



Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

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A simple plan for a meeting for worship for all ages about Quakers and the Nobel peace prize

Resources: copies of the pictures of the Nobel peace prize and Friends Ambulance Unit volunteers following this page; plain white paper or card; pencils and pens for writing; crayons and pens for colouring. Before people arrive place copies of the pictures of the Nobel Prize and of Quaker helpers on chairs and the floor where people are likely to sit. Set out writing and drawing materials around the room.

Meeting for worship

Begin by welcoming everyone to this meeting for worship for all ages. Start with some moments of quiet and stillness. Say that you are going to tell a short story. *Pause*. Tell this story:

'A long time ago, but not too long ago that people have forgotten, (probably some people here will remember or will know people who do) there was a terrible war. It was called the Second World War. Soldiers fought against each other in lots of countries. Soldiers were hurt and many died. Men, women and children were also hurt and many lost their homes and didn't have enough to eat or drink or enough medicine.

Some Quakers, who remembered another time of war, decided that they wanted to help. They knew that they were not going to fight or kill anybody but they wanted to help all sorts of people – children, women, men and also soldiers who were hurt, hungry or homeless. They knew that in that other time of war Quakers had started two groups called *the Friends Ambulance Unit* and the *Friends' War Victims Relief Committee* (that's a long name). They decided that they would start them again.

They rescued wounded soldiers by setting up tent hospitals near battles; they rescued women and children and lots of people not fighting as soldiers, whose homes were being bombed, and gave transport to safer places; they fed thousands of homeless hungry people and gave out warm clothes; they gave people advice and information about where to find a place to live or stay until they could get back home again; they found children new homes and families; they visited 'enemy' people in prisons and prison camps.

They lived near to where or next to where soldiers were fighting or people were hurt or hungry. They were not paid money – they just had their clothes, food and somewhere to sleep. They came to be called quiet helpers. Even during terrible times they always made sure they had somewhere to meet and worship together – a tent or just chairs under a tree. Feeling joined up together in meeting and the love that can come from that helped them do the hard jobs they did. At the end of the war Quakers from our country and America were given a very special prize – the Nobel Peace prize.' *Pause*

You had a picture of this on your seat or on the floor when you came in – there are also pictures of some of the quiet helpers. Look at these pictures for a moment. Think about what you see. *Pause*

Now, I am going to ask my Friend sitting next to me, and I will too, to imagine that they are, for just a moment, one of these helpers. Then when we are ready we are going to hold the hand of the person next to us, or if on the floor to come nearer and hold hands, and to imagine they are passing a greeting, a hello or a message on from the quiet helpers. Each of you then holds the hand of the person next to or near you until all our hands are joined together. Each of you, if you can, imagine you are passing a greeting, a hello or a message from the quiet helpers. *Pause*

Just be still for a few moments in the circle staying joined together. *Pause*. Ask people to let go gently.

Ask everybody to quietly think about the question:

'What was it like, even for a moment, in your imagination, to be joined to or wondering about the quiet helpers, the *Friends Ambulance Unit* and the *Friends' War Victims Relief Committee*?' *Pause*

Quietly say that people who want to can use the drawing and writing materials around the room to write, draw and think about the story they have heard, being joined up with the quiet helpers or something else it has made them think about. Say that Friends are also welcome to sit in stillness and worship with their thoughts and reflections.

End by bringing everybody back to the circle and keep the stillness for a few moments.

The two sides of the Nobel Peace Prize

