

**YEARLY MEETING OF  
THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS) IN BRITAIN  
HELD IN LONDON AT FRIENDS HOUSE 25 – 28 May 2012**

**Minute 14: Economic justice and sustainability 1**

In minute 23 of Yearly Meeting held at Canterbury 30 July – 6 August 2011 we pledged ourselves to continue to learn more about how we are influenced and constrained by the economic system. We rededicated ourselves to a corporate discipline of waiting and opening ourselves to the leadings of the spirit on this issue, as we seek to develop an economic system in which our testimonies can flourish. We have today heard an introduction on ‘The Good Economy’ which takes further our thinking on the spiritual basis for action towards a more just economy, one based on goodness, justice and selflessness, rather than greed, selfishness and waste.

We look forward to continuing our work on this matter in our next session.

**Minute 16: Economic justice and sustainability 2**

Further to minute 14, we have heard from members of Junior Yearly Meeting on issues of economic justice and sustainability; what a more socially and economically just world would be like; and how we are challenged to change.

They have talked to us of a community founded on justice and kindness, with real equality of opportunity; they have encouraged us with the insight that however big problems are, we can make a difference, that we should not underestimate the power of even just a few words. They have described the blessings of seeing the world freely, without the distraction of unnecessary possessions, and the distorting effects of disproportionate wealth.

We will carry their insights into the next part of this session.

**Minute 17: Economic justice and sustainability 2 (continued)**

Further to minute 16, we have continued our consideration of this theme and have heard prepared ministry from a member of Young Friends General Meeting on the human aspects of economics and how we can come to understand better the incentives which lie behind the banking system which we see as broken.

In our wider consideration today we have reflected on economic justice and sustainability, peace, and political power, and on the human relationships which underpin them and are daily affected by them. Many of us see the current system as inherently unjust and therefore unsustainable. Can we change it to embrace our testimonies to peace and equality?

We stand in this light and wait to discern what the new system could be. It is an enormously hard and transformative thing to pray for the emergence of a good economy – isn’t this the Kingdom of God which we pray for?

*He has bought down the mighty from their seats and exalted them of low degree. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent empty away.  
(Luke 1 vs 52-53)*

As well as praying, our waiting will include the daily spiritual discipline of: creating community; treating each other justly and kindly; putting our money and energies into places which support our testimonies; accounting ‘peace’, ‘joy’ and ‘respect’ alongside financial values.

Are we ready, Friend by Friend, to do this?

The path we are now travelling will only be sustainable if it begins in a deep place; this journey needs to be illuminated by the light within; the measurements and targets need to be infused by love. The changes we bring about can only be achieved together.

**Minute 21: Economic justice and sustainability: Postcards from the future**

In this morning’s session we were led on a guided meditation and worship sharing during which we recorded on postcards our dreams for a just, sustainable future and our next steps in realising it. We were joined at the end of the session by some of those on the children’s programme who had been through a similar exercise.