



Some time ago Ealing Meeting produced a Britain Yearly Meeting specific “Quaker jargon Buster”, to help F/friends, particularly those new to the Society. With their kind permission, South Belfast Quakers have amended it for use here in Northern Ireland.

Attender - A person who worships regularly with Friends but has not joined the Religious Society of Friends.

Birthright - a person born where both parents are Quakers automatically becomes a member of the Society by right of birth, hence birthright! Nowadays some meetings do not adhere to this principle and encourage teenagers to apply for membership of the Society when they are ready. Compare with *convincement*.

Book of discipline - more formally known as Organisation and Christian Discipline. It establishes clear guidelines for the correct holding of Quaker business meetings, marriages and all matters of governance within IYM.

Britain Yearly Meeting - the body of Friends in Wales, Scotland and England.

Christian Experience - Ireland Yearly Meeting’s book which seeks to express in words the workings of the Spirit as experienced by Quakers over three hundred years. It is a collection of extracts from writings in the nature of an anthology, that illustrate what the Society of Friends has upheld and upholds. This book is currently being revised.

Christocentric - A Quaker whose inspiration is based on Christ and who holds that the Religious Society of Friends is essentially a Christian denomination. Compare with *Universalist*.

Clerk - a person appointed by a business meeting or committee to take a meeting through its business and write the minutes. See also *convener*.

Concern - an idea or prompting by the Spirit which leads a Friend to take on an issue as a personal crusade. The Friend will probably bring their concern to their business meeting to be tested, that is to see if it is a true concern or simply a notion.

Convener - usually applied to a person who is responsible for the organisation of a one-off meeting for business. Compare with *clerk*.

Convincement - a discovery of truth, as in "Quaker by convincement", one who has become convinced of the truth of the Quaker way. It is used to describe anybody who joins the Society. Compare with *birthright*

Daffodil ministry - Often in spring a Friend notices how lovely the daffodils look as they come to meeting for worship, and they minister about how lovely the world is.

Elder - as a noun: a member of a meeting charged with responsibility for the ordering of the spiritual life of that meeting. As a verb: the process of gentle redirection of a person by an elder back onto the path of right ordering.

Enquirer - someone enquiring about Quakerism!

Epistle - Quaker gatherings often send a report of their deliberations to other Quakers. The best known example is the Yearly Meeting Epistle. They often start "To Friends everywhere..."

FMH - an abbreviation of Friends Meeting House, see Meeting House.

Friend - A member of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). We get our name from the original title of "Friends in the Truth". This doesn't mean that we have to be nice to each other, rather our first loyalty is to Truth. Quakers often refer to themselves collectively as Friends and will address a Quaker as "Friend" if they don't know the person's name.

Friends Book Centre - a very useful source of books on all matters Quaker-related, you'll find it at Friends House in London.

Friends House - the central offices of Britain Yearly Meeting, opposite Euston Station, London.

Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) - the organisation responsible for building links among Quakers worldwide.

General Christian Counsel - a short document published by Ireland Yearly Meeting raising theological ideas and beliefs considered important by Irish Friends. Intended as a spiritual guide and challenge to our members.

Ireland Yearly Meeting - a meeting for decision making and business administration for Friends in Ireland. It meets over several days each year and can be attended by all members. Abbreviated to IYM.

IYM - an abbreviation of Ireland Yearly Meeting

Leading - a prompting thought to be received from the Spirit. It can turn into a concern

Meeting - used in different contexts, and so confusing. It can be as shorthand for meeting for worship, or it can refer to a meeting of Quakers that has gathered for business and administrative matters, for example: preparative meeting, monthly meeting, Quarterly Meeting and yearly meeting.

Meeting for Worship - the great mystery of Quakerism: what happens in meeting for worship? We don't actually worship using a liturgy, agreed words or ritual in the way that other traditions do. Quakers believe that when we gather together in silence we can engage in a direct and personal relationship with God.

Meeting House - a place where Quakers gather for worship, though not the only place that they may do so. Early Quakers referred to churches as "Steeplehouses"

Membership - what you apply for when you decide to want to join Friends. Visitors will then come round to see you! Contrast with Attender.

Ministry - this is our term for what a person gives when they stand up and speak during meeting for worship. Ministry should be inspired and prompted by the Spirit.

Ministry & Oversight - Often abbreviated to M&O, a regular meeting of Elders and Overseers.

Minutes - these are the record of the proceedings of a business meeting written by the clerk or convener of that meeting. Quaker minutes are written and agreed as the meeting proceeds with its business.

MM - an abbreviation of Monthly Meeting.

Monthly Meeting - a meeting for business administration and decision making for a group of local Preparative Meetings. Abbreviated to MM.

Moyallon - a purpose-built residential centre set in the grounds of Moyallon Meeting House near Portadown.

Notion - 1) any approach to religious matters not based on first-hand spiritual experience. 2) a leading that didn't turn into a concern.

Organisation and Christian Discipline - - Ireland Yearly Meeting's book of guidance on the right ordering of Quaker affairs.

Overseer - a member of a meeting charged with responsibility for the general welfare of the members of that meeting.

Plain speech - this is how Quakers aspire to speak ("Let your Yea be your Yea") but too often they will couch their meaning in obscure and devious phrases, see occur.

Popcorn ministry - A term sometimes used to describe a particularly active period of Meeting for Worship, where there is little or no silence. People keep bursting into ministry like a pan full of popcorn on the stove.

Preparative meeting - a meeting for decision making and business administration for a local meeting. Abbreviated to PM.

Programmed - describes a meeting for worship that has an order of service and is led by a pastor. Two thirds of Friends world-wide belong to yearly meetings that hold programmed meetings. Meetings for worship in Ireland are unprogrammed.

PM - an abbreviation of Preparative Meeting.

Public Lecture - a lecture given at the time of Ireland Yearly Meeting by one or more Friends, it is an important platform for the continuing development of Quaker thought and theology.

Quaker - originally a pejorative name for a member of the Religious Society of Friends, now a title worn with pride and probably more widely known by the public than the more correct term of Friend.

Quaker House - the central offices of Ireland Yearly Meeting, in Stocking Lane, Dublin.

Quaker Life and Practice - a book which seeks to express in words the workings of the Spirit as experienced by Quakers in Ireland and elsewhere over the past 350 years. It is both an anthology of Quaker thought and action, and an expression of Quaker faith and doctrine. It is not however a doctrinal statement. It is revised every generation to reflect the continuing revelation and understanding of the Spirit's work among Friends. Along with Organisation and Christian Discipline, General Christian Counsel, and Queries for Serious Consideration it makes up the formal publications of Ireland Yearly Meeting

Quaker Service – a charity which works with disadvantaged and vulnerable families and individuals. See www.ulsterquakerservice.com

Quarterly Meeting - a meeting for business administration and decision making for a group of local Monthly Meetings. There are 3 Quarterly Meetings in Ireland, namely Ulster, Leinster and Munster. Abbreviated to QM.

Queries for Serious Consideration - a group of questions devised by Friends in Ireland to help individuals consider their spiritual wellbeing. At present there are 11 queries which deal with all aspects of Christian living.

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) - the correct title of the organisation to which Friends/Quakers belong.

Right ordering - done in the correct manner, in keeping with Quaker tradition and practice. A body of wisdom and insights that has evolved over three hundred years of seeking the guidance of the Spirit, it is captured in part by “Organisation and Christian Discipline”, but only in part.

Testimonies - The cumulative lived witness of generations of Friends. Aspects of our witness on which most Friends can actually agree! They include (in alphabetical order) equality, integrity, peace, simplicity and truth.

Testing a concern - a process of deliberation by a preparative or monthly meeting to examine whether a Friend's concern has religious validity and should be promoted and supported by that meeting.

The Friend – a Quaker magazine published weekly by Britain Yearly Meeting.

The Friendly Word – a Quaker magazine published every other month by Ireland Yearly Meeting.

Swarthmoor Hall - a historic hall recognized as the ‘birth’ place of Quakerism in Cumbria, England.

Universalist - A Quaker who believes that there is a universal truth that may be found in all faiths, as compared to Christocentric.

Unprogrammed - describes a meeting for worship where all ministry and prayer is inspired by the Spirit rather than by a predetermined order of service. This is the practice in Britain. Compare with programmed.

Visitor - 1) If you apply for membership two people will be appointed by your local monthly meeting to help you and the monthly meeting decide if the commitment to membership is right for you. They will write a report to help your monthly meeting reach its decision. 2) A Friend visiting from another PM. 3) Somebody new to meeting.

Weighty Friend - one who is influential (i.e: their opinion carries weight) within the Society (while remaining consistent with our testimony on equality, of course).

Woodbrooke - the Quaker study centre in Birmingham.

Worship - see meeting for worship.

Yearly Meetings Committee - a meeting for decision making and business administration for Friends in Ireland. It is the executive body of Ireland Yearly Meeting and meets regularly at Quaker House.

