

NELSON RECOGNISED MEETING NEWSLETTER

Quakers - the Religious Society of Friends – Aotearoa New Zealand Te Hāhi Tūhauwiri

May 2024

Spiritual Thought

"Although God calls each of us personally, as individuals we see only partially. Individual perception, reasoning, and understanding are always limited. Even a person who feels absolutely certain that a specific revelation comes from God may be mistaken as to how it is to be applied. Because God often reveals part of the picture to one person and another part to another person, it is prudent to consult one another to discern God's counsel, guidance, and direction, even if there is no apparent reason to do so. While circumstances sometimes require us to act without consulting others, the danger of arrogance and error in proceeding on our own can be great."

Suzanne G. Farnham, Joseph P. Gill, R. Taylor McLean, Susan M. Ward, (1991) Listening Hearts: Discerning Call in Community

News of and for Friends

Top of the South regional meeting was held in East Takaka at the home of John Pemberton and Jocelyn Tracey on a brilliant sunny day, blessed by busy fantails. A group of 18 Friends gathered to hear Anne Potaka speak on Te Tiriti (the Treaty of Waitangi), which she did with great clarity and thoughtfulness. The first part of her talk has been recorded.

Tracing the history of Te Tiriti from the initial Declaration of Independence in 1835, through to the draft in English and its translation into te Reo Māori, Anne showed us the differences between the draft and the version the chiefs eventually signed as copies travelled around Aotearoa, as far as the Top of the South but not throughout the South Island. In 1869 the fledgling NZ Parliament asked for a translation of the signed (Māori) version, then, finding it not to their liking, allowed it to be declared a 'nullity' and buried in a basement for over one hundred years. The misshapen version we are familiar with was brought forth in the 1970s, rat-chewed and burnt in a fire in the building and has slowly resumed its legal status. Later again, Parliament and the courts derived three 'Principles' which underpin the relationship between iwi Māori and tāngata tiriti (those of us who live in Aotearoa because the Treaty permits us to). The Principles are Partnership, Protection and Participation.

Our monthly home discussion was held in April in the Meeting House where a small group of Friends discussed the topic: how do we discern the will of God in daily life? Those present found the discussion thought-provoking and helpful.



Sandi and Sam returned home from their summer in Nelson to find snow on the ground in Maine. Then, before she could finish attending to her much-loved garden, Sandi came down with Covid. We wish her a speedy recovery and some spring weather soon.

Rex has spent time with his sister in Levin to support her as she copes with cancer. He said she is positive and resilient, and they are hopeful that her treatment will be effective.

Elizabeth continues to be strong advocate for cycling and walking in Nelson, making submissions to Council, and taking part in regular 'joyrides'.

Christine is looking forward to travelling to London to spend time with her son, his partner, and their son. Time with her young grandson is always precious.

John D has illustrated a book for some friends of his: It's not the Dog we're Training by Katie and Dean Shannon. See this article: <https://www.thepress.co.nz/nz-news/350232065/traumatic-death-beloved-pet-sparks-lifelong-dedication-dog-welfare>

On Anzac Day we held a vigil on the Church Steps, which was attended by a greater number than usual, including some of our Palestinian Solidarity friends. A vigil in Motueka, in only its second year, was held by a valiant few.

Several Friends regularly attend rallies for Palestine and continue to hope that a ceasefire will

come soon: **Palestinian Rallies every Saturday at 10.30am, 1903 Square, and sometimes at Tahunanui Beach**: Nelson Friends have faithfully attended the weekly rally for Palestine, carrying the 'Quakers for Peace' banner (first used in 2003 to protest the Iraq war.) Scott, the co-ordinator of Te Tau Ihu Palestine Solidarity, encourages us to persist 'it does make a difference.' Local Palestinians have gone on record to say they feel grateful for the support. Check the Te Tau Ihu Palestine Solidarity FB page for venue.

DIARY OF EVENTS:

Wednesday 15th May 5.30pm, Victory Community Centre, 2 Totara Street, Nelson: Multicultural Nelson-Tasman AGM. For catering purposes, please RSVP by Thursday, 9 May to admin@multiculturalnt.co.nz

Wednesday 15th May 7pm Home Discussion Group. Venue and topic to be advised.

Wednesday 22nd May 7.30pm Spirited Conversation, Yaza Café: The Changing Face of Employment. Emily Bissett, HR professional. Café open from 6pm for dining.

Sunday 26th May Quaker Meeting House 12.15pm 30 Nile Street Nelson Meeting for Worship for Business after a shared lunch. Note that this is our June Business Meeting, brought forward to avoid King's Birthday weekend. The agenda will be circulated the week prior.

Deadline for the next newsletter:

Our Newsletter is a way to share our lives – to help build our Quaker community. Thanks to everyone who has sent contributions. Please consider sending in your news, a book review, a quote that speaks to you. Send newsletter items for the June letter to Christine Gillespie c.gillespie@xtra.co.nz by the end of May.

A reminder about Quakers NZ Website: <https://quakers.nz/> is the database for the New Zealand Religious Society of Friends. It is a useful source of information on people and events. Please get into the habit of referring to the database, and please make sure your details are entered and up to date. This is where we go when we are looking for a Friend's phone number, etc. This database is only as good as the data you enter so, please make use of this important communication tool. Nelson Meeting newsletters and lots of other material is posted and archived there. **You can subscribe to the Aotearoa NZ Friends Newsletter there.**

For Flowers

by Judith Childs

We share you with bees, small birds, and butterflies,
a kind of fellow-feeling which leapfrogs over
four-footed furry animals, so-called higher orders,
yet lower in being lumbering, earth-bound and colour-blind.
Just as there wander "through the channels of the ear"
sound-waves we've learnt to recognise as music

so our eyes feast upon your myriad patterns
of colour, shape and motion, borne upon the air,
expect the succession of bud, leaf, and blossom,
accept the ephemeral petals' frail fall.

This visual music, in its own dimension,
gently inexorable moves at its own pace
through melody, harmony, theme, and variation;
few can there be who are tone deaf among you,
while we, wide-eyed, drink in your silent songs.

Judith Child was a Mt Eden and then Nelson Friend whose book of poetry, Tangled Roots, was published posthumously by Friends and is in our library.

Online Resources: visit our own website quakers-in-nelson.org.nz, the national website quakers.nz and our Face Book page [@Nelson Quakers](https://www.facebook.com/NelsonQuakers).

Our Programme: below is a reminder of the different activities each month.

All Sundays: Meeting for Worship, 10am, Quaker Meeting House, 30 Nile St. Nelson

2nd Sunday: Meeting for Worship, 10am, Family Service Centre, Talbot St. Motueka

3rd Wednesday: Home Discussion Group, 7pm – 8.45pm. Topic & venue tba

Children are welcome at all Meetings for Worship and activities will be provided for them.
