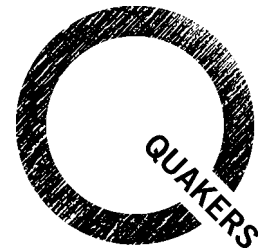


Epistle of Junior Yearly Meeting

held at Warwick University, Coventry

29 July – 5 August, 2017



To All Friends Everywhere

From the 29 July to 4 August 2017, participants from across Britain and Europe joined Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) at Yearly Meeting Gathering (YMG), hosted at the University of Warwick in Coventry. With a group of 60 young Friends, we explored the theme “How can we work with others to make a difference?”

We were joined by Friends from Norway & Sweden Yearly Meetings and representatives from the Methodist and Anglican churches.

Throughout the week we joined together as a worshipping community, particularly appreciating the opportunity to reflect on communities which we find important. Many identified Quaker communities as being significant to them.

Our community was strengthened by social activities that encouraged teamwork and communication; this was especially evident in our dress up drama session. The community space was open at lunch and in the evenings allowing participants to socialise in an informal setting. Hunt the Quaker saw JYM and the Young People’s Programme join together to find Adult Volunteers across campus in a variety of costumes whilst the ceilidh saw us bond with YFGM over a shared love of music and dance. We revelled in the opportunity to share our community with Yearly Meeting Gathering through our quiz and the Wednesday Activities.

Base Groups were another opportunity to meet people, form friendships, and have a sense of togetherness. We shared laughter and worship in equal measure as we explored our theme and developed our responses as we moved out into the world.

We have been inspired this week by our speakers. Sam Walton shared how he has been motivated by his faith to take action. This led to interesting discussions around how we are led to act ourselves.

Catherine West, who delivered the Swarthmore lecture, facilitated a vocal parliamentary style debate on votes at 16. We considered how this might help young people take action but recognised the polarity of opinion.

Tim Gee's recognition of the children of Reading meeting reminds us that children and young people remain at the heart of Quakerism. His lecture encouraged us to acknowledge and challenge the shortcomings of the Society of Friends.

Among our speakers, we enjoyed the opportunity to hear from those who work tirelessly on the work of Britain Yearly Meeting including Paul Parker, Sam Walton, Chris Venables, Tim Gee and Oliver Waterhouse.

We were joined throughout the week by various visitors including those who represented the work of Quaker life central committee, BYM trustees, Yearly Meeting Elders and Young Friends General Meeting

We welcomed the opportunity to work closely with Yearly Meeting Gathering; sharing in worship and theme sessions in addition to offering all-age options of our own to the community. Exploring *Living our Beliefs*, the Children & Young People's Publication, presented opportunities for creative discussion around practical interpretations of the Quaker testimonies. We welcomed members of Yearly Meeting Arrangements Committee and Yearly Meeting Elders to participate in our sessions and worship. This was reciprocated with JYM joining Yearly Meeting Gathering sessions throughout the week including the gender diversity session which set out a vision for a truly inclusive Society of Friends.

As we brought our week to a close, we reflected on the close and supportive community through a variety of media. We set out into the world, inspired to work with others to make a difference locally, nationally, and internationally, with our wider JYM community supporting us. The friendships we have made over this week will sustain us as we seek to be "God's Burglars".

Signed in and on behalf of Junior Yearly Meeting,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gwen Jess". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gwen Jess

Jess Kendall & Gwendolen Da Sousa Correa
Clerks of JYM 2017

Poem from epistle social session

Our afternoons at the bakers
I felt the need to visit the Quakers
So to JYM I went
Fortunately I needed no tent

We met each day in oculus
So close I need no binoculars
We had meeting for worship every day
For that is for sure the Quaker way

Sam Walton talked of his trial in court
To which we listened in deep thought
Tim G gave an interesting conjecture
In the annual Gorman Lecture

Some days there was a choice for me
To visit others at YMG
The sessions were powerful and meant a lot
To those who waited to be part of the plot

We had lots of fun dancing the ceilidh
If only we could have one daily
And risk assessments were used a lot
To make sure dead we were not.