

How does the Religious Society of Friends work for peace?

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) is a pacifist group with its roots in Christianity, that has worked for peace since its creation in the 17th century. Quakers usually refer to themselves as 'Friends' and they believe that there is something sacred in everyone and that violence should always be avoided.

Friends' opposition to all forms of violence imposes on them the responsibility to seek alternative responses to conflict and injustice. Quaker Faith and Practice, 24.38

Friends have historically refused to take part in wars. In World Wars One and Two, they became conscientious objectors. In 1947, Friends in Britain and the US won the Nobel Peace Prize for their work helping victims of conflict in Germany, Europe and Asia after World War Two. They provided food aid and helped to rebuild areas that had been badly damaged in the War.

Some examples of the work that Friends do today include:

- campaigning and encouraging countries to get rid of nuclear weapons and other lethal weapons
- training groups around the world in non-violent methods of conflict resolution
- protesting against wars and violent actions in their own countries
- sending volunteers to areas of conflict to support local peace activists
- keeping offices at the United Nations which brings different nations together to discuss issues such as nuclear weapons and peace