

# The Quiet Word

[The Leeds Area Meeting Newsletter](#)



Your Editor having an unorthodox low-carbon ride outside Carlton Hill Meeting

## Leeds Quakers' Summer Fair



The Leeds Quakers Summer Fair is to be held at Adel Meeting House and grounds on **Saturday 18 June, 11.30 - 4.40pm.** The aim of the fair is to have some fun whilst raising funds for **PAFRAS**. It will include food, stalls, events and games



**Leeds City of Sanctuary welcomes you to a unique community event on:**

**30<sup>th</sup> May 2011** (Bank Holiday Monday) at the Mariners Resource Centre, Beeston, Leeds LS11 6TT (just off the M621 motorway + 3-4 minutes walk from the Refugee Council)

**1pm until 8pm** Drop in (or come for it all!)

Picnic at 1pm main meal (free) in the evening

The event is for EVERYONE – from every corner of Leeds! (people from the refugee/asylum communities are especially welcome...)

This will be an opportunity for a wide range of people to: connect with each other; talk and learn about big issues, such as the world of refugees and people seeking asylum, and how we can together help Leeds become a city of welcome for all; generate ideas for social change; and – most importantly – celebrate, create and eat together.

There will be a rolling programme of sessions and activities, stalls, sport, music, kids activities, and food. The event will be happening both indoors and outdoors, so there'll be lots of opportunities to soak up the sunshine! In it all, One Love One Leeds aims to create an opportunity for diverse people across Leeds to get become more involved in Leeds City of Sanctuary activities/networks ([www.cityofsanctuary.org/leeds](http://www.cityofsanctuary.org/leeds)).

Book your FREE place via the website on [www.oneloveoneleeds.wordpress.com](http://www.oneloveoneleeds.wordpress.com) or just turn up on the day

## Leeds Area Meeting



**LAQM** - Leeds Area Quaker Meeting was held at Rawdon on the 8<sup>th</sup> May and was attended by 24 friends from across Leeds – many had challenging journeys as the day clashed with the Leeds half marathon which made travel very difficult. The first half of the meeting looked at Quaker Marriage and started with recording the marriage of Ann Spencer and Gerard Lynch at Adel Meeting House on 16/04/11. Contributions were given by Owen Claxton-Ingham, who was a speaker at Yearly Meeting on this topic and by Kim Knott our Leeds Registering Officer.

There were periods of worship and sharing and we learned more about some of the changes to our practices, particularly in relation to same sex marriage. We recognised that this issue gives rise to differences of opinion and that some friends are unhappy with the changes that have taken place. We then broke with tradition and enjoyed a full tea break.

After our break we confirmed our 2011 Quota i.e. the level at which we agree to support local and national Quaker work. There are three main elements – £8 to support the NFPB (Northern friends Peace Board), £19:50 for Leeds Quaker work and £156 for national Quaker work ie, we seek to enable all friends to support their local meetings and to give an average of £183 i.e. just £3.52 per week to support local and national Quaker work. Some friends will be in a position to

contribute more whilst others may find that their present income prevents them from giving as much as they would like. Your Local Meeting treasurers will be giving more details in the near future.

Our Area Meeting Trustees provided an update report – we are progressing with the installation of Solar Panels at Carlton Hill Meeting House. We were also encouraged to both contribute to Friends Action on Poverty and to identify suitable projects to make grants to (see our Leeds Quaker website for more details).

To enable routine business to be completed more quickly, ‘draft minutes’ were again circulated and proved popular. These included information about the process of appointing new Elders and Overseers for the period 2012 to 2014. These appointments are made by LAQM with the help of an ‘ad hoc’ committee of local friends as follows: Roundhay: Russell Lloyd and Donald Purves, Otley: Susan Robson, Carlton Hill Betsey Randolph-Horn and Steven Walton, Adel: Helen Leach and Kim Knott, Ilkley: Robert Gibson and Margaret Nunnerley, Rawdon: Charlotte Allen and Emma Roberts

Finally, our annual outing was confirmed for 24/09/11 when we will visit Bradford Quaker Meeting and the Peace Museum. We also agreed to support Local Meetings by offering to print and distribute the LAQM newsletter, ‘The Quiet Word’. If you require a printed copy, please contact the editor, Ben Wood, or myself. The day ended with a sumptuous tea which was enjoyed by all.

**Robert Keeble (LAQM co-clerk)**

Rawdon Amnesty Series ~ 2011



AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL

***All events will take place at Rawdon Quaker Meeting House, Quakers Lane, Rawdon- Admission: Free. All our donations are given to Amnesty International.***

**Phantasticus in Musica ~ Saturday 7 May at 7.30pm:** Once again we warmly welcome **Arioso** to open our series, with a banquet of vocal and instrumental music representing the “stylus phantasticus” of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, including English and Italian composers Johnson, Lanier, Lawes, Frescobaldi, Carissimi and Monteverdi.

**Opera in a Nutshell ~ Sunday 22 May at 7.30pm: Jane Anthony’s** outstanding opera students from the Leeds College of Music will transport us to Italy Spain, Russia and places known only to the imagination for scenes of love, betrayal, comedy and pathos.

**Ilias Devetzoglou and Miaoyin Qu ~ Sunday 12 June at 7.30pm:** This virtuoso violin and piano duo makes a welcome return to our series to perform works from the great German repertoire, including Bach, Brahms and Kreisler.

**Much Ado About Nothing ~ Friday 8 July at 7.30pm: Theatre of the Dales** give a forties twist to this joyful tale of love found, lost and found again – a perfect outdoor summer’s entertainment. Some seating, but feel free to bring a cushion, blanket, or deck chair.

**The Kenwood-Herriott Duo ~ Saturday 30 July at 7.30 pm:** We look forward to a virtuoso mix from **Elizabeth** (oboe and cor anglais) and **Richard** (piano) **Kenwood-Herriott**, including music for piano by Ralph Vaughan Williams and the oboe sonata by Edmund Rubbra.

**The New World Ensemble ~ Sunday 25 September at 7.30pm:** Old friends in new combinations: **Colin Honour** (clarinet), **Andy Long** (violin), **Katie New** (violin), **Liz Wylie** (viola), **Juliet Welchman** (cello)



and **Annette Saunders** (piano) will perform Mozart's clarinet quintet, Brahms' piano quintet and a few surprises. Not to be missed.

**The Aire Ensemble ~ Saturday 15 October at 7.30 pm: Deborah Pennington** (clarinet), **Amy Cherryholme** (flute) and **Mata Williams** (piano) will perform a programme of original and specially-arranged classical pieces. Promises to be a musical treat.

**Two Wartime Classics on Remembrance Sunday ~ Sunday 13 November at 7.30 pm: David Robertson** of Theatre of the Dales and **Maggie Mash** of Trio Literati will read from **84, Charing Cross Road**, and actors from **the Royal Armouries** will perform **Only Water Between**, **Peter Spafford's** moving adaptation of letters and memoirs from World War One.

**St Aidan's in Concert ~ Saturday 3 December at 7.30 pm:** The chamber choir of **St Aidan's C of E High School** in Harrogate won the BBC Songs of Praise School Choir of the Year competition in 2006, and has reached the finals 6 times. We are thrilled to welcome members of this young choir along with musicians from the school's symphony orchestra.

**Bradford Music Club ~ Sunday 18 December at 7.30 pm:** This is your opportunity to experience the talent and enthusiasm of the **Bradford Music Club**, who have made it a tradition to share their last meeting of the year in aid of Amnesty.

Come and listen, and next year you might be performing.

**Further information from David Griffiths (07903 145093), Barbara Parry (0113 2503867) or Diane Exley (0113 2502051)**

## What Does Jesus Mean to You?



Easter has just come and gone but what do Friends make of the central character of the Easter Story?

**Stephen D. Lodge (Carlton Hill):** For me, Jesus is a myth. I use the word myth here in the way that the ancients understood it and as Jung and Joseph Campbell used it, i.e. a symbolic narrative conveying profound psychological and spiritual truths, not in the modern sense of a false idea.

If you take out the elements of the Jesus story that cannot be found in the 'pagan' myths of the classical mystery cults, you are left with nothing save the pseudo-historical Jewish context of the gospels. The story of Jesus is a profound myth based on other profound myths, all designed to convey the same eternal spiritual laws and truths.

Like all the other dying and resurrecting god-men, Jesus is a mythical exemplar of a spiritually realised or divinised, human being. His actions and teachings show us how we are to relate to each other, to the world and to God. They are ethical examples and basic religious instruction. They form the exoteric shell of the myth, which came to be misinterpreted as actual biography.

At the esoteric level, by virtue of his title of Christ and his description as the Logos, Jesus is a symbol of the higher self, the Divine within all our souls, which Quakers call the Inward Light or 'that of God.'

It is only when we truly open and surrender ourselves to the Christ through contemplative practice and by bringing our lives under the ordering of love and truth that we can begin to transform the water of the mundane human mind into the intoxicating wine of spiritual awareness.

In this sense, and this sense only, Jesus is absolutely right when he says, 'I am the way, the truth and the life, none shall come to the Father but by me.' If you do not seek for and follow the Divine Light (the Son) at the core of your soul, you will never know that utterly ineffable Mystery (the Father) from which the Light emanates. It is also important to note the phrase 'I am'. The Christ is your true self, your eternal 'I am-ness', as opposed to the false self of the perishable body and conditioned ego.

The events and miracles of the gospels are all symbolic teachings. When Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey, he shows the proper relationship that should exist between the specifically human mind and our more primitive, animal instincts, appetites and passions, represented by the donkey. We must exercise the responsibility our conscious minds give us through their powers of reason and will so that we do not harm or debase ourselves or others by serving our animal nature rather than gently restraining and guiding it. Similarly, at a higher level, when Jesus walks on water, he shows that the spiritual self must master the psychological self, water symbolising the mind, particularly its unconscious and emotional aspects.

Ultimately, we must transcend our human self, our identification with an impermanent body and personality, if we are to know our ultimate self as the eternal Christ. This is what the symbolism of the crucifixion represents. The false self must die so that Christ might resurrect. Christ resurrects, of course, because He was there all along as our deepest, truest self, as He is the true self of us all.

**Ben Wood (Carlton Hill)** In *Advices and Queries* we are reminded that 'Christianity is not notion but a way'. What does this mean? I think it touches on a very deep truth indeed. The first followers of Jesus were not convinced by force of argument or by eloquent words, but by the power of their teacher's own personality. I can only begin imagine his face, those evidently magnetic eyes; the same eyes which looked on the afflicted and healed them, the same gaze which comforted the downcast and was said to even bring the dead back to life. While Jesus was not a stranger to debates with lawyers and religious specialists, his true



vocation was out in the countryside among simple folk, tasting their home-spun hospitality and trying to best meet their daily needs in the ways he knew best, though prayer, patience and loving-kindness. His was less a man of systematised dogma and overwhelmingly a man of practical action who sympathised with those whom his social superiors ignored or despised. His loyalty to the working-classes of ancient Palestine and his distaste for the refined legalism of the Pharisee or the elaborate rituals of the Jewish Priesthood bred some ugly roammers about him. Some thought him a hardened rebel determined to destroy the ancient traditions of Temple worship [[Mark 14:57-58](#)], while others saw him as a political rabble-rouser and king-pretender who desired freedom from the might of Imperial Rome as evidenced by the chant of the crowds as he entered Jerusalem. They shouted "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" [[Matthew 21:1-11](#)]. Still others thought him a reckless law-breaker and subversive for calling into disrepute the doctrines and the customs of the influential Pharisaic class [[Luke 6:1-5](#)].

The problem with these perceptions of Jesus then and now is that they each assume an 'ideology'- a definite social or political vision, of which Jesus was the chief exponent. In this vein, Jesus is reduced to a social reformer at best or at worst some parody of a Marxist intellectual. But Jesus was not concerned with 'ideas', systems or arguments, but rather with placing his disciples and hearers in a living relationship with a God whom he called his Father, so intimate was his sense of the divine.

When Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee and saw Peter and Andrew he offered them no grand schemes of theology, no doctrines, no dogma. All the Gospel of Matthew says on the matter is this; 'Jesus said to them, "Come with me. I'll make a new kind of fisherman out of you. I'll show you how to catch men and women instead of perch and bass." They didn't ask questions, but simply dropped their nets and followed' [[Matthew 4:18-22](#)]. Jesus offered nothing but himself. What he presented was less a doctrine but an experience.

**Quentin Fowler (Adel):** Now, for the best part of my life I would have said that I was a Christian. But that's not the case now; I'd say I was a Quaker instead. If I were to say I was a Christian, to me that would mean that I believed in the divinity of Jesus. I see Jesus as being a good man, who gave us some marvellous images of how we should behave, and set a standard far higher than anything I find in any Quaker writing. How many Quakers sell all they have, and give the money to

the poor? I know I'm a hypocrite; I may give some of my money to charity, but I still retain a healthy chunk.

I believe we are body, mind and spirit, and that we must look after, and listen to all three. As a Quaker, I believe I have a wonderful start in having the Testimonies to turn to. But believing in Peace, Truth, Equality and Simplicity is not enough; these building blocks have to be considered carefully and translated into action. Being open to Truth from wherever it might come is extremely important to me. I come to Meeting for Worship, often ill-prepared, sometimes rather drowsy, but nevertheless I find myself having various thoughts which develop my thinking about how I should live my life.

When it feels right, I share these thoughts with others through vocal Ministry. I don't know where these thoughts originate. I like to think of my life being laid out like a blanket in front of me, and of a Light shining on it. But I really don't know a lot about that Light, whether it is simply a metaphor, whether there really is something "out there" influencing my thoughts, or, most likely, it is the workings of my mind, my body and of course most important of all my spirit.

I believe we should think of ourselves as being on this earth to make a difference. I'm very conscious of how often I fail in this regard. But that doesn't mean I give up. I believe I'm constructed in such a way that I'm an optimist, that I'm a "half full" person, and that I tend to be manic rather than depressive. I believe I shouldn't have to apologise for this. I try to use the way I am by being positive, by having a good laugh, by speaking and writing in what I hope is an engaging manner. I try very hard to listen more and say less, but I know I'm still learning. I believe I ought to seek out those people who might benefit more from my attention, but I know how badly I fail in this regard. Family is very important to me, and developing my relationships with all my relations, especially my wife and my two children, is central in this regard.

## Goodbye Dear Jean....

After seeing our Friend Phil O'Hare's touching piece on the passing of our dear friend Jean McPherson in the recent CH Newsletter ('**And Marx Said...**') I was moved to write my own thoughts on Jean's life (the small part I knew of it). Jean's death I know is a loss to all who knew her and for Carlton Hill Friends in particular. There is a chair beside the Meeting door which is now so ominously empty early on Sunday mornings where we would sit putting the world to rights. I keep on expecting to hear her voice and still find the silence of her absence strangely deafening.

What can I say about Jean? Above all, she always took me aback with her charm, humour, intelligence and compassion, and I will miss her terribly. I admit these qualities might not have been immediately obvious to most people. Jean had a hard outer shell which didn't suffer fools or idle-gossip easily. Her strong opinions and gruff demeanour were always proactive, but always mixed with a dry wit and ability to laugh at herself.

Jean grew up in a South Wales mining valley, midst the tense contradiction of coal slag-heaps and stunning natural beauty. Raised in a left-wing family, with a father who read the Daily Worker (the organ of Communist opinion at the time) and with the founder of the NHS, Nye Bevan, as her Member of Parliament- gave Jean a genuine socialist fire which she never lost. At the heart of Jean's philosophy was the simple yet radical belief that poverty and injustice were not matters of unfortunate circumstance but a product of negligent or sometimes malevolent human decision.

Jean was convinced that we clever little animals could do better than a haphazard capitalist market-system which spit-out goodies on the basis of wealth, or even pot-luck, but could direct an economy on the basis of need, organised for the benefit of everyone, not just a few plutocrats at the top. It was this desire for justice, which drove Jean to be both in the Labour Party and the Co-operative Movement- she wanted a better world and was willing to work for it. Such was her passion that it's fair to say that in our short time together, she lit a flame in me, a fire I intend to carry with me for the rest of my life.

Behind Jean's externally serious politics was primarily a love of life- fine food, jazz, and the glories of French cinema. She wanted socialism, not because she thought we should all to be serious 'party-members' toeing

some Leninist line (incidentally as an anarchist Jean was suspicious of clubs or party-lines!) but because she wanted happiness to be spread around and for human lives to be fuller with laughter and companionship, richer with joy and altogether more peaceful.

A few weeks before her death Jean told me she was rereading George Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia*. The book is a stirring description of the Spanish Civil War and the anarchist resistance against the Fascists on the one side and the Stalinist Soviet combatants on the other. It's an account of high drama, in which Orwell reveals the audacious socialist experiments taking place in 1930s Spain. Those brave anarchist resisters sought to build (unlike the totalitarian Fascists or so-called Communists) a culture without hierarchy in which equality as well as industrial and civic democracy were both at the very heart of social life. On the nature of such a transformative project Orwell reflected:

***"I am well aware that it is now the fashion to deny that Socialism has anything to do with equality. In every country in the world a huge tribe of party-hacks and sleek little professors are busy 'proving' that Socialism means no more than a planned state-capitalism with the grab-motive left intact. But fortunately there also exists a vision of Socialism quite different from this. The thing that attracts ordinary men to Socialism and makes them willing to risk their skins for it, the 'mystique' of Socialism, is the idea of equality; to the vast majority of people Socialism means a classless society, or it means nothing at all. And it was here that those few months in the militia were valuable to me. For the Spanish militias, while they lasted; were a sort of microcosm of a classless society. In that community where no one was on the make, where there was a shortage of everything but no privilege and no boot-licking, one got, perhaps, a crude forecast of what the opening stages of Socialism might be like. And, after all, instead of disillusioning me it deeply attracted me. The effect was to make my desire to see Socialism established much \*more\* actual than it had been before."***

This was Jean's vision too, uncompromising, challenging but beautiful. I know instinctively that Jean would not want us to mourn her, but instead continue to champion the things that mattered to her the most

and maybe through our meagre actions bring closer the establishment of the just earth she hoped for. The cause of Socialism has lost a true comrade and I've lost a dear friend.

**Ben Wood**



## Friendly Bible Study Method



We should apply to any Bible study method Quaker insights, understanding and standards. Five important aspects of our tradition should be supported. A Bible study method should:

1. Affirm that of God in all of the participants. It should affirm the equality of all participants. It should not expect any authority figure as leader. Everyone should be able to experience the Spirit working out of the silence.
2. Affirm the availability of continuing revelation in our spiritual lives.

Would you like to deepen your spiritual journey using the Bible?

Join us at  
Rawdon Meeting House  
(in the schoolroom)

Tuesdays 7-9pm  
(starts 5<sup>th</sup> May)

No need to let us know if you can attend, simply turn up on the night.

All welcome.

3. Recognise the authority of personal experience as central to our spiritual lives.
4. Connect the Bible witness to our actions in daily life.
5. Affirm the continuing nature of our spiritual journeys in a community of faith.

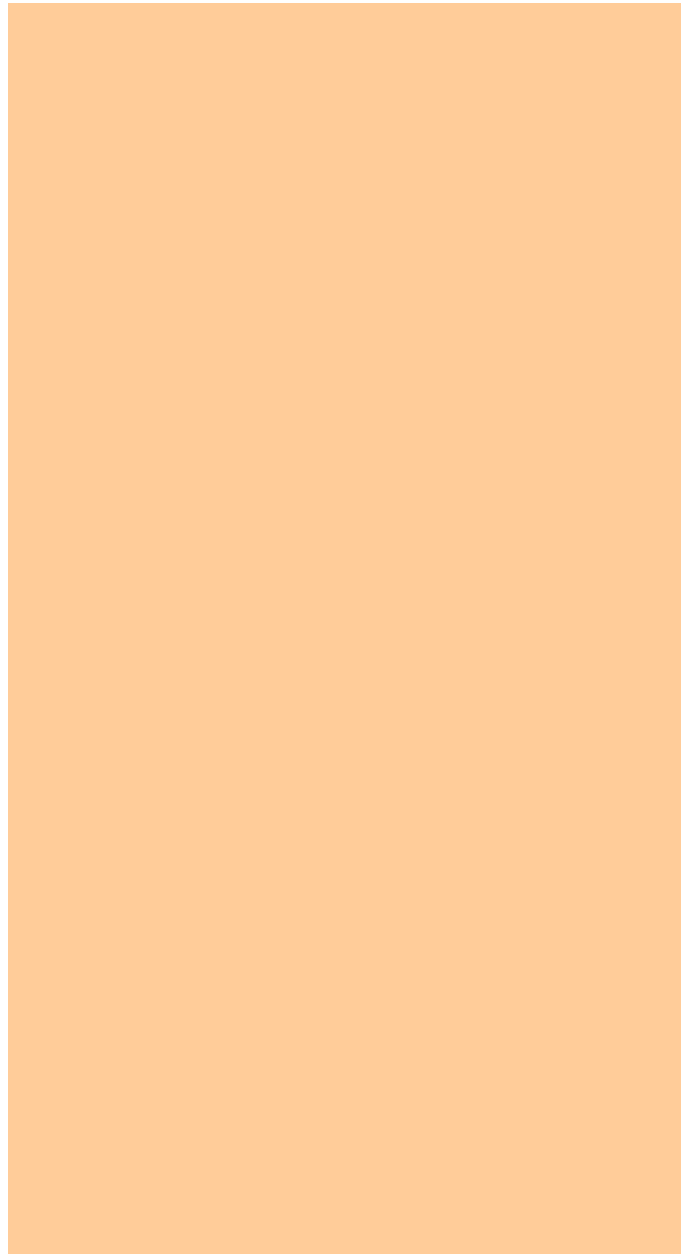
### The Process

Read the passage aloud.  
Perhaps read from another translation if it seems helpful.

In silence, each person writes their own answers to the five questions. You may want a notebook for this purpose.

One by one, each shares their answer to question 1. Then each shares their answer to question 2 and so on. One person acts as facilitator to ensure the answers of all can be heard in the timeframe.

A brief period of discussion may follow and end in silence.



## Some More Dates for Your Diary



**Coffee Morning:** every Friday from 11am to 12noon a Coffee Morning is held at **Carlton Hill Meeting House**. Everyone is invited and for those interested, there is also an open discussion group from 9:45am to 11am on alternative Fridays that discuss anything and everything topical, including, on the day of the Royal wedding `are all Quakers republicans?

**Don't miss the train:** A large group of Leeds Quakers are taking advantage of group travel / early booking rates for trains to and from Yearly Meeting Gathering at Canterbury from 30/08/11 to 06/08/11. Departing from Leeds at 10:05 and whisked along by high speed train for part of the journey they will arrive in Canterbury at 14:21! If you would like to join these friends, please contact Rachel Muers without further delay at [r.e.muers@gmail.com](mailto:r.e.muers@gmail.com)

**Our annual Leeds Quaker outing** will be to the Bradford Peace Museum and Bradford Meeting House on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September - full details in **the next Quiet Word** but put the date in your diary now!

**Charity concert at Rawdon Meeting in aid of the family of a refugee:** Saturday 4 June 2011- Tea and cake sale in the schoolroom from 3 pm Concert in the meeting house from 4.30 pm: Music (piano, vocal, chamber, folk) and poetry Free admission, voluntary donations

Further information from Barbara Parry 0113 2503867

[barbaraparry@waitrose.com](mailto:barbaraparry@waitrose.com)

## New Tenants Required



Age UK will be leaving Carlton Hill Meeting House at the end of 2011 and Area Meeting Trustees are seeking new tenants. This offers a fantastic opportunity for any organisation seeking new premises as there is a large hall, kitchen, welcoming reception area and seven additional rooms.

Outside there is secure parking (up to 16 cars during office hours) subject to negotiation, as well as maintained gardens. The prominent building is on Woodhouse Lane, opposite Leeds University and is on a major public transport route. Please inform any organisation that may be interested in becoming tenants.

Enquiries should be made to Simon P. Dalingwater at Adair Paxton who is acting as agent in this matter.

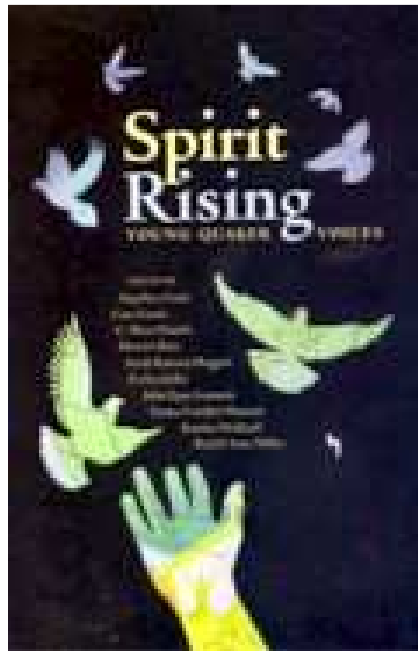
Contact details:

Tel: 0113 239 5777

Mob: 07740 321 996

Email: [simon@adairpaxton.co.uk](mailto:simon@adairpaxton.co.uk)

## Announcing the release of a new book by Quaker Youth Book Project of QUIP: Spirit-Rising



An anthology of non-fiction prose, poetry and visual art by international young Quakers ages 13-40 from all branches of the Religious Society of Friends, *Spirit Rising: Young Quaker Voices* includes over 210 pieces of writing and visual art by over 150 teenage and young adult Friends. The contributors represent all major theological branches of Friends and come from 17 countries, including Australia, Bolivia, Burundi, Canada, Cuba, Guatemala, El Salvador, Italy, Kenya, Korea, New Zealand, Nepal, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States. *Spirit Rising: Young Quaker Voices* a project of Quakers Uniting in Publications (QUIP) published by QuakerPress of Friends General Conference was released at QUIP's 2010 Writers' Conference 21-25 April Quaker Hill Conference Centre, Richmond, IN.

The conference served as the release date and celebration for the book but more importantly as a chance for the editorial board, writers and artists to gather in person and carry forward their ministry. Editorial board members and anthology contributors led workshops for Friends young and old, focusing on youth ministry among Friends, their work gathering submissions (which for several



included travelling long distances), and practical writing workshops focused on writing as ministry among Friends and intergenerational dialogue. For more information about the project, the book and the conference go to <http://www.quakerquip.org>