

To Friends Quarterly, 2009 Prize Essay contribution in respect to
"The Future of the Religious Society of Friends"
September 2009
"Tolerance & Quaker/Christian Values"

It will soon become apparent I am no scholar, and this contribution is not as thought out as I would like it to be, it is more a "stream of conscienceness" than anything. After being an attender for a year or more, I became a Quaker Member, in the belief I could commit to Quakerism because it appeared harmless! In any event I had been a good, bad, and indifferent Christian all my life (I am now in my seventh decade) since a 12 year old child, and around about mid life, had been maintaining Quaker values without knowing it!

Having met Quakers at Quaker retreats, or study groups, at Swarthmoore Hall, Charney Manor, Claridge House, and Woodbrooke Hall, and after a particularly distressing time at my Meeting, I resigned my Membership, and subsequently joined the Quaker New Foundation Fellowship (NFF). I have met a number of people from the NFF, and many of them can tell of similar distressing behaviour from Friends(sic) at their Meeting, which forced them to resign their membership, for similar reasons as mine.

I have read a number of Quaker history books, and one by Cecil W. Sharman, entitled "George Fox & The Quakers", I can heartily recommend. Another, which isn't the easiest of reads, is the Everyman's Library (1944) edition of "The Journal of George Fox" Revised by Norman Penny. Much of what I have to say in this essay, will be based on these readings.

I spent a week on a working retreat at Swarthmoor Hall, the house where George Fox, the founder of Quakerism, and his wife Elizabeth Fell lived for many years. I met a number of Friends there, some were questioning their faith, some knew each other from previous retreats, not always Quaker retreats. One Friend had been an Elder at his Meeting for ten years, and confided in me he had never been comfortable being a Quaker, he felt he was more a Taoist, which I now know is a Chinese religious philosophy advocating a simple honest life, and non interference with the course of natural events, which to me is fatalistic (Karma?), with no mention of God!

Another Friend once said to me she was troubled by what she felt was the lack of commitment by Quakers, they didn't seem to do anything she said! This tallied with my own thinking at the time: my Meeting appeared to be a quasi religious Sunday coffee morning, mainly for white, retired female teachers, of a certain age, who didn't make "enquirers" feel very welcome, which was my experience. This got me thinking, and I had a certain sympathy with the idea that Quakers don't seem to do much, and Taoism, I think, would not have found much favour with George Fox, and the early Quakers, who were very much religious activists!

George Fox spent his early adult life before, during, and after the civil wars, preaching up and down the country, trying to "convince" people they need not go to "Steeplehouses" as he called churches, in order to be a Christian.

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He thought people should emulate early Christians, who didn't have churches, or priests, but who should "meet" on occasion, and share their suffering. These were turbulent times, religious tumult, and fervour was rampant, new religious organisations were breaking out everywhere, and not just in Britain, but also in the colonies. This of course, upset the Church of England/Scotland, and of course the state, because they all gained a great deal of wealth from the tithes, and taxes they imposed, which some new religious groups refused to pay.

But also of course, these new religious groups were undermining the power and authority of the Church and State: the state often used the church to maintain law and order, leaving it up to the local clergy to dole out punishments, including amputations of hands for theft, or having a red hot poker thrust through the tongue to stop dissent. Religious unrest had gripped the nation for over a hundred years, and especially just before, during and after the British civil wars, which had left the church, and state very nearly bankrupt. I once saw it estimated 20% of the population died during, and shortly after the civil wars, not by fighting, but by starvation, and disease. Armies do march on their stomachs, and civil war armies marched up and down the country for years, taking what food they could scavenge from the local population. Paying tithes on top of this, left people in penury, and often jail. Not going to Church, and not paying tithes, meant terrible retribution by Church of England/Scotland, and thousands faced jail, torture, banishment to the colonies, and death by church courts. George Fox was regularly beaten up, and injured by mobs, whipped up by the clergy, and he was imprisoned eight times, in filthy and wretched conditions, as were many thousands of others, 12 years old and over.

George Fox, and thousands of Quakers, from at least ten years before the Civil Wars, during it, and for many, many years after, were Evangelists, sometimes itinerant, who preached the Gospel, and salvation through faith alone. Everything was seen through religious eyes in those days, there were no political parties, and democratic government didn't exist. Charles the 1st was seen as wanting to reintroduce Catholicism mainly because he was married to a French Catholic. The Civil wars weren't just about Royalists, and Parliamentarians, it was also a religious war. For a hundred years, since Henry VIIIth established the Protestant Church, seperating links with Roman Catholicism, there had been civil unrest. Tens of thousands of people were jailed, tortured, exiled, and executed to protect the interests of the Church, and the state, against Catholicism.

The introduction at the beginning of the 17th Century of the authorised King James Bible, meant ordinary people could read it as the definitive version, more easily, and in their native tongue, which led to new interpretations of what it all meant! A contemporary estimate for the period 1660 to 1680 calculated about 11,000 Quakers had been imprisoned, for one reason or another, usually for Meeting together, meetings having been banned by Act of parliament.

In the city of London alone, for the nine months to the end of August 1664, 5 Presbyterians, 5 Independents, 3 Baptists, and 791 Quakers were jailed just for holding Meetings! This was what Protestantism was all about, people, largely led by Quakers, actively protested for their faith.

I have been wrestling with this for some time, and feel Quakers should be protesting more, and be tolerant less! What has been troubling me for some time is, do we find many practices condoned and permitted in other religions acceptable, and if not, shouldn't we be protesting about them? I am referring to all religions, including the Church of England, and the Catholic church, which are fabulously wealthy, and undemocratic.

During a Swarthmoore Hall Retreat we visited a huge new local Bhudist temple, and college, which was set in hundreds of acres of Cumbrian countryside. I wouldn't go into the temple which had had the roof covered in gold, although some Friends did. I felt it was a betrayal of all the millions of desperately poor people who had to become Bhudist monks, and nuns in order to survive, throughout the world, forced to live on small handouts of a few grains of rice a day, and felt revolted by the ostentatious use of money on this vast estate, which could have been put to better use. There was also the deification of animals, and idol worship, by Bhudists which I found abhorrent.

Many religions own great tracts of land, buildings, works of art, and receive income from business, and banking. Yet hundreds of millions of their parishioners, especially Catholics live in dreadful poverty, much of it avoidable if they were able to benefit from contraception. The misery due to the spread of HIV/AIDS in Catholic countries such as the Philipines, and South America, but also in Africa, can be laid directly at the door of the Vatican, for forbidding the use of condoms.

The Catholic church is riddled with hypocrisy, and I once heard it described by a commentator on the television, as a haven for child molesters! Why should a newly ordained, young Catholic priest, sworn to celibacy, be addressed as Father by his parishioners, when he can't ever be one? And why should unmarried, celibate priests, and nuns advise Catholics on their marital problems, and birth control? Celibacy in the Catholic church, was introduced by Pope Gregory VII, in 1074 AD, according to Howard F. Vos's Book "Exploring Church History" (Nelson's Christian Cornerstone series). Pope Gregory "issued a ban on clerical marriage" in order to prevent the clergy from becoming a "hereditary caste". There is no reason Catholic clergy should be celibate today, and perhaps if they were not, there would be less instances of child abuse, and draconian, cruel treatment in Catholic run schools, orphanages, and institutions that are all too evidently being exposed today, all over the world. It is also a refuge for Catholic Homosexuals, which the church prohibits! Countries like Ireland, Spain, Italy, and Portugal, once suffered greatly from poverty, and deprivation, but have all come on in leaps and bounds since they shook off the iron grip of dictatorship, and Catholic priestocracy.

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This was largely due to the reforms, and conditions necessary for them to join the EU. Incidentally, they all now have the lowest population increase, per woman of child bearing age, especially in Spain, and Italy, than other developed countries!

North and South America were colonised at about the same time, the north is largely Protestant, and the south Catholic. The largely Protestant north is wealthy, and developed, the largely Catholic south is under developed, locked in corruption, poverty, and disease, with uncountable deaths of children, and mothers due to constant child bearing. Similarly, the Philippines were colonised by the Spanish around the same time, and the huge population there, due to lack of birth control, also live lives of misery in poverty, disease, and corruption. However, Australia, and New Zealand, both colonised by Protestant Britain, are modern thriving states!

The evidence is overwhelming, the Catholic church has never been a vehicle for progress, and its parishioners are kept locked in a vice like grip of ritualistic authoritarian control. Quakers should abhor these practices that condemn so many innocent people to an early death and misery. How is it one man (never a woman, because women can't become Catholic priests) the Pope, has the power to make fellow human beings into Saints? Its ludicrous this practice still exists, and the devotion to Saints in the Catholic church, is based on pure superstitious nonsense.

Then there was the vatican support for Hitler, Mussolini, and especially Franco, and it mustn't be forgotten the tens of thousands of Muslims who were forced to become Catholics, or face death which many preferred, in the Balkans, during World War II, by Fascist Catholic priests. It is well documented, as is the escape routes the Catholic church provided for escaping NAZI mass murdering War criminals after the war, including providing them with a false ID. The Catholic church has just recently been confronted by the Germans of all people, as to having bought 6,000 slaves from the SS during the war!

Other religions should not be acceptable to Quakers similar to the practices of the Catholic church. This is the 21st century, do we find the bleeding to death of animals acceptable, as in Halal, and Kosher butchering? Is it right woman should be forced to wear disfiguring dress in order not to inflame the passions of men, as I heard it explained by a Muslim priest? Can Quakers condone forced marriages, but it happens to thousands, probably millions of Muslims regularly, including the forced marriages of children. Can we accept the stoning to death of homosexuals, and woman convicted of adultery, as they are in the Muslim world.

Can Quakers accept public flogging, and amputating of limbs, of people convicted of misdemeanors, children forced into bonded slavery, including young girls. Genital mutilation, to both sexes, widows forced into prostitution because they have no man to support them? A little time ago there was a case of a Muslim woman who could not bring charges against the men who had gang raped her, because she had to have the testimony of at least four men who witnessed the act!

Can Quakers accept the worship of living animals, as Hindus do? Their cast system condemns people of one cast or another to lives of abject poverty, and misery. For instance a married Brahmin man (An upper cast of Hindu scholars, teachers, priests etc) allows the husband to marry a woman from a lower cast, in addition to his Brahmin wife. However his lower cast wife, and children will have no rights as his Brahmin wife does, and will have to live separately, and support any children they may have.

A Jew visited our Meeting, and unless I misheard, said there are some 633 Rules, and laws in orthodox Judaism. None of these rules or laws seemed to prevent the Israelies from acting like murderous NAZI's in Poland, when they entered the Gaza strip recently, including the murder, for that is what it was, of hundreds of innocent civilians, mainly woman and children!

Similarly, other religions include ritualistic prayers, upto five times a day, Hymn singing, chanting, diet laws, religious festivals, and other prohibitions. They are all about control, and indoctrination by priests, and it suits some Islamic states to have the people ruled by Shia, and Suuni courts! Choosing my words carefully, I would submit religions that insist on these practices are still in a mind set more suitable for the late middle ages in Europe, and are not likely to change unless action is taken. I prefer the advice of Marg Simpson, of "The Simpsons" fame, who once said "if you want to speak to God, I recommend prayer". By this she meant praying, not reading out a ritulistic prayer from a Prayer Book, as they do in the established churches, to prevent people having a personal, and loving God.

Many governments, largely Muslim, allow priests to govern for them by holding the people in thrall, without accountability for the misery they inflict on their own people. This is similar to our own history, if we take the Magna Carta as the start, it took another 400 years to make sure the monarchy couldn't declare war on its own subjects, and another 140 years to widen the franchise beyond aristocrats, then another 110 years before woman were considered equal citizens in the eyes of the law.

In Britain it has taken centuries of protest, and struggle to throw off the power of the church, and church courts, which the monarch of the day used to rule the people, and gain some form of representative government. But can we wait for other countries to do the same, whilst they suppress, sometimes violently, their own people using religion as a tool, and weapon?

Isn't it time Quakers stood up, and condemned the evil practices of other religions? Shouldn't Quakers reassert themselves, as the Protestant church militant, and loudly protest about the injustices of other religions, against their own people? I feel sure George Fox, and the early Quakers would have done so, were they alive today. It is time the Quaker movement re-established itself, and for a start I suggest it no longer takes part in any "Interfaith" activities. I do not want to see Quakers lending their support, or providing credibility by their presence, to the religious organisations mentioned above. cont'd 6/

George Fox said "I was against the Pope, and Popery" and "one of the Bishops of Rome denied the faith, and sacrificed to idols; therefore he was not infallible". But Catholics everywhere accept the infallibility of the Pope, having said that, they are just getting round to accept the Pope may have been wrong when he made Galileo recant his view the Earth orbited the sun!

As someone once said "A fatalistic desire to do nothing, is only a failure to take responsibility", which is where I think Quakers are at right now. I am finding it more and more difficult to roll over and be tolerant of intolerance, by that I mean religious intolerance, as described above.

"Quaker/Christian Values"

In The Friend, dated 2/6/06, Roger Sawtell, a Swarthmore lecturer, said "I have believed implicitly Jesus was not only a historical figure, but also was and still is, the Messiah whom the Jews had been waiting for, for many years, and for whom orthodox Jews are still waiting. I believe Jesus is part of the Trinity, and his life on earth was the only time in recorded history when God has been incorporated as a human being, to show us the way. This incarnational belief is fundamental to my faith journey, and I would find it very difficult to be committed to a religious organisation which does not specifically hold this view". I don't think George Fox would have a problem with any of that, but I know a good many so called Quakers today who would have! And where is Roger Sawtell today, is he still a Quaker?

Many people who go to Meeting are disaffected Quakers, as I have learnt, unhappy their Meeting are not practising Christianity, but instead happy to admit a rag bag of religious misfits, including Zen Bhudists, Druid/Celtics, spiritulists, atheists, and any amount of other 'ists. At one Quaker Retreat I went to, someone, I can't say he was a Friend, called Quakers "Mystics"! I am not a mystic! I am now a self practising Christian Quaker, and practice "Silence" at home, and not just on Sundays, but where else are Christian Quakers supposed to go? Where is their Christian spiritual home, if not amongst Quakers, because none of the others on offer can come anywhere near being suitable.

Incidentally, I found no Friends at Meeting who were willing to socialise outside of Meeting, and I expect this is the experience of other Christian Quakers, so much for friendship! It is my understanding at one point Quakers toyed with the idea of reaffirming their official title of "The Religious Society of Friends" to "The Religious Society of Friends of Jesus". What is wrong with that? It says what it is on the tin! Quakers should be proud to be Christians, and if there are people who are Quaker Members, and not Christians, then why are they Quakers? Who let them in? I am coming to the conclusion Quaker Meetings have been infiltrated by people who have no understanding what Christian values are, and I have seen evidence of this.

Although I hoped Quakers were mostly harmless, they are not in my, and others experience.

Re: My contribution to the Essay, dated 12th September, can I issue an errata, please? On page 7. midway, where the paragraph starts "When the Meeting the family went to, started proceedings to evict them from their home, they had had enough, and resigned their membership" Please delete this sentence. At the start of the next sentence, where it says "They have started their own unofficial etc....." replace "They have" with "The family have".

I regret this mistake, which was probably due to my misremembering the conversation at the time, which was during an intense study period at Woodbrooke. The Friend involved has put me right, and on reflection it was probably me that suggested to him, he should make sure of maximum publicity, should the Meeting start eviction proceedings!

I am aware of a husband and wife who resigned their Membership of fifty years standing, due to the unfriendly attitude, and atmosphere created at their Meeting, because they spoke during Silence, referring to Jesus, and being Christians. Another case I know of, involved a couple and their 4 young children, who occupied a three bed house, as part of the husbands job as Caretaker to his Meeting, which was poorly paid.

The rent for the house initially, in the early 90's was nominal, however, both the husband and wife made no secret they were Christian Quakers. A few years ago the Meeting decided to apply to the Rent Tribunal to have the rent of the house increased, which it was, beyond the salary paid to the husband, who had to take other work to supplement his income.

Then the atmosphere changed, which many of us have experienced similarly, to one of subtle but none the less wounding, and intimidating affect. The family, (and myself at my Meeting) were made to feel uncomfortable having spoken during Silence, when the Spirit moved them, referring to Jesus, and Christian values. Friends then made subtle remarks of criticism in response. Also, the Elders could not resist an opportunity to put down any suggestions, or remark even when said in a jocular fashion, to take the unnecessary solemnity out of any discussion. In my case I was often treated like a recalcitrant child, being snapped at whenever I spoke. Both the family, and myself experienced the Elders adopting an overbearing, controlling, and autocratic attitude towards us, which other Friends joined in.

^{The family}
~~When the Meeting the family went to, started proceedings to evict them from their home, they had had enough, and resigned their Membership. They~~ have started their own unofficial Meeting, with similar disaffected Quakers. Also, they are staying put, and if the Meeting does manage to have them evicted, then expect to see it on the News!

Similar behaviour occurred in my case, but the circumstances were different. I have always been active against racism, from the early 70's when the National Front would march through London, I took part in demonstrations, and also against the Vietnam war. In the last 17 years or so, I have always defended Asylum Seekers, and Refugees to this country, and have been a member of Refugee Action for many years.

Locally I worked as a volunteer for the a Refugee Support Group, and Migrant Helpline who had more Asylum Seekers than migrants to help! I was also a volunteer prison visitor with a Detainee Visitor Group. In the last 2 years or so, due to a number of reasons, mainly because of the Governments dispersal programme, we found we didn't have any Asylum Seekers, or Refugees to look after. However, still wanting to be useful I approached Refugee Action, and they referred me to a local Refugee Action Network, who I was of course aware of, who asked me if I would be interested in taking part in their Mentoring of "Unaccompanied Children" programme, that is being a Mentor to teenage children who have somehow made it to England.

Some of these children had been put on the back of a truck, in France by their parents, sometimes as young as 3, 4 or 5 years old. I have been CRB vetted on a number of occasions, but not had any direct experience with children, or especially young teenagers, and was conscious of my lack of knowledge of the Education system. Once the children had reached the age of 18, and if their nationality could be verified, and if the government deemed it safe for them to be returned, they were often locked up in detainee centres, and deported, to a very uncertain future. Some Mentors tried to stay in contact with their children, to ensure they weren't being harmed.

I had many misgivings about becoming a Mentor, as I am a single male pensioner, living in a Retirement Scheme, where everyone knows everyone's coming and going. It would have been expected of me to bring the child home to help socialise him/her, in British culture, which would not have gone unnoticed. None the less I undertook the training, and at the same time asked, at Meeting, for people to come forward to help me, and said it would only take up an hour or two a week at the most. I made the appeal twice, yet despite at least 60% of the average 15 to 20 Friends who regularly go to Meeting, being retired teachers, not one person came forward to help me! Consequently, I decided not to become a mentor to these poor unfortunate children!

A few months prior to this Friends House had said it was going to run a national publicity campaign to try and make people more aware of Quakerism. Because I knew the publicity handouts provided in my Meeting house were arcane, and too mystifying to appeal to any "Enquirer", I decided to write up a new one entitled "An explanatory Leaflet about Quakers", see enclosed. I had the backing, and help, of our then Elder, a man of great wisdom, who was 90 years old, but mentally alert, who was the author of 17 books, and who said my leaflet was much better than the stuff at the Meeting now! However, he was never to see the final draft of the Leaflet, as he died a few months beforehand, much to my sorrow, as he truly was a great F(f)riend.

The leaflet was submitted 4 or 5 times to Meeting, for approval, and each time the new Elders tried to change the meaning, or found other nit picking, pedantic issues with it. The whole point of the Leaflet was to try and get it accepted by the County Council Libraries department, who would only accept it if it was "educational", and not a religious tract. The final draft was accepted by the Meeting, after I made it known I would be taking drastic action if it wasn't! I obtained the application paper work to submit the Leaflet to the County council Libraries department, who had assured me there would not be a problem over acceptance, and I handed it over to the Meeting for the clerks/elders to make the application. This was just before the publicity campaign was due to start, but it was never submitted to the county council. A wonderful opportunity was lost to get the Leaflet accepted by the county Libraries department, and once it had been accepted, then surely other county library departments would accept it as well, nationally. But it was not to be.

During this period, when our wonderful, wise Elder was dying, and unable to come to Meeting, another Elder started to introduce a Catholic element into the Meeting. This had started some time before, whereby he would often recommend Friends to use a Catholic retreat, in a nunnery nearby. Why? Most of us abhor nunneries, and monasteries, as being a total waste of human life, which should be used more profitably. In any case Quakers have their own retreats, which should be supported, as many of them are struggling financially.

Then a framed testimony to a Catholic priest appeared in the library, testifying to his work in Africa, what has that got to do with Quakerism (my understanding is this had been published in Friend magazine, which doesn't justify it, or make it right, in fact it is an example of how far Protestant Quakerism is being undermined, and to many of us it is offensive) A similar piece was also published in the Meetings own Newsletter.

Then something bizarre happened. After the Elder had died, no one could bring themselves to sit in his seat, so the chair arrangement was changed. This meant in my case, I no longer had an empty chair next to me, which was close to the door, which was seldom, if ever used. It was my custom to come to Meeting with my copy of Faith & Practice, and usually a few copies of the G2 section of the Guardian, which I read after Meeting in a local cafe, where I would go for Brunch(sic). I also read a few pages of Faith & Practice during the first five minutes of Silence, to allow for latecomers to settle.

The empty chair I used to use to place my copy of Faith & Practice, and the G2 sections, and my glasses on, had gone, so as I was now facing the table in the centre of the Meeting, I placed my copy of Faith & Practice, a few G2 Sections of the Guardian, and my glasses on that. I was particularly concerned about my glasses, as I had had both eyes recently operated on for cataracts, and the new glasses had cost a great deal of money. There was no other chair space I could use, as I have an injured spine, which causes cramps, and should this happen, I have to get up to stretch my legs. This is why I always used a chair at the front of the Meeting, so that no one sat in front of me. I am quite tall, and lanky, and needed the extra leg room.

The next weekend I was approached by the treasurer, just before Silence, who asked me not to put my things on the table. I asked why not, after all it was just a table, which usually contained an assortment of bits of correspondence, cards for signing, the offering box, and a small vase of flowers etc. However, she was quite adamant, and said she wanted to make the table look nice, with just the flowers she had picked. At first I acquiesced, and said I wouldn't put my things on the table, but then on reflection I thought, why not?

I 'phoned the treasurer during the week, and said I had reflected on the matter, and decided I couldn't agree with her not to use the table, as I had nowhere safe to put my glasses, other than on the table.

She was again very adamant I should not use the table, and without my saying anything she said "I am not trying to turn it into a shrine or anything". I had never said she was, but I did know she took an interest in Celtic religions! The next Sunday I put my things on the table shortly after Silence began, and something extraordinary happened! Suddenly the woman next to me, a retired school teacher, and another new Elder, snatched my things off the table, and threw them under my chair! I was astonished, she hadn't said anything before Meeting about this, and immediately after Silence, she got up hurriedly, and left Meeting. During the week I tried to 'phone her, but later learnt she had gone away for a week or so.

This was all becoming too much: I had asked Friends if any of them would help me with the Mentoring of young teenagers, and none had come forward, instead what appeared to be exercising them, was my putting a few things, including my copy of Faith & Practice on the Meeting table for at the most 50 minutes! Cutting a long story short, which included a Meeting for Clarity, where I was pilloried, by a Member from another Meeting, I resigned my Membership!

These people had demonstrated to me they were not Quakers, and certainly not Christians, in fact I am coming to the conclusion the treasurer was a pagan! George Fox, in the Journal mentioned earlier, on page 85, in 1653, says "As I was sitting in a house full of people, declaring the word of life unto them, I cast my eye upon a woman, and discerned an unclean spirit in her. And I was moved of the Lord to speak sharply to her, and told her she was a witch". Of course this was a highly dangerous statement to make in those days, but he went on, in the same page, to say "As I was going to a meeting, I saw some women in a field, and I discerned them to be witches: and I was moved to go into the field to them, and declare unto them their condition". George Fox must have been aware his words could have been a death sentence in those days, so he must have felt pretty sure of himself to say such things.

I am not suggesting for one moment the two women, and possibly a third, who is also an elder, mentioned earlier, are witches, but they are not, in my opinion Quakers, or Christians, as this behaviour is inexcusable, and I can't help feel it was meant to make me unwelcome at the Meeting.

In conclusion I would like to say if there is any future for the Religious Society of Friends in Britain, then the only way forward is to go backwards to Quaker roots. Here's another quotation from George Fox's journal (B11:296) which is as apposite today as it was in the 17th Century "all the children of the new covenant, that walk in the new and living way, hear Christ their Prophet, that God has raised up, and anointed to be their teacher, and Priest. So now God doth speak to his people by his Son, as he did in the apostles days. The Lord is come to teach his people himself, to bring them off all the worlds churches, to the church in God, which Christ the heavenly man is head of". It is my earnest wish that all Meetings should read a page of George Foxes Journal at the beginning of every Silence.

Yours in Friendship.

