

Peace and the individual

By Judith Thompson, Exeter Quaker Meeting

Good morning.

Violent conflict is in the news again. I long to do something but I feel helpless in the face of such complex and intractable problems. What could I possibly do that would promote peace and healing? It is then that I remember the words of a song Tom Paxton sang:

'Peace will come
Let it begin with me
My own life is all I can hope to control
Let my life be lived for the good, good of my soul'

(Tom Paxton, Peace will come)

The Quaker booklet, "Advices and Queries" gives me a way to start. This contains 42 paragraphs that help me to think through how to live out my Quaker faith day by day. In one paragraph I am challenged to examine those emotions, attitudes and prejudices in myself which lie at the root of destructive conflict and to acknowledge my need for forgiveness and grace. I am asked to search out whatever in my own way of life may contain the seeds of war. There is plenty of room for action here and plenty of opportunities as I go about my daily life.

I invite you to join me in doing today one small thing to promote peace, justice and harmony where you are. It could be at home or at work, on the streets or in the shops, at the gym or on the bus. If we all did this each day in the faith and hope that a million small things could make a difference, we might find that "Peace will come".

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