

# Preparing for Yearly Meeting

Compiled for Yearly Meeting,  
Friends House, London and online  
23–26 May 2025

Yearly Meeting of Quakers in Britain





# Preparing for Yearly Meeting

## Welcome

Everyone in our Quaker community is welcome to join, whether a member or not and including children and young people. Yearly Meeting, including programmes for children and young people, will be held from 23–26 May 2025. Yearly Meeting Preparation Sessions will take place during the online Yearly Meeting fringe week, from 27 April–3 May 2025.

## This Yearly Meeting

Yearly Meeting 2025 will be rooted in our peace testimony. We will be considering: How do we as Quakers address violence and conflict in our local communities and across Britain? How do we welcome and accept and nurture the radical peacemaker in ourselves and others?

## How to prepare

We hope this document will help you prepare for Yearly Meeting. If you are unsure what to expect or how to prepare, ask a Friend from your meeting or worshipping community to help you.

Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee encourages individuals, Quaker meetings and other Quaker groups to prepare for Yearly Meeting. Let us use this Yearly Meeting as an opportunity to strengthen our community and encourage action.

## Proceedings of Britain Yearly Meeting

The following documents will help you get ready for Yearly Meeting:

- *Preparing for Yearly Meeting* – this document
- *Agenda and Notes* – includes information about sessions and what Yearly Meeting will be considering
- *Testimonies* – to the Grace of God as shown in the lives of deceased Friends
- *Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees' Annual Report* – for the year ended 31 December 2024
- *Patterns of membership*, including the Tabular Statement – information about the number of Quakers in Britain

These documents will be published on Monday 24 March. You will be able to find them online at [www.quaker.org.uk/ym](http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym).

The Yearly Meeting minutes will be published after the event.

If you need accessible versions, you can request them when registering or by emailing [ym@quaker.org.uk](mailto:ym@quaker.org.uk). Printed copies are available for those with accessibility needs. This includes those who can't use smart devices during the event. We encourage you to request these only if necessary. This helps us reduce costs and environmental impact.

## What's on offer...

### For everyone

There will be a variety of online events from Sunday 27 April to Saturday 3 May to help Friends of all ages prepare for Yearly Meeting. There will also be events organised by many different Quaker groups.

During the weekend of Yearly Meeting, Friday 23–Monday 26 May, there will be creative opportunities available in the community hub and online. There will be opportunities for crafting and creative participation in Yearly Meeting 2025. This will offer different ways of approaching the questions we're facing together. This can be part of our radical witness for peace and inspire everyday activism. Join in to create something practical and help strengthen our community and our commitment to peace.

### For young adults

Young Adults @ Yearly Meeting

During the Yearly Meeting weekend, there will be a community space for 18- to 35-year-olds attending Yearly Meeting. It's an opportunity to connect with each other, prepare for and reflect on Yearly Meeting.

More details will be available nearer the time of the event at [www.quaker.org.uk/ym](http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym).

### For children and young people

These programmes are an integral part of Yearly Meeting. They allow Friends in these age groups to connect with Yearly Meeting in age-appropriate ways. This supports their faith and spiritual growth. It also helps them to experience transformation beyond the event and helps make them feel part of the wider Quaker community.

All under-18s attending Yearly Meeting need to be registered by a parent or guardian. Please book in advance by the deadlines as places are limited.

### 0- to 11-year-olds: Children's programme at Yearly Meeting

Friday 23–Monday 26 May at Friends House

This programme can be booked by individual session and does not include accommodation. Bookings for the Children's Programme close on Friday, 4 April, to give volunteers time to prepare. To attend the Children's Programme (ages 0–11), a responsible adult should be close by.

### 11- to 15-year-olds: Young People @ Yearly Meeting

**15- to 18-year-olds: Junior Yearly Meeting**  
Friday 23–Monday 26 May at Rock UK Frontier Centre, Northamptonshire

These are both residential events including accommodation.

The booking deadline for Young People @ Yearly Meeting is **Sunday 23 February**.

There are two deadlines for Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM). The first deadline is **Sunday 9 February**, for Nominations and open place applications (for individuals not being nominated). The second deadline is **Sunday 23 February** for the parent/guardian to confirm that the young person would like to come to JYM by completing a consent and information form.

Full details can be found at [www.quaker.org.uk/ym](http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym) and at [www.quaker.org.uk/events/junior-yearly-meeting-2025](http://www.quaker.org.uk/events/junior-yearly-meeting-2025) for JYM.

# Our community agreement

## Quaker practice at Yearly Meeting

Respect the wide diversity among us in our lives and relationships. Refrain from making prejudiced judgments about the life journeys of others. Do you foster the spirit of mutual understanding and forgiveness which our discipleship asks of us? Remember that each one of us is unique, precious, a child of God.

*Advices & queries 22*

Yearly Meeting aims to be a spiritually enriching experience, where Friends build a loving and inclusive community. It is important for us all to consider what impact our behaviour and words might have on others. We need to continue to practise listening and speaking to one another with care. Quakers are not immune to the bad behaviour that seems to occur more often online than in person. We need to maintain our discipline of coming together to “know God’s will for the gathered group”, despite the challenges of meeting remotely.

Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee asks you to share responsibility for creating a safe and loving community by upholding Quaker discipline at this Yearly Meeting.

Throughout Yearly Meeting and beforehand, whether meeting online or in Friends House:

- Follow the guidance on safeguarding and online security provided for events.
- When talking or writing to other participants about the Yearly Meeting topics please take care over how you communicate. Use inclusive language and behaviour to avoid hurt. Pause before communicating (especially online) and carefully consider whether you might be about to say something you would later regret.
- Be mindful of how important or sensitive the subject may be when discussing views and beliefs you or others may hold. Respect the experiences and opinions of others, even if they differ from your own. Be open to change.
- Do not lobby clerks, introducers, staff or other servants of the meeting regarding the agenda (see *Quaker faith & practice* 3.04). Do not assume that

Friends who are closely involved will always be available to discuss a topic with you; people might need time off from the discernment between Yearly Meeting sessions.

- Do not claim to speak on behalf of others when expressing your own view.

In Yearly Meeting and preparatory sessions:

- Follow the general counsel on church affairs set out in *Quaker faith & practice* 3.01–3.07. Friends are encouraged to speak clearly and briefly and stand to speak if comfortable and able to do so. Our experience is that Friends online may not sense as quickly as those in Friends House that their Ministry has been heard. Clerks may say when a Friend has ministered at sufficient length and it is time to make space for others’ contributions, so that a wide range of voices can be heard. If this message is not received it may occasionally be necessary to disconnect an online contribution.
- Yearly Meeting sessions are meetings for worship, so please do give them your full attention rather than ‘multitasking’. For instance, engaging in parallel discussion on social media would be as inappropriate as chatting to someone else in the room.

Interactions between Friends (online or in Friends House) can result in pain and distress. Be mindful of your own words and actions, and careful that you do not cause inadvertent hurt.

Behaviours such as discrimination, bullying, harassment or verbal abuse are not acceptable and will not be tolerated. If you experience or witness unacceptable behaviour by anyone in our community, for the well-being of everyone concerned, please let an elder or a member of the Pastoral Care Team know. For more information, please see our policies and procedures on bullying and harassment.

Yearly Meeting clerks and elders may decide, exceptionally, to exclude from the event anyone who does not abide by these guidelines.

# Preparation Resources

The following resources are to help you to prepare for Yearly Meeting. You can do this individually and in your Quaker meeting or community before Yearly Meeting.

All Friends are welcome to attend online preparatory sessions before Yearly Meeting (see “[Before Yearly Meeting](#)” on page 8 for details). Some of these events might reference the material below. It can be helpful to explore this material beforehand, but it’s not essential.

## Addressing violence and conflict in our local communities and Britain

We will look at how we, as Quakers, have dealt with violence and conflict in our local communities and across Britain. We hope we can find ways we can improve. To prepare, we want to understand the causes of violence and conflict. We want to learn what has worked in promoting peace and supporting local communities. We hope this may inspire others and give us a chance to reflect on areas where we can improve.

### Passages from *Quaker faith & practice*

The follower of Jesus is to discover and then promote the Kingdom of God. That Kingdom has two tenses: it is already here, in each one of us; and it is still to come, when God’s goodness becomes a universal norm. We are to live now ‘as if’ the Kingdom of God were already fulfilled.

Peace begins within ourselves. It is to be implemented within the family, in our meetings, in our work and leisure, in our own localities, and internationally. The task will never be done. Peace is a process to engage in, not a goal to be reached.

Sydney Bailey, 1993  
*Quaker faith & practice*, 24.57

Issued by Yearly Meeting in London 1744, during the War of the Austrian Succession:

We entreat all who profess themselves members of our Society to be faithful to that ancient testimony, borne by us ever since we were a people, against bearing arms and fighting, that by a conduct agreeable to our profession we may demonstrate ourselves to be real followers of the Messiah, the peaceable Saviour, of the increase of whose government and peace there shall be no end.

*Quaker faith & practice*, 24.05

## Resources and Materials

- **Engaging with conflict, challenging hate:** Within this [toolkit](#), developed by Quakers in Britain’s peace and social witness team, you will find examples and guidance from conflict resolution practitioners that refer to specific divisions and hatreds, in particular around the far right. We hope that these case studies can help Quakers and community organisers reflect on how we grapple with and respond to conflict and hate. This toolkit can serve as a primer in a rich and complex field of practice, supporting you on your path of engaging with conflict and resisting hate in all forms.
- **Courses:** Between January and April 2025 Woodbrooke is running a number of sessions and courses related to this topic that will help Friends to prepare for Yearly Meeting. For full information and to book your place, please see the [www.woodbrooke.org.uk/ym25](http://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/ym25).

## How do we welcome, accept and nurture the radical peacemaker in ourselves and others?

In a world challenged by injustice, war, systemic racism, and a worsening climate crisis, we are called to live out our peace testimony. Yet, finding ourselves called to action can be difficult. The global challenges may feel too big. We might feel held back by our responsibilities, fear the consequences, or worry about reputational risk. However, we can support others in the Spirit. We can be allies, and offer loving support to those taking compassionate action, at the same time as finding our own way forward.

It’s often said, “If you want peace, work for justice.” Each of us can be a radical peacemaker in our own way, from small acts of support to large-scale activism. Many people in our local Quaker communities are already taking peaceful, radical actions in the world. How can we, as a community, support and encourage these Friends, and create spaces of compassion and care? Many Friends and others connected to Quaker communities are in conflict with the law for their peaceful actions. How can we support those who are arrested, prosecuted, or imprisoned for their peaceful witness? How can we each find our own way to contribute to radical peacemaking? How can we support peaceful efforts to create a more just and sustainable world?

## Resources and Materials

- **Article:** Imi Hills. [Long-term solutions: Imi Hills says Quakerism should harness the radicalism of young Friends](#) (27 September 2024), *the Friend*, [www.thefriend.org](http://www.thefriend.org).
- **Article:** Martin Luther King, Jr. [Letter from Birmingham Jail](#) (16 April 1963), *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, <https://letterfromjail.com>.
- **Article:** Rajan Naidu. [Resistance movement: Rajan Naidu writes from prison](#) (14 October 2022), *the Friend*, [www.thefriend.org](http://www.thefriend.org).
- **Report:** [Peace at the heart](#) (2022), Quakers in Britain's Peace Education team work with students and teachers to help young people be peacemakers and bring peer mediation into their schools and communities.
- **Newsletter:** [Faith in Action](#) monthly newsletter and drop-in network meetings to support action in local Quaker communities.
- **Minutes:** Support for Friends involved in Witness. East Kent Area Meeting , Leeds Area Meeting , Devon Area Meeting. See "[Appendix 1](#)".
- **Courses:** Between January and April 2025 Woodbrooke is running a number of sessions and courses related to this topic that will help Friends to prepare for Yearly Meeting. For full information and to book your place, please see the [www.woodbrooke.org.uk/ym25](http://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/ym25).
- **Poem:**  
My heart is moved by all I cannot save: so much has been destroyed. I have to cast my lot with those who age after age, perversely, with no extraordinary power, reconstitute the world.

Adrienne Rich,  
Excerpted from 'Natural resources' in  
The Fact of a doorframe: selected poems 1950-2001  
New York, WW Norton & Company, 2003

## Activities

Everyone in your meeting or worshipping group is invited to take part in the following preparation activities for Yearly Meeting 2025, whether or not they plan to attend.

### Activity 1. Worship sharing

Come together worshipfully to explore the questions:

- What makes a radical peacemaker?
- What is the role of allyship in spiritually informed activism?
- How can we develop courage, collaboration and communication?

You may wish to read and consider Adrienne Rich's poem 'Natural Resources' and Martin Luther King's 'Letter from Birmingham Jail'.

### Activity 2. Creative exercises for all ages

The exercises suggested below are inspired by [The Work That Reconnects Spiral](#). It will be helpful to read about the spiral before starting the activity.

- In a worship sharing circle you could ask each other: what elements of 'radical peace' do you value, are grateful for?
- Draw around your hand (helping children if needed). In the middle of the palm, write something like "Thank you, radical peacemaker". On each finger, write something related to peace that you are grateful for.
- You may want to share your sadness and grief about the hurts and harms being done to people, and to the natural world of which we are a part. For more ideas, visit the resource section at: <https://workthatreconnects.org>.
- Seeing with new eyes: consider examples of peacemaking in history, in other faiths and social justice movements around the world – and your connection to them.
- Remember that small steps add up. Reflect on the different active roles you can play working for peace and climate justice: maybe write a letter to a peace campaigner; or address such a letter to your past or future self.
- Post your letter and your handprints to Bridget Holtom, Faith in Action Lead, at Friends House. They will be shared with radical peacemakers and at Yearly Meeting 2025.

# Joining Yearly Meeting

Yearly Meeting will include minuted sessions, community time, worship and the Swarthmore Lecture as well as the preparation week events held online in advance of Yearly Meeting. Some of the main sessions will be rooted in the peace testimony

To attend Yearly Meeting and the events before it, you need to book. See [on page 9](#) for more details.

## How to find out what's on

Yearly Meeting (YM) can be very busy. The most useful guide is the YM Planner, which lists everything taking place – including Preparation Sessions and Yearly Meeting. A link to the YM Planner will be emailed to you after booking. Volunteering is a great way to get involved and meet others (see “[How can I help?](#)” on page 9).

## Before Yearly Meeting

There will be online events taking place from 27 April to 3 May 2025. There will be sessions relating to the Yearly Meeting agenda. These are to help prepare our hearts and minds for the discernment at Yearly Meeting.

There will also be an online Yearly Meeting fringe, with meetings of [Quaker Recognised Bodies](#) and [Yearly Meeting central committees](#).

Everyone is encouraged to attend Woodbrooke introductory sessions. These are for everyone, whether you have been a Quaker for many years or are new to the community. This year's Woodbrooke sessions are ‘We all make Yearly Meeting’ and ‘How does Yearly Meeting work?’.

## Attending at Friends House and online

It is important that everyone finds a way to join Yearly Meeting that is comfortable for them. We understand that traveling to London can be difficult for many Friends. Friends can join online or at Friends House in London.

The clerks are eager to welcome Friends from all areas, whether they're attending at Friends House or online. Families and young people are especially encouraged to attend.

Yearly Meeting sessions will be clerked from the Large Meeting House in Friends House.

Everyone will be equally able to indicate if they feel called to give spoken ministry.

Friends joining online will be able attend Yearly Meeting sessions, morning and evening worship and

creative activities. The Swarthmore Lecture will be given at Friends House on Saturday evening and will be available to watch online at the same time.

The Groups Fairs will be held in Friends House on Saturday and Sunday lunchtimes. This will be a chance to learn about the work of Quaker Recognised Bodies and the work of the staff and committees of Quakers in Britain.

Whichever way you plan to join in with Yearly Meeting, you must book to attend (see booking information on [on page 9](#))

## Swarthmore Lecture

The 2025 Swarthmore Lecture will be given by Emily Provance. Emily's lecture will focus on the meaning of Quaker community and how community is integral to Quaker theology and spiritual life.

Clerk of the Swarthmore Lecture Committee, Sarah Donaldson, said that:

Emily's rich and varied ministry means that she is well placed to explore questions around our life as Quaker communities and the Quaker testimony to community. The wide range of Quaker and other communities that Emily has worked with, together with her knowledge and experience of different Quaker traditions, mean that she is particularly able to help Friends to engage with this subject. She has a gift for harnessing the power of stories to communicate, as well as challenging people to think.

In her lecture Emily will engage with the challenge of how people can live and cooperate in community, especially when those communities are not ones that we have chosen. Emily hopes to present a Quaker testimony of community drawn from books of discipline used across Friends' theological spectrum and in many parts of our global community. In her lecture Emily hopes to provide a “sense of the meeting,” using the collective wisdom of our immensely diverse Society to suggest how all people—Quaker and not—can survive and thrive as an immensely diverse humankind.



# Booking information

## What do I need to do?

**Register!** From Wednesday 8 January you can do this online at [www.quaker.org.uk/ym](http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym). There is no charge to attend Yearly Meeting. But whether you're attending Friends House in person or online, registration by the deadline is essential so that suitable preparations can be made.

If you wish to attend, you need to book online at [www.quaker.org.uk/ym](http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym). If you would like to attend the online fringe week and Yearly Meeting preparation sessions, then please book for Yearly Meeting by Sunday 7 April. Bookings for Yearly Meeting close on Sunday 27 April. Our deadlines give us enough time to prepare to welcome you and invite you to the YM Planner.

You can find more information and follow updates online at [www.quaker.org.uk/ym](http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym).

Or join the conversation on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/groups/quakerspace](http://www.facebook.com/groups/quakerspace).

## Where can I stay?

Accommodation is not provided. If you plan to attend Yearly Meeting in Friends House, you will need to arrange your own place to stay. The bookings section of the Yearly Meeting website has information about possible accommodation.

## Where can I get financial support?

There is no charge to attend Yearly Meeting at Friends House or online. Friends shouldn't be put off coming to Yearly Meeting because they can't afford the cost of accommodation and travel. If you need help with these costs, please talk to Friends in your Quaker meeting or other Quaker group. If they can't cover all the costs, you can ask for help from the Yearly Meeting bursary fund at [www.quaker.org.uk/ymbursary](http://www.quaker.org.uk/ymbursary).

## What do I do if I have access needs?

Please let us know your access needs when you book. Consider whether there is anyone else attending who may be able to support you. You should first speak to Friends in your Quaker meeting or other Quaker group to see what help they can provide. If they cannot help, the Pastoral Care Group and staff will work with you to provide support where possible. For information, email [access@quaker.org.uk](mailto:access@quaker.org.uk) or call 020 7663 1040.

## How can I help?

Help make the Yearly Meeting happen by volunteering. All help is greatly appreciated. For information on volunteering, please visit the 'Get involved' page at [www.quaker.org.uk/ym](http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym).

## How do I find out more about Yearly Meeting?

The best place to start is [www.quaker.org.uk/ym](http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym), where you will find the answer to commonly asked questions. We will update the website as more information becomes available. If you can't find the answer to your question, email the Yearly Meeting Office at [ym@quaker.org.uk](mailto:ym@quaker.org.uk) or call 020 7663 1040.

# Appendix 1

## **Adrian Cook, London West Area Meeting; Phil Laurie, East Kent Area Meeting; Alison Meaton, Cornwall Area Meeting**

As noted in the Friend (26 January 2024), eight Friends appeared in court in January following witness at the Defence and Security Equipment International (DESI) arms fair in London in September 2023. These Friends were charged under Section 14(5) and (9) of the Public Order Act 1986 for failing to move when asked from sitting in the road. Three area meetings have confirmed the following Friends were acting under concern and wish to be included in the Prison and Court Register:

- Adrian Cook, London West Area Meeting
- Alison Meaton, Cornwall Area Meeting
- Phil Laurie, East Kent Area Meeting

It is likely further names will be brought to a future meeting of Meeting for Sufferings.

## **Jacob Arthur Solomon Bourne (known as Sol), Leeds Area Meeting**

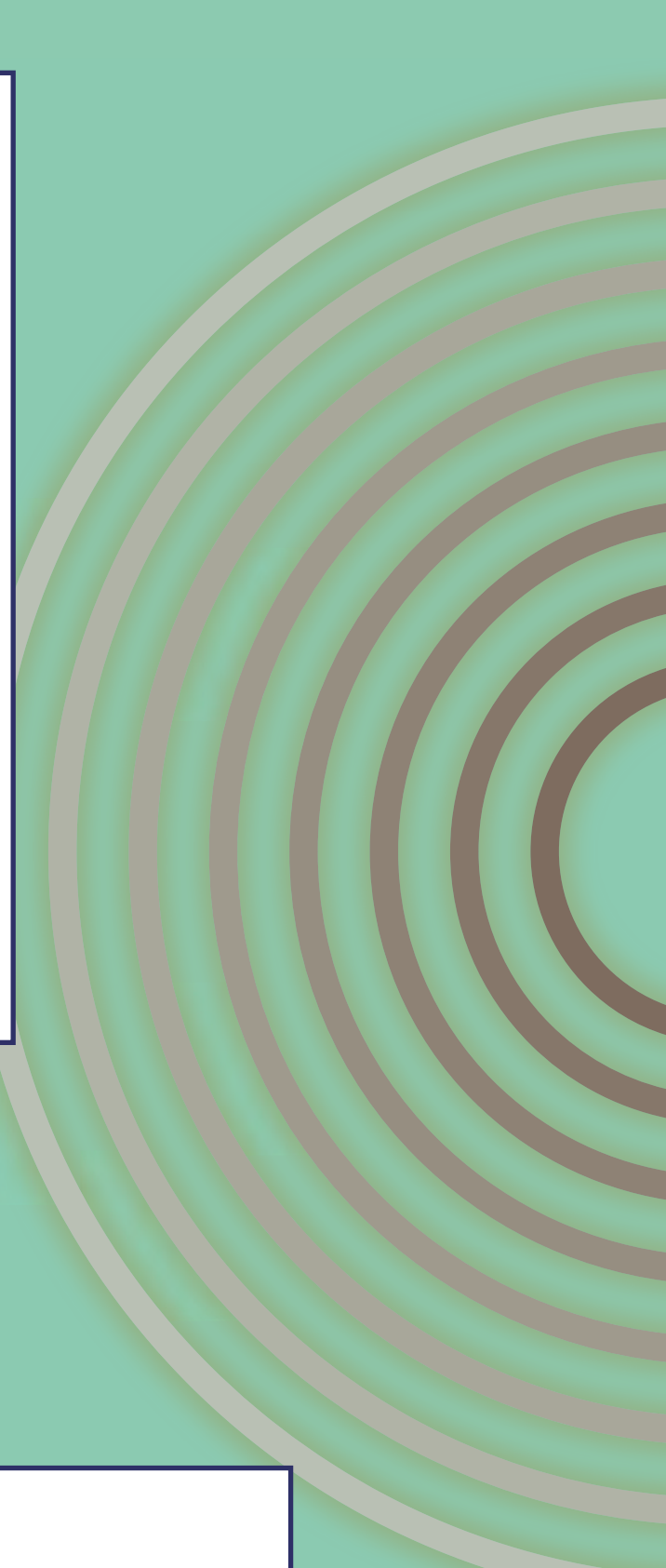
Leeds Area Meeting forwarded the following minute from Carlton Hill Local Meeting with a request to Meeting for Sufferings for these details to be included in the Prison and Court Register: Jacob Arthur Solomon Bourne (known to us as Sol) was part of a 'Just Stop Oil' protest on 28 June at Lords Cricket

Ground and was arrested. He pleaded not guilty to aggravated trespass on 31 July and went to trial on 28 September 2023. He was found guilty and sentenced on 24 October to 60 hours of Community Service and ordered to pay a fine and costs totalling £444. He is one of three people who all had the same sentence. Because Quakers nationally have committed to climate action, we feel this is in line with our testimonies. We uphold him in his action. Further action is planned by Sol and other Friends of the meeting. We offer Sol and other individuals the opportunity to hold a meeting for clearness in which they could work through their thinking on taking further action and the consequences of that for themselves and the meeting. We invite friends to donate towards Sol's fine, costs and other expenses.

## **Pasha Bell, Devon Area Meeting**

Devon Area Meeting asks for Pasha Bell, a young Friend from Exeter Meeting, to be included in the register. Pasha Bell was found guilty and sentenced to 22 months on 1 August at Basildon Crown Court because of their faithful witness as part of nonviolent action organised by Just Stop Oil. This was agreed at Devon Area Meeting in session on 19 October 2024. The Area Meeting expressed its gratitude for the faithful witness of Pasha Bell who is acting for all of us who care about the destruction of the earth.





Quakers share a way of life, not a set of beliefs. Quaker unity is based on shared understanding and a shared practice of silent worship – a communal stillness.

Quakers seek to experience God directly – internally, in relationships with others, and with the world. Local meetings for worship are open to all who wish to attend.

Quakers try to live with honesty and integrity. This means speaking truth to all, including people in positions of power. The Quaker commitment to peace arises from the conviction that love is at the heart of existence and that all human beings are unique and equal.

This leads Quakers to put faith into action by working locally and globally to change the systems that cause injustice and violent conflict.

Accessible versions of this document are available. Please contact the publications manager at [publications@quaker.org.uk](mailto:publications@quaker.org.uk) or call 020 7663 1162

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