

Capel y Boro
Sun 30 May 2021, 11am

A Service for
The Light Within

The Quakers in Wales
and Waldo Williams



Pales Quaker Meeting House, Powys

Opening music:
Aaron Copland
Ballet, *Appalachian Spring*
Excerpt, Simple Gifts theme
Martha Graham Company

Intrada

***Give me oil in my lamp, keep
me burning***
(Traditional, *Sing hosanna*)

William Shakespeare
***Hamlet* – “What a piece of
work is a man?”** (Hamlet’s
monologue, Act 2, Scene2)

Waldo Williams
Pa Beth yw Dyn?
(*What is man?*)

Waldo Williams
Mewn Dau Gae
(*In two fields*)

Goleuni'r byd yw Crist
(*Christ is the world's true light*)
(G W Briggs efel. Dyfnallt Morgan,
Nun Danket)

**A talk by John Jones on the
Welsh Quakers**

Film, *Quakers in Wales today*

Walt Whitman
**On George Fox, founder of
the Quakers, excerpt from
*Essay in November***

Film, *William Penn*

Tecwyn Ifan
Brawdoliaeth
(***Mae rhwydwaith dirgel Duw***)
Brotherhood
(*The mysterious network of God*)
(Waldo Williams)

Lord of the Dance
(Sydney Carter, *Simple Gifts*)

I Peter 2: 4-10

Ioan 1: 1-9

Disgleiried golau'r groes
(Elfed, tune Caradog Roberts,
Gwendoline)

**A message on
The Light Within**

**Gweddi'r Arglwydd/
Lord's Prayer**

***Lord, the Light of your love is
shining (Shine, Jesus, shine)***
(Graham Kendrick)

Blessing

Closing Music:
Traditional
Simple Gifts
arr. Mack Wilberg
Mormon Tabernacle Choir

Opening music:
Aaron Copland
Ballet, *Appalachian Spring*
Excerpt, Simple Gifts theme
Martha Graham Company

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=91y-NEdTj-g> (up to 3:00)

Intrada

Ysbryd y tragwyddol Dduw,
disgyn arnom ni; Ysbryd y
tragwyddol Dduw, disgyn arnom
ni: plyg ni, trin ni, golch ni, cod ni:
Ysbryd y tragwyddol Dduw,
disgyn arnom ni.

*Spirit of the eternal God, descend
upon us; Spirit of the eternal God,
descend upon us:
fold us, treat us, wash us, raise us:
Spirit of the eternal God, descend
upon us.*

Welcome to Capel y Boro

and our service this morning on
The Light Within or the Light of
God, Light of Christ, Christ
within, Spirit of God within us,
and inner light all related phrases
commonly used by the Religious
Society of Friends (better known
as Quakers) as metaphors for
Christ's light shining on or in
mankind. And later I will be
exploring the shining light on or
in and how we are to understand
the inner light of Christ. John
Jones will talk to us about the
Quakers and their associations in
Wales. We have readings of
works by two quaker writers the
American Walt Whitman and
Pembrokeshire's Waldo Williams
who was very much influenced by
Whitman.

Our service opened with a clip of
a 1959 film of the 1944 ballet
Appalachian Spring written by the

twentieth century American composer Aaron Copland. It was choreographed and danced by the legendary Martha Graham, who along with Isadora Duncan, was a pioneer of modern dance.



Martha Graham (centre) in the Quaker-inspired ballet *Appalachian Spring*

In the clip we heard the ballet's principal theme arranged from the Quaker, or Shaker, hymn *Simple Gifts* and we will hear the Mormon Tabernacle Choir sing *Simple Gifts* at the close of our service. The tune is also the basis of British quaker hymnwriter Sydney Carter's *Lord of the Dance* and we will be singing that later. Our other hymns are on the theme of light and the idea of Jesus as the light of the world.

Give me oil in my lamp, keep me burning

Give me oil in my lamp, I pray
Give me oil in my lamp, keep me burning
Keep me burning 'til the break of day

Chorus: *Sing hosanna, sing hosanna*

Sing hosanna to the King of kings
Sing hosanna, sing hosanna
Sing hosanna, to the King

Give me love in my heart, keep me sharing.
Give me love in my heart, I pray.
Give me love in my heart, keep me sharing.
Keep me sharing till the break of day.

Give me joy in my heart, keep me singing.
Give me joy in my heart, I pray.
Give me joy in my heart, keep me singing.
Keep me singing till the break of day.

Give me faith in my heart, keep me praying.
Give me faith in my heart, I pray.
Give me faith in my heart, keep me praying.
Keep me praying till the break of day.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUd0VwMvCiU>

William Shakespeare Hamlet – “What a piece of work is a man?” (Hamlet's monologue, Act 2, Scene 2)

I have of late - but wherefore I know not - lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises, and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air - look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestic roof fretted with golden fire - why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours.

What a piece of work is a man!
How noble in reason, how infinite in faculty! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god! The beauty of the world. The paragon of animals. And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust?

Waldo Williams Pa Beth yw Dyn?

(What is man?)

Beth yw byw? Cael neuadd fawr
Rhwng cyfyng furiau.
Beth yw abnabod? Cael un gwraidd
Dan y canghennau.

Beth yw credu? Gwarched tref
Nes dyfod derbyn.
Beth yw maddau? Cael fford trwy'r drain
At ochr hen elyn.

Beth yw canu? Cael o'r creu
Ei hen athrylith.
Beth yw gweithio ond gwneud can
O'r coed a'r gwenith?

Beth yw trefnu terynas? Crefft
Sydd eto'n cropian.
A'i harfogi? Rhoi'r cyllyll
Yn llaw'r baban.

Beth yw bod yn genedl? Dawn
Yn nwn y galon.
Beth yw gwladgarwch? Cadw ty
Mewn cwmwl tystion.

Beth yw'r byd i'r nerthol mawr?
Cylch yn treiglo.
Beth yw'r byd i blant y llawr?
Crud yn siglo.

What is Man?

What is living? The broad hall found between narrow walls.
What is acknowledging? Finding the one root under the branches' tangle.

What is believing? Watching at home till the time arrives for welcome.
What is forgiving? Pushing your way through thorns to stand alongside your old enemy.

What is singing? The ancient gifted
breath
drawn in creating.

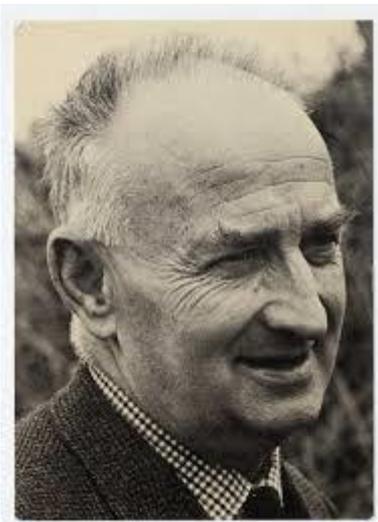
What is labour but making songs
from the wood and the wheat?

What is it to govern kingdoms? A
skill
still crawling on all fours.
And arming kingdoms? A knife
placed
in a baby's fist.

What is it to be a people? A gift
lodged in the heart's deep folds.
What is love of country? Keeping
house
among a cloud of witnesses.

What is the world to the wealthy
and strong? A wheel,
turning and turning.
What is the world to earth's little
ones? A cradle,
rocking and rocking.

Translated by Rowan Williams



Waldo Williams

Waldo Williams was baptised and accepted as a member of Blaenconin Baptist Chapel, Llandysilio, Pembrokeshire by total immersion, as was the custom, by his minister, the Rev D. J. Michael, when he was 16 years old, in April 1921. Waldo was a faithful and industrious chapel member in his

youth. After marrying Linda Llewelyn in April 1941 at Blaenconin Waldo moved to the Lleyn Peninsula and then to England.

Then, when he returned from England he received an invitation to attend the Friends Meeting House in Milford Haven. Waldo would soon be cycling and travelling by train every Sunday to join the Quakers at Milford Haven. Even so he did not break all ties with Blaenconin and was buried in an unpretentious grave, as is the Quaker practice, at Blaenconin cemetery close to his wife, Linda, and where other members of the family already lay.

Waldo would often venture there was no inconsistency in being a Baptist and a Quaker simultaneously, as he testified in a radio talk he once delivered on the subject 'Why I am a Quaker': This is what he said:

"Well, the Quakers' way of worship makes it easier for man to look at God in unison with his own feelings regarding such a matter, and at the same time feel at one with his community – because of the immense solitude and the joint ministry, and the prompting upon us to keep an open mind towards the Light. To be honest, I believe it is this matter, the belief inherent in me since I was a young man that strove me on the path towards the Quakers, although it is not characteristic of them. I had nothing from them, either, but an emphasis and development on matters I had come to recognize primarily amongst the Baptists . . . despite the fact there are so few of us, we believe the similarities between men are more than their differences, we are able to receive the Inner Light. That is the foundation of the

pacifism that is so strong amongst us, and in our social work."

As a pacifist Waldo was to become, as other quakers did, a conscientious objector. Waldo gave up writing poetry for a time in the early 1950s as he felt so much shame during the Korean War as he saw what he believed to be the ignominy of men killing their fellow men. This very sentiment is actually expressed in his poem *Brotherhood* which we will hear sung later on.

Waldo Williams *Mewn Dau Gae* (In two fields)

O ba le'r ymroliai'r môr goleuni
Oedd a'i waelod ar Weun Parc y
Blawd a Parc y Blawd?
Ar ôl imi holi'n hir yn y tir tywyll,
O b'le deuai, yr un a fu erioed?
Neu pwy, pwy oedd y saethwr,
yr eglurwr sydyn?
Bywiol heliwr y maes oedd
rholiwr y môr.
Oddi fry uwch y chwibanwyr
gloywbib, uwch callwib y
cornicyllod,
Dygai i mi y llonyddwch mawr.

Rhoddai i mi'r cyffro lle nad oedd
Ond cyffro meddwl yr haul yn
mydru'r tes,
Yr eithin aeddfed ar y cloddiau'n
clecian,
Y brwyn lu yn breuddwydio'r
wybren las.
Pwy sydd yn galw pan fo'r
dychymyg yn dihuono?
Cyfod, cerdd, dawnsia, wele'r
bydysawd.
Pwy sydd yn ymguddio ynghanol
y geiriau?
Yr oedd hyn ar Weun Parc y
Blawd a Parc y Blawd.

A phan fyddai'r cymylau mawr
ffoadur a phererin

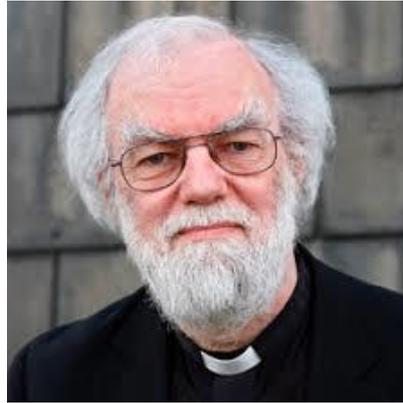
Yn goch gan heulwen hwyrol
 tymestl Tachwedd
 Lawr yn yr ynn a'r masarn a
 rannai'r meysydd
 Yr oedd cân y gwynt a dyfnder fel
 dyfnder distawrwydd.
 Pwy sydd, ynghanol y rhwysg a'r
 rhemp?
 Pwy sydd yn sefyll ac yn cynnwys?
 Tyst pob tyst, cof pob cof, hoedl
 pob hoedl,
 Tawel ostegwr helbul hunan.

Nes dyfod o'r hollfyd weithiau i'r
 tawelwch
 Ac ar y ddau barc fe gerddai ei
 bobl,
 A thrwyddynt, rhyngddynt,
 amdanynt ymdaenai
 Awen yn codi o'r cudd, yn
 cydio'r cwbl,
 Fel gyda ni'r ychydig pan fyddai'r
 cyrch picwerchi
 Neu'r tynnu to deir draw ar y
 weun drom.
 Mor agos at ei gilydd y deuem –
 Yr oedd yr heliwr distaw yn
 bwrw ei rwyd amdanom.

O, trwy oesoedd y gwaed ar y
 gwellt a thrwy'r goleuni y galar
 Pa chwiban nas clywai ond
 mynwes? O, pwy oedd?
 Twyllwr pob traha, rhedwr pob
 trywydd,
 Hai! y dihangwr o'r byddinoedd
 Yn chwiban adnabod, adnabod
 nes bod adnabod.
 Mawr oedd cydnaid calonnau
 wedi eu rhew rhyn.
 Yr oedd rhyw ffynhonnau'n torri
 tua'r nefoedd
 Ac yn syrthio'n ôl a'u dagrau fel
 dail pren.

Am hyn y myfyria'r dydd dan yr
 haul a'r cwmwl
 A'r nos trwy'r celloedd i'w
 mawrfrig ymennydd.
 Mor llonydd ydynt a hithau a'i
 hanadl

Dros Weun Parc y Blawd a Parc
 y Blawd heb ludd,
 A'u gafael ar y gwrthrych, y perci
 llawn pobl.
 Diau y daw'r dirhau, a pha awr
 yw hi
 Y daw'r herwr, daw'r heliwr,
 daw'r hawliwr i'r bwlch,
 Daw'r Brenin Alltud a'r brwyn yn
 holkti.



Rowan Williams, the translator of two
 Waldo poems read in today's service

In two fields

*These two fields a green sea-shore,
 the tide spilling
 radiance across them, and who
 knows
 where such waters rise? And I'd had
 years
 in a dark land, looking: where did it,
 where did he
 come from then? Only he'd been
 there
 all along. Who though? who
 was this marksman shooting off
 bolts
 of sudden light? One and the same
 the lightning
 hunter across the field, the hand to
 tilt
 and spill the sea, who from the
 vaults
 above the bright-voiced whistlers,
 the keen darting plovers,
 brought down on me such quiet,
 such*

*Quiet: enough to rouse me. Up to
 that day*

*nothing had worked but the hot sun
 to get me going,
 stir up drowsy warm verses: like
 blossom
 on gorse that crackles in the ditches,
 or
 like the army of dozy rushes,
 dreaming
 of clear summer sky. But now:
 imagination
 shakes off the night. Someone is
 shouting
 (who?), Stand up and walk. Dance.
 Look.
 Here is the world entire. And in the
 middle
 of all the words, who is hiding? Like
 this
 is how it was. There on the shores
 of light
 between these fields, under these
 clouds.*

*Clouds: big clouds, pilgrims,
 refugees,
 red with the evening sun of a
 November storm.
 Down where the fields divide, and
 ash and maple
 cluster, the wind's sound, the sound
 of the deep,
 is an abyss of silence. So who was it
 stood
 there in the middle of this
 shameless glory, who
 stood holding it all? Of every witness
 witness,
 the memory of every memory, the
 life
 of every life? who with a quiet word
 calms the red storms of self, till all
 the labours of the whole wide world
 fold up into this silence.*

*And on the silent sea-floor of these
 fields,
 his people stroll. Somewhere
 between them,
 through them, around them, there is
 a new voice
 rising and spilling from its hiding
 place*

to hold them, a new voice, call it the poet's
as it was for some of us, the little group
who'd been all day mounting assault
against the harvest with our forks,
dragging
the roof-thatch over the heavy meadow. So near,
we came so near then to each other, the quiet huntsman
spreading his net around us.
Listen! you can
just catch his whistling, hear it?

Whistling, across the centuries of blood
on the grass, and the hard light of pain; whistling
only your heart hears. Who was it then, for God's sake?
mocking our boasts, tracking our every trail and slipping past
all our recruiting sergeants? Don't you know?
says the whistling, Don't you remember?
don't you recognise? it says; until we do.
And then, our ice age over, think of the force
of hearts released, springing together, think
of the fountains breaking out, reaching up
after the sky, and falling back, showers
of falling leaves, waters of autumn.

Think every day, under the sun,
under these clouds, think every night of this,
with every cell of your mind's branching swelling shoots;
but with the quiet, the same quiet, the steady breath,
the steady gaze across the two fields, holding still
the vision: fair fields full of folk;
for it will come, dawn of his longed-for coming,

and what a dawn to long for. He will arrive, the outlaw,
the huntsman, the lost heir making good his claim
to no-man's land, the exiled king is coming home one day; the rushes sweep aside.
to let him through.

Translated by Rowan Williams

As so many of Waldo's poems highlighted the Christian pacifist viewpoint, he did not feel they should be published until he himself had accomplished a direct action against warfare. It is not words that are needed but actions he believed. As a result Waldo gave up teaching and refused to pay income tax in protest against the spending on warfare. "Between Two Fields," perhaps Waldo's greatest poem, was written in 1956, when he was ready to write again, specifically for inclusion in the volume "Dail Pren." However, the poem had been ruminating ever since Waldo was a teenager as it is based on a mystical experience he felt when wandering around two particular fields close to the family home at Llandysilio, Pembrokeshire.

Goleuni'r byd yw Crist,

Tywysog ein hachubiaeth,
y seren fore yw
a gwawr ein gwaredigaeth.
Ein gobaith ydyw ef,
perffeithydd mawr ein ffydd,
diddarfod gariad yw
sy'n troi pob nos yn ddydd.

Ein heddwch ni yw Crist,
fe greodd un ddyndoliaeth,
a chwalodd drwy ei gnawd ganolfur o elyniaeth.
Nawr drwyddo at y Tad
mae ffordd i bawb i ddod;
aelodau teulu Duw
sy'n cyd-ddyrchafu'i glod.

Ein bywyd ni yw Crist,
mae'n Arglwydd ar farwolaeth;
gollynga ni yn rhydd
o rywmau llygredigaeth.
Dyrchafwn enw'r Oen,
rhown iddo newydd gân;
gogoniant fo i'r Tad
a'r Mab a'r Ysbryd Glân.

Christ is the world's true light,
Its Captain of salvation,
The Day-star clear and bright
Of every man and nation;
New life, new hope awakes,
Where'er men own his sway;
Freedom her bondage breaks,
And night is turned to day.

In Christ all races meet,
Their ancient feuds forgetting,
The whole round world complete,
From sunrise to its setting:
When Christ is throned as Lord,
Men shall forsake their fear,
To ploughshare bear the sword,
To pruning-hook the spear.

One Lord, in one great Name
Unite us all who own thee;
Cast out our pride and shame
That hinder to enthrone thee;
The world has waited long,
Has travailed long in pain;
To heal its ancient wrong,
Come, Prince of Peace, and reign.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kO_vZjB37y0

A talk by John Jones on the Welsh Quakers

I've talked a lot about religious dissenters of some kind or another: Howell Harris, John Penry and John Bunyan for example, and some of the religious upheavals that have occurred over the last five hundred years.

Today I'm going to talk about the Quakers, or the Religious Society of Friends as they're officially known, an international Protestant denomination united in their belief in the ability of each human being to experience God within themselves. There are various forms of worship but it is fundamentally non-hierarchical with services usually involving silent prayer. Current day Quakers describe their movement as a way of life rather than a set of beliefs. They're known as Quakers, or Shakers, as the early practitioners used to tremble, rather like the early Methodists did, with religious fervour during their meetings. As it happens, my older sister is a Quaker and you would be surprised how many others are or have been, as you will see.

Film, *Quakers in Wales today*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2I3fqRc_yzE

Some weeks ago, Powys County Council bought a very rare manuscript, dated 1682, the records of a sale of 200 acres of land in Pennsylvania by one Richard Davies, a prominent Quaker of Cloddiau, Welshpool, to Margaret James, a spinster of the parish of Newchurch in Radnorshire. It was signed by Welsh immigrants who founded Radnor Township, later recorded in Philadelphia under the signature of Thomas Lloyd, of Dolobran, Deputy Governor to William Penn, after whom Pennsylvania is named. But, because they suffered some persecution there, the Quakers

also set about buying land in New Jersey, near New York.

It all began in England, when many Protestant groups emerged following the English Civil War in the 17th century, dissatisfied with the teaching, power and wealth of the Church of England. By 1680 it was thought there were as many as 60,000 followers in Britain, despite the fact that the Quaker Act of 1662 prohibited them from meeting together.

Its founder was George Fox, from Leicestershire, who travelled throughout Britain and America preaching his new doctrine despite being locked up several times, like Bunyan, for his radical beliefs. Fox spent his final decade in London organising the expanding the Quaker movement, convinced that it was possible to have a direct experience of Christ without the aid of ordained clergy. Two days after preaching as usual at the Gracechurch St. Meeting House near Leadenhall market in the City of London, he died and was buried in the Quaker Burying Ground in Bunhill Fields in 1690. The Friends House on the Euston Rd., built in 1927, is the home to the central offices of the British Quakers. And Sioned Bowen tells me that Eisteddfod y Cymdeithasau was held there for years and was full to the rafters. The American poet, Walt Whitman, raised as a Quaker, wrote this about the movement's founder George Fox:

**Walt Whitman
On George Fox, founder of
the Quakers, excerpt from
*Essay in November***



Walt Whitman

“George Fox stands for something too,
A thought, a thought that wakes
in silent hours,
Perhaps the deepest,
Most eternal thought latent in
the human soul.
This is the thought of God,
Merged in thoughts of moral
right and the immortality of
identity.
Great, great is this thought.
Aye, greater than all else.”

The Quakers had a profound impact in Wales too, perhaps because they already had a keen appetite for a different kind of worship. Wales also became something of a refuge for those fleeing persecution. They were firmly established by the 1650s and the movement spread quickly. In the early days, the main spokesman was John ap John, who was a follower of Morgan Llwyd, the Puritan preacher, but would have disapproved of the use of the word Leader to describe his work. It was, after all, an egalitarian sect. Quakers were adamant in their belief in the abolition of slavery and equally clear that they would never fight in war. They refused to swear

the Oath of Allegiance to the Monarch, to pay tithes to the established church or doff their hats to their supposed superiors. But, as a result of their constant hounding, and it's hard to over-estimate the difficulties they experienced, many emigrating to America, joining William Penn, himself a Quaker and close friend of George Fox, who was then trying to create an ideal society that became the state of Pennsylvania. Penn himself was born in London, at Tower Hill, but because of his firm beliefs, settled in America where mass emigration of Quakers began in 1677 and originally called the region he acquired "New Wales". The land had been handed over to him by King Charles II who owned it, it was one of his colonies after all, to pay debts he owed to Penn's father who was a naval admiral. Even the Quaker Oats logo, dating back to 1877, was identified as being William Penn, and referred to him as the standard bearer of the Quakers and Quaker Oats.

Film, William Penn



William Penn

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9rwBpFcuoBQ>

The original settlers negotiated a region, known as the Welsh

Tract, in 1684 as a separate county predominantly for Welsh speakers. And this happened two centuries before the founding of the Welsh settlements in Patagonia, let's not forget. Some of the place names still reflect this Welsh provenance; Brynmawr, Montgomery, Lower Merion, Narberth and Bala Cynwyd.

So much was the drain on the Welsh population, in fact, that its Quaker movement was in a pretty poor state by the 18th century. One of the great ironies is that it also declined following the Toleration Act in 1689 which allowed them certain freedoms. But, by then, their spontaneity and enthusiasm had made way for silent worship in meeting houses and their former dynamism never truly recovered.

Successful Welsh Quakers included the Lloyd family from Dolobran, Montgomeryshire, where there is still a prominent meeting house. They were part of the family who went on to found Lloyds Bank, by the way. Other British Quaker families included the Cadburys, the Frys and the Rountrees. There's actually a mansion called Dolobran, in Haverford, Pennsylvania, in Lower Merion Township, Montgomery county, built by Thomas Lloyd who had been lieutenant governor of Pennsylvania in the 17th century. He and his family had moved there in 1683 to avoid continued religious persecution.

The movement experienced a reawakening in Wales after the 1st World War with the establishment of a settlement, Maes yr Haf, in Trealaw in the

Rhondda Valley, there largely to help relieve unemployment, providing services such as crafts, dressmaking and youth clubs. There was also a similar settlement in Brynmawr in Monmouthshire.

Other notable Welsh Quakers include the poet Waldo Williams. Here is his poem "Brawdoliaeth: Brotherhood: in a musical setting by Tecwyn Ifan:

Tecwyn Ifan

Brawdoliaeth

(Mae rhwydwaith dirgel Duw)

Brotherhood

(The mysterious network of God)

(Waldo Williams)

Mae rhwydwaith dirgel Duw

yn cydio pob dyn byw;

cymod a chyflawn we

myfi, tydi, efe:

mae'n gwerthoedd ynddo'n gudd,

ei dyndra ydyw'n ffydd;

mae'r hwn fo'n gaeth yn rhydd.

Mae'r hen frawdgarwch syml

tu hwnt i ffurfiau'r deml;

â'r Lefiad heibio i'r fan,

plyg y Samaritan;

myfi, tydi, ynghyd

er holl raniadau'r byd

efe'n cyfannu'i fyd.

Mae cariad yn dref-tad

tu hwnt i ryddid gwlad;

cymerth yr lesu ran

ynghwledd y publican;

mae concwest wych nas gwêl

y Phariseaidd sêl:

henffych y dydd y dêl.

Mae Teyrnas gref, a'i rhaith

yn cydymdeimlad maith;

cymod a chyflawn we

myfi, tydi, efe

a'n cyfyd uwch y cnawd:

pa werth na thry yn wawd

pan laddo dyn ei frawd?

*God's mysterious network
captures all living beings;
reconciled and complete with
I, you, he: our
values in him are hidden,
his tension is his faith;
he who is captive is free.*

*The simple old brotherhood is
beyond the temple forms;
the Levite passes by,
the Samaritan fold;
I, you, together
for all the divisions of the world
he complements his world.*

*Love is a fatherland
beyond the freedom of a country;
Jesus took part
in the feast of the publican;
there is a great conquest that he
does not see
the Pharisee seal:
it is the day that comes.*

*There is a strong Kingdom, and its
spoils
are prolonged sympathy;
reconcile and complete with
I, you, he will raise us
above the flesh:
what a price than ridicule
when a man slaughters his brother?*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YgNEzEm5whY>

Also worth mentioning here too is Marion Eames' novel, *Y Stafell Ddirgel*, which gives a vivid account of Quaker life in Meirionydd.

In the early days of Quakerism, music was regarded with suspicion and rejected as being something that wasn't spontaneous. Sometimes it was simply regarded as frivolous.

However, they did approve of "singing in the spirit" as a way of expressing belief. By the 19th century, there were differences of opinion, some branches favouring hymn singing, particularly the case in America. One of their better-known Quaker hymns, *Simple Gifts*, was adapted by the English writer Sydney Carter, himself a Quaker, into *Lord of the Dance*. Another of Carter's famous hymns was *When I needed a neighbour, were you there*. He worked extensively with Donald Swann, born in Llanelli, and Michael Flanders, who died in Betws y Coed, the comedy song writing duo known as Flanders and Swann, both of whom were also Quakers.

While I am tempted to play a version of *Mud Mud, Glorious Mud*, I must restrain myself. Instead, let's sing *Lord of the Dance*:

I danced in the morning

when the world was begun,
And I danced in the moon and
the stars and the sun,
And I came down from heaven
and I danced on the earth;
At Bethlehem I had my birth.

Chorus: *Dance, then, wherever you
may be;*

*I am the Lord of the Dance, said he,
I'll lead you all, wherever you may
be,
And I'll lead you all in the Dance,
said he.*

I danced for the scribe and the
Pharisee,
But they would not dance, and
they wouldn't follow me;
I danced for the fishermen, for
James and for John;

They came with me and the
dance went on.

I danced on the Sabbath and I
cured the lame:

The holy people said it was a
shame.

They whipped and they stripped
and they hung me on high,
And they left me there on a
Cross to die.

I danced on a Friday when the
sky turned black;
It's hard to dance with the devil
on your back.

They buried my body and they
thought I'd gone;
But I am the Dance and I still go
on.

They cut me down and I leapt up
high;

I am the life that'll never, never
die;

I'll live in you if you'll live in me:
I am the Lord of the Dance, said
he.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7mgvzwXTpM4>

I Peter 2: 4-10

Come to him, a living stone,
though rejected by mortals yet
chosen and precious in God's
sight, and like living stones, let
yourselves be built into a spiritual
house, to be a holy priesthood,
to offer spiritual sacrifices
acceptable to God through Jesus
Christ. For it stands in scripture:

'See, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and
precious;
and whoever believes in him will
not be put to shame.'

To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe,

'The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner',

and

'A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall.'

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Ioan 1: 1-9

Yn y dechreuad yr oedd y Gair; yr oedd y Gair gyda Duw, a Duw oedd y Gair. Yr oedd ef yn y dechreuad gyda Duw. Daeth pob peth i fod trwyddo ef; hebddo ef ni ddaeth un dim sydd mewn bod. Ynndo ef yr oedd bywyd, a'r bywyd, goleuni dynion ydoedd. Y mae'r goleuni yn llewyrchu yn y tywyllwch, ac nid yw'r tywyllwch wedi ei drechu ef.

Daeth dyn wedi ei anfon oddi wrth Dduw, a'i enw Ioan. Daeth hwn yn dyst, i dystiolaethu am y goleuni, er mwyn i bawb ddod i gredu trwyddo. Nid ef oedd y

goleuni, ond daeth i dystiolaethu am y goleuni. Yr oedd y gwir oleuni, sy'n goleuo pawb, eisoes yn dod i'r byd.

John 1: 1-9

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

Disgleiried golau'r groes

ar uchelfannau'r byd;
aed Mab y Dyn o oes i oes
yn fwy ei fri o hyd.
Gogoniant byth i'r Oen,
ar aur delynu'r nef:
ei groes sy'n gwella'r byd o'i boen –
gogoniant iddo ef!

Tywynned golau'r groes
i ddyfnder tlodi dyn,
gan ddangos gobaith dod, drwy'r loes,
ar ddelw Duw ei hun.

Gogoniant byth i'r Oen,
ar aur delynu'r nef:
ei groes sy'n gwella'r byd o'i boen –
gogoniant iddo ef!

*Shine the light of the cross
on the heights of the world;
the Son of Man is born from age to age
even greater prestige.
Glory forever to the Lamb,
on the gold of the harps of heaven:
his cross that heals the world from his pain -
glory to him!*

*Let the light of the cross shine
into the depths of man's poverty,
showing the hope of coming through the
torment of God's own image.
Glory forever to the Lamb,
on the gold of the harps of heaven:
his cross that heals the world from his pain -
glory to him!*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fy13Lhnnufs>

The Light Within, a message



Holman Hunt's *The Light of the World*, at St Paul's Cathedral, London

Members of the various Quaker movements are generally united by a belief in the ability of each human being to experience and access the light within or to see

"that of God in every one". Some profess the priesthood of all believers, a doctrine derived from the First Epistle of Peter.

The inward light, Light of God, Light of Christ, Christ within, That of God, Spirit of God within us, Light within, and inner light are related phrases commonly used within the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) as metaphors for Christ's light shining on or in them. It was propagated by the founder of the Quaker movement, George Fox, who "preached faith in and reliance on 'inward light' ('the presence of Christ in the heart)". The first Quakers were known to sit in silence and meditate on the words of the Bible until they felt the inward light of God shining upon them and the Holy Spirit speaking. Early Quakers taught: "God reveals Himself within each individual's conscience and consciousness by the Holy Spirit, Christ Himself being the Light to illumine man's sinfulness and lead in the way of truth and righteousness. ... this light is in all men by the grace of God to lead them to Christ, and that the same light will give daily guidance to the Christian."

The Key to the Faith and Practice of the Religious Society of Friends states that the Inward Light is "both the historical, living Jesus, and as the Grace of God extended to people that simultaneously makes us conscious of our sins, forgives them, and gives us the strength and the will to overcome them" and "teaches us the difference between right and wrong, truth and falseness, good and evil". As such, the word *light* is commonly used by Christians (including

Quakers) as a metaphor for Christ, derived from many Biblical passages including John 8:12 which states:

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Quakers take this idea of walking in the Light of Christ to refer to God's presence within a person, and to a direct and personal experience of God, although this varies to some extent between Quakers in different yearly meetings. Quakers believe not only that individuals can be guided by this light, but that Friends might meet together and receive collective guidance from God by sharing the concerns and leadings that he gives to individuals. This is often done in meeting for worship; Pierre Lacout, a Swiss Quaker, describes a "silence which is active" causing the Inner Light to "glow", in his book *God is silence*. In a Friends meeting it is usually called "ministry" when a person shares aloud what the Inner Light is saying to him or her. The term inward light was first used by early Friends to refer to Christ's light shining on them; the term inner light has also been used since the twentieth century to describe this Quaker doctrine. Rufus Jones, in 1904, wrote that: "The Inner Light is the doctrine that there is something Divine, 'Something of God' in the human soul". Jones argued that his interpretation of the Quaker doctrine of the inner light was something shared by George Fox and other early Quakers, but some Quaker theologians and historians, most notably Lewis Benson reject this viewpoint.

Originally, *Inward Light* was used much more often than "Inner Light". This term evokes an image of people being illuminated by the light of God or Christ, rather than having a light of their own inside them.

The Quaker belief that the Inward Light shines on each person is based in part on a passage from the New Testament, namely John 1: 9, which says, "That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Early Friends took this verse as one of their mottos and often referred to themselves as "Children of the Light". Moreover, Friends emphasise the part of the verse that indicates that the Light "is extended to all people everywhere", even as it says in Romans 2: 14–16 "people who have never heard of Christianity in a meaningful way or at all can share in the Light, if they sincerely respond to God's grace. For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or excuse them on the day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus."

The principal founder of what became the Religious Society of Friends, George Fox, claimed that he had a direct experience of God. Having explored various sects and listened to an assortment of preachers, he finally concluded that none of them were adequate to be his

ultimate guide. At that point he reported hearing a voice that told him, "There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition." He felt that God wanted him to teach others that they need not depend on human teachers or guides either, because each one of them could experience God directly and hear his voice within. He wrote in his journal, "I was glad that I was commanded to turn people to that inward light, spirit, and grace, by which all might know their salvation, and their way to God; even that divine Spirit which would lead them into all Truth, and which I infallibly knew would never deceive any." Fox taught: that Christ, the Light, had come to teach his people himself; that "people had no need of any teacher but the Light that was in all men and women" (the anointing they had received); if people would be silent, waiting on God, the Light would teach them how to conduct their lives, teach them about Christ, show them the condition of their hearts; they loving the Light, it would rid them of the "cause of sin"; and soon after, Christ would return in his glory to establish his Kingdom in their hearts. Fox called the Light destroying sin within as the Cross of Christ, the Power of God.

Friends are not in complete agreement on the importance of the Inner Light in relation to the Bible. Most Friends, especially in the past, have looked to the Bible as a source of wisdom and guidance. Many, if not most of them, have considered the Bible a book inspired by God. Early Quakers, like George Fox and Robert Barclay, as well as most modern Quakers believed that

promptings which were truly from the Holy Spirit would not contradict the Bible. They did, furthermore, believe that to correctly understand the Bible, one needed the Inner Light to clarify it and guide one in applying its teachings to current situations. In the United States, in the nineteenth century, some Friends concluded that others of their faith, especially those of the Liberal Friends tradition, were using the concept of the Inner Light to justify unbiblical views. These Friends held that the Bible was more authoritative than the Inner Light and should be used to test personal leadings. Friends remain formally, but usually respectfully, divided on the matter.

So how do we find the inner light of Christ that according to the Quakers is inside all of us? Is it really there waiting to ignite or even already is aflame but trapped by darkness? If we go back to the passage from John which Megan read to us – and is one of the cornerstone texts of the inner life doctrine - it says:

"In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

"There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

"The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world."

So everyone has or will have the light of life and Christ. But if God is life, and life is the light of all mankind as it says in John, is that light *with us* or is it *shone on us*. Don't forget the passage start with creation and it says "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made."

The Inner light theory might suggest an inherent lightness in our beings waiting to be ignited but unrealised. But if God created everything we are ultimately vessels of his creation, and what about the holy spirit? Are we not empty vessels waiting for the holy spirit to descend upon us? Can it be that we are all endowed with this light and is it then a matter of choice and free will as to whether or not we find the light of Christ within us? There is a laudable and fulfilling activity of faith unpinning this view of inner light but perhaps we should come back to the semantics I talked about earlier of, Inward Light which was used by early quakers much more often than "Inner Light" and its evocation of an image of people being illuminated by the light of God or Christ, rather than having a light of their own inside them. The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world says John. That light may be available to everyone but is it inherent in us? As well as *our* will to discover the light in us is *God's* will. And it could be that we are empty vessels to be filled by the holy spirit when God is ready for us to receive it.

Last week for Pentecost Peter talked about receiving the holy spirit and we sang hymns about its manifestation in the breeze. And Peter told us in his message of a prayer where the spirit comes down gently to us so we do not expect it to come or are trepidatious of its arrival but asks for its gentle breaking on us. And we have to open our hearts. We rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him. And while I agree with the central doctrine of the quakers as the light within us I also think this needs to be balanced with another tenet of Quakerism. That is, as well as the belief in the ability of each human being to experience and access the light within or to see "that of God in every one," that is their idea of the "priesthood of all as believers," a doctrine derived from the First Epistle of Peter which Rachel read to us:

"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

"Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

And why have we received mercy? Because, as it says in the words preceding this, we are believers. We are living stones being built into a spiritual house, those who stumble on stones do so because they disobey the word. So we need to have faith and to believe and to have open hearts for God's will. And then we may find our inner light but

also the light from the holy spirit from without as well as within. We go back to John on belief – "For God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting."

And in the passage from John on light that we have focused on during this service it opens with "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And then goes on to say: The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us." So 'the light within us all' underpinning any doctrine should perhaps be seen in the context of the overall teachings of the Bible, of God's grace and the ultimate authority of The Word. Amen.

Gweddi'r Arglwydd/ Lord's Prayer

Ein Tad, yr hwn wyt yn y
nefoedd,
sancteiddier dy enw.
Deled dy deyrnas.

Gwneler dy ewyllys,
megis yn y nef, felly ar y ddaear
hefyd.

Dyro i ni heddiw ein bara
beunyddiol.

A maddau i ni ein dyledion,
fel y maddeuwn ninnau i'n
dyledwyr.

Ac nac arwain ni i brofedigaeth,
eithr gwared ni rhag drwg.
Canys eiddot ti yw'r deyrnas, a'r
nerth, a'r gogoniant yn oes
oesoedd.

Amen.

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;

on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass
against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZzF49HPfQzM>

Lord, the light of your love is shining

In the midst of the darkness,
shining
Jesus, Light of the world, shine
upon us
Set us free by the truth you now
bring us
Shine on me, shine on me.

Chorus: *Shine, Jesus, shine
Fill this land with the Father's glory
Blaze, Spirit, blaze
Set our hearts on fire
Flow, river, flow
Flood the nations with grace and
mercy
Send forth your word
Lord, and let there be light.*

Lord, I come to your awesome
presence
From the shadows into your
radiance
By the blood I may enter your
brightness
Search me, try me, consume all
my darkness.
Shine on me, shine on me.

As we gaze on your kingly
brightness
So our faces display your likeness
Ever changing from glory to glory
Mirrored here may our lives tell
your story.

Shine on me, shine on me.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D4hXJ9ax2FY>

Blessing

Grant us, O Lord, the blessing of those whose minds are stayed on you, so that we may be kept in perfect peace: a peace which cannot be broken. Let not our minds rest upon any creature; but only in the Creator; not upon goods, things, houses, lands, inventions of vanities or foolish fashions, lest, our peace being broken, we become cross and brittle and given over to envy. From all such deliver us, O God, and grant us your peace. Amen.
(George Fox, founder of the Quakers)

Closing Music:

Traditional

Simple Gifts

arr. Mack Wilberg
Mormon Tabernacle Choir

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OXDW-J3U2g4>

Readers:

William Shakespeare

Hamlet – “What a piece of work is a man?” (Hamlet’s monologue, Act 2, Scene2)
Neil Evans

Waldo Williams

Pa Beth yw Dyn?

(What is man?)
Catrin Treharne

Waldo Williams

Mewn Dau Gae

(In two fields)
Glyn Pritchard

A talk by John Jones on the Welsh Quakers

John Jones

Walt Whitman

On George Fox, founder of the Quakers, excerpt from *Essay in November*

David Evans

1 Peter 2: 4-10

Rachel Hughes

Joan I: 1-9

Megan Evans

A message on *The Light Within*, script links and Blessing

Neil Evans

Producer Mike Williams
