YM 2026 11 12

Court and prison register

Meeting for Sufferings was established in 1676 to consider the sufferings
experienced by Quakers for their faith. Gradually the practice of recording Friends'
names in the 'Great book of Sufferings' lapsed but from the late 1990s until 2026 Meeting for Sufferings maintained a register of the names of Friends brought before the courts or imprisoned for matters of conscience. This responsibility has now been passed to Yearly Meeting.

The purposes of recording the names of Friends who come into conflict with the law when acting under concern and bearing witness to the truth as revealed to them are:

1. To enter the details of the matter into the permanent records of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), acknowledging Friends' witness and their willingness to face its consequences
2. To remind ourselves that being a Quaker does not come without cost
3. To record the Society's prayerful upholding of Friends who are suffering for their faith

4. To serve as a record of the actions of the State in restricting our freedom to worship and witness.

The following names of Friends are brought before Yearly Meeting for possible inclusion in the court and prison register.

Leicester Area Meeting

Matt Clement (Leicester) – arrested at a peaceful protest outside the factory in Meridian Business Park which manufactures military drones for the Israeli weapons company, Elbit. It is known that these drones have been, and continue to be, used against civilian targets in Gaza and other conflict zones.

Jim Newmark (Rugby) – arrested at a protest organised by Defend our Juries about the banning for Palestine Action.

Neither Friend has yet had their trial.

York Area Meeting

Ginnie Shaw – arrested whilst protesting as part of a 'Defend our Juries' march and sit-in. Her plea hearing is expected in the autumn.