

NELSON RECOGNISED MEETING NEWSLETTER
Quakers - the Religious Society of Friends – Aotearoa New Zealand

Te Hahi Tuhauwiri

September 2023

Spiritual Thought

“Hierarchy is built on the idea that there are people who are more valuable and there are people who are less valuable. And what we as Friends say is all people, no matter what, are equally valuable.” Gilbert George, Quaker Pastor, Portland, Oregon.

News of Friends

The news is scant, because the writer disappeared with a virus and has seen no-one. However:

Important Announcement: Phillida and her partner John were married on Saturday 2nd September, confirming their long relationship. We congratulate them and offer them our good wishes.

Rex: is currently heading a landscaping team for the new Wakatū Presbyterian church in Champion Road and they have just completed their first planting – which is entirely in native trees. It will one day be a community garden with fruit trees, welcoming people and birds to enjoy the bounty.

Top of the South: Friends from Golden Bay and Blenheim joined Nelson Friends for the Top of the South regional meeting. We held a Meeting for Worship, followed by a lively shared lunch, then a discussion on discussion on the topic of Quakers and Privilege. John Michaelis introduced the topic with data from Max Rashbrooke, illustrated by Toby Morris, which brought hope the extent of the gaps between the very rich, the comfortably off, and the poor. The inequality tower can be found here: <https://thespinoff.co.nz/society/31-07-2018/the-side-eye-inequality-tower-2018> .

It is sobering to think all this has happened in 40 years. Our discussion looked for ways that Quakers in Nelson could direct our voice and energy to best effect. With the election taking place on 14 October, we thought it a good idea to attend candidates’ meetings to be a reassuring, peaceful presence and model respectful listening. Some of us will be volunteering with political parties, but all of us would be able to convince people to at least vote.

A useful website for examining the policies of the parties has been produced by The Spinoff:

<https://policy.nz/2023/party-vote/policies/community-and-inclusion>

we can choose from 13 topics and compare party policies on that topic. I found it very helpful.

Upcoming Events

Spirited Conversations

Wednesday 27th September, 7.30-9.30pm at yaza Cafe, Montgomery Square

Melissa Ansell-Bridges, Secretary of the CTU will speak on the topic: With an election coming up, what's in it for the workers?

All welcome. Cafe opens from 6pm to serve meals. Talk begins at 7.30pm.

Top of the South

We agree to hold a Top of the South meeting in Blenheim in November. We will provide more information, including a topic for the Meeting at our next Meeting for Business

Home Discussion Group

Suggested topics include

- Ways we can be effective in keeping the topic of inequality at front and centre of life in Aotearoa until we see change that brings back a fair sharing of resources.
- Returning to Te Wheke to look at how the values of te Ao Māori fit with our Quaker values.

Service for Suffrage 130th 1893-2023

Nelson Tasman Methodist Parish Stoke Sunday 17th September 10am

Live Youtube streaming. Wear a hat and suffrage colours: white, green or violet.

Candidates Meetings

Wednesday 20th September by Zoom: Nelson Tasman Climate Forum will host a candidates' meeting on Climate. Register on their website for the Zoom link.

<https://www.nelsontasmanclimateforum.nz>

Thursday 28 September from 7.30 pm

Nelsust Inc is organising a Meet the Candidates' Meeting at Victory Community Centre, on. There will be someone there to explain all about voting under MMP or help people to register if they haven't got around to it. The meeting is called "Not Your Normal Candidates Meeting" because the aim is to have fun. There is a dancing troupe, a musical group, and a very scary MC (looks more like a circus ringmaster).

More info: Elizabeth elizdooley@hotmail.com

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 for the October newsletter to Christine Gillespie c.gillespie@xtra.co.nz by Friday 6th October 2023.

Poem

An Ode We Owe, Amanda Gorman
U.N. General Assembly Sept 19, 2022

"How can I ask you to do good,
When we've barely withstood
Our greatest threats yet:
The depths of death, despair and disparity,
Atrocities across cities, towns & countries,
Lives lost, climactic costs.
Exhausted, angered, we are endangered,
Not because of our numbers,
But because of our numbness.
We're strangers
To one another's perils and pain,
Unaware that the welfare of the public
And the planet share a name–
–Equality
Doesn't mean being the exact same,
But enacting a vast aim:
The good of the world to its highest capability.
The wise believe that our people without power
Leaves our planet without possibility.
Therefore, though poverty is a poor existence,
Complicity is a poorer excuse.
We must go the distance,
Though this battle is hard and huge,
Though this fight we did not choose,
For preserving the earth isn't a battle too large
To win, but a blessing too large to lose.
This is the most pressing truth:
That Our people have only one planet to call home
And our planet has only one people to call its own.
We can either divide and be conquered by the few,
Or we can decide to conquer the future,
And say that today a new dawn we wrote,
Say that as long as we have humanity,
We will forever have hope.
Together, we won't just be the generation
That tries but the generation that triumphs;
Let us see a legacy
Where tomorrow is not driven
By the human condition,
But by our human conviction.

And while hope alone can't save us now,
With it we can brave the now,
Because our hardest change hinges
On our darkest challenges.
Thus may our crisis be our cry, our crossroad,
The oldest ode we owe each other.
We chime it, for the climate,
For our communities.
We shall respect and protect
Every part of this planet,
Hand it to every heart on this earth,
Until no one's worth is rendered
By the race, gender, class, or identity
They were born. This morn let it be sworn
That we are one one human kin,
Grounded not just by the griefs
We bear, but by the good we begin.
To anyone out there:
I only ask that you care before it's too late,
That you live aware and awake,
That you lead with love in hours of hate.
I challenge you to heed this call,
I dare you to shape our fate.
Above all, I dare you to do good
So that the world might be great."

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

All Sundays: Meeting for Worship, 10 – 11am, 30 Nile St. Nelson

2nd Sunday: **Motueka** Meeting for Worship, 10am, Family Service Centre, Talbot St

3rd Wednesday: Home Discussion Group, 7pm – 8.45pm. Topic & venue tba

Children are welcome at all Meetings for Worship and activities will be provided for them.