

THE QUIET WORD



September 2015 issue no.7

Meeting for worship

GILDERSOME Friends Meeting

House 75 Street Lane, Gildersome,
Leeds, LS27 7HX
tel: 0113 2564944 or 07973 450368
Sundays, 10.45 am

ILKLEY Friends Meeting House

Queens Road, Ilkley, Leeds, LS29 9QJ
tel: 01943 600 806 or 01943 601181
Sundays, 10.30 am

ADEL Friends Meeting House

New Adel Lane, Leeds LS16 6AZ
tel: 0113 2676293
Sundays, 10.45 am

CARLTON HILL Central Leeds

Friends Meeting House
188 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds,
LS2 9DX
tel: 0113 2422208
Meetings for worship:
Sundays, 10.45 am

ROUNDHAY

Friends Meeting House
136 Street Lane, Leeds, LS8 2BW
tel: 0113 2933684
Sundays, 10.45 am

OTLEY

Friends Meeting
1st Sunday of month 10:45 at
various houses.
3rd Sunday every month in The Court
House - usually in the Robing room .
Enquiries :0113 318 8084
dmr@cooptel.net

RAWDON

Friends Meeting House-
Quakers Lane, Rawdon, Leeds,
LS19 6HU
tel: 07582 960092
Sundays, 10.45 am

LEEDS UNIVERSITY

Tuesdays, 1.05pm
In Claire Chapel, The Emmanuel
Centre which is alongside the main
entrance to the University of Leeds
Campus opposite the Parkinson
Building (with the white clock tower).
Organised by the Leeds Universities
Chaplaincy

Bedford Court

First and third Wednesdays,
10.30 am



Bolton Abbey - the destination for the Area Meeting day out.

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Please send any submissions for Next month's issue of the Quiet Word to quietword@leedsquakers.org.uk. The Quiet Word is available online from www.leedsquakers.org.uk/activities/a-quiet-word

Forthcoming Events

@ denotes an event that is only open to those who attend Leeds Quaker meetings.

September

Saturday 5th annual outing: Farfield Quaker Meeting House and Bolton Abbey

Sunday 6th 2pm Trident - what next planning meeting at QMH 188 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds

Saturday 12th 1pm to 4pm Heritage Open Day at Rawdon QMH

Sunday 13th 12noon to 4pm Heritage Open Day at Gildersome QMH

Monday 14th 7.30pm **Death and Beyond in Christianity & Baha'i faiths** - arranged by Leeds interfaith group, Concord and hosted at QMH 188 Woodhouse Lane, LS2 9DX

Sunday 20th 10.45am Otley Quaker Meeting

Sunday 27th 7.30pm **Amnesty Concert at Rawdon QMH**

October

Friday 9th 'For Conscience Sake' a play about opposition to conscription in World War One. Ilkley QMH.

@Sunday 11th 1pm - 4.15pm **Leeds Area Quaker Meeting at Rawdon QMH**
Topic: **'Spirituality'**

Sunday 11th 7.30pm Amnesty Concert at Rawdon QMH

Saturday 17th 10am to 4pm **Quakers in Yorkshire** at Bootham School, York.

Sunday 18th 10.45am **Otley Quaker Meeting**

Saturday 31st 10am to 1pm Leeds Quaker Criminal Justice Group seminar - all welcome

Annual Outing 2015 Saturday 5th Sept.

Farfield Quaker Meeting House & Bolton Abbey



Meet 12noon to 12.15 in Addingham at 6 Bark Lane, LS29 9QJ by car or bus:

11am No X84 from Woodhouse Moor (11.15 Adel, 11.40 Otley, 12noon Ilkley)

12.30pm double up in cars and travel to Farfield Meeting House for packed lunch

1.15pm Meeting for Worship

2.30pm (?) travel to Bolton Abbey for guided tour then the Cavendish Tearooms

5pm return bus from Addingham

Please contact Martin Ford 01943 879 398 martin.fordfamily@talktalk.net or Robert Keeble if you will be able to come detailing if you can offer or will need a lift from/to Addingham. Parking information is detailed in the Quiet Word

The Asylum and Refugee Question

Refugee: *a person who feels unwelcome or unsafe in their home country and who flees for safety.*

Asylum: *a shelter from persecution or hardship. Politically, the right to seek protection from another sovereign authority.*

The mass media has gone to considerable lengths recently to whip up feelings and create tensions about the number of migrants “swarming” into Britain. The facts do not support this. Official government statistics show that between January and March 2015 Britain received 7,335 applications for asylum. France received 14,770, Germany 73,120 and Hungary 32,810. Those stating a wish to remain in the UK represented just 4% of the total. In other words 144 people for every million of the UK population. Anybody who enters this country without the required legal paperwork is deemed to be “illegal”. Most do not choose. They simply finish up here. The media is very good at picking up on the minority and portraying it as the norm. Given the circumstances under which people are fleeing from persecution this cruel definition must apply to practically everyone.

It cannot be denied that the situation on a global scale is a severe problem, with so many countries across the Middle East, Africa, and indeed Eastern Europe, controlled by corrupt or terrorist regimes where millions fear for their safety. For any government simply to turn its back on the situation and hope it will go away is not an answer. For the media to whip up hatred is unforgivable.

How are asylum seekers treated?

People arriving in this country are transported to a number of assessment centres across the UK. For the North of England it is Angel Lodge in Wakefield. Here they get a full health check and an initial assessment of their claim. Angel Lodge is run by the very



controversial Israeli security company G4S who then moves them to a variety of properties throughout northern England. G4S have “acquired” a large number of properties in the Wakefield, Leeds and Middlesbrough areas which generally are in very poor condition and have proved difficult to let commercially. The security company carries out only absolutely essential maintenance and the absolute minimum of “furnishings”. For a living room, for example, this typically means a couple of garden chairs and a picnic table. In the kitchen you might find a washing machine, but not always, a cooker that has seen better days, a couple of aluminium saucepans, a kettle, a couple of plates (maybe cracked), a couple of cups, and knives and forks and spoons. If the accommodation is for a family quantities might be increased accordingly.

Wherever the asylum seekers finish up they have to make their way to the Immigration Centre at Waterside Court in Kirkstall Road, Leeds once a fortnight at their own expense. Here they have to sign to confirm that they behaved themselves and complied with all the rules and regulations in place. Each person receives a total of £35.39 per week which they obtain from the local Post Office. This is all the money they have to pay for food, clothing, transport or any other costs they may have to incur. They are provided with free accommodation but are not allowed to work or play any part in English social life but any children must attend a local school if they aged between 5 and 17. There the children get free school meals.

It can take anything up to four years for an initial assessment to be converted into “Leave to remain” - at which point they are no longer asylum seekers but refugees. As soon as they are given Leave to Remain all support that they had as an asylum

seeker is cut. They are given 48 hours to leave the accommodation they were provided with and will have to find their own. The £35.39 ceases immediately and they are expected to find a job. They are able to claim Job Seekers Allowance but this can take anything to four weeks to come through. They can apply to the local authority for housing and they will be treated the same as any other applicant and will have to pay the going rent. Leave to Remain lasts for five years after which they expected to apply for UK citizenship or make another claim for Leave to Remain. This application has to be made in person at the Liverpool Immigration Centre, the applicant has to pay the costs of the hearing, the cost of a new biometric identity card (£40) and a contribution to the NHS, all from their own pocket! The details of this last sentence were brought into law in July 2015 and have been condemned by every organisation working in the immigration and asylum field.

If an applicant is refused Leave to Remain, either in the initial stage or at a subsequent application, they will be expected to leave the country within 48 hours. They can appeal the decision but this requires legal representation in order to succeed and lawyers need paying! It must also be done within 3 days of being refused. Also the appeals are usually held at Liverpool and the applicants must appear in person – which also costs money for transport and possibly accommodation. Whilst they are waiting for an appeal they will not be allowed to work or obtain any benefits from the state, except a voucher (an Azure Card) for £35.39 per person which can be exchanged for food, clothing and essential toiletries (but not condoms!) at any supermarket. They will be given temporary housing if needed, but if they refuse it then they do not get the voucher.

If the appeal is refused and they do not leave the country immediately they will be arrested and sent to a detention centre pending removal from the country. Families are broken up and women and children are sent to Yarl's Wood in Bedfordshire. This is run by government contractors Serco as a prison where



family unit.

Serco have rigorously defended the way they run it and the government has refused to act.

people are treated as prisoners, locked up, and prone to sexual harassment.

The contract is worth £85 million to Serco but there is considerable pressure from protest groups for it to be closed and families kept as a

Serco have rigorously

Can you help? Can you get involved?

Whilst waiting for their claims to be settled asylum seekers are not allowed to work. Their knowledge of English is often quite limited. They have a need to talk. If they've been given leave remain they need somewhere to live. Even as an asylum seeker their accommodation is very basic and often less than desirable.

A Friend at Diss Local Meeting in Norfolk put forward the suggestion that if every Friend opened their home to an asylum seeker, Home Secretary Theresa May's 'moral compass might be moved'.

Pete Redwood

Carlton Hill Meeting

Leeds Asylum Seekers' Support Network **Leeds Asylum Seekers Support Network**
(LASSN) <http://lassn.org.uk/> provides support for host accommodation, English at Home, and Befriending. Contact Jon Beech or Catherine Tonge on 0113 373 1759 or email admin@lassn.org.uk if you can help



Positive Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers <http://www.pafras.org.uk>

provides food, clothing, advice, support and a drop-in centre. Contact 0113 262

2163 or use the contact form on the web-page.

Both of these organisations require physical as well as financial help in running their services.



Asylum and Refugee Network - QARN

Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network (QARN)

<http://www.qarn.org.uk> is a national organisation which acts as a sounding board and a support for Quakers

working with refugees and asylum seekers. They hold regular conferences which may be attended by any Quaker (or by any interested party with permission).



13th August 2015

Dear Friends at Carlton Hill Quakers

On behalf of PAFRAS our most grateful and humble thanks for the two cheques that amounted to £135.00 from stalls at the Unity Day Festival at Kirkstall, we are so appreciative of your support as well as the ongoing donations and food that are brought to the PAFRAS Drop In.

PAFRAS had another busy year, visits to the drop in totaled 7,769, (this figure includes people who return weekly for long term support, food and food parcels). The number of hot meals served last year totalled 6,510 and food parcels packed by volunteers, 3,313. Case workers carried out 1,476 casework sessions and ongoing support. 650 people who visited PAFRAS were destitute with no means of financial support, no permission to work. and divest of all civil and social rights.

We thank you so much for all your support and the vital help it will give those who have no financial means for travel costs for Appeals, submitting Fresh Claims to Liverpool, attending court hearings, health appointments, baby milk and nappies, as well as toiletries and food.

With over 60 million people displaced in the world, (according to UNHCR, more than the Second World War), and mass migration movements which has given way to a huge humanitarian crisis in the world, sadly is being met by disproportionate security in Europe and not the vital humanitarian they need.

The UK is refusing to take any people desperately needing to claim asylum, despite signing up to the Refugee Convention. These are mainly Syrians and Eritreans. New immigration legislation passed by the Government to come into force by July this year will end in more people being left destitute.

Thank you all once again for all your support and the part you are all playing to help people in the most desperate circumstances;

Kind Regards

Christine Majid, Manager

Positive Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

PAFRAS, Units 13/14, Chapel Enterprise Centre, 231/235 Chapeltown Road, Leeds, LS7 3DX

Registered Charity Number 1120950

SPARE ROOM

for forced destitute migrants.

Friends Meeting House, Bush Road, London E11 3AU

Tel. 07930643552 E-mail. hostmigrants@yahoo.co.uk Web www.spare-room.org

Hospitality for a person seeking sanctuary?

Could you offer a spare room to a refugee or other forced migrant who is not allowed to work and is denied access to public housing, or do you know anybody who could?

“SPARE ROOM for destitute forced migrants”, finds, selects and supports people willing to offer a spare room to people forced to seek refuge in the UK who are homeless and neither allowed to work or claim any state benefits. We only offer places for people who have not actively supported violence.

Each host is interviewed and assessed for their suitability. We arrange Disclosure and Baring Service clearance checks. Hosts are supported and advised by our host assessors who are well qualified as Social Workers or as a Teacher. All guests are interviewed and assessed. We aim to match host and guest. We generally do not host families with children because with good advocacy a local authority will normally provide for children and families. Law changes proposed by the Government may substantially reduce their obligation and power to do so.

Developing from a concern supported by Wanstead Quaker Meeting in 1996 it is now ecumenical. It is working to become multi-faith. Hospitality is offered on the basis of need and compatibility with any hosts currently having vacancies for new guests. As there are thousands of people in need of such hospitality we seldom have vacancies. We do not keep a waiting list and normally only assess guests if we think we have a place to offer. Our aim is to match hosts and guests as well as possible.

One of our guests was a Tamil speaking Muslim woman from Sri-Lanka refused asylum despite being a minority of a minority at risk from both the Tamil Tigers and the Sinhalese Army. We helped find her a good lawyer to present a fresh application with new evidence. She was able to move on to stay with a family of her own community. Another was a student democracy activist from Syria. A third was a TV journalist from Uganda who criticised the President's policies towards the Acholi in the north. He had been arrested and beaten up. He now has now graduated with an MA from Queen Mary College.

We urgently need more hosts willing to offer hospitality for as long or short a time as suits your circumstances.

If you feel you can be a host please speak to Chris Gwyntopher or Cath Woodall on 07950571256, e-mail hostmigrants@yahoo.co.uk or write to Spare Room, c/o The Friends Meeting House, Bush Road, Wanstead, London E11 3AU. Our web address is <http://www.spare-room.org>.

Spare Room is a national charity matching volunteer hosts with migrants in desperate need. They work closely with QARN (Quaker asylum and Refugee Network).

Leeds Area Bible Study Group



George Fox and early Friends used the Bible as a source of guidance in their lives. Today among Friends there is a wide range of views of the Bible from seeing it as an historical document to those who see it as God's word.

We have been meeting at Rawdon Meetinghouse for several years, although we have warmly welcomed Friends from all Meetings. We are a small group who seek to reflect upon the verses of the Bible using our Quaker insights and personal experiences as we travel along our individual spiritual journeys together.

As guidance we use "The Friendly Bible Study Guide" by Joanne and Larry Spears (pamphlet I BSN 0-620912-2-7) available from Friends House. There are five short questions to help as reflect upon the passage being studied, and we write down our thoughts for each one. There is no pressure to read out answers and we sometimes say "pass" or "I have nothing to add." Often though, it is the briefest of our shared reflections that can shed some new light for someone else in the group.

We have now changed our venue for meetings to the Upper room at Carlton Hill Meetinghouse, still on the first and third Tuesday of the month at 7.30 p.m. We hope that this will be more accessible for people and we will welcome allcomers. One or two visits to see if this is the sort of thing for you will not commit you to anything more unless you wish it to!

We always end the session with a cuppa and a biscuit.

Meetings for September - **Tuesday 4th** and **Tuesday 15th** 7.30pm. All welcome



Heritage Open Days **Gildersome Quaker Meeting House**

Sunday 13th September 12noon to 4pm, 75 Street Lane, LS27 7HX



Visit the historic Meeting House built in 1757

Tours of meeting House, school room and stables

Craft activities for children

Gildersome QMH history talk at 2.30pm

Refreshments

All welcome.....



See <http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/directory/gildersome-quaker-meeting-house-open-day>

Also at Rawdon Saturday 12th 1pm - 4pm. Both Meetings would appreciate help for these events.

Personal reminiscences of Carlton Hill Meeting

by Horace England

Horace died in 1986 aged 95. Before his death, some of his memories were recorded and this second instalment is being printed with permission of his daughter, Mary Rowntree. The first instalment was printed in the July 2015 Quiet Word.

Horace served as the caretaker at the Old Carlton Hill Quaker Meeting House for 24 years starting in 1932.....

It was a little before we got into our stride, having been thrown in at the deep end. We had to gain experience as we went along. The boiler was the first job which had to be mastered. It was a 5 feet by 5 feet by 3 feet coke fired boiler, situated in the basement and the coke was delivered through a chute outside the Meeting House. The boiler was usually burning day and night from October 1st to March 30th and needed to be thoroughly cleaned out and re-light every week. It burned about 30 tons of coke per year. This meant that I shovelled 730 tons of coke during my time at Carlton Hill! But a lot of what goes in has to come out in the form of clinker and altogether I estimate that I shovelled about 1,400 tons. The first ton we brought in 1932 cost 14 shillings and sixpence! Pipes carrying hot water ran throughout the building.

We had 23 January Quarterly Meetings. For many years the meetings were held in the upstairs room and meals in the Meeting House downstairs. All the forms were removed from the Meeting House and stacked into shed outside. They had to go through the windows. This was done on the Friday before Quarterly Meeting by six men employed by John Roylance, who was a member of the Meeting and had a painting and decorating business. This worked well as we could get on with preparing the meals whilst the meeting was in progress. However, after a time someone had a brainwave and the procedure was reversed. Consequently we had to prepare the meals before the meeting and creep on tiptoe across the floor of the upstairs room. I remember one January, I was carrying a basket of crockery from one room to another, when I tripped and down went the basket, crockery and all. What a clatter! It stopped the meeting and for a while two or three rushed out to see what had happened. Many broken cups and saucers, but no broken bones!

At one Quarterly meeting Roland Whiting made

a suggestion that he thought Horace should have a Quarterly Meeting later in the year now and again, not always in the winter. However nothing came of this suggestion, Friends thinking Carlton Hill was the best and most central meeting to attend in the winter. I remember one Quarterly Meeting when it was a foot deep in snow on the Saturday morning and Albert the BBC caretaker and I made a pathway from the road to the Meeting House, although feeling sure that no one would come. How wrong we were! The indomitable spirit of Friends brought more than ever! Queer folk aren't we?

One Quarterly meeting we had a full gathering upstairs, including about 20 children sitting at the Clerks table. It so happened that a few of the premises Committee sitting at the back thought that they felt the floor moving! After the meeting it was decided to seek advice and the floor was declared unsafe. I often shudder to think what might have happened. It was decided to have a new sprung maple floor, suitable for Young Friends to dance on! I think it cost about £100. It meant placing six boxed girders in the Meeting House. The large library stretching from end to end was boxed in, but not the small library on the far side. The girders were swung through the windows and of course the first one went straight through the glass of the panels of the small library, smashing them to pieces! Annie and I had a hectic time, almost every night washing the Meeting House floor and corridor's to keep down the dust. It was months before things were back to normal. It was a grand job well done and provided a base for many happy events for both young and old. Soon the dancing idea began to snowball and before long everybody wanted to book the room for dances. I used to strip the floor two or three times a year using vim to remove the marks, then clean water, afterwards polishing with Ronuk, leaving to dry and polishing with a long handle polisher. No electric polishers in those days. Later an electric polisher was brought, but I still preferred to use the long handled polisher.

Footnote: Quarterly meeting is now called 'Quakers in Yorkshire Gathering' and is still held every January in Leeds. There continues to be four QiY meetings a year, with meetings also being held in April, July and October. The July meeting always has a business session in the morning and then various social activities in the afternoon including walks, visits to places of interest etc. In 2016 Leeds Area Meeting will be hosting the QiY gathering at our Ilkley Quaker Meeting House and volunteers from across Leeds will be needed to help make the day enjoyable for all. In October, part of the day is dedicated to hearing reports from our two Quaker schools in York, which are called , Bootham and The Mount – pupils from the schools normally participate in the day which normally provides a fascinating insight into a Quaker education.

The next QiY gathering is on Saturday 17th October 2015 at Bootham Quaker School, York and anyone who attends Quaker Meetings in Yorkshire is encouraged to attend and in addition to hearing about the schools, we will also be discussing concerns about the proposed TTIP – the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership.

Northern Friends Peace Board.

Quakers and attenders from Wales, Scotland and the northern half of England met at Glasgow Meeting House on Saturday 13th of June 2015.

Accounts for 2014 were presented and approved.

We heard about the Sustainable Security project work which is planning a conference for early 2016 with the aim of

- exploring and identifying opportunities and challenges with regard to influencing opinion and promoting discussion
- raising awareness of how different media can be used
- considering creative ways of presenting information and ideas

We also heard about Building Peace in Diverse Britain project work which has been taking place in West Yorkshire and Lancashire amongst young people from diverse backgrounds. The group recognises the importance of dialogue, listening and building relationships in nurturing conditions for peace. It is also concerned about the prevalence of 'Islamophobia' and the role of government and media in this issue.

We heard about the work of the Quaker Scottish Parliamentary Engagement Officer who was appointed at the beginning of this year. Significant areas of her work overlap with NFPB concerns, in particular social justice and the economy, militarism in schools and Trident.

Concern was raised about the rise of militarism in schools through seemingly innocent recruitment videos for the armed services.

Work continues on influencing the decision on replacing Trident (which was a significant factor in the success of the SNP in Scotland). There will be an opportunity for this at the International Day of Peace on 21st September.

We noted the forthcoming anniversaries of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, in particular an interfaith commemoration and service taking place in Friends House and simultaneous events in Edinburgh.

The next meeting is in Perth on **26th September**. Contact nfpb@gn.apc.org for details

Fiona Pacey, Rawdon Meeting



AVP IN LEEDS

- Volunteers needed!

AVP (Alternatives to Violence Project) began as a Quaker initiative in prisons in New York in the 1970s and started working in the UK in 1990 with support from Friends House. In 1997 it became an independent organization, AVP Britain, but there is still much Quaker involvement.

You can find out more about AVP and its Quaker connections at the links below:

<http://www.quakersintheworld.org/quakers-in-action/42>

<http://www.quakersintheworld.org/quakers-in-action/83>

We started running AVP weekend workshops in Leeds this year and so far have run two, one in March and one in May with further weekends planned in October and December. These low-cost friendly workshops are for anyone who wants to deal with conflict and build good relationships, whether that means managing a strong temper or handling difficult situations with other people. From the response that we have had so far, we know that AVP workshops are needed in Leeds and the potential exists to establish a busy programme.

But for AVP Leeds to be successful we really need some new volunteers to help us in a variety of ways:

- To train as workshop facilitators
- To help with fundraising to pay the salary for our development worker and expenses associated with the workshop weekends. (Many of our participants can't afford to pay the full fee, and we need to pay venue costs as well as travel and accommodation costs for our volunteer facilitators)
- Offering overnight accommodation on Friday/ Saturday to facilitators at workshop weekends
- Doing the vital job of publicizing our work through social media, face to face community events, and distributing leaflets and posters.
- Serving on the steering group.

We have developed an induction and training process for each of these roles and we will ensure that volunteers receive all the support that they need.

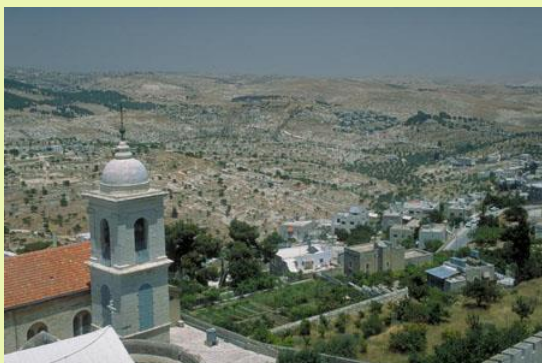
Might you be interested in becoming involved with AVP? Or do you know someone else who has the skills/interest to do any of the jobs that need doing to develop AVP into a strong and vibrant organisation in Leeds?

If you would like to know more, and/or explore possible ways of becoming involved, please get in touch with Riley Coles (AVP Leeds development worker) on 07479 982703 or leeds@avpbritain.org.uk



'God has Broken Down the Dividing Walls' (Eph 2:14)

A Half day conference about Palestine and the impact of the Separation Barrier on the lives of ordinary people



Bethlehem as seen in traditional pilgrimage brochures



The reality of some parts of Bethlehem – as experienced by pilgrims from the Leeds Diocese in 2013

Sat 26 September
10:30 – 1:30pm
Oxford Place Centre
Oxford Place
Leeds

This event has been organised by **Leeds Pax Christi** and the **Justice & Peace Commission** of the Leeds Diocese and is part of the World Week for Peace in Palestine & Israel.

Lunch will be available at the end of the Conference. Admission to the event is free but a collection will be taken to help defray expenses.

An opportunity to

- Find out what is happening in the Holy Land today
 - Hear about CAFOD's involvement
 - Listen to an 'Ecumenical Accompanier's' experiences
- Reflect on what the Christian response to the situation should be
- Pray for the people of Palestine and Israel



Book a place by going to www.leedsjp.org.uk or email jandp@dioceseofleeds.org.uk

Friends of Sabeel - Yorkshire

**“Working For Peace for the People of Palestine
and Israel”**



Forthcoming meetings in Leeds:

**Wed 30 Sept: 2.15 - 6.00 pm Kairos Britain: Taking
Action for Palestine**

The afternoon will include:

- An introductory film to **Kairos Palestine**
- An overview of the history of the **Kairos Britain** movement
- **Analysis of the situation** in Palestine and Israel
- **Workshops** on taking action (including campaigning with Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions)

Rev Brian Brown will speak about his personal experience of campaigning during **South African Apartheid** and how we can use BDS as a tool for non-violent creative resistance to the Occupation.

**Wed 25 Nov: 6.00 - 8.00 pm Bethlehem: Keeping Hope
Alive**

Gifts for Christmas will be on sale.

Venue: Mill Hill Unitarian Chapel, City Square, Leeds LS1 5EB



Friends of Sabeel UK
Working for Justice and Peace in Palestine

www.friendsofsabeel.org.uk/

What exactly is TTIP? And why all the fuss.



You will probably have seen groups in town waving banners saying “No TTIP” and “Stop TTIP”. You may have even read something in the newspapers. Whenever I talk about it I am asked to explain it. I am no expert. Just somebody with a very inquiring mind and an insatiable quest for answers. I have compiled the following over the past year and I hope serves to help understand why it is such a bad thing for Britain. But don't take my word. Please following the links at the end of

*the article. Do a bit of searching on the internet. There is a wealth of material out there – both from each of the respective governments, and from numerous protest groups. The European Parliament takes the view that unless you are involved in the parliamentary process you are not sufficiently informed to form an opinion! We should therefore leave it to the politicians! **NO!!!!!!** Every European citizen should know exactly what is going on because it will have a profound effect on everybody. Here's why.*

The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) is a proposed free trade agreement between the United States of America and the European Union. It was first mooted during secret discussions between the US and the EU during 2013. In March 2014 what should have been a secret draft proposal was conveniently leaked. This forced the EU to hold restricted public consultations, providing a very limited set of data. This in turn led to action by a number of NGO's to obtain more information. In January 2015 the EU finally agreed to publish very selected parts of an overview. They are still refusing to publish full details. A final agreement is not expected until mid-2016.

The EU has recently published a number of glossy booklets in an attempt to put their side of the argument. They maintain that it would boost the EU's economy by 120 billion Euros a year and the US economy by 90 billion Euros a year. It would also substantially boost world trade for everybody – so they claim. Conversely, the United States Center for Economic and Policy Research has pointed out that trade barriers between the US and the EU are already very low and the only way they could be lowered further would be by over-riding national regulations – such as fracking, food regulations, finance regulations and copyright laws. Putting it into economic terms, they assert that such gains would not be any greater than \$50 a year!!!!

The Global Development and Environment Institute has also looked at the data supplied by the EU and come to the conclusion that such a

trade agreement would have a negative effect on income and jobs throughout the EU and could only result in a lowering of standards.

The EU is absolutely adamant that our laws protecting food, agriculture and the environment are not for negotiation. Do you believe that?? On 2nd May 2015 US negotiators applied pressure over proposed pesticide criteria . A number of pesticides containing endocrine disrupting chemicals were in a draft criteria to be banned. The US insisted that the proposed ban be dropped. The EU obliged later on the same day and the chemicals were removed from the list.

The American Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy announced in May 2014 that “American agricultural companies were united in campaigning” for the EU adopt the use of chlorine wash for all meat and poultry products – standard practice in the USA but banned in the EU. This currently prevents American companies from exporting meat products to Europe.

Seventy six members of U.S. Congress are lobbying on behalf of US agribusinesses to be able to sue the EU directly for any legislation that exceeds World Trade Organisation standards if TTIP goes through in its present form. Most EU food standards are far in excess of WTO rules.

A bigger worry to a number of NGO's is a small clause inserted into nearly all trade agreements for the past ten years or so. The clause is called an Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS). It allows an investor to bring a case directly against the country hosting its investment without the

intervention of government. It was introduced because there were circumstances where some investors felt they had been disadvantaged and needed some form of redress.

How does it work? The case is not brought through a court but is instead taken to an “independent” tribunal. Each party appoints a lawyer (usually a high-profile lawyer) and they then appoint a third. The three lawyers assess the claim between them. Neither claimant or defendant is allowed to be present and tribunal's decision is final under international trade law (there can be no appeal). Since 1989 there have been a total of 97 such tribunals. It is significant that the claimant has won in each case and been able to claim substantial damages.

In November 2013 a number of states in Canada decided to ban fracking. Mining company Lone Star decided to invoke ISDS for “loss of predicted profits” and succeeded in extracting nearly \$30 million from the combined states.

Also in 2013, Germany decided to phase out nuclear power plants. Swedish company Vattenfall was responsible for building and maintaining many of the plants. They invoked ISDS, claiming that they would lose 1.8 billion Euros in projected profits. They won their case.

The EU claims: “We want to clarify the basis on which investors can invoke ISDS; we want to strengthen governments rights to regulate; tribunals must allow interested parties to make

submissions.” So far the EU has caved in on each of the US demands. Can they fight this one? The US has stated clearly that ISDS is an essential part of the agreement. If the treaty goes through, there will be no possibility of a future government re-nationalising the railways, or any government believing the NHS can remain free at point of use, given that David Cameron is already opening it to private investment.

Leeds North MP Fabian Hamilton has said he supports TTIP in principle but wants the ISDS clause removed. MEP's Linda McAvan and Timothy Kirkhope have both announced broad support for TTIP but would like to see the ISDS clause removed. East Yorkshire MP Greg Knight, when I challenged him last year, firmly supported TTIP and stated that ISDS “might, at worst, mean a small fine”!!!!!!

For more information see the EU website at <http://tinyurl.com/pmu5x48>

Read the report from Scarborough Friend and Quaker Economics member David Malone at <http://tinyurl.com/pflu2vl>

See David Malone's video on Youtube at <http://tinyurl.com/oywape7>

And here is what our MEP's are thinking <http://tinyurl.com/no6mhlx>

Pete Redwood

Carlton Hill

We have been led to the conviction that, despite a culture of state secrecy, we must strive to bring about openness in our country. Secrecy bolsters power and leads to deceit and the abuse of power. At times a sensitive reticence is required but, in working in the spirit of love and trust rather than fear, we seek to discern the boundary between that reticence and secrecy.

Quaker faith & practice 23.91

The Quakers were born during the first great struggle to establish democracy and the rule of parliament and law in this country. I think it is imperative that Quakers be there to defend what we once helped win.

David Malone

Christ in Catastrophe

by

Emil Fuchs (13 May 1874 - 13 February 1971)

Emil Fuchs was born in Germany. A religious socialist, he was one of the first Lutheran pastors to join the Social Democratic Party of Germany. As a devoted pacifist, he later joined the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). He was a Fellowship holder at Woodbrooke College (now Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre), Selly Oak, Birmingham during 1934-5.



Let us hear the challenge of Christ. There may be hard disappointment and bitter suffering on the road he points to. He never promised quick or easy victory. Only by our suffering can we overcome prejudices bred in millions of people by the inability of Christians to speak to their times. Mahatma Gandhi led a great nation along his way of truth and came to a great creative success. When will the Christian conscience be strong enough to unite those who call themselves after Jesus in the building of a world of brotherhood? When will we be ashamed to call Christian those who trust in the sword?

So long as God is an idea in which we believe only with the mind, whilst in real life our chief aim is earning money and winning influence and power, we will never overcome the inward weakness that is servility. We will never overcome that outward weakness, nationalism, so long as it is more important to defend the honor of a nation against accusation than to find the right relation to God in our conscience.

What does it mean, this trusting in God? I think it means that we are certain that spiritual power is life's precious foundation. It means that we are called as nations and as individuals to take a great task, to lose our lives and to find the life and power which overcomes distrust and hatred and cowardice.

Taken from pamphlet no 49 issued by Pendle Hill, a Quaker retreat and study centre in Philadelphia, USA

What's on at Woodbrooke



Woodbrooke is the Quaker Study College at Selly Oak in Birmingham.

A Friendly Introduction to the Quaker Way 4th - 6th September

Relatively new to Quakers? Wonder what happens during Meeting for Worship? A weekend of exploration, reflection and conversation.

Mindfully Together 6th - 11th September

An exploration of the Buddhist practice of Thich Naht Hanh

From Militarisation to Peace 11th - 13th September

One of a series of three linked weekends following on from Diana Francis' Swarthmore Lecture 'Faith, Peace and Power'. Led by Diana Francis and Steve Whiting.

Spiritual Beings on a Human Journey 18th - 20th September

A conference organised jointly by Friends Fellowship of Healing and Quaker Fellowship for Afterlife Studies.

At Swarthmore Hall, Ulverston, Cumbria

A Friendly Introduction to Membership 2nd - 4th October

What is Quaker Membership and how do I apply? A weekend exploring the history, meaning and benefits of membership.

Full details of all of the above on the Woodbrooke website -

<http://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/pages/courses.html>

Bursaries are available. Speak to an Elder or Overseer