

Tayside Quaker

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East Scotland Area Meeting

Scottish charity number SC0020698

All opinions in Tayside Quaker are those of the individual writers and not necessarily of The Religious Society of Friends.

Editorial

Cover by Rosemary Crawley Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network. This will be the final issue of Tayside Quaker before the laying down of East Scotland Area Meeting.

80 years of Christian Aid

There have been various events this year to mark eighty years of Christian Aid, one of which was the Christian Aid Big Breakfast in Perth. At this event a poem by Cathy Galloway was read:

The Folk That Give Life

She was just a lassie
when she drove her big armt ambulance into the camp
but what she saw then
marked her hale long life
and for the rest o' her days, she was a healer.

Never again, folk said, never again.
But of course it was again and again
and it wisnae , it was some place else.
the greed and the cruelty and the sheer rank badness o' it,
and aye the uprooted yins and hungry yins
and the pathetic excuses of the high heid yins.

But there were aye folk who saw things a bit differently

saw the weans wrapped in news paper against the winter cauld
and the old yins wi naething to eat but cabbages,
and the homeless folk among the rubble
and they said, this'll no dae, something'll need tae be done,
it wisnae charity, it was mair like a helping hand
it was giving folk a voice and a pal, and dignity.

And as the drilling and the logging and the mining and the land grabbing went
on,
and the powerful offered bread and circuses and lies,
and set folk against each other,
the other thing went on as well.
Year after year, mair mountains climbed, mair lang miles walked,
mair red tins filled, mair bridges crossed mair banners waved,
mair choirs and dancers, shows and speeches, cakes and scones,
mair prayers raised tae heavens,
year after year after year.

Naebody says 'never again' noo.
Nae body would believe it anyway,
but low down on the ground,
where there's folk still just getting on wi' it,
there's aye the steadfast yins,

and ye ken,
tyey're the loving yins,
every day,
they're the folk that give life.

Cathy Galloway

Report to Tayside Quaker from the final ESAM, held on 18th October 2025

I attended this historic Meeting in person – the last ESAM, as the next step on our journey to becoming Quakers in Scotland. 21 (plus 3 visitors) were present in person or online.

The Meeting was clerked by Robin Waterston and Assistant clerk Alice Curteis and we got through the whole agenda – including some discussions – only 20 minutes over time. The Meeting felt very gathered.

Pam Brunt provided an up to date statement of finance. She has worked really hard to ensure that local meetings understand the changes necessary as we move toward all monies going into QiS bank – which is planned to take place by the end of the year. She emphasised the need for local meetings to have emptied their bank accounts by then and to ensure that all members/attenders who donate regularly have transferred their payments to the new bank account. (She visited our Local Meeting a few weeks ago and gave us an extremely helpful explanation of how it is envisaged that the new system will work.)

Robert Thompson spoke of his online attendance at the recent blended Meeting for Sufferings – although he felt that being online made participating in the small group discussions difficult, his report to ESAM was comprehensive and very interesting. There will be a report elsewhere in TQ, so I need say no more.

Richard Raggat and Caroline Burch attended ESAM in person and spoke about

the importance of the work of PEWG. They are stepping down as Conveners, and await 2 new people stepping forward. They spoke of us being in a time of renewal and transition (both as becoming QiS and the Scottish elections to be held next year).

We heard how much has been learned during their time with PEWG and that a much greater appreciation of the pressure which politicians are under has been gained. The Quaker testimony to Truth and Integrity encourages us to cut through division, so more reciprocity in engagement with SNPs has been cultivated.

Richard says he now finds himself challenging people who declare that all politicians are only 'in it for themselves', as meeting with so many of them has convinced him that the majority have actually entered politics with a genuine desire to try and make life better for all.

Pamala McDougall brought a letter she had felt moved to write, offering sympathy and love to the Jewish community following the Manchester synagogue attack and asking that it be sent out on behalf of ESAM. After some discussion and small alterations, this was agreed.

Time was given for people to reflect on their experience of ESAM over the years before it was laid down and we became – officially – part of QiS.

I shall miss these Meetings, but after the positive atmosphere of this one, look forward to the evolution of QiS, with all its challenges – keeping the Quaker reminder to 'live adventurously' close by.

Yours in friendship, Stella Cranwell (Member, Perth Meeting)

George Richardson Lecture

The 2025 George Richardson Lecture, postponed earlier this year, has now been rescheduled for Wednesday 9 December, 19:30–21:00.

This year's online lecture is on '**George W. Taylor, a Practical Antislavery Man: Capitalism, Race, Gender, and Quakers in the Nineteenth Century**' and will be given by **Julie Holcomb**, author of *Moral Commerce: Quakers and the Transatlantic Boycott of the Slave Labor Economy* details at <https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/courses/george-richardson-lecture-george-w-taylor-a-practical-antislavery-man/>



Woodbrooke Worship Groups

Young Adult Worship

A space for 18-35s to come together for reflection, worship, and connection.

9pm (UK time) every Wednesday

www.woodbrooke.org.uk/worship/young-adult



EDUCATORS WORSHIP

A space for all Quakers, and those with similar values, who work in schools: it is intended to be a warm, supportive hub offering spiritual nourishment.

8pm (UK time) the first Monday of the month

<https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/worship>



News of Our Meetings

Dundee 'A testimony to community' Emily Provance in Dundee

Friends, joined by guests from St Andrews and Central Fife meetings, were blessed with a visit from Emily Provance as part of her travelling ministry on 19 July 2025. Since January 2019, Emily has been travelling in the ministry full-time, visiting and supporting Friends across the globe. Amongst this work, Emily delivered the latest annual Swarthmore lecture entitled 'A Testimony of

Community.’ It was this same theme that provided the fertile ground for discussion in Dundee.

It was in community that our discussion began, first with coffee and catch-up, and then gathered in silent worship. We listened to an introduction from our Friend, Pamala McDougall, who reminded us that Scottish Quakers have form in providing Swarthmore lecturers – Jonathan Dale (1996) and Christine Davis (2008) being but two examples. We also heard that the topic of community was opportune, given the time of ongoing organisational change as we journey from ‘General Meeting for Scotland’ to ‘Quakers in Scotland.’ Introducing Emily, we learned of her monumental achievement of reading all the Quaker Books of Discipline. The common threads from these books, along with insights from her global travels, were woven into her discussion.

Emily began by inviting us into dialogue with her, asking us to help her shape the discussion in a way that felt resonant in the context of our meetings. As a guidepost, she mentioned that her goal was to learn together ‘what Friends can say about how we should live in community.’ Friends, in turn, shared concerns about global conflicts in Gaza, Ukraine, and Sudan. They asked, what can Friends do, individually and corporately, as members of a global community. Some Friends also acknowledged the challenges of entering dialogue with those with whom they profoundly disagree, particularly those who may express racism and other forms of bigotry. Additionally, we questioned whether the formal structures of our meetings always serve us, or whether, at times, we serve our structures to the detriment of community expression.

Sharing with us her gifts as a facilitator, Emily helped us find structure and commonality between seemingly disparate threads. When conflict arises, she mentioned the need for flexibility of approach. Conflict may look different when it occurs within our own communities, having actively chosen to live together, versus between communities that may merely tolerate – or actively

dislike – each other. We brainstormed some of the tools we have available to us in our Quaker communities when navigating conflict. Emily helped us remember that whilst we may each have our individual concerns, there is great value in the careful discernment and testing of our leadings as a collective.

It may be that individuals may need to express strong emotions on an issue before navigating a path forward. Our Threshing Meetings can provide an outlet that allows for the expression of different perspectives without aiming for immediate discernment. If a concern or leading lies more with an individual or small group, they can be supported through a meeting for clearness, or by Elders and Pastoral Friends. Our day-to-day decision-making practices are grounded in waiting worship. At our best, we try to make room for individual contributions, whilst aiming to be sensitive to the promptings of the light as a collective.

With Emily, we discussed that our spiritual practice does not end within the confines of our meeting houses. We are led to live our testimonies, and look for that of God in everyone, in the world around us. In a time of seemingly irreconcilable conflicts and deep divisions, this is a deeply challenging task. However, we were reminded that sometimes a big difference can be made through even the smallest of actions. Can we listen to a friend in need? Give our time to a local community group or charity? As one Friend mentioned: “I may not be able to change the world, but I can write a letter.”

It is in recognising our own spiritual gifts, alongside our limitations and boundaries, where we can be most in service to our meetings and our communities. Friends mentioned the importance of keeping ourselves nourished, physically and spiritually, before entering challenging conversations. At times, we may recognise that a particular subject matter may bring up difficult and complicated emotions. During these times, it is important to put the care of ourselves first, drawing a boundary, and leaning on the solidarity of community to support us. We may recognise that there are a lot of

different and creative ways to express ourselves, and what we each feel capable of doing may fluctuate throughout the seasons of our lives.

At times, Quakers have been known to shy away from conflict, fearing the impact upon our communities. Despite having a wealth of spiritual resources, we may not always know the clearest route through hardship. Ultimately, our conversation with Emily helped us remember that sitting with difficulty and complexity can be the first step towards resolution. Quaker testimonies, Simplicity, Truth, Equality, Peace, and Sustainability are intentionally open-ended and incomplete. We remain open to the possibility that through asking questions, and looking after one another, that the light will guide our efforts towards healing and wholeness.

Dundee Quakers thank Emily Provance for visiting us, sharing her gifts, and for facilitating tender conversation. We wish her well on her journey and hope that she will visit us again. Haste ye back, Emily.

Craig Wilson Pastoral Friend Dundee Meeting



Perth

Perth freinds and others marked the 80th anniversarry of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima.



News from St Andrews

It has been a long time since our summer picnic has not felt the heat from hot sunshine. The gathering this season took place at Kinburn Park on a dull day with the dress code for the occasion, warm clothes and some hats. Being together outside was a joy, the sound of voices and laughter, a chance to talk, talk and listen to each other. The Labyrinth was close by, all the better for the maintenance carried out cutting the edge of the path to the centre. A contemplative stroll to the centre where, on a bench that invites time to rest, there is inscribed the words of George Fox, "Be cool and still in thine own mind and spirit" an ideal way to end the afternoon.

Friends were invited to pick blackcurrents at the home of Ellen Colingsworth. This now seems to have become an annual invitation. In addition we had a shared lunch, for most, before the business of berry picking. It was a hot August day, the ice cream took no time at all to melt! The woody shrubs were laden with fruit, its versatility an added attraction. Only the brave would eat them straight off the bush but with sugar there are plenty of enticing combinations. My own is puréed currents with vanilla ice cream – delicious.

There were 4 options to enjoy; 1. Pick blackcurrents 2. A walk in the woods nearby, a relief from the hot sun 3. Stay and chat, and 4 Find a quiet place in the garden and listen to birdsong.. Whatever the choice we all happily enjoyed the afternoon and thanked Ellen for her hospitality.



It is planned, on the morning of Saturday 1st November, to have a table in Church Squ. for distributing White Poppies. This is an opportunity to talk about the origins of the White Poppy and its continuing significance to the present day.

At a now redundant red Telephone box, just by the Younger Hall, North St., there is now inside an installation devoted to PEACE. A ladder is the symbol of a climb to reach PEACE. At the top are White Poppies, and a few Red, together with helpful suggested labels attached to the rungs of the ladder to aid a thought process to PEACE. The installation can be seen by curious passers by until mid November.



Finally,

Wisdom, where does it hide?

tucked away in a locker

abracadabra

Jill Marshall

Book of Discipline Revision Committee - October 2026 update

For our final meeting of this year, your committee assembled at Aston University in Birmingham over the weekend 10-12 October. Having dealt with routine business on the preceding Wednesday evening, we plunged straight into a huge amount of business. Instead of going home after lunch on Sunday, we had been asked to stay on for an afternoon session: we were delighted to finish slightly early, having done everything we'd intended to do.

Committee members, had a staggering amount of writing to complete in time for our meeting, while all of us had a huge amount of reading to do.

After our July meeting those of us who chose to receive hard copy were presented with a 400-page book containing everything we've written and banked so far, to read, digest, and comment on by the end of September. In addition, various committee members had been working on producing new material on our testimonies, while another small group continued its work on writing new Advices and Queries. These all arrived uncomfortably near the date of our meeting...

We are NOT going to produce any more new text! We have already assembled a massive amount of text which needs to be wrestled into a more coherent form – we simply can't keep adding more to what we already have, no matter how strong the temptation.

Not everyone will read the Book from cover to cover: many people will dip in and out. We want to minimize the amount of duplication of "voice of the book" [narrative voice] and extracts, but sometimes things might need to be said in more than one place rather than filling pages with potentially off-putting extensive cross-referencing. It is probable that the more coherent the Book becomes, the less need there will be for repetition.

Our Communicating with Friends [CwF] group has felt we need to discern a working title for the draft, which will reinforce the message that we are not simply re-working *Quaker faith and practice* but are creating a totally new book of discipline. A new working title for the draft will help us get this across. We kept returning to this question throughout the weekend – it was fascinating to see the gradual emergence of clarity.

Central Nominations committee are looking for new names to join the committee, and Woodbrooke and Friends House staff will be supporting us in this work.

Finally, we are beginning to edge towards a book!

That said, we still need your prayers and upholding as we near the end of the first phase of our work as your committee. We are working on your behalf: we can't do this without you!

BDRC 2025-10-26 Key messages

1. *The newly appointed External Reader has begun the task of reviewing current versions of all texts which the committee have written.*
2. *We have agreed our sixth and final report to Meeting for Sufferings which will go to their meeting in December 2025. This will include sharing information about our working title and structure of the new book.*
3. *We remain on track to have the first complete draft of the new book ready by late 2026 for inclusion in Documents in Advance ahead of Yearly Meeting in July 2027.*
4. *Our work to create resources that will help prepare Friends to engage with our first complete draft in early 2027 is being supported by both Woodbrooke and Quakers in Britain staff.*
5. *Drafting the new version of Advices and Queries continues.*

Mary Woodward

Meetings for Worship

Dundee: The Meeting House, 9 Whitehall Crescent, Dundee DD1 4AR

Sundays 11.00 am – 12 noon, followed by tea and coffee.

On the first Sunday of each month the meeting will be a blended one, with attendance possible via Zoom.

St Andrews Meeting House, 2 Howard Place, St Andrews KY16 9HL

Sundays 10.30 am

Children's Meeting - each Sunday during school terms

Enquiries: Genevieve Orr (01333 360396)

Midweek Meeting, Thursdays 1.15 – 1.45pm

Perth: The Subud Centre, 7 St Leonard's Bank, Perth PH2 8EB

Second and last Sundays of each month

Meeting for worship 11.00 – 12 noon, followed by tea and coffee.

Arrangements for children on 2nd Sundays (Contact Anneke Kraakman 07746 117762)

Occasional all age worship (on fourth Sundays in five Sunday months – check details with correspondent)

ESAM Light Group: meets the first Sunday of the month at 10.30, via Zoom. New members always welcome. Contact enidharding@icloud.com for further information.

Quakers in Scotland

28/02/2026