

Among Friends

No 142: Summer 2018

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Faithfulness in Turbulent Times

Dear Friends,

Cometh the hour, cometh the (wo) man – or, in this case, the women – Saskia Kuhlmann and Lee Taylor. They had agreed to serve as assistant clerks during our Annual Meeting held at the Åsane Folkehøgskole near Bergen from 21st to 24th June – see the lovely pictures on the centre pages of this edition. But what they had not bargained for is that, thanks to some major disruption on Swedish railways on 20th June, and the mid-summer bank holiday in Sweden, our clerk Sue Glover Frykman was prevented from attending at the very last minute. Surprised but undaunted, the pair embarked on a very effective partnership, which steered us through the business of the gathering with competence, patience, and good humour. The meticulous preparation that the clerking team had done beforehand certainly helped, and it demonstrated once more the critical dynamic of good planning, and openness to being present in the moment, to do whatever may be necessary.

With three former secretaries and two former clerks also present at this very special gathering, which celebrated the 80th anniversary of the European section of FWCC,



EMES Gathering in Bergen

Photo: Mick Johnson

as well as the 200th anniversary of the establishment of Norway Yearly Meeting, there were many opportunities to reminisce on past events and many challenges. We reflected on what the world must have looked like to those who gathered in Vallekilde, Denmark, back in 1938 to create this permanent connection among Friends from different countries, who were soon to find themselves on different sides of a cruel war.

With Brexit in the UK, and the fierce anti-migrant rhetoric and policies of most other countries in Europe, the ever-growing oppression for our Friends in the Middle East, and the undeniable changes to the climate we are already witnessing, times look bleak once more. Yet our tradition is rooted in times of cataclysmic unrest, during a civil war that turned the established order upside down – for a while at least. Early Friends found the courage to turn their back on the imperative of violence in their own time, and ground their resistance in their Christian faith. We reminded ourselves of the ultimate text on “apocalyptic” times – Revelation itself. A text that Mark Russ of Woodbrooke warned us “should not be approached unprepared or without guidance”. Yet careful and well guided reading opens up a beautiful vision of a wholesome society, governed by God’s laws of justice and peace. A beautiful jewel that those who remain faithful to its vision in spite of persecution and turbulence will surely see. All that is asked of us is to keep faith – so that when the hour cometh, so will the Friend.

Marisa Johnson, Executive Secretary

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Church and Peace Conference 21st -24th June 2018

Lynda Williams, Britain Yearly Meeting, writes:

Glorious sunshine welcomed us all when Church and Peace held its International Annual Conference in Hertfordshire, England over midsummer this year. It was not just the weather that was warm.....it was an extremely warm ecumenical gathering of around 100 European Christians, alive to both peace theology and peace activism. I personally found it very enriching to learn more of the ecumenical picture across Europe. It was very moving that such a diverse group were able to work together so passionately on issues of non-violence, reconciliation and peace.

There was a sense that Europe was “shrinking” in terms of the concept of the European peace project as we see the rise of nationalism; the closing of borders; massive displacement of populations and increased militarism dominating the political landscape, but at the same time there was a feeling that there is a resurgence within Europe for peace issues and development, particularly amongst young people. More individuals and peace organisations have applied to become members of Church and Peace. Some churches, such as the Evangelical Church in the Rhineland (EKiR), are taking steps with the support of Church and Peace, to becoming peace churches.

Interjit Bhogal’s keynote speech was inspiring and challenging. His life story is an example of lived peace activism. He set up both the first interfaith groups in the UK and the City of Sanctuary movement. His statement that “the violence of war in the interests of peace is a fallacy” pointed towards pacificism which was a challenging position for some present. His calling to set up places and organisations of “Sanctuary” is being taken up by Friends across the UK. Perhaps his call for Interfaith Pilgrimages of Peace could also be a witness to which Friends might wish to respond.



Church and Peace conference

Photo: Lynda Williams

Church and Peace provides much support to those members whose traditional Christian Churches do not have peace as their central focus and where peace activists are very much in the minority. Such members look to the historic peace churches for leadings on peacebuilding and non-violence. I was humbled by the number of times Quakers were referenced as providing examples of historic peacebuilding work in both plenary and workshop sessions.

There was indeed a healthy Quaker presence, with Friends from Germany, Denmark, Netherlands, Switzerland, Moscow, Ireland, EMES, QCCIR and at least 4 individual members from UK, providing a good opportunity to get to know each other and hear of work in each others countries. Each day began with Quaker Meeting for Worship at 7.45am. My experience of pre-breakfast worship in other contexts has been that very few make the effort. Here, around 30-50 came along and the worship was introduced with great sensitivity. For many it was their first opportunity to experience Quaker worship and there was a real interest in and discussion over breakfast about the Quaker Way.

Besides the formal programme, it is often individual encounters that are so valuable. At the final plenary of this conference, two young women, one Serbian and one Kosovan told of how they had met with fear in a workshop and then had been able to offer each other forgiveness and friendship...a moving transformative moment on which to end.

A new Sweden Yearly Meeting Peace Committee in the making

Sue Glover Frykman, Sweden Yearly Meeting, writes:

In the 1950s-70s, Sweden Yearly Meeting had a very active Peace Committee, but after that energies were channelled into the reception and helping of refugees in connection with the Balkan War. In autumn 2017, a Recognised Meeting under the care of Sweden Yearly Meeting asked for the re-formation of a Peace Committee or Peace Secretary to be raised at Interim Yearly Meeting. The reason given was that peace has been an important issue for Quakers since the 1660s and is still one of our greatest concerns. We are now facing military threats (e.g. between North Korea and the USA) and have just experienced major military exercises with a number of NATO countries and Finland (Aurora 17) in Sweden and between Russia and Byelorussia (Zapad 17). A more intensive stockpiling of nuclear weapons is also a reality. All this makes peace a much more urgent and vital issue for both our world and our planet.

The matter came before Interim Yearly Meeting in November 2017. Friends discerned that the idea of working more actively with peace issues was welcome, but that the purpose and form needed to be clarified before a decision could be made. The matter was referred to local Meetings before being raised again at Interim Yearly Meeting in March 2018.

Local Meetings were asked to complete a questionnaire on how the proposed peace work should be organised internally and how it could contribute to society at large. Many people expressed how important it was for the Yearly Meeting to have an active peace testimony and drew attention to the fact that we are an historic peace church. Many said that it was our individual and corporate responsibility to 'speak truth to power' and to put our peace testimony into action. Other aspects of peace were mentioned – the importance of working with inner peace, with peace in small groups, and with peace as a political and global issue. Some felt that the Yearly Meeting was a peace organisation in itself and therefore did not need a special committee for peace and suggested calling it a reference- or resource group

instead. Others felt that the peace issue should not be limited to what a certain committee could or might do. There was also the feeling that every Quaker had a responsibility to be active in peace issues, and that the Yearly Meeting should support those who had a specific concern, or an individual member's activism. It was felt that we needed to cultivate a living relation to all our testimonies, and that outward work should emerge from a strong, inner, spiritual anchorage. Different ways of how the Yearly Meeting might work with peace issues were also suggested. Fears about what might happen if a peace committee was formed were also expressed.

The matter was discussed again at Interim Yearly Meeting in March 2018 in the light of the above responses and local Meeting discussions, and different perspectives were raised. The discernment at this meeting was to continue the discussion at Yearly Meeting in May.

At Yearly Meeting in May the issue was first discussed in 'threshing' groups, so that everyone present would have an opportunity to express an opinion in a safe space. Here, threshing is defined as separating the grain of truth from the chaff, or shaking out the truth. After the threshing we held a worship sharing session on what had emerged. In a later Meeting for Worship for Business, the gathered body was asked to consider what the way forward might be. As Friends ministered, it became apparent that the time was both right and ripe for the Yearly Meeting to again have a Peace Committee. Nominations Committee was asked to bring names forward for service to Interim Yearly Meeting in November, and in the meantime a working group was to be formed to come with proposals for how the committee should work and what its remit would be.

This process has given Friends time to converse, sift, reflect on and discern the way forward. If other Yearly Meetings in our Section are thinking along similar lines, our experience may be of help.

News from the Quaker United Nations Office in Geneva

Sustaining Peace and Human Rights

This June, QUNO co-hosted a human rights discussion at United Nations (UN) headquarters in New York, bringing together representatives from all of the UN's three pillars of peace and security, human rights and development. Only a year ago, this topic would have found little convening power.

During the event, moderated by Andrew Tomlinson, Director of QUNO New York, Florence Foster, our Representative for Peace & Disarmament, presented findings from QUNO's recent study exploring how the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) can be leveraged to sustain peace by better identifying human rights violations that, left unaddressed, could lead to conflict. The UPR is a UN process that reviews the human rights records of all 193 UN Member States in a five-year cycle. Florence's presentation was followed by a panel that offered a unique opportunity for senior representatives of civil society, UN agencies and Member States to discuss how best to implement recent resolutions calling on the UN to better integrate human rights and peacebuilding, as two mutually reinforcing strands of work.

Historically, the UN's work in these closely linked areas has too often been siloed, with human rights discussions happening mainly in Geneva. QUNO has sought to bridge the silos between human rights and peacebuilding by looking at how institutions in New York and Geneva, as well as in the field, can better work together. QUNO looks forward to its continued collaboration with all actors on better integrating human rights and sustaining peace, and encouraging a more holistic and integrated approach at the international and local level.

Migration

Negotiations on the UN's Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration are due to end in mid-July. The New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants in September 2016 initiated this two-year process to develop twin global agreements aimed at improving the response to refugees and migrants.

QUNO has been working to support an ambitious, effective and human rights-based global compact. Our fourth and most recent paper, published in June, is a compilation of agreed language that relates to the human rights of migrants from treaty law, UN General Assembly

resolutions and Human Rights Council resolutions. It was compiled to provide an easy-to-use source to assist State representatives in ensuring that the Global Compact for Migration does not fall below or undermine existing standards. While the working draft of the Compact that was issued just before the final round of negotiations is far from all we would have hoped, it is certainly not all we feared. QUNO will continue efforts to ensure it makes a real difference in the lives of people migrating.

More information on our earlier work in this area can be found in our Briefing for Friends and on our website at quno.org/areas-of-work/refugees-and-migrants.

Continued engagement at the international climate negotiations

Now in our sixth year offering quiet diplomacy at the international climate negotiations, QUNO continues to host off-the-record dinners for negotiators, and side-events at the conferences to help build communication and understanding between a diverse group of countries.

As observers of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), we engage negotiators, climate scientists, civil society and government representatives on the need to include sustainable economic systems, consumption and lifestyles, as well as nature regeneration, in their approaches to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

QUNO remains concerned by increased attention on geo-engineering and technical fixes, many of which fail to address the root causes of current climate change. In April, we published a second edition of A Negotiator's Toolkit, a resource for international climate negotiators that outlines concise cases for urgent, rights-based climate action. It includes updated climate science, economic findings, arguments for gender-sensitive climate policy and policies with the most potential to limit the impacts of climate change. We are currently transforming this work into a booklet for government officials, and another for citizens. We are supporting Britain Yearly Meeting and FWCC to prepare a similar booklet for Quaker and other faith communities.

Sign up to receive QUNO newsletters and monthly updates at quno.org/mailling-list, or visit quno.org and follow @QuakerUNOffice on Facebook and Twitter to learn more about our work.

“So Friend, How Many Leaflets Should We Print? ...50, 100, 1000?”



Andrew Lane, Quaker Council for European Affairs Director and Member of Belgium and Luxembourg YM writes:

‘How big should we dream?’, or *‘What can we realistically do?’* Political action is a form of witness, even if we know that it will not make a difference. It might for example be more useful for a group of Friends to spend an hour talking to people in the street, rather than writing a statement that few will read.

Here I give two examples of situations, and bullet-point a few practical suggestions further below.

If we believe change is really possible then we need room for a crowd

I was recently with a Quaker Meeting that was worried about a far-right march being planned in their city against the building of a new Mosque.

Several wonderful Friends had the foresight and courage to act – and had begun to organise a public meeting. Excellent speakers had been found and many more Friends had volunteered to help on the night. However, the event was to take place in their Meeting House, 20 minutes walk from the city centre and with room for only 25 chairs. For this reason it was decided that it would only be advertised to Friends and a local interfaith group. I think that with only a small amount of extra work this Meeting could hire a university lecture theatre in the city centre. Then send an email to every student society listed on the student union website, and write to every faith group and ask them to nominate 5 of their congregation to attend.

QCEA has recently taken a risk with organising larger public events. Twice we have hired 300 seater cinemas to show films and host public discussions on the important issues. On one occasion our event was only half full, but on another it was over-flowing. Don't be afraid to charge a 5 euro entry fee to help cover your costs.

How many copies should we print?

Similarly, I am proud of the improvements QCEA has been making in its written publications. Our shorter reports are commended by politicians and officials for their ease of understanding. Our peacebuilding handbook for policymakers, *Building Peace Together*, has had very positive comments from diplomats and practitioners who are using it in conflict affected countries.

It is now time to get our publications to larger audiences. *Building Peace Together* was a good start. We used an effective combination of our contacts database, website and social media to share it with tens of thousands of people.

It often costs just a few extra euros to ‘sale-up’ and print double the number of leaflets or publications. When giving out printed materials to sympathetic people, instead of giving them one copy - why not offer them 5 copies and ask them to help distribute them to their friends. QCEA has tried this with some of our outreach material during 2017-18 and it is working well.

Here are a few things I think we should consider:

1. Get out of your usual Meeting place
2. Don't print one-hundred leaflets, print one-thousand
3. Have a next step: What is the event or action after the one you are currently organising?
4. Spend time building new relationships and try to co-organise events with people who are not already part of the traditional peace movement. Think especially about finding people who don't look like you. It takes effort to build coalitions across society, but there is so much power in it.
5. Keep supporting each other: The EMES website has details of an exciting Border Meeting, EMES Peace and Service Consultation, and a QCEA-Woodbrooke Study Tour taking place during the historic Brexit week.

EMES Annual Meeting 2018 Bergen

From 21-24 June around 90 Friends from around EMES (and 2 from Kenya) gathered at the Åsane Folk High School, outside Bergen. This gathering celebrated both the 80th anniversary of EMES and the 200th anniversary of Norway Yearly Meeting.

We hope you enjoy these photos. With thanks to photographers Mick Johnson and Kerstin Mangels.



European and Middle East Section of FWCC in session



Former EMES clerks, Rachel Bewley-Bateman (2011-2015), Marianne Ijspeert, (1999-2000) and Marisa Johnson, current Executive Secretary



Hans Eirik Aarek and Penny Heymans, Norway Yearly Meeting



EMES Secretaries. From left: Tony Fitt (1998-2002), Marisa Johnson (2008-), Hans Weening (1993-1998), Franco Perna (1983-1993), Michael Eccles (joined as Assistant Secretary in 2018)



A rest on an energetic hike in free time



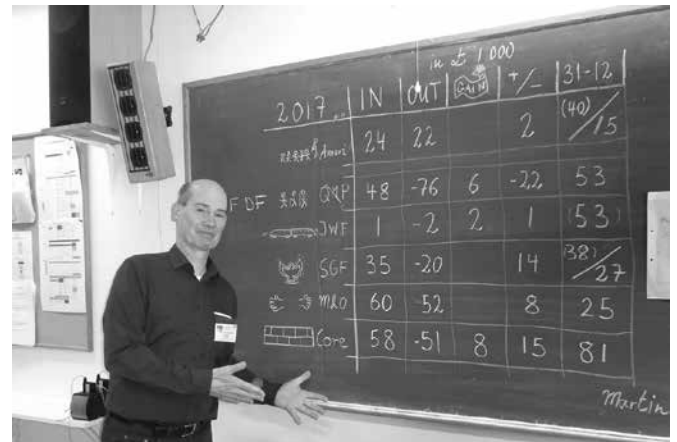
Dan Flynn and Friends working on the Epistle



Susanna Mattingley, Sustainability and Communications Officer, FWCC World Office



Esther Zijerveld, Lara Marie Wik, Lynda Berry, George Thurley & David Mangels



A happy Treasurer, Martin Touwen, Netherlands Yearly Meeting, presenting the accounts outturn for 2017



Nancy Edith Kidiya Mijega, Africa Section Office, with Annika Hollsing, Sweden Yearly Meeting

12 Ways to Spot a Quaker Household

European and Middle East Young Friends

Emmie Touwen, Netherlands Yearly Meeting, writes:

Moving from a busy student-type house to a small apartment with my partner has been lovely. I'm immensely enjoying having our own kitchen, having a living room as well as a bedroom, and turning the house into one cosy space that adheres to our wishes. Now that I'm living together with another Quaker and we get to make all the decisions I've been noticing more and more how we make our home reflect our Quakerly lifestyle. We put our faith into action in a lot of small ways. I've started to wonder: are these specific to us or are they universal to all Quakers?

- At least one image of the two mules. Because come on, who has never visited the Friends House gift shop? Ours hangs in our bedroom so we are reminded of the benefits of cooperation first thing in the morning.
- A large waste-sorting station. Following the options our city provides we sort our waste into compost, hard plastics, paper and rest. And not only that. We also love to talk to our friends in other cities about their sorting options. "Did you know that Leuven now has a pink bag for soft plastic?" "Where do you think mushroom cartons go?"
- Quaker literature. Literature from other religions. Sustainability, peace or simplicity related books. We Quakers love to educate ourselves! Be it through the little red publications of the Cary Lecture or through the Young Quaker Podcast.
- Bikes! Fair enough, we live in a big city so we probably wouldn't have a car anyway. However, we bike and use public transport so religiously that people call us crazy. Especially when we arrive at work sopping wet.

"One car less"

- Sewing kits, tool kits, a tyre repair kit. As part of our commitment to sustainability we love to repair things. Combine this with a certain disregard of conventions and your iron never needs replacing either.

- It's always a bit cold. Brrr. Why do Quakers value sustainability over comfort? Is it our Calvinist heritage? Our love of simplicity? Or do we just really like to wear the hoodies we've gathered at various events?
- What we like to call our "Quaker propaganda". If our friends and family refuse to listen to our endless stories about why silence is so great, we can at least indoctrinate them with the postcards we send them or the ones adorning our toilet walls. "If war is the answer we need a new question!"
- At least one Quaker Oats joke.

I was recently at a Quaker home where they have two of these:

- Lots of improvised guest-beds. We Friends love our crash pad!
- A large collection of herbal teas. Preferably with names such as "Vitale Vrouw", "Zonnenschijn" and "Knappe Koppen Thee". They soothe us when we get stressed about our many commitments to Quaker roles and committees.
- At least one name-tag that we've accidentally stolen from a Quaker gathering but our conscience demands us to take back some day. Its colours have started to fade from hanging on a pin board so long. (Alternatively, we can leave it in a drawer at Quaker House Brussels for its staff to find about once a month, but that is only for VIPs.)
- Mismatching chairs, plates or cutlery. We love our local second hand shop and don't mind having a somewhat eclectic household as a result. At least one piece of furniture has been painted over several times. (Unless you've just moved in together like we did. But believe me, I've seen my parents do it many times.)

That's it for me, but I am sure there are many more ways. I'd love to hear your ideas!

This article was originally published in Willy & Penn, EMEYF's online magazine.

You can subscribe at www.willyandpenn.com

Witness against the arms fair in Paris

Karina Knight Spencer, France Yearly Meeting, writes:

After two years of regular monthly Skype meetings, get-togethers three times a year and months of solid work the biannual event 'Eurosatory' was here. On the Saturday before the Quakers who arrived early were raising awareness in central Paris with a great 10 piece brass band which drew an appreciative crowd. On Sunday at meeting for worship where there were 36 Quakers from many European countries (which CQI in Paris has not seen in a while) from Sweden, Ireland, UK, Norway, Belgium, Lithuania, Holland, Germany and of course France.

There was a 4 hour preparation workshop on the Sunday afternoon and the next morning we walked slowly and silently past the Saudi Embassy and arms sellers offices with our large banners and partners from Movement de la Paix. We were surprised we were allowed to hold up traffic and take half the road. It worked out well that we could not hand in our letters to the organisers of the event because a researcher we met at Villepinte (the site of Eurosatory) took our letter & handed it personally to the director general over lunch.

Demonstrating in itself does not necessarily get results immediately but contacts are made. It wasn't always easy with torrential rain, illness, rail strikes, ways of demonstrating by other groups, aggressive police action, but things went OK. The weather improved during the week and the cello playing by friend Amit greatly improved our experience.

We are very grateful to have arranged professional media communication and press releases, it resulted in Holly Spencer, our staff member, having many articles and interviews published: including in the Catholic daily, La Croix, the main newspaper in Finland, interviews on Radio France International, Al Jazeera (Arabic - 18000 views on YouTube) and a French YouTube channel feature of our action, shared



Friends at Eurosatory

Photo: Marc Javierre-Kohan

1000 times seen 82,000 times. (www.facebook.com/M.Mondialisation/videos/2209231549093239). Thanks to Holly willing to be our spokesperson and everyone's important contribution.

On the steps to the Eurosatory salon we are faced with those who do not agree with us and we have to listen to their arguments, which clarifies our response. The comments 'war is always going to be profitable', or 'you can demonstrate because of us', 'you are naive' and the double edged 'bon courage' rain down on us. At times we felt we were there for the workers, those who were positive who said 'we had to be there', 'we were doing a good job' and gave us the thumbs up. We handed out nearly 10,000 leaflets about the alternatives to the arms trade.

Julia Ryberg helped immensely when she said she was 'love bombing' those who passed her as she tried to hand them a leaflet, easier than trying to persuade! Annika Hultman Löfvendahl said: "It was an overwhelming and unforgettable week in my life, you were so supporting and loving and caring, and so the ambience of the group became extraordinarily warm and Quakerish! I am so happy that I had the opportunity to be a part of this important action."

Now we will rethink SFW's direction, shape and effectiveness. Ideas already abound and we will be inviting all contributions as to our future.

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.



Erik Dries, Netherlands Yearly Meeting, and Friends at Eurosatory *Photo: Marc Javierre-Kohan*

News from Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre

Warm greetings from Woodbrooke!

Recently, we have been thankful for the welcome our Head of Learning, Simon Best, received at this year's EMES annual meeting at Åsane, near Bergen. We think it is important that Woodbrooke is represented at such events so that more people can learn about the opportunities we offer, we are pleased that strengthening the partnership between EMES and Woodbrooke is part of the EMES strategy plan and we look forward to working on this with EMES and Friends across the Section. We were delighted that another member of Woodbrooke staff, Mark Russ, was able to lead a Bible Study on Revelations 21 (the theme of annual meeting) by video and we hope that lots of meetings will use this material when it is shared with representatives after the gathering.

It was also a pleasure to meet young Friends from Norway, who spent a day or so with us during their recent trip to the UK. Together we explored Quaker history and spirituality, as well as looking at our processes for personal and community discernment. We are still enthused by our partnership event back in February with Quaker Council for European Affairs where we explored William Penn's vision for Europe and thought about the shape of current European politics.



As usual, we continue to offer training and support to Friends serving their Quaker communities, whether that is at one of our regional events, on-the-road at their local meetings, online or onsite at Woodbrooke. Of particular note was the workshop on 'Being a Quaker Clerk' we ran for Germany Yearly Meeting. This event was run by Julia Ryberg, Arne Springorum and Esther Köhring, who are known to many, and was part funded by the Catchpool Fund (see below).

June also saw us host a conference organised by Centre for Post-Graduate Quaker Studies and Quaker Studies Research Association. We welcomed Quaker academics from all over the world. This year's George Richardson Lecture focused on William Penn and was given by Andrew Murphy of Temple University, Philadelphia.

Looking forward, September's *Transgress & Transcend* will be a chance to explore issues of gender and sex in bible stories with playwright, scholar and activist, Peterson Toscano, whilst October's *Forced Migration and Human Rights* will take a timely look at the current global migration crisis.

www.woodbrooke.org.uk/item/transgress-transcend/
www.woodbrooke.org.uk/item/forced-migration-and-human-rights/

We'd also like to highlight, *Bayard Rustin: Reflections on his life and witness*. This is an online course, led by Nicole Hirschfelder of University of Tübingen, Germany, and will look at the life of one of the most important civil, human, and labour activists of the twentieth century. For more information see www.woodbrooke.org.uk/item/bayard-rustin-reflections-on-his-life-and-witness

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.

We think these other courses may be of interest...

Courses at Woodbrooke

Stories for our time: Storytelling as a Tool for Peace, a Tool for Change 10 -12 August. Over the weekend we will explore how stories can have the power to change our world and you'll gain some insights in how to tell them. www.woodbrooke.org.uk/item/stories-for-our-time/

Threshing and Clearness 10-12 September

We will explore how these well-established but little practised processes work and how they relate to the decision making Meeting for Worship for Business. www.woodbrooke.org.uk/item/threshing-and-clearness/

Online Courses

Living the Heart of Christianity 03 September – 12 October

Julia Ryberg will lead this six-week online retreat taking its inspiration from Marcus J. Borg's 'The Heart of Christianity'. www.woodbrooke.org.uk/item/living-the-heart-of-christianity/

Meeting for Worship for Business 17 September – 14 October

www.woodbrooke.org.uk/item/meeting-for-worship-for-business-an-online-course/

What is actually going on in a meeting for worship for business? Why do we do what we do? What is the spiritual underpinning? This course will help us to understand our decision making process better, whether we are serving as clerks or are Friends on the benches.

Exploring Quaker Spirituality 08 November – 13 December

A six-week webinar series asking the questions, what Quaker spirituality is all about and how might it speak to us today? www.woodbrooke.org.uk/item/exploring-quaker-spirituality/

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/

Diary Dates 2018

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

9-12 August 2018: Norway Yearly Meeting
kveker@kveker.org

1-2 September 2018: Annual Gathering of Friends (Amici) in Italy, Fattorie Faggioli, Borgo Basino, Forlì, Italy luciabiondelli@gmail.com

7-9 September 2018: Border Meeting, Jugendakademie Walberberg, Wingert, Germany
border.meeting@gmail.com

7 October 2018: World Quaker Day,
<http://www.worldquakerday.org/>

25-28 October 2018: German Yearly Meeting, Bonn, Germany clerks@quaeker.org

27-30 October 2018: France Yearly Meeting, Paris, France assembleedefrance@gmail.com

16-18 November 2018: Peace and Service Consultation, Quaker House, Bad Pyrmont, Germany emes@fwccemes.org

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

If you are receiving this copy of Among Friends this means we are holding your address in our database. Due to the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) across the European Union in May 2018 we need to check that you are happy with this. If you would like to know what data we hold about you or would like us to remove you from our database please email emes@fwccemes.org. The introduction of the GDPR affects our ability to keep personal data indefinitely, without good cause, or without ascertaining periodically continued willingness for the data to be held.

FWCC invites you to join Quakers around the world for **World Quaker Day**, in its 5th year on 7 October. The theme, **Crossing Cultures, Sharing Stories** draws us into our shared experience of worship, celebrating our wonderful diversity of expression. Church to church, meeting to meeting, country to country, and section to section, we feel the power of God collecting us into a faithful family. We welcome all expressions of Quaker worship!

How will **you** celebrate World Quaker Day? Ideas about how to work with the theme can be found on the Resources page: <http://www.worldquakerday.org/>

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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Account Name – CAF Bank Ltd

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Account Number – 00025578

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Deadline for Among Friends 143: 1 November 2018