



About Bournemouth Quakers

Many people have heard of the Quakers but very few know of them. This article is an opportunity to learn a little about them and an invitation to you to follow it up if any of it 'strikes a chord'.

Who are we? Our formal name is the Religious Society of Friends. Although based in Christianity, everyone is welcome to our meetings whatever faith or belief system they may uphold.



CONNECTING TO THE LIGHT WITHIN

Bournemouth Quakers are part of a national group of Quakers. The organisation and administration is maintained from Friends House in Euston, London and we have many centres throughout the country. The collective name for all of the groups in the UK is "Britain Yearly Meeting" and this is made up of several "Area Meetings" which, in turn, may comprise of several "Local Meetings", some with their own Meeting House such as ours at Boscombe

Other local meetings at Poole, Lymington, Swanage, New Milton. Visit www.quakerbournemouth.org for details

Many of the greatest figures in for the last three hundred years of English history have been Quakers. But Quakerism was not the most important things in their lives. Their causes, the great missions of their lives were most important. The overriding essence behind their actions was compassion.

This was felt by William Wilberforce for slaves, Elizabeth Fry for women prisoners, John Howard who founded the Howard League for Penal Reform. The Cadburys, who instigated responsible housing such as that at Bourneville, Joseph Rowntree who set up a social welfare foundation and William Penn who founded Pennsylvania in USA. Many famous people from present times are Quakers such as Dame Judy Dench, actress, and Gerald Priestland, newscaster and author. It is our worship and compassionate concerns that drive us all forward.



We worship in silence so that we may hear the voice of God that speaks within us all. This is the essence of Quakerism; that we recognise that there is something of God within every one of us.

We believe that God speaks to all and hears all. Communion with God, or the divinity or the spirit or whatever name you give to that wonderful spirituality that each one of us senses, is a personal thing and often felt very deeply.

It is not for Quakers to say what one's perception of spirituality should be. We have no creeds or doctrine. Although based in Christian roots we welcome all believers.

Those on a spiritual journey of enquiry often find our meetings helpful. We are not evangelistic and so do not try and teach or explain religion or spirituality, but we do explore it and in so doing develop within each one of us, and sometimes as a group, a sense of the divine and spiritual that imparts a significant meaning to our everyday lives.



You are welcome to join us at our meetings for worship. Come and experience the joy and peace of worshipping in the stillness and the quiet. Our meetings on Sundays are open to all and children are especially welcome. They start at 10:30 and finish after about an hour. Our Boscombe premises is just a four minute walk from Boscombe Pier and just a minute from the Gardens.

If you are not sure about your religious or spiritual convictions then Quakerism may be an ideal opportunity to help you explore these issues. This is because Quakers do not have a creed. We do not say what one should or should not believe or say. We are not evangelists. It is sometimes difficult to grasp what it is exactly that we believe in because each of us may have a slightly different view, but because we respect that of God in everyone, we respect the viewpoints of all without necessarily agreeing or disagreeing with them.

We believe that God speaks to us as individuals and we speak to God directly. We communicate with the spirit and receive our spirituality in ways that are very special to each one of us. Whether it is by silent prayer, or occasional spoken ministry during our Meetings for Worship, whether it is via some form of artistic expression such as sculpture or painting or poetry, each one of us has the ability to commune with God, (or whatever term you feel is appropriate for that great spiritual force.)

Although we have no creed we do believe, sometimes very passionately and very forcefully, in what we call our Testimonies.

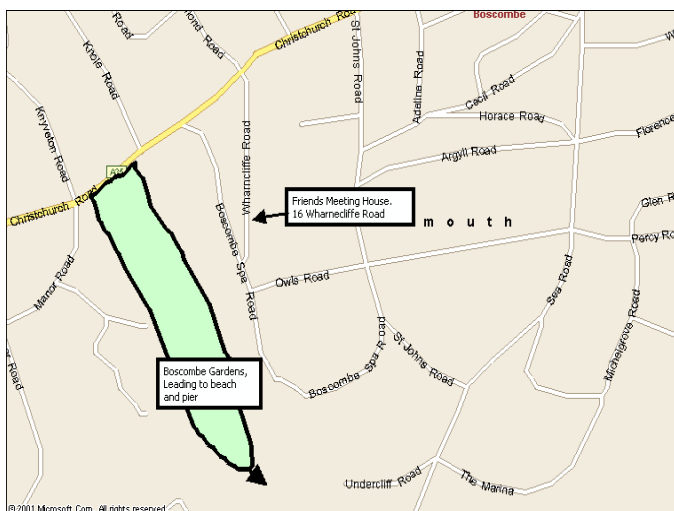
Peace We believe that no good comes from war. “We are called to live in the virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars”.

Equality We believe that all are created equal in the sight of God.

Simplicity We try to live simply. A simple lifestyle freely chosen is a source of strength. We try not to be persuaded into buying what we do not need or cannot afford.

Honesty & Integrity We are encouraged in all we say and do to maintain strict integrity in business transactions and in our dealings with individuals and organisations. We do not take oaths because it implies a double standard of truth.

We have many other testimonies including those to the Environment and the Community. These can be explored at or from the links in our web site at www.quakerbournemouth.org.



We have recently just started to appreciate that there is a growing interest in the Quakers but not many folk know enough about us or how to follow up their interest. For this reason the Quakers nationally are holding a “Quaker Outreach Week” next week to make available further information and contact details of local meeting houses and what Quakers are all about. Please feel free to contact us. You will be sure of a warm and gentle welcome.

Contact:
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