

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)
CHEADLE HULME MEETING
Sunday 12 April 2015

8 Friends present.

1. Readings. Paragraphs 12 and 13 of *Advices and Queries* have been read in Meeting for Worship.

2. Intervisitation. Susan Clark will visit Disley Meeting in May.

3. East Cheshire Meeting, March Business Meeting. The Friends appointed attended this meeting and a report was given after meeting for worship. The relevant minutes have been noted.

(a) Equality Week. Further to Minute 15.03.11 and Minute 3(c) of our last meeting, our offer of £50 for printing was gratefully accepted.

(b) Out of the Silence. (Minute 15.03.12) Friends agree to consider a performance in Cheadle Hulme. Susan Clark agrees to propose the idea to Churches Together. Peter Eccles agrees to organise the event if it is in the autumn.

(c) Local meeting contributions to the Northern Friends Peace Board. (Minute 15.03.13) Friends are asked to contribute £4 each during the year to Northern Friends Peace Board.

(d) July Area Meeting. (Minute 15.03.14) We note that July Area Meeting is to be held in the new Stockport Meeting House rather than in Cheadle Hulme.

4. Meeting finances. Further to Minute 5 of our last meeting:

(a) Annual Report. We have received a draft Annual Report and approve this after amendments (attached).

(b) 2014 Accounts. The accounts for 2014 are not yet completed, but provisional figures suggest that the General Purposes Fund went down from about £5,000 to about £4,000, in part due to a reduction in contributions from Friends

Last year we suggested to Friends an individual contribution to the meeting of £80. In view of the reduced General Purposes Fund we agree to suggest an individual contribution of £90 this year.

We have recently revised the way in which we collect funds and donate them to other charities, having done away with the practice of having monthly special collections. And so we ask Alan Ingram to remind Friends of this change in the letter he writes to Friends requesting donations.

5. Churches Together July Meeting. Further to Minute 9 of our last meeting, it is suggested that the meeting in July should be a semi-programmed Meeting for Worship. The event is on Monday 27 July at 7:00 for 7:30 at the meetinghouse. As we intend to hold as near to a Quaker meeting as we are able, it is essential to have a core group of Friends to keep the Meeting on the night. So, Friends are asked to make every effort to attend.

6. Midweek meeting for worship. Further to Minute 6(f) of our December Meeting, we revisited the possibility of having a mid-week meeting for Worship. This is something that we hope to do, but we are not yet sure what day and time is best. Friends are encouraged to share with the clerks what they are looking for in a mid-week meeting so that something can take shape.

7. Facebook. Further to Minute 7 of our last meeting, Taylor Giacoma held a follow up session after meeting for worship on 15 March.

8. Date of May Business Meeting. As many Friends are away on the first Sunday of May, and as we do not anticipate having any time-sensitive business for that day, we agree to not have a Business Meeting in May.

9. Area Meeting in May. We appoint Alan Ingram to attend the Area Meeting on 10 May at Frandley.

Signed, Taylor Giacoma and Peter Eccles, co-clerks.

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) Cheadle Hulme Meeting

Annual Report for the year ending 31 December 2014

The past year has been a challenging one for our Meeting family. The number of us gathering on a Sunday has, overall, gone down a bit, with some Friends finding Light elsewhere and others facing great difficulties. Some of us are struggling with illness, and some of us are devoted carers for spouses who are struggling with illness. But we have loved and upheld one another throughout, and the year was not without its joys.

We were glad to receive into membership Michael Nash, previously an attender, in October, and Taylor Giacoma, via transfer of membership, in June. We sent greetings to Christchurch Meeting in New Zealand which Alan Ingram and Evelyn Ingram delivered personally on a visit with a Friend from that Meeting in December. We had an outing to the National Arboretum in August, where we met with local Friends and learned about the construction of the Quaker contribution to the Arboretum.

We have had several happy events at our meetinghouse. In August, we gathered with family and Friends to celebrate the 80th birthday of Kevin Thompson, a very special event indeed. We hosted a couple of lunches, including a Lenten lunch, in conjunction with Churches Together, to raise funds for Christian Aid in February and a lunch in aid of the Cape Town Peace Centre in June. We also had a more casual after-Meeting lunch whilst listening to *The Living Space*, a recording by The Kindlers. In June we had a series of Meetings for Learning, during which Friends shared their stories about their individual Quaker journeys. In October, at the conclusion of Quaker Week, Friends set up a table with leaflets outside the meetinghouse in an effort to reach out to the community. The event was very positive, and we hope to do it again.

In addition to the Lenten Lunch, we took part in a Churches Together musical event in January in which our contribution was a pleasant surprise to the other churches and was very well-received. Churches Together meetings are now open to all and take place in each church in turn and, for the first time since this change, we hosted a meeting in January. A recent issue about our involvement in Churches Together has been a proposed new constitution, which would have meant that it would not have been possible for us to continue in full membership. Churches Together has now agreed to adopt the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland basis of membership, which resolves the problem.

East Cheshire Area Meeting and our local meeting have been very much focused on peace this past year, largely due to the fact that 2014 marked the one hundredth anniversary of the start of World War I. Various literature has been distributed throughout the year, including *Teach Peace* packs which we shared with local schools. We took part in an International Carols for Peace event, held at the Stockport Art Gallery, in which we marked the Christmas Truce of 1914. Christmas carols from several languages and readings from various perspectives written at the time were shared.

The Area Meeting has also been focused on the issue of equality, particularly with deep cuts in welfare affecting Friends and many around us. We have engaged with local food banks, sought out discussions with local government, and our local meeting has signed the Stockport Quaker Statement on Equality.

Financially, the Meeting is in a satisfactory state, though contributions were down a bit during the year. We invested nearly £9,000 in some much-needed repairs to the meetinghouse, including the repair of the ceiling in the committee room and the reconstruction of the wall outside in front of the meetinghouse. We also spent some time thinking about how we raise money for other charities, and made a decision to discontinue our practice of holding special monthly collections. Instead, we will raise money for our Quaker and Local Projects Fund, from which we draw in response to appeals received.

We are struggling a bit as a Meeting, as we are small in number and it seems we are not always able to meet all of our responsibilities, either internally or externally. Towards the end of the year, we reviewed the state of our Meeting. We shared both our concerns for those aspects of Meeting life which we feel are ailing and our gratitude for what Meeting provides and for each other. We acknowledged that we are facing some difficulties, but we also began exploring some new and exciting ways to strengthen our Meeting community. We finished a challenging year with a renewed commitment to care for one another and a positive outlook on the year ahead.