

So what can I do now?

- If you are interested in finding out more look at our website, www.qlgf.org.uk or email qlgfcontact@btclick.com
- If you are interested in the Society of Friends, check out www.quaker.org.uk or look up Quaker Meeting in the telephone directory
- If you are going to a Quaker gathering (BYM, Summer gathering etc), we run information stalls, socials, informal meetings at Quaker events ... look out for us
- If you are going to be at any of the Pride events around the Country; look out for us!
- Ask your Quaker Meeting to become a Supporting Group
- Display the QLGF card at your meeting house; this shows that it is a welcoming space for other Quakers and users of the meeting house
- Look in the gay press for our details, we should be in there



Suggested reading

Part of The rainbow – a QLGF publication

This we can say, speaking honestly about sex – Nine Friends Press- ISBN 095255 3503

A Light that is shining – by Harvey Gilman and A minority of one ISBN 085245 2071

Girl 2 girl – edited by Norrina Rashid & Jane Hoy ISBN 1873741456 A very good book for younger women questioning their sexuality.

A different kind of loving – a guide for those who have lesbian, gay or bisexual partners by Joy Dickens.

Family Outing – a guide for parents of LGB children. Editor Joy Dickens ISBN 0720609615



QLGF

Quaker Lesbian & Gay Fellowship

Quakers (the Religious Society of Friends) welcome lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people as part of the diversity of creation. Quakers practise equality between men and women, and have no separate priesthood, have deep concerns for peace, social justice and the earth. Quaker Meetings embrace the tradition of spirit led Christianity, as well as seekers for truth from all backgrounds. Our society is a member of Churches Together in Britain, but we subscribe to no written creed. Instead we acknowledge the authority of individual experience of Light that shines in all people.

QLGF is a welcoming and supportive group for Quakers of all sexualities and those who, while not Quakers, are in general sympathy with the Quaker thought and lifestyle. We aim to promote dialogue at all levels within the Religious Society of Friends with a view to achieving a deeper mutual understanding. Significant positions of responsibility in our Meetings, as well as at Friends House, our HQ, are held by Quakers who are openly part of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community. Currently, our membership stands at about 200 nationally, with an almost even gender balance, although there are many more non-QLGF members within local groups.

We hold **two annual gatherings** a year; one a residential weekend, the other a day conference. These events usually have a theme with an invited speaker and workshops, free-time, entertainment, and a Meeting for Worship for business. Our **local groups** are mixed gender, autonomous and make their own programme of events and do not, as a rule, require members to belong to the fellowship at a national level. We also have a **newsletter** which is published four times per year and is free to members. In addition we periodically **publish booklets** on related subjects.

We welcome enquirers from any denomination or religion; we ask only that you agree with the aims and outlook of the fellowship and broadly with the principles of the Religious Society of Friends.

For further information contact our National Contact at:
Ruth (OP), 46 The Avenue, Harrogate, HG1 4QD

qlgfcontact@btclick.com or www.qlgf.org.uk

On being Quaker and gay or lesbian

There is no single Quaker view or statement about homosexuality because the Society of Friends does not make prescriptive statements about what its members believe. We use as a guiding principle the belief that the presence of God is consistently revealed in the lives of women and men, and so we are encouraged to test all religious writings (from other faiths as well as Christianity) to see what truths they may hold for us.

We try not to take quotations from the Bible out of context and apply them to a social and religious climate for which they were not designed. Thus, the verses which are most often cited against us might have had relevance for a particular time, place and culture. We would not necessarily accept them as relevant to a 21st century western European culture. There is a great deal of law and practice laid down in the Bible which we suspect the majority of Christians would not adhere to today.

Most Quakers interpret Jesus' mission as being more about love than about laying down specific rules. This way of looking at the Bible is increasingly accepted in many denominations and, with it, a broader view of sexuality is finding acceptance among Christians.

Ubi Caritas, Deus ibi est

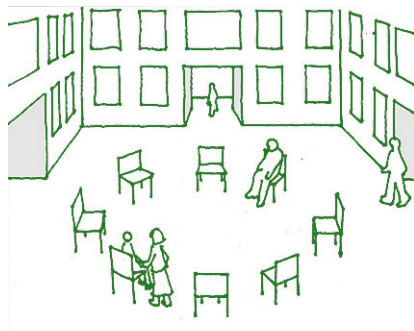
Wherever love is, God is also there

Taize chant

'We affirm the love of God for all people, whatever their sexual orientation, and our conviction that sexuality is an important part of human beings as created by God, so that to reject people on the grounds of their sexual orientation is a denial of God's creation.'

Wandsworth Quaker Meeting, March 1989

Quaker Faith & practice 22.16



What criteria are there for ordinary membership of the Fellowship?

QLGF, and its previous incarnations, have never asked people their sexuality, gender identity or set any other personal criteria, other than broad support for the aims of the Fellowship and sympathy with Quaker thought.

Is QLGF a campaigning organisation?

Campaigning is not our first purpose. QLGF does campaign, sometimes making submissions to Government or third parties, trying to encourage and publicising issues in the secular gay world, the religious world and the Society of Friends. Most of us in QLGF see its social and supportive role as important and hope to keep a balance.

How far is QLGF a Quaker group?

We are a listed informal group within the Society of Friends. Our business meetings are run using the Quaker business method and appointments made in the usual Quaker way according to church government.

What is the relationship with the Quaker Lesbian group?

QLG is an autonomous group. Some QLGF women are involved with QLG and some not. Not all members of QLG are members of QLGF. We run reports of their events in our newsletter as they are of interest to our members.

Is QLGF primarily a group for people who are not out in their Meeting?

We don't think it is. Some people are not out to their Meetings, which we respect; some are out in society but not at work and some are out generally. We ideally want a world where everyone feels comfortable being out.

Can QLGF offer oversight/pastoral care?

We would hope that Friends would feel able to approach their Meetings primarily. If there are specific issues with pastoral care please talk to the national contact, but we cannot offer support to everyone. We do appoint overseers and elders for the duration of gatherings.

Why don't you call yourselves Quaker Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Queer etc etc?

With 2 members of the current committee being bisexual, they, and others, haven't pressed for our name to be made more long-winded. Our literature makes it clear that we welcome everyone. We have transgendered members, one used to be our clerk.

How do I find a local QLGF group?

Contact the national contact.

