



## IRELAND YEARLY MEETING RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Quaker House Dublin, Stocking Lane, Dublin, D16 V3F8

Phone/Answering – 01 4998003

e-mail – [office@quakers.ie](mailto:office@quakers.ie)

Epistle

To Friends Everywhere,

We send loving greetings from Ireland Yearly Meeting, held in the peaceful surrounds of the Dominican Retreat Centre in Tallaght, Dublin from April 9th-12th, 2026.

Our theme this year was “Deepening our Spirituality”, with a focus on how we use the gifts we have received. This was inspired and guided by a verse from the First Epistle of Peter: “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms” - 1 Peter 4:10.

We welcomed many Friends from around the world, as well as representatives of other church bodies and other belief communities. As was the case in the last number of years, those attending in person were joined by a large number of online Friends. We are mindful, at a time of war and environmental breakdown, of what a privilege it is to be able to gather together as Friends, a privilege denied to our Friends in Middle East Yearly Meeting who had also planned to gather at this time. Our thoughts were very much with our Friends in that region and with all who are suffering as a result of war.

How Friends respond to the needs of a suffering world was a common thread throughout Yearly Meeting. We heard about the work of Friends who are using their gifts to give expression to our Quaker values. We were reminded of the work of the Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA) in ensuring that the Quaker voice is heard by European leaders on migration, the climate crisis, peace and the rights of conscientious objectors. The IYM Middle East Working Group, established in 2025, continues to carry out lobbying and other activities in support of Palestinians living in Ireland. Other Friends spoke about their work on migration issues, working with Quaker women in Africa, and supporting Friends in Cuba Yearly Meeting, suffering greatly due to trade and oil embargo.

Together we explored how to express our spirituality through our gifts of creativity. Opportunities to explore creativity through textiles, art and photography were taken up with enthusiasm - sessions which were both spiritually enriching and a time of enjoyment and community for those who participated. While the arts were historically treated with a level of suspicion by Friends, it is clear that for present day Friends art and creativity are gifts from God that give us joy and allow us to express our spirituality in new ways.

The ongoing revision of our Book of Organisation and Christian Discipline (better known as the “Red Book”) reminds us that Quakerism is built on the truth that Christ is speaking to us today, and that we are being guided to respond to a changing world. The importance of ensuring that our meetings are safe spaces for young people and vulnerable adults is reflected in the ongoing revision of safeguarding procedures, and the review of the role of our Youth Support Worker.

During our Ministry and Oversight Session, we heard about the results of a recent survey that gave a sense of the challenges faced by our meetings, but also, the activities that meetings engage in to build community and deepen our spiritual life. In our Public Lecture, artist Brian Maguire drew upon his decades-long body of work that bears witness to inhuman treatment of poor, vulnerable and dispossessed people. He showed us the cost of this for both the living and the dead, and how those missing and murdered across the world are so often shamefully ignored by authority, too often in tacit collusion with the perpetrators. He praised the spirit of those who survive such trauma and who work to mitigate it.

Emily Provance gave a talk on the impact of musical theatre in her life, as well as the prophetic impact it has had on so many over the last 100 years. One message, from the musical Rent, is whether we choose to love knowing it will lead to grief. Her response was that we should love as hard as we can, for as long as we can. She led Friends in singing a selection of show tunes, with an emphasis on fun rather than accuracy. Zack Jackson described the development of “Thee Quaker” podcast, and how it is helping the Quaker message to reach people who are seeking hope amidst chaos. This includes many who realise from listening to the podcast that they have been Quakers all along. He encouraged Irish Friends to consider contributing to the podcast.

Young Friends took part in a range of activities over Yearly Meeting, including art, deepening their spirituality through nature, quizzes and bowling. In addition, they reported their concern that there is a need for training in the support of neurodivergent Friends. They also led older Friends in a series of games, which were enjoyed by all.

We close our Yearly Meeting, inspired, in the words of Thomas Kelly to listen to the still small voice within, which calls us to creative action.

Signed on behalf of Ireland Yearly Meeting

William Haire, Clerk *William Haire*  
Elizabeth Dickson, Assistant Clerk *Elizabeth Dickson*  
Bernard Quinn, Assistant Clerk *Bernard Quinn*  
Rachel Cave, assistant in writing  
the Epistle *Rachel Cave*