

## MFW February 23<sup>rd</sup> 2019

### QFP Revision workshop: *What Can We Say?*

At several points in the short (morning) and longer (afternoon) sessions we were reminded that Meeting of Friends in Wales is the body tasked by BYM with representing Quakerism to Wales and representing Wales and its Quakers to BYM. So the revision process has to matter to us in Wales, if Friends' diversity; the changed realities of devolutionary government; the fact of a nation with two official languages; Quaker insights which happen to have come from Wales or which are distinctively Welsh in colour - are properly to be reflected through the revision. None but Friends who live in Wales can make sure that this happens for a new Book which may take the Society through to almost 2050. QFP (whatever it will be called) will need to speak to our conditions and speak about us to non-Friends who encounter it.

In the introductory short session four Friends offered brief input on where we are/ what has been happening/ what we should not overlook.

*The Revision Committee is now appointed* (at Meeting for Sufferings in February 2019) and from Wales Catherine James (co-clerk of Meeting of Friends in Wales) and Alice Southern are on it.

Please note that

- There will be a meeting for Worship at Yearly Meeting in an 'interest group' slot, to uphold the Revision Committee and with a chance to speak informally with members afterwards.
- A weekend has been reserved at Woodbrooke (8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> November). Watch that space in case it is used for a Revision-related event.
- Any Friend can make suggestions and submit material to be considered, sending by email to [gfp@quaker.org.uk](mailto:gfp@quaker.org.uk), or by writing to Revision Committee, Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ.

### THE FOLLOWING EMERGED FROM ADDRESSING QUESTIONS IN GROUPS

#### **The present and future volume**

- Is the present title problematic?
- Do we demand too high a level of literacy to attract many?
- Target the perspective of newcomers – is so much needed all in one volume?
- Listen to and reflect youth
- Stress the spiritual, and more explanation of silence is needed - context and meaning.
- Where does decision-making lie in this process of revision – should we care?

## Form and content

- Would 'Church Government' be better if ALSO produced as individual booklets by topic?
- Slim down the volume by separating off 'Church Government' material.
- We need to retain both the 'dynamic' changing element of the book, with its spiritual guidance, address to present situations, 'wisdoms' to help our discernment AND the methodology material which relates to our structures etc.
- Have a better index and, with Advices and Queries indexed to link to the anthology.
- Consider production in a variety of formats. We will need better indexes in all formats
- Include visual material/graphics
- Have THREE 'books' – the Church Government element; the anthology of tradition and insight in quotations and a third 'dynamic' and evolving publication which will reflect exploration and change as it happens. This third thing to be online?

## Other observations

- ❖ Sustainability and migration are not issues which are going to disappear. Inclusivity – reflecting diversity in many directions.
- ❖ Religious language, an issue still with us. Welsh speaks of Y Bod Mawr – The Great Being. Who determines what language may be used?
- ❖ Keep richness and diversity of language in the various anthology entries - keep *beautiful* language and the 'treasures' in the tradition.
- ❖ Distil some of the more modern advice which is in the present volume
- ❖ Reflect the changes (and their impact) since the 1990s, looking forward
- ❖ QFP does not reflect rural culture

## Wales and the revision

- ONGOING Revision needed in Church Government re. Wales/MFW and BYM. BYM needs to consider its language on nationhood

- Wales – it's a reminder of the value of, and need for, decentralisation. Small is beautiful. Less hierarchical in outlook in Wales
- It is important to provide the committee with items which reflect (1) concerns and (2) Quakers' faith and practice from the standpoint of being in Wales
- We need to look at what Quakers in Wales have been saying – from blogs, through Calon/AM newsletters/ Swarthmore lectures/ publications by Friends (make use of the MFW anthology in English and (not identical) Welsh versions, *Towards the Source* and *Tua'r Tarddiad*); articles, books etc etc .
- If new writings are needed – because perhaps what we care about has not been written about and for what needs to be said for the future volume and for the 21<sup>st</sup> century – then should we have writing workshops? That worked for the production of *Tua'r Tarddiad* / *Towards the Source*.
- A workshop would also bring together material which Friends would have gathered from all the other sources -
- It is OUR job to see that Wales - and insights dear to Friends here (which they might like to see included, wherever they originate from) and insights FROM Friends who live in Wales, in English and in Welsh, are available to the revision committee.

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Abstracted by Christine Trevett 26.02.2018

