

Northern Friends Peace Board.

Meeting held in Sheffield Saturday 1st December 2018.

NFPB delegates were welcomed to Sheffield and I personally would like to thank our friends from Central Meeting House for hosting this event, our delegation were made to feel very welcome .

As always we started our session with opening worship, which consistently gives us a true grounding for the day ahead.

The day started with introductions, NFPB delegates travelled far and wide Scotland is well represented as is York , Leeds , Lancaster , North Wales , Manchester , Bolton, Durham ,Settle and Lancaster.

The main focus of our day in Sheffield centred on two workshops together, as a theme. Fear and misunderstanding of how people and nations of the world view their understanding of the world through Religion and Violence and Rethinking Security

Religion and Violence.

Sue Beardon (Neither Edge Meeting) from Quaker Committee on Christian and Inter –Faith- Relations introduced and facilitated this work shop.

Discussion included an overview of how our we identify ourselves as citizens of the United Kingdom. We are historically seen as being predominately a Christian country and because of this The First and Second world wars were justified as necessary. With God on our side our Christian identity as a country justified war and the Church of England and other denominations supported war. The media of the time censored the horrors of trench warfare, Pacifism was seen as cowardice, conscientious objectors to both wars were treated harshly by both government and their fellow country men and women.

Quaker Peace Testimony is a general declaration of truth against war, it is not a belief but a description of committed actions to promote peace and actively oppose war.

The recent commemoration of 100yrs since the armistice of the Great War ending 11th of November 1918, and the annual BBC Festival of Remembrance was seen as glorification that sadly ignores the grief and despair that war creates.

This view opposes our Quaker Peace testimony; we must oppose violence as a means to an end. Religion and violence historically run together, peace must always be the ultimate goal, the proxy war in Yemen must come to an end and as Quakers we must Lobby our government to end arm sales to Saudia Arabia.

Please view the Never Again website to continue your thoughts on Religion and Violence www.vfpuk.org

The afternoon session on Rethinking Security continued our peace agenda.

Celia McKeon who is currently Rethinking Security Coordinator facilitated our second workshop.

Our session was thoughtful and enlightening. This brief statement Gives clarity to what is Rethinking security and what was generally Discussed.

“Building security in a globalised world has become one of the most complex responsibilities of government. It requires efforts to ensure the safety and wellbeing of citizens at home ,as well as a firm commitment to international peace and security, based on the rule of law. This ultimately is the way the state operates.

I use a quote from William Penn.

Peace can only be secured by Justice
Never by force of arms.

Rethinking Security for a just and peaceful world
www.rethinkingsecurity.org.uk Roots of Resistance www.rootsofresistance.org.uk

Ellis Brooks from Quaker Peace and Social Justice
and Hanna Brock(Nether Edge meeting) from Quaker Voluntary Action both attended our meeting QPAJ and QVA objectives run parallel to our NFPB ethos of Peace and Justice in a world , that in 2019 needs to welcome and befriend other communities, peoples and nations.

Our day was soon over, good to again meet Quaker friends on Sheffield’s home turf.
Good to inform friends that Sheffield is a City of Sanctuary and Refugees now living In Sheffield have a Sanctuary Centre on Chapel Walk that supports and understands their desperate need to start a new life away from war torn and dictatorial regimes’

John Morgan,
Northern Friends Peace Board. (Sheffield and Balby)

A few brief notes for minutes of AM

NFPB AM was hosted by our Sheffield Friends from Central Meeting House.
Delegates were made very welcome and a positive active day was enjoyed by all.

Two workshops formed the main theme of the day :
Religion and Violence and Rethinking Security. Many views were expressed

Our Quaker Peace testimony formed the core of our discussion and why we actively oppose war.

