



OAKHAM FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY AND MARCH 2012

I WISH YOU ALL ENOUGH

I wish you enough sun to keep your attitude bright no matter how grey the day may appear.

I wish you enough rain to appreciate the sun even more.

I wish you enough happiness to keep your spirit alive and everlasting.

I wish you enough pain so that even the smallest of joys in life may appear bigger.

I wish you enough gain to satisfy your wanting.

I wish you enough loss to appreciate all that you possess.

I wish you enough hellos to get you through the final good-bye.

Submitted by Don Amphlett

Taize at Launde Abbey



A friend of mine, aware of my love for music and silence, asked if I would like to attend a candlelit service of prayer, chants and silence at Launde Abbey. In my usual fashion I said yes first, without knowing anything about "Taize" so my first experience was without any pre-conceived ideas of what I might expect. Since then I have attended a number of services in the clear knowledge it is an experience I value.

The singing of distinctive and much-repeated prayer chants during a candlelit service is a Taize trademark. Taize highlights simple phrases, usually lines from the Psalms or other pieces of scripture, repeated in song. The repetition is designed to help meditation and prayer. There is a set order of service which runs without interruption, and at Launde is lead by Emily, who plays the guitar, leads the chants, and prayers and also reads the scripture passage. The service also includes a period of silence.

There is a Taize community in France, which is an ecumenical monastic order with a strong devotion to peace and justice through prayer and meditation. It was founded in 1940 and is today an important site of Christian pilgrimage, especially with young people. Prayer chants are sung in many different languages and I understand that its origins were to enable groups from different backgrounds races and religions to join together in prayer. From my own experience I can believe the chants sound beautiful when sung in different languages at the same time.

Launde Abbey has a beautiful small Chapel, and when lit by candles it has a magical atmosphere. The chants lull you into a sense of peace. The music is enhanced by individuals singing alto or base lines, and I have stopped singing sometimes to simply listen to others' interpretation of the tune. The silence forms an integral part of the service.

The services are usually every Thursday evening at 8pm, but if you are moved to have a "Taize experience" I would suggest you contact Launde on 01572 717254 to confirm there are no changes to the usual format.

Trish Smith

Life is where our Souls are sent to School

Life is where our souls are sent to School.
Where we learn to appreciate our family's Love,
Where, from Love, Life is where our Souls are sent to school.
Where we learn to appreciate our family's Love,
Where, from Love, we learn to create Meaning,
Where through Love, we learn to share our creation with others.

Life is where our souls are sent to school.
Where we learn to appreciate the joys of this world,
Where our appreciation is sharpened by pain,
Where, from joy and pain, we learn to teach creation to others.

Life is where our Souls are sent to school.
Where we are taught to evaluate body and spirit,
Where we are given a brief moment to paint with Time,
Where we give our creation to those we love, and graduate to a higher art.

Learn to create Meaning,
Where through Love, we learn to share our creation with others.

Life is where our Souls are sent to School.
Where we learn to appreciate the joys of the world,
Where our appreciation is sharpened by pain,
Where, from joy and pain, we learn to teach creation to others.

Life is where our Souls are sent to school.
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Submitted by Doreen Capewell

PRIVATE PEACEFUL by MICHAEL MORPURGO (author of 'War Horse')

On Thursday 23rd February (7.15 pm) and on Friday 24th February (1.30 pm and 7.15 pm) a play based on Michael Morpurgo's best selling book "Private Peaceful" is to be presented at the Uppingham Theatre. The inspiration for the book came from a visit to Ypres where he was shocked to discover how many young soldiers were court-martialled and shot for cowardice during the First World War.

"Private Peaceful" relives the life of Private Tommo Peaceful, a young First World War soldier awaiting the firing squad at dawn. During the night he looks back at his short but joyful past growing up in rural Devon, his exciting first days at school; the accident in the forest that killed his father; his adventures with Molly, the love of his life; and the battles and injustices of war that brought him to the front line.

Don Amphlett

The Wisdom of Mahatma Gandhi

"The only people on Earth who do not see Christ and his teachings as non violent are Christians".

" I like your Christ, I do not like your Christians Your Christians are so unlike your Christ".

From a Quaker Website. Submitted by Don Amphlett



White Christmas in the Windy City

Off we went in torrential rain and high blustery winds to Liverpool. Five hours later the Sat Nav got us to our destination by the side of the River Mersey. The sun had come out but we could hardly get the car doors open the wind was so strong; and by the time we did get out we could literally lean on the wind!! The heaving seas on the Mersey were so bad that the famous ferry

was not running. And we commiserated with two young kids whilst they ate their sandwiches in the shelter of the warehouse, who had come with their dad especially to go on it.

We booked in to our converted warehouse overlooking Albert Dock. Lovely brick, barrel shaped ceilings in all the rooms. Next door "The Beatle Experience"!

From the front of the hotel in the distance we could see the Roman Catholic and Anglican Cathedrals standing out against the skyline; and at the back when we sat having our meal Albert Dock, the Tate Gallery and the Liver Building. The reason for this crazy visit in January?...We had come to see Aled Jones in "White Christmas".



Next day we walked into the city centre through the newly built "Paradise Shopping Centre", stopping off of course at some well known retail outlets as we passed through. Then a short cut through School Lane...I stopped to admire the lovely Victorian " Old Post Office Public House" and almost missed the shop like front of the new "Liverpool Friends Meeting House" right opposite the pub. We just had to see if

we could get in. We caught the attention of the lady in the office who came and opened up for us. She was the manager she told us; "not a Quaker but a Christian", she said. Is that significant!!! Two Meeting Rooms, the larger of the two in the picture. Lots of space and light. We were invited to join a group of adults with learning difficulties who meet there once a week to run a "coffee morning" and

we were made very welcome. The coffee was not up to much but the company was delightful! The manager told us that the Meeting House is a very popular conference venue situated as it is right in the centre of the city. We were so glad we had called in and we left our names in the visitor book, promising to go back one day.

Then it was on to the magnificent Walker Gallery up at the top end of Lime Street. After a lunch of Spicy Soup and crusty bread we wandered and wondered our way through gallery after gallery until we felt we had had our fill of crafts and paintings and some of "Lily Savages" wonderful costumes! It was then time to cross the road to take our seats in the beautiful Edwardian "Empire Theatre" to see "White Christmas". It was excellent entertainment and made the journey well worthwhile. Tired but fulfilled we returned with a most obliging taxi driver to our Mersey side hotel to enjoy an excellent meal.

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to Liverpool. So much to do and to see and such lovely friendly people. We promised ourselves that we will go back again one day.

Finding our way out through Liverpool the next day is a story for another day!

Don Amphlett

Dates and Events for your Diaries

February

Thurs 2 nd	Candlemas (Christian) <i>Imboic (Pagan)</i>
Fri 3 rd	<i>Rissun (Shinto)</i>
Sat 4 th	Coffee Morning at the Meeting House 10.00am to 12 noon <i>Milad un Nabi (Muslim)</i>
Sun 5 th	Meeting for Worship 10.30 am
Wed 8 th	<i>Parinirvana - Nirvana Day (Buddhist)</i> <i>Tu b'Shevat (Jewish)</i>
Sun 12 th	Meeting for Worship 10.30 am
Thurs 16 th	Short Meeting for Worship at the Meeting House 10.30 am
Sun 19 th	Meeting for Worship 10.30 am
Mon 20 th	World Day of Social Justice (United Nations)
Tues 21 st	Shrove Tuesday (Christian)
Wed 22 nd	Ash Wednesday (Christian)
Sun 26 th	Meeting for Worship 10.30 am

March

Thurs 1 st	St David's Day (Christian)
Fri 2 nd	<i>Start of 19 day Fast (Bahai)</i>
Sat 3 rd	Coffee Morning at the Meeting House 10.00 am to 12 noon.
Sun 4 th	Meeting for Worship 10.30 am Followed by Local Business meeting
Mon 5 th	St Piran's Day (Christian)
Thurs 8 th	International Women's Day (United Nations) <i>Purim (Jewish)</i> <i>Holi (Hindu)</i>
Sun 11 th	Meeting for Worship 10.30 am Followed by Area Business Meeting in Oakham.
Thurs 15 th	Short Meeting for Worship at the Meeting House 10.30 am
Sat 17 th	St Patrick's Day (Christian)
Sun 18 th	Meeting for Worship 10.30 am Mothering Sunday (Christian)

Wed 21 st	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UN) <i>Naw-Ruz (Bahai)</i>
Thurs 22 nd	World Water Day (United Nations)
Fri 23 rd	<i>Ugadi (Hindu)</i>
Sun 25 th	Meeting for Worship 10.30 am Feast of the Annunciation (Christian) International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery And the Transatlantic Slave Trade (United Nations)

Discussion on Economic Justice and a Sustainable Global Society: Questions for Local Meetings (Sunday 22 January 2012)

Following on from the request by Area meeting to discuss the notes that were distributed from the September Conference, nine Friends met to discuss the question allocated to Oakham Meeting.

The question was :

" Yearly Meeting encouraged us to practice speaking truth to power at local level - what will this mean in practice? What truth will you be speaking? Can you see opportunities or merely obstacles?"

During the Meeting for Worship we had been challenged to think of the unthinking acceptance of inequality that still occurs and how we should bring concerns to the Light. We were reminded that, in the past, Friends had never been put off by difficulties and that Quakers had taken responsibility to address inequalities and injustices in the past; that collectively and individually, feeling a concern could result in taking action. We were also reminded how difficult it is to judge in one's own era what the problems are when practices are the accepted norm.

Stimulated by these thoughts, a discussion followed which attempted to suggest actions that could be taken up at the local level .

What will this mean in practice?

Several Friends expressed concern over their sense of helplessness when faced with the enormity of the issues. The group felt that, in order to effectively address any issues, a knowledge and understanding of the economic and financial concerns would be essential as a building block to expressing concerns.

Friends felt that there could be two approaches - individual actions and actions that raised awareness in others.

Individual actions could include discovering the ethics of personal banks; changing banks if unsatisfactory answers are given; ensuring that financial investments and pension funds are ethical; and speaking to local Council members and MPs.

Wider actions could include taking part in community support groups and considering setting one up.

What Truth will you be Speaking?

Four truths came from the discussion -

- that within a capitalist society, business does not need to seek obscene profits in order to succeed
- that money does not have to rule the system and volunteering shows an alternative way
- that the decline in organised religion has resulted in materialism
- and the attainment of extreme wealth does not provide a measurement of happiness or contentment.

Opportunities and Obstacles:

The obstacles, such as a lack of knowledge, could be addressed by attending courses and discussions.

Opportunities for discussion can arise at any level such as letters to newspapers, attending more public meetings to express the Quaker point of view and discussing issues with the local business community.

Opportunities for practicing the truth that money is not all important can be illustrated through volunteering

Hilary Ludlow

Advices and Queries provided by the East of England Group at the conference on "Economic Justice and Sustainable Global Society" on September 24th 2011

The world is neither fair nor just. Access to the Earth and our resources is inequitably shared. We are degrading the Earth's living systems. The ways in which we live generate conflict. Issues of social justice and environmental sustainability are inextricably linked. The way in which the world's financial systems are arranged is making the situation worse.

- Do you empower yourself by acquiring more knowledge of current economic issues?
- Do you take steps to inform others in your Area Meeting of your concerns?
- Do you hold public meetings to consider the struggles and issues we all face?

Tread carefully and remember that there is that of God in everyone. Deep active listening and reflection should be our approach. Hear those with technical expertise and seek clarity where necessary. Be conscious that the human cost of inequality and un-sustainability urges us to action sooner rather than later.

Work collaboratively as this is not the time for isolated individual action alone. Seek strength in your community.

Resources :

Books:

R Wilkinson and K Pickett (2010) " **Spirit Level - Why equality is better for everyone**"

Pam Lunn 2011 Swarthmore Lecture " **Costing not less than Everything: Sustainability and spirituality in challenging times**"

