



Journeys in the Spirit



Children's Edition How to use guide

Journeys in the Spirit Children's Edition comes out monthly offering a variety of activities on a theme for 5 - 12 year olds. It is suitable for use in children's meeting on a Sunday morning, at midweek activity clubs, on residentials and at all age gatherings. It is sent to subscribers each month by email or post.

Journeys in the Spirit aims to be a springboard for ideas that will stimulate the children and the adults working with them, it is not a curriculum. It is underpinned by an approach that intends to encourage children's spiritual development. This is reflected by the headings that the material is written under: gather, engage, respond and reflect.

Each issue consists of the main sheets, made up of four A4 sides. These provide a range of ways to explore the theme with children. There is also material on the Journeys in the Spirit children's edition web pages, which includes additional ideas and resources for each issue.

Using Journeys in the Spirit – some do's and do not's

Do:

- **plan well:** always read the 'getting ready' section to ensure you are clear on what you are doing, liaise with your co-worker and gather together the necessary resources
- **prepare well:** arrive early, set up the space appropriately and be ready to welcome the children
- **know your group well:** choose what you will do carefully, taking into account the ages and abilities of the children
- **deliver well:** try to offer something from each of the 'gather', 'engage', 'respond' and 'reflect' sections, providing a variety of approaches
- **review well:** spend time afterwards, with your co-worker if possible, considering the questions in the 'review' section, thinking about what follow up might be beneficial

Don't:

- **try to do everything:** each issue seeks to offer enough material to be the basis for a number of sessions on the theme
- **follow everything as written:** each issue is devised to serve a number of situations and a range of needs, feel free to adapt the material to fit the gifts and talents in your meeting
- **forget to create a sense of worship:** a variety of ideas are offered and these should be seen in the context of Quaker worship
- **be fixed in your plan:** it is fine if your session ends up somewhere other than you had planned, we should be open to fresh thinking and direction
- **have all the answers:** instead seek to encourage children to wonder & explore

Underpinning each issue of Journeys in the Spirit are two core principles

The first is that children should be offered opportunities to develop their own experience, knowledge, understanding and practice of Quakerism.

The second is that there are four directions to our spiritual journey: *Inwards* to ourselves; *Outwards* to others; *Upwards* (or is it further inwards?) towards the Light, God, the deeper mystery; *Downwards* to the world we live in. 'Journeys in the Spirit' offers ways for each of these to be explored in a Quaker context.

Journeys in the Spirit includes:

The main sheets (sent to subscribers each month) **with material under the following headings:**

- **Getting ready** – encouraging the people responsible for planning the session to think in relation to the theme.
- **Gather** – framing the session in the context of worship; bringing the group together; setting the tone; being ready for what is to follow.
- **Engage** – thinking about the theme; breaking open the topic; encouraging listening; creating interest, wonder and enquiry; posing questions without offering answers; exploring together.
- **Respond** – encouraging a response to the theme through a variety of approaches, such as art, drama, writing and play; considering the children and young people's ministry in relation to the theme; identifying the need for both individual and corporate action.
- **Reflect** – readying people to go back out into the world; looking back and looking forward; thinking about what will be taking away from the session; recognising the journey that has been travelled and the journey that is to come; leaving people wondering.
- **Review** – some questions or queries to assist those who facilitated the sessions to review and make judgements about what took place.

The dedicated web pages (www.quaker.org.uk/journeyschildren) **updated each month and containing:**

- **Additional resources** – for each issue including pictures, templates or scripts.
- **All age worship ideas** – a suggested approach to fit with the theme of each issue.
- **An easy to use plan** – setting out an outline to use the material in Children's Meeting.
- **Other resources and links** – that relate to the topic being explored in the issue.
- **A topical activity** – an idea that doesn't relate to the theme but offers a way of engaging children with a topic that is current.
- **Links to special issues** – including ideas for engaging with schools, an exploration of Quaker's involvement in the abolition of the slave trade and approaches to work with under 5's.
- **An archive of previous issues** – going all the way back to the first issue in January 2007.
- **A discussion forum** – to facilitate conversation between those using Journeys in the Spirit.
- **A link to the Youth Edition of Journeys in the Spirit** – providing ideas for 12 – 18 year olds.

A quote from a 'Journeys in the Spirit' subscriber: "Journeys in the Spirit has been an outstanding inspirational and material resource without which we would have found it very difficult to make progress".

'Journeys in the Spirit' is published by Children & Young People's Staff Team of Quaker Life and is available free by subscription either by email or on paper.

Back issues are archived and available on the Journeys in the Spirit children's edition web pages www.quaker.org.uk/journeyschildren

If you have any queries about 'Journeys in the Spirit', have an idea for a future theme or would like to be a writer please contact Chris Nickolay 020 7663 1014 chrisn@quaker.org.uk