

# Lewes Quaker Meeting Newsletter

## March 2024



“The resurrection, however ... we interpret it, demonstrates the power of God to bring life out of brokenness; not just to take the hurt out of brokenness but to add something to the world. It helps us to sense the usefulness, the possible meaning in our suffering, and to turn it into a gift. The resurrection affirms me with my pain and ... anger .... It does not take away my pain; it still hurts. But I sense that I am being transfigured; I am being enabled to begin again to love confidently and to remake the spirit of my world.”

*Quaker Faith & Practice 26.56; Jocelyn Bell-Burnell, 1989*

*See Page 3 for information on the tapestry pictured above.*

### **Sunday morning Meetings for Worship**

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

### **Wednesday lunchtime Meetings for Worship**

12:30 p.m. start, on Wednesdays in the meeting room. All are welcome. Tea and coffee available afterward, served at the hatch in the foyer.

**Parking:** There are 4 parking spaces behind the meeting house plus 2 accessible spaces. Disabled drivers, please use the accessible spaces and display your blue badge. Anyone else wishing to park, please use a parking voucher available from the blue box file in the foyer, sign for it and return it after use.

**Children’s Meeting** is held on the second and fourth Sundays of each month, starting at 10:30 a.m. Children and young people meet in the community room, then join Friends in the main meeting room for the last few minutes of meeting for worship. If you have questions, or you would like to bring your child/ren to meeting for the first time, please contact Sara by email on [saralucytodd@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:saralucytodd@yahoo.co.uk)

*See Page 3 for details of the newly launched young people’s meeting.*

### **Meeting for Worship for Church Affairs (Business Meeting):**

**Sunday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March** - 12:30 p.m. at the meeting house. Please bring your own lunch, although tea and coffee will be available. The agenda will include financial reports and an update on the return to full use of the meeting house.

Business meetings are usually held on the first Sunday each month, at 12:30 p.m. after meeting for worship. All Friends are welcome, but attenders should speak to a clerk beforehand if they plan to attend.

**Lewes Friends gather at The Depot on Friday mornings** at 10:30 a.m. for coffee and a chat. No need to book; just turn up and join in fellowship with Friends.

**Woodbrooke**, the Quaker Study Centre, hosts a number of **online meetings for worship** each week. These are freely available for anyone to join. For a link and details, see [Worship - Woodbrooke](#). All are welcome.

**Christ Church Thinktank** will be held on **Wednesday, 20 March, 7:30 - 9:00 pm**. A talk by Gwyneth Watkinson and Glenn Ecclestone of the Beachy Head Chaplaincy Team, a local charity providing a committed team of search and rescue volunteers who respond to emergency calls from people at risk. BHCT believes people in suicidal distress can be awakened to the hope that there are positive ways to address their problems. Gwyneth and Glenn will share what it is like to work on a chaplaincy shift. ~ Thinktanks are held at Christ Church and streamed live by Zoom. Please email David Smith if you wish to attend: [j.d.smith@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:j.d.smith@sussex.ac.uk)

**Evening meetings for worship:** Pastoral Care and Eldership Team [PaCET] is considering if there is sufficient interest to restart Sunday evening Meetings for Worship, or whether an evening MfW on a week day might be more suitable. If re-instated, these would take place from 6 - 6:30 p.m. A questionnaire is available at the Meeting House. **Please hand completed questionnaires to Chris Lawson or Caroline Pybus by 13 March, or return to the marked box in the Meeting Room before that date.**

## Discussion Groups

Please join discussion group meetings on the third Sunday of alternate months, after meeting for worship. Upcoming dates are **Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> April and Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> June**.

These will start at 12:15 p.m., running for about an hour. All Friends are very welcome to participate. Suggested topics include continuous revelation, Quaker testimonies and Advices and Queries.

These friendly gatherings are for everyone, new and old Friends alike. Please bring a sandwich or packed lunch with you, although tea and coffee will be provided. The sessions will start at 12:15 p.m. promptly.

There is a box in the foyer for you to add suggestions for future topics for discussion.

**Sussex East Area Meeting** will be held **Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> March, at Eastbourne Meeting House, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.** It will include a study session on *“The Pros and Cons of Merging SEAQM Trustees with those of other Area Meetings.”* All Friends are welcome to attend. An agenda will be circulated in advance.

The **Good Cause for March** is **Prison Phoenix Trust**, chosen by Needlemakers Circle.



The Prison Phoenix Trust works in prisons across the UK and Ireland, providing support to prisoners and staff by teaching yoga and meditation. As well as running classes, the Trust provides support materials like books and CDs, and also corresponds with prisoners, offering

hope and encouragement. There are currently two classes a week at HMP Lewes, so this is local in application.

This small but effective charity works in more than 200 prisons and other secure establishments in the UK and Ireland. They are in direct contact with around 5% of the prison population. Please support this good cause during March and hear more about their work in our Sunday morning updates.

More information can be found here: [The Prison Phoenix Trust - HOME PAGE](#), including their most recent newsletters.

In January, Lewes Meeting raised **£300** for Friends Southern Summer Events (FSSE), the good cause chosen by Cliffe Circle.  
*Many thanks for your generosity, Friends.*



### Continuing Explorers

This group is for anyone new or fairly new to Quakers; it aims to answer

questions and share experiences of Quaker faith and worship. The next meeting will be held on **Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> March**, at 7:15 p.m. at Lewes meeting house. If you plan to attend, and for further details, please email John at [johnashcroft57@gmail.com](mailto:johnashcroft57@gmail.com)

### Young people's meeting launched

In addition to the children's meeting, Friends are pleased to announce a young people's meeting **starting Sunday, 24<sup>th</sup> March**, and planning to meet monthly. This group will be for young people aged about 11 years and older and will follow a discussion format, with opportunities to meet adults from our

meeting and hear about how Quakerism has shaped their lives. The young people are already engaged in planning these sessions.

Please encourage your young people [aged 11 +] to join in. But be assured that if they wish to continue with children's meeting sessions (more arts and crafts-based), that is fine too.

Kathy Gibbs, convenor of Children's Committee, writes, "We hope every Friend at Lewes Meeting who feels able to do so, will volunteer to help with a children's or young people's meeting this year. It is very rewarding and you will be supported in your role - it might be that you enjoy the experience so much you will choose to volunteer for further sessions. Young people at Lewes Meeting welcome your input."

To get involved, you will need to have a clear DBS check; application is free for volunteers. To start the process, contact Theresa on [squirrelnutkin25@gmail.com](mailto:squirrelnutkin25@gmail.com)

**Tapestry:** Friends will soon see the tapestry pictured on the front page, in the foyer. It has come to us from Woodbrooke, and is very gratefully received. Our Friend Christina Lawson writes, "This tapestry was designed by Henry Voss and woven by Elisabeth Holmgaard, a Danish Friend who for seven years was cook at Woodbrooke during the time when Woodbrooke had 11-week terms for an international community."

The tapestry is named "*Solentiname*", for the islands in Lake Nicaragua where Ernesto Cardenal founded a contemplative community. A school of naïve art developed there and became known all over the world. It was destroyed in 1977 during the revolution, but re-established by Father Cardenal after 1979 when he became minister of culture in the Sandanista government.



**Safeguarding:** If you have concerns about a child, young person or vulnerable adult who might be experiencing abuse, neglect or exploitation, please contact Helen

Thomas on 07736 962526 or email [helen.thomas62@btinternet.com](mailto:helen.thomas62@btinternet.com). Helen is the Safeguarding Deputy for Lewes Meeting.

“Change is inevitable. How we respond to change will determine whether our meetings are ... full of vitality and welcome ... and how we move forward together, as a community. We need ... to be intentional about change, supported by ... Quaker disciplines. We are led to work in new ways that are ... inclusive and sustainable .... We recognise that inclusion means looking at a web of different needs and gifts .... Working together is a form of Quaker worship and a way in which we can come to know each other in the things that are eternal.”

*Extract from Minute 17, Britain Yearly Meeting 2023*

**Yearly Meeting 2024** will take place at Friends House and online between 26 - 30 July 2024. This year, Friends will consider *Integrity and Truth*, and also seek to discern Yearly Meeting’s formal role in steering the Religious Society of Friends. Bookings will open on 11<sup>th</sup> March.

Local Development Worker Ruth Audus writes, “I will be attending Britain Yearly Meeting in London this year and would like to encourage and support Friends to do so too.

“Have you ever wondered what ‘Yearly Meeting’ (YM) is? Would you like to know more about the relevance to you and how you might be part of it? Did you know that anyone who is a member or regular attender of a local meeting or other Quaker community can attend? Would you like to know how you can participate in a powerful, joyful, spiritual community space with the wider Quaker community, make new friends and get a better understanding of how British Quakers operate?

“If so, I invite you to join me at one of two workshops where we’ll explore these and other questions. I hope we will be joined by, and hear the experience of Siobhan Haire, Deputy Recording Clerk and former Yearly Meeting Clerk, and Eleanor Brooks, co-clerk of East Kent AM and regular attendee at YM. The workshops will be held on Zoom:

- 7.30 pm - Monday 11 March
- 7.30 pm - Tuesday 16 April

Each will last no longer than an hour. All are welcome, experienced Friends or those new to Quakers. I look forward to seeing you.”

A Zoom link will be circulated nearer the date of the first workshop.

Please note: there is no charge for participating in Yearly Meeting, but you will need to arrange your own transport / accommodation if you attend in person. More details can be found here: [YM 2024 Programme | Quakers in Britain](#)

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***Regional Meeting will be held at Lewes Meeting House on 23 March - see Page 8 for details of this all-day event, to which all Friends are warmly invited.***



Lewes Passion Play is hosting a drama workshop on Saturday, 23 March, 2 - 4 p.m. at St John sub Castro, Abinger Place, Lewes, to which all are invited. This workshop will launch the build-up to the 2025 Passion Play, scheduled for Holy Week next year.



Director Tim Telford will lead participants in exploring scenes from Mark's Gospel, encouraging exploration of how to tell stories using minimal props and scenery. The workshop

is free and open to all, including anyone interested in taking part in the passion play next year. Email [thelewespassionplay@gmail.com](mailto:thelewespassionplay@gmail.com) if you plan to attend.

In addition to recruiting actors for 2025 the team is looking for people to assist behind the scenes. If you would like to be part of this effort, send an email to the address above, giving your name and a contact telephone number. All offers are gratefully received!



**Together with Refugees (TwR)** is a national coalition of 500+ community groups, international development charities, trade unions and faith groups, to which LOSRAS, the Lewes Organisation in Support of Refugees and Asylum Seekers, is affiliated.

A new national campaign, *Fair Begins Here*, was launched in February 2024, with the goal of ensuring that the next UK government commits to a fair plan for refugees. The plan has three key asks:

- Protection for all people seeking safety in the UK by restoring the right to asylum, upholding international law and ending the Rwanda scheme.
- An integrated welcome strategy for refugees, ensuring asylum claims are heard fairly and that they can rebuild their lives with fair welfare support, a decent home and the right to work.

- Stronger international collaboration to respond to global drivers of forced migration, increase responsibility-sharing and provide safe routes.

This means gathering united support by people and organisations across the UK, to show political leaders it is not just the refugee sector who want a kinder and fairer plan for refugees - it is people from all walks of life.

Sabir Zazai, Chair of Together with Refugees, writes: "I understand the temptation to despair ... But while I am under no illusions on the scale of the challenge, I am hopeful because I know the majority of people support us. ... Most people in Britain support welcoming refugees, they want us to do the right and decent thing." You can find out more about LOSRAS by visiting their website, linked here: [LOSRAS home page](#) Or visit the Together with Refugees website, to learn more about their work: [Together With Refugees HOME PAGE](#)



**Churches Together in Lewes** is offering study sessions and services to which all are welcome:

**Monday mornings 11 a.m. - St Anne's - "Heart in Pilgrimage":** Considering the Gospel of Mark through poetry, the Bible and prayer. 11 am on 4 and 11 March.

**Wednesdays at 7 p.m. - St Thomas's - "The depths of prayer":** Talks on mystical prayer, followed by discussion. 7 pm on 6 and 13 March.

**"CARITAS" contemplative service - 17 March at 6:30 pm at St Michael's:** poetry and prayer.

## Quaker groups in the meeting house

It is wonderful to have full use of our meeting house once again. There is an online booking system, Hallmaster, that enables us to book rooms for individuals and groups who pay to use our spaces, and for our own internal use.

So, for any room you wish to use for a circle meeting, social event, discussion group, committee meeting, etc, please send a booking request by email to [quakermeetinghouselewes@gmail.com](mailto:quakermeetinghouselewes@gmail.com)

Remember to include the room and date required, along with start and finish times, and a contact name. Drew will let you know if your request can be met.

Please be aware that you may not always get your first choice of room / date, if another booking is already in place.

Available rooms are the meeting room, community room, library and corner room. Eventually the gallery will be available (for Quaker use only) but at this time it is not quite ready. Please be patient as refurb-ishment and preparation are ongoing.



## WOODBROOKE

### Woodbrooke Courses

Have you seen the brochure for Woodbrooke Learning? Copies are available on the magazine rack in the lobby. As well as continuing courses celebrating 400 years since the birth of George Fox, online courses of interest in the next month include:

- Isaac Penington and early Quaker spirituality by Phil Dahl - 20 March 7-8.30 pm

- Meeting for Worship through Dance with Robin Bowles - 24 March 8-9 am
- Holding in the Light: what does it mean? By Rhiannon Grant - 26 March 7-8.30pm
- Woke Bible Study: is there patriarchy in Heaven? - By Ashley M Wilcox 27 March 7-8.30pm

There are many other courses on a wide variety of topics, mainly online. These are listed in the brochures Woodbrooke Learning, available for borrowing, and more details and full listings can be seen on [www.woodbrooke.org.uk/courses](http://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/courses) where bookings can also be made.

Christina Lawson

### Project Group Update: March 2024

The builders officially completed their work on 6 February, though there are still some jobs which they are finishing up. They are attending to various “snags” which have emerged as Friends have started using the premises again.

We are now in the rectification period in which Valley Builders are responsible for snagging. Urgent issues will be attended to immediately, but other less urgent matters will be collated and rectified before 6 February 2025. Premises Committee will collect details and pass these on for attention.

Although most of our work is complete, the project group will not be formally laid down until the end of February 2025.

Friends will be aware that a problem arose on Sunday February 18<sup>th</sup> when a gas leak was discovered in the ground floor, causing the cancellation of Meeting for Worship. Southern Gas attended quickly and the building was made safe. The installers, Plumb Solutions, repaired the leak, which was due to a pipe being damaged when tables were put in the boiler cupboard.

Additional protection has been made for that area so tables can be stored safely, without further affecting this pipework.



This development project has been a major journey for all involved (for some Friends, over ten years) but we are pleased with the outcome which we feel will enable the premises to be of service to Friends and the local community for many years to come.

The Project Group:  
Helen, Chris and Sue



## Lewes Meeting Contacts

*Clerks:* John Ashcroft, Liz Brooks and David Martin at [quakerclerkslewes@gmail.com](mailto:quakerclerkslewes@gmail.com)

*Pastoral Care and Eldership Team [PaCET]:* Tim Pitt-Payne (convenor), David Hitchin, Chris Lawson, Caroline Pybus, Theresa Samms, Nancy Wall

*Website:* [www.lewesquakers.org.uk](http://www.lewesquakers.org.uk)

*Website editor:* Drew Fisher  
[ajfscorpio@hotmail.com](mailto:ajfscorpio@hotmail.com)

*Newsletter:* Liz Brooks [realgirltribe@gmail.com](mailto:realgirltribe@gmail.com)

*Children's meeting:* Sara at [saralucytodd@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:saralucytodd@yahoo.co.uk)

*Safeguarding:* Helen Thomas  
[helen.thomas62@btinternet.com](mailto:helen.thomas62@btinternet.com)

*Circles for pastoral care & support:*  
Cliffe - Berta Busby, convenor  
Friars - Veryan Greenwood and Anna Milner-Gulland, convenors  
Needlemakers - Geoff Halsey, convenor  
Wallands - Bronwyn Harwood, convenor

*Sussex East Area Meeting Clerk:* Sally Avis at [sally.aviss@btinternet.com](mailto:sally.aviss@btinternet.com)

In March, Needlemakers Circle will promote the **Good Cause**. The rota for the following months is:

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

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

**Deadline for the April newsletter is 29<sup>th</sup> March.**

Please send news, photos, items of interest and information on upcoming events to [realgirltribe@gmail.com](mailto:realgirltribe@gmail.com), for inclusion in the April newsletter.

Sussex and Surrey Regional Quaker Meeting  
**“Disability - Equality and Spirituality”**

**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2024**

10.30 -15.15 at Lewes Meeting House  
and 11.00 - 15.15 on zoom

Led by Ade Couper,  
Quaker Disability Equality Group committee member  
and former Health and Social Care professional,  
and Clare Dimyon of Ditchling Meeting, on **Neurodiversity**

Using talks, questions and answers, poetry, video clips and time in small groups discussing various scenarios.

Everyone who attends or is a member of a Quaker meeting within Sussex and Surrey Regional Meeting is welcome to register, either to come in person (50 places available) or to join on Zoom.

There is no charge to attend.

Please register before Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March by contacting:

[sussexandsurreyrmquakerclerk@outlook.com](mailto:sussexandsurreyrmquakerclerk@outlook.com)

If you cannot email, please telephone 01323 890210.

If the cost of travel would prevent you from attending in person, please ask our treasurer for a claim form:

[sussexandsurreytreasurer@outlook.com](mailto:sussexandsurreytreasurer@outlook.com)