

NELSON RECOGNISED MEETING NEWSLETTER

Quakers - the Religious Society of Friends – Aotearoa New Zealand Te Hahi Tuhauwiri

May 2020

Spiritual Thought

"Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them, humanity cannot survive."

His Holiness the Dalai Lama XIV

News of and for Friends

Jan is enjoying the peace and quiet, and the increase in birdlife in her street. Jan is also reminding us that as we may only meet **to a maximum of 10 people** it will be necessary to carry on with Zoom for now until we have a chance to meet.

Clive has completed the Harvest and is now pruning. He has been 'zooming' into Meeting for Worship (because of Covid-19 lockdown) but is looking forward to being with us all soon.

Patricia has been embroidering Totara, Stewart Island Forget me not, and Bramble on the Nelson Quaker Embroideries.

Joanne and her son **Ben** are enjoying their time together. Ben had almost completed the Te Araroa track when isolation 'struck' so he has joined Joanne in working for the Green Party. Joanne was one of three people from Nelson Greens who attended the National Forum in Napier last November, getting to know the candidates for the next election.

John L continues the tidy-up of his garden, pruning fruit trees in accordance with Clive's instructions and planting ready for Spring. He had his first outing when a neighbour took him to Stoke Pharmacy and they were able to go to Stoke Community Centre for a (takeaway) cup of coffee.

Lizi is keeping her little Granddaughters, Amelia and Ruby, safe while her daughter Bex continues her ICU nursing. It sounds as if the garden has become a Covid 19 cafe and dancehall!

Christine has been enjoying the mounting numbers joining Worship via Zoom. There were 10 last Sunday, including Jos from Marlborough and Ann from Motueka.

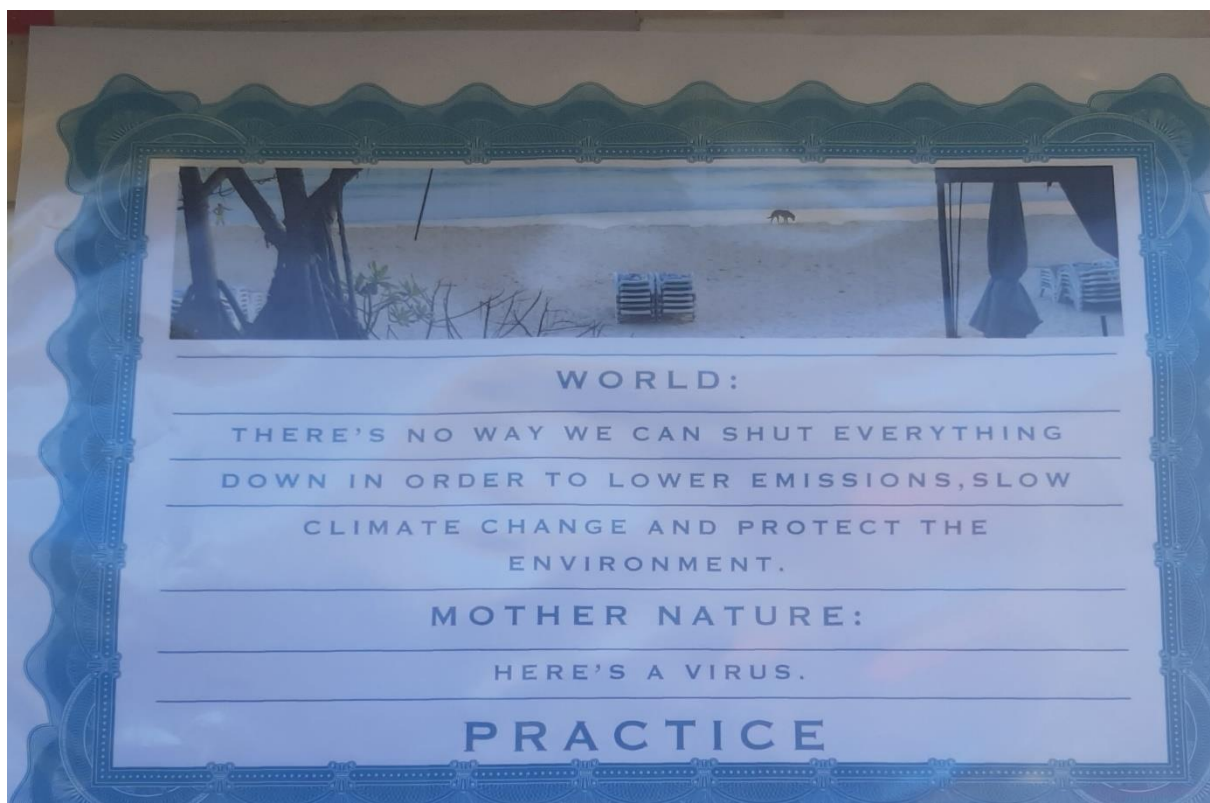
Christine and **Lawrence** joined a Zoom Meeting at 7pm last Sunday 10 May to commemorate Nakba Day (15 May). 'Nakba' means 'catastrophe' in Arabic and refers to the mass expulsion, at gunpoint and with many massacres, of

Palestinian Arabs (between 750,000 and one million) from Palestine during Israel's creation (1947-49). They heard from Palestinian medical professionals, community activists and journalists about the huge threat Covid 19 poses to the people of Palestine – and Gaza in particular – and what we can do about it. See you there”. In fact, Christine reports, Gaza closed its borders in December 2019 and has successfully protected its people.

John D has also been in reflective mode during this gift of time and space: “What a blessing to have such silence and solitude. A place that provided for all my needs. With so many books, but only one I read - Peace Pilgrim, with its message of simplicity and complete trust in the divine. A time to sit in silence and listen, to receive the gifts of clarity and acceptance. An opportunity to get to know neighbours, be creative, commune with nearby nature and an uncharacteristically quiet CBD. All as if I created this opportunity to take stock and reconnect with truth. Much gratitude. ”

Gwen and Linda are happily enjoying the house and garden, especially the birdsong, putting out Feijoas and apples for passers-by, and walking in the warm Autumn weather.

Prompted by Barbara’s message board, Gwen has put up a bulletin board at her place, which had the following recent addition:



Barbara has been reflecting on her life and shares the following:

“THE NEW NORMAL has become clearer to me today, and doesn't make me feel too short-changed, intimidated or resentful, realise I have been working towards

it for some time now, unknowingly, in terms of the global context, but willingly, acceptingly and peacefully within the constraints of my age, my early dementia and our intention to live 'simply'.

I find I can let go of (not totally without regret, but easily) a final visit to the UK. I find myself grateful for the way of life we live here at 169, which will need little tweaking or adaption within the 'new normal'. I feel lucky and blessed, a sense of comfort at the prospect of our life carrying on much as we have lived it. I realise that as the 'newly retired', once again, we have 'had it all'. We, as the post-war generation, are already practiced (thanks to our Quaker values) at living within our means. Our generation generally own homes (purchased at a reasonable proportion of our income). We generally already have what we need to live with comfort and enjoyment. Especially here in Aotearoa, we have food, space and beauty and a 'can do' attitude to help us be adaptive, resourceful and content. "

James (is actually very busy, but not too busy to celebrate life with this fine drawing):



How many Friends have gathered for MfW this year: we might not have an accurate account of attendances for 2020, given that people are joining us in spirit, worshipping at the same time but in their bubble, or not able or comfortable to join our Zoom Meetings for Worship during the Covid-19 lockdown. Those of us who have gathered are enjoying the experience and people who previously were unable to join easily have made it to Meeting.

Deadline for 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 to Christine @ c.gillespie@xtra.co.nz. [The cut-off date for items for the June newsletter is Friday, June 5th, 2020.](#)

Still open - an opportunity to star in your own movie – your website needs you:

The new national Quaker website has space for short 'selfie' videos of just 1 minute on you and Quakers: e.g. "My name is ... I became a Quaker because... Or "One reason I am a Quaker is..." or "The reason I joined Quakers is....". Please just do it! If you are willing, let Christine know, and **then just do it!**

National Website Friends' Profiles: we are keen for all Friends who own or have access to a computer to upload their names, addresses, email addresses and phone numbers to the secure section of the new national website, and to choose whether you want your details to be available to other Friends. This will be the source of data for a future paper copy of the Members and Attenders Book. You are also asked to choose how you would like to receive the national newsletter, monthly minutes and YM documents. **Elizabeth D is available to provide help to do that.** Please ask Elizabeth to arrange a time to help you create / update your online profile, albeit remotely!

A Brave and Startling Truth

by Maya Angelou

We, this people, on a small and
lonely planet
Travelling through casual space
Past aloof stars, across the way of
indifferent suns
To a destination where all signs tell
us
It is possible and imperative that we
learn
A brave and startling truth

And when we come to it
To the day of peace-making

When we release our fingers
From fists of hostility
And allow the pure air to cool our
palms

When we come to it
When the curtain falls on the
minstrel show of hate
And faces sooted with scorn are
scrubbed clean
When battlefields and coliseum
No longer rake our unique and
particular sons and daughters

Up with the bruised and bloody grass
To lie in identical plots in foreign soil

When the rapacious storming of the
churches
The screaming racket in the temples
have ceased
When the pennants are waving gaily
When the banners of the world
tremble
Stoutly in the good, clean breeze

When we come to it
When we let the rifles fall from our
shoulders
And children dress their dolls in flags
of truce
When land mines of death have been
removed
And the aged can walk into evenings
of peace
When religious ritual is not perfumed
By the incense of burning flesh
And childhood dreams are not kicked
awake
By nightmares of abuse

When we come to it
Then we will confess that not the
Pyramids
With their stones set in mysterious
perfection
Nor the Gardens of Babylon
Hanging as eternal beauty
In our collective memory
Not the Grand Canyon
Kindled into delicious color
By Western sunsets

Nor the Danube, flowing its blue soul
into Europe
Not the sacred peak of Mount Fuji
Stretching to the Rising Sun
Neither Father Amazon nor Mother
Mississippi who, without favor,
Nurture all creatures in the depths
and on the shores
These are not the only wonders of

the world

When we come to it
We, this people, on this minuscule
and kithless globe
Who reach daily for the bomb, the
blade and the dagger
Yet who petition in the dark for
tokens of peace
We, this people on this mote of
matter
In whose mouths abide cankerous
words
Which challenge our very existence
Yet out of those same mouths
Come songs of such exquisite
sweetness
That the heart falters in its labor
And the body is quieted into awe

We, this people, on this small and
drifting planet
Whose hands can strike with such
abandon
That in a twinkling, life is sapped
from the living
Yet those same hands can touch with
such healing, irresistible tenderness
That the haughty neck is happy to
bow
And the proud back is glad to bend
Out of such chaos, of such
contradiction
We learn that we are neither devils
nor divines

When we come to it
We, this people, on this wayward,
floating body
Created on this earth, of this earth
Have the power to fashion for this
earth
A climate where every man and
every woman
Can live freely without sanctimonious
piety
Without crippling fear

When we come to it
We must confess that we are the
possible
We are the miraculous, the true

wonder of this world
That is when, and only when
We come to it.

On-line resources: apart from our own website: quakers-in-nelson.org.nz and our Facebook page: Quakers in Nelson, and the national website: quakers.nz

A wonderful Tale from Tonga

(actually, this is not a book review, but an extract from *Rutger Bregman's Humankind*, translated by Elizabeth Manton and Erica Moore. So fantastic you can't believe it's true:

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/may/09/the-real-lord-of-the-flies-what-happened-when-six-boys-were-shipwrecked-for-15-months>

The new national website is now online – go to quakers.nz

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

Our programme is currently taking place via Zoom and as long as Christine or Jan have your email, they will send you the information you need for connection to Meeting for Worship and other 'Zoom' gatherings

First Week of the Month: Sunday: Meeting for Worship, 10.00–11.00am

Wednesday: Becoming Friends, 7.00 pm – 8.45pm

(Alternate Even Months) Sunday: Business Meeting 12.00 pm

Second Week of the Month: Sunday: Meeting for Worship, 10.00–11.00am

Third Week of the Month: Sunday: Meeting for Worship, 10.00–11.00am

Wednesday: Home Discussions, 7.00 pm – 9.00pm

Fourth Week of the Month: Sunday: Meeting for Worship, 10.00–11.00am

Children are welcome at all Meetings for Worship. Activities will be provided for them. Children's Programmes are to be developed for 2020.