

Peace, Equality, Simplicity and Truth

Vanessa Dowse

Several years ago, I attended a dear friend's funeral which was held in a Quaker house in London and the beauty and dignity of the day has stayed with me. I was given a card which was a picture of Tiles in the Horfield Quaker Meeting House Peace Garden, Bristol with the words which contain the Quaker principles. The words are Peace, Equality, Simplicity and Truth.

I attend St Mary's Buriton and through the wonderful miracle of Zoom can take part in the services. The power of words as written on the Quaker's card repeatedly strike me each week.

Peace is such a small word with such a mighty meaning. Peace between nations, peace in our work places, peace in our homes and peace in our hearts. Each week, the words spoken by Jesus to his disciples 'Peace be with you' are said at the Sunday Eucharist the reply 'and also with you' means just what it says. Those of us taking part on Zoom unmute and say it to each other and the smiles on our faces say so much at this moment.

My generation probably know the refrain from John Lennon's song 'all we are saying is give peace a chance' there are prayers on the PACT website for Ukraine, and as said after so many prayers, in so many places, they end with the wonderful words 'grant us peace'. Peace combined with the words Equality, Simplicity and Truth helps us to find the peace that we can find in our own often very busy lives.

At a recent service we sang the hymn 'Be Still' once again containing powerful words that stop our busy lives for a while and know that we are in 'the presence of the Lord' and sitting in my kitchen partaking from my Zoom viewpoint my world stops too, for a while.

Wishing us all a Peaceful Year and whenever possible a few 'Still' moments.

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