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TOWARDS WHOLENESS

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FRIENDS FELLOWSHIP OF HEALING (A QUAKER GROUP)

The Friends Fellowship of Healing is an informal group of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). (*Registered Charity number 284459.*)

Since its foundation in 1935, it has sought to uphold the cause of a healing ministry, and seeks to be a channel to help people towards health and harmony of body, mind and spirit, which it believes is God's purpose for everyone.

It has prayer groups attached to many Meetings, and also postal groups to enable isolated people, and those who may be unable to join a local group, to co-operate with others in the service of healing prayer.

The Fellowship holds conferences, retreats and workshops held either in its residential centre (*Claridge House, Dormans Road, Dormansland, Lingfield, Surrey RH7 6QH*) or elsewhere.

All members annually receive three issues of *Towards Wholeness*, the journal of the Fellowship, published in March, July and November.

The minimum subscription is £15 per calendar year for the UK.

For Europe and all overseas countries it is £21 (Sterling only).

Cheques, payable to Friends Fellowship of Healing, should be sent to The FFH Membership Secretary, 6 Ferris Place, Bournemouth, BH8 0AU.

US members please contact our agent, Richard Lee, 1201 Walsh Street, Lansing, MI 48912, USA. Tel: 517-285-1949 Email: richardlee3101@att.net regarding payment via him. (The telephone country code for America is 001.)

Letters, articles, news items and other contributions for *Towards Wholeness* should be sent to the editor, Rosalind Smith,

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Donations for the work of the Fellowship are most welcome.

FFH / QSH website: www.quaker-healing.org.uk

Front Cover: Swan

Back Cover: Tulips both photos by Nicholas Rawlence

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- ◇◇ Please note:
◇◇ The FFH AGM will
◇◇ take place on Saturday
◇◇ 8th April at 3pm.
◇◇ William Penn room,
◇◇ Friends House.

If any FFH members, or full healer members of QSH, would like to offer help at Britain Yearly Meeting Gathering – 29th July/5th August, at University of Warwick, please contact the Clerk, David Mason. Contact details on inside back cover. Thank you.

September 29 – Oct 1 Friends Fellowship of Healing and Quaker Fellowship for Afterlife Studies joint Autumn conference at Woodbrooke.

This conference will offer the opportunity to look more deeply at the interaction between the spiritual, mental, emotional and physical levels of our being. Participants will have the time and space to explore and deepen their understanding, and share experiences. The conference will explore topics of interest to both FFH and QFAS members through talks by invited speakers and discussion in large and small groups. Previous conferences have been much valued by those who participated.

Ensuite bedroom fee: £238.00 Standard bedroom fee: £218.00.

All administration and bookings will take place through Woodbrooke:

Tel: 0121 472 5171, Email: enquiries@woodbrooke.org.uk

Bursary help may be available from your Local or Area Meeting, or from FFH if you are a member. Woodbrooke does have a bursary fund that you can apply to:

<http://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/pages/financial-help.html>

Woodbrooke's Bursary Scheme provides financial help to anyone, Quaker or non-Quaker, who needs it to cover course fees at Woodbrooke. Please indicate on your booking form or contact the administration team. Enquiries are treated confidentially.

Just over five years ago, aged 58, I suddenly, after a lifetime of being in pretty good health, mysteriously and suddenly collapsed; I was rushed to hospital where after a week's tests I discovered there was a small, dark 'shadow' in my small intestines. They didn't know what it was, but they did know it shouldn't be there, so they advised an operation. The morning after an extremely dangerous operation – as it proved to be – I woke to find the surgeon informing me that he had removed two malignant sarcomas (a very rare form of cancer effectively), one the size of a grapefruit, the other the size of a avocado; the latter pressed against an artery and threatened to split it. Which would have meant instant death. So much for the 'small'.

Unfortunately, the operation wasn't successful and two weeks later I had another five-hour operation and by this time some 30% of my small intestines had been removed: that's about 6-7 feet of internal tubing. Then they waited, for my system to kick in and work, which it didn't. So I went on to Nil by Mouth for nearly 5 weeks. For those who don't know Nil by Mouth it means that I couldn't eat or drink anything; all nutrition came, belatedly, via an IV drip. Personally, I found the hunger easy to deal with, but the thirst – the unending desire to drink water, the dryness of the throat – is a torture almost beyond bearing. And I say belatedly because they took a while to realise that I needed the drip, and so I was wasting away. I read in America that 40% of cancer patients die of malnutrition, and I lost about 4.5 stone in that period, and looked like somebody from Auschwitz or Belsen. Indeed, I looked like somebody who was soon to die.

I should say at this point that my parents were/are atheists, and I was myself, but I had become a Christian in my mid-twenties, and a Quaker when I was about 50. And by the time I was taken ill had no previous experience of strange or mystical experiences.

Thus it was that during my 3 month stay in the Royal Bournemouth Hospital, lying in the hospital bed, early one evening, practising meditative breathing in order to control the pain, psychological and physical, and resisting – which I did consistently – the urge to activate the morphine drip that I was supplied and that they were eager that I used – I had a healing experience which changed my life.

I was staring at the blank ceiling above my bed. Without warning, effortlessly, I suddenly found that my consciousness was leaving my body and heading up into deep space. It was not alarming; I was curious. Ahead of me in the deep black I saw a light. Aware my body was far behind me on Earth, I willed my consciousness to head towards the light. As I approached I saw what looked

like a huge, white, translucent index finger wrapping what appeared to be white candy floss round in a spiral, shell-like pattern. Intrigued, I willed myself closer. The finger casually flexed itself and just flicked the candy floss which spun off into space; as it did so, equally casually, the finger seemed to trail lightly behind.

Then I realised with total astonishment that this wasn't candy floss but an enormous white star that the finger had created and sent off into its orbit in the cosmos. I realised that God – the mere finger of God – was about what it was always about: creation, and a star had been born. And as this sank into my consciousness I became critically aware of the disparity between myself – helpless in pain, consigned to death on a hospital bed – and the Lord of all Glory, serene above the clouds, in deep space, creating a star. My whole consciousness was swept by an anguish that shook me to the roots of my being, and I cannot claim that I willed it, but almost involuntarily, as if I had been taken over by the Power who enabled me to do the only proper thing: my consciousness cried out in deep despair, 'God help me'. It was the simplest and profoundest of prayers.

And there in deep space as I made the cry, the finger instantly broke from its casual movement, and like a gun turned and aimed itself at me. Before I could think what did it mean, the finger rushed straight at me – seemingly faster than light itself – and I simultaneously recoiled backwards and in one consummate movement I was abruptly back in my body as the finger went straight into me: straight into the point where the operation had opened up my intestines. It was like some pulverising shock, and I felt as if my whole body bolted upwards in the bed some six inches or more – though probably only less than an inch – and then thudded backwards, relapsing as it were, onto the bed.

There I was: my whole being suddenly and immediately was immersed, was saturated, in joy, sheer joy. The physical and psychological pain had all vanished, all gone. I felt the presence of God – which even to recall now fills me with awe and fear and trembling, like nothing else – and I wept. Not tears of pain: I wept tears of joy. And I became aware that I could die now; and thoughts of my wife and children came to my mind, and I saw the pain of leaving them, especially their pain in not having me. But selfish as it sounds, it didn't matter – dying was better, to be with God. Because, anyway, this power, just as it had looked after me, would look after them; in His hand, everything was possible. So I wept more, and more, and became aware too of the deepest thing of all: the one word for me that described this God who held me now. The 'purity' of God. I struggle to convey my sense of it. How unworthy I felt in myself, and yet God held me: the disparity between my unworthiness and

His purity; my weakness and His strength; between my mortality and His unquenchable life.

I wept yet I was in perfect peace, and in a perfect place which I never wanted to leave. My body curled up into a foetal position, and like some baby being rocked, slowly, slowly, I drifted into sleep. How long had the experience been? I do not know – maybe 30 mins – but it may have been 2 minutes or 2 hours.

But here's the thing: in all my 3 months in hospital I never got one night's sleep. The maximum was 2 hours before one was awoken by something or other. Yet on this night, for some reason, I slept till the new nurse shift at 6.00 the following morning. A perfect and profound night's sleep of at least 6 if not 7 hours. I woke feeling as if I had had pleasant dreams, and feeling so refreshed. But more than that I woke knowing one other thing: that I wasn't going to die from this cancer now, that I was going to leave the hospital, and that I was going to re-create my life.

Curiously, too, my youngest son came to visit me from his university sometime after, and he told me, Dad, he said, I had a dream. In the dream I was crying and crying. Suddenly a man – a woman? – being of light stood before me and said, 'Why are you crying?'

And I said, 'Because my father is dying.'

And he said, 'Stop crying, your father is not going to die. He has not finished his mission yet.' The being disappeared and my son instantly woke with the scene fresh in his mind.

So I have come to believe that what happened to me – the healing that has allowed me to re-enter life – that has re-claimed me for a mission – is not unique to me or even to do with my being special in some way. No, as I contemplate that finger, and those words, I realise that every single human being is precious to God, and everyone has a mission – that their words and actions count. When we abandon these beliefs we are no better than atheists, and just as hopeless. True healing is from God – the Spirit – the Light – the Christ and I feel blessed to have directly experienced it. For this is the strange reality it has led me to: I am glad that I had the cancer – still have the cancer – I am glad that my pain and suffering enabled me to have the opportunity to experience the mercy, the compassion, and the healing of the Lord. And as a result I feel unafraid of death in a way that would have been impossible before this illness overtook me.

Earthsong

*If the earth had a song
How would it sound?*

It does have a song

Listen

Listen

*Listen to the sea
As it crashes or laps
Sucking the pebbles
And dragging them back*

Listen

Listen

*Listen to the wind
As it roars or murmurs
Tossing the trees
Or tickling the leaves*

Listen

Listen

*Listen to the storm
As it cracks and thunders
Crackling the sky
Raging with light*

Listen

Listen

*Listen to the silence
As the sun sinks down
Wrapping the earth in darkness
An owl hoots, a bat squeaks*

Listen

Listen

*The earth has a song
for us all to hear
Many songs within songs
When we listen*

Listen

Listen

Judy Clinton

WHOLENESS EQUALS ONENESS EQUALS HEALING? *Janet Shimmin*

Are wholeness and healing the same phenomenon as non-duality, advaita and 'meeting in that which is eternal'? I wonder whether healers (potentially all sentient beings) operate by allowing us back into the Oneness and connectedness of everything.

We may have different ways in. Personally when I intend to heal, I first reach for what I find in Meeting for Worship or in meditation: being at one with the Universe and knowing myself part of godde [my spelling, between god and goddess], then I reach for the spirit of the other (the healee?) and hope to bring us all together. This seems to work well especially when people are open to the experience. There are no adverse side effects to healing.

Is healing similar to 'spiritual contagion' – the way very soul-ful people unintentionally facilitate that dimension in others? Some of you may remember Venetia Jones, who was a member of QSH. I once mentioned to her that people don't often discuss spiritual matters in our society and she was astonished – 'People are always talking to me about spirit!' she said. Well, yes, that was because she was Venetia and drew it forth. Just sitting in meditation with people who can easily find that connection with the Divine, makes it easier for others. The foundation of the Gathered Meeting – where two or three are gathered together.

I have a chronic health condition (fibromyalgia) that comes and goes, and makes me a bit of a coal-miners' canary to spiritual ambiance! I have made two six-months trips to volunteer in India and unaccountably flourish in that society's sense of the sacred. Not in the busy modern cities, but in areas whose strongly-woven community fabric is based on the sacredness of all. Living in quite challenging conditions there, my pain and fatigue drop away, I lose weight, my hair grows thicker, my mind is clearer.

In UK recently I had a 'flare-up' of symptoms and, chatting online to a friend in India, I said what a good thing this hadn't happened when I was there earlier this year, I'd never have been able to walk up and down the steep alleys and steps of the Himalayas. 'I would have looked after you!' wrote my friend indignantly and I realised, by golly she's right. *Everyone* would have looked after me, ex-pat friends would have dropped in for hours, my Indian neighbours (whose little English to my zero Hindi never impedes our friendship) would have inundated me with home-cooking and love. In UK my more geographically-widespread Friends offered to shop, pick up prescriptions, but I lacked the embeddedness in a nearby community where

love-within-the-Divine was the norm.

In the part of India I know, the name of one's spiritual path is unimportant, everyone is assumed to have one unless otherwise stated! Some of my ex-pat friends were studying Buddhism, some yoga, some (like me) just soaking up the reverence and love. The locals are nominally Hindu but many follow the Radha Suami path which is not dissimilar to Quakerism and allows them (low-caste in Hindu terms) equal value and participation. Hinduism itself embraces all sorts of sects, schisms, local deities and beliefs. Traditionally Muslims and Hindus worshipped at each other's shrines, found every few hundred yards.

The Indian women with whom I was working would rush out when we heard the sirens announcing the Dalai Lama's cavalcade. Waiting at the roadside, hands together and heads a little bowed, I asked why they (Hindu, Radha Suami or whatever) did this for a Buddhist leader and they stared at me in astonishment. Why would anyone pass up the chance of a spiritual hit from someone so palpably holy, just because his path was couched in different terms? 'Don't you feel the blessing?' one asked me.

In the same way that I found the ambient spirituality in Himachal Pradesh healing and supportive, I enjoy my weekly Quaker Meeting in UK as a community that comes together in the presence of the Divine. When I hold people in the Light I am trying, on my own, to create a bubble of connectedness and oneness that allows others to experience wholeness, even if they are dying. It would be interesting to know what difference the FFH Healing Day in 2017 makes. When groups of Transcendental Meditators did an eight-week project in Washington in 1993 violent crime, road accidents and hospital admissions dropped about 20% for that period. Some healing!

*Dear Lord,
Weave with us the weft of life;
Draw with us the shapes we need;
Choose with us the colours dear;*

*Weave with us the weft of life;
Draw the thread in fellowship fine;
Weave with us in thankfulness;
Weave with us the weft of life.*

Rosemary Bartlett

THE SUN BREAKS THROUGH

Judy Clinton

It was a dismal, dreary grey day at the end of January. For days there had been no sunshine to break through the gloom, and the weather forecast didn't offer any hope of change in the immediate future.

I'd gone into town to do some necessary shopping and felt fed-up, energy-less and uninspired. It was one of those days when I felt that, like the sun, I hadn't smiled for a while. The street where I had parked my car was dirty, littered, noisy, busy and drab.

But, all that was to change in the wink of an eye. Coming to the main road I immediately saw a small, elderly African man standing on the other side of the street taking photographs with his mobile phone. That was interesting enough in itself, given that it was drizzling steadily. But it was his hat that took my attention. It was a loudly multi-coloured, large creation of a hat, sitting jauntily on his head like a circular cushion. The man and his hat raised my spirits immediately, and I knew I wanted to speak to him.

I crossed the road at the lights and walked towards him. 'Your hat is fabulous,' I said, with absolute sincerity. He turned from taking photographs and looked at me with an enormous grin covering his otherwise rather sad face. 'I like to try and bring some sunshine in; the sun's hiding today.' I told him that he'd most certainly brought sunshine into my life, quite made my day in fact. We laughed, smiled at each other and parted company. I crossed a side-street, passing a woman coming the other way who, seeing my broad smile, smiled back.

The day got better and better from then on, despite the continuing gloom of the weather, and all because a man had chosen to wear a cheerful hat on a miserable day. And because I had been able to see, enjoy and share it. What small things can transform everything!



*Sitting quietly,
doing nothing.
Spring comes,
and the grass
grows by itself.*

*Zen
Wisdom*

We must forgive ourselves if we disrupt, undermine or abandon our healing programme for we can always, in better times, start to build up again, on the very foundations we have previously laid and make a success of things this time around.

A full and open-hearted surrender to the adverse dynamics that are operating in our lives is often the most appropriate and realistic response that we can offer up until we move forward into a position where positive change/s can be enacted.

The first dedicated steps into healing can start to build up into a stride, a momentum that can sustain us for the journey ahead. Always remember this when starting, even if we have been here before. The more steps we take the more we find ourselves 'in the flow' to a much better life.

Sometimes we have to be broken down before we are built up again and healed.

It does take time to integrate all the fractured parts of us that need healing. Always remember this.

Mindfulness lies at the heart of healing – the ability to be present in the moment, not judging or worrying, just staying open to the peace and serenity of this special, quiet moment.

In order for healing to appear in our lives we do need to create the right seedbed conditions for it to flourish. And an essential part of this process is the adoption of a non-judgmental, relaxed, quiet mind.

We must never give up on ourselves, on the possibility of further healing. Accept the fact that there are always things we can do, alternatives to explore in order to enter more personal wellbeing. Seek out everything that can enlarge your healing and magnify it.

Sometimes healing can simply be an evening spent listening to soothing classical music – relaxed, quiet, in peaceful mode, contented with just sitting still with no innate desire to be anywhere else.

Healing, in its most open phase allows us to explore its landscape in a

non-condemnatory manner, bearing witness to 'what is,' an observer of a passing show that constitutes our lives.

Treat your healing as a 'day at a time' process because life only comes to us a day at a time.

Healing is undoubtedly a challenge for it asks of us to step outside of our normal everyday selves, the way we undertake things, and adopt change/s based on faith – a basic belief that things can and will become better.

Never be afraid, wipe the slate of negativity clean in our hearts and minds to start afresh.

Never preoccupy yourself with too much busyness so that you fail to attend to the potential of healing that opens up in the quiet spaces of a settled, relaxing calm.

Healing is a form of self-empowerment – taking up responsibility for making our lives better.

It's never too late to engage with the healing of our lives so don't waste another day – start the journey now.

Sometimes we get trapped and keep on repeating actions without regard for their critical evaluation. Remember what Albert Einstein said:

"Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results."

1. Listening is the aspect of silence in which we receive the compassion of God.
2. Listening is indeed vital, but we must take care to remember that to understand is to *stand under the other*.
3. When one really loves, words become less important and listening brings deeper awareness and greater sensitivity of love.

All Mother Mary Clare, SLG

IF I BE THE FIRST OF US TO DIE

*If I be the first of us to die,
Let grief not blacken long your sky.
Be bold yet modest in your grieving.
There is a change but not a leaving.
For just as death is part of life,
The dead live on forever in the living.
And all the gathered riches of our journey,
The moments shared, the mysteries explored,
The steady layering of intimacy stored,
The things that made us laugh or weep or sing,
The joy of sunlit snow or first unfurling of the spring,
The wordless language of look and touch,
The knowing,
Each giving and each taking,
These are not flowers that fade,
Nor trees that fall and crumble,
Nor are the stones,
For even stone cannot the wind and rain withstand
And mighty mountain peaks in time reduce to sand.
What we were, we are.
What we had, we have.
A conjoined past imperishably present.
So when you walk the wood where once we walked together
And scan in vain the dappled bank beside you for my shadow,
Or pause where we always did upon the hill to gaze across the land,
And spotting something, reach by habit for my hand,
And finding none, feel sorrow start to steal upon you,
Be still.
Close your eyes.
Breathe.
Listen for my footfall in your heart.
I am not gone but merely walk within you.*

Nicholas Evans

(suggested by Andrew Rutter, Winchester Meeting)

This story begins last year when we went to Marrakech for our fourth visit. One of the chambermaids was very pregnant and I thought I would like to give her a little present when the baby was born. I asked Hassan the riad manager to keep me informed. This he did by email. Eventually the baby arrived in January, a little boy and I was duly informed. I sent off a card with a fiver tucked inside. It took three weeks for it to arrive and then I heard from Hassan that it had arrived safely. I thought no more about it.

About the same time in January I took the decision to stop teaching children one-to-one. There seemed no work on the horizon and as I am over seventy it seemed like a good idea to give up and retire properly. Gradually I began sorting out the books and resources I had amassed over the years and ended up with a number of games which I didn't know what to do with. In chatting to Hassan he told me there were lots of poor children in Morocco who would enjoy the games. I suddenly realised I had only looked at Morocco as a tourist on the surface. I hadn't really accepted there was poverty.

I took my unwanted games to Morocco on our next visit in November. We booked in one piece of hold luggage and filled it with all the toys I could fit in. Hassan was delighted with the plan and promptly invited us to share a meal with him and his wife. It was, he said something I deserved. That concept didn't sit happily with me.

In the riad our arrival at breakfast that first morning was greeted so enthusiastically by the two ladies who worked there you would have thought I'd given them thousands of pounds for the new baby. We have very little common language but they were so happy to see us. Later I showed Hassan the toys I had brought and he shared them between the two ladies for their children. This occasioned further delighted thanks and hugs.

The invitation to a meal was reiterated and two days later we piled into a taxi for the half-hour drive to Hassan's flat and to meet his wife Naima. He lives in a flat in a new development area of Marrakech. I had already seen extensive development from the aircraft as we flew in. The flats were finished and lived in but the area around was still an undeveloped wilderness that all builders tend to leave behind. We picked our way gingerly through piles of sand and broken bricks and unmade roads to Hassan's flat.

He lives on the second floor in a nice modern one-bedroom flat. I worried we may have to sit on the floor to eat our meal, but there was a dining table

and sofas, to my relief. I think Naima had spent all day cooking our meal. The tagine held four pieces of chicken and we were invited to help ourselves so I served Mike and myself with two of the four pieces. Hassan and his wife just picked at the rest and suddenly I realised I didn't know how I was meant to behave at this meal and felt somewhat embarrassed, but then I decided it was all part of Berber hospitality. The chicken was removed to the kitchen to be replaced by a huge dish of couscous with vegetables laid on the top. After that Naima brought in a tray of Moroccan sweetmeats made from almond stuffed pastries, and a tray of salted almonds and walnuts. We thanked Hassan for our lovely meal and he said again we deserved it!

Very gently we asked Hassan about the role of his wife. Some time ago a guide had told us that his wife could do what she wanted as long as she asked her husband first. As a westerner I was appalled. But that appears to be how it is. The man in a marriage is king, and the wife has very little say. Her role seems to be to bring up the children of the marriage if there are any and shop, cook and clean. Naima generally gets up to see her husband off to work at 7.30am and then goes back to bed for a couple of hours. Then she gets up and mostly watches films on TV for the rest of the day until Hassan returns. We thought privately she led a rather lonely existence and that her time could be better used doing other more meaningful things. She has no family living nearby to pop into for a quick visit. We suspect but didn't like to ask that theirs was an arranged marriage.

We also talked about the Mosque being only for men. Hassan protested that it caters for women too, but I've never seen women going into the mosque five times a day as the men do.

We can't have done everything wrong over the meal because we have been invited to stay with them and to go again for a meal the next time we visit. When it came time for us to leave Hassan came with us to guide us to the main road where we could hail a taxi, he nipped along at a rate of knots while we stumbled along in his wake avoiding all the building hazards. At the main road there was a man packing up his stall of second hand trainers, throwing the shoes haphazardly into the back of his van. To one side were two mules tethered on a piece of waste ground. It seemed to us that modernization was purely surface deep. Further down the road was a very active market still open and busy at 9pm. A taxi came along eventually and Hassan negotiated a price for us to go back to the riad.

The next day we hired a guide for half a day to take us into the souk to the places we wanted to see. For the first time ever I felt discrimination. Our

guide only wanted to talk to Mike and was happy for me to walk several paces behind him and take no part in the conversation. I wanted to go to the dyers section of the souk and had to insist. I had seen felt slippers last year and thought this year I would buy a pair, but our guide thought he could tell me to buy leather ones. As a textile artist I found the dyers section very interesting and was happy to chat with them about dying and felt making both of which I have done. Later I mentioned to Hassan about how difficult our guide Rashid had been and he was astonished, he had no problem taking to him. I pointed out that was because he was talking man to man. Next time could we have a female guide? Hassan looked very doubtful and said that we could with plenty of notice. It would take time to arrange. I told him that here we have female electricians and female decorators because not everyone was happy to have strange men in their homes. He just looked uncomprehending.

In the Kasbah, normally a very busy thoroughfare, an elderly lady sleeps rough tucking herself into a shallow niche in a house wall. She is covered with a blanket to keep out the cold of the night. We asked Hassan about her as we had seen her sleeping form on previous visits. She was, we were told a beggar. Well, there are plenty of those in Marrakech, and even more since the events in Syria. She apparently walks round during the day begging money from people for cigarettes. Hassan declared without any sympathy that she was mad. I thought that here we would qualify that sort of remark with something like she was mentally ill, or had Alzheimer's or dementia. But he had no sympathy for the woman that we could see. I don't think there is any sort of safety net from the state for the unfortunates in society there although he was at pains to explain that the mosque distributed funds to the poor. Islam states that they have to pay a tithe from their income to provide for the less able and deprived.

When we came to pack to leave I had a well-used handbag I couldn't fit in the case and Mike an old pair of trainers. Both things were gratefully received and no doubt distributed to the deserving poor. We haven't yet decided whether to go again to Morocco next year, we have been five times already. We think that perhaps we should look at getting to know somewhere else equally well rather than be talked into deserving further meals with our Moroccan hosts, charming though they are.

(This article might well elicit some comments and views about the status of women in many parts of the world where the Quaker ethos of equality is not recognised. Please send any contributions, or letters, following Jan's article to the editor – details on inside back cover.)

CLARIDGE HOUSE *News and Programme*

Bursary assistance available, depending on individual personal circumstances. Please enquire when booking. For booking details – and other tariff, including daily rates and special breaks – please contact The Manager

Claridge House, Dormans Road, Lingfield, Surrey RH7 6QH.

Email: welcome@claridgehousequaker.org.uk

Website: www.claridgehousequaker.org.uk Tel: 01342 832150



CLARIDGE HOUSE PROGRAMME

March 14th - 16th TAI CHI COURSE

Tai Chi is a gentle form of exercise that can benefit people of all ages. The health benefits of tai Chi have been confirmed by numerous medical studies. They include improving your breathing, overall body flexibility and balance as well as reducing stress. It will be taught in a supportive atmosphere so you will leave Claridge House greatly refreshed and with a greater understanding of this ancient art. *Andrei Illes teaches Chen style Tai Chi in his local community.* **£240**

March 17th - 19th YOGA TO CELEBRATE THE EQUINOX

The Spring Equinox is a time when the earth is poised in balance of light and dark, and in most cultures marks the beginning of spring. It provides an auspicious opportunity to manifest new wishes into our lives. We will do this using a series of yoga, meditation and visualisation techniques, simultaneously enjoying a weekend of thanksgiving, celebration and friendship.

Ceri Lee is a member of the Independent Yoga Network and has taught at several of their regional day workshops. **£280**

March 21st - 23rd MASSAGE RETREAT

For details please see above.

£250

March 24th - 26th ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE

– for beginners and refreshers

The Alexander Technique is a learned skill which improves health, balance and co-ordination and is medically proven as a long term solution to back pain (BMJ 2008). This gently-paced course uses explanation, lying down, guided activities, hands-on work and discussion to explore the principles involved. Please bring comfortable clothing.

Jill Payne, teaches the Alexander Technique in Beckenham.

£225.

March 31st - April 2nd DRAWING WITH CONFIDENCE

Everyone can learn to draw with the right teaching. Enjoy seeing the world through artists eyes. This course is relaxing, friendly, non-judgemental and encouraging. A lovely atmosphere in which to create. Surprise yourself
Michelle Baker de Roeck is a drawing tutor with the University of the Third Age in London with many years experience. **£225**

April 7th - 9th GENTLE YOGA FOR FATIGUE AND STRESS

A gentle yoga course for all abilities, that will help restore and balance energy. It will include soothing breathing techniques, gentle yoga postures, simple meditation and nurturing relaxation. Suitable for those with moderate ME/CFS.
Leah Barnett is a massage therapist who began her journey into the world of holistic therapy back in 2001 when she qualified as a yoga teacher and has run many successful, popular courses at Claridge House. **£225**

April 21st - 23rd CREATIVE WRITING AND ART: MEETING WITH TREES

We will seek inspiration for creative work among the beautiful trees in Claridge House's garden. We will go out to observe and deepen our connection and understanding of trees and what they mean to us. We will also explore the trees that flourish within us, drawing on myths, stories, our imaginations and memories. Participants may write, make images or explore moving between words and images. No previous experience is necessary. The aim is to generate new ideas and inspiration for creative work rather than produce highly finished pieces of writing or art work.
Rebecca Hubbard has a special affinity with nature and runs creative writing and art workshops inspired by landscape, gardens and trees. **£240**

April 25th - 27th TAI CHI COURSE

Tai Chi is a gentle form of exercise that can benefit people of all ages. The health benefits of tai Chi have been confirmed by numerous medical studies. They include improving your breathing, overall body flexibility and balance as well as reducing stress. It will be taught in a supportive atmosphere so you will leave Claridge House greatly refreshed and with a greater understanding of this ancient art. *Andrei Illes now teaches Chen style Tai Chi in his local community.* **£240**

April 28th - 30th MEDITATION WEEKEND

This silent retreat offers time out of your busy life to nourish yourself and to offer your heart, body and mind compassion and kindness. It also offers the unique

opportunity to practice, eat, share and be together as a group of meditators. Self-compassion or Loving Kindness meditation experience necessary.

Gayle Creasey is a Mindfulness Teacher and Integrative Psychotherapist. **£385**

May 5th - 7th EXPERIMENT WITH LIGHT

In the serenity of Claridge House this retreat offers a meditative practice, based on the early Friends experience of waiting in the light, to help us explore the deeper issues of our lives. This can be searching and powerful, leading to fuller understanding and insight into ourselves and our leadings.

Angela Greenwood is an experienced Experiment with Light practitioner, having been involved in two Light groups for over ten years. **£240**

May 8th - 12th YOGA RETREAT WEEK

Why travel to Thailand for your Yoga retreat? Simply come to Surrey for a full timetable of posture work, breathing, deep relaxation and meditation. Wonderful vegetarian food will help cleanse and heal your body. All in a peaceful, spiritual setting that will re-energise your mind, body and spirit.

Lina Newstead is a British Wheel of Yoga Foundation Course and Diploma course tutor who has run many successful, popular courses and retreats at Claridge House. **£390**

May 12th - 14th HEALING WITH HERBS

Learn how to use herbs for healing, especially those from garden or hedgerow. Make infusions, tinctures and creams. Try dowsing for herbs and experience healing through meditation on herbs. Suitable for all levels of experience. Optional walk to identify local herbs.

Anne Brewer is a qualified Quaker Healer who is regularly consulted by friends and family on alternative ways to treat their ailments. **£225**

May 16th - 18th MASSAGE RETREAT

When you hurt yourself, you instinctively use your hands to rub the affected area; Massage is an extension of this technique. Andrei's soothing massages will relax you in both mind and body. At the end of the Massage Retreat you will leave the comfort of Claridge House relaxed, refreshed, but longing to return.

Andrei Illes is a professional massage therapist & teacher with many years experience. **£250**

Friday May 26th - 28th THE SPIRIT OF POETRY

We shall bring along, hear and look at poems that move us. We will share poems we have each written, speaking out for ourselves. We will experience resonance on various levels. We may find new meaning for ourselves in light of our time together.

“A poet’s autobiography is his poetry; anything else is just a footnote”

– Yevtushenko.

Francis Standish has been a keen student of English since his teens, has a deep interest in how we speak our truth, and has written poems at significant times throughout his life.

£225

June 23rd-25th BETTER BREATHING – BETTER BEING WITH YOGA

This weekend is suitable for all those wishing to deepen their understanding and awareness of the healing power of the breath through Yoga. Through talks and practical sessions covering anatomy, mudra, asana, pranayama, meditation and relaxation, we will explore this most fundamental aspect of our being. Yoga beginners and more experienced students welcome.

Bill and Gill Feeney, very experienced Yoga teachers with a particular interest in working with the breath.

£240

June 27th - 29th June MESSAGE RETREAT

Please see Tuesday 16th to Thursday 18th May above

£240

(For further programme during July, please contact Claridge House.)

In the stillness is the pearl of great price, where the Light shines. It is within us all, but we must dig deep...

Give your all and treasure it with all you have to give. Love it, tend it, care for it that it may grow and shine. This tender seed, this Precious Gift, this treasure trove of Love, found simply alive. Within’.

Elizabeth Mills (first pub. Quaker Voices May ’16)

QUAKER SPIRITUAL HEALERS' NEWS and EVENTS

Q S H TRAINING COURSE

There will be a Quaker Spiritual Healer Training Course on 11th - 15th September at Claridge house. If you want to book a place please contact Claridge House directly. Telephone: 01342 832150
or Email: welcome@claridgehousequaker.org.uk.

The tutors will be Cherry Simpkin and Kay Horsfield

The cost of the course will be £350 en suite, £310 not en suite. There will be bursaries available in case of hardship. If you have any questions about the course or want to ask about bursaries please contact:

Kay Horsfield Tel: 01923 675671 or Email: horsfield.k@gmail.com

If you are a full Quaker healer or probationer there will be an opportunity to make contact with other healers and share experiences as there is going to be a Healer Support Weekend at Claridge House – the weekend of **3rd-5th November**.

There will be more details in the Summer issue of *Towards Wholeness*.

If any full healers are thinking they may want to become tutors for the QSH Training Course please contact Kay Horsfield: Email: horsfield.k@gmail.com.

To all healers a quote from Lao-Tzu

Kindness in words creates confidence.

Kindness in thinking creates profoundness.

Kindness in giving creates love.

THE QUAKER SPIRITUAL HEALERS' NEWSLETTER.

Please send any contributions for the Quaker Spiritual Healers' Newsletter to: Ed Warne, contact details on inside back cover.

The young couple had been walking the way – marked Way. Sometimes it was a track but mostly just way-posts to indicate the way. This particular afternoon it was hot and the lass was grateful for the breeze coming off the sea which kept the midges away. The going was so wild that she was constantly looking at her feet and not noticing the wild flowers giving a glow of colour. There was tiny yellow tormentil, infusion of roots good for children with upset stomachs; louse worts, horrid name for pretty purple flowers, infusion of this plant good for ridding the head from lice; deep blue milkworts, help to separate the milk from the whey; the carnivorous sundews, red rimmed spiky green floret of leaves with tiny white flowers on long stems; red sphagnum moss and grey reindeer moss; long long grass and the heather just coming into bloom with its vivid purple. No, the lass was watching every foot-fall, already she had stumbled into a hidden course of a stream.

The couple skirted bogs and crossed rivers; one earlier had been crossed by a small bridge over the miniature gorge where a rowan tree was hanging on by its roots to the sheer sides of the gorge. There was an old disused nest of a buzzard and waterfalls and eddies. She had delighted in that place and they had sat companionably eating their lunch. The Way then went along ancient walls, maybe 3,000 years old, much overgrown, and later they had to cross a fast running stream, full from the heavy rain of the previous day. They had walked up and down seeking an easy way to cross, trying to keep their booted feet dry; at last there was a place but the rocks were slippery and it took time to cross. They stopped to wonder at an old ruin, rectangular in shape with odd looking add-ons to it; they questioned what it might have been so close to the water, maybe a mill of some kind? Then disaster struck. There, way out in the strange wilderness miles from anywhere, not entirely sure of where they were and with a ferry to catch, the way-posts disappeared. They were concerned, they were walking to the ferry port and had little idea of just how long this was going to take, and anyway, where were those posts? They began to be careless, rushing this way and that always looking but never spotting the next one. The bogs became a nightmare, the myriad of streams confused them. They went onto high ground; still no joy. Now what were they to do?

Then in the distance, too far away to be heard, they saw another person, an older lady, striding along the rough ancient wall, with a pale dog running joyfully all over the place. She had turned and saw them. She knew this area well, walking frequently, rejoicing in its beauty and her feet in touch with the earth. The walks grounded her, quite literally, as she saw the working of the natural world, all things depending upon all others and she herself was part of that. She loved that place and felt close to God, or the Spirit when way away

from houses, roads and demands. She was smiling. She knew too what had happened to that young couple, she knew that the posts disappeared for quite a distance and that it was confusing, but she was on the Way right beside a post. She swithered about should she head back towards them to guide them? But she was conscious too of needing to be back home for a visitor. So, as she was watching the lost souls they looked towards her and she saw the young man point towards her, so she smiled although they could not see that and raised her arm, vigorously waved her hand to show them that if they made for where she was they would pick up the posts again. Then she turned off the Way, went higher up the hill to circle back by a hidden loch where her dog liked to swim. As she climbed up she looked back down towards the Way and saw to her relief that the young couple had indeed found the posts again and were making good timing as they walked south.

Sometimes we become a bit lost in the wilderness, confused by the diversions, the bogs and the streams and the fear of losing the Way. Keep seeking, there is always someone there to smile, raise a hand and help you back to the way-mark posts. I have been helped thus often in times of need.



LETTERS

From Michael Len, Redlands Meeting, Bristol Area Meeting.

Cycle Towards Wholeness. What a pleasure to share Friend Ruth Kirk's story in the Summer 2016 issue of *Towards Wholeness*. It exemplified the enjoyment of life even in the face of pain – physical and metaphysical.

For the past 2½ years I have coexisted with multiple myeloma and congestive heart failure. There have been times of highs and lows. From January to May I had been hospitalized six times in Seattle, Washington where I now co-reside. Three occasions were for pneumonia, in which dark nights of the soul were pro forma. Each of these three admissions resulted in belief that, this time, I was “buying the farm”, and would leave the wards for that destination. And each time I opined that it would actually be a joy to go, to let go, to accept. But the sweet light at the end of the tunnel shone not for me, and I am here still. Let us hope that the value of my remaining, gifted time on this coil will be of a high estimate.

Ruth's story brought my mind to the void in my state. I do not, I did not, have a cherished item, experience, asset, companion... nor a tangible treasure like a bike to match her “loved it immediately” passion. At best, my most desired goal would be a yellow labrador resembling Glint, who I helped raise in 2001

for the Guide Dogs. I loved and cherished his tenderness, gentleness and companionability. But he is not now with me, and he was a sentient being. Ruth's love for a present tangible "began to revolutionize [her] life" – and I celebrate that for her and with her.

More synchronicity: a few autumn weeks ago the Seattle media reported on a chap giving up efforts to manufacture battery-assisted bikes for the area's environment-loving population. There proved to be no market for them. The yang to the yin: last week a close acquaintance informed me over lunch that one of her sons was in the throes of starting up production of these hybrid bikes for the London market. I hope for success for him, so that Ruth's happiness can be multiplied many times over in others.
In Friendship.

FFH GROUPS – JANUARY 2017

- BANGOR** Jenifer Gibson, Cum Ty Coid, Menai Bridge, Anglesey LL59 5LA
BATH Hazel Mitchell, 1 Victoria House, Albert Mill, Dapps Hill, Keynsham, Bristol BS31 1UL
BARNSTAPLE Janet Richards, 2 The Old School, Old School Lane, Fremington EX31 3HZ
BEDFORD Geoffrey Martin, 24 Kingsley Road, Bedford MK40 3SF
BEWDLEY Margaret Shaddock, 19 Bow Patch Road, Arely Kings, Stourport-on-Severn DY13 OND
BLACKBURN Beverley Rayner, 5 Southfield Drive, West Bradford, Clitheroe BB7 4TU
BLACKHEATH Cherry Simpkin, 78 Courtlands Avenue, Lee, London SE12 8JA
BOURNEMOUTH Stephen Feltham, 6 Ferris Place, Bournemouth BH8 0AU
BRADFORD Edna Woodhouse, 1 Beamsley House, Bradford Rd, Shipley, W. Yorks BD18 3BL
BRIGHTON Magda Cross, 41 Preston Grange, Orange Close, Brighton BN1 6BH
CAMBRIDGE Pat Revell, 12 Rustat Road, Cambridge CB1 3QT
CARDIFF Ken Timmins, FMH, 43 Charles Street, Cardiff CF10 2GB
CHESTER Hazel Goynes, 4 Whitton Drive, Chester CH2 1HF
CHORLEY Joan Williamson, 34 Runshaw Lane, Euxton, Chorley PR7 6AU
CLACTON ???
CLARIDGE HOUSE Peter Horsfield, Claridge House, Dormansland, Surrey RH7 6QH
CROYDON Croydon PM c/o Joyce Trotman, FMH, 60 Park Lane, Croydon CRO 1JE
DERBY Emmaline O'Dowd, 54 Ravenscroft Drive, Chaddesden, Derby DE21 6NX
DISLEY Leonora Dobson, Moor Edge, Birch Vale, High Peak, Derbyshire SK22 1BX
DISS Jacqueline Rowe, 10 Frenze Road, Diss, Norfolk IP22 4PA
DORCHESTER & WEYMOUTH Charlotte Seymour-Smith, 9 Mansell House, Bridport Road, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 3TS

DORKING Lesley Hunka, 68 Stevens Lane, Claygate, Surrey KT10 OTT
ECCLLES David P. Jones, 26 Moss Lane, Sale, Cheshire M33 6GD
ESHER Betty Sear, Tara, Irene Rd, Blundel Lane, Stoke-d'Abernon, Cobham KT11 2SR
EXETER Bridget Oliver, 10 Second Avenue, Heavitree, Exeter EX1 2PN
FINCHLEY ???
FOREST OF DEAN for venue and times please contact either Mike Green, 01452 762082
or Joy Simpson, 01594 841800
GLASGOW Muriel A Robertson, 51 Highmains Avenue, Dumbarton G82 2PT
GREAT AYTON Carole Avison, 4 The Avenue, Stokesley, Middlesborough TS9 5ET
HALL GREEN Joy Aldworth & Trevor Barker, 5 Velsheda Road, Shirley,
Solihull B90 2JL
HARLOW Elizabeth Wilson, 111 Rectory Wood, Harlow, Essex CM20 1RD
HARROW Ann Taylor, 79 Hawthorne Avenue, Ruislip HA4 8SR
and David Crick, 104 Northview, Eastcote, Pinner HA5 1PF
HEREFORD Pam Newman, 82 Bridle Road, Hereford HR4 OPW
HULL *Acting Convenor:* Margaret Pameley, 20 Brimington Road, Willerby,
Hull HU10 6JD
HUNTINGDON Mavis Parker, The Old School House, School Road, Warboys PE28 2SX
ILMINSTER ???
ISLE OF MAN ???
KESWICK Allan Holmes, 1 Fern Villas, South St, Cockermouth, Cumbria CA13 9RD
KETTERING Alan Tustin, 8 Lumbertubs Lane, Boothville, Northampton NN3 6AH
LEIGH ON SEA Tony Burden, 25 Fernleigh Drive, Leigh on Sea, Essex SS9 1LG
LLANIDLOES Gwen Prince, Glanafon, Glan Y Nant, Llanidloes SY18 6PQ
LONG SUTTON Annette Price, 29 Middle Leigh, Street, Somerset BA16 0LD
MARAZION Heather Bray, Blue Waters, Market Place, Marazion, Cornwall TR17 OAR
NEWTON ABBOT Valerie Huish, 13 Brimley Vale, Bovey Tracey, Nr. Newton Abbot,
Devon TQ13 9DA
NOTTINGHAM Mary Brimelow, 30 Private Road, Sherwood, Nottingham NG5 4DB
OAKHAM Anna Findlay, 44 Well Street, Langham, Rutland LE15 7JS
OSWESTRY Humphrey Gibson, 14 West Street, Llangollen LL20 8RG
OXFORD Mary Fear, Homelea, Glebe Road, Cumnor, Oxford OX2 9QJ
OXTED Pat Pique, 17 Altamont, Westview Road, Warlingham CR6 9JD
POOLE Peter Wilson & Pamela Chadbourne, The Old Stable, Levets Lane,
Poole BH15 1LW
PURLEY Robert & Veronica Aldous, 7a Downs Court Road, Purley CR8 1BE
READING Jenny Cuff, 62 Redhatch Drive, Earley, Reading RG6 5QR
SHAFTESBURY Gerald & Doreen Wingate, Shaston, 3 Hawksdene, Shaftesbury,
Dorset SP7 8NT
SHEFFIELD Anne Marples, 55 Mona Road, Crookes, Sheffield S10 1NG

SIDCOT Jo Hewitt, 2 Oatlands, Wrington Hill, Bristol BS40 5PL
and Joyce Hinton, 12, Sewell House, Belmont Road, Winscombe BS25 1LQ

SOUTH AUSTRALIA REGIONAL MEETING

Enid L. Robertson, 9 Sherbourne Road, Blackwood, S. Australia 5051

STOCKPORT Joan Armstrong, 14 Tintern Ave., West Didsbury, Manchester M20 2LE

STREATHAM Isobella Stewart, 15 Lexton Gardens, London SW12 0AY

TELFORD Val Robinson and Anne Harding, 11 Arundel Close, Telford TF3 2LX

THAXTED Anthea Lee, 24 Lea Close, Bishops Stortford CM23 5EA

TOTTENHAM Nigel Norrie, 65 Friern Barnet Lane, London N11 3LL

WANSTEAD Mary Mallinson, 26 Calderon Road, Leytonstone E11 4EU

WARWICK Dorothy Parry, 31 Cocksparrow Street, Warwick CV34 4ED

WATFORD Ruth Shadwell, 9 Denmark Street, Watford WD17 4YA

WELLINGTON Zoe Ainsworth-Grigg, 4 Kingdom Lane, Norton Fitzwarren TA2 6QP

WELLS-NEXT-SEA Jane Heath, 1a Barney Road, Fulmondeston, Fakenham NR21 0AT
and Joolz Saunders, Caprice, Clubbs Lane, Wells-Next-Sea NR23 1DP

WINCHESTER Andrew F Rutter, 1 St. Johns Road, Winchester SO23 OHQ

WITNEY Mahalla Mason, 5 Larch Lane, Witney OX28 1AG

WORCESTER & MALVERN Mary Callaway, 7 Red Earl Lane, Malvern WR14 2ST

WORTHING Don Jameson, 26 Wilmington Court, Bath Road, Worthing BN11 3QN

YEALAND Hazel Nowell, Well House Farm, Wyresdale Road, Lancaster LA1 3JL

IMMEDIATE PRAYER GROUP

Rosemary Bartlett, Apt. 3 Oakmere, Spath Lane, Handforth SK9 3NS

and Joy Simpson, 14 School Crescent, Primrose Hill, Lydney, Glos. GL15 5TA

and Mike Green, 1 Walford House, Priory Lea, Walford, Ross-on-Wye HR9 5RT

URGENT PRAYER GROUP: Anne Brennan, 3 Annandale, South St, Castle Cary BA7 7EB,

MOTHER & HER UNBORN CHILD

Mina Tilt, 185 Robin Hood Lane, Hall Green B28 0JE

POSTAL GROUPS

Muriel Robertson, 51 Highmains Avenue, Dumbarton G82 2PT

and Robin Goodman, Taigh Nam Borgh, Borve, Isle of Harris HS3 3HT

A Healing Meeting ... From Wells-Next-Sea Distant Healing Group

Welcome. Let us move into the quietness. Be aware of the tensions in your own body. Take a little time to make yourself comfortable. Listen to your breathing, the rhythm of your life. Feel the flow of energy as it moves steadily through your body. Relax your shoulders, feel the tensions melt away. Let your hands rest gently. Upholding someone is one of the deepest instincts we have. At the heart of this instinct is love. If we truly love people and care for them, we will want more for them than we can possibly give. We will want their well being, in every respect, and so the very best we can do for them is to uphold them.

Sometimes we may find ourselves worrying about a person for hours on end,

or someone may come into our mind unexpectedly and we think of them. Instinctively whether we realise it at the time or not, this is intercession in its simplest and deepest form.

Silence...

The Caim or encircling prayer is one of the most characteristic features of Celtic prayer. We draw an imaginary circle around ourselves and our loved one. In doing this we are encircling our loved ones in God. Praying for God's protection ... strength ... and love. Let us think of our prayers today as being little circles in a pond, made by throwing a stone into the water. The surface of the pond is still and silent; the stone drops into the middle, and we see the first circle emerge. In this circle are the people closest to us, family and friends. We know them well, their strengths and their struggles. Their enjoyments and their needs.

Silence...

The circle spreads. Look now to the second circle. Here are the people we know well; perhaps we work alongside them, go out sometimes. Here there may be more distant members of our family; we may not be in contact with them as much as we would like, but we care for them none the less. Here are neighbours, friends, from a while ago. People we stay in contact with, maybe ring from time to time or send a card. And there are many needs.

Silence...

The circle spreads again. Look now at the 3rd and 4th circles, people we know less well. Those with whom we exchange a friendly word; we meet in the shop, or maybe when we are out walking the dog. We don't know their needs, but they are known to God who loves them.

Silence...

I will now read the names of those we are upholding this morning. We encircle each one in God's protection, strength and love... Do we have any other names?... please speak them, as we encircle each one into God's protection, strength and love. The circles spread right out. They reach the edge of the pond; one after another they lap against the banks. Our prayer is an act of love. Let us delight to encompass all things within the circle of God's extraordinary care and keeping.

Silence...

Lord God our Father, our prayer this morning is a small pebble thrown in a large expanse of need. We thank you that your love is greater still and we entrust every circle of our prayers to you.

Silence...

And now you're here, the light is shining where the darkness used to be – and all the world is a different place.... and every single day a fresh beginning. *(Source references – based on the idea of visually imagined circle prayers from John Pritchard's Intercessions Handbook, and now you're here...from the Song of Solomon. Celtic Daily Prayer, inspirational prayers and readings from the Northumbria Community).*

In ancient times to know someone's name and to name them specifically gave the speaker some kind of power or control over the person named. Nowadays hopefully knowing someone's name gives us the opportunity to picture them as a human being with all the feelings and circumstances which go with being a person. We can then feel a connection with the fellow human being named even if we do not ever meet them.

Where healing is concerned, Elizabeth Angas is quite right in saying that we as healers act as channels for healing energy to be sent to a person, a group of people or a specific situation. The very act of thinking of someone or speaking their name is an action and therefore a form of energy. We do not know how this energy works, and we do not really need to know. Names can be said out loud or held in our thoughts. They can be said when we are alone or in a group.

The Immediate Prayer Group never meets as a group but we send a list of names of those who have asked for our help to an intercessor once a month. The intercessor then upholds the person by name in Love and Light asking that the healing be given that is appropriate to their needs. We send healing in this way and at the time of day or night chosen by each intercessor to suit their lifestyle. I personally picture each person as a figure, a child, or an adult walking towards the Light and I ask that healing be given to them, which is appropriate to their needs.

We do not need to know why they have requested our help, which is usually by phone, although listening to their needs can be a healing in itself. We do not need to know their surname as each one of us is already known to God. In the Bible it says we are known unto God by name and each one of us is of special value as a result of being called by our name.

Some members of the IPG do not wish to know the reason for requests for prayers: they prefer to picture each person as a whole being. However, we have found that it is necessary to have a person's permission to pray for them. This may sound very odd but on several occasions knowing they were being prayed for made some people very cross which was counterproductive to say the least.

I am told that those we pray for have felt the power of prayer. I can testify to this as I have recently experienced this power very strongly. When a group does meet for distant healing, names need to be said clearly for those who are hard of hearing. An indistinct word can be frustrating when calmness and peace are

needed. Whether you say a name out loud, or in your head when you are alone, what is important is the *naming* and thus the beginning of the sending of the healing to that person or situation. I feel that the spoken word should be as clearly heard as is possible so that as many people as possible are included in the sending of healing where it is most needed.



Julian of Norwich: A very brief History by *Janina Ramirez*. SPCK 2016. ISBN: 978-0-281-07737-3. 99pp. £12.99.

I loved this little book by Janina Ramirez. It appealed to my Quaker Testimony of Simplicity for it is only a small tome of a tad fewer than 100 pages, but to borrow a maxim from elsewhere “Feel the quality – not the quantity”

Many have heard of Julian of Norwich the anchoress who was bricked up of her own volition in a cell for twenty years until her death in a short time after 1416. The most famous quote attributed to her is “*All shall be well, all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well.*”

Julian was a mystic and this little book by Janina Ramirez seeks to explain Julian’s work and life in the context of the medieval period when mysticism was a dangerous thing. It was even more so for a woman, where accusations of heresy and witchcraft with consequential threat of burning was a very real possibility. The fact that Julian was able to live in these times and, from her cell, offer her ‘interpretation’ on spiritual and the practical issues of her visitor is a truly remarkable achievement. That visitors brought these issues to her window and she responded without upsetting either clergy or authority in such a male dominated world is indicative of a significant intellect and a canny awareness of mundane and petty politics.

Her most significant contribution is that, arising from her visions which she received in 1373, she was able to write in English her *Revelations of Divine Love*. This was produced in two versions (the long and the short). Julian is subsequently credited as being the first woman ever to write in English, notwithstanding that it was in an East Anglian dialect.

Janina Ramirez does not attempt, very wisely, to summarise the text of Julian’s

revelations. There are plenty of books already in existence but no doubt more will follow because Janina has successfully explained in this short history why *Revelations of Divine Love* is timeless and could be said to be more relevant today than when first written.

Janina has produced a book that I will enjoy reading again. Moreover, like any true exponent of their craft, Janina has left me wanting more and so I eagerly plan my next visit to Julian's cell in Norwich where my previous visit was just as a tourist but my next will be as a seeker of a greater understanding of the text within *Revelations of Divine Love*.

This very brief history is a delight because it gives such a great understanding to the life and times of this inspired woman who achieved so much from within the confines of a stone cell attached to a small church in Norwich. A great read Janina. Many thanks.

Stephen Feltham

Liberating the Gospel: Translating the message of Jesus in a Globalised World by *David Smith*. Darton-Longman-Todd, 2016. 240pp. ISBN: 978-0-232-53233-3. £12.99.

This book by David Smith is not a book about healing per se, unless we extend the scope of healing to mean healing the world and its troubles; troubles that derive from its philosophies and its politics. But it is nonetheless a remarkable book that is of interest to any Christian; and there is much in it that Quakers specifically will find useful, helpful, enabling and most of all challenging. And it is worth mentioning too that the circumstances of the book's composition seem to be under conditions very familiar to Quaker healers: namely, the frailties of old age and the loss of a beloved and supportive partner. It is a triumph of the spirit that David Smith has written so well, so fluently and persuasively about the world *zeitgeist* and the failure of Western (and Northern) Christianity, given his personal situation. I should add here that I do not personally know David Smith, was not aware of his work before reading this book, and my observations are based entirely on inferences from his own introduction.

David Smith, then, makes a number of central contentions about Christianity today. First, that the Western churches have signally failed to represent and embody the message of true Christianity to the world. Second, that Christianity in the Southern Hemisphere has come to understand the meaning of Christianity at a deeper level than we do. Third, that instead of attempting to continue to exercise our complacent and hegemonic domination of what Christianity means, we need to practise a 'deep listening' to what the South

has to teach us. Fourth, that part of our problem is our failure to understand what Jesus really wants from us; we have turned salvation into our own private access to God and ignored the wider community dimensions. On this issue Smith is very clear: so many modern Christians in the West are really trying to have their cake and eat it too. Whereas Jesus explicitly states that man cannot serve God and Mammon, we here do precisely that. And fifth, David Smith is concerned to establish what Christianity ‘really’ looks like, and for me this is perhaps the most interesting aspect of the whole book.

For what Smith does is to examine the latest findings of the Gospel in its original context and then ask how that context bears on society today. Where are the similarities, and where the differences? Where clearly and unequivocally can the Gospel speak to our condition, and where are we inappropriately manipulating texts to suit our own ends, which are often ends which compromise the original message? As Smith puts it: ‘Western Churches have generally read Paul’s letters to urban churches with distorting lenses that have concealed the true character of the emerging first-century Jesus movement’.

One vital aspect of this distortion which I find fascinating is, as he says, the fact that the Western Churches seem to have a picture of Jesus that starts at the Incarnation, fast forwards, and then focuses on the Crucifixion/Resurrection bit. But as Smith observes, these two ends are connected by the bit in the middle: the life, as lived, by Christ! As I write this review I am returning from a short break in the South of France, and am struck here by just how many churches are almost wholly preoccupied by Mary and the infant Jesus. Indeed, outside Avignon Cathedral we see Christ on the Cross, but up above Mary looking down on Him – yes, down, not up! Then I remember, that as a Protestant we did away with all that – and yes, the Protestants became obsessed with the one sufficient sacrifice at the other end! But the connection is the life lived: for we cannot choose how we are born, and most of us cannot choose how we die, but it is in the example of how Christ lived his life – the bit in the middle – from which we can draw strength, courage and inspiration that is truly transformative. Quakers, of course, will especially enjoy this aspect of the book precisely because they are more interested in the life lived than they are in what can sometimes seem ‘abstract’ theology.

But Smith goes further, deeper. There is running through his book a penetrating critique of modern society, indeed the modern world. We have in his opinion – and I share it – lost our way. Two points here are really trenchant: first, that there are ominous parallels between our society now and the Roman Empire that began and was established shortly before Christ was born and flourished in the West for another 400 years or so after Christ died. Just as the

Roman Empire benefitted the fortunate few at the expense of the downtrodden many, so now we have a similar situation in the West with globalisation. I love his description of the beneficiaries of this process as ‘tourists’ – feeding off and travelling round but contributing nothing substantial to the world – while the losers of the process he calls ‘vagabonds’, and they have to move where they can and make shift where they can, usually in desperate straits. Then, he aims directly at perhaps the biggest idol of Western philosophy. Quoting Zygmunt Bauman: ‘Indirectly... science cleared the way to genocide through sapping the authority and questioning the binding force, of all normative authority, particularly that of religion and ethics ... Science wanted to be value free and took pride in being such. By institutional pressure and by ridicule, it silenced the preachers of morality. In the process it made itself morally blind and speechless. It dismantled all the barriers that could stop it from co-operating, with enthusiasm and abandon, in designing the most effective and rapid methods of mass sterilisation or mass killing; or from conceiving of the concentration camps’ slavery as a unique and wonderful opportunity to conduct medical research for the advancement of scholarship and – of course – mankind’.

Perhaps the final point to make in this short review of this powerful book is to quote David Smith (who is himself quoting Justo Gonzalez from the Southern tradition) about what he sees as being Jesus’s central concern when He was alive: ‘...the first believers recognise that the core of the human predicament is neither a debt to God nor a lack of spirituality but an enslavement to the powers of evil.’ That is very strong stuff: paradoxically, whilst we focus on the lived ‘life’ of Christ, we are also reminded of that supernatural dimension that is ever present, and ever real. Christ did not die by accident; evil willed that it be so, and that truth be suppressed. We ignore this – especially when we pretend or act as if humans can solve all human problems – at our peril.

It should come as no surprise then that I strongly recommend you buy this book and experience its remarkable cogency and force for yourself. It will repay many readings and challenge you to address your personal version of being a ‘Christian’; I certainly felt and continue to feel its critique of my life.

James Sale

Poacher’s Pilgrimage: An island journey by *Alastair McIntosh*. Berlinn Press. ISBN 978 178027 361 7. £20.

Alastair is a Quaker and environmentalist, taken to live on the Isle of Lewis by his parents and with his sister when he was very young. The island, its culture, stories and way of life has made a massive impression on him.

In this book Alastair describes his journey, on foot from the southern tip of

Harris, Rodel, to the north of Lewis, ending in Ness. He travels an uncertain route following certain way marks, that of ancient sacred sites. The island has so many; some are ruins dating back to the early Celtic religion. Most remain as footprints on stones.

Alastair commences his walk at the church of St Clements, Rodel, Isle of Harris where he describes the take-over from the rather gentle Celtic religion by the more strident one of Rome. Later, the Reformation happened and churches were destroyed and Alastair brilliantly explains the severity of the local Presbyterian churches. St Clements is one of only two old churches on Lewis and Harris that have been preserved. Alastair makes his journey meeting people on the way, remembering his childhood and reflecting upon the stories of the island. He also reflects upon the language behind the place names, rich in heritage and of ancient origin.

This is a gentle book with much to think about as Alastair writes about his thoughts as he walks. I live on Harris, so many of the places and people are known to me, but I believe that the ideas and love of the planet will appeal to readers who do not know this lovely place. His descriptions are lively and vivid. You might find having an O.S. map beside you would help to follow the route Alastair took and see for yourself the places that he visits. It is not essential however as he helps the imagination along. Be warned, you may end up wanting to come here and see for yourself. B&B and impromptu Meeting is on offer!

Robin Goodman

LONELINESS

*Leaves in a vase
Flowers are not the only beauty,
nor foliage on the trees.
Family's not the only love.
I find it in strangers and friends
who are the leaves with flowers gone
and wood in winter's naked truth.*

*What Is Loneliness?
It is just a feeling within, a gap,
A space in consciousness.
How to fill it?
Love, love, love
That space inside.*

Carolyn Appleby

FFH PUBLICATIONS

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All are welcome to join. If you would like to help in this way, please write to one of the Postal Co-ordinators (*Robin Goodman & Muriel Robertson – contact details on the inside back cover*) with a few details about yourself. Your letter will be passed on to one of the group secretaries who will then contact you directly and give you the names of two or three people to uphold in prayer regularly.

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IF YOU ARE THINKING OF MAKING A WILL...

Have you considered leaving something to the FFH?

A specimen form of words could be:

“I give and bequeath (*state what...*) to the Friends Fellowship of Healing (being a Charity registered under the Charities Act, No. 284459), to the registered address of the Charity as recorded with the Charity Commission at the time that this bequest comes into effect, AND I DECLARE that the receipt of this legacy by the then proper officer for the Fellowship, shall be a complete discharge to my Trustee(s) for that legacy.”



Look on everything as though you are seeing it for the first or last time. Then your time on earth will be filled with glory. Betty Smith (from A Tree Grows in Brooklyn)