences alongside the theme, offering a diverse range of talks that were both engaging and thought-provoking, grounded in community and our shared humanity. They encouraged us to be unapologetically passionate about what we love, reminding us that the ridiculous is something to be embraced—for our communities are richer when we bring our full, authentic selves, a fact that became evident in the community built at JYM.

We had plenty of opportunities to unwind throughout the weekend. The Pioneer Centre offered a range of outward-bound activities, including high ropes, abseiling, an aerial runway, indoor caving, and archery—and even the soggy raft builders found plenty of joy in the experience.

Free time was equally enjoyable and gave us space to relax and be ourselves. Our spaces were filled with games, music, singing, and even a dinosaur themed jigsaw. Alongside laughter, free time created opportunities for deeper conversations—moments that might not have found space within the main sessions, but were incredibly rewarding, both intellectually and spiritually.

A creative session run by Lorna McNeill allowed us to reflect on the theme in a more indirect way and the glass paint art was appreciated in the evening using light to project the artwork. This brought us together and united us using art as an expression of our core values.

Through telling stories, last year's Swarthmore lecturer, Emily Provance, challenged us to consider how two communities with the same core values can experience conflict - prompting us to question our preconceptions and listen more openly. We thought deeply about the concepts of love and empathy, recognising their differences, and considering how we could extend love and empathy to all people in the world. We struggled with the impossibility of meaningfully loving the entire population of the world but concluded that we should still strive to have this love, perhaps in a way that manifests as simply loving the humanity in people.

Paul Ingram reminded us that working for meaningful change is often not about the outcome, but about the process. It's about breaking down barriers that prevent meaningful conversations from happening. It struck us how much experience Paul has in bridging divisions. This inspired us to open up to other people and allow ourselves to be vulnerable, especially where there is a vast difference of opinion to overcome.

In our minute, we claim that "there is communal strength to be found in mutual vulnerability and openness". By sharing our ideas freely, being open to having meaningful conversations and being vulnerable with each other, we were able to develop an overwhelming sense of connection between the Friends present at JYM.

This strong sense of belonging let us hope for a less divided world.

In friendship and peace,

Signed on behalf of Junior Yearly Meeting,

Ryn, Izzo, Rose.