



Yearly Meeting of the
Religious Society of
Friends in Britain

Epistle from Junior Yearly Meeting Held at Lee Valley Youth Hostel on 1-4 May 2015

To all Friends everywhere,

From 1st – 4th May 2015, 51 young Quakers gathered at Lee Valley Youth Hostel to discuss the theme 'How do we as Quakers respond to injustice?' We valued the presence of two ecumenical representatives and two representatives from Sweden Yearly Meeting.

We left behind the stresses and pressures of everyday life and created a welcoming atmosphere and a community with a warm heart. Social activities such as a ceilidh helped us to bond through fun and laughter, and worship sessions gave us an opportunity to share our spiritual journeys in a deep and creative way. We were able to support and uphold one another in learning, sharing, friendship and discovery.

This year's JYM (Junior Yearly Meeting) happened alongside BYM (Britain Yearly Meeting), held at Friends' House in London. Our theme was closely integrated with the BYM theme, 'Living out our faith in the world', and we joined BYM on Saturday and Monday afternoon to integrate with the wider gathering of Friends.

Whilst at Friends House, we had a creative challenge which simulated injustice faced on a global scale and opened our eyes to the nature and scale of injustice, illustrating how some countries have many privileges and others have very few. This provided us with inspiration for the following session run by QPSW (Quaker Peace & Social Witness), in which we learned about pillars of power and discussed ways in which we can approach challenging injustice.

We enjoyed the Swarthmore Lecture, given by Diana Francis, which was presented in a human and relatable way and spoke to many of our participants. Diana

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encouraged us to remember the importance of our faith, which is a source of motivation and power that we can draw upon to help us as we respond to injustice. As a group of Friends, the precedence of the Spirit above all is important.

A lively and interesting talk from Sam Walton from QPSW taught us more about the global involvement of Quakers. We connected with the stories he shared and were encouraged by examples of positive change. We feel inspired to act in any way we are able, rather than ignoring injustice we see around us.

We are left with more questions than answers, and this inspires us to continue our journey of learning and discovery as we go back to our homes. We hope to draw strength from the experiences we have had and things we have learned at JYM.

Many of the sessions and discussions gave us a sense of empowerment, and the knowledge that it is possible for us to make a difference. We leave with a deeper understanding of the theme and the ways in which we can change the things that are important to us. We discussed the importance of identifying our own perceptions of injustice and starting with small changes. By addressing the things we have the power to change on a personal and local level, we are making an important step towards a more just community.

We found the event eye-opening, and it increased our understanding of injustice, affirming our determinations to make positive changes. Throughout the event we were reminded that every person is 'unique, precious, a child of God'.

Signed on behalf of JYM 2015,

Isaac Peat

Oliver Morley

Clerks