

The particular focus of Yearly Meeting Gathering 2020

Where we have privilege we can choose how to use it: we must choose carefully.

From Minute 33 of Yearly Meeting 2019

The title of YMG 2020 is 'Listening, prophecy and reconciliation: allyship in a climate emergency'.

Since Yearly Meeting 2019, Friends in Britain have been sitting with the questions that arose from our consideration of privilege, and continue to thresh our concerns in local and area meetings and other settings. We plan to come together at Yearly Meeting Gathering 2020 with hearts and minds prepared, to take our corporate discernment forward. How can we practise allyship in a climate emergency? What can we contribute as Quakers to the work already being done? Where are you and where is your local/area meeting (or other Quaker community) in relation to these concerns?

Questions for reflection

As you explore the suggested resources listed below, and others, you might want to ask yourself some questions. There are several ways to explore the material: alone, in a study group, through worship sharing, by keeping a journal, in a creative activity, or by joining a conversation on social media.

a) Reflecting on the title of the Gathering, the following questions arise:

- To whom are we listening?
- Who has not yet been heard? What prevents us from hearing them?
- Do we hear a prophetic voice? What is it saying to us?
- With whom must we be reconciled?
- Are we reconciled within ourselves?; within our Quaker community?; with others?; with the Light/the Spirit/God?
- What are Quakers offering in the way of allyship?

Most importantly, how do we transform injustice within ourselves, corporately within our Society, and in the world around us?

What other questions arise for you?

b) Below you will find questions to support a three-session study group in the lead-up to Yearly Meeting Gathering. You might want to gather with local Friends (or online) to consider these questions together. Your study group might identify other resources (and other questions) that you find helpful. The questions set out below are offered as suggestions for a way in.

Note: Please agree reading material in advance. There are a large number of resources and it is unlikely your group will want to read everything.



Session 1: Gathering

What will we bring to YMG in August?

What work have we done since YM 2019?

How do we create a loving and inclusive Gathering?

Do you feel comfortable and welcome at Gathering? What might other Friends find difficult about attending Gathering?

Session 2: Exploring

What does our Quaker community look like?

What is our vision for radical inclusion?

What is our place in the world?

What, if anything, is difficult about working together?

What is in our Quaker toolkit/Quaker heritage that helps us face the challenges before us?

Session 3: Preparing for action

What have we learned that has changed us?

Where are we going?

What are we leaving behind?

In the work of transformation, can we find joy?; friendship?; love?

What is our unique Quaker contribution to the challenges we face?

You and your local group might be able to share your learning and insights with Friends at the Gathering.



Suggested resources

The following resources can help Friends prepare for Gathering. Further resources will be published on the Quakers in Britain website as August 2020 approaches; updates can be accessed at www.quaker.org.uk/ym.

Quaker resources

- 1) *Quaker faith & practice*: chapters 20, 23 and 25
- 2) Minutes of Yearly Meeting 2019: www.quaker.org.uk/ymprep
- 3) Quaker Peace & Social Witness's climate activism and advocacy work. Report for Meeting for Sufferings, October 2019: www.quaker.org.uk/ymprep
- 4) 'Philosophy for Communities for Quakers':
<https://together.woodbrooke.org.uk/asset.php?a=WOW6PI>
- 5) The Canterbury Commitment (Minute 36 of YMG 2011):
www.quaker.org.uk/ymprep
- 6) Edwina Peart's blog on diversity within BYM:
www.quaker.org.uk/blog/embracing-diversity
- 7) Diversity & Inclusion. Report to Meeting for Sufferings, April 2019: www.quaker.org.uk/ymprep
- 8) Three podcasts called 'A Quaker take...'
www.quaker.org.uk/podcast:
 - on allyship
 - on climate change
 - on climate activism.

Other resources

- 1) *Active hope: how to face the mess we're in without going crazy*. Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone (2012). Novato, CA: New World Library. Visit www.activehope.info/joanna-macy.html.
- 2) United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals.
- 3) Extinction Rebellion from a Quaker perspective: www.quaker.org.uk/our-work/our-stories/experiencing-extinction-rebellion-s-autumn-uprising-as-a-green-spirit.
- 4) An open letter to Extinction Rebellion by grassroots collective Wretched of the Earth: www.redpepper.org.uk/an-open-letter-to-extinction-rebellion.
- 5) Discussion of the Gender Recognition Act: www.gires.org.uk/the-gender-recognition-act-discussion-july-2019.
- 6) 'A "Green New Deal" needs to be global, not local' by Open Democracy: www.opendemocracy.net/en/opendemocracyuk/a-green-new-deal-needs-to-be-global-not-local.
- 7) 'Why migrant justice is climate justice', in Teen Vogue: www.teenvogue.com/story/activists-explain-why-migrant-justice-is-climate-justice.
- 8) 'Let them drown: the violence of othering in a warming world' by Naomi Klein, in London Review of Books: www.lrb.co.uk/v38/n11/naomi-klein/let-them-drown.