

NONTHEIST FRIENDS NETWORK

www.nontheist-quakers.org.uk



Nontheist
Friends Network

August 2015

NFN Woodbrooke Conference

April 1 – 3 2016

Celebrating our diversity

Exploring Varieties of Nontheist Experience

Sharing experiences & learning from one another

- **Workshops** – could you offer to lead one?
- **Speakers' Corner** – would you offer to speak?
- **Base Groups** – engaging with the same group of people

Friday: After a welcome, and brief introduction to the theme, we will go straight into Base Groups to share our experiences in Friends.

Saturday: Speakers Corner – opt for who you want to hear.

Workshops - 75 minutes – each offered twice

Base Groups – & after supper - Quaking with laughter

Sunday: AGM - later Plenary (as led) & Meeting for Worship

This gathering is an opportunity to really engage with each other in sharing ideas, experiences, and ways of being and expressing ourselves. We have some interesting topics and workshops – and will welcome offers from members who also have something to share. See details below: -

Conference fee

Book between now and December 31st 2015 - £195.00

Book by December 31st for the lower cost

Book after January 1st 2016 - £215.00

Please do not let a lack of funds prevent you from coming. Ask for a bursary from your Local or Area Meeting – several have provided bursaries for our conferences.

If neither of your Meetings are able to help you, we will help you.

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Workshops – We will give details later of the choice of workshops available. If any of our members has ideas for leading a workshop please send your proposal as early as possible to our Clerk.

Speakers – Have you a topic you would like to speak on for up to 10 minutes? We would like to hear your topic – and a brief outline of what you have to say – as early as possible. Please send details to our Clerk.

Base Groups – We want to provide the opportunity to share with the same group of Friends on more than one occasion our understanding of the range of experiences, practices and ideas about nontheism, from within and beyond the Religious Society of Friends.

Michael Wright: Clerk - michaelwright80@virginmedia.com

Please complete the attached Booking Form – in separate file attachment - and return it with your cheque payable to Nontheist Friends Network to

NFN Annual Conference,
Loddon Park Farmhouse,
Twyford. RG10 9RY

Tel: 07500 914440

The Network's proposed aim

The Steering Group has agreed to propose to the AGM at the Conference that the aim of the Network, as stated in our constitution shall be amended to include the words in italics, to read:

The Network's aim is to provide a forum and supportive framework for Friends who regard religion as a human creation. *We want to ensure that our Religious Society of Friends in Britain is an inclusive Society.* We seek to explore theological and spiritual diversity and their practical implications, in respectful acceptance of different views, experiences, and journeys.

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Exploring theism/nontheism within the Religious Society of Friends

The Book of Discipline Revision Preparation Group (established by Meeting for Sufferings) is forming a “theology think-tank” to explore issues relating to spiritual experience, belief and language in Britain Yearly Meeting.

One of its key topics is to be ways of expressing ideas about our Quaker understanding of God, which no doubt will include our concept of the Light, the Spirit, the divine, and other terms often used by Friends. They feel that “theism/nontheism” is an inadequate description of the issue, and is unhelpful, as it tends to imply an either/or approach which doesn’t acknowledge the variety of insights which exist. They want to explore with some Friends to see if a more helpful way of framing this issue can be found.

As Editor I envisage opening a discussion in this Newsletter from the next edition, on some ways of beginning to explore this. I will welcome contributions from readers over the coming months.

However, our Steering Group has decided that from January 1st 2016, the Newsletter will be sent automatically to Members of our Network only and to those of you who ask specifically to continue to receive it.

If you wish to participate in this Newsletter discussion, please consider paying your £10 membership fee for 2015-16 (which runs from May 1st to April 30th).

Newsletter Editor: Michael Wright michaelwright80@virginmedia.com
07966 527697

Please complete and return this form, together with payment by cheque made out to "Nontheist Friends Network", to NFN Annual Conference, Loddon Park Farmhouse, Twyford, RG10 9RY



Nontheist
Friends Network

BOOKING FORM

Nontheist Friends Network 2016 Residential Conference

Woodbrooke April 1-3 2016

CONTACT DETAILS:

Name(s)

Address:

Town/City: Postcode:

Telephone:

E-mail:

Area meeting:

DIETARY REQUIREMENTS:

Type of diet: Anything Vegetarian Veg/Fish Vegan
(tick one)

Special needs: Non-diary Diabetic Gluten-free Low-fat
(tick those applicable)

ACCESS:

Please tell us about any way we might be able to assist you in your conference participation:

Sight Hearing Mobility Other

Please give details:

RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION: £195 per person **BEFORE DECEMBER 31st 2015**

£215.00 per person **AFTER JANUARY 1st 2016**

All rooms are en-suite. Do you require: single room(s) double room

DAY ATTENDANCE (non-residential): Please tick those applicable

Fri evening (£21 inc supper) Sat (9am-5pm) (£31 inc lunch) Sat (9am-9pm) (£52 inc lunch & supper) Sun morning (£31 inc lunch)

CANCELLATION POLICY:

After January 10th we can only offer part-reimbursement or none at all, depending on how close your cancellation is to the conference date and whether we are able to re-let your room if you have booked residential accommodation.