

Lewes Quaker Meeting Newsletter

March 2023



“Thither George Fox went, being accompanied with John Audland and John Camm. John Audland would have ... George Fox [go] into the ... pew where usually he or the preacher did sit, but he refused, and took a back seat ... and John Camm sat ... by him, where he sat silent waiting upon God about half an hour, in which time ... Francis Howgill seemed uneasy, and pulled out his Bible and opened it, and stood up several times, sitting down again and closing his book, a dread and fear being upon him that he durst not begin to preach. After the said silence ... George Fox stood up in the mighty power of God, and in the demonstration thereof was his mouth opened to preach Christ Jesus, the light of life and the way to God, and saviour of all that believe ... which was delivered in that power and authority that most of the ... several hundreds, were effectually reached to the heart, and convinced of the Truth that very day, for it was the day of God’s power... never to be forgotten by me, Thomas Camm ... I being ... present at that meeting, a schoolboy [of] 12 years of age.”

- *Quaker faith & practice 19.19; Testimony of Thomas Camm (1641-1707) regarding a meeting of Westmorland Seekers, 1652*

Sunday morning Meetings for Worship

10:30 a.m. start. A blended meeting, in person at the Meeting House and on Zoom. Zoom link available from the clerks on request; it is the same week to week.

During building works, there is access to the meeting room only at weekends. Please do not attempt to enter any part of the building but the meeting room. [There is a port-a-loo in the garden.] Two parking spaces behind the Meeting House are now available on Sundays. Please give priority to those with mobility difficulties. [Vouchers are kept in the meeting room.]

Children’s Meeting is held on the second and fourth Sundays of each month, at The Open Door (32 Church Twitten). Start time 10:30 a.m. Children and young people join Friends at the Meeting House for the last five minutes of meeting for worship. Please ring Sara on 07857 058219 or email saralucytodd@yahoo.co.uk for further details.

Meeting for Worship for Church Affairs

(Business Meeting): Sunday, 5th March at 12:30 p.m. in the meeting house. Please bring your own lunch and drinks, as the kitchen is not open at this time.

Wednesday lunchtime Meetings for Worship

At The Open Door, 32 Church Twitten, Lewes. 12:30 p.m. Go through the door marked “Thebes” and up the stairs to the first floor meeting room. Please bring your own drinks / refreshments.

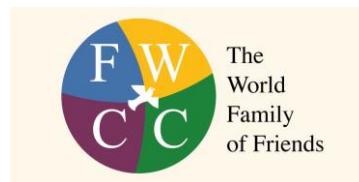
Please do not attend any meetings in person if you have any viral symptoms. Please be aware that the symptoms of Covid-19 can resemble those of a common cold. You are welcome to attend meetings on Zoom.



Lewes Friends **gather at The Depot** on Friday mornings at 10:15 a.m. for coffee and a chat. No need to book; just turn up and join in fellowship with Friends.

Sussex East Area Meeting will be held Sunday, 12th March, from 1:30 - 4:00 p.m. at Bexhill Quaker Meeting House, 15a Albert Road, Bexhill-on-Sea TN40 1DG. ~ From Area Meeting Minute 13.23: *“We have received a request from the Book of Discipline Revision Committee (BDRC) They have reached the point in their process where they feel ready to offer some draft text ... and to ask for feedback The BDRC would like to hear from Area Meetings particularly. We shall therefore bring this to AM in Bexhill in March as the study component of our Area Meeting.”* See [Revising Quaker faith & practice | Quakers in Britain](#) for details.

“Grown in Lewes” The team who wrote and published *Pells of Lewes* are seeking help to create a new book, this time chronicling gardens, allotments and all types of growing in Lewes. They are looking for words, images and memories, and would welcome input. Something for the Gardening Group to consider? It would be interesting to see the meeting house garden represented in this publication. Email growninlewes@gmail.com for details.



Regional Meeting will be held Saturday, 25th March at Brighton Meeting House and on Zoom. Tim Gee of Friends

World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) will speak on **“Friends worldwide: united or divided?”** All Friends, members and attenders, are welcome to attend. No booking is necessary; just turn up on the day. Tea, coffee and snacks are provided by the host meeting, but please bring your own lunch or food to share for a shared lunch.

Woodbrooke, the Quaker study centre in Birmingham, facilitates several **online meetings for worship** each



week. All Friends (members and attenders) are welcome to attend. For the Zoom link email worship@woodbrooke.org.uk.

Christ Church Thinktank: Wednesday, 15th March, 7:30 - 9:00 pm. Professor Vivian Vignoles will speak on **“Identities: What are they, and do they have to be so divisive?”** Identity has been a common theme in recent controversies, including Brexit. Participants in these debates often insist their own identities are “respected”, while accusing opponents of “playing identity politics”. What does this all mean? Viv is a Professor of Social and Cross-Cultural Psychology at the University of Sussex. During 25 years of research, he co-edited *The Handbook of Identity Theory and Research*. In this talk, he will consider identities as ways of understanding ourselves, that we create, maintain, and defend, rather than as innate characteristics. Email David Smith for details and / or Zoom link on j.d.smith@sussex.ac.uk. All are welcome to attend, either in person or online.



THE KINDLERS

“Looking with the eyes of love”

Kindlers-on-the Road will offer a whole-day participatory workshop:

“Looking with

the eyes of love: Seeing the one in the many” on 22nd April at Friends Meeting House, 15 Albert Road, Bexhill-on-Sea. All Friends are welcome to attend. Refreshments will be served at 10.00 am and the workshop will start at 10.30 am. Finish time is 4 p.m., followed by tea. Please bring a packed lunch; drinks will be provided. Please book in advance with Kieron on 07956 556520 or by e-mail: bexhillkier@gmail.com. The workshop will be facilitated by Peter Parr and James McCarthy of The Kindlers: web link: kindlersontheroad.com. Please do join Area Meeting Friends for this event.



Transition Town LEWES

“Should I get a heat pump?” Friends might be interested in a public talk to be held Thursday, 9th March, at the Elephant & Castle, White Hill, Lewes. Lots of people wonder if a heat pump would be a greener, cheaper way to heat their home. Transition Town Lewes has organised this talk to provide some answers, with experts and homeowners on hand to share their experience. The event is free but donations are welcomed, to support Transition Town Lewes. [7:30 p.m. start]

To receive the monthly Transition Town Lewes newsletter to your in-box, email enquiries@transitiontownlewes.org

Continuing Explorers will meet on Tuesday, 21st March at 7:15 p.m. at the home of the Goyders, to talk about individual discernment in



Quakerism, including around decisions about membership. This group is for anyone new or relatively new to Quakers,

and aims to answer questions and share experiences of Quaker faith and worship. The group meets once a month. Email John on johnnashcroft57@gmail.com for details, or if you plan to attend for the first time.

Edited by Tom Clark

Broke

Fixing Britain's
poverty crisis



Looking Ahead: Friends might be interested in a talk to be held **Saturday, 13th May**, by Tom Clark, fellow at the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, previously a writer for *The Guardian*. His 2014 book Hard Times: Inequality, Recession, Aftermath made sense of the fallout of the financial crisis. His

latest is Broke: Fixing Britain's Poverty Crisis, which seeks to restore empathy to the public discussion, blending human stories with policy analysis. Clark will address widespread hunger, homelessness, ill-health, disability, debt, migration and work experiences in Britain today. Most importantly he will present options for urgently needed reform. This event is part of *Lewes Speakers Festival* to be held at the All Saints Centre between 12 - 14th May 2023. See website for details and to book tickets: [Lewes Speakers Festival | speakersfestivals](http://LewesSpeakersFestival|speakersfestivals) .

LOSRAS: On Thursday, 23rd March, at 7 p.m. LOSRAS [Lewes Organisation in Support of Refugees and Asylum Seekers] will host an open meeting at the Town Hall in Lewes, including a talk by Florence Grover: “*Boats, borders & barracks: an insight into the arrival process for refugees*”. For details, see the LOSRAS website: www.losras.org or sign up for the newsletter by emailing info@losras.org .

Yearly Meeting 2023 will be held between 28 April - 1 May, in person at Friends House in London and online. All are welcome. There is no charge to attend, but if you plan to join in person you will need to arrange your own accommodation in London. Bookings are now open; it is essential to book a place whether you plan to attend online or in person.



This year's theme is ***'Releasing our energy so we can follow the leadings of the spirit, fulfil our purpose and build a better world.'***

As in previous years, YM Agenda Committee will host preparatory events online in the run up to Yearly Meeting itself, between 21 - 23 April.

To book a place visit this link: [YM 2023 bookings](#). There is more information available for children & young people, so do visit the website if this pertains to your family. **Bookings for the children and young people's programmes will close on 17th March.**

In February the meeting raised **£190** for generators to send to Ukraine, a good cause chosen by Friars Circle. Many thanks for your generosity, Friends.

In March, Needlemakers & Wealden Circle will promote the **Good Cause**. See Page 6 of this newsletter for details.

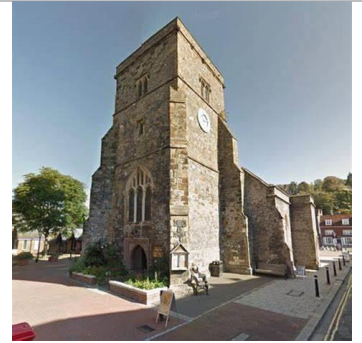
In the following months, the rota will be:

- Wallands - April
- Cliffe - May
- Friars - June

If you have an idea for a good cause that the meeting could support, please speak to your circle convenor.

A Peculiar Church

The Church of St Thomas á Becket stands at the end of Cliffe High Street, as if nothing has changed since its founding in the 12th century. However, it has seen remarkable changes, especially since 1990.



To understand what has changed, I will present some background. Christianity in its earliest form spread quickly east to Greece and beyond. In 313 Roman Emperor Constantine accepted Christianity and the church then spread west with the expanding Roman Empire. There was co-operation between Christian groups on an equal basis until the Pope, as head of the Western Church, claimed pre-eminence and eventually broke away in the 'Great Schism of 1054'. Afterward, the Roman Catholic Church, headed by the Pope, was based in Rome. Leaving the Eastern Church in a 'separate but equal' position, known as The Orthodox Church.

Things didn't change much until communism, under which Russia in particular banned religion. This failed to eliminate the Orthodox religious feelings of many. The fall of communism in 1991, and subsequent reforms, allowed a resurgence of the Russian Orthodox Church and its 'political' incorporation.

These events brought to the fore a most remarkable man: Bartholomew I, 270th Archbishop of Constantinople and Ecumenical Patriarch. He is regarded as 'primus inter pares' ('first among equals') in the Eastern Orthodox church, and the spiritual leader of Eastern Orthodox Christians worldwide. He has also been very active internationally. One of his first campaigns was to rebuild once-persecuted Orthodox churches of the former 'Eastern bloc'. He has worked to strengthen ties among various national churches and patriarchates. And has continued a reconciliation dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church, begun by his predeces-

sors, and initiated dialogue with other faiths, including other Christian churches, Muslims and Jews.

Bartholomew attended the papal inauguration of Pope Francis in 2013, paving the way for better Catholic / Orthodox relations. It was the first time the spiritual head of Eastern Orthodox Christians attended a papal inauguration since the Great Schism of 1054. Afterward he invited Pope Francis to travel with him; together, they support refugees, reunification and peace.

On 5 January 2019, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew granted independence to the newly founded Orthodox Church of Ukraine. In response, the Russian Orthodox cut ties with the Ecumenical Patriarchate, marking the beginning of the 2018 Moscow-Constantinople Schism.

In July 2019, Pope Francis gave into Patriarch Bartholomew's possession nine bone fragments believed to belong to St Peter. Bartholomew described the Pope's gesture as "brave and bold".

Archbishop Nikitas (Lulias) of Thyateira (Greece) has now been made the Greek Orthodox Archbishop of Great Britain (under the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople). There are many of these churches, local ones being in Lewes, Brighton, St Leonards-on-Sea, Eastbourne, Folkestone and Margate.

At the end of Cliffe High Street is the centuries-old Church of St Thomas á Becket, an Anglican parish. Parish Eucharist is held at 9:45 a.m., sung with four hymns, following the *Book of Common Prayer*. However, at 11:30 a.m., while Father George and his congregation enjoy tea in the church hall, another congregation arrives and removes crucifixes and statues, bringing in from the vestry icons and other items of orthodoxy.

Now we are in the "Orthodox Parish of the Nativity of Christ, Lewes". Father Ian Wallis, an Englishman ordained as an Orthodox priest, prefers Russian cadences to Greek (as do I), but preaches in English and calls on God to bless King Charles III, the British Government and its armed forces.

Orthodox services at St Thomas á Becket tend to be full of repetition and ritual, and one reason for this is that all Orthodox services are available for people to come and go as they please. There are some special services and timed events, such as leaving the church at Easter to process around and re-enter after midnight. Or you might be sprayed with holy water. Christmas has moved to 25th December but Easter is still on the old calendar. The services are all advertised if you are interested in attending. All are welcome.

After the service icons are returned to the vestry and everyone moves to the church hall next door to enjoy tea, cakes and conversation. This is also an opportunity to speak to Father Ian.

I think Lewes is rather special.

Luke Hindmarch



Jesus appeared to Saint Teresa of Avila [1515 - 1582] in a vision and asked her who she was. She said, "I am Teresa of Jesus", to which he replied, "I am Jesus of Teresa."



Children's Meeting continues to thrive. Here are photos of Valentine cards the young people made for their loved ones, at a recent meeting at The Open Door. Details of children's meeting can be found on Page 1 of this newsletter.

Good Cause for March: Needle-makers Circle has chosen **DAY-MER** as the good cause for March 2023. DAY-MER was set up in 1989 by the Turkish wife of the Clerk of Forest Hill Quaker Meeting, to work with, and on behalf of, Turkish and Kurdish people living in London. Their aim is to solve problems and promote Turkish immigrants' cultural, economic, social and democratic rights and to strengthen solidarity with local people. As well as providing educational support and cultural events in London, the community has focused its recent efforts on those effected by the recent earthquake. Over 70% of the Turkish community in the UK have family members in the region affected by the earthquake.



A representative of DAY-MER writes, "We will send any donations that reach our community centre in London directly to those affected by the earthquake, through campaigns by socialist and democratic institutions and organizations in Turkey.... Money we [send] has been used so far for food parcels, blankets, tents, heaters, hygiene products. We will use some of the money to buy marquees and container houses, and the rest will be used for basic daily needs for earthquake victims. Funds

raised will be passed directly to known volunteer groups on the ground, who use donations to address practical needs. They are working with a range of partners [in] a coordinated effort." To make donations to DAY-MER on-line, and for a Gift Aid Form, email tessa.brown3@btinternet.com. Funds will also be collected after meeting for worship on Sundays.



Lewes Quaker Meeting is committed to being an Eco-Church and part of this means thinking about how all of us can be greener. The award encourages us to think how we can reduce our personal energy consumption. Over the past few weeks Maggie and I have signed up to "Saving Sessions" with our energy supplier Octopus Energy. "Saving Sessions" are designed to limit electricity demand at times when the National Grid is under extreme pressure. We turn off our electric appliances for an hour (in the early evening) and in turn receive points that translate into money off our bill. So far we have earned around £15 for sitting in candlelight in front of the fire. Turning everything off makes us think about how much electricity we use (as does our smart meter) and it has been delightful experiencing a winter evening in the way people of previous generations did. If you are with Octopus Energy go to www.octopus.energy/saving-sessions/ for details. Why not try a quiet evening with no TV, a head torch and a good book?

John Pares

Quaker Membership: Is it for me?

The topic of membership arose at our last Continuing Explorers group and is something that we will revisit next time. Conversations around the differences between "members" and "attenders" in Quakers frequently arise, an attender being defined as someone who frequently attends meeting and who is not a

member. Qf&p 11.01 tells us that *“Early Friends felt no need for formal membership; they were a community of seekers who recognised in each other a similar hunger, a similar quest”*.

The decision to apply for membership is a deeply personal one, individuals having their own reasons to choose to, or choose not to, apply. There is no pressure to become a member of a Quaker meeting and some people remain life-long attenders. We celebrate the coming together of people who are actively involved in their own spiritual journey, regardless of membership. Only a few roles cannot be held by non-members, and attenders are active contributors to the life and running of the meeting by providing practical assistance and/or financial support. Attenders are welcome to contribute to Meetings for Worship for Church Affairs and to join working groups.

Many of us have experienced times in our lives when we need to be upheld, to have nothing asked of us. Quaker meetings can be an oasis of restful silence and spiritual replenishment when people are in times of need.

Advices & Queries 28 states, *“Every stage of our lives offers fresh opportunities. Responding to divine guidance, try to discern the right time to undertake or relinquish responsibilities without undue pride or guilt. Attend to what love requires of you, which may not be great busyness.”* However, there is another well-known saying - *You get out what you put in,*” and many Friends, regardless of membership, have found that getting involved in the meeting develops valued friendships, provides spiritual support, increases confidence and skills.

We are a community, with records for around 75 members and 50 attenders in Lewes, not all of whom regularly attend. Without employing ministers or organisers, Quakers are particularly reliant on the

involvement of sufficient members and attenders at any one time. If no one wants to take on necessary roles then the organisation will wither. If you feel you would like to do more to support the meeting in a practical way, please talk to a member of the Pastoral Care and Eldership Team / Clerks / Nominations Committee who will be delighted to speak to you.

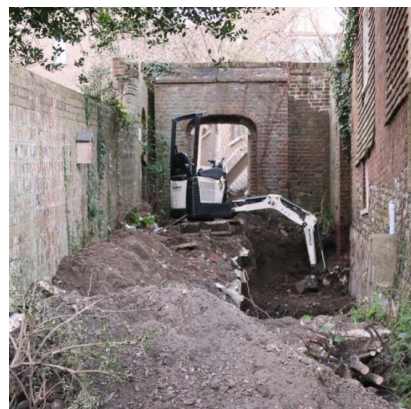
If practical involvement is not possible, financially supporting the meeting, particularly during renovations, is another form of collaboration that is gratefully received:
<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/LewesMH>

If neither a practical nor financial contribution is possible at this time, please keep coming, you are very welcome and we value your presence.

In Friendship,
Theresa Samms

Quiet Ways:

Contributions to the Sussex East Area Meeting newsletter are welcome at any time. Please email editorquietways@gmail.com with your news items.



Development Project Update - March 2023:

This photo shows work in progress in the alley between the Meeting House and All Saints Centre for a “French Drain”;

the aim is to prevent damp which has been such a problem in the wall for years. The trench will be filled with gravel to enable water to drain away more easily.

Work on interior renovations has been going on steadily. The floors are back down again in the

flat, as the work on inserting sound and heat insulation layers has been completed. Attention is now being given to internal insulation of walls and finishing new walls for the new bathroom.

Downstairs the first layer of flooring in the back area has been completed. Due to the low height of the ceiling, the architects suggested a slight lowering of the floor. A small ramp to this area at the end of the corridor just beyond the new double doors to the main meeting room will be needed, but the gain will be well worth it for those Friends of height.

Outside, work on the new foyer and corridor is delayed whilst sorting the work needed to stabilise the high retaining wall. Cost and timing aspects are not yet clear, but will be significant.

Outside work in the alley to improve drainage is underway, as noted above. The sight of children and others moving all the flower pots, which provide such a good display for much of the year, was as memorable as it was useful. Councillor Stephen Catlin who looks after the plants will be glad when they can be returned from their temporary home at the front of the meeting house - so there will be another chance to join a pot-moving procession.

Electricity supply: Enlarged premises and the increasing use of electricity as we move away from gas mean that an upgrade is needed to the power supply (from single to 3-phase, for those who know about these things). UK Power Networks will do this work, which will entail a new link into the main cabling under the road. Discussions are ongoing about when to do this work and its associated cost.

Working Groups: The groups doing detailed planning for the kitchens, toilets and bathroom have been working with suppliers of equipment as well as the architects and have managed to keep their recommendations within budgets. All groups reported

to the February 12th open session and follow-up work continues. Discussion will be needed between different groups in relation to use of some areas as well as further reporting to the Meeting in due course.

Fundraising: A representative of the Rank Trust, which has provided a grant of £25,000, visited the Meeting House recently to see work in progress. We understand he was impressed with what he saw. The fundraising team continues to seek new sources of funds so please speak to Patricia Cockrell on 01273 474884 or David Martin on 01892 663522 if you have particular suggestions or thoughts. For ways of giving, look on the website www.lewesquakers.org.uk or see www.justgiving.com/campaign/LewesMH.

The Project Group



Part of a monthly series of interesting facts about Quakers

Not many people know that . . .

The American state of Pennsylvania is not named for William Penn, but for his father Admiral Sir William Penn. Father and son did not get along, as the younger man's non-conformist views and commitment to Quakerism threatened his father's social and professional standing in dangerous political times. However, they did reconcile. Not long before his death the elder Penn advised his son, "*Let nothing in this world tempt you to wrong your conscience.*"

David Hitchin & Liz Brooks

Deadline for the April newsletter:
please send events for the local meeting, news, photos and other items of interest for the April newsletter to Liz at realgirltribe@gmail.com by 29th March.

Thank you, Friends.