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**Quote for the month.** Our Elders plan to have a regular Grapevine item called *Reflections* – see page 4 for this month's offering. So the quote this month echoes their theme and comes from Quaker, Faith and Practice 2.01: *Silent worship and the spoken word are both parts of Quaker ministry. The ministry of silence demands the faithful activity of every member in the meeting. As, together, we enter the depths of a living silence, the stillness of God, we find one another in 'the things that are eternal', upholding and strengthening one another.*

### Dates for your Diary

|                        |            |   |
|------------------------|------------|---|
| <b>Midweek Meeting</b> | 12.45-1.15 | <b>Every Wednesday</b> , followed by simple lunch                         |
| Saturday 14 Jan        | 10.30am    | <b>Area Meeting</b> at Horsham  |
| Sunday 15 Jan          | 12 noon    | <b>Creative Listening</b> at Meeting House                                |
| Friday 20 Jan          | 7.30pm     | <b>Meditation Meeting</b> at Meeting House                                |
| Friday 3 Feb           | 7.15pm     | Light supper followed by <b>Study Group</b> at Meeting House (see page 4) |
| Sunday 5 Feb           | 9.00am     | <b>Prep Meeting</b> at Meeting House                                      |
| Sunday 12 Feb          |            | <b>Traidcraft stall</b> after Meeting                                     |
| Sunday 12 Feb          | 6.30pm     | <b>Meeting for Worship</b> at Park House, Leatherhead                     |
| Friday 17 Feb          | 7.30pm     | <b>Meditation Meeting</b> at Meeting House                                |

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### Notes from Preparative Meeting

#### Collections:

**December collection** for Winston's Wish (supporting bereaved children), chosen by the children, raised £190. **Midweek Meeting** raised £100 for Rewrite and £100 for the Ruth Hayman Trust - two charities supporting refugees and asylum seekers.

The January collection is for Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre, and February's is for Britain Yearly Meeting.

Advices and Queries read in December: at Dorking number 4; at Leatherhead none

The Elders introduced a discussion about **study groups**. Elders during 2011 arranged monthly study groups on Friday evenings from 7.30 to 9.00pm on a variety of topics but many were poorly attended. They would like to put their energy into facilitating something, which is needed and would be appreciated, bearing in mind that their role is to deepen the spiritual life of the Meeting. It was agreed they would write an article for the Grapevine outlining some suggestions already made – there was a particular interest in bible study - and asking for further ideas (See page 4). It was also agreed that Elders should follow up their suggestion of inviting Quaker Life facilitators to run a half-day workshop '**Explorations**', which aims to support Meetings by encouraging and developing the gifts and strengths within the Meeting. It was felt that Sunday afternoon would be a good time.

The **fund-raising** group appointed in December had met, and Su Johnston presented a report on their deliberations. Their approach outlining principles to be considered, assets available and

possible projects, was much appreciated. Some further ideas were proposed, and the group will now try to come up with two projects, which might be possible in 2012.

It was agreed that we would not undertake any activity for **Heritage Weekend** this year but would focus on putting on something in **National Quaker Week** in October. Rachel Hope will write an article for a future Grapevine outlining a proposal for a day event entitled 'Who do you think we are?' and asking for volunteers to help organise it.

A list will be put up in the office entitled 'Ongoing Gardening – offers of help welcome!' This will alert us all to jobs which some Friends are undertaking in the garden, and maybe other Friends might feel they had the time and energy to give a helping hand.

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### Supporting The 'Occupy' Protest



The Occupy info tent we visited before Meeting for Worship. Photo by Colin Brewer.

Seven of us from Dorking joined the New Year's Day Quaker Meeting for Worship in support of the commendable Occupy Protest on the steps of St. Paul's Cathedral. Our expedition was lengthened by Southern Rail's decision not to run any trains south of Sutton, with the consequence that most of us had to use a double-decker bus for the connecting leg which itself was quite an adventure. Another unexpected complication was the persistent rain that deluged throughout the day. Even then it was good that a few bystanders joined respectfully in our Meeting. Mind you, it must be noted that one of the



Chatting with London Quakers after Meeting for Worship. Photo by Colin Brewer.

newcomers eventually proved to be an unlikely convert with his ministry that our proceedings would be improved with us each having a serving of 'magic mushrooms'.

As we bounced home on the bus's top deck, wet and bedraggled, we all agreed that it had been a most agreeable day. Even more important was that it had been well worthwhile confirming our support for the intrepid Occupiers who, despite the uncomfortable elements, are steadfastly pursuing an economic cause that demands an early global response. We'll certainly be showing our support again. Hope you care to join us, but we can't promise the bus ride or the rain!

Bob Humphreys

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### Meditation Meetings

These takes place once a month normally on the third Friday of the month, from 7.30 – 9.00 at the Meeting House. We offer an introduction to meditation through using a range of approaches emanating from different traditions of meditation. As part of the use of time, we may also discuss readings and philosophical perspectives that seem to relate to meditation.

If interested please do just come along to one of the meetings, or, if you want to find out more in advance, please speak with Catherine Carr (01483 283693) who organises the meeting.

Dates for 2011 are:

|                        |             |                  |                          |
|------------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>January</b>         | <b>20th</b> | <b>July</b>      | <b>20th</b>              |
| <b>February</b>        | <b>17th</b> | <b>August</b>    | <b>No Meeting</b>        |
| <b>March</b>           | <b>16th</b> | <b>September</b> | <b>21st</b>              |
| <b>April</b>           | <b>20th</b> | <b>October</b>   | <b>19th</b>              |
| <b>May</b>             | <b>18th</b> | <b>November</b>  | <b>16th</b>              |
| <b>June</b>            | <b>15th</b> | <b>December</b>  | <b>14<sup>th</sup>**</b> |
| **not the third Friday |             |                  |                          |

## Natural Grace

I was asked to write an article for Grapevine capturing the ministry I gave on the 18<sup>th</sup> December. So here I quote from my source - the book 'Natural Grace – dialogues on science & spirituality' which records the conversations between Rupert Sheldrake (scientist) and Matthew Fox (ex-Dominican monk). Matthew Fox is speaking below (from pages 26 & 27).

*"There is a shift we see in theology today from theism to panentheism.... Newton more or less pictured God as having an oil can behind the machine of the Universe so that he could come in and keep it going once in a while. That's theism; we're here and God's out there somewhere. Panentheism is the mystical tradition. Panentheism teaches that all things are in God, God is in all things, and God works through all things. We need to make this shift from theism to panentheism today in all our spiritual practice, in all our theology.*

*The West has not developed a theology of the spirit. We talk about a Trinitarian divinity, but in fact in an excessively redemption-orientated and Jesus-orientated theology we leave out God the Creator who is per se life, who is present in all living things and therefore is understood more deeply when we understand the mystery of the living things. God the Creator! The first article of faith has often been left behind in our theological training as has the third article of faith which is about God the spirit and sanctification, and God as our divinisation. How many of us, if we practice religion in the West at all, have ever heard a sermon on our divinity or what it means to be divine....*

*... I am a Trinitarian Christian and that means experiencing the God of Creation and the God of our divinisation, God the Spirit. What is our divinisation? It is our creativity and our capacity for using this creativity for compassion....*

*And so the idea of Jesus as redeemer is not really enough. We must include the cosmic Christ. Because the cosmic Christ is that cosmic wisdom – Sophia – that permeates all creatures and the whole Universe. As the Book of wisdom says, 'It holds all things together in the Universe'. The first hymns in the Christian liturgy in the first century were not hymns about our personal salvation. Not one of them talks about being saved and about what wretches they were until they met Jesus. They are all, as the Epistles to the Colossians says, about the Christ who binds all things together in heaven and on earth and everything in between...."*

Lois Lodge

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## Dorking Meeting Party – A Happy, Winter Event

This year's party (7<sup>th</sup> January) worked out as special as ever for me. I started out, absorbed by the work-progress-work ethic, with that 21<sup>st</sup> century indifference that comes around the old annual festivities through the year. While I brought contributions I put less enthusiasm than I usually do into preparing for the Meeting Christmas/New Year party. I arrived fatigued; but I left very, very much happier.

For a start there were other, very hard-working people who were putting all their physical and imaginative resources into making the party go well despite there being fewer party-goers. (We missed many Friends and friends.) The games were happening thanks to Anne and Judith with lots of enjoyment and pleasure from a really great bunch of children; so many - 15 years old and under, featuring a wonderful turnout of the under 9's. The food was organised with great care and sensitivity by Eleanor and Trish. There was lively interchange in the kitchen and lots of welcoming and greeting in the meeting room. Romy and Jan were especially welcoming to everyone, keeping the long-standing Elias hallmark of hospitality in action. Wednesday and Sunday Meeting goers were able to chat to each other, and we had new babies to delight at, their parents to admire, new Attenders to give a party to and a piano for Sheila to play!



Pass the parcel. Photo Michael Brewer



The jelly tots challenge!  
Photo Michael Brewer.

There were two star events – both magical – at 4.30pm, the third Christmas party magical show from 17-year-old Garrod of Reigate Meeting and, soon after, a really lovely Russian fairy story telling by Martin Hunka which brought the party to a very splendid resolution. Many thanks to everyone not mentioned above too – for your smiling and your being there!

Sarah Freeman

## Meeting, Eating, Learning?

What would you find most helpful in developing your spirituality and knowledge of Quakerism and themes of relevance to Quakerism? The Elders have been reflecting on what type of sessions the Meeting would be keen to attend in 2012 with these aims in mind.

Elders have over the last couple of years run a variety of study groups covering topics such as individual Quakers including George Fox and William Penn, "Quaker Bible Study" based on material from Pendle Hill (the American Quaker Studies Centre) and also the King James Bible.

These groups have been held at the Meeting House over cups of coffee and tea on Friday evenings, and it appears to us that probably the topics that have been most popular have been based on the Bible.

What format does appeal to Friends most? Would another evening of the week or another time suit Friends better? Is the venue difficult for Friends? Should we be thinking of running sessions one week in Dorking perhaps and then another in Bookham? We really would like your input. So, please speak to individual Elders (Mary, Rachel, Romy and Richard) so we can arrange sessions that would appeal to you.

One thing we do know is that Friends quite like eating together and so we plan a "meeting and eating" session at the Meeting House on Friday 3 February. There will be a light supper at 7:15 prompt and, as we have our puds, Bob Humphreys will be introducing the theme of "The Occupy Movement and Equality". This will be a nice change for Bob from the wet and the cold of the Meeting for Worship by the steps of St Paul's on New Year's Day. So please join us to hear his views and join in the discussion which will end by 9 pm to get you home not too late.

Richard is going to set up an email circulation list of those who have attended Friday sessions previously, and so do please get in touch with him if perhaps you have not attended before but would like to be added to this circulation list.

So: to do list:

- 1) speak to the Elders on the learning/discussion sessions you would like in 2012.
- 2) attend the 3 February "meeting and eating" with Bob Humphreys leading the discussion on "The Occupy Movement and Equality".
- 3) Join the learning session circulation list – so contact Richard.

We look forward to a stimulating and fruitful 2012 together.

Romy Elias on behalf of The Elders

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### Reflections ... on Meeting for Worship

*... "we come to be with a warm-hearted group of exploring Friends, who together will evoke a unique silent stillness through which we can be in touch with the deepest we know."*

From *Journeying the Heartlands*: Kindlers booklet No. 1

*"Meeting for Worship requires surrender. We put down our daily concerns to enter with the community of worshippers into a common stillness. It is a time when we can ... experience and know the living spirit within."*

*In Meeting for Worship we stand on holy ground."*

From *Breakthrough to Unity*: Kindlers booklet No. 2.

Offered by Elders