Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain

At a Yearly Meeting session held at Friends House, London, and online,

Saturday 21 November 2026

Substantive minutes

Saturday 21 November, 09.30-13.00: Yearly Meeting Session 10

Minute 71: The work of our yearly meeting trustees: receipt of the annual report of Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees

We receive with thanks the trustees' annual report including financial statements for 2025. The Clerk and Assistant Clerk of Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees have spoken about the work done on our behalf. The Yearly Meeting Treasurer has introduced the accounts, emphasising that Britain Yearly Meeting needs income in order to continue to do Quaker work. All of us, individual Friends and Quaker meetings, are urged to give the amount we believe is possible and right for us.

We have heard responses in spoken ministry.

We accept the annual report and financial statements.

Minute 75: Report of the Book of Discipline Revision Committee

We receive a written report from the Book of Discipline Revision Committee and its clerking team has spoken to the report.

We give thanks for the prayerful work of this committee over the last eight years, and for the new draft book that they have prepared. We will uphold them as their work continues. The draft book will become available to everyone today, and we look forward to reading it.

Our Quaker Way: The spiritual discipline of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain is a draft book, not the finished article, and the title is provisional. All of us will

have the chance to shape the final text. Friends and meetings are encouraged to explore the text, and the non-text materials which are available online. We are encouraged to make use of the resources available to help us read, reflect and respond. We are encouraged to engage prayerfully, joyfully, creatively and boldly with the process.

We expect to consider the book together during our Yearly Meeting sessions in 2027 and beyond.

Saturday 21 November, 14.00–16.30: Yearly Meeting Session 11

Minute 78: Reparation Working Group

We have heard from Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees' Reparation Working[1]Group, who have shared the work of researchers, historians and theologians showing that Quakers and Quaker-owned businesses were directly involved with, and profited from, the enslavement and trafficking of Africans, and that Quakers have continued to benefit from this.

We acknowledge this history that has been brought into the light, and we commit to the next phase of work on our response.

We are grateful to the Reparation Working Group for their work so far and their commitment to future work on our behalf. We recognise that we all have our part to play in understanding this aspect of Quaker history and discerning our response.

We ask local and area meetings to continue these conversations about our history and about the action needed now. Resources to help with this are available at https://www.quaker.org.uk/action/reparations and in the attached document 'Reparation Working Group: Tree of hope and tapestry'. Friends throughout Britain Yearly Meeting need to be engaged in order to make an apology meaningful.

We expect to return to this matter at our Yearly Meeting sessions in 2027.

Reparation is not about changing the past but about repairing broken systems and harmful behaviour that continue to do damage today.

We are urged to look more deeply into the ideology of Quaker colonialism and white supremacy that affected enslaved people and enslavers, and continues to affect descendants of both of these groups. The history of Quaker involvement in abolitionism is not a true or complete history; it erases the history of black people and enslaved people who struggled for their own freedom. This history is bound up with a mindset of extractivism, treating people as objects and accumulating wealth in the hands of the few.

Until we face up to our own culpability we cannot hold others to account.

[1] The working group's name has been changed from Reparations (plural) to Reparation (singular) as a result of their discernment.

We have an opportunity to open ourselves to the truth that can make us free. We each have a light and we can make a commitment to take this journey together, to show the world we have been wrong, but that our testimonies can make a difference to the world.

Our discernment today follows on from the conference *Truth and Repair: Our Quaker Journey Towards Justice* held on 23 October 2026. The conference was organised by the Reparation Working Group and about 200 Friends registered to attend, online and at Friends House. We receive the document “Our hopes for the reparation journey”, prepared by the group and giving possible ways forward for our collective work on reparation. We also receive the report, prepared by Woodbrooke, on the history and theology of Quaker involvement in enslavement, abolition and reparation.

We are grateful for the work of the historians, researchers and theologians who have explored this subject on our behalf.

We know that there is a great deal more for us all to learn and work to do.

Minute 84: All-age worship and conclusion

We have ended our time together in worship as an all-age community.

We are learning together how our new ways of gathering as a Yearly Meeting can work, and we will continue this experiment in 2027.

Change is needed. We need to be silent together and to talk together. We need to be opened by the spirit to see what we need to do as individuals and a whole community.

Having concluded the business laid before us in the agenda for this session of Yearly Meeting, we separate, hoping to meet again in Friends House and online, for the first session of Yearly Meeting 2027 on Saturday 20 February 2027, should nothing occur to prevent.

Fred Langridge

Clerk