

Peace and simplicity

By Alison Mitchell, Exeter Quaker Meeting

Good morning.

This week Quakers are discussing aspects of our faith, particularly our commitment to peace.

Peace isn't just an absence of war, but rather a way of life. Peace is found in how we relate, as individuals, as communities and as a nation, to our friends, neighbours, to people we agree with and those we are in dispute with. Peace is found in how we live our lives and how we use resources.

One of the key values of Quakers is that of simplicity. This affects choices we make about what we spend and how we live. But it isn't a deprivation, not doing without in order to be good. Living simply allows space to focus on what is important to you. It helps you to consider how much of the earth's resources we need. If I have more someone else has less: that unfairness is one of the main causes of dispute and war.

Quakers have a booklet of 'Advices and Queries'; passages we use to reflect on our faith and lives. This is one of my favourites:

'Try to live simply. A simple lifestyle freely chosen is a source of strength. Do not be persuaded into buying what you do not need or cannot afford. Do you keep yourself informed about the effects your style of living is having on the global economy and environment?'
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