



Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

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Issue 88



A simple plan for an all-age Meeting for Worship

Preparation – you will need the text of the Engage section of this issue of *Journeys in the Spirit*, number 88; copies of the oval shape in this sheet as a 'face shape'; colouring pens and pencils; pieces of card for use as 'clipboards'; copies of Quaker faith and practice 6.02 in different print sizes; a large sheet or rug to put on the floor; Bibles for different ages and Quaker faith and practice. Have the ovals, boards and colouring pens and pencils set out on the sheet or rug on the floor; a large sign that has the Quaker faith and practice quotation written on it.

During the meeting

Once the group has settled and become still, welcome everybody to meeting for worship for all ages. Say that this year there is a special and very big meeting of Quakers that is called Yearly Meeting Gathering – there will be 2,000 Quakers at this great big meeting including nearly 300 children and young people. They will all be spending a week together in the city of Bath.

When Quakers first started, nearly 400 years ago, they needed to meet together. They would travel by coach, horse and cart, boat and on foot. They were meeting to hear news, look after each other and find out who had been in trouble for being a Quaker. Read the following quotation slowly:

They said that:

"We did conclude among ourselves to settle a meeting, to see one another's faces, and open our hearts one to another in the Truth of God once a year" Yearly Meeting in London 1668 (Quaker faith & practice 6.02)

This is one of the reasons why people maybe going to the Yearly Meeting Gathering. It is also one of the reasons why we come to our own Quaker meeting when we do or can. We come to 'see each other's faces, and open our hearts – to find out how we each are, to look after each other and to hear each others news. To show love and kindness to one another.

Ask everybody to think about what they have done or has happened to them since they were last at meeting – good things, fun things, happy things, maybe sad things. Have they helped anybody in any way – even small? Has anything been a worry? Give some time for thinking about these things.

Now say that, if people want to, they can use the oval shapes to be like their face. They could draw a face on it if they want. Say that, if they want to, they can also write or draw about some of the things they have thought about in answer to the questions you just asked about what they have done or has happened to them since they last came to meeting. If people don't want to draw or write they can just sit in the stillness and think and wonder about what you have asked.

After a suitable amount of time say that people can quietly talk with another person about what they have written, drawn or thought about – if they would like to; otherwise they just remain sitting quietly. Again, after a little time ask people, if they want, to put their pictures onto the sheet or rug ready to be displayed in the meeting.

End with a little more stillness and then shake hands.

